PRIVATE LIFE

Written by
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INT. BEDROOM – NIGHT

RACHEL BIEGLER, early forties, lies half-naked on her side, surrounded by sheets and pillows. Her head rests on an arm as she stares into space, thinking. Rachel’s underpants are the kind you’d find in a twelve-pack: moss green cotton bikinis with lots of little flowers. The elastic waistband is separating in one spot.

MAN (O.S.)
Are you ready?

RACHEL
Uh-huh. Yeah.

Rachel fluffs up a pillow and plants her face in it.

(muffled)
I’m ready.

MAN (O.S.)
Alrightie...

Like a sun rising over a mountain, RICHARD GRIMES, mid-forties, in boxers and a faded T-shirt, appears above the curve of Rachel’s hip. He sits up on his knees behind her and after a considered pause, pulls Rachel’s underwear down.

RICHARD
Just breathe, okay?
(a beat)
Are you breathing?

RACHEL
(muffled and annoyed)
Yes! Go!

RICHARD
Okay.

Richard lays one hand on her haunch and with the other raises a SYRINGE with a LARGE NEEDLE. He nervously takes aim --

One... two... three.

-- and spears the needle into his wife’s flesh.

RACHEL
Owww! Fuck! Richard!

RICHARD
What?!

RACHEL (CONT’D)
That fucking hurts!

RICHARD
I’m sorry, I’m sorry.
Richard’s hand trembles as he pulls the plunger back to check for blood. There is none, so he pushes the plunger down.

    RICHARD (CONT’D)

Richard pulls out the needle; Rachel looks at her hip.

    RACHEL
    I think you hit a nerve.

Still holding the syringe, Richard uses his teeth to open a SMALL FOIL ENVELOPE, causing him to slur --

    RICHARD
    Uhm shorry, honey. I did ekshactly what the nursh told me to do.

He spits out the torn-off strip, removes an ALCOHOL PAD and presses it over the injection site just as TWO RESCUE DOGS, ENO and LAZLO, click into the room and hop up on the bed.

    RACHEL
    (pointing)
    Wasn’t it supposed to be more like here?

    RICHARD
    Nope. Upper outer quadrant.

    RACHEL
    Then why did it hurt like that? Nobody on the message boards said it’s supposed to hurt like that.

    RICHARD
    I don’t know, Rache. It’s a bigger needle. Maybe you have a lower pain threshold than most people. I don’t know. I’m not a doctor. Remember?

Rachel watches Richard as he climbs off the bed and drops the used syringe in a PLASTIC WATER BOTTLE that already contains a dozen others. This new, larger one, lands with a dull CLUNK.

    RACHEL
    Are you mad at me?

    RICHARD
    No. I’m not mad. I’m just... Whatever. I don’t know. Tired.

Richard picks up something from a nearby bureau and offers it to Rachel: It’s A BAG OF FROZEN PEAS.
Husband and wife regard each other for an odd moment, then Rachel takes the peas, places them on her aching ass and Richard leaves.

CUT TO BLACK.

UNDER BLACK, A CARD --

36 HOURS LATER

INT. LARGE CLINIC WAITING ROOM - DAY

A big, bright modern space with large windows. At 7:15 A.M. it’s already packed with (mostly white) women in their late 30s and early 40s. Some are accompanied by husbands. Some are alone. There are several Hasidic couples. One lesbian couple.

Among this crowd are Rachel and Richard.

SUPERIMPOSE --

THE RETRIEVAL

Richard does the crossword puzzle while Rachel sits with an unread magazine on her lap, furtively observing her fellow patients, including --

A TENSE WOMAN, dressed for work, tapping her Blackberry.

Rachel’s eyes float down to the woman’s HANDSOME LEATHER PUMPS with gold buckles, then Rachel examines her own shoes: OLD SAUCONYS in dingy yellow.

DING! The elevator arrives and Rachel watches as a SINGLE WOMAN steps out, wheeling a CRYOGENIC TANK. The woman scans the room for an empty seat. There are none, so she just stands there, stranded with her tank of frozen sperm.

With the SWOOSH of a door, a NURSE emerges and everyone looks up expectantly.

NURSE

Rachel?

Rachel rises, holding her coat, scarf and purse in an awkward heap as the magazine drops to the floor.

INT. CHANGING ROOM - DAY

A WEDDING BAND, WATCH and NECKLACE are placed one at a time on a Formica surface next to CELLOPHANE WRAPPED HOSPITAL GARMENTS.

WIDER shows Rachel in her underwear and socks as she unscrews an earring. We notice a CHAIN OF PURPLE INJECTION BRUISES above her panty line as she looks around the sterile room, wondering how she ended up here.
INT. LOCKER AREA - DAY

Rachel stuffs her parka, purse and clothes into a tiny locker.

            ADMITTING NURSE (PRE-LAP)
These are your consent forms.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE AREA - DAY

Richard stands at a desk as an ADMITTING NURSE presents him with various documents.

            ADMITTING NURSE
Both partners signatures are required on the second page. This is our policy regarding embryo storage. The fee schedule is on the back. You both need to initial each paragraph then sign here.

She fastens the documents onto a clipboard and hands it to him. As Richard turns to go --

    And this is for you.

She disappears behind the desk and reappears with a PLASTIC BAG containing A SPECIMEN CUP.

    Instructions are inside.

Richard takes the cup and smiles awkwardly.

            RACHEL (O.S.)
There you are!

Richard turns to see Rachel approaching in a HOSPITAL GOWN, PAPER SHOWER CAP and her locker key dangling from her wrist. She seems anxious.

            RICHARD
What’s wrong?

            RACHEL
Nothing. It’s fucking freezing in here.

Richard puts an arm around her and rubs her shoulders.

            RICHARD
Shhh. Relax. Don’t obsess.

            RACHEL
I’m not obsessing. I’m cold.

He guides her into --
INT. THE GOWNED WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS

-- and they sit down among several other couples.

RICHARD
(handing her the clipboard)
You need to sign these.

As Rachel begins examining the papers, she mumbles to herself.

RACHEL
Oh, my god. What are we doing? Are we really doing this? Are we insane?

RICHARD
We’re not insane. We’re normal.

Richard folds back the papers and points out a signature line.

RACHEL
(signing)
This is not normal. This is the opposite of normal. I’m not sure if it’s even ethical. Remember what Marty said? “Having a baby is an immoral act.”

RICHARD
Marty’s an idiot.

RACHEL
“Overpopulation, climate change...”

Richard notices a nearby couple giving them looks.

...the rise of neo-fascism --”

RICHARD
Did you take your Valium?

RACHEL
Yes. Why?

NURSE #2 (O.S.)
Ms. Biegler?

Rachel turns to see a nurse standing a few feet away. Rachel signals that she’ll be right there, then turns back to Richard.

RACHEL
Okay, I guess we’re doing this.

RICHARD
Don’t be scared, okay? You’re gonna do great. All we need is one good egg, right?
Moved by her husband’s optimism, Rachel smiles and nods.

**RACHEL**
You, too honey. Don’t be scared.  
You’re gonna do great.

Richard smiles feebly and raises his specimen cup. Rachel chortles quietly.

I love you.

**RICHARD**
I love you, too.

They kiss. As Richard watches his wife being led off to surgery, we hear the incongruent SOUND of GRUNTING and MOANING.

CUT TO:

A NAKED WOMAN ON ALL FOURS with giant fake breasts being drilled from behind by a STEROID-ENHANCED MAN. He grunts; she moans. Wider reveals that we are watching the action on a wall-mounted VIDEO MONITOR in --

**INT. “COLLECTION” ROOM - DAY**

Richard sits with his pants around his ankles and the empty SPECIMEN CUP in his hand, staring at the screen with a look of profound despair.

Unable to bear another moment, he aims the remote and presses STOP, but the horror show continues. Richard tries another button, but the moaning and grunting just get LOUDER.

Desperate, he shakes the remote and TWO BATTERIES fall out, rolling across the floor.

With his pants still around his ankles, Richard stands and shuffles to the monitor. A LARGE SHEET OF SANITARY PAPER is stuck to his ass and CRINKLES loudly.

CLICK, he switches off the MONITOR. Silence at last. Then --

**ANESTHESIOLOGIST (PRE-LAP)**
My eight year old came to work one day...

**INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY**

The ANESTHESIOLOGIST hovers over the camera.

**ANESTHESIOLOGIST**
...to see what I do. You know,  
“Take Your Daughter to Work Day."

REVERSE, Rachel is looking up from a surgical table as the
anesthesiologist rambles on, injecting her with a sedative.

She said it was the most boring job
in the world. All I do all day is
put people to sleep.

Rachel smiles politely as her eyes drift shut and we --

FADE TO BLACK.

UNDER BLACK, HUSHED VOICES speaking in a foreign tongue. Hebrew?

INT. RECOVERY AREA - DAY

WE OPEN OUR EYES TO SEE --
A BLURRY HASIDIC MAN in a dark suit standing next to his
wife’s bed, talking to her. He wears a hat; she wears a wig.

ANGLE ON BLEARY-EYED RACHEL --
observing her exotic neighbors as she wakes up.

Rachel gets up on her elbows and looks around to find that
all the women in the surrounding beds have been joined by
their husbands or partners. She calls to a passing NURSE.

RACHEL
(groggy, weak)
Excuse me...(louder) Ma’am? Nurse?

The nurse finally hears Rachel and goes to her.

Where’s my husband?

NURSE
Your birth partner hasn’t joined you?

Rachel shakes her head. The nurse refers to her paperwork.

RACHEL
He’s my husband.

NURSE
Excuse me?

RACHEL
NURSE (CONT'D)
My birth partner... he’s... (mispronouncing as
my husband. “Grimes”)
Not that that matters, it’s Mr. Grimes?
just...

RACHEL
(correcting “Grimes”)
Rachel notices a flicker of concern on the nurse’s face as she reads something on the clipboard.

    NURSE
    You’ll need to speak to a Doctor.
    (walking away)
    Let me go find someone.

    RACHEL
    Is something wrong?

    NURSE
    It’ll be just a moment.

    RACHEL
    (mounting panic)
    Why can’t you just tell me? Hello!

The nurse disappears.

    Fuck!

Rachel’s eyes land on her Hasidic neighbors who regard her with flat stares. She smiles, but their faces remain expressionless.

    FEMALE DOCTOR (O.S.)
    There wasn’t any sperm.

Rachel turns to discover a FEMALE DOCTOR at the foot of her bed.

    RACHEL
    (puzzled)
    Excuse me...

    FEMALE DOCTOR
    Your husband didn’t have any sperm.

Pause.

    RACHEL
    Wait. You mean, like... he couldn’t... do it?

    FEMALE DOCTOR
    No. He produced. And there was semen, but no sperm.
    (off Rachel’s bewilderment)
    Dr. Dordick will have to give you the details.

The doctor leaves and Rachel discovers Richard across the room looking at her with a defeated smile.
DR. DORDICK (60s), silver-haired and handsome in his scrubs, stands at Rachel’s bed side and speaks to our beleaguered couple while drawing a diagram of the male reproductive system on a file folder.

DORDICK
Think of it like a soda machine. Either one of you ever work in a movie theater? The seltzer comes from one place.

(pointing with his pen)
The syrup comes from someplace else. Together they make Mountain Dew or Diet Coke or what have you. But if the pipe gets... clogged...

(draws an X)
...you don’t get Mountain Dew. You just get... seltzer. Richard is probably blocked.

RACHEL
Mentally? Like psychosomatic?

RICHARD
No. Not mentally. Physically. Like what he’s just been talking about with the soda machine.

RACHEL
Right. Sorry.

DORDICK
I just got off the phone with a buddy of mine. A urologist. Joel Fisher. He’s an expert on this. He’s writing a book about it.

Dordick pulls out a XEROXED ARTICLE from New York Magazine and hands it to Richard. The title is: Male Menopause

RICHARD
Oh, my god. That’s so depressing.

DORDICK
Don’t be depressed, Rich. Based on everything that I told him, he’s confident that you’ve got sperm in there. The trick is getting it out. Now, there’s a procedure for it. And Fisher is definitely the man for the job. It’s called...

(pronounced “tessy”)
TESE. Testicular sperm extraction.
Dordick hands Richard an information sheet on the procedure.

    RICHARD
    (under his breath)
    Oh, my god.

    DORDICK
    It’s not as bad as it sounds.

    RACHEL
    You know he only has one testicle, right?

Richard looks at Rachel, incredulous.

    What? He needs to know.

    RICHARD
    I realize that.
    (sighs, then to Dordick.)
    I only have one testicle.

    DORDICK
    I saw the note in your file and I filled Fisher in. He doesn’t anticipate a problem.
    (pointing with his pen)
    What he’ll do is avoid the vas deferens and go right to the source by doing a testicular biopsy.

    RACHEL
    Like for cancer?

    RICHARD
    No, Rachel. Not cancer. I don’t have cancer. I have blocked sperm!

    RACHEL
    Sorry. He said biopsy.

    DORDICK
    The thing is if we do TESSE, we’ll have to follow up, with ICSE
    (pronounced “Icksy”)
    Intra-Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection.
    (handing Richard another sheet)
    It’s an additional expense, but there’s no way around it.
    The good news is Fisher is available and happens to be in the city today. The bad news is...
    he’ll need a check for ten thousand dollars. I know it’s short notice.
RICHARD
Not a problem.

RACHEL
It’s not?

Richard shakes his head. Dordick prepares to leave.

DORDICK
Take a minute to talk things over and once you’re ready, I’ll give Fisher a call while Moira helps Richard get suited up and we’ll be off to the races.

INT. CLINIC CORRIDOR - DAY

Richard and Rachel walk down the hall following MOIRA. Rachel pushes her IV pole.

RACHEL
(hushed, but intense)
Richard. We don’t have ten thousand dollars.

RICHARD
I’m gonna call Charlie.

Rachel slows to a halt. Richard stops, too.

RACHEL
We said we weren’t going to tell anybody.

RICHARD
I know... But what’re we supposed to do, Rache? Eleven of your eggs are sitting in there waiting to be inseminated and we don’t have anything to inseminate them with.

Rachel watches with envy as ANOTHER COUPLE, finished with their procedure, walk arm-in-arm toward the exit.

If I don’t call him we’re screwed. The cycle will be a bust, we’ll have blown through a big chunk our baby budget and you’ll have gone through all this for nothing.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - HALLWAY - DAY

Richard, now wearing a parka over a HOSPITAL GOWN, paces back and forth on the sidewalk, talking on his cellphone.
Rachel stands in the vestibule watching him through the glass door. After a few moments, Richard hangs up and heads inside, looking upbeat.

RICHARD
He’s on his way with a check.

RACHEL
He is?

RICHARD
Yep.

They walk to the elevator.

RACHEL
Did Cynthia say anything?

RICHARD
What? No. Of course not.

RACHEL
She’s so judgmental.

RICHARD
No, she’s not.

The elevator arrives. Rachel’s Hasidic neighbors exit, and our couple steps in.

RACHEL
Yes, she is, Richard. She was even weird when we were doing IUIs.

RICHARD
You’re being paranoid.

The doors close.

INT. CHARLIE’S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - DAY

CYNTHIA (50s) with messy morning hair stares at someone off-screen with her jaw dropped wide open.

CYNTHIA
They’re doing it again?!

Reverse shows CHARLIE (50s) at the sink as he turns off the faucet and drags a towel over his wet face.

CHARLIE
No. This is something totally different. New doctor. Very high tech with... egg harvesting... and hatching. And something called “Icksee.” Have you seen my pants?
Charlie slips past Cynthia, enters the adjoining bedroom and starts sifting through strewn clothes.

CYNTHIA
I thought they were done with all that and they were trying to adopt.

CHARLIE
Yeah. They are. They’re still doing that. But after that thing with that girl, they’re trying a “by any means necessary” approach. Doing both at once.

CYNTHIA
Oh, my god. They’re like compulsive gamblers!

Charlie finds his pants, steps into them.

CHARLIE
Anyway, it’s really technical and hard to keep track of. But there’s a problem with Richard’s sperm and he needs to borrow ten thousand dollars.

Charlie zips his pants and exits. Cynthia runs after him into --

THE HALLWAY --

CYNTHIA
You’re not going to give it to him?

CHARLIE
Of course I am. He’ll pay me back.

Charlie arrives at the STAIRS and heads down. Cynthia follows.

CYNTHIA
Charlie, if you love Richard and Rachel, do not give them the money. They don’t need money. They need help. Giving them money is just... enabling them.

Charlie shoots her a skeptical look as he enters --

THE LIVING ROOM.

Cynthia is a few steps behind him.

CHARLIE
To what?
CYNTHIA
To pursue this... fantasy of
fertility when it’s pretty clear
that it’s consuming them --
emotionally and economically.
They’re strung out. Their marriage
is a wreck. They’re always
fighting. They’re like fertility
junkies.

CHARLIE
That’s nuts.

CYNTHIA
Honey. They’ve been doing this for
years. They need to stop. They need
to move on. They need an intervention.

GIRL’S VOICE (O.S.)
Mom?

Cynthia and Charlie turn to see their daughter, CHARLOTTE (17)
holding A PHONE.

CHARLOTTE
Sadie’s on the phone. She doesn’t
sound good.

Charlotte looks back and forth between her parents, neither
of whom responds so she drops the phone on the couch and
leaves. Cynthia and Charlie look at each other. Then, OUT
OF THE RECEIVER, a faint voice --

SADIE (ON PHONE)
Mom?

CYNTHIA
(picking up)
Hi, honey.

CHARLIE
I need to get going.

He pulls on a sweater. Cynthia follows him as he makes his
way to the front door where he grabs his coat and exits.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - UPSTATE NY - CONTINUOUS

SADIE BARRETT (25) stands outside a dormitory, shivering and
smoking as she talks on her cellphone. She’s wearing a thick
oversized sweater and pajama bottoms.

CYNTHIA (ON PHONE)
(to Charlie)
I really want you to think about
what you’re doing.
SADIE
Mom? What’s going on?

EXT. CONNECTICUT HOME - CONTINUOUS

Cynthia watches from the doorway as Charlie crunches across the gravel driveway and -- VEEP! VEEP! -- unlocks their Mercedes Station Wagon.

CYNTHIA
Nothing. We’re just. Charlie’s going into the city and --

Before he gets in the car, Charlie calls out to Cynthia.

CHARLIE
I’ll pick up some stuff from Russ and Daughter’s. You want salmon?

CYNTHIA
(covers the phone)
Charlotte! You want salmon?

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
What?

CYNTHIA
(louder)
Dad’s going into Manhattan. You want Russ and Daughters?

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - CONTINUOUS

Sadie struggles to hear, but she can only make out MUFFLED SOUNDS. Several students trudge by with backpacks. INTERCUT.

SADIE
Mom?

CYNTHIA
(to Charlie)
A bialy. An everything bagel. And a quarter pound of Wild Nova.
(to Sadie)
Sorry, honey. Is everything okay?

CYNTHIA
What’s wrong?

Sadie takes a deep drag on her cigarette.

Are you smoking?
SADIE
(mouth full of smoke)
No. I quit. I told you.
(exhales away from phone)
I just have a cold. And I’m standing outside and it’s freezing.

She drops her cigarette and steps on it.

CYTHIA
Where?

SADIE
Tivoli. School.

CYTHIA
Right. Okay. I was just checking. You sound funny.

A pause as Sadie summons her courage.

SADIE
I need to get out of here.

CYTHIA
For the Holidays?

SADIE
No. Before the holidays. And after.
(tense pause)
I need to leave here for a while.

CYTHIA
You just got back there!

SADIE
I know. I don’t think it was such a good idea.

CYTHIA
What do you mean? It was a great idea. You’ll finally graduate.

SADIE
I’m not doing well.

CYTHIA
Are you failing?

SADIE
No. God, mom. Emotionally, not academically. You are so achievement oriented.
CYNTHIA
Finishing college at 25 isn’t exactly an achievement, Sadie. It’s damage control.

Sadie’s eyes well up. Cynthia grimaces, regretting her choice of words.

I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have said that.

SADIE
It’s what you think.

CYNTHIA
No, it’s not. I just... want you to find something that you love doing that gives you a sense of purpose and meaning to your life.

SADIE
I found it. Remember?

Cynthia tries to think of what Sadie is referring to.

Writing...

CYNTHIA
Of course. Yes. And you’re really good at it, honey. But if you want to be a writer-writer, a professional, you have to be very driven and disciplined. And if it’s giving you this much trouble in college, what’s going to happen in the real world when you need to pay your rent at the same time?

Sadie shakes her head.

SADIE
I’m not failing, Mom. I did a lot of good work at the beginning of the semester that I’m really proud of. It’s just... I’m a little stuck right now and I’m not gonna to be ready to hand in my portfolio in Writing Workshop which counts for like eighty percent of our grade. But the good news is my professor really believes in me and she’s willing to give me an incomplete which is great because...

Sadie trails off.

CYNTHIA
Sadie? What?
SADIE
Nothing. I guess I’m waiting for you to tell me that in “real life” there’s no such thing as an incomplete.

Pause.

CYNTHIA
Honey, why don’t you just come home, and we can talk about this in person.

SADIE
I can’t come home, mom.

CYNTHIA
Why not?

SADIE
(hesitant)
Because... I want to be in the city.

CYNTHIA
Oh, god, Sadie, how’re you going to do that?

SADIE
I’ll work. I’ll waitress. It’s not gonna cost you a penny. I promise. Uncle Richard and Aunt Rachel said I could stay at their place whenever I want.

CYNTHIA
Honey, Richard and Rachel have a lot on their plate. Trust me. They’re not in a position to take care of anyone but themselves right now.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Richard and Rachel, the last remaining patients, lie in adjacent beds. He clutches an ice pack to his crotch, she a heating pad against her lower abdomen.

MELANCHOLY LOW-FI PIANO MUSIC FADES IN as the CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS AWAY from our reproductively challenged couple.

GIRL (PRE-LAP)
(singing)
Nobody wants a broken toy....

The song transports us to --
INT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A GIRL (10), holding a DOC McSTUFFINS' KARAOKE MICROPHONE sings a song from the show while her YOUNGER SISTER does a strange interpretive dance.

A REVERSE shows Richard and Rachel watching with polite ambivalence. They sit with other MIDDLE-AGED DINNER GUESTS who form a captive, but charmed, audience.

The song ends. The guests applaud. The children beam. CAROLINE (45), the hostess (and mother of the girls), tries to move things along --

CAROLINE
Okay, you guys. Say good night to everyone.

GIRLS
Good night!

A chorus of “Good night!” from the table as a BABY-SITTER herds the kids off to bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The remaining guests lounge with wine and dessert. We drift through the room, catching bits of conversation. We hear a party-goer, DAVID, talk about alternate side parking rules. In a corner, we find Richard talking to Caroline’s husband BRAD. Rachel is nearby.

RICHARD
It’s just party people drinking themselves sick on the weekends. I can barely walk the dogs at night. I just don’t want to find myself at fifty sitting at a block association meeting trying to prevent a new bar from opening.

RACHEL
Honey, we’re not going to turn fifty on East 6th Street.

RICHARD
I’m forty-seven!

INT. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Caroline removes a bottle of wine from the fridge as Rachel enters, carrying dishes. We hear voices from the other room.

RACHEL
You guys seem great.
CAROLINE
Me and Brad? We haven’t spoken in two days.

RACHEL
What?

CAROLINE
For the last forty-eight hours we have not uttered a word to each other.

Just then, Brad enters the kitchen with some dessert plates.

That’s how we fight. Right, honey? No words.

Brad looks at Rachel, shrugs in agreement, deposits dishes on the counter and leaves.

When’s your book coming out?

RACHEL
April.

CAROLINE
(opening the wine)
That’s exciting. I haven’t written jack-shit since Talia was born.

POP! The cork comes out and Caroline begins to pour.

You have got to try this. I’m obsessed. I drank it all summer.

RACHEL
No, thanks.

CAROLINE
Really? It’s Prosecco. You’re not a Prosecco person?

RACHEL
No. I am. I love it. It’s just, I can’t... I’m cycling.

CAROLINE
Oh, my god. Soul Cycle? My sister does that and her ass is like two little coconuts. Do you love it?

RACHEL
Oh, no. Not that kind of cycling.

(hesitant)
It’s... IVF.
CAROLINE
(covers her mouth)
Oh, my god. I am so sorry. What an idiot.

She hugs Rachel.

RACHEL
It’s okay.

CAROLINE
No, it’s not. I’m such a dope. Wow. I didn’t know you guys were back to doing that. I thought you we’re trying to adopt.

RACHEL
No. Yeah. We are. We just figured, while we’re waiting, we might as well give this a shot. Ha! That’s a good one, right? Giving IVF a shot. It’s our first time, actually. We did lots of IUIs before, but we never brought out the big guns.

CAROLINE
It’ll really increase your chances, though, right?

RACHEL
Yeah. I don’t know. Our numbers aren’t so great.

CAROLINE
You should talk to my cousin, Erin. She did IVF to get her kids and her doctors told her she shouldn’t even bother. Her chances were like one percent or something. And she got pregnant twice. In her forties. With only one ovary.

Rachel, rapt, mouths “wow.”

I’m sure she’d love to talk to you about it. And her kids are amazing.

Caroline pulls a photo of Erin and her two kids off the fridge and hands it to Rachel.

CUT TO:

A MONITOR
displaying an enlarged microscopic image of what appears to be TWO CIRCLES OF SUDSY SPITTLE.
A WIDER ANGLE reveals that we are in --

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Rachel, her feet in stirrups, lies on a table, tipped so her head is lower than her pelvis. LAB TECHNICIANS and NURSES stand at various stations around the room. Dordick, in surgical scrubs, points to one of the spittle circles.

DORDICK
That’s a double-A embryo, right there. See the tightly packed cells.... That puppy is raring to go. We’ll transfer both, but I’m putting my money on this guy.

(turning to Rachel)
You ready?

RACHEL
(not sure)
Uh-huh.

DORDICK
(a smile, then to the room--)
Alrightie. Here we go, guys. It’s show time.

LIGHTS dim. A GIANT SURGICAL LAMP GOES ON. Dordick sits on a stool with wheels and rolls in between Rachel’s legs.

Your job is to just relax and breathe, okay?

Rachel nods, not relaxed at all. Dordick holds out his hand and a nurse supplies him with a SPECULUM.

DORDICK (CONT’D)
This might feel a little cold...
Just relax... That’s it.

MELLOW GUITAR MUSIC begins to play.

Do you like The Eagles?

Rachel has no idea what he’s talking about until the vocals begin:

EAGLES
Every night... I’m lyin’ in bed...
Holdin’ you close in my dreams...

Dordick smiles and raises his eyebrows. Rachel politely smiles back and nods.
Dordick holds out a hand and an embryologist gives him a CATHETER. With one eye on Rachel’s cervix and the other on the ultrasound monitor, he speaks softly --

DR. DORDICK
Alright. Let’s get pregnant, shall we?

Rachel smiles weakly and watches Dordick mouth the lyrics as he guides the catheter deep into her body.

EAGLES
Oh, oh, oh, oh, sweet darlin’
you get the best of my love...

EXT. CONCEPTIONS - DAY

Rachel holds the collar of her coat closed as she and Richard stand on blustery First Avenue, searching for a cab. Spotting one, Richard raises his arm and a PIECE OF PAPER he’s holding is snatched from his hand by the wind.

RACHEL
Oh, my god! Richard.

Richard chases the paper down the sidewalk, awkwardly crouching as he goes. Pedestrians step out of the way and give him looks. Rachel watches with a hand over her mouth.

INT. CAB - DAY (MOVING)

Richard smooths the paper against his thigh and rubs it, trying to remove the dirt and creases. For the first time we see that it’s a BLACK & WHITE IMAGE of their embryos.

The cab hits a large pot hole, making a jarring dip and bump.

RACHEL
Ugh.
(to the driver)
Excuse me? Sir?

The PAKISTANI CAB DRIVER conversing in Urdu on his headset doesn’t respond.

RICHARD
(quietly to Rachel)
It’s okay.

RACHEL
No, it’s not. I’m trying to implant.

Rachel unbuckles her seat-belt and sticks her head through the opening in the Plexiglass divider.

Sir.
Startled, the driver yanks out his earbuds.

Hi. I’m sorry, but I just had a medical procedure. Gynecological.

The driver looks terrified.

So if you would slow down and take it easy on the bumps, I’d appreciate it.

As soon as Rachel retracts her head from the opening, the cabdriver slides the window shut. WHACK!

CUT TO:

BATHROOM TILE being mercilessly scrubbed.

SUMERIMPOSE --

THE HOME STUDY

WINDER reveals we are in--

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - DAY

Rachel is on all fours in the bathtub, scrubbing the tile.

Meanwhile, the dogs follow Richard as he enters the bedroom with an armful of fertility medication. He kicks the lid off a WICKER HAMPER and dumps everything inside.

RACHEL (O.S.)
(yelling)
How are we doing?

RICHARD
Good!

Richard spots the WATER BOTTLE filled with used syringes and tosses it into the hamper.

As of now, no IVF materials are in sight.

BACK IN THE BATHROOM --

RACHEL
Great!

RICHARD (O.S.)
Do you think we should take down the Lisa Yuskavage?

RACHEL
What? No!

Richard has wandered into --
THE LIVING ROOM, where he stares at something off-screen.

RICHARD
I’m just looking at it from Beth’s perspective. We’re used to it, but... If you and I sit next to each other on the couch and Beth sits across from us...

Richard takes a seat in the only chair opposite the couch.

It’s like right in her face.

RACHEL
(entering with a sponge)
What is?

RICHARD
The vagina.

ANOTHER ANGLE reveals a SEXUALLY EXPLICIT LITHOGRAPH of a nude woman with her legs splayed open.

I think we should at least move it. So it’s not so... central.

RACHEL
(thinks for a moment, then --)
No. Uh-uh. If our social worker is so uptight that she would actually deny us a child because we have a... vagina on our wall, well then... just... screw everything...

Rachel marches back to the kitchen and gets down on all fours.

RACHEL (CONT’D)
I mean, just fuck it!
(shaking Ajax on the floor)
I am so sick of these people judging us and telling us what to do all the time. Between the doctors and the social workers and the support groups, it’s just like, shut the fuck up already and shove it up your fucking asses!

LATER, IN THE LIVING ROOM --

A civilized tableau: Rachel and Richard, nicely dressed and flanked by their dogs, sit on the couch across from BETH (50), a compact social worker. While Rachel pours tea, Beth reviews their file.
BETH
Before Kyra went on maternity leave she walked me through everything, so I’m pretty up-to-date. But nothing can replace talking face-to-face. (receiving her tea)
Mmm, thank you.

As Beth takes a sip, her eyes land on the lithograph and the VAGINA. She seems hypnotized by it. Richard gives Rachel an “I told you so” look.

RACHEL
She’s a good friend of ours. Not the woman in the picture. The artist who made it. She’s our friend. It was a wedding present.

BETH
(back to business)
So, it looks like you came to adoption after some fertility treatments.

Nervous “Uh-huhs and “Yeahs” before an uncomfortable pause.

RICHARD
It wasn’t for us. Didn’t feel right.

Beth nods sympathetically as she writes something down.

RACHEL
Plus Richard only has one testicle, so...

Richard shoots his wife a look. Beth moves things along.

BETH
I see that you were matched with a birthmother last winter. Would you mind telling me a little bit about that?

Richard and Rachel check in with each other. Richard nods.

RACHEL
Okay. Um. We’d been officially waiting for a couple of months and we weren’t getting any calls, which was totally depressing. Kyra told us about Parent Portraits...

Beth nods knowingly.

...so we decided to give it a try.

(MORE)
About a week after our page went up, we got a call...

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

A RINGING PHONE sits on a desk in their home office. Taped to it is a handmade label: BABY PHONE/INCOMING CALLS ONLY.

Rachel stumbles into the dark room, stubbing her toe en route -- “Oww, Fuck!”

RACHEL
Hello. Yes. Uh-huh. That’s us.

She turns on a lamp. With the handset wedged between her shoulder and ear, she pushes aside paperwork to reveal TWO PAGES of what appears to be a play taped to the desk. A heading reads: PHONE SCRIPT.

No, not at all. “We’re happy you called. It’s the perfect time.”

Richard, in boxers, drifts into the room, squinting and scratching his head. Rachel looks at him, holds up a finger.

Well, it’s got its pros and cons.
But we love it.

Rachel scrawls on a notepad and shows it to Richard:

**TIFFANY 19**

Richard nods.

RACHEL
What about you?... Uh-huh. Oh, wow. Birthplace of Bill Clinton!
No. But we’ve always wanted to...

She hastily writes something else for Richard:

**Little Rock, Ark -- 13 Weeks Pregnant**

Richard draws a deep breath and sighs as he watches his wife sink deeper and deeper into the call.

RICHARD (V.O.)
It was like a match made in heaven.

CUT TO:

A SKYPE SESSION - NIGHT

TIFFANY is on a computer screen, having an animated conversation with Rachel and Richard.
The voices are barely audible and the pixillated image is beautiful and strange, like a digital dream.

RICHARD (V.O.)
We talked to her almost every night for a month...

ANOTHER SKYPE SESSION --

Tiffany gets up, adjusts her computer, then lifts her sweatshirt to reveal a BIG RED HEART drawn with lipstick on her barely showing belly.

Richard and Rachel smile in awe. Tiffany pops her head back into frame. Everybody laughs.

RICHARD (V.O.)
We fell in love with her...

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

A key is inserted in a mailbox that says Biegler/Grimes. Among the mail is an ENVELOPE decorated with HEART STICKERS and a PURPLE UNICORN STAMP.

RICHARD (V.O.)
She was so young. It was like we were her parents.

Richard opens the envelope and pulls out SEVERAL SONOGRAMS along with a PHOTO of Tiffany which looks like it was taken at JC Penny’s.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - DAY

Richard puts the photo and sonograms on the refrigerator with a MAGNET IN THE SHAPE OF ARKANSAS.

BETH (V.O.)
So you arranged to meet her?

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - PRESENT

RICHARD
Yep. Two days before Christmas. It was amazing we could get tickets.

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAY - FLASHBACK

A rental car whizzes by a sign that says:

WELCOME TO LITTLE ROCK
INT./EXT. RENTAL CAR – DAY (MOVING)

Richard drives. Rachel holds a beat-up manila folder in her lap and watches the landscape roll past. Richard spots something --

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD -- A CRACKER BARREL.

    RICHARD
    Thar’ she blows.

EXT. CRACKER BARREL – CONTINUOUS

Richard turns into the parking lot, finds a spot and shuts off the engine. They stare at the restaurant.

    RICHARD
    We’re early. You want to go in or wait here?

    RACHEL
    Go in.
    (opening the door)
    I need to use the bathroom.

Richard and Rachel walk toward the restaurant straightening their clothing, which is dressier and more conservative than usual. Richard reaches for Rachel’s hand, then notices something and stops.

    RACHEL (CONT’D)
    What?

    RICHARD
    On your neck. What is that?

Rachel nervously fingers her necklace, and we see a TINY GOLD CROSS.

    RACHEL
    Jewelry.

    RICHARD
    I know that. Why are you wearing it?

    RACHEL
    (shrugging)
    I like it.

    RICHARD
    You’re Jewish.

    RACHEL
    No I’m not, my mother’s Irish Catholic.
RICHARD
Your father’s Solomon Biegler.

RACHEL
Okay. So, I want Tiffany to like us.

RICHARD
By lying to her?

RACHEL
I’m not lying. It’s just... a piece of jewelry. She can interpret it any way she wants.

RICHARD
Rache, we don’t have to pretend we’re something we’re not. She knows who we are. She thinks we’re cool. She’s not suddenly expecting Christians to show up. It’s not like we ever said anything in our Parent Profile about being religious, so we don’t need to start now.

(off Rachel’s look)
What?

RACHEL
I updated our page.

Richard stares at his wife, baffled.

It felt stale. It needed refreshing. So, I updated a few things.

RICHARD
You mean like our sudden belief that Jesus Christ is our savior?

RACHEL
Will you stop making me feel shitty about this? Jesus. Everyone in our group does it. They say they go to church on Sunday even if where they really go is just to... brunch or... pilates or whatever because they know that most of these girls with unwanted pregnancies aren’t really Sunday-brunch-pilates-people because if they were... they wouldn’t be in this... stupid situation in the first place because they would have already taken care of it by now by having had an abortion...

(voice catching)
(MORE)
...just like we did... nine years ago when we weren’t ready.

Rachel’s breathing is shallow and jittery as she holds back tears.

RICHARD
We weren’t ready, Rache. We were in graduate school. In enormous debt. We had just met. We didn’t even like each other yet.

Rachel lets out a little snort-laugh. Richard laughs a little, too. They fall silent a moment.

RACHEL
Do you ever think that that’s why now we can’t --

RICHARD
No. I don’t. Ever.

A moment. Then Richard holds out a hand. Rachel takes it, and they resume walking toward the restaurant.

FROM BEHIND, as they walk away --

RACHEL
It’s just a piece of jewelry.

RICHARD
I know.

RACHEL
I think it’s pretty. It looks good with my blouse.

RICHARD
Yeah. It does.

INT. CRACKER BARREL – DAY

A WAITRESS arrives at the booth and places MEATLOAF in front of Richard and ICED TEA in front of Rachel.

RICHARD
Mmm. That looks great. Thank you.

WAITRESS
(to Rachel)
Are you sure there’s nothing else I can get for you?

RACHEL
No, thank you.
As the waitress leaves, Richard takes a bite of meatloaf. Rachel takes a sip of her tea, looks out the window and sighs.

RICHARD
Honey, relax, okay? She’s just late. Have some mashed potatoes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CRACKER BARREL - DUSK

We PAN across a PURPLE AND LAVENDER SUNSET and arrive at a WINDOW through which Rachel and Richard can be seen sitting in the same booth -- hours later.

RACHEL (V.O.)
After all that, it was just like...
Poof!

A SKYPE SESSION --
with Tiffany, which quickly dissolves into ANOTHER SESSION and then ANOTHER...

RACHEL (V.O.)
She never showed up and we never heard from her again.

Tiffany’s image FREEZES and we DISSOLVE TO --

INT./EXT. RENTAL CAR - HIGHWAY - NIGHT (MOVING)

Richard and Rachel drive in silence. They pass signs for the Clinton National Airport.

RICHARD (V.O.)
We’d been warned about this stuff. But she’d never asked us for money or anything, so...

INT. CLINTON NATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON an “I miss Bill” REFRIGERATOR MAGNET. A Clinton KEY CHAIN. An “I Heart Little Rock” MUG.

WIDER--our couple float aimlessly through A GIFT SHOP. Richard looks at RUBBER HALLOWEEN MASKS of Bill and Hillary. Rachel stands in front of a POSTCARD CAROUSEL looking at a picture of a young Hillary and Bill cradling newborn Chelsea.

A BOARDING ANNOUNCEMENT can be heard.

LATER--

Richard and Rachel pull rolling bags as they head toward a gate. Richard carries a shopping bag. As they walk into the distance, we hear THE SOUND OF A PLANE TAKING OFF.
INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The SONOGRAMS on the refrigerator are being removed.

Richard and Rachel, still in the same clothes from the trip, examine the flimsy print-outs.

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    When we got home, we realized...
    there was no name or date on any of
    the sonograms.

SLOWLY PUSH IN ON the PHOTO OF TIFFANY held up by magnets.

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    Kyra said sometimes the girls just
    want the attention... and there
    isn’t a baby at all.

The photo is plucked off the fridge. HOLD on empty space.

    We still don’t know if she was real
    or not.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - PRESENT

Beth looks at the sonograms.

    BETH
    It’s much easier when it involves
    money. At least that makes some
    kind of sense. But the emotional
    scams...
    (shaking her head)
    After something like that, a lot of
    people give up -- or they throw
    themselves back on the fertility
    treadmill. It’s a real testament
    to your strength as a couple that
    you stuck with it and renewed your
    commitment to adoption.

Rachel and Richard smile stiffly and nod. The SOUND OF
THUNDER and HEAVY RAIN carries us to --

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - ANOTHER DAY (RAINING)

Rachel opens a KITCHEN CABINET, revealing an array of
FERTILITY MEDICATION. She plucks a bottle from the shelf and
pops a pill into her mouth. Without swallowing, she
retrieves one bottle after another, in quick succession,
filling her mouth with pills. Finally, with a big swig of
water, she knocks back all the pills in her mouth.
From another shelf, she removes a GREEN BAG, stuffs several pills into PILL POCKETS and feeds one each to Eno and Lazlo who circle around her, panting.

IN THE BEDROOM -- HIGH ANGLE

Rachel sits on her bed surrounded by paper working on a BOUND MANUSCRIPT filled with copy-editing marks and Post-its. She pauses and lays the manuscript on the bed so we can see the title page: WOMEN'S STUDIES by Rachel Biegler. Rachel stares into space for a moment, looking uneasy, then begins feeling her breasts. She presses them to see if they are sore. They are!

INT. "THE PICKLE GUY" OFFICES - DAY (RAIN)

Richard and his only employee, SAM (30), are in the middle of receiving a delivery of PICKLE GUY PRODUCTS. Sam is alone in the storage room when a message arrives on Richard’s phone. Sam picks it up.

SAM
Rich. Text from Rachel.

Through the doorway, we see Richard out in the hall helping TWO UPS GUYS unload dollies.

RICHARD
What does it say?

Sam opens the message and blushes.

SAM
It’s kind of personal.

Sam holds up the phone so Richard can see --

A SELFIE OF RACHEL’S BREASTS, spilling from her bra with the caption: “Do these look bigger to you?”

Richard cracks a tiny smile.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE TEST

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

Rachel emerges from a subway station, hurries down a street and arrives at a door with a bronze plaque: LAWRENCE DORDICK, MD.

INT. EXAM ROOM - DAY

A NURSE wearing DEVIL HORNs draws Rachel’s blood.
INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

On her way out, Rachel passes the desk where FOUR WOMEN work at various stations.

A JACK-O-LANTERN sits on the ledge along with a GOLDFISH BOWL FILLED WITH LOLLIPOPS. Rachel lingers, then takes a lollipop, pops it in her mouth and smiles at a receptionist, who smiles back.

As Rachel pulls on her coat, she discovers that she’s standing in front of a wall covered in CHEERFUL CARDS and BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS. She begins reading the notes of appreciation and looking at the photos of babies and beaming children.

RECEPTIONIST #1 (O.S.)
We’re rooting for you.

Rachel turns to find one of the receptionists looking at her with obvious empathy.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - DAY

Rachel showers, letting the water pelt her face. In the distance, a PHONE RINGS.

Richard enters the apartment with the dogs on leashes. Hearing the phone --

RICHARD
Rache?!

Richard drops the leashes and answers.

Hello? Sure, hold on. Rache!

He hurries into the bathroom.

Rache. It’s Dordick.

Rachel SHUTS OFF the water, pulls open the curtain and looks at her husband. Richard hands her a towel. She wraps herself in it and sits down on the side of the tub. Richard joins her. They look at each other, prepare themselves, then Richard pushes the SPEAKER button.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
Okay. We’re both on.

DORDICK (ON PHONE)
Hi, Rachel.

RACHEL
(tentative)
Hi.
Excruciating silence.

DORDICK (ON PHONE)
   It’s not good news, guys.

HOLD on our couple as the words sink in.

INT. DOCTOR’S WAITING ROOM - DAY

A WIRE MOBILE IN THE SHAPE OF A PREGNANT WOMAN dangles in front of a window. Caught in the stream of air coming from a nearby vent, the wire woman twists and turns, occasionally striking the window like a fly trying to escape. TAP. TAP. TAP.

WIDE -- Rachel and Richard sit among other couples in a cramped seating area. The room is hushed except for the sound of the TAPPING.

INT. DORDICK’S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Consulting his notes --

DORDICK
   You could give it another go. This was your first IVF. Rachel responded well. It only takes one good egg. On the other hand, the two of you have been at it for quite some time and if money is a factor -- that combined with Rachel’s age makes me think... sure, you could try again, but your best chance of success is with a donor egg.

Rachel and Richard are stunned.

   It’s a big leap, I know. It takes some getting used to. And I don’t want to diminish the loss of a genetic link for Rachel, but there are a lot of positives to consider. Rachel would carry the child. Control the pre-natal environment. Give birth, breast-feed. And, of course, there would be Richard’s genetic contribution.
   (pause)
   It’s a lot to wrap your head around. Give it some time.

Dordick takes out a brochure and slides it across the desk.

(MORE)
Meanwhile, take a look at our program. See what you think and we can talk next week.

The couple looks at THE SHINY BROCHURE where ethnically diverse young women with good teeth smile up at them. Below the image, it says:

_Sometimes it takes three to make a family...

**EXT. STREET – DAY**

The door to Dordick’s office is thrown open and Rachel hurls herself out. Richard follows -- brochure in hand, pulling on his coat -- and tries to catch up.

_RACHEL_

He’s out of his fucking mind! There’s no way in hell I’m doing that.

_RICHARD_

We should at least just think about it.

Rachel stops and turns to face him.

I’m not saying we would do it. We can just... explore the idea. See how we feel. Make a list of all the pros and cons --

_RACHEL_

Are you serious?

_RICHARD_ (tentative)

We’ve come this far.

Rachel, flabbergasted, stares at her husband.

What?

_RACHEL_

We talked about this. We swore we would never do it.

_RICHARD_

No. You swore you would never do it. I kept my mouth shut because I didn’t want to pressure you into something that you’re going to have to live with for the rest of your life.
RACHEL
Wait. So all this time that I’ve been going along assuming that we feel the same way about this, you’ve been having secret fantasies about egg donation?

RICHARD
It’s not a secret fantasy.

RACHEL
It is to me. I didn’t know about it. I thought we decided together, as a couple that we would definitely draw the line at... science fiction!

RICHARD
It’s not science fiction, Rache. It’s pretty primitive, actually. They do it with farm animals all the time.

Rachel’s jaw drops.

RACHEL
Well, I’m not a goat, okay?

RICHARD
Bad example. Sorry.

RACHEL
Oh, my god. You’re really freaking me out, right now. You’re so gung-ho.

RICHARD
I am not gung-ho. I’m... pragmatic. If we do another IVF with your eggs, we have, what? -- a four percent chance of getting pregnant? With a donor egg, we’d be going from four to like sixty-five percent. The gambler in me wants to put my money on the better odds.

Rachel’s eyes widen.

RACHEL
Oh, my god, you’re Guy Woodhouse.

RICHARD
What?

RACHEL
The husband in Rosemary’s Baby. John Cassavetes. That’s you.
RICHARD
Yeah, Rachel. That’s me. Standing by while you’re being raped by a satanic demon. I’m just suggesting we listen to our doctor and look into all the options. We’re already signed up for adoption, what’s the big deal?

RACHEL
Well, for one, I’m not putting someone else’s body parts into my uterus!

A NANNY warily approaches with a double-wide stroller. Unable to pass, she gives them looks. Richard leads Rachel a few steps to the side, smiling politely.

RICHARD
(hushed)
I know it’s more complicated for you.

RACHEL
Isn’t it more complicated for you, too?

RICHARD
Yes, of course, it is... But you heard him. There are lots of positives. (stroking her cheek)
You’d get to carry the baby.

Rachel swats his hand away.

RACHEL
Oh, woop-de-do! What does that make me? The bellhop?!

RICHARD
(weak, barely audible)
No.

Richard, utterly at sea, watches his wife walk away until she whips around and hisses:

RACHEL
Well, why don’t you just go screw a younger woman, then?

RICHARD
What’re you talking about?

RACHEL
Oh, look. There’s one now.

She points to a thirty-ish woman walking on the other side of the street.
Go fuck her!

RICHARD
I don’t want to fuck her!

The woman in question glances over, picking up her pace. Rachel marches away again. Richard goes after her.

Look, we’re doing just about everything we can short of kidnapping to start a family. I don’t know why this is so off limits.

Rachel staggers to a halt and looks at her husband.

RACHEL
Easy for you to say. You...
(voice catching)
You’ll have your... genetic contribution. Me, I’ll just be...

A spasm of shallow breaths overtake her.

RICHARD
(soft)
What?

RACHEL
...lllll... left out...

Rachel erupts into tears. Richard watches her for a moment, then goes to hug her but is met with Rachel’s wrath as she starts pounding on his chest.

Keeping his face out of the line of fire, he opens his coat and manages to wrap Rachel inside even as she continues to pound. Finally exhausted, her body goes limp and she allows herself to be comforted.

They stand on the sidewalk -- pressed together under the coat -- as pedestrians walk around them. Leaves fall from the trees. We see a TRICK-OR-TREATER or two.

EXT. AVENUE A - DUSK (SLOW MOTION)

More trick-or-treaters: BLOODIED GHOULS and FACE-PAINTED BUTTERFLIES. Parents are dressed up, too. A BANNER reads NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL HALLOWEEN PARADE. A motley MARCHING BAND of aging punk rock parents plays MUSIC as it leads the procession.
INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The distant marching band can be heard as Richard and Rachel nap with their dogs. A loud, unpleasant BUZZZZ wakes them, and Richard gets up to go to the door.

RICHARD’S POV THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE --

A GRIM REAPER (10) and a BALLERINA (7) wait in the hall.

  RACHEL (O.S.)
  (groggy)
  Who is it?

  RICHARD
  (whispering)
  The kids from the third floor.

  RACHEL
  What do they want?

  RICHARD
  (is she kidding?)
  Candy. It’s Halloween.

  RACHEL
  (whispering)
  Oh, shit. Right. Just don’t answer it.

There is a sudden KNOCK and Rachel and Richard stand there, frozen. Muffled voices can be heard through the door.

  BALLERINA GIRL (O.S.)
  Someone’s there. I heard them.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

  GRIM REAPER
  Maybe, but they’re not answering.

  BALLERINA
  But it’s a holiday.

  GRIM REAPER
  It’s not that kind of holiday. Not everybody celebrates Halloween. Especially people that don’t have kids.

The boy walks down the hall while his sister lingers.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Richard and Rachel stand there, listening.
BALLERINA (O.S.)
They did it last year.

FADE OUT.

INT. RICHARD AND RACHEL’S APARTMENT - ANOTHER NIGHT

A COMPUTER SCREEN where little HEAD-SHOTS of young women scroll past, accompanied by ID NUMBERS and short descriptions:

--24 year-old (Italian; Irish) 5’6”, brown eyes, fair skin.
--22 year-old (Russian born) 5’4”, hazel eyes, brown hair.
--26 year-old (Brazilian born; US citizen) brown hair, brown eyes.

RACHEL (V.O.)
Jesus. It’s like eBay for ova.

WIDER reveals Rachel stretched out on the living room couch with her laptop open, calling into another room.

There’s one that got a full athletic scholarship in golf.

She gets up and walks to --

THE BEDROOM -- where Richard lounges with a book.

Have you ever even heard of that? College golf?

RICHARD
I thought you were working on your edit.

Rachel joins him on the bed and turns her laptop so he can see.

RACHEL
What d’you think? Do you want her to have your baby?

Richard ignores the computer.

RICHARD
She’s not having my baby. You are.

RACHEL
Okay. Fine. But what d’you think?

Richard puts his book down and gives the laptop his full attention.

RICHARD
I think she’s fine.
RACHEL
That’s all you have to say?

RICHARD
I’m not gonna make a big deal about it.
It’s just an egg. It’s one cell.

Richard resumes reading.

RACHEL
(mumbling to herself)
One cell that contains half the
chromosomes of our child-to-be.

RICHARD
I don’t see it that way.

Rachel laughs and shakes her head.

RACHEL
Oh, my god, you are so in denial
it’s crazy.

RICHARD
Don’t knock denial. It comes in
very handy. You should try it
sometime. Without it, you end up
like this guy.

He holds up his book, THE STRUGGLE, so Rachel can see the
intense face of the Norwegian author on the cover. Rachel
snort-laughs, then returns to looking at her screen.

RACHEL
Listen to this. Double major in
philosophy and political science at
an East Coast Ivy League
University. Entered at 16.

RICHARD
Too intimidating.

RACHEL
Yeah. Your sperm might be very shy
around her eggs.

Richard gives up trying to read and scoots closer to the
screen. Richard grimaces at something.

RICHARD

RACHEL
Oh... see that asterisk? That
means she’s reserved.

(MORE)
There’s probably a waiting list.  
It’s the Ivy League thing.

Richard points to an attractive young woman with brown hair.

RICHARD
Click on her.  She’s cute.

Rachel clicks the thumbnail and a page opens with a longer description and additional photos.

RACHEL
She has a BA.  Majored in journalism and cinema studies.  No wonder she’s selling her eggs.  She can’t get a job.  I like her nose.

RICHARD
I like your nose.

Richard kisses Rachel’s cheek, then buries his face in the crook of her neck.

Mmm.  This is kind of kinky.

Rachel giggles and squirms, then notices something out of the corner of her eye.

RACHEL
Oh, my god.  Richard.

She points and Richard leans in to look at ANOTHER YOUNG WOMAN, this one with auburn hair.

RICHARD
Wait.  Is that... Fiona?  From Mogador?

Rachel nods, almost imperceptibly.

Whoa.

INT. CAFÉ MOGADOR – DAY

The real-life FIONA glides through the restaurant.  She talks easily with some customers, writing their order on a pad.  The camera lingers.

Rachel and Richard sit at a table with their menus and coffee, watching.

RICHARD
I don’t know.  This is weird.

RACHEL
Think of it like an exercise.  
There’s no right or wrong answers.
RICHARD
Alright. Fine.
(surreptitiously looking)
Well. She’s beautiful. That’s obvious. And she’s always nice, which is good. Any time we come in. No matter how crowded. She’s got a great laugh and an amazing body. In the summer when she wears those thin cotton dresses with her hair all piled up...

RACHEL
You’re not supposed to think about how hot she is, Richard. You’re not going to have sex with her.

Rachel sighs, looks away and shakes her head.

RICHARD
What? You said there were no wrong answers. It’s very confusing. I’ve never done this before.

RACHEL
Neither have I. But just... stop thinking about fucking her, okay. Think about her like she’s your daughter. Not your girlfriend.

RICHARD
Okay.

RACHEL
God.

RICHARD
What?

RACHEL
(eyes pooling)
Nothing.

He reaches across the table and lays his hand on her forearm.

RICHARD
I’m sorry. I love you.

She takes her arm back and gazes down at the table.

You’re the one who wanted to do this.
RACHEL
Oh, do you think I enjoy this?
Looking for another woman’s egg to
mix with my husband’s sperm so I
can inject it into my uterus so we
can have a baby?

Richard notices A COUPLE at a nearby table look over.

At least Fiona is a flesh and blood
person we actually know, instead of
some random thumbnail photo.
(an exhale, then--)
Maybe we should just ask her.

Rachel raises her arm to flag Fiona. Richard yanks it down,
clinking the cutlery and water glasses in the process.

RICHARD
Are you crazy? We can’t ask her.

RACHEL
She put her picture up on a website.

RICHARD
That doesn’t mean she wants customers
inquiring about her ovaries during
the brunch rush-

WOMAN (O.S.)
Hi, guys.

Rachel and Richard turn to find Fiona looking down at them
with a warm smile, pen and pad in hand.

What can I get you?

EXT. MOGADOR – DAY

The couple make their way through the cluster of customers
on the sidewalk.

RACHEL
(pulling on her coat)
Oh, god. It’s like The Handmaid’s
Tale. It would be different if I
had like… a younger sister or
cousin or something.

Richard’s cell RINGS. As they walk, he digs through the
pockets of the coat slung over his arm.

Even a family friend.
(MORE)
Someone in our lives who we had a real connection with -- so I wasn’t just preying on the ovarian reserves of random young women...

Rachel, realizing that Richard is no longer walking beside her, turns to find him staring at his phone.

    RACHEL (CONT’D)
    What?

Richard shows her the phone: SADIE BENNET. Rachel realizes what he must be thinking and they lock eyes -- each silently turning over the same idea.

The RINGING PHONE goes SILENT.

    CUT TO:

INT. SUBARU - DAY

SADIE, in profile, looking out the passenger seat window.

    RICHARD (O.S.)
    It really sucks what you’ve been going through.

        SADIE
        Yeah. It does. Thanks.

Another ANGLE shows Richard, behind the wheel.

    RICHARD
    (puzzled)
    Thanks?

        SADIE
        For confirming that my life sucks right now. It really means a lot to me.

        RICHARD
        You’re welcome.

        SADIE
        I know you’re technically just my step uncle and aunt, but I feel closer to you guys than everyone else in the family. You guys get it. Everyone else is on me all the time to get my shit together. Like I’m some sort of drop-out or something.

Pause.
RICHARD
You did just drop out of Bard, didn’t you?

SADIE
No. I was granted permission by the Dean’s Office to finish my degree requirements in absentia. That’s a thing.

RICHARD
It’s Latin, right? For dropped out?

Sadie playfully swipes at Richard.

SADIE
Shut up.

RICHARD
Hey, watch it. I’m driving.

She looks out the window and shakes her head --

SADIE
God. Even you, Uncle Cool.

RICHARD
Hey. You came up with that name, not me. The idea that anyone would refer to me as “cool” is just evidence of how utterly uncool our family is.

Sadie laughs.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Richard’s old Subaru whizzes by.

OMITTED

INT./EXT. CAR - DUSK

Richard drives, listening to Duke Ellington. Sadie is asleep. The MANHATTAN SKYLINE appears and Richard taps her. She opens her eyes and groggily, but in awe, takes in the sparkling view.

INT./EXT. CAR - EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

Through the window: Avenue A is crawling with young people out for a good time.

As the car pulls up to his apartment building, Richard is distressed to find FRESH GRAFFITI, a DRUNK passed out and a SHADY GUY smoking in front of the neighboring LIQUOR STORE.
SADIE
I thought everything was supposed
to be all gentrified now.

RICHARD
Yeah, well, I guess they forgot
about our corner.

SADIE
It’s so... Serpico.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Richard holds the door open for Sadie who teeters in
wearing a massive backpack. The two dogs rush toward her.

SADIE
Oh, my god!

Sadie kneels down to greet them. Rachel emerges from an
adjoining room, smiling.

RACHEL
Hi, Sade.

Sadie jumps up and throws her arms around Rachel, but her
enthusiasm, combined with her unwieldy backpack, knock them
off balance. They topple over, sending the dogs into a fit
of barking.

INT. SUPPER - NIGHT

Richard, Rachel and Sadie sit at a booth in a crowded
Italian restaurant.

RACHEL
So, how do you plan on finishing?

Sadie tears bread and dips it in olive oil. Her chin is shiny.

SADIE
Online.

RACHEL
Really? Why online?
SADIE
(between bites)
Because that way I don’t have to
talk to any deluded college
students who think the real world
actually gives a shit about their
stupid short fiction -- which isn’t
even really “fiction” in the first
place, just thinly veiled
autobiographical crap about their
entitled upbringings.
(w�aiter brings plates)
Mmm. Thanks. And I won’t have to
listen to what a big deal it is
that they’re being published in
some random literary magazine that
no one has ever even heard of...
like Tin House or whatever.

Pause.

RACHEL
Wait. Tin House?

SADIE
Uh-huh.

RACHEL
Tin House is a really well-regarded
literary magazine.

RICHARD
They published something of yours,
right?

RACHEL
Once. Yeah.
(to Sadie)
Everybody at your school is getting
published in Tin House?

SADIE
Not everybody. I just mean, in
general, it’s like everyone is so
self-promoting and convinced of their
own artistic promise and I’m like,
hey, my uncle is an award-winning
theater genius and my aunt is a real-
life playwright and author who gets
her stories published in well-known
periodicals that normal people have
actually heard of like The New
Yorker, for instance.
(MORE)
And they’re over 40 and still have to live in a rent stabilized apartment on Avenue A with like drunks and graffiti in front. So don’t talk to me about the sacrifices you’re making to be an artist, okay?

Rachel and Richard stare at Sadie with stiff smiles.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF PHOTOS.

-- RICHARD AND RACHEL, ten years younger, stand among company members in front of a run-down building with a hand-painted sign that says “La Rata Theater.”
-- RICHARD DIRECTS A REHEARSAL in a beat-up work space with exposed brick and scaffolding.
-- A PRODUCTION STILL from a gritty looking theater piece. Bare stage. Shirtless men.
-- ANOTHER PRODUCTION PHOTO IN BLACK & WHITE. A man and woman in a bed on a dramatically lit stage.

A WIDE SHOT reveals we are back in --

INT. RICHARD AND RACHEL’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sadie, wearing an over-sized Pickle Guy t-shirt, is looking at the photos on a wall of bookshelves in the living room.

Richard sits on the floor trying to blow up an air mattress without the aid of a pump.

SADIE
Don’t you ever miss it? You guys were so great.

Removing his mouth from the valve --

RICHARD
Tell that to the N.E.A.

Richard resumes blowing as Rachel drifts in with sheets and pillows.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
Oh, I meant to tell you. I walked by our old space on Walker Street the other day. You know what it is now? A Citibank. Just try doing Growtowski in front of an ATM.

Rachel laughs. Sadie reads from a NEWSPAPER CLIPPING.
This was the year that a small downtown theater collective reminded us of the singular power of theater to astonish. In “Tray,” a story set among cafeteria workers in a suburban high school, La Rata and its director, Richard Grimes created a political comedy that deftly examines the racial and socioeconomic divide that plague our nation.

Who wrote that?

Jonathan Gilmore. The Village Voice.

See. That’s how sad we are. We’re from a time when the Village Voice was considered relevant.

As Rachel brushes her teeth, she notices Sadie’s TOILETRY BAG. After a quick glance at the door, she begins to dig through the contents: “Wet ‘n’ Wild Lip Gloss,” Pink disposable razors. Deep Cleaning Pore Strips. Rachel abruptly stops rifling and stares dumbstruck when she comes across a package of “Plan B” morning-after pills. Just then, Sadie walks in, startling Rachel who swings around and knocks the bag to the floor. The toiletries spill out and roll around.

Oh, shit. Sorry. I got it.

That’s okay. I can do it.

Rachel frantically shoves the toiletries into the bag, spits out her toothpaste, and rushes out, leaving Sadie bewildered.

Rachel and Richard lie in bed flanked by their dogs. Richard is asleep, but not Rachel.

Honey? Honey, are you awake?

No response. She softly pokes his shoulder.
Richard?

RICHARD
Huh? What?

RACHEL
Do you think we should do it?

RICHARD
Do what?

RACHEL
Ask Sadie.

She heaves a big sigh and stares up at the ceiling.

She’s so young.

Richard looks blearily at his worried wife.

RICHARD
That’s the point, isn’t it?

EXT. EAST VILLAGE - DAY

A SERIES of SHOTS: Rooftops in the early morning. On the last one, we tilt down to find Sadie smoking on a fire escape with bare legs, unlaced sneakers and a big down jacket.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Rachel is at the counter grinding coffee beans and making cappuccinos on their semi-professional machine. As espresso oozes, she looks out the window at Sadie on the fire escape.

Rachel studies her, then turns to Richard, already sitting at the table with his own coffee. They look at each other, then Richard nods. She turns back to the window, knocks on it and holds up A MUG printed with the word “Yaddo.”

Sadie smiles, stubs out her cigarette and climbs back into the kitchen to find her cappuccino sitting on the table along with toast, jam and a newspaper.

SADIE
Wow. How Instagrammable. Thank you.
(tasting her coffee)
Mmm. Yum.

Rachel picks up her own mug as does Richard, and there’s a long pause as everyone sips silently. Then --

SADIE (CONT’D)
Oh, my god. Look at us. We’re like an ad for assholes.
Sadie laughs and wipes her mouth with the back of her hand. Rachel and Richard smile vaguely.

RICHARD
You mean, we’re assholes? Or we’re part of an ad that’s targeted to assholes?

SADIE
No. It’s just, you know. That whole--

(sing-songy pizzicato delivery)
People. With cappuccinos. In their lofts. With their laptops and their dogs. With messy hair.

(regular voice)
That whole fantasy... It’s not your fault. You guys are authentic and real. You’ve just been co-opted by the cultural mechanisms that create desirability.

Richard and Rachel smile and nod vaguely.

I took a Media and Consumer Society course. It was pretty life-altering.

Another pause as everyone sips. Then Rachel throws Richard a glance, and he takes his cue.

RICHARD
Uh, Sadie, --

(clears his throat)
-- there’s something that we want to, um...

Richard hesitates, then gets the ball rolling, so to speak.

You know I only have one testicle, right?

Taken aback, Sadie looks at her uncle, then Rachel, then back to Richard.

SADIE
Uh, yeah, actually. I do.

RACHEL
You do?

SADIE
Charlie mentioned it once.

RICHARD
He did?
SADIE
Not to me, personally. But to my mom. I overheard it. A couple of Thanksgivings ago. I can’t remember. Whenever you guys were going through all that fertility stuff.

RACHEL
We’re still going through all that fertility stuff.

SADIE
I thought my mom said you guys were trying to adopt.

RICHARD
Yeah. We are. But... recently we decided that it might be a good idea to try everything all at once because... Well, we’re not getting any younger...

RACHEL
That’s for sure.

Rachel and Richard laugh lamely. Sadie smiles, not sure why.

RICHARD
And we just had a failed IVF.

SADIE
Wait. What?! Oh, my god. You guys. I’m so sorry.

RACHEL
Thanks.

SADIE
That must suck.

Rachel and Richard smile sadly.

It’s not over, is it? I mean, you’re going to keep trying, right?

RICHARD
(a quick glance at Rachel)
Well, now the doctor is suggesting a different approach altogether, so...

SADIE
Oh, my god. My mom said that you guys had a lot going on, but I had no idea.

(MORE)
This is a really bad time for me to be crashing here, isn’t it?

RICHARD
Not at all. It’s great.

SADIE
Really? Because I have friends in Bushwick...

RICHARD
No way.

RACHEL
No. We’re really glad you’re here.

SADIE
You’re sure?

RACHEL
Yeah.

Rachel reaches for Sadie’s hand and squeezes it.

SADIE
Me, too.

(choking up)
I love you guys.

Sadie puts down her coffee and reaches for Richard’s hand so all three of them are holding hands. An awkward pause. Then --

RACHEL
I’m gonna pop in some more toast.

RICHARD
Good idea.

Rachel lets go and pulls a loaf of bread out of the fridge. Sadie spots the Magazine Section and pulls it out of the pile.

SADIE
Ooooo.

(turning to the last page)
Does anybody mind if I get started on the crossword?

As Sadie finds a pen and pulls the cap off with her teeth, Rachel catches Richard’s eye. He nods and composes himself.

RICHARD
Actually... we wanted to ask you about your eggs.

SADIE
Scrambled is good. But however you guys do them is fine with me.
Richard and Rachel stare at an oblivious Sadie, who chomps on toast as she fills in a word.

**INT. PICKLE GUY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

Richard, along with Eno and Lazlo, escort Sadie down an industrial hallway. They arrive at the PICKLE GUY OFFICES just as the door opens. Sam is preparing to roll out a dolly stacked with BOXES OF PICKLES and BALES OF HAY.

**RICHARD**

Oh, hey.

**SAM**

Hey.

(suddenly self-conscious)

Or did you mean, “hay?”

(gesturing to the bales)

With an A?

**RICHARD**

No. Just, “hey” as in hello.

Sam, this is my niece, Sadie.

Sadie, Sam.

They exchange hellos.

Sadie is going to help out around here for a while. I thought you could show her the ropes.

Sam finds Sadie very attractive, but maintains his composure.

**SAM**


**EXT. PICKLE GUY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

Sadie kneels inside the back of a VAN as Sam hands her boxes.

**SAM**

I like to be as prepared as possible the night before The Farmer’s Market because we set up at 5:00 am. And at that hour I’m utterly impaired and not in a position to make any kind of business decision. I am definitely not a morning person. What about you?

**SADIE**

What?
SAM
Are you a morning person?

SADIE
I guess so. I like the morning. The before-ness of it all. It feels optimistic. Fresh. Optimism doesn’t come that naturally to me, so I need to grab whatever positive free vibes I can get.

Sadie laughs at herself. Sam just stares at her, entranced. After several seconds, Sadie gestures for a box. Sam snaps out of it and hands her one. As she slides the box deeper into the van, he can’t help but notice Sadie’s thong underwear peeking out over the top of her jeans. Sadie turns back for another box and catches Sam looking.

Oh, my god. I’m totally whale-tailing, aren’t I? Sorry.

Sam continues to stare as she good-naturedly hitches up her pants.

EXT. STREET CORNER / FOOD TRUCK - NIGHT

Richard emerges with BAGS OF TAKE-OUT and joins Rachel, Sadie and the dogs out front. They begin walking when Sadie looks up at something and then stops.

SADIE
Oh, my god. What does that even mean?

THEIR POV -- A GIANT SIGN on top of a building advertising new high-rise apartments. It says: LIVE LIKE A ROCKEFELLER PARTY LIKE A ROCK STAR

SADIE (CONT’D)
It’s like an open invitation to assholes.

Sadie snaps a picture with her cellphone.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rachel, Richard and Sadie eat with chopsticks.

SADIE
Oh, my god, my esophagus is on fucking fire! I love this.

Rachel and Richard smile and nod in agreement. Then Richard gets down to business.
RICHARD
Sadie... Rachel and I have been looking for an egg donor. Do you know what that is?

Sadie looks up from her food, a little thrown.

SADIE
Uh, yeah. I do. They advertise at school. I know somebody who did it, actually. A film major. They paid her like ten thousand dollars. That’s how she financed her senior thesis. It was the entire budget of her short film. She called her company “Ovum Productions.”

Sadie lets out small propulsive laugh, then regrets it.

It was funny at the time... not so much now...

RICHARD
No. It is...

RACHEL
Yeah. It’s funny.

Pause.

RICHARD
We wanted to ask you about your eggs, actually.

RACHEL
In your ovaries.

SADIE
(tentative)
Oh. Okay. What about them?

Richard looks at Rachel, then back to Sadie.

RICHARD
Uh. Well... We were wondering... if you might... consider... donating some.

RACHEL
To us.

RICHARD
Just like your friend.

RACHEL
Except not.
RICHARD
Yeah. Right. Because... you know us, so it would be different.

SADIE
(softly to herself)
Wow.

RICHARD
Yeah.

Pause.

SADIE
What does it involve, exactly?

RACHEL
Well. Technically, you’d be going through pretty much what I just went through with IVF. Minus the transfer.

SADIE
What’s the transfer?

RICHARD
It’s when they put the fertilized eggs back into your uterus.

RACHEL
My. Uterus. In this case.

RICHARD
Right. Yeah. It wouldn’t be yours because... it would be Rachel’s... so... your uterus wouldn’t be involved in this instance. You’d be done right after the retrieval.

RACHEL
You’d have to be screened by the clinic, first.

RICHARD
They’d give you a bunch of blood tests. A psychiatric evaluation.

SADIE
(nervous laugh)
Uh-oh...

RACHEL
No, it’s not like that. They just want to make sure you’re able to handle the whole thing. Psychologically.
SADIE
Right, so I don’t go all --
(widening her eyes)
-- Mary Beth Whitehead on you.

Sadie wiggles her fingers and does a crazy laugh, then immediately regrets it.

RACHEL
Who?

SADIE
Uh, nothing. Forget it.

RICHARD
Who is that, again?

SADIE
Just something we read about in a Medical Ethics class.
(off their puzzled look)
The surrogate in the Baby M. case. In the eighties.

RICHARD
She refused to give up the baby or something, right?

SADIE

RICHARD
Okay. So... What else?

RACHEL
The drugs.

RICHARD
Right, of course. The stimulating hormones. How could I forget. You give yourself injections to increase your egg count for the cycle.

RACHEL
It’s a lot of shots.

Rachel lifts up her shirt, exposing her fading bruises.

SADIE
Oh, my god.

RACHEL
It looks a lot worse than it is. But the drugs can make you feel pretty crazy mood-wise.
(MORE)
My shrink had a funny name for it.
   (to Richard)
What did she call it, again?

   RICHARD
Emotionally incontinent.

   SADIE
   (laughing)
Oh, my god. Gross.

   RICHARD
But because it’s not you who’s trying to have the baby --
   (nervous glance to Rachel)
-- directly. It’ll be way less fraught. Emotionally.
   (to Rachel)
Don’t you think?

   RACHEL
Definitely.

   RICHARD
And, of course, we’d pay you.

   SADIE
What?! No, way! I’m not taking money from you guys.

   RICHARD
No. We insist. We want to pay you exactly what you’d get if you did it at any of the university clinics. Eight thousand dollars, just like your friend. It’s not a lot of money, considering, but it’s the standard rate and it’s all we can afford.

A pause as Sadie sits there, thinking.

   RACHEL
You don’t have to tell us anything now.

Richard pulls out the donor brochure, gives it to Sadie.

   RICHARD
It’s just an overview.

Sadie stares at the women on the brochure’s cover, then opens it.

   It’s a lot to absorb. Take your time and think it over.
Sadie reads a bit, then closes the brochure.

SADIE
Okay.

RICHARD
Good.
(rubbing his hands together)
All right, who needs more beer?

RACHEL
(raising her hand)
I do.

SADIE
No. I mean, okay. Yes. I’ll do it.
(off their confused look)
The egg thing. I’ll do it.

RICHARD
Oh, no. You don’t have to give us an answer now.

RACHEL
You really need to take some time to think about it. It’s a big decision.

SADIE
Why? I’m totally cool with it.

Rachel and Richard are clearly freaked out by the speed of Sadie’s decision.

Really. It’s not like I’m doing anything else right now. I don’t even have a job. And what could be more rewarding than helping two people I love start a family?
(voice breaking)
You guys have always been such role models for me. You’re so supportive and non-judgmental. You’re going to be such amazing parents. Way better than mine.

RACHEL
That’s not true. You have great parents.

Sadie rolls her eyes.

RICHARD
We’ll need to talk to them about it, too, you know. It has to all be out in the open. Totally transparent.
SADIE
I don’t see a problem with that.

RACHEL
You don’t?

SADIE
Nah. My mom is all about me finding a purpose and doing something “real” with my life.

Sadie picks up the brochure and waves it around.

Welp. It doesn’t get more real than this, right?

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVELY HIGHWAY – DAY (VARIABLE FPS)

Sadie’s head sticks out of the SUN ROOF of the Subaru as it speeds along. Her hair whips around as she films the sky with her CELLPHONE CAMERA. THROUGH SADIE’S CAMERA: SUN, TREE TOPS, SKY rush by.

INT./EXT. SUBARU – DAY

Rachel rides shotgun. Sadie stands in the back between the dogs. Spirits are high as they listen to music.

EXT. A ROAD-SIDE STOP – DAY

The DOGS run through PILES OF LEAVES as Richard throws a ball with his CHUCK-IT device. THROUGH SADIE’S CAMERA: the threesome runaround being chased by Eno and Lazlo. The women bury Richard in LEAVES.

INT./EXT. SUBARU – DAY

WOOSH! The car is back on the road, going even faster.

INT. CHARLIE’S HOUSE – DAY

Charlotte sits on her bed with her laptop, surrounded by homework. At the sound of a car arriving, she gets up and goes to --

THE WINDOW, where she sees the Subaru pulling up out front.

CHARLOTTE
They’re here!

Charlotte dashes out of the room, but the CAMERA remains at the window as the car doors open and the dogs leap out.
EXT. CHARLIE’S HOUSE - DAY

Charlotte runs to greet Sadie, jumping up on her for a piggy-back ride.

Cynthia and Charlie step out to welcome their guests, Charlie gives Richard a hug.

Meanwhile, Sadie drags an OVER-STUFFED LAUNDRY BAG from the car.

CYNTHIA
You brought laundry?

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

A FLURRY OF LEAVES soars into the air, accompanied by a HIGH-PITCHED WHINE. Charlie is demonstrating his new gas-powered LEAF-BLOWER to Richard.

At an opportune moment, Richard slips something into Charlie’s shirt pocket. Charlie pulls it out and unfolds it. It’s a check for $5,000.

RICHARD
I’ll get you the rest before the end of the year.

Charlie looks into his brother’s eyes. Richard smiles sadly and they hug, leaves swirling around them.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Tears stream down Rachel and Cynthia’s faces. Are they having a heart-to-heart? Nope, they’re just chopping onions.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Sadie stares at an AUTUMNAL CENTERPIECE on the table.

SADIE
God, I hate gourds.

She removes the centerpiece, shakes open a table cloth and lets it float down onto the table. Nearby, Charlotte pulls dishes out of a cabinet. She yells into the kitchen --

CHARLOTTE
Mom, how many?

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
How many what?

CHARLOTTE
People. Are eating?
EXT./INT. HOUSE - DAY

Cars pull up as more guests arrive with foil-covered plates. There are hugs and kisses. We catch bits and pieces of conversations. Some people carry wine glasses as they drift about. Kids run around. A teenager plays piano.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The table is crowded with family and friends. Charlie clinks his glass with a knife. Everyone quiets as Cynthia stands.

CYNTHIA
Charlie and I decided that we wanted to do Thanksgiving right for a change. So before we dig in we’d like to go around the table and invite everyone to talk about what they are thankful for this year.

There are a few groans from the guests.

C’mon. Please. I’m going to start.
(raising her wine glass)
I’m thankful for Richard and Rachel --

Sadie hoots and raises her glass; she’s already had a few. Our couple is surprised by the attention.

--for taking such good care of our daughter Sadie, and giving her a great home-base in Manhattan, where she has the love and support she needs in order to begin her new life there.

(addressing them directly)
I know it has been a tough time for you guys. And the fact that you are taking care of someone else’s child when you’re struggling to have one of your own is just more evidence of your incredible generosity. I hope some day we can repay you for all that you’ve done.

CHARLIE
Here, here.

Everyone toasts Rachel and Richard, who blush humbly. Rachel blinks to hold back tears.

SADIE
Can I be next?

CYNTHIA
Sure, honey. Go ahead.
Cynthia sits down and Sadie stands up.

SADIE
Okay. That was beautiful and it’s the perfect prologue for what I wanted to say. I’m also thankful to Rachel and Richard for all they’ve done for me over the years. From letting me intern at their theater company...

RICHARD
Free labor is more like it...

SADIE
...to employing me at the Pickle Guy offices. And most recently, letting me crash at their place until I get my act together. I’m especially thankful to you, Rachel, for reading all my lame attempts at play-writing and short fiction.

Rachel flicks her hand and shakes her head.

And for taking me seriously as an artist when I have such a hard time doing it myself. And finally, this seems like the perfect occasion to share some exciting news. I’m going rogue here, I haven’t cleared this with Rachel and Richard, but I can’t let this moment go to waste.

Rachel and Richard’s smiles dissolve as it dawns on them what Sadie is preparing to say.

Cynthia’s jaw drops open as she comes to a different conclusion. She catches Rachel’s eye and mouths to her: “Are you pregnant?” Rachel shakes her head.

Richard speaks up, but not with enough force to stop this runaway train.

RICHARD
Uh, Sadie, I’m not sure this is...

SADIE
(misunderstanding, smiling)
No, it’s okay.
(back to the group)
See, the thing I’m most thankful for this year is the opportunity to help Richard and Rachel...
SADIE (CONT’D)
-- make their dreams come true...

RICHARD
No... Sadie... really, don’t.

SADIE
(waving him off)
By offering just a tiny bit of myself, I get to give these guys the greatest gift they could have asked for. The gift of life. An oocyte.

Silence as Sadie beams proudly. Many of the guests look around, unclear about what has just been said. Rachel and Richard stare down at the table, dreading what’s coming.

CYNTHIA
I don’t understand. What’s an oocyte?

CHARLOTTE
Isn’t it like an egg?

SADIE
That’s right. I’ve decided to be Richard and Rachel’s egg donor.

Cynthia’s face darkens. There are uncomprehending murmurs among the guests.

And if all goes well, next year we’ll be giving thanks for the newest member of our family...
(raising her glass)
(Richard and Rachel’s baby)

The murmurs stop. Everyone at the table stares at Sadie until an ELDERLY WOMAN begins to applaud. Cynthia shoots the woman a look, but other guests are already joining in -- the whole table is now toasting and cheering.

Richard and Rachel sit in shock as they get their backs slapped by nearby guests and others congratulate them.

Cynthia grabs Sadie by the elbow and pulls her into the kitchen. Meanwhile, UNCLE BOB (65) taps his glass with his spoon.

UNCLE BOB
It’s my turn, now, right?

As Uncle Bob stands, we hear voices coming from the kitchen.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Over my dead body! Do you hear me?
SADIE
This has nothing to do with your body. It’s my body --

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

SADIE
-- and I can do whatever I want with it.

CYNTHIA
This isn’t giving blood or checking the organ donation box on your goddamn driver’s license.

INT. DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Richard and Rachel sit uncomfortably among the guests who can’t help but overhear the argument as Uncle Bob finishes his toast.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
You’ll be living with this the rest of your life. Our whole family will be affected by it.

SADIE (O.S.)
I’ve given it a lot of thought.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Oh, have you?

SADIE (O.S.)
Yes, I have. I want to help them. It means a lot to me.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

As the women argue, Cynthia removes items from the oven.

CYNTHIA
Well, now it’s fun. You get to be the center of attention. But what about after the baby is born? What then?

SADIE
I don’t know. I’ll be Aunt Sadie. Or cousin Sadie or whatever they want me to be. Look, mom. What if you had kidney disease? And I was your friend and I had two kidneys. A person only needs one kidney, right? So I’ve got an extra one. Of course, I’d give it to you.

CYNTHIA
Honey, kidney disease kills people. Rachel wants to have a baby. She’s not dying.
SADIE
How do you know?!

Charlie enters carrying the turkey platter, followed by Richard and Rachel.

RICHARD
I’m sorry, Cynthia. We were planning to talk to you about this.

CYNTHIA
Oh, that’s nice. And how are you planning on paying for it, Kickstarter?!

SADIE  CHARLIE
Jesus, mom!  (to Cynthia)

Honey, why don’t we go upstairs and you can take half of something.

CYNTHIA
Who’s side are you on?

CHARLIE  RACHEL
Nobodys.  We’re not going through with it without your support.

CYNTHIA
Well, you don’t have it.

Cynthia locates an ELECTRIC KNIFE and begins carving turkey.

CHARLIE  CYNTHIA (CONT’D)
(to Richard and Rachel)  (to Sadie)
Maybe it’s best if you guys just grab some food and go. We can talk about this later. Where are you going?

Sadie has opened the basement door and is heading downstairs.

SADIE (O.S.)
I’m getting my laundry.

Cynthia hands Charlie the knife and heads after her daughter.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Sadie marches to the dryer with Cynthia right behind her.

SADIE
God. You are so anti-Aunt Rachel.

CYNTHIA
I’m not anti anybody.
Sadie opens the dryer and begins yanking out laundry and stuffing it into a bag.

SADIE
Oh, c’mon, mom. On some level you’re threatened by her. Is it because she’ll have a book and a baby and you’ll have nothing once Charlotte’s gone?

Cynthia stands there blinking.

CYNTHIA
That’s what you think I’m worried about? I’m worried about you. You could be squandering your future fertility for all you know. My god, you should be freezing your eggs, not selling them.

SADIE
That’s absurd. Tons of girls do it and they’re fine. Anyway, I’m not having kids.

CYNTHIA
You don’t know that now.

SADIE
Yes I do. I don’t want kids. I want a career.

CYNTHIA
You can have both.

(off Sadie’s amused look)
What?

SADIE
Do you know how many times you’ve told me that women make sacrifices when they have kids? That you had to drop out of school when you had me.

(beat)
Look, every month I get my period and flush an egg down the toilet. Why not give some to Richard and Rachel instead? What could be more meaningful than giving two people I love who are desperate to start a family the gift of life?

CYNTHIA
Oh, my god. They’ve brain-washed you.
SADIE
(storming up the stairs)
Why do you feel so cheated by life, mom?

INT./EXT. SUBARU – NIGHT

Richard and Rachel are buckling their seat-belts. Through the window, they see Sadie hurrying toward the car with Cynthia right behind her.

RICHARD
Maybe we should’ve gone with an anonymous donor.

In the background, some dinner guests roam the lawn like Thanksgiving refugees.

Sadie throws her laundry in the hatchback and SLAMS it shut. Cynthia stops some distance away and shouts at Richard and Rachel.

CYNTHIA
I know you want a child, but this is my child we’re talking about.

SADIE
I am not a child!

Sadie climbs in the backseat with the dogs. Richard turns on the headlights and starts the engine.

CYNTHIA
If she was your daughter would you want her to do this?

Before Rachel or Richard can respond, Charlie arrives with some foil covered plates that he hands to Richard through the window. Then he puts his arm around Cynthia and waves, smiling falsely...

CHARLIE
Thanks for coming, guys. Good night!

Richard backs out just as Charlotte joins her parents. Through the windshield, from Rachel’s POV, the shell-shocked family recedes from view.

INT./EXT. SUBARU – COUNTRY ROAD – NIGHT (MOVING)

Our trio rides in gloomy silence, lost in thought. The only sound is the HYPNOTIC THUD of tires on road seams. Dordick’s voice intrudes while the camera visits each of them.
DORDICK (PRE-LAP)
Third-party reproduction is usually an arrangement among anonymous or unrelated individuals, but some couples prefer to involve a family member or a trusted friend, which is fine.

POINT OF VIEW traveling forward, mist in the headlights.

DORDICK (PRE-LAP) (CONT’D)
As long as the people involved are mature consenting adults, it shouldn’t be a problem...

INT. DORDICK’S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Our threesome sit side-by-side on a couch. Unlike the well-heeled medical consumers surrounding them, they look like anxious kids waiting outside the principals office.

INT. DORDICK’S OFFICE - DAY

Rachel, Richard and Sadie sit opposite Dordick.

DORDICK
Now that’s not to say that this kind of collaboration doesn’t bring up some intense feelings for everyone, including the extended family. Of course it does. This is uncharted territory for most people. But we’re getting ahead of ourselves. We don’t even know if Sadie’s an appropriate candidate for egg donation.

Dordick’s speech continues over --

A MONTAGE, following Sadie through her screening process --

INT. DORDICK’S - VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY

Sadie, in a gown, is weighed by a NURSE; she has her blood pressure measured, her blood drawn.

DORDICK (V.O.)
My advice is get the process started and use the time to try and wrap your head around what this arrangement will mean for you and your family.
IN THE BATHROOM --

Sadie pees on the toilet. She pulls a cup from between her legs, screws on the lid and places it on a shelf in front of a SMALL METAL DOOR. The door opens, startling Sadie, and a woman’s hand snatches the cup.

IN AN EXAM ROOM --

Sadie has her feet in stirrups as Dordick performs a sonogram.

DR. DORDICK (V.O.)
Then, after the lab results and the reports come back and Sadie’s completed her psychological evaluation, you can sit down and make a fully informed decision...

IN ANOTHER ROOM --

CLOSE ON A BOOKLET with a dull blue cover: Standard Multiform Psychiatric Evaluation. A hand opens the booklet to uncover a TRUE OR FALSE TEST.

WIDER shows Sadie taking the test, filling in bubbles on an answer sheet.

CLOSE on one of the true or false statements:

I am sure I get a raw deal from life.

Sadie thinks, then fills in the bubble marked “False.”

CLOSE on another statement:

I am very seldom troubled by constipation.

Sadie looks at the question, disconcerted, then answers.

PAN DOWN PAST THREE MORE STATEMENTS:

Evil spirits possess me at times.

I would like to be a singer.

No one seems to understand me.

Sadie flips through the booklet and finds HUNDREDS of similar statements, including the FINAL ONE:

At times I feel like smashing things.

-END MONTAGE-
INT. RACQUETBALL COURT - DAY

Charlie in sports-goggles SMASHES the ball against the wall. Richard returns it, and we watch the brothers play a vigorous game of racquetball.

SADIE (PRE-LAP)
I call him Uncle Richard but actually he’s my stepfather
Charlie’s brother.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE - DAY

Sadie talks to a FEMALE PSYCHOLOGIST, who takes notes.

SADIE
So we’re not really related...
which is probably better for something like this...

An uncomfortable pause as the psychologist stops writing and looks over the top of her glasses at Sadie.

PSYCHOLOGIST
Because otherwise it would be incest.

A moment as Sadie puts this together.

SADIE
Yeah. Right. There’s that. So...

INT. RACQUETBALL COURT - DAY

Charlie and Richard guzzle water.

CHARLIE
For the record, I don’t have a problem with the whole donor thing.

Richard looks at Charlie, surprised.

That’s not to say I don’t think it’s a little weird -- it is. But, hey... I’m a periodontist -- I graft freeze-dried cadaver bone into the mouths of living people every day. I can handle weird.
Cynthia is different. She’s much more... sensitive. Especially these days. She’s been having a really tough time -- hormonally.
INT. CHARLIE’S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Cynthia stands at a MAGNIFYING MIRROR, moving her finger across her jaw, feeling something. She leans in and lifts her chin.

IN THE MIRROR, her magnified chin sprouts ONE BRISTLY HAIR.

Cynthia locates some TWEEZERS and tries to grab the offending hair. Her first attempt fails, so she tries again, pulling her lips into her mouth. GOT IT!

She holds the tweezers up to examine the wiry whisker, then notices a PIN-SIZED DROP OF BLOOD on her chin. She grabs some toilet paper and dabs at it.

INT. CHARLIE’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Charlie reads in bed as Cynthia rubs lotion on her legs.

CHARLIE
(eyes on his book)
I saw Richard today.

CYNTHIA
Uh-huh.

CHARLIE
He’s good.

CYNTHIA
Good.

CHARLIE
He says Sadie’s doing a great job at the Pickle Guy offices. Maybe you should give her a call. (hesitant)
...they’re screening her.

CYNTHIA
(looking up)
Who’s screening her?

CHARLIE
The clinic. For the egg donation.

Cynthia stares at her husband, then returns to moisturizing.

Maybe you want to talk to her about it.

CYNTHIA
She doesn’t need my permission.
CHARLIE
That’s true. She doesn’t. She’s hell-bent on the idea no matter what anyone says. Richard and Rachel, on the other hand, aren’t going to go ahead without your support, and this cold war isn’t good for anybody.

(pause)
Honey, what if Richard and Rachel were gay?

CYNTHIA
Oh, please!

CHARLIE
I’m serious. What would you say if they were a gay male couple who wanted to start a family and Sadie wanted to help them?

CYNTHIA
I’d say... mazel tov, now go get some girl off the internet and leave us out of it. Sadie doesn’t realize what it is she’s doing. She’s just... throwing her genetic material around like it’s... popcorn. Auctioning off family property like it’s no big deal.

CHARLIE
(almost to himself)
They are our family.

CYNTHIA
What?

CHARLIE
Richard and Rachel are our family.

The words hang there. Then, Charlie notices something on his wife’s face. He reaches over to remove it and Cynthia rears back.

CYNTHIA
What!

CHARLIE
You’ve got something on your chin.

Cynthia turns away and grabs at her chin to discover an errant piece of toilet paper.

CYNTHIA
It’s nothing. It’s just...
CHARLIE
It’s bleeding.

She touches her chin with the back of her hand and sees a little red smear.

CYNTHIA
It’s just... a thing. A pimple.
It’s fine. My god.

Charlie watches his high-strung wife grab tissues and press them against her chin.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
I got into Berkeley.

The couple turn to see their daughter holding a letter.

CYNTHIA
What?

CHARLOTTE
My early decision letter came. I got in.

Charlie jumps out of bed and gives Charlotte a congratulatory hug. Cynthia’s eyes well up.

CHARLIE
That’s great, honey. We are so proud of you. Isn’t it great, Cyn?

Cynthia is caught in a swirl of confused emotions, but she manages a smile.

CYNTHIA
Yes. It is. It’s great, honey.
I’m so happy for you...

Charlotte smiles, then notices something.

CHARLOTTE
What happened to your face, mom?

CYNTHIA
Oh. It’s... fine. It’s just...

-- but it’s not fine. The damn breaks, and Cynthia bursts into sobs.

CYNTHIA (CONT’D)
...no--thing...
INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S LOBBY – DAY

Rachel opens their mailbox and finds a thick envelope from “Conceptions.” She pauses for a moment, then tears it open.

    RACHEL (ON PHONE, PRE-LAP)
    Sadie Barrett has applied to become a donor in the Conceptions Oocyte Donor Program.

INT. PICKLE GUY PRODUCTION FACILITY – DAY

Richard’s cellphone is on speaker-mode as he and Sadie listen.

    RACHEL (ON PHONE)
    The purpose of this evaluation is to assess her appropriateness as a donor and to gain insight into her psychological and emotional well-being...

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT – DAY

Rachel paces and reads into her phone. INTERCUT.

    Psychological testing indicates that all clinical scales are within normal limits.... no significant evidence of psychopathology.

Sadie does a fist pump and hoots. Richard gives a thumbs up.

    Okay, here’s the good part: Ms. Barrett presented as a bright, sophisticated and charismatic young woman --

Sadie beams and curtsies.

    -- who appears comfortable with her decision to donate. She is mature and intelligent and it is likely that she will comply with the medical demands of the donation...
    In conclusion, Ms. Barrett is approved as a candidate for oocyte donation.

Richard raises his hand. Sadie gives him a high-five.

INT. IL BUCCO ALIMENTARI – DAY

Cynthia, stunned, sits across from her daughter.

    CYNTHIA
    You passed?
SADIE
Why are you so surprised?

CYNTHIA
I’m not. I’m just... I thought they might have some reservations about someone with a... mental health history.

SADIE
I don’t have a mental health history... dad does.

CYNTHIA
It is genetic, you know.

SADIE
Okay. Fine. I have some depression and anxiety. Maybe a little OCD, but the normal amount that everybody has.

A WAITER arrives.

WAITER
Can I take your order?

SADIE
I’ll have the kale salad with a Zoloft to start and a side of Klonopin.

Unfazed, the waiter just stares at Sadie who smiles and hands him her menu. Cynthia shakes her head, amused, then hands over her own menu.

CYNTHIA
The risotto, please.

The waiter leaves.

SADIE
Oh, and, by the way, I talked to Dad and he’s fine with it.

CYNTHIA
He is?

SADIE
Totally. He said he thought it was a wonderful thing to do for two people I love. He’s proud of me.

Cynthia’s throat tightens.
CYNTHIA
Well, he always has been a big believer in spreading genetic material around without putting much thought into the consequences.

Sadie looks away and sighs.

I’m sorry. I’m sorry.

She lays her hand on her daughter’s and looks her in the eye.

You know, I love you, right?

Sadie nods, but not right away.

And even though I don’t agree with you, at all -- I respect you. And if this... project is something you feel that you have to do, then... you should do it.

SADIE
So you’re cool with it?

CYNTHIA
No, I’m not cool with... anything. Ever. But I see how much this means to you and I don’t want to stand in your way. I want to... to support you... no matter what.

SADIE
You do?

Cynthia nods. Mother and daughter smile at each other, tears brimming in their eyes. Then --

CYNTHIA
It doesn’t mean I’m happy about it.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

A BIG BOX is sliced open to reveal a CORNUCOPIA OF FERTILITY MEDICATION AND SUPPLIES: vials, syringes, needles, a red plastic sharps container...

WIDER -- Our trio stands over the box, admiring the contents.

SADIE
Whoa. Christmas.

LATER -- Sadie watches, fascinated, as Richard prepares a pair of identical injections. It’s an exacting process. Rachel, nearby, chomps on an apple.
SADIE (CONT’D)
(examining a vial)
What does this stuff do?

RACHEL
Shuts down our reproductive systems
so they can synch up our cycles.

SADIE
Yikes. Any risk of like,
triggering menopause?

RACHEL
Technically, it is menopause.
Chemically induced, but it’s
temporary so...

RICHARD
(holding a syringe)
Okay, I’m going to do Rachel first.

Rachel lifts the bottom of her shirt and unbuttons her jeans
to expose her lower abdomen. Richard wipes the area with
alcohol, pinches the skin and aims.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
Ready?

RACHEL
Yep.

RICHARD
One, two, three --

He confidently jabs the needle in. Sadie watches, mouth agape.

RACHEL
See. Subcutaneous. No biggie.

RICHARD
(turning to Sadie)
Okay. Your turn.

Sadie eagerly starts undoing her belt.

SADIE
Oh, my god. This is so glamorous.
We’re like “Drugstore Cowboy.”

A FUN MONTAGE -- (LIKE DRUGSTORE COWBOY)

SUPER-8 style glimpses of Richard, Rachel and Sadie as they
film each other at 16fps using Sadie’s app on her phone. The
montage sketches a portrait of our trio’s life together and
also serves as a little homage to the East Village. They
vamp for the camera. They cook. They bike.
They swing on playground swings, play with the dogs in Tompkins Square Park, and work (along with Sam) at Pickle Guy.

**INT. DORDICK’S OFFICE – WAITING ROOM – DAY**

An abrupt cut to the HUSH of the waiting room. Rachel reads a magazine. Above her, the WIRE MATERNITY MOBILE TAPS.

**SADIE (O.S.)**

All done.

Rachel looks up to find Sadie putting on her coat.

**EXT. DORDICK’S OFFICE – DAY**

As they exit, Sadie pulls two lollipops from her pocket and offers one to Rachel, who takes it.

**SADIE**

He wants me to start stimming.

Rachel slows to a stop, takes the lollipop from her mouth, and looks at Sadie.

**INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT – KITCHEN – DAY**

The FRONT DOOR bursts open. The dogs rush in, Richard behind them. THE REFRIGERATOR opens. The vegetable drawer slides out. Inside are BOXES OF MEDICATION. One marked FOLLITROPIN is lifted out, before the drawer is kicked shut.

QUICK SHOTS: Richard scrubs his hands, Sadie unzips her pants, Rachel swabs Sadie’s belly, Richard assembles the CARTRIDGE, CLICK, CLICK, CLICK. (see instruction video)

Richard holds a syringe, poised to inject Sadie’s belly.

**RACHEL**

Okay. Warning. This stuff can really make you crazy and all-over-the-place.

**SADIE**

Emotionally incontinent. I remember. Don’t worry. I can handle it.

Richard looks at Rachel, who gives him a nod.

**RICHARD**

One, two, three...

He injects her as the CAMERA QUICKLY PUSHES IN toward Sadie.
SADIE
Ouch. Shit, it stings.

NOW IN THE BEDROOM,

and high on hormones, Sadie spins around in a VINTAGE DRESS.

I love it!

Rachel sits cross-legged, sorting a pile of clothes.

Are you sure you don’t want it?
It’s in perfect condition.

RACHEL
No. It’s better for you. I can’t wear that anymore.

SADIE
Oh, no... You’re not going to start... draping are you?

Rachel gives Sadie a puzzled look.

Oh, god. My mom went on this jag and got rid of everything in her closet that’s even remotely form fitting.

Sadie pulls off the dress and is completely unself-conscious in her bra and thong underwear. Rachel can’t help but admire her young and beautiful body.

And now it’s just like... cowl necks and tunics and draw strings and shawls. That whole Eileen Fisher thing.

She finds her discarded t-shirt and pulls it on.

It’s like she doesn’t even have a body anymore. She’s just drowning inside of all this fabric and erased all sexuality from her being. It’s like she’s been spayed.
(examining her arms)
Can I use some of your lotion? My skin is so dry. I’m molting.

RACHEL
Yeah. Sure. Whatever’s in there.

Sadie leaves. Rachel looks down at herself. She is wearing a large loose cashmere sweater-thing with kimono sleeves. She quickly pulls it off and tosses it in the pile on her bed, only to discover AN EILEEN FISHER LABEL staring back at her.
SADIE (O.S.)
Oh, my god. My boobs are so big from those drugs. I look like a porn star.

Sadie re-enters, rubbing lotion on her face and neck. Rachel quickly buries the Eileen Fisher item.

You’re going to be such a great mom.

RACHEL
I am?

SADIE
(sitting on the bed)
Uh-huh. Totally. I wish you were my mom.

RACHEL
That’s crazy.

SADIE
No. It’s not.
(lays her head on Rachel’s lap)
I think of you like that sometimes. Like you’re my art mom. And Richard is my art dad. And I’m your art daughter. And now it’s going to be so intense because a little part of me mixed with a little part of him will be growing inside of you.
(a pause, then--)
Do you think Sam’s attractive?

RACHEL
What?

SADIE
Sam, who works at Pickle Guy?

RACHEL
I don’t know. I never thought about it.

SADIE
I think he’s attractive in a kind of fucked-up-character-in-a-Sam-Shepard-play way. Broken, but hot.
(pause, then--)
Do you think our baby will grow up to be a writer?

RACHEL
Yours and Sam’s?
Sadie’s weird choice of words hangs in the air. A RING TONE breaks the silence, and Rachel locates her phone.

Rachel
Shit. It’s my editor.

She climbs off the bed and answers. Sadie lays among the clothes, daydreaming about having an editor of her own one day.

Rachel (cont’d)
Hi. Liz.

Liz (through the phone)
Have you seen it?

Rachel
Seen what?

Liz (through the phone)
The email I just sent you.

Rachel walks into her Office...

and goes to the computer. Without sitting, she clicks the mouse and scrolls through her in-box, then stops.

Rachel
Got it.

Rachel double clicks and looks at the screen. Her expression changes. She is crestfallen.

Liz (o.s.)
Are you there?

Silence. Then, Rachel walks away from the computer and we finally see what is on screen --

It’s a mock-up of a book jacket: a young woman stands in a field, holding a wildflower as she gazes out over the horizon. Swirly lavender and pink letters read:

Women’s Studies
A Novel
Rachel Biegler

Ext. Midtown Street – Day

Rachel hurries alongside her editor, Liz, who is in a rush.
LIZ
It’s the book jacket. Not the book. It’s a sales tool.

RACHEL
It’s pink.

LIZ
I knew you were going to say that.

RACHEL
Well, that’s because it is, Liz.

LIZ
It’s also green.

RACHEL
When do I talk to somebody about this?

LIZ
That’s what we’re doing now, isn’t it?

RACHEL
My contract says I get to consult on the cover. Don’t I get to talk to marketing directly?

They slow down and then stop in front of a building.

LIZ
Yes, of course, you can do that, but as your editor and friend, I don’t advise it. It’s just not worth it. I’ve been through this a hundred times. They’ll pretend to “consult” and maybe they’ll tweak the font to placate you. But they won’t really change it. And then you’ll become known as “a difficult author.” Or, more likely -- because you’re a woman -- just a fucking bitch. If I thought this cover was going to kill your book, I’d tell you. They’re casting a wider net. They want people to buy it. That’s a good thing.

Liz hugs Rachel goodbye and disappears into the building. Rachel stands there, looking lost.

INT. RICHARD AND RACHEL’S APARTMENT – DAY

The dogs eat their breakfast. Richard drinks the last of his coffee and puts dishes in the sink. Rachel yells from off-screen.
RACHEL (O.S.)
It totally misrepresents the book.
Then it’s like -- oh, I just don’t understand the business side of things -- which I don’t --

As Rachel and Richard rush about, preparing for the day, Sadie sits on her inflatable bed with a cup of tea, watching them go in and out of view.

Rachel heads into the bathroom to wash up.

-- but I do understand that if a guy wrote it, it wouldn’t be packaged like a fucking cupcake. I am so sick of this shit. It’s the same thing with this whole fertility nightmare. I just feel so betrayed.

RICHARD
By what?

RACHEL
The bullshit I was fed in college. Feminist ideology. The lie that I could have a career, then kids. Well, obviously, that hasn’t panned out.

(spits toothpaste)
I should send them the bills for all our IUIs and IVFs.

RICHARD
You can’t blame second-wave feminism for your ambivalence about having a kid.

RACHEL
(emerging)
I’m not ambivalent.

RICHARD
Now you’re not, because you realize the boat is leaving the dock. But before... You kept changing the deadline, remember? “We’ll start as soon as I finish the play... Right after I get this story published... Once I’m done with the book...”

Rachel joins Richard in the foyer. He’s pulling on his boots.

RACHEL
Are you blaming me?
RICHARD
I’m not blaming you. I’m just saying that we need to take some responsibility for the situation.

RACHEL
A lot of women have babies at forty-one. I thought I could, too.

RICHARD
Okay, but I don’t think it’s Gloria Steinem’s fault that we can’t get pregnant.

RACHEL
Whose fault is it, then?

Richard is at a loss.

Oh, I guess it’s mine. I was too busy writing my stupid book.

She lifts her manuscript and drops it so it lands with a thud.

RICHARD
I didn’t say that.

RACHEL
All the doctors ever talk about is my advanced maternal age. My old eggs. And then we’re in the middle of an IVF and -- what a surprise! -- your sperm is like... on a sabbatical.

RICHARD
Whoa, whoa. What’s that supposed to mean?

RACHEL
Nothing. Let’s just drop it.

RICHARD
All I’m saying is we can’t blame Doctor Dordick or Bella Abzug or anybody else for our fuck-up.

RACHEL
You mean my fuck up.

RICHARD
Why do I feel like I’m in a Wendy Wasserstein play?
RACHEL
(pulling on her coat)
I don’t know, but it’s our anniversary today and I have to go get a... dildo-cam shoved up my twat by Dr. Dordick, so can we not talk about this anymore and just... repress it. Or suppress it. Or whichever one is appropriate in this instance, so we can just keep this train on track...

A tense pause. Then --

SADIE
It’s suppress...

Richard and Rachel turn to Sadie.

...when you consciously forget something that’s suppression. Repression is unconscious.

CUT TO:

DARKNESS, A MURKY UNDULATING LANDSCAPE
as if we’ve been plunged into the unconscious mind itself. Wider reveals that we are --

INT. DORDICK’S OFFICE - EXAM ROOM - DAY
Rachel, a paper sheet over her lap, is looking at an ultrasound image of her uterus on a MONITOR as Dordick maneuvers a wand between her legs.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE - DAY
Sadie holds a grocery bag and buys flowers from a deli.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - NIGHT
A SERIES OF SHOTS of Sadie alone in the apartment. She chops vegetables. Whisks dressing. Drags the air bed out of the living room. Opens a drop-leaf table. Hangs a paper lantern.

LATER -- Rachel and Richard enter their dark apartment. We FOLLOW THEM as they travel through the foyer and into --

THE LIVING ROOM, where they discover a beautifully set table with flowers and candles. Sadie pops up from behind the couch with a homemade sign that says “Happy Anniversary!”

SADIE
Surprise!

The dogs bark with excitement.
A CAST IRON PAN as steaks SIZZLE. Sadie stabs the steaks and puts them on a dish.

SADIE (CONT’D)
(calling out)
Did you ever read “Innocence” by Harold Brodkey?

RICHARD (O.S.)
Uh, I don’t think so. No.

RACHEL (O.S.)
Me, either.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Sadie as she carries the steaks into the living room, where Rachel and Richard sit at the table.

RACHEL (CONT’D)
Wait. Is that the Harvard cunnilingus one?

Sadie sets the steaks on the table and begins serving.

SADIE
Yeah. That one.

RACHEL
It’s all about a guy going down on a girl, isn’t it?

SADIE
It’s pretty life-altering.

Everyone begins eating.

I read it in a Contemporary Short Fiction class. Then, as an assignment, I wrote a kind of tongue-in-cheek response to it called, “Experience.”

RICHARD
No pun intended.

Sadie gives Richard a puzzled look, so he explains, his mouth full of steak.

...“tongue-in-cheek response” to a story about cunnilingus...

Sadie laughs. Rachel rolls her eyes.

What? Someone had to say it.
SADIE
(sawing at her steak)
I kept writing and re-writing and it grew into this forty-five-page-long... thing. Anyway, it’s still a work-in-progress, but I was wondering... if you guys were interested... I’d love to hear your thoughts about it.

RICHARD & RACHEL
Yeah. We’d love to read it. Sure.

SADIE
(between bites)
Oh, my god. That would be so great. But it has to be top secret because my mom’s been asking to see my writing all semester and, oh, my god, the thought of her reading about me “choking on cock,” even in a fictional piece, is horrifying. But it’s fine for you guys because you know how life is. You get it.

Several beats of eating, then --

RICHARD
I wouldn’t be so sure of that...

LATER, IN THE OFFICE --

A PRINTER spits out pages. Sadie removes a small pile, taps the bottom against the desk to straighten the pages and begins searching for something.

She opens a drawer, rifles around, then closes it. She moves some papers around and by chance uncovers --

What looks like two pages from a play. On closer inspection, Sadie realizes the pages are taped to the desk and pauses to read this curious document:

US: Hi, I’m Rachel. My husband Richard and I placed the ad.
HER: I hope I’m not disturbing...
US: No! We’re happy you called.

RACHEL (O.S.)
Did you find it?

Startled, Sadie whips around and looks blankly at Rachel.

The stapler. That desk is a mess.

Rachel goes to the desk, and begins to search. Sadie feels slightly guilty.
SADIE
I saw those pages and I thought you were working on a new play.

RACHEL
(amused)
Oh, no. That’s definitely not a new play. That’s our cheat sheet. For when a birth mother calls. But it’s been pretty quiet on that front.

Rachel retrieves the stapler and hands it to Sadie.

SADIE
So... pregnant girls just call you out of the blue?

RACHEL
They see our ad online or wherever and look at our pictures and read about us and if they’re interested they call.

Rachel pulls the computer keyboard closer and opens a website. We see RACHEL AND RICHARD’S PARENT PROFILE with a photo of them amid a cheerful, cheesy template.

RACHEL (CONT’D)
Would you give your unborn child to these people?
(pause)
Oh, I guess you sort of are...

LATER --

As Sadie stands in the foyer, pulling on her coat and scarf, she looks into the living room and sees Richard on the couch, leafing through her story.

SADIE
Oh, my god. You don’t have to look at that tonight.

RICHARD
Hey. It’s our anniversary. I can at least read about fellatio.

RACHEL
Shut up!

Rachel playfully throws a pillow and then pounces on him in a burst of affection.

SADIE
Bye, guys.
RICHARD
Where are you going?

SADIE
(hesitating, then --)  
To meet Sam.

Richard and Rachel are surprised, but act nonchalant.

RICHARD
Oh.  Cool.

RACHEL
Yeah.  Cool.

RICHARD
Welp.  Have a good time.

RACHEL
Yeah.  Have fun.
(unable to suppress it)
But don’t have sex.

Sadie and Richard look at Rachel.

I mean, you know.  Not right now.

SADIE
I’m not planning on having sex with Sam.

RACHEL
I know.  It’s just.  You know, if it comes up.  You’re extremely fertile at the moment...

SADIE
We’re just going to the movies.

RICHARD
(trying to deflect)
What’re you guys seeing?

SADIE
Something at the Anthology Film Archives.  
A documentary about some music guy.

INT. ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES - NIGHT

Sam and Sadie eat popcorn and watch PHIL SPECTOR (with insane hair) on trial for murder.  Sam turns to look at Sadie.  Sadie senses his gaze and enjoys the attention, but keeps her eyes on the screen.

EXT. ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES - NIGHT

Sadie and Sam stand on the sidewalk.  It’s bitter cold.
SADIE
That was fun. Thanks.
(a pause, then --)
Maybe fun isn’t the right word.

Sam laughs.

SAM
Yeah. Definitely not a good date movie.

SADIE
There should be a warning: “Do not bring a date to this movie. Total vibe kill.” Emphasis on kill.

They laugh.

SAM
Oh, well. I guess I blew it, then.

SADIE
What?

SAM
Our date.

SADIE
What? No. Wait. This isn’t really...

She points her finger back and forth between Sam and herself.

SAM
I thought so.

SADIE
Oh.

SAM
But I don’t think it counts unless both parties agree. So it’s up to you... Are we on a date?

They stare at one another. There are definitely sparks.

SADIE
Good question.

They stare some more. Then, almost imperceptibly, Sam leans in. Sadie hesitates, then swallows.

I’m thirsty.

SAM
Me, too. Wanna get a drink?
Sadie nods. A pause. Then Sadie and Sam simultaneously move toward each other and KISS.

WIDE shows the young romantics kissing beneath the marquee that reads “The Agony and the Ecstasy of Phil Spector.”

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

Thunder and RAIN as Sadie rushes down the street, wearing the same clothes as the night before.

INT. DORDICK’S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Sadie enters, wet and breathless, and finds Rachel and Richard sitting in the packed waiting room. As Sadie unbuttons her coat, Rachel looks at her flatly -- she’s not happy.

SADIE
Do not freak out. We didn’t do anything. I swear. Just cuddled and kissed. Nothing vaginal.

At the word “vaginal,” Richard springs up.

RICHARD
I’m gonna wait in the car.
(to Sadie)
Take my seat. I’ll see you guys after.

He weirdly salutes all the ladies in the room and leaves. Sadie sits, and Rachel resumes reading a magazine. Sadie sighs and reaches for a magazine of her own.

SADIE
The trains were such a mess.

RACHEL
(eyes on her magazine)
You missed the appointment.

SADIE
Didn’t you get my text?

RACHEL
Texting isn’t being here on time.

SADIE
Okay. I’m sorry. But I just told you, the trains were messed up.

RACHEL
You know we’re really grateful for what you’re doing, but this isn’t... content for some Tweet or some thing to post on Facebook.
SADIE
I know. I would never do that. What’re you talking about. I don’t even have Twitter.

Rachel gets up and walks away.

Where are you going?

RACHEL
To tell them that you’re here.

While Rachel speaks with the receptionist, Sadie glances around nervously. Rachel returns and resumes reading.

SADIE
What’d they say?

RACHEL
They might be able to squeeze you in in a half hour.

SADIE
Oh. Okay. Cool. So there’s not a problem, then.

Sadie picks out a different magazine and flips through it.

RACHEL
I’m going to wait in the car, too.

Rachel slaps her magazine shut, stands up and goes.

INT./EXT. SUBARU - UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY (RAINING)

Rachel and Richard sit in the car, listening to a podcast. Richard dozes reclined in the driver’s seat. Rachel spots Sadie emerging from Dordick’s office, she nudges Richard.

RACHEL
Honey.

Richard comes to and sees Sadie. Sadie seems disoriented, so Rachel steps out and waves to her.

Over here!

As Sadie approaches, Rachel holds TWO LARGE GREEN BEVERAGES.

Look what I got!

Sadie smiles and is heading for the rear door when Rachel beats her to it.

SADIE
I can sit in the back.
RACHEL

No. It’s fine. You sit up front.

They climb in, and Rachel hands Sadie one of the drinks.

It’s a Green Goddess with a shot of wheat grass.

Richard takes a closer look at Sadie and notices she looks blotchy and weepy.

RICHARD

Are you okay?

Sadie nods yes and sucks on her straw for a long moment. Then, unable to contain her emotions, she begins to cry.

RICHARD (CONT’D)

Oh, no.

RACHEL

Oh, god, honey. I’m sorry I got so mad... I think I overreacted.

Sadie shakes her head.

That’s not it?

She shakes her head again. Finally she manages to speak through her tears --

SADIE

The doctor yelled at me and said my eggs weren’t developing on schedule.

RACHEL

What?

RICHARD

Dordick yelled at you?

SADIE

Dr. Russell.

RACHEL

Who’s Dr. Russel?

SADIE

I think that was his name. He said I didn’t have enough follicles. That I was a “low responder.” That someone my age should have way more. And they’re not growing at the right rate or something. He said he’s had forty-one-year-olds produce more eggs than me.
Sadie begins to sob. Rachel and Richard watch helplessly until -- CLICK! Richard opens the car door and climbs out.

RACHEL
Honey, what are you doing?

INT. DORDICK’S OFFICE – DAY

Richard approaches the reception desk, soaking wet.

RICHARD
I need to talk to Dr. Russell.

RECEPTIONIST
I’m sorry, Mr. Grimes. He’s with patients all morning. But I can get a message to him if you’d like.

RICHARD
Yeah. Okay. Tell him that my niece is not a fucking farm animal!

The receptionist looks warily at Richard. So do the other women working behind the desk.

Write it down. Please. Our donor...

Richard grabs a pile of EGG DONATION brochures and flaps them around angrily.

...who is giving us the gift of life is being treated like a piece of shit!

RECEPTIONIST
Please keep your voice down, Mr. Grimes.

DR. RUSSELL emerges from a room behind the desk.

DOCTOR RUSSELL
Is there a problem?

RECEPTIONIST
Dr. Russell, this is Richard Grimes --

RICHARD
Oh, hey. Doctor Perdue. How are you?

Richard places his COAT on the reception desk and reaches over to shake the doctor’s hand.

DOCTOR RUSSELL
I’m sorry --
RICHARD
Are you? Sorry? Really? Because my niece is out there, crying in my car, feeling like some kind of failed factory farm animal because you told her she wasn’t producing enough goddamn eggs!

DOCTOR RUSSELL
Should I call security?

RICHARD
Should you? I don’t know. You tell me!

Richard, preparing to make a dramatic exit, grabs his coat from the desk and accidentally pulls down the plexiglass display rack, sending the brochures flying. The staff and waiting patients stare.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
(embarrassed)
I’m sorry. I’m sorry. Okay.
(kneeling)
I’ll clean this up.

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK – DUSK

Our couple watch their dogs race around in the dog run.

INT. RICHARD AND RACHEL’S APT – NIGHT

Richard and Rachel enter with the dogs. As they pass the living room, they see Sadie on the air bed, writing in her journal. The muffled PARTY sounds filter down from the apartment upstairs.

RACHEL
Are those guys keeping you up?

SADIE
(shaking her head)
I’ve been living in a dorm.

Rachel and Richard smile at her joke.

RICHARD
You know you can call it quits any time you want...

Sadie nods.

And don’t worry about the stupid numbers, okay? All it takes is one good egg. That’s what they’re always telling us anyway.
INT. PICKLE GUY OFFICE BUILDING - BATHROOM AREA - DAY

Sam stands at the SLOP SINK filling an electric teapot. Sadie enters, holding her purse.

SADIE
Hey.

SAM
Hey. How’s it going?

SADIE
Good. How are you?

SAM
Good.

Sadie points awkwardly toward the unisex stalls.

SADIE
I need to --

Sam steps out of the way. Sadie enters a stall and shuts the door. Sam stands there for a moment, nervously holding the full tea kettle.

SAM
Sadie?

SADIE (O.S.)
Huh.

SAM
Are you freaking out?

SADIE (O.S.)
Uh. No. Not really. Should I be?

SAM
I was just wondering. Because that happens with people sometimes. They get... intimate with someone and then, you know, they spaz.

SADIE (O.S.)
I’m not spazzing. Are you?

SAM
No.

SADIE (O.S.)
Cool.

SAM
Cool. What about Richard? Was he freaked out?
SADIE (O.S.)
Nope. He was cool with it. I wouldn’t worry about it, Sam.

SAM
I’m not... worried. I’m just, concerned.

SADIE (O.S.)
(amused)
Well, there’s nothing to be concerned about. Everyone involved is pretty evolved.

SAM
You just seem kind of distant.

SADIE (O.S.)
I’m in the bathroom.

SAM
I mean the other morning. You left before I woke up.

SADIE (O.S.)
Oh, yeah. Sorry. I was late for something. I’m not trying to be coy or anything...

As Sam listens, he realizes he can see --

A SLIVER OF SADIE through the edge of the stall door. She places a syringe between her teeth and wipes her belly with an alcohol swab.

SADIE (CONT’D)
(slurring)
It’s just, there’s a lot of personal shit I’m dealing with at the moment.

Sam’s eyes widen and his jaw drops open as she expertly injects herself.

INT. RICHARD AND RACHEL’S APT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Just like Rachel did when we first met her, Sadie lies on her side, surrounded by sheets and pillows. She reads from a drug information sheet.

SADIE
“Human Chorionic Gonadotropin.”
Jesus. Could it sound more sci-fi.

Rachel swabs Sadie’s haunch.
They call it the trigger shot. It makes you ovulate. Then 36 hours later, the retrieval and... finito.

Richard appears with a large intramuscular needle.

Okay. You ready?

Yep.

Alrightie.

He places one hand on Sadie, takes aim --

One... two... three.

-- and spears the needle into her. He pulls the plunger back to check for blood. Then he pushes the plunger down.


Richard pulls the needle out. Rachel presses a swab against the injection site and hands Sadie a bag of frozen peas.

All three of them are lying in the bed, staring at the ceiling. After a few seconds of silence --

I guess it’s stating the obvious, but we couldn’t have done this without you.

Sadie smiles.

Oh, my god. You know what we never even talked about?

What?

The whole birthing thing. Are you guys going to do it like at home with a doula without drugs? Natural childbirth.

Richard and Rachel contemplate the question. Then --
RICHARD
Nothing about this has been natural so far, so I don’t see why we would all of a sudden wanna start...

FADE TO BLACK.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST (PRE-LAP)
You’re going to feel a prick.

INT. CLINIC - OPERATING ROOM - DAY
Sadie, with drooping eyelids, lies on the table as the ANESTHESIOLOGIST injects her with a sedative. It’s the same guy who administered Rachel’s anesthesia, and he gives Sadie the exact same spiel about his daughter visiting his job.

INT. CLINIC - RECOVERY ROOM - DAY
Rachel and Richard stand beside Sadie’s bed as she wakes up.

RACHEL
Hi.

SADIE
Hi.

RICHARD
Hi.

SADIE
Did they get a lot?

RACHEL
Twenty-four eggs.

Sadie tries to absorb this tally. Rachel smiles warmly.

You did great.

Sadie seems relieved. They all blink back tears.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - DAY

IN THE OFFICE -- Rachel presses a phone against her ear as she scribbles on a pad.

LATER, IN THE BEDROOM --

Sadie is camped out in Rachel and Richard’s bed. She’s pale and buried under the blankets. Rachel excitedly reads from her notes.
RACHEL
They did ICSI on fifteen. Six fertilized. And they’re watching two more.

SADIE
(weak and wan)
Is that good?
(off Rachel’s nod)
I’m so happy.

THE NEXT MORNING --

Rachel and Richard drink the last of their coffee and place dishes in the sink.

MEANWHILE, IN THE BATHROOM --

Sadie stands on a scale in her sleeping shirt and calls into the other room --

SADIE
Did you gain a lot of weight after? I swear I’ve put on like twelve pounds in three days.

IN THE FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

Richard and Rachel are pulling on their coats.

RACHEL
Sometimes it takes a while for your body to re-adjust after all the hormones. I wouldn’t worry about it. Coffee’s on the table. And scrambled eggs and strawberries.

SADIE (O.S.)
Thanks.

RICHARD
Feel better.

SADIE (O.S.)
I will.

RACHEL
(as they leave)
See you later.

INT. OUTER HALLWAY - DAY

Waiting for the elevator.
RICHARD
How is she gaining weight? She hasn’t eaten anything in two days.

RACHEL
It’s water retention. It’s totally normal.

INT. PICKLE GUY OFFICES - DAY

Richard rolls his bike in, leans it against a wall. Sam is already there, working on a computer.

SAM
Sadie’s not coming in?

RICHARD
Nah. She’s not feeling too good.

SAM
That’s too bad.

Richard sifts through mail as Sam works up his courage.

I need to tell you something, Rich. I was thinking I should talk to Sadie about it first, but then I thought I should just tell you as soon as possible.

RICHARD
(apprehensive)
Okay.

SAM
I think Sadie’s in trouble. Yesterday in the bathroom. She was in the stall. And I was at the sink. And we were talking, you know, through the door. But then I realized I could see her through an opening.

Richard just stares at Sam, waiting for him to make his point.
She was shooting up.

RICHARD
What?

SAM
It’s crazy. I never would have suspected it. She shoots it in her gut. To hide the marks, I guess.

Richard starts laughing.

(MORE)
What the fuck, Rich? It’s not funny.

RICHARD
I’m sorry. I’m sorry. It’s not what you think. She’s fine.

SAM
What do you mean? Fine? She’s got a fucking monkey on her back, man.

This makes Richard laugh more. Sam stares at him, horrified.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - ALL - NIGHT

Rachel enters with a groceries and mail. She puts the bag down, pulls off her coat and glances into the kitchen to discover that the coffee and breakfast she made Sadie are exactly where she left them.

Rachel makes her way down the hall and looks into the bedroom where Sadie sleeps with the TV on. Rachel observes Sadie for a moment, then shuts off the TV.

LATER--

Richard and Rachel sleep on the inflatable mattress. The sound of WHIMPERING wakes Richard. When he goes to investigate, he finds Sadie in the bathroom, sitting on the side of the tub, holding her stomach and crying.

INT. CAB - NIGHT (MOVING)

Sadie, frail and unwell, sits in the backseat between Richard and Rachel. Richard stares straight ahead, very upset, while Rachel nervously watches Sadie.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Sadie talks to an E.R. Doctor who palpates her abdomen.

SADIE
Oww.

E.R. DOCTOR
Sorry. Okay. What about here?

SADIE
Oww.

E.R. DOCTOR
When did the pain begin?

SADIE
It started a few days ago after the retrieval.
RICHARD
We’re in the middle of an IVF.

E.R. DOCTOR
You’re trying to get pregnant?

SADIE
No.

RACHEL
I am.

The CAMERA PANS to find Rachel slouched in a chair, hand raised. The doctor is thoroughly confused.

ER DOCTOR
(re: Richard and Rachel)
I thought you two were her parents.

RACHEL
Prospective parents.

SADIE
She’s my aunt. He’s my uncle. I’m just the donor.

The doctor tries to make sense of this arrangement.

RICHARD
It’s complicated.

ER DOCTOR
I can see that.
(back to business)
Were there any difficulties with the retrieval?

RICHARD
No.

SADIE
Actually... yeah... Well, sort of.

This comes as a surprise to Richard and Rachel, who are about to interrupt when the doctor raises a hand to stop them.

E.R. DOCTOR
What happened?

SADIE
Um, well... I wasn’t... I mean, I didn’t have enough follicles.
(hesitating, then --)
So I upped the dose of the Follitropin.
DOCTOR
By how much?

Sadie holds her thumb and forefinger a quarter inch apart.

RICHARD
Oh, god. That doctor is an idiot.

SADIE
It wasn’t him. He didn’t tell me to do it.
    (off their confusion)
I did it myself.

RACHEL
What?

SADIE
I increased the dosage on my own.

Rachel and Richard stare at Sadie in disbelief.

I really wanted this to work out for you guys. You’ve spent so much money. And I know how much it means to you and...
    (starting to cry)
I didn’t want to disappoint you.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Richard is on the phone, pacing, with Rachel standing nearby.

RICHARD
Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome. They did an ultrasound and said her left ovary was enlarged... They want to keep her overnight.

Richard listens, then reluctantly answers a question --

About the size of a grapefruit.

Richard shuts his eyes and listens then hangs up and turns to Rachel.

They’re on their way.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Cynthia and Charlie exit an elevator and stop at a nurses’ station to ask for directions.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Cynthia and Charlie warily enter the room --
CHARLIE
Knock. Knock.

Richard and Rachel both stand. As soon as Cynthia sees Sadie, her face crumples.

SADIE
It’s okay, mom. I’m fine. They’re just observing.

Rachel offers Cynthia the chair next to Sadie’s bed, and the two women wordlessly brush past each other.

It wasn’t their fault. It was me.
I was the idiot.

INT. VENDING MACHINE ROOM — NIGHT

Rachel, Richard, Charlie and Cynthia sit at a table, lit by the glow of the snack machines that line the wall. There is a terrible drawn-out silence. Finally, Cynthia stands —

CYNTHIA
I’m gonna go back to the room.

INT. RICHARD AND RACHEL’S — FOYER — NIGHT

Richard and Rachel enter their apartment. The dogs greet them.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE — NIGHT

Richard walks the dogs, looks up at his apartment, catches a glimpse of Rachel’s figure in the window and stares at her.

INT. APARTMENT — NIGHT

LATER, IN THE BATHROOM -- Rachel tears open a foil package of ESTROGEN PATCHES and applies one to her stomach.

RACHEL (CALLING)
Don’t forget we need to do my progesterone.

IN THE LIVING ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Richard is squeezing the air out of the inflatable bed. He’s heard Rachel but doesn’t answer.

RACHEL (O.S.)
Richard?

RICHARD
Yeah. Okay.
IN THE BEDROOM -- LATER

Rachel lies on her side, arranging herself on the bed. Richard shambles in with a syringe and a bag of frozen peas.

RACHEL
Dordick said my lining looks beautiful. He said most women would kill for a lining like mine. Isn’t that great?

Richard kneels behind Rachel preparing to give her the injection.

RICHARD (O.S.)
(dully)
Yeah. It’s great.

RACHEL
Are you even listening?

RICHARD
Yeah. I am. But I’m a little preoccupied. Didn’t we do this side last night?

She swivels around so her head is at the foot of the bed and her feet are at the top.

RACHEL
Anyway, I’m trying to talk to you about something important.

RICHARD
What?

RACHEL
My endometrium.

RICHARD
(swabbing her)
What about it?

RACHEL
Its thickness effects implantation. And today when I went for my ultrasound, mine measured eight point two millimeters. Ideally, you want anywhere from eight to ten on the day of the transfer, so I’m already there.

RICHARD
(detached)
That’s great, honey.

Richard stabs the needle into Rachel’s haunch. She barely flinches. He presses the plunger, then pulls it out.
RACHEL
I know all this stuff with Sadie is upsetting and I want to be sympathetic, but the transfer is in two days and my acupuncturist said I need to create a really warm welcoming non-negative environment so the embryo will attach. She told me to eat warm food. No salads. Soups and stews. And she told me to laugh, Richard. I’m supposed to laugh. But I’m not laughing.
   (starting to cry)
If you were an embryo, would you want to attach to a negative, cold environment? No. You’d want it to be warm and funny and positive.

Rachel is sobbing; Richard stays nearby, but seems very far away.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Dordick is once again between Rachel’s legs as he transfers the embryos. A different EAGLES SONG plays; he mouths the words.

EXT. CONCEPTIONS CLINIC - DAY

Rachel holds the collar of her coat; Richard tries to flag a cab.

INT. CAB - DAY

They ride in the back looking out opposite windows.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The PHOTO OF THE NEW EMBRYOS is stuck on the refrigerator with a magnet.

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

Rachel emerges from a subway station and walks down a busy street toward Dordick’s office.

INT. DORDICK’S OFFICE - DAY

Rachel has her blood drawn. She grabs a lollipop, walks past the wall covered in birth announcements and exits, but instead of following, WE STAY BEHIND as the CAMERA pans to --

THE WAITING ROOM,

filled with anxious women and painfully silent, except for the WIRE MOBILE tapping against the window.
DORDICK (PRE-LAP, ON PHONE)
Discontinue the progesterone, the estrogen patches, the Estrace as well as the supplements.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT - DUSK

As Dordick continues, the CAMERA moves through the seemingly empty apartment --

DORDICK (ON PHONE)
Barbara will call you early next week to schedule a meeting to talk about next steps.

-- and finally arrives on Richard and Rachel who are seen in SILHOUETTE. Richard mumbles something into the phone, then they hang up and just stand there, staring into space. After a while, Richard wanders off.

RACHEL
Where are you going?

RICHARD (O.S.)
To walk the dogs.

IN THE BEDROOM -- LATER (NIGHT)

They lie in bed -- Richard on his back, eyes open; Rachel curled up, facing the wall. We hear a party going on in the apartment above them.

RACHEL
I’m so sad.
(no response)
Richard?

RICHARD
Don’t those people ever fucking stop partying?

Richard stands up on the bed and BANGS the ceiling with a book. It works! The music is lowered.

RACHEL
Did you hear me?

RICHARD
I did. And I know that intellectually I’m supposed to... do something for you, right now -- comfort you or whatever, but I’m sorry. I can’t, right now. I just don’t have it in me.
RACHEL
(very low, shaky)
Okay.

A long, painful silence.

RICHARD
You’re going to hate me for saying this, you’ll think it’s hideous sacrilege, but I’m actually sort of glad the cycle didn’t work because... at least now it’s over.

Rachel turns to him, aghast.

I know it’s a harsh, but that’s how I honestly feel. Relieved. I don’t think I even want to have a kid anymore. I just want my life back. I mean, look at us. We’re a mess. It’s like we’re not even in a relationship, let alone a marriage. I’m not your husband, I’m just some... guy who injects hormones into your ass every night. We don’t even have sex.

RACHEL
Wait, is that what this is about? Sex?

RICHARD
No. Yeah. Well, maybe. I don’t know. What d’you think? Do you think we’re ever going to have sex again?

RACHEL
Are you actually asking me that right now or are you being theoretical?

RICHARD
No. I’m not. I’m actually asking you -- do you think we will ever have sex again?

RACHEL
I don’t know, Richard.

RICHARD
You don’t know?

RACHEL
No. I mean, yes. Of course, we will. At some point.

RICHARD
At what point will that be, exactly?
RACHEL
I don’t know. Why are you so fixated on this?

RICHARD
I’m not. I’m just pointing out that while we’ve been so obsessed with this... project we’ve had sex maybe one time in eleven months and you had to get trashed on a bottle rosé before you would even consider it. Jesus, Doctor Dordick is more intimate with your vagina than I am.

RACHEL
Oh, my god. Do you want sex right now? Is that it?

Before Richard can respond, Rachel opens a drawer and takes out a CANDLE clearly reserved for romance, then removes a VIBRATOR from a draw-string bag.

Because we just had a failed IVF and I don’t know about you, but generally that makes me feel pretty shitty and dead and despondent and doesn’t put me in a particularly erotic frame of mind. But if you’re dead set on it, I’m sure we can manage something. But I can’t guarantee that it’s going to be a hell of a lot of fun.

She twists the bottom of the vibrator and it makes a loud buzzing sound.

Hey, batteries still work. It’s our lucky day!

She throws the vibrator onto the bed. It bounces, just missing Richard. Rachel crumples in a heap and begins to cry. The vibrator continues to buzz as we...

FADE OUT

INT./EXT. SUBARU - UPSTATE NY - DAY

Bare branches against the winter sky drift past. Rachel looks out the passenger window. Richard stares ahead at the road. There is a very long silence.

SADIE (OS)
I’m sorry, you guys.

Sadie is in back with the dogs.
RICHARD
We’re the ones who should be sorry.
For two people who want to be
parents, we didn’t do a very good
job of taking care of you.

SADIE
(almost to herself)
I’m supposed to be able to do that
myself, aren’t I?

A long beat of driving.

You guys are gonna try again though,
right? You’re not giving up?

Richard and Rachel don’t answer, and Sadie’s question lingers in the air.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The Subaru whizzes past and the camera whip pans to a highway sign that says: SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEXT 2 EXITS.

INT./EXT. SUBARU - SARATOGA SPRINGS - DAY

RACHEL
Slow down. It’s easy to miss...
That’s it! Right there.

Richard slows and signals. Out her window, Sadie sees TWO STONE GATEPOSTS flanking the entrance to a LONG, WOODED ROAD. On one of the posts is a sign that says YADDO.

SADIE
It looks like an insane asylum.

RACHEL
(almost to herself)
Well, it is filled with crazy artists...

Richard turns and drives through the gateposts. The snow covered woods sparkle like a winter wonderland.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

The SUBARU parks outside a STONE AND MARBLE MANSION that looks like a castle. Our trio and the dogs emerge, all slightly disoriented.

INT. MANSION - DAY

Rachel and Richard accompany Sadie as she receives a tour from JONATHAN, a male resident who leads them through the ornate downstairs rooms, which appear both grand and gaudy.
Someone PLAYS PIANO, and the music drifts through the mansion. The tour pauses in front of TWO FULL-LENGTH OIL PORTRAITS of Katrina and Spencer Trask, the Wall Street baron and his wife who founded Yaddo.

JONATHAN
That’s them. Our patron saints.
Spencer and Katrina Trask.
(beat)
They had awful luck with children.

SADIE
They couldn’t have them?

JONATHAN
No. They had four, but all of them died young. After the children were gone, they decided to turn their estate into a place for artists to come and work.
(to Sadie)
That’s why you’re here.

LATER -- Jonathan leads everyone up a sweeping set of stairs and down a passageway toward a door with inlaid stained glass.

INT. KATRINA’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The group drifts in and looks around the beautiful, light-filled space. Through the windows is a view of a TERRACED LAWN and a FOUNTAIN.

JONATHAN
This was Katrina’s room.

Among the antique furnishings is a CHAISE LOUNGE.

Look, you’ve even got your own fainting couch.

SADIE
Wait. This is my room?

Jonathan smiles and nods.

RACHEL
Wow. I’ve been here three times and I never got this room.

Sadie can barely contain her excitement, she sashays around, then fake faints onto the chaise lounge.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

At the Subaru, Sadie straps on her giant backpack.
RICHARD
So we’ll get you in a month, right?

SADIE
(hesitant)
Actually, you don’t need to.

Rachel and Richard look at her, confused. Sadie fesses up.

Sam said he could do it.

Richard and Rachel are happy for Sadie, but a little hurt. Sadie blushes.

He’s always wanted to see Saratoga Springs and... I thought it would save you guys the trip.
(to Rachel)
Thanks, for whatever strings you had to pull to get me in here.

RACHEL
I didn’t pull any strings.

SADIE
You didn’t put in a good word for me? I thought that’s why I got accepted.

Rachel smiles and shakes her head, no. Sadie beams.

INT. KATRINA’S ROOM - DAY

Sadie pulls out her laptop and some notebooks, arranging them on the desk. She sits down, self-conscious but intoxicated by the extravagant writing space. After a moment, she hears BARKING.

EXT. LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Richard throws a ball for Eno and Lazlo, then joins Rachel to watch the dogs jump and play. It’s cold. We see their breath.

SADIE (O.S.)
Hey!

Richard and Rachel look up to see Sadie, not unlike a princess in a castle, leaning out one of her windows. She waves and they wave back. The three of them wave for a long time, then lower their arms and just look at each other, unsure what’s next.

NINE MONTHS LATER

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DUSK

A CHILD’S FINGER presses a DOORBELL - BZZZZZ! The apartment door swings open to reveal Richard. He’s wearing a RUBBER MASK but it’s pushed up so you can see his face.
At the door are the same TWO KIDS from the earlier Halloween Scene: a GIRL (now 8) and BOY (now 11)

KIDS
Trick or treat!

RICHARD
You guys look great... what are you?

The girl wears a strange outfit with a PLASTIC SEE-THROUGH BUBBLE UMBRELLA, LEG WARMERS, BIG RUBBER BOOTS and a BATHING SUIT under a DOWN VEST. The boy wears an Edvard Munch Scream Mask.

GIRL
Climate Change.

Richard nods, impressed.

BOY
I’m The Scream. Who are you?

Richard pulls down his mask. It’s Nixon. Richard does the standard impersonation, hunching over and making “peace” signs. The kids don’t have a clue.

RICHARD
Richard Nixon.
(pushing the mask up)
He was a president from when I was a kid. I wanted to wear my Bill Clinton, but I couldn’t find it. I guess he’s before your time, too.

The children linger, then Richard remembers why they came --

Oh, yeah.

He grabs a BOWL filled with CANDY. The KIDS take some, drop it in their bags and say “Thank you.” As they walk away --

Sorry about the environment!

The kids stop and look back. The girl nods in appreciation before she and her brother continue on their way.

INT. RACHEL AND RICHARD’S APARTMENT – DUSK

Richard closes the door and turns to find Rachel wearing a HILLARY CLINTON MASK.

RICHARD
Hey. Where’d you find it?
RACHEL
(muffled)
Linen closet.

Rachel has also found Richard’s Bill Clinton mask, which she holds out. For an odd moment, Nixon and Hillary stand there in silence, looking at each other. The familiar SOUND of A MARCHING BAND filters into the apartment.

EXT. AVENUE A - DUSK

THE NEIGHBORHOOD HALLOWEEN PARADE is in full swing: POLICEMEN hold traffic as costumed children march into TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK lead by the BAND OF PUNK PARENTS.

An ORANGE CRAYOLA CRAYON DAD walks beside a BLOODIED MOM dressed up as Carrie. Children run around.

Richard and Rachel, now both in their Clinton masks, walk with the revelers. Richard’s cellphone rings and he pushes his mask up to look at the caller ID.

RICHARD
It’s the 800 number.

They look at each other, paralyzed for a moment.

Answer it.

RACHEL
Why me?

Richard, flummoxed, doesn’t respond, so Rachel pushes her mask up and answers it.

(from their script)
“No. We’re happy you called. It’s the perfect time.” We’re just... out for Halloween.

Rachel presses a finger into her ear to block out the parade and steps away from the crowd. Richard watches her, and we hear pieces of her conversation.

Yep. New York City. Uh-huh. Well, it’s got it’s pros and cons, but... What about you?... Oh, wow.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A rental car whizzes past and the CAMERA WHIP PANS to a SIGN:

Welcome to Virginia
Virginia is for Lovers
INT./EXT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Richard drives. Rachel cradles a folder in her lap.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD -- an APPLEBEE’S comes into view.

    RICHARD
    Land, ho!

EXT. APPLEBEE’S PARKING LOT - DAY

Richard pulls in and parks.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Richard and Rachel stare at the restaurant, then trade “here we go again” looks and climb out.

INT. APPLEBEE’S - DAY

A WAITRESS leads Richard and Rachel to a LARGE BOOTH where they sit down facing each other. The waitress hands them menus and begins to clear two of the four place settings.

    RICHARD
    Actually... we’re expecting someone.

    WAITRESS
    I’ll grab another menu.

The waitress leaves. They sit for a moment without speaking, then Richard gets up and joins Rachel on her side of the booth.

    RICHARD
    That’s better.

Richard moves his water glass and place-mat over to his new seat. He takes Rachel’s hand and kisses it. She glances over and smiles nervously. They turn their attention toward the front door and sit there like that for a very long time, holding hands and waiting.

THE END