

**DIVORCE**

Written by

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INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Bright breezy music plays. Close up of Frances, hair wet and fresh out of the shower, rolling deodorant into her armpits in front of the mirror. As she rolls she looks at herself very closely. She looks down at her breasts. She then looks at them in the mirror. Holds them. Squeezes them. Closes her eyes.

The bathroom door opens. She drops her breasts. Robert, her husband of 15 years, walks in. He is tall, little thinning in the hair department. He walks to the toilet. Lifts the lid and sits down on it. After a beat he takes a book down from the shelf. Frances looks at him in the mirror. Goes to say something. Changes her mind. Leaves the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CAR

Robert and Frances, in party clothes, are driving along, Robert behind the wheel. Frances staring straight ahead. A Coldplay song plays on the radio. After a few seconds Frances turns it off. Robert looks at her but says nothing. After another beat or two Robert begins humming the tune of the same song. Frances closes her eyes.

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EXT. DIANE'S HOUSE, KATONAH, - LATER

Robert and Frances stand side by side, stony faced at the front door of a large house. It might even have a turret. Music blasts out as the door is opened by Diane(45, short, mumsy but still quite sexy). Frances immediately puts on her party face.

FRANCES  
Happy birthday!

DIANE  
(pretty drunk)  
You're late but you haven't missed  
fuck all.  
(Shouting back in)  
TURN THE MUSIC UP FOR CHRIST'S  
SAKE! Get in here!  
(ushering them in)  
He's asked a pile of cocks I don't  
even know, I wanna kill myself -

The door shuts behind them.

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Frances and Robert walk into a pretty lavish room of about 30 or 40 people. Robert immediately peels off and heads to a group he recognizes. Dallas (47, tough, Judy Davis/Eve Best type) walks over to her.

DALLAS

It's not weird here at all, just so you know. The atmosphere is -

She kisses the tips of her fingers like she's complementing a great broth. Frances links her arm and they wander further in.

FRANCES

When can we leave?

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE - LATER

Frances is in the huge kitchen dancing with Dallas and some party guests. (We cut back and forth between Robert and Frances a few times as the camera roves around the party, eavesdropping on snippets of conversation and action as the night progresses)

We see Frances throwing back a cocktail with some friends

PETE

How's it going at RGA?

FRANCES

Oh I left. I'm with Armand now.

SIMON

Why'd you leave RGA? That's a fun company. We do a lot of business with them

FRANCES

Yeah, well y'know, it's all changed there now. My new boss is 28. And she didn't like me. But mainly she's 28.

Frances gives a rigor mortis smile. She glances over at Robert who is dipping a piece of bread into a cheese fondue, dripping cheese on his tie as he talks to a middle aged woman.

ROBERT

... we have the financing, the financing isn't the problem, the problem is our vision it's too forward thinking -

Later we see Frances sitting with Dallas and Diane

DALLAS

And now she's pregnant so -

DIANE

Oh God

FRANCES

Really already? That's obscene -

A tray of canapes pass. They all take something.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

(biting in)

You look great though -

DIANE

I was gonna say exactly the same -

We see Robert now talking with a suited man, dropping his bread in the fondue, fishing it out, burning his fingers.

ROBERT

... we have the financing, ah shit,  
 (blows fingers)  
 the financing isn't the problem,  
 the problem is our vision it's too  
 forward thinking -

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM

Most of the guests are shoved in and around a long table. There are dozens of bottles and the food is everywhere and half eaten. Frances and Robert are sat at different ends of an enormous table. At one point Frances laughs loud and hard at something and Robert glances over at her, watching her for a beat or two with a half smile. By the time Frances looks in his direction, he's looked away.

Frances is beside Diane.

FRANCES

Where's Beatrice? She's normally  
 pressing her wet ass against my  
 shin by now.

DIANE

She died last week.

FRANCES

Really? Oh no, I'm so sorry,  
 that's... how old was she?

DIANE

24.

Frances bursts out laughing. Diane kinda laughs along

FRANCES  
That is too old for a dog.

DIANE  
(laughing)  
Aren't you gonna ask me what she  
died of?

FRANCES  
Something to do with her age, or  
her weeping butthole?

DIANE  
Depression. She couldn't handle the  
atmosphere. She choked herself to  
death with her leash.

Frances laughs again.

FRANCES  
I'm so sorry.

Diane takes a long drink and looks over at her husband Nick sitting across the table. He is talking expansively and spooning dessert on to his plate.

DIANE  
Did you see how much weight he's  
put on?

FRANCES  
Oh, I hadn't really -

DIANE  
He did it on purpose. That was 100%  
just to revolt me.  
(She stares over at him)  
Go on, keep spooning it in, you fat  
fuck.

Frances looks over at Nick. He does have the air of corporate fat fuck about him.

FRANCES  
Well he threw you a good party

Diane looks at Frances

DIANE  
I threw me this party. I didn't  
even want him here. I'm five foot  
one and I had to put my own banner  
up. He watched me do it.

They look over at Nick again who raises his glass to them. Frances smiles and raises hers back.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
How did this happen? Look at us.

FRANCES  
I'm looking.

DIANE  
We are *formidable* women, we had it  
all for the taking, if we'd just  
had a dirty peep hole into the  
future, if we'd had *any* idea we  
would end up -

FRANCES  
(laughing)  
I'm not getting into this  
conversation

DIANE  
Come on, I mean look at *him* -

FRANCES  
Who am I looking at now?

DIANE  
Robert.

Frances looks over at Robert who's deep in conversation with  
an older, stern looking woman.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
God he's such a... wet pussy.

Frances stares at Diane. What did she just say?

DIANE (CONT'D)  
Dallas had the right idea, getting  
rid of hers.

FRANCES  
Hers died.

DIANE  
No, the other one.

FRANCES  
The other one left her.

DIANE  
I wish this fucker would leave me.  
But he's too smart for that. He's  
trying to smoke me out of here.  
(She takes a drink)  
Luckily I have a strong tolerance  
for mental torture.

There's the sound of glass being clinked and Nick stands up.

NICK

A little toast I think could be in order.

(He raises his glass)

Diane hates it when I make a speech, or talk, so I will just very quickly say; Happy birthday darling, can't believe you made it to 45 in one piece. Although it was touch and go for a while.

He laughs and a few people join in. Not Diane.

NICK (CONT'D)

She doesn't like 45, do you sweetheart? But one thing I think we can all agree on is that Diane has never looked her age... until this year, sadly, when it aaallll caught up on her.

There is a hoot of laughter from maybe one man but the rest of the table is uncomfortable.

NICK (CONT'D)

You know I'm joking! She looks amazing. One of the many benefits of not raising any children.

Frances visibly flinches at that one. Diane's eyes narrow. Nick fills his glass, raises it again.

NICK (CONT'D)

Happy birthday darling. Here's to the next 45.

Everyone shouts 'Happy birthday' while Diane and Nick eyeball each other.

NICK (CONT'D)

I have a little surprise for you, ILONA! A little birthday surprise, she's so hard to buy for but... ILONA! I *hope* I got it right... ILONA! Get in here!

Diane looks uncomfortable. Ilona, the housekeeper walks in. She has a fully grown Chow Chow dog with her. She kind of half pulls, half leads it to Diane. Diane looks at Nick, who is smiling widely at her, with dark eyes.

DIANE

(under her breath)

You fucking bastard.

A few guests come over to kiss Diane and stroke the dog who is now not moving no matter how hard Ilona pulls its leash.

Robert looks across the table at Frances. He gives a smile, like, isn't this fun? Frances is horrified.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, SITTING ROOM - LATER

A drunk woman puts her arm around Robert, using him to balance on. Robert, very nicely, moves her hand away. She doesn't really notice and puts her hand back. He lets her. and stands there awkwardly.

Diane slow dances lasciviously with an extremely tall drunk man, as Nick looks on. Nick eventually walks over and pulls her off him. As they walk off we see the massive dog is now lying across the floor, breathing heavily. Someone has laid out newspaper and a bowl of water beside it.

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, SITTING ROOM

Later again. Frances is talking with Simon, Pete and Dallas. They are subtly looking over at Diane with Nick arguing in the corner, as they speak.

FRANCES

I do admire couples who can argue in public. It must be feel so liberating.

DALLAS

They *only* argue in public. It's a safety net. They can't fight unless they're around people who can stop it getting bloody.

Nick sees Frances looking over, he turns his back to her and keeps arguing.

FRANCES

Oh god he just caught me looking.

SIMON

They had a fight earlier too, before you came.

FRANCES

Fist?

SIMON

No verbal, but with intent.

FRANCES

Yeah?

SIMON

Yeah. She opened her blouse in  
Nick's boss' face.

FRANCES

Did she? Why would she do that?

PETE

Just for fun. She's fun!

FRANCES

Well -

SIMON

He didn't like it.

FRANCES

Who?

PETE

Nick.

Frances looks at Dallas. Dallas shrugs. Simon gives Dallas a  
poke.

SIMON

We saw your ex's new lady the other  
day in Charles's. Buying a Le  
Cruiset pot.

DALLAS

Oh yeah?

SIMON

Yeah. The nice news for you is she  
has *porked* out, seriously, he was  
mis-sold those goods.

DALLAS

She's five months pregnant

They all stand there a little awkwardly. Beat.

PETE

How are your kids?

Frances and Dallas both smile and nod, good.

CUT TO:

Diane and Nick's argument has reached another level of  
shrill. Only the rubberneckerers are enjoying it. Frances has  
had enough of the drama. She walks up to Robert.

FRANCES

I'm going home.

ROBERT

Why?

FRANCES

It's a car crash, I've seen enough.

DRUNK WOMAN

(holding out her hand)

Amanda, pleaseta mee' choo.

ROBERT

(to the woman)

Oh I'm sorry, this is Frances, my wife.

The woman looks confused.

FRANCES

I'm going to the bathroom and then I'm leaving.

She walks off. Robert does an eye roll and a little head shake to the woman.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE - TOILET

Frances is on the toilet. She looks at a framed photo hanging on the wall of Diane with the world's oldest looking pug. She looks kind of grossed out by it. There is a sudden scream and a scarily loud crash. Frances looks up.

FRANCES

What the fuck...

She quickly wipes and makes for the door.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, THE LANDING

Frances sees Dallas and some guests running up the stairs, panicked. She makes for the main bedroom just in time to see a half crazed Diane aiming a gun at Nick

FRANCES

Jesus Christ DIANE! Is that a *gun*?  
Are you pointing an actual -

The gun goes off but misses Nick. He screams.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Oh my God -

The guests scream and scatter, some falling over as they do. Frances turns around and sees that there is a chunk out of the door frame where the bullet hit right beside where Robert is now standing, petrified, and rooted to the spot. It narrowly missed him by inches, centimetres.

DIANE

Sor' Rob' thas an acciden'

Robert stares at Frances with wild, terrified eyes. The shot has made Frances go temporarily deaf, she spins around, trying to work out what's going on. Everything is now muffled and disorienting. Diane is being wrestled to the ground by some of the big boys. There is lots of shouting and screaming as they try to unfurl Diane's fingers, which are coiled tightly around the gun.

DALLAS (O.S.)

Somebody call an ambulance!

Frances sees her lips move but can't hear her.

FRANCES

What is happening?

DALLAS

Call a fucking ambulance!

Frances looks and sees Dallas on the floor beside Nick. He is purple in the face and appears to be having a full blown heart attack. She realises what is going on.

FRANCES

Call an ambulance... *I'll call an ambulance... Robert!*

Robert turns and sees Nick. He manages to shake himself out of his shock and go to him. They start undoing Nick's shirt and tie. Nick is going greyer and greyer in the face as this happens. The tall drunk guy tries to get involved and is pushed out of the way and sent flying across the room. Frances surveys the madness as she talks to the emergency services, her voice an echo in her head.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, THE BEDROOM - LATER

The dog walks into the room and lies down. There are flashing lights from outside as police cars pull up. Only a handful of guests are left in the room now; Robert and Frances are still there. The paramedics have arrived and are surrounding Nick.

AMBULANCE WORKER

Sir, can you hear me?

We can hear Diane shouting in another room.

DIANE (O.S.)  
 Wha's happenin'? Where's Nick?

The fire department arrives and helps with equipment and the resuscitation. It's a full on CPR, clearing his air ways, pipes down throat nightmare scenario. Nick is then pronounced dead. (**Will research what is said**)

Diane is taken away by the police before Nick's body is removed. As she passes the room she sees them all and stops. She is a mess.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
 Sorr', I'm so sorry, I dunno wha'  
 happen but ee's gonna be okay, Iva'  
 go down to tha station now so may  
 yourselves a'home... there's plenny  
 ov food, cheese ona side, under the  
 (she sees Frances)  
 Frances! Open'a champagne -

Diane is removed. Frances turns to Robert, he is staring into space.

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, THE SITTINGROOM

A shell-shocked Frances and Robert sit in Diane and her dead husband's sitting room, waiting to give a statement to the cops. Frances looks around at all the wedding and family photos that scatter the room. Diane and Nick looking happy and young and alive. Frances turns to Robert. He is already staring at her.

ROBERT  
 She nearly killed me.

He gives her his hand to hold. Closes his eyes. Frances looks at his hand for a second or two, then takes it.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
 Two, three more inches to the  
 left... oh Christ.

He leans against her, wraps his arms around her. She puts an arm around him slowly and, not knowing what else to do, pats his back a couple of times. She continues looking at pictures over his shoulder. She sees a framed holiday photo.

FRANCES  
 How do you go from a conga on a  
 water slide to wanting to blow  
 someone's head off..?

She releases herself and looks at Robert.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

What if the same thing happens to us?

ROBERT

What?

FRANCES

I don't want that to happen to us.

ROBERT

I would *never* try and shoot you in the head

FRANCES

Are you sure? Are you *really* sure you would never try and shoot me in the head?

ROBERT

Of *course* I'm sure.

(Beat. Then;)

Are you *not* sure?

FRANCES

When you threw my laptop out the window -

ROBERT

That's not the same -

FRANCES

... I remember thinking, I wanted to hit you in the face with the, the ceramic, the Chinese ceramic cat thing -

ROBERT

Are you drunk -

FRANCES

(stream of consciousness)

I don't think we love each other anymore.

ROBERT

What are you talking about? You're in shock and you're saying -

FRANCES

There's nothing there Robert, it's gone... I'm not even being idealistic, I swear to God I'm not, I'm not looking for anything special, but this is *nothing*, we have *nothing*, we're just sharing a house, a calender -

ROBERT

We've both had a lot to drink,  
okay, this isn't the time, it's  
definitely not the place -

FRANCES

Sometimes I come back from work,  
and I'm happy, I actually feel  
happy and then I see your car  
there, parked, and I realize you're  
home and my heart *sinks*.

She starts laughing, kind of loudly. He looks around,  
embarrassed.

ROBERT

Don't do that.

FRANCES

(still laughing)

You spent last Christmas fishing in  
Alaska.

ROBERT

No, no, that was a one off, that  
was a, that's the *only* time the  
chinook salmon travels north in  
those numbers, as you know, you  
said you didn't mind -

FRANCES

I didn't mind. It was the best  
Christmas I've had in years.

He stares at her for a beat. Goes to speak.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

What if gets worse? What about a  
year from now? Two years? When we  
despise each other? What then?  
It'll be hard for the kids, I know  
it will, but we'll be happier so  
they'll be happier. That's what  
everyone says I know, but it's true  
I think. I think it might be true.

ROBERT

If this is because of my job, I'll  
go back, or I will look at ways to -

FRANCES

I want to save my life while I  
still care about it, Robert. I  
don't love you anymore.

(beat)

I want a divorce.

A cop walks over and stands by them.

COP  
Excuse me Sir, are you the  
gentleman who was nearly hit in the  
crossfire?

Robert looks up at him. Just staring. Not answering.

COP (CONT'D)  
Sir?

Robert blacks out. A woman near them sees this and screams.  
People start running out of room. What's happening now?! The  
cop calls a medic over. Frances shakes Robert a little.

FRANCES  
Robert... Oh Christ, Robert?

Robert opens his eyes. Frances sighs, relieved. Then;

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
We can make it so it's not  
horrible, I don't want it to be, we  
can do it right... if we do it now,  
we have a chance to get out before -

Robert blacks out again. Frances shakes him again.

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
Robert! Please! Focus -

She keeps trying to talk to him about what's about to happen  
to them and he just keeps blacking out..

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE BEDROOM - DAY

Frances wakes up in bed. She has brief nano-moment of normal  
before it all comes flooding back. She looks sick with the  
thought of it all. She lifts her head up and sees Robert  
sitting on the bed, in just his boxer shorts, staring at her.

FRANCES  
Jesus!

She grabs her heart.

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
You scared me.  
(Beat)  
Where did you go last night? I was  
worried.

Robert sits there for a beat. Then;

ROBERT  
I went to a club.

FRANCES

Oh -

ROBERT

A strip club. To watch some strippers. I was trying to hurt you.

FRANCES

Right. Well, I think I might be a bit beyond that.

ROBERT

And then one of the girls saw how messed up I was and she said just stay away for the night, give her some space, she'll come round. So I did. Now I'm back.

Robert takes Frances's hand. He looks at it as he holds it. Looks up at her.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

This is crazy, right?

Frances says nothing but lets her hand be held.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I'm not sure you meant what you said last night, about not loving me anymore.

FRANCES

I'm sorry, I did. I did mean it.

ROBERT

I don't think you did Frances.

FRANCES

I did Robert.

He starts taking off his boxer shorts.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

ROBERT

I want to give you an orgasm.

FRANCES

I don't want an orgasm, Jesus!

She holds the covers around her so he tries to get under them from the bottom of the bed.

ROBERT

Please. I think if we just tried to connect -

She wriggles up the bed. He's under the covers now.

FRANCES  
Robert I don't want to -

ROBERT  
(muffled)  
You never want to, that's the  
problem -

FRANCES  
You never wanted to either! Neither  
of us wants to.

She pulls the sheets off him. He lies there for a beat,  
exposed. He gets up. He starts pulling his shorts back on,  
repeatedly missing the leg hole.

ROBERT  
(shouting)  
Is that it then? Huh?

He kicks a chair across the bedroom and then falls over  
backwards. She flinches a little. He gets up.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
You don't even want to go to  
counselling?

FRANCES  
We've been to counselling!

He kicks over another, smaller chair

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
Stop kicking over chairs!

ROBERT  
So you won't even give us a chance,  
you won't even talk about it?

FRANCES  
I will *of course*, I will talk about  
every aspect of this, but it won't  
change my mind.

He stares at her. Starts putting his clothes on.

ROBERT  
I'm going.

Frances gets up and out of bed.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

FRANCES

I'm going to make the kids  
breakfast and then I'm taking them  
to school.

ROBERT

What, you're just going to pretend  
that everything's normal -

FRANCES

(Screaming)

I'M NOT PRETENDING EVERYTHING'S  
NORMAL, OKAY? I'M DIVORCING YOU!  
THAT'S NOT NORMAL!

He stares at her. She calms down a notch. She pulls her robe  
on.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

I've just got to get the kids to  
school first.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE KITCHEN

It's still very early and the house is quiet. She puts the  
kettle on. We can see she's shaken but she goes to the  
fridge, opens it, takes some stuff out, starts making lunches  
for school bags. Robert walks into the kitchen, she stands  
there, rigid. He walks past her and the front door slams. She  
stands there for another moment, releases a breath. She goes  
to her bag and takes her phone out, goes to dial. After a  
beat she changes her mind and puts it back in her bag. She  
continues making the lunches.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE HALLWAY

The kids are running downstairs, grabbing bags and coats.  
Mayhem.

FRANCES

Let me smell quickly, come here and  
let me smell -

Her daughter, Lila (11) goes to her and reluctantly breathes  
on her. Frances grimaces.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

No they are not (brushed).

LILA

*They are.*

FRANCES

Well they're not done properly, go  
back up and do them again -

LILA

UGH!

She storms off. Frances turns to her son, Tom (14).

FRANCES

Tom grab your bag, it's on the  
table by the -

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SCHOOL GATES, WESTCHESTER - MORNING

From a silent distance we watch Frances drop the kids at the  
school gate. She hugs her daughter long and tight.

CUT TO:

INT. A QUIET CAFE - DAY

Frances sits on her own in a busy cafe. She's on the phone.

FRANCES

Antonia can you tell Marchelle and  
Andrew I'm not in today.... yeah...  
it's a personal issue... Sorry..?

(Listens)

No. Because it's *personal*.

(She rolls her eyes)

Also it took 9 rings for someone to  
answer the phone so can you do  
something about that? Thank you.

She hangs up. She sees there's a local newspaper on a table  
nearby, the front-page details last night's incident. There's  
a photo of Nick. Frances reaches over for it

FRANCES (CONT'D)

(to the table dwellers)

May I...? Sorry, I know him,  
thanks.

She takes the paper. As she reads Dallas walks in and sits  
beside her. Frances shows her the paper. She looks at it.

DALLAS

God, he looks awful in that photo.  
So smug...

(Taking the paper)

He died didn't he? I'm not...?  
They didn't resuscitate him in the  
hospital or...?

Frances shakes her head. Dallas scans the paper as she talks.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

I had to leave to let the dog  
sitter go so I missed the end...  
Have you called her? Is she  
arrested? Is she out on bail? What  
the fuck is going on?

Frances starts crying. Dallas takes her hand.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

Oh sweetheart, she'll be okay, she  
will be fine, I'll call... who  
shall I call? Her mother? We'll  
call someone -

FRANCES

It's not -

DALLAS

It was a crazy thing she did but  
it's Diane, it's still Diane -

FRANCES

I'm leaving Robert.

DALLAS

You're leaving?

FRANCES

Well I'm, we're breaking up, we...  
it's over, I don't know who's  
leaving but it's over.

DALLAS

Right. Okay.

FRANCES

Last night... a man lay dying *at my*  
*feet* and I couldn't focus on  
anything except another inch and  
Robert would have taken that  
bullet. That's all that was going  
around my head, how simple my life  
would be if he'd been balancing on  
his left foot instead of his right.  
You shouldn't think like that about  
the father of your kids.

DALLAS

Since when?

Frances laughs a little. Dallas looks at her.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

So what now? What's the plan? Have  
you talked to the kids?

FRANCES

No. I will, I just, I think in the long run it'll be the right choice for them too. You know, they'll be happier.

DALLAS

They won't. They'll just add that to their bank of reasons to hate you. My son holds me responsible for one husband dying and the other one leaving. I'm anathema to him now. The other night we were eating dinner and he took his food up to his room because I was *breathing too heavily* and it was *putting him off*.

Frances laughs a little

FRANCES

Breathing too heavily? Are you sure he didn't mean breathing too *much* or too often? -

DALLAS

He hates me. And you know what, at the moment, I hate him more.

Frances stares at her, like, come on.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

I'm just telling you the truth. Also, do you enjoy being on your own? Because if you're expecting to find something better then believe me when I say you will be disappointed. I'd love to recommend the single life of a middle aged woman -

FRANCES

You're not middle aged.

DALLAS

Thank you but I know what you're really saying is "*I'm not middle aged*" and you are. Sorry.

FRANCES

I won't be on my own anyway.

Dallas looks at her. She's taken aback.

DALLAS

That is a horrible idea.

FRANCES  
Why?

DALLAS  
Why?

FRANCES  
He's the only thing that's kept me sane this last year. I love him, I think.

DALLAS  
You don't love him.

FRANCES  
I do. I think.

DALLAS  
He makes you come. Anyone who makes you come, when you haven't even wanted to come in years, you're going to think you're in love with.

FRANCES  
I'm not a teenager.

DALLAS  
You are. Right now, mentally, and vaginally, that's what you are.  
(beat)  
(She looks around)  
I'm going to order a tea.

She signals for someone to take their order. She picks the paper back up.

DALLAS (CONT'D)  
(scanning the page)  
Is there anything about us in here?

CUT TO:

EXT. AN APARTMENT BLOCK, BROOKLYN - DAY

Frances looks at her watch and rings the doorbell. After a beat she rings again.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
Yep?

FRANCES  
It's me.

She's buzzed in.

CUT TO:

INT. THE APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Frances waits outside an apartment door. After a beat it opens. This is Julian. He's younger than Frances, maybe by ten years or so. He has a full beard and a nice face.

JULIAN

How's it going? I just got your messages. I put my earplugs in last night, must have forgotten to take them out.

FRANCES

Oh. Okay.

JULIAN

You alright?

Frances shakes her head. She goes to speak again but she can't. He holds out his arms to embrace her. She steps into it. As they hug we can see that Frances feels good with this man. She relaxes a little, puts her head on his shoulder.

CUT TO:

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT, THE BEDROOM

Julian and Frances are having sex. It's pretty serious, athletic, orgasmic, intense lover's sex. Frances locks eyes with him.

FRANCES

I love you Julian I think. I -

Julian kisses her quiet. They continue having sex.

CUT TO:

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT, THE BEDROOM

Frances is lying on Julian's chest in his bed.

JULIAN

...I wished you'd have brought that newspaper.

FRANCES

I didn't think to.

JULIAN

Don't worry, I'll read it online. Fuck... I can't believe I missed that... and she's the one with the dog, the short one we saw at that bar, with the molting, yappy..?

FRANCES

Yeah. The dog's dead now too.

JULIAN

Well, I honestly thought it was a piece of taxidermy until it farted.

She half laughs. He cuddles her.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

You're ok-ay. Shhh. It's okay.

(He smooths her hair)

None of your gun totting friends are here now.

She slaps his hand away. A long pause

FRANCES

I told Robert I wanted a divorce.

A beat.

JULIAN

What?

She looks up at him, nods.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Fuck.

FRANCES

Last night was just such a -

JULIAN

You can't make a decision based on last night

FRANCES

No but it was *so* extreme, I'm not saying it would ever come to that, but he's *dead* and her life is *over*, if they'd split just two years ago, a year ago, that wouldn't have happened, I don't, I mean, I don't want anything extreme to happen between me and him.

JULIAN

Well it won't, because you're not insane.

FRANCES

Well I felt pretty crazy last night.

(beat)

I feel okay now. But that's down to you, mainly.

JULIAN

Oh. Thanks.

FRANCES

I mean I'm scared about what's about to happen but for the first time in years I feel like I've got a bit of me back, the woman I used to be.

JULIAN

What do you mean, you're great as you are.

FRANCES

No, I'm not, I'm great with you. But this is easy. I used to be sociable, you know? People asked me to go for drinks for no reason, they just wanted me around. Now if someone asks me out it's because they want a job from me, or because I'm a parent or, I don't know.

(beat)

I'm just saying it's not too late for me to be that person again.

She wraps her arms around him.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Is it okay if I stay here for a few nights? I don't want to disrupt the kids until I have to but I don't want to go home tonight. I can't fight with him again. I'll say I'm at Dallas's.

JULIAN

Well yeah, but this is.. I mean this is a shock.

She looks up at him.

FRANCES

We talked about it -

JULIAN

Well it didn't seem real. I mean you've got kids.

FRANCES

I'll still have kids.

JULIAN

Yeah I know.

FRANCES

What's the matter?

JULIAN

Nothing.

FRANCES

Why did you mention the kids?

JULIAN

What?

FRANCES

You don't understand what it's like to share your life with someone who you have literally *nothing* to say to beyond, the alarm is making that beeping sound again or, you know, we need to transfer money into the current account because the fucking, I don't know, the fucking standing order came in too early. And that's it, that is *it*. And I could do banal shit *all* day long if there was a little love, a little happiness, but there isn't. It's just dead air.

Julian shifts a little.

JULIAN

Can you... sorry my arm is dead, can you move your -

She sits up. He moves away, rubs his arm. She watches him for a bit.

FRANCES

Are you okay?

JULIAN

Yeah.

FRANCES

What's the matter?

JULIAN

Nothing.

(Then)

I thought that was the reason for me. So you could escape that.

FRANCES

Well it was, I mean it is.

JULIAN

I never wanted you to leave your husband. That's not what I wanted.

FRANCES

I didn't do it for you.

JULIAN

Okay, well good, I was just...  
sorry.

He starts getting up.

FRANCES

This is really weird, the reaction  
you're having.

JULIAN

Is it? I'm not sure it is. You've  
made this huge decision and you  
didn't even discuss it with me.

FRANCES

It's not like I'm expecting  
anything from you.

JULIAN

Really.

FRANCES

What the fuck? Yes, *really*.

JULIAN

I don't believe you, this changes  
everything.

FRANCES

What? We can be together more? Is  
that so *terrible*? You're acting  
like a huge asshole right now -

JULIAN

Well maybe I'm upset. You know,  
because we had something really...  
really... private -

FRANCES

*Private?*

JULIAN

And, and, and *unique* and... special  
and now, now you've kind of ruined  
everything.

He pulls his sweat pants on and leaves the room. She sits  
there in his bed. She doesn't fucking believe this. She looks  
panicked.

EXT. SMITH STREET, BROOKLYN - DAY

Frances is walking along the street in a world of her own.  
She's sees one of those awful adverstising posters with about  
twelve young adults in Arran sweaters and scarves, arms round  
each other, being young and hot and fun.

She stares at it, transfixed. She goes to cross a busy road but a pedestrian pulls her back on the pavement. A car whizzes by, honking their horn. She stares at the guy who pulled her back.

FRANCES  
 Sorry, I wasn't looking where I  
 was, thank you.

She walks off. As she paces she can feel the panic rising in her chest.

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
 What am I doing?

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE KITCHEN

Frances walks into the kitchen. Robert is sitting there with the kids. They are eating supper. She watches them for a beat.

FRANCES  
 Sorry. I was held up at work.

Robert looks up. He looks more together now but is quite cold and business like with her.

ROBERT  
 Well it's Tuesday. Anya picks them  
 up Tuesday.

Frances nods. She sits down with them. Lila looks at her.

LILA  
 What's the matter?

FRANCES  
 Nothing.

LILA  
 Why are you being all quiet?

FRANCES  
 I'm not. I'm tired.

LILA looks at her, saying nothing.

ROBERT  
 (to TOM)  
 Don't watch your iPad at the table.

TOM spoons food into his mouth, eyes fully on the iPad.

TOM  
 (mouth full)  
 It's math.

He keeps staring at it. Lila puts some food on a plate and slides it over to Frances. Frances looks down at the plate. She smiles at her, squeezes her hand. After a beat she starts eating.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE

Frances shuts the door to one of the kid's bedrooms and walks downstairs. She sees Robert in the sitting-room watching TV. She walks in. Sits down on one of the armchairs to the right of him. He doesn't take his eyes off the TV.

ROBERT  
 I wasn't sure you were coming back.

Frances nods. After a beat he turns it off.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
 So how do you want to do this?

FRANCES  
 I don't know.

She puts her head in her hands.

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
 I don't know.

ROBERT  
 Frances -

FRANCES  
 My mother died when she was sixty three. My grandmother was fifty fucking two.

ROBERT  
 Okay -

FRANCES  
 My matrilineage is not strong. You know, we have good hair but our hearts are shit, and I keep thinking, I'm 45. I'm forty five years old. I've got 25, 30 years left on this earth, I mean at *best* -

Robert sits down beside her, takes her face in his hands

ROBERT

What are you going to spend those  
30 years doing? Finding yourself?

FRANCES

I don't know -

ROBERT

What if you hate what you find?

FRANCES

Well, then I'll -

ROBERT

You know what I think?

FRANCES

No.

ROBERT

I think I feel alive, right now. I  
feel alive.

A beat. She releases her face from his hands.

FRANCES

Sorry, what do you mean?

ROBERT

All this, talking, feeling... I  
wouldn't want to do it every day  
but

(he thumps his chest)

I feel my heart beating, my blood  
pumping. What does that mean?

FRANCES

I don't know -

ROBERT

It means this isn't dead. Our  
marriage is alive. We owe it,  
Franny. We owe it another shot.

She stares at him. It's really hard to see what she's  
thinking. She sort of looks blankly at him. Eventually she  
nods.

FRANCES

Okay.

She wipes her nose. He hugs her.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

(almost a whisper)

Poor Diane.

ROBERT  
You mean poor Nick? He's the one  
who's dead.

FRANCES  
Yeah. Poor Nick, I meant poor Nick.

Robert continues to hug her.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE BEDROOM

Frances and Robert are having sex. It is not great but it's in full motion. He comes loudly. He pulls off her. Kisses her forehead, cheek, and the side of her mouth. She smiles. He goes to go down on her.

FRANCES  
No its okay

ROBERT  
(whispers)  
No let me

FRANCES  
No it's fine

ROBERT  
(whispers)  
Please I want to

FRANCES  
It doesn't matter

ROBERT  
(whispers)  
Please

FRANCES  
Robert -

ROBERT  
(whispers)  
I'm doing it

He's under the covers now. Frances lies there. Sighs. Closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE BATHROOM

Frances is standing in front of the mirror. She looks at herself. Looks down at her breasts. Holds them. Squeezes them. Closes her eyes.

FRANCES  
(quietly)  
It doesn't matter.

She hears her phone ring, quietly. She turns to look for it but it's not in there. She looks panicked for a minute.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE, THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frances walks in and looks around the room. Can't see her phone. She is about to walk out when Robert walks in holding it.

FRANCES  
Oh, thanks, I was -

ROBERT  
You left it in the other bathroom.

He hands it over.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Must've fallen out of your pocket.

He smiles at her. She looks at the phone. It says 'Julian missed call'. She looks over at Robert but he's just getting in his pyjamas.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Can you turn the alarm off? It's beeping again.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SCHOOL GATES - DAY

Frances is dropping the kids off at school. She walks back to the car. Looks over and see some frazzled, tired looking single mother fighting with her daughter beside their car. The daughter storm off and the mother then flips her the bird. Frances watches, horrified. Then she closes her eyes, relieved. She drives off.

CUT TO:

EXT. A STREET - DAY

Frances is in her car. She pulls up at the lights. Looks across at a news stand. There are more papers there with the Diane and Nick's story still on the front page. She looks away. She can't deal with it.

She is about to turn the radio up to drown out her thoughts when her phone rings. She picks it up and looks at the screen. It's Diane.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE AND NICK'S HOUSE, SITTING ROOM - DAY

Frances is sitting across from Diane who looks like a shadow of the woman we met a few scenes ago. The Chow Chow is lying in the background. We can hear it breathing heavily.

DIANE

... it's manslaughter, diminished responsibility, irresistible impulse, whatever, I don't... they've told me the worse case scenario is no less than 5 years, no more than 25.

FRANCES

Twenty five - No! That can't be, you were, I mean you didn't *mean* to do it. I'll have to say what I *saw* but I will also say, with no compunction, that you were pushed, *mentally*, I mean he, he, he gave you that dog which was just a total *fuck you*, I mean I can smell it from here -

DIANE

(Matter of fact)

If I'm gonna stand any kind of chance I'm going to have sell the house. So if you know anyone..? I'm putting it on the market tomorrow. Then I'm gonna buy myself some new shoes and a real cunt of a lawyer.

She looks down at her hands. A beat.

DIANE (CONT'D)

I was crazy the other night. I did try and kill him. But I'm not glad he's dead.

Frances takes her hand.

FRANCES

I know.

They sit there for a moment, holding hands. Diane looks up.

DIANE

Can I ask you a favour?

Frances nods, smiles, of course.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRANCES AND ROBERT'S HOUSE - DAY

Frances parks on the street at the front of the house. She opens the car door and then with difficulty drags the Chow Chow out of the car. She gets her keys from her bag and goes to open the door. The door doesn't open. She tries again. She takes the keys out and looks in the lock. Puts the keys back in. But she can't get it to open. She takes her phone from her bag and calls Robert. It rings for a second or two. He answers.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Hello?

FRANCES

Hi. Where are you? I can't get in, the keys aren't, there's something up with the lock.

ROBERT

I'm here. I'm in the house.

She hears a banging on one of the windows. She looks up and sees Robert looking down at her. He gives her a wave.

FRANCES

Well can you let me in?

ROBERT

No.

FRANCES

What -

ROBERT

I called your friend. Julian.

FRANCES

You -

ROBERT

I want you out Frances, I want you out of my house, out of our lives. You disgust me, if I'm honest.

FRANCES

Robert -

ROBERT

I don't trust you, I don't trust anything you say.

(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You're the villain here, not me,  
you're the liar, the adulterer, the  
wrong do-er -

FRANCES

Can you let me in so I can just -

ROBERT

I want a divorce. Like you,  
remember? But Frances? That sneaky,  
'friendly', easy way out you were  
looking for? Forget it. I want a  
divorce, I don't care how I get one

FRANCES

Robert? Robert!

But he's not at the window anymore, he's hung up. She starts  
banging on the door.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Robert! ROBERT!

After a beat or two she knows he's not coming down. So  
Frances stands outside the house in a kind of resigned shock.  
The Chow lies down in the pavement beside her, legs fully  
extended. The camera pulls back as we leave them there on the  
step.