

EXTREME CLOSE-UP

by

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Based on the novel

Extreme Close-Up (Perspectives #1)
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OVER BLACK

A Woman SIGHS.

EXT. SUBURBIA - MORNING

Dunwoody, Georgia, specifically. Upscale homes with tidy landscaping. Mature trees held in check by HOA guidelines.

We hear the Woman MOAN SOFTLY.

PUSH IN on a pretty house with an overgrown lawn.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Big master bedroom. Feminine knickknacks on the dresser. Nothing but a thin layer of dust on the tall chest.

LISA TAYLOR (41), sound asleep on one side of the king-sized bed. The other side hasn't been slept on. In years, from the look of things.

She's having a sexy dream, given her squirming and the little PURRING SOUND.

The sound grows deeper -- more like a GROWL.

And it's definitely not coming from Lisa, now. It's loud. Unpleasant. Ugly, even.

LISA

Are you shitting me? Who mows their lawn at this hour?

She punches the pillow like a woman who's slept like crap the last few years and was just cheated out of an orgasm.

Yanking at her twisted noose of a T-shirt, she goes to the window. Her JAW CLENCHES as she scowls out at the world.

LISA (CONT'D)

What the-- Who's mowing my lawn?

EXT. LISA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa stomps across freshly-cut grass, muttering.

LISA

Not my screw-up... I'm not gonna pay some random lawn...

(MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)
 (stops short)
 God.

Across the yard, there's a shirtless, sweat-slicked LAWN GOD.

His mirrored sunglasses glint at Lisa. He turns his baseball cap from back to front, shuts off the mower.

Lisa braces for confrontation as the gorgeous young guy advances. Up close, he's all sculpted muscle and golden skin.

LISA (CONT'D)
 Hey, uh, hate to tell you this, but
 you're at the wrong house.

LAWN GOD
 Sorry, ma'am. Didn't realize you
 were home.

He tugs off his hat, wipes his brow with a forearm.

Lisa watches a bead of sweat land on his chest, slide down his torso and disappear into his waistband...

Stop eye-fucking the kid. Lisa jerks her gaze back to his mirrored sunglasses.

Nearby, something starts SPUTTERING LOUDLY.

LISA
 What I'm saying is I didn't hire
 you. You're mowing the wrong lawn.

LAWN GOD
 I'll just finish up and get out of
 your way.

LISA
 Jesus. I told the homeowners
 association not to do this.

Lawn God tries to interrupt, but can't get a word in.

LISA (CONT'D)
 Sorry. It's not your fault my ex is
 jerking me around more than usual,
 but he won't pay you and I can't.

The in-ground SPRINKLERS come on, drenching them both before they can jump out of the way.

LISA (CONT'D)
 Oh my god! Seriously?
 (then)
 (MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)

Let me see the work order. I'll call your boss and explain the situation.

LAWN GOD

I don't actually have a work order, per se.

His eyes are still hidden behind the water-flecked sunglasses, but it's clear he noticed that Lisa's braless under her wet T-shirt. She crosses her arms.

The sprinkler comes back around, just missing them.

LAWN GOD (CONT'D)

I see you got an irrigation system.

LISA

Nothing gets by you, huh?

Lawn God stifles a grin.

LISA (CONT'D)

No work order. Fine, I'll just call that shrew at the HOA.

She trudges back toward the house.

LAWN GOD

No, wait. Ma'am, please.

LISA

Don't worry about finishing, but leave me your card so I can--

Lawn God jogs to catch up to her.

LAWN GOD

Please stop walking.

LISA

--write you a nice Yelp review.

LAWN GOD

Ah, shit. Mrs. Taylor, wait.

Lisa freezes on the top step. Turns to find she's eye level with his mirrored lenses.

She notices the stubble on his angular jaw. The shape of his finely-sculpted lips. Hair overdue for a cut curling from under his ball cap. His Adam's apple bobs, an unexpected sign of nerves for a Lawn God.

LISA
So, you *do* have a work order.

LAWN GOD
Not exactly.

He rubs his shoulder, biceps flexing across his chest. The braided leather around his wrist would look like a corny bohemian affectation on anyone else, but on him it's sexy.

Lisa catches herself staring again.

LISA
Uh-huh. You wanna tell me how you know my name?

LAWN GOD
I'm not supposed to. How 'bout I just leave and--

LISA
How 'bout no?

LAWN GOD
(chuckles)
Yeah, I didn't think so.

Then he pulls off his glasses.

His eyes are more than "pretty." They're ocean-deep. Soulful.

FLASHBACK - 12 YEARS AGO

Lisa stands in exactly the same spot. She has a glass of iced tea in one hand, cup of juice in the other.

Laughing and screaming, JAKE (3) chases BRADY (11). Brady lets Jake tag him, then he drops and rolls. When Brady notices Lisa, his eyes light up. They're ocean-deep. Soulful.

BACK TO SCENE

LISA
Brady?

LAWN GOD/BRADEN
(sheepish)
Sorry about the cloak and dagger.

Lisa goes through a slew of emotions, then stiffens.

LISA
Does your mother know you're here?

BRADEN
No.

He looks away, absently rubbing his shoulder again.

LISA
(off his shoulder)
I was sorry to hear about your injury.

BRADEN
It happens.

LISA
I know, but I'm sorry it happened to you, Brady.

BRADEN
Thanks. And it's *Braden* these days, Mrs. Taylor.

LISA
(bitter)
It's *Miz Taylor* these days, Braden.

Braden nods.

BRADEN
I'm sorry. About... everything.

LISA
It happens.

BRADEN
Yeah, but it shouldn't have happened to you.

His eyes go stormy. *There's history here.*

LISA
So, what are your plans for summer?

BRADEN
I'm tending bar down at Sully's and I might take a couple classes.

LISA
Didn't you just graduate?

Braden chuckles at himself.

BRADEN

Yeah, but what am I gonna do with a degree in biology?

Lisa frowns like she's got something to say about that. Opts for emotional distance and a change of subject, instead.

LISA

Do you still live near campus?
That's a long drive.

BRADEN

No, I'm crashing at mom's 'til I find an apartment.

Heavy awkward silence.

LISA

So Vance sent you to do the lawn.
In lieu of rent, knowing him.

Braden tries to respond, but she talks over him.

LISA (CONT'D)

Well, you can tell him I don't need his games or-- Never mind, I'll tell him myself.

Braden grabs her wrist before she turns back to the house.

BRADEN

It wasn't Vance. Just let me finish and we'll forget it, okay?

LISA

No. Not okay.

She tries to tug her arm free, but he doesn't let go.

LISA (CONT'D)

I'm sure it seems I'm overreacting, but we just had this big argument--

BRADEN

It was Jake. Don't tell him I told you. Please.

He drops her arm.

LISA

Jake? He's away at baseball camp.

BRADEN

I know. He's worried about you, but he'd be pissed if he knew I told you that. He asked me to sneak in and take care of the yard while he's gone. Said you had yoga in the mornings...

LISA

Yoga's expensive. I didn't realize you guys were in touch.

BRADEN

We weren't. It was a surprise when he called. A good surprise. I missed him.

LISA

He missed you, too.
(watery smile)
God, I love that little shit. I can't believe he did that.

BRADEN

He's a good kid. Best little brother a guy could ask for.
(earnest)
You're not gonna tell him about this conversation, are you?

LISA

No. I promise. And since Vance had nothing to do with it, I'm going to pay you for your work.

BRADEN

No ma'am, you're not.

His smile is so sexy, it fries Lisa's brain a little.

LISA

Well. That's ridiculous.

BRADEN

I don't want your money. But there *is* something...

He licks his lips. Lisa struggles not to stare.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Any chance you still make that iced tea I used to love?

LISA

Tea? Right. Yeah, you must've spent half your childhood drinking tea at my kitchen table.

She walks backward to the door.

LISA (CONT'D)

Think I've got some. Be right back.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

A SWEATY GLASS OF ICED TEA. There's something SEXY about it. A drop of condensation slips down the side, reminiscent of Braden's sweat.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Lisa sets her CAMERA aside. She exits with the wet glass.

Through the window, we see her deliver the tea to Braden in the back yard. Even at a distance, his smile is devastating.

INT. PHOTO STUDIO - DAY

Basic black box room. Boxes of office equipment, piles of back-to-school supplies. A NOTICE OF OVERDUE RENT.

A box of PAPERCLIPS in a LIGHT BOX.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Lisa moves the box, changes a camera setting. She snaps a few TIGHT, ARTSY PICTURES OF THE PAPERCLIPS.

She takes the paperclips out of the light box. Replaces them with a BOX OF CRAYONS.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

She dumps out the box. Adjusts focus on the PILE OF CRAYONS.

FLASHBACK

A pile of crayons on Lisa's kitchen table. JAKE (5), works on his coloring book. BRADY (13) looks up from his drawing. His eyes and smile are disconcertingly beautiful.

BACK TO SCENE

Lisa scoops up the crayons without taking any more pictures.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

ARTSY FRAMED PHOTOS on the walls. Shots of random objects cropped tight, shot in extreme close-up to emphasize texture.

Lisa and NATALIE (30s, uptight hair, laid-back vibe) pick at remains of lunch.

LISA

They had a pipe burst or something, so he wants me to cover Jake's camp and he'll pay me back. He knows I can't do that.

NATALIE

(reminding her)

I've got a dozen partners in need of a photographer. The gig's yours if you want it.

LISA

(thankful, but)

I promised myself I'd never resort to taking portraits.

NATALIE

Then what are you gonna do?

LISA

I might pick up some work shooting equipment on location, just 'til the studio's paid up.

NATALIE

Bulldozers are higher art than portraits?

LISA

Ha! "Art."

NATALIE

What? You're an artist.

LISA

I take pictures of office supplies.

NATALIE

That smells like Vance's brand of horseshit.

Lisa concedes with a shrug.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
For all we know, you could be the
second coming of Annie Leibovitz.

LISA
Cool. And you can be the next Ruth
Bader Ginsburg.

Natalie gets up to refill their empty glasses. She GASPS.

NATALIE
Oh my. You hired a gardener?

Lisa joins her at the window.

Outside, Braden clips a hedge, shirtless and sweaty.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Speaking of art...

LISA
That's Elena's son, Braden.

NATALIE
No shit?

LISA
He's all grown up, now.

NATALIE
I noticed.

Braden looks up, raises the clippers in greeting. Lisa waves.

LISA
He's working really hard.

NATALIE
Yeah.

LISA
I bet he's thirsty. Think he's
thirsty? He looks thirsty.

NATALIE
You look thirsty.

Lisa pours a glass of iced tea.

LISA
Shut up.

Natalie laughs as Lisa exits to

LISA'S YARD

Braden stops bagging cuttings, takes off his sunglasses.

BRADEN
Is that for me?

LISA
Yes, and you're doing too much.

She hands him the sweaty glass. Pats her overheated neck.

BRADEN
I disagree. Respectfully.

He toasts her with the glass and drinks.

LISA
It's the weekend. You should be out
having fun.

She watches him drain the glass.

BRADEN
Mm, thanks, Ms. Taylor. It's as
good as I remembered.

LISA
I wish you'd let me give you more
than just tea.

Braden's eyes go dark for a second, like they're locked onto prey. Lisa laughs, embarrassed.

LISA (CONT'D)
Like money... I don't... have.

Braden grins. He slides his sunglasses back on.

BACK TO LISA'S KITCHEN

Lisa returns with the empty glass. She gives Natalie a weak smile. Scrubs the glass by hand as they stare out the window, watching Braden work.

NATALIE
As your lawyer and best friend,
it's my expert opinion that you
should totally hit that.

LISA

God, please. The only thing more embarrassing than my drooling over him would be the horrified look on his face if he knew.

INT. LISA'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Lisa struggles to focus as she edits photos of pencils.

The DOORBELL rings. *She's not expecting anyone.*

INT. LISA'S FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa glimpses a muscled arm through the sidelight window. *Shit.* She pats her hair, checks her clothes. Opens the door.

LISA

Hi. What's up?

She acts casual, like she hasn't been perving on him.

BRADEN

Hey, I was just coming home from work and something occurred to me. Do you know when you last changed your air filter?

LISA

Oh. They probably did it when I had my oil changed, why?

BRADEN

I mean the one in your house.

LISA

There's one in my house?

INT. LISA'S HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa watches Braden remove the air vent cover and pull out a big square of filth.

LISA

Oh my god! How did you know?

Braden puts everything back.

BRADEN

Lucky guess. I'll pick up a new one for you.

LISA

That was nasty. Must be one of the things Vance used to take care of.

Braden's mouth tightens.

BRADEN

If you ask me, Vance didn't take care of the right things. Not that you asked me.

A heavy moment. Lisa forces a laugh, heads back to the

FOYER

LISA

I'm not exactly president of his fan club, either.

BRADEN

Is he dicking around with all the bills, or just yard maintenance?

LISA

He said everything will be late this month, because they had to get all that work done on the house.

BRADEN

(annoyed)

They're remodeling the kitchen with the new granite my mom had to have.

LISA

Heh. Elena.

BRADEN

You must hate her.

He watches closely for Lisa's reaction. She shrugs.

LISA

I thought I did, but I just hated the situation. She is who she is.

BRADEN

She's a spoiled brat.

LISA

(chastises)

She's your *mom*.

BRADEN
You're not disagreeing.

LISA
No, I'm not. She's a brat.

Braden's grin is so hot, she has to look away.

LISA (CONT'D)
You were a brat, too, as I recall.

BRADEN
Yeah, I can see why you'd think so.
I had reasons.

He suddenly seems tense, uncomfortable.

Lisa opens the door to let the poor boy escape.

LISA
Thanks again for all your--

BRADEN
(blurts)
Did you ever fuck my dad?

Lisa freezes with her hand on the doorknob. The question hangs in the air, like they're both surprised he asked it.

LISA
No.

She drops the facade of polite distance, relaxes.

LISA (CONT'D)
You want some tea?

BRADEN
I'd take a beer if you've got it.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa hands Braden a bottle.

BRADEN
Thanks.

He crosses the kitchen to look at a FRAMED PHOTO on the wall.

Lisa sips her beer and watches him study the photo's colorful lines and twisted shadows.

FLASHBACK

VANCE (40ish, bro) drinks a beer, frowns at the same photo.

VANCE

Why'd you cut the sides off? You
can't even tell what it is, now.

BACK TO SCENE

LISA

It's a park bench.

BRADEN

How can you tell?

LISA

I took it when I visited a friend
in Austin a while ago.

BRADEN

You took this? Wow. It looks like
something out of a gallery.

LISA

Thanks.

She's dazed from the emotional orgasm he just gave her.

BRADEN

Do you have any more?

LISA

Beer?

BRADEN

No, more pictures like this.

INT. LISA'S HOME OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa watches Braden move from one framed photo to the next.
He stops at a SHOT OF SOMETHING PALE, SMOOTH AND CURVY.

BRADEN

(suggestive)

Is it wrong that I wish I was there
when you took this one, Ms. Taylor?

LISA

Only if you have an aversion to
butternut squash.

BRADEN

Squash?

(looks from a new angle)

Dunno that I've ever had butternut squash, but I'd eat this one.

Lisa takes a drink, hiding impure thoughts behind the bottle. Braden drops onto her sofa.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I love the way you see things. So this is what you do? You take these great pictures and... what? How does it work? I bet you sell a ton of them.

LISA

They're up on some photo stock sites, but no. I shoot office equipment and supplies for catalogues. That's my real job.

BRADEN

Sounds like you meant to say your 'real boring job.'

LISA

Yeah, but at least the pay sucks.
(deflects)
How 'bout you?

BRADEN

Occasional selfie, that's about it.

Lisa sits on the other end of the sofa.

LISA

You know what I mean. What's next for you?

BRADEN

Hell if I know. I wanted to go into sports medicine, but I was probably concussed when I thought of it.

LISA

Don't bullshit me, Brady. Braden. You didn't major in biology by accident.

BRADEN

I missed you, Ms. Taylor. Y'know, you're still the only one who never bought the act.

Lisa raises her eyebrows, waits for him to continue.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I've always loved football, ever since I started playing Pop Warner when I was five. The first time I broke my arm, I was seven. Landed on it inches from the end zone and the ball rolled away. The clock ran out and we lost. Never heard the end of it.

He tenses and drains his beer.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

In middle school, I could look at an x-ray of my shoulder and tell you which tendon was strained or torn. By high school, I'd sprained or broken most of my fingers, broke the other arm, strained my Achilles and had shoulder tendonitis.

LISA

I remember the arm. Jake was so excited you let him be the first to sign your cast.

BRADEN

Of course I did.

(smiles, shrugs)

High school was crazy. I came in as backup quarterback for varsity, but then coach bumped me to starter...

(smile fades)

I'd never seen my dad so happy. Not even at Steph's wedding.

Lisa realizes she's clenching her jaw. Rubs it.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

So I worked even harder after that, and when I got to UGA they started me at quarterback after two games.

(lost in memories)

For a while, I thought I'd won and lost everything on that field.

LISA

Not anymore?

BRADEN

No. The injury took me out just in time. I still love the game. But I hated the *job*.

Lisa takes his empty bottle.

LISA

Want another?

BRADEN

Sure, if you're not sick of me yet.

LISA

Not yet.

INT. LISA'S FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa and Braden sit down with fresh beers.

LISA

You never answered my question. What's next? Have you applied to med school or what?

BRADEN

Med school?
(forced laugh)
I was thinking of physical therapy, not med school.

LISA

And I was thinking you were done trying to bullshit me.

BRADEN

Habit. Sorry. Yes, I'd love to go to med school, and no, I haven't applied. My grades in core classes were good enough, but I bombed the MCAT -- y'know, the admission exam.

LISA

That can't be true.

BRADEN

That's what happens when you don't study.

LISA

So take it again.

BRADEN

I was gonna... But c'mon. I'm smart for a jock, but I'm no med student.

LISA

Never thought I'd hear Chet's voice come out of your mouth.

BRADEN

(chuckles)

My dad did say it first, yeah.

LISA

God, he's an asshole.

(oops)

Sorry. I shouldn't have said that.

BRADEN

No, you're right. He's an asshole. Doesn't mean he's wrong.

LISA

It doesn't. But he is.

(remembers)

And you thought I slept with him.

BRADEN

More like I wanted to be sure you didn't.

He stares at her face, considering her over his bottle as he takes a long swallow.

Lisa surreptitiously presses her thighs together.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I remember those conversations we used to have. You were always the one person who'd talk to me. *Listen* to me. Everyone else was just there for the quarterback.

LISA

I saw that.

BRADEN

We had some marathons, huh? Up at the lake?

LISA

Vance picked a fight with me after one of those marathon talks.

(clenches her jaw)

(MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)
He accused me of flirting with our
best friends' kid.

BRADEN
With *me*? You did not.

Lisa rubs her jaw.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
(concerned)
What's that about? You have TMJ?

LISA
I just clench my teeth a lot when
I'm stressed.

He moves closer, stops with his hands inches from her face.

BRADEN
Do you mind?

Lisa shakes her head, incapable of speaking without
embarrassing herself.

Braden expertly walks his fingers along the edges of her jaw,
up to her cheekbones then presses lightly with his thumbs.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
This where it hurts?

LISA
Yes.

He massages small circles, cradling her head in his hands.

BRADEN
Better?

LISA
Mm-hm.

BRADEN
These are your masseter muscles,
and they run from here...

He places his thumbs above her cheekbones and smooths them
down to the bottom edges of her jaw.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
...down to here.

LISA
Oh.

BRADEN

When they ache, just feel for the hinges, right here, and massage with your thumbs...

Lisa tries to concentrate on what he's saying, but she's more focused on the way his lips move as he talks. Her BREATHING is deeper than usual -- it's so loud it drowns out his voice.

Then Braden brushes a thumb across her lips.

Lisa laughs and backs away.

LISA

What do you think you're doing?

BRADEN

(mischievous)

I'm not a kid anymore, Ms. Taylor.

LISA

From what I've heard, you've got no need to flirt with the likes of me.

She takes their empty bottles. Braden follows her to the

KITCHEN

BRADEN

Don't believe the hype. I didn't hook up with every girl in school.

Lisa gives him a skeptical look.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I had a reputation because I dated seniors when I was a freshman.

LISA

That's it? I heard you got caught with a teaching assistant.

BRADEN

(a little embarrassed)

Oh. Yeah. That was senior year.

Lisa laughs.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

What can I say? I've always had a thing for older women.

(makes eye contact)

For you, specifically.

LISA

Uh, what?

BRADEN

You must've known I had a crush on you. I was so obvious.

LISA

Nope. I had no clue.

BRADEN

Why'd you think I hung out with Jake so much when I was twelve and he was only like, four? I love the guy, but back then he was just an excuse to spend time here.

LISA

Never crossed my mind. Guess you weren't as transparent as you think.

BRADEN

I always imagined coming by one day and sweeping you off your feet.

LISA

Aw... that's cute. Where was Vance in this scenario?

BRADEN

He got hit by a bus.

They laugh.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

So, naturally I stopped by to pay my respects.

LISA

Naturally.

BRADEN

Then everyone else left and I stayed to help you put all the casseroles in the fridge.

LISA

That was very thoughtful of you.

Her chuckle gets stuck in her throat when Braden comes closer, pretty much trapping her against the counter.

BRADEN

And then I hugged you, like this...
(hugs her)
And kissed your cheek, like this...

He kisses her cheek, her jaw. Lisa's hands fist at her sides.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

And I promised to make you forget
about that asshole. And you said,
"I already have."

His lips brush her ear. Lisa shivers. Gently pushes him away.

LISA

That's how you envisioned sweeping
me off my feet when you were
twelve?

Braden grins, though his eyes remain dark and hungry.

BRADEN

The fantasy evolved over time.
That might've been more what I had
in mind when I was eighteen.

He rakes his appreciative gaze over her from head to toe.
Lisa fights her physical response to him.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Let me show you what I have in mind
at twenty-three.

He slides his hand behind her neck. Lisa backs away.

LISA

Braden, I'm sorry, but I'm not
interested in you that way. I still
see you as that boy.

BRADEN

Do you?

He relaxes against the counter, gives her a small smile.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I thought we didn't bullshit each
other. I'm not ashamed to admit I
want you. Why pretend you don't
feel the same?

LISA

I'll admit you're very attractive,
but that doesn't mean I want you
like that.

BRADEN

With all due respect, Ms. Taylor,
your eyes and your body say you do.

LISA

I-- What?

BRADEN

Your pupils are dilated, you're
breathing like you just ran up the
stairs, your cheeks are pink and...

His eyes dip down to her chest. Lisa crosses her arms.

LISA

I'm not having this conversation.

BRADEN

There's nothing to be embarrassed
about, it's just your body's
involuntary response to certain
stimuli. It's physiology. Happens
to everyone.

Lisa tries to interrupt, but he continues--

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Remember at the lake house once,
about ten years ago, I pitched a
fit and ruined the whole day?

LISA

Once?

BRADEN

Yeah, I know. I was a brat.

LISA

And what's that got to do with my
wanting to crawl under a rock and
die right now?

BRADEN

I'm thinking of one tantrum in
particular. My dad was giving me
shit because I had a hard-on,
which, of course was my body's
involuntary response to certain
stimuli.

(MORE)

BRADEN (CONT'D)

It happened a lot back then, and dad never missed an opportunity to call me out on it.

LISA

Asshole.

BRADEN

That day, the stimulus occurred when Jake was grabbing at you, trying to get you to pick him up. Your bikini top slipped for a second, and I got my first glimpse of a nipple.

LISA

Oh god.

BRADEN

Five minutes later, dad caught me starching a sock and decided to be a complete dick about it.

LISA

I'm sorry. For what it's worth, I appreciate you telling me. Nobody's ever "starched a sock" in my honor before.

BRADEN

(laughs at her)
Yeah they have, trust me.

LISA

Oh. Well, no one else ever told me about it.

BRADEN

Maybe no one else has been out of his skull in lust with you for half his life.

He takes a deep breath. Lisa can hardly breathe at all.

LISA

Braden, I'm beyond flattered, but there's Jake... and everything else. You know this can't happen.

Braden inches closer, eyes and voice dark as sin.

BRADEN

I know we're both adults, both single.

(MORE)

BRADEN (CONT'D)
I know I'm dying to touch you. I
know I can make you feel good.

LISA
(whispers)
Are you trying to kill me?

BRADEN
I know I have to see that nipple
again, because every one I've seen
since has paled in comparison.

Lisa snaps out of it, spell broken.

LISA
Laying it on pretty thick, huh?

BRADEN
Nope.

He points at her left breast.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
That, right there, is the nipple
that launched a thousand starched
socks.

He reaches for her hand. She jumps back, ass smacking into
the cabinet. He grins.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
And now, I'm gonna go home and
starch one more.

He places a chaste kiss on her palm and folds her fingers
over it. Then he takes the knuckle of her thumb into his
mouth and releases it after a brief but glorious assault by
his teeth and tongue.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
(raspy)
Make that two more.

Lisa sags against the counter.

LISA
You are. You're trying to kill me.

Braden adjusts himself. Gives her a tight smile.

BRADEN
The feeling's mutual, Ms. Taylor.

INT. LISA'S FAMILY ROOM - LATER

Lisa straightens the cushions, lost in thought. She studies her hand, sucks the knuckle that was just in Braden's mouth.

LISA

Jesus...

She turns off lights, shutting down the house for the night.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lisa undresses for bed. She FORCES HERSELF TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR. *Face. Boobs. Butt.* HATES WHAT SHE SEES.

SAME SCENE - LATER

The clock reads 12:17 A.M. Lisa punches her pillow.

INSERT: GLITCHY FLASHES OF BRADEN AT AGES 23, 15, 23, 13, 23, 11 -- all looking at us with THOSE EYES.

SAME SCENE - SERIES OF SHOTS

-- 12:49 A.M. Lisa stares at the ceiling, eyes wide open.

-- 1:35 A.M. *Fuck it.* She slides a hand under the blanket.

-- 2:08 A.M. *Well, that didn't work.* She's still awake.

-- 3:12 A.M. On her laptop, she responds to an email from Camp Big League, subject: *Late Payment.*

LISA

(as she types)

"Yes, thank you, I'm aware the payment is late, but I still don't have it, because Jake's shit-ass dad is a dick. All the best."

She highlights and DELETES all of that.

Opens email from Big Box Office Supplies, subject: *Freelance Fee.* The phrase "*unable to approve your request for an increase*" stands out.

LISA (CONT'D)

(as she types)

"Great. Then fuck you, I quit."

She highlights all but *miskeys and accidentally SENDS it.*

Oh. Shit. She bursts into manic laughter.

INT. PUB - DAY

Busy happy hour. Lots of SUITS.

Lisa and Natalie drink margaritas.

LISA

I hate shooting people, but I guess
I can shoot lawyers. It's penance.

NATALIE

Middle of the night's probably not
the best time to respond to email.

LISA

I wasn't tired!

NATALIE

Of course you weren't. The hottest
guy you've ever seen probably had
his cock in his fist and was
thinking sexy things about you.

LISA

When you put it that way...

NATALIE

When have you ever been that tired?

LISA

Nobody's ever been that tired.

Natalie taps her glass to Lisa's, drinks.

LISA (CONT'D)

Even if I were tempted *and I'm not*,
I'd never go through with it.

NATALIE

You're dead to me. If this wasn't
my favorite suit, I would rend my
garment right now.

She pretends to tear her lapel.

LISA

He's twenty-three! I've got clothes
older than that.

(mutters)

Nothing that fits, but still.

NATALIE

Not buying.

LISA

It would be impossible enough to measure up to girls his age, let alone his blown-out-of-proportion memory of my younger, thinner self.

NATALIE

Now you're just making shit up.

Lisa leans in, hesitantly confides--

LISA

There's something wrong with me, okay? I can't stop thinking about "the slip." It's like I'm really embarrassed, but also... *not*. I'm sick. He was a child. What kind of freak would be turned-on by that?

NATALIE

Did you do it on purpose?

LISA

No, but--

NATALIE

Were you aware when it happened?

LISA

No.

NATALIE

If beautiful thirteen year-old Brady showed up and asked to see your tits, would you show him?

LISA

Shh! Of course not!

NATALIE

So you're turned on by a *man* who got a look at you once. You're not sick, you've just got a bit of an exhibitionist streak.

LISA

That doesn't quite jibe with my body image.

NATALIE

Doesn't matter. You're hot and you've got a great rack. So even if you break my heart and don't fuck him, there's no reason not to show the grown boy what he wants to see.

LISA

Yeah, no. I hate them.

NATALIE

What? Why?

LISA

Always have. Ever since I was sixteen and my boyfriend, Ricky Lavin said "You need to firm these things up!"

NATALIE

Fuck Ricky Lavin! What's a snot-nosed teenager know, anyway?

LISA

(weakly)

His dad was a gynecologist.

NATALIE

So you've lived your entire adult life hating your body because of that dumbass.

Lisa absorbs that.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

That's tragic, Lise.

LISA

(shaken)

God... Think of all the sexy clothes I never wore.

NATALIE

The sexy guys you never fucked.

LISA

Shit.

NATALIE

You could make up for years of unfucked men in one fell swoop.

LISA

No! It's-- no. There's Jake and Vance and Elena. It's too complicated.

The Waitress drops off chips and salsa.

WAITRESS

Another round, ladies?

LISA

Not for me.

NATALIE

We're good, thanks.

Waitress leaves. Natalie dunks a chip, studies Lisa.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

You say Vance wasn't always a condescending prick, but you lived with that prick a long time.

LISA

And?

NATALIE

You need deprogramming.

LISA

He's not Charles Manson!

NATALIE

Vance and that other little fucker crushed your ego when you were too young to know any better. I think all that stuff is holding you back from getting on with your life.

LISA

(laughs)

That's a lot of deprogramming. If you're gonna have me committed, I need to pack a few things.

NATALIE

No, you can do it. Just step a little outside your comfort zone, then a little more. Baby steps.

LISA

Or maybe instead, you can lobotomize me with this fork.

NATALIE

Start with baby steps. If that
doesn't work, we'll try the fork.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lisa makes iced tea and stares out the window, jaw clenching.

Her yard looks welcoming thanks to Braden's work. Compared to
the rest, the colorful flower bushes are an overgrown mess.

LISA

Baby steps.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lisa fixes her ponytail. Tugs her cutoffs to cover her ass.
Unhooks her bra, pulls it through the arm of her tank top.

That feels good. Sexy. She takes her hair down, fluffs it.

EXT. LISA'S YARD - LATER

Lisa clips an overgrown flower bush. A breeze blows through
the loose sides of her top.

She bends to scoop clippings into a trash bag. A strap slips
off her shoulder. She glances down at herself. Shrugs so the
shirt slips further, nearly baring one breast.

LISA

(to self)

Exhibitionist. Oh, the irony.

BRADEN (O.S.)

Ms. Taylor. You're home.

Lisa jumps, startled.

LISA

Braden. Hi.

BRADEN

Sorry to--

(stares)

Jesus.

Lisa resists the urge to cross her arms.

LISA

You've done so much with the rest of the yard, I couldn't let these bushes go any longer.

BRADEN

Uh-huh.

He absently pats his shorts, drawing Lisa's attention to what appears to be an impressive erection.

Then he digs in his pocket and pulls out an 8" PVC pipe.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I mowed over a sprinkler the other day. Just gonna fix it real quick.

LISA

Thanks. I wish you'd let me give you something... Pay you, I mean.

An awkward, loaded beat.

BRADEN

(re: pipe)

This'll only take a minute.

He looks her up and down, then turns to find the broken pipe.

Lisa bends to pick up the clippers, starts cutting. She's hyper-aware of Braden watching her as he works.

He stalks toward her radiating heat and restless energy.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I need to test the system. You'll wanna stand clear.

Lisa watches him disappear behind the house.

LISA

(to self)

Fuck you, Ricky Lavin.

A moment later, the SPRINKLERS come on. SHE DOESN'T BUDGE.

Braden walks back around. Sees Lisa getting drenched. He shuts off the sprinklers and jogs over to her.

Lisa's skin is shiny and wet. Her clothes are soaked.

BRADEN

Sorry, Ms. Taylor, I thought you--

Lisa wrings out her hair.

LISA

Oops.

BRADEN

Fuck.

His eyes are so hot on her, Lisa shivers, hugs herself.

Braden takes a step closer, gently uncrosses her arms and sets them at her sides. Admires the view.

Lisa fidgets, both turned-on and mortally embarrassed.

Braden's hands slide up her arms. He pushes a wet lock of hair off her face. Licks a drop of water from her cheek.

Lisa holds her breath as he brushes his mouth against hers once... and again... She backs away.

LISA

I'm sorry. I can't.

BRADEN

You mean you won't.

LISA

I can't. So I won't.
(crosses her arms)
I'm forty-one years old.

BRADEN

Yeah. And you're playing games like a high school girl.

Frustrated, he pushes her arms down again. Holds them there.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

You think you're not attractive to men anymore? Is that it?

Lisa's eyes are wide, but she doesn't respond.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Well, *Lisa*, in case you haven't noticed, I'm a man, and this is what you do to me.

He kisses her roughly, grinding against her.

Lisa's defenses snap. She KISSES HIM BACK just as roughly.

Without breaking the kiss, Braden maneuvers them to a LOUNGE CHAIR, pulling her down on top of him. His hands lift the wet hem of Lisa's shirt. She panics.

LISA
I'm not ready.

Before his expression closes, she rushes to explain--

LISA (CONT'D)
I've been with no one besides Vance since I was younger than you.

BRADEN
(surprised)
I didn't know.
(kisses her forehead)
I've waited half my life for you.
I can wait a little longer.

Lisa traces Braden's face with her fingertip. When he closes his eyes, she brushes his eyelashes.

LISA
Even back when you were just a beautiful boy, your eyes... when you looked at me, I felt like you knew all my secrets, even the ones I didn't know.

He opens his eyes and stares into her soul.

LISA (CONT'D)
Sometimes, I had to avoid eye contact with that boy. Because he made me never want to look away.

Braden processes that a moment.

BRADEN
That had to be confusing for you.

LISA
It was.

She breaks eye contact, fiddles with his leather bracelet.

LISA (CONT'D)
It is.

She scoots to the opposite end of the lounge, facing him. His eyes flick down to her damp shirt. She covers herself.

LISA (CONT'D)

Sorry--

BRADEN

Don't. I'll be glad to have real pictures in my head instead of my imagination when I go home to take care of this.

He palms the bulge in his shorts, then teases--

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Unless you wanna lend me a sock.

Lisa notes the way his hand cups the erection she caused.

LISA

(impish)

I could lend you a sock.

Braden's eyebrows go up. Lisa stares back at him. Neither intended this sudden turn, but they're both on board.

He watches her face, slowly slides a hand down his stomach... under his waistband...

BRADEN

This is what you make me do.

Lisa's fascinated and turned-on by the flexing muscles of his forearm as his hand moves inside his shorts.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Show me, Lisa. Let me see you.

Baby steps. Lisa's terrified, but she trusts him and she wants this. Inch by inch, she lifts her shirt.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

You're perfect. Still. Perfect.

His free hand reaches out -- but not for her breasts, as expected. He LACES HIS FINGERS WITH HERS.

He holds her gaze as his hand squeezes hers a few times, then relaxes. His eyes close as he catches his breath.

Lisa tugs her shirt down. Embarrassed, but still turned-on.

Her ARTIST'S EYE zeroes in on a GLIMPSE of abs where his shirt hiked up when he pulled his hand out of his shorts.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Now you.

LISA

I'm fine.

BRADEN

Is that an "I was unmoved by the whole experience" fine, or an "I'll take care of myself the second you leave" fine?

LISA

I promised you a sock, didn't I?

BRADEN

Little late for that.

He chuckles, tugs at his shorts.

LISA

Sorry. Guess I got distracted.

He runs his hands up her thighs.

BRADEN

I can think of so many ways to distract you.

His fingertips disappear into her shorts. She stops them.

LISA

I believe you. But that's about as much distraction as I can handle for one day.

Braden nods, stands and offers a hand to help her up.

BRADEN

Hugs okay?

Lisa sinks into his hug.

LISA

Thank you.

BRADEN

(rueful)

The pleasure was all mine.

He kisses the corner of her lips. Catches her eye so there's no mistaking his meaning when he adds--

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I'll see you again soon, Lisa.

INT/EXT. HIGH-RISE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Lisa schleps photography equipment like a pack-mule. She hits the handicap access button with her foot to open the door.

Dodging BUSINESS PEOPLE, she makes her way to the elevators. THOMAS (mid-40s, handsome, gray hair) holds one open for her.

LISA

Thanks. Hit twelve, please?

THOMAS

We're going to the same place.

Lisa struggles to get her gear in before the doors close.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

You must be the photographer.

LISA

(chuckles)

What was your first clue?

THOMAS

The cameras tipped me off.

LISA

I'm Lisa Taylor. I'd shake your hand, but...

THOMAS

Your hands are full. Thomas Porter, senior partner.

LISA

Then I'll be shooting you today.

THOMAS

With a camera, I hope!

His grin probably charms all the female jurors.

INT. LAW OFFICES - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Still lugging all her gear, Lisa follows Thomas. She notes he doesn't wear a ring. Checks out the rest of him. He's clean-cut and classically handsome, but doesn't boil her blood.

THOMAS

You're in here. Hope it's okay.

INT. LAW OFFICES - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LISA
It's great, thank you.

With relief, she unloads her equipment.

THOMAS
My pleasure. See you soon, Lisa.

He smiles and exits.

LISA
(to self)
Oh god. *Focus.*

She spots a printed schedule. Uses it to fan herself as she checks out the room's natural lighting.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Backdrop, lighting, etc. in place.

Lisa and Natalie eat take-out lunch at the long table.

NATALIE
Did my dad pull the stick out of his ass before his sitting?

LISA
No, but it worked for him.
(chuckles)
Surprisingly, I've been able to coax natural smiles out of these people.

NATALIE
Maybe you're meant to photograph subjects with a pulse.

LISA
Meh.

NATALIE
Who's next?

LISA
(checks list)
Margaret Byington, then Thomas Porter. He walked me in this morning.

NATALIE

You've met the silver fox. All the admin staff love him.

LISA

What's his story? I think he was flirting with me.

NATALIE

I'm sure he was. As of about six months ago, he's single again. *Again.* But he's a decent guy, has a few kids with wife number one.

(studies Lisa)

So... if he was flirting, would you be interested?

LISA

Maybe? I probably should be, huh?

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lisa photographs MARGARET BYINGTON (50ish, dowdy).

LISA

If you'll tip your chin a bit... good. Right there. Now smile.

MARGARET

This is a professional portrait. I wouldn't want to look glib.

LISA

You won't look glib. I promise.

She takes a few more shots and checks them.

LISA (CONT'D)

Perfect. All done. That wasn't so bad, was it?

Margaret stands, smooths her skirt.

MARGARET

I'd rather have a PAP smear.

LISA

I hear you. That's not my preferred side of the camera, either.

Margaret exits. Lisa's phone BUZZES.

BRADEN - TEXT
Picked up a new air filter. U home?

Lisa responds--

LISA - TEXT
That's so sweet, but I'm on an all-day shoot...

BRADEN - TEXT
Key still under the flower pot?

LISA - TEXT
Yes, but don't make a special trip!

BRADEN - TEXT
I live around the corner...

LISA
 (to self)
 Like I could forget.

LISA - TEXT
Right. Ok then thank you!!

BRADEN - TEXT
My pleasure, Lisa. ;-)

Lisa's breath catches and releases with a tiny whimper.

LISA
 (to self)
 Fuck.

KNOCK-KNOCK.

Thomas Porter leans in the doorway.

THOMAS
 Ready for me?

LISA
 Yep. There's the hot seat.

He immediately sits with his good side to her, shoulders angled, eyes squinting a bit to warm his "trust me" smile.

LISA (CONT'D)
 You've done this before.

THOMAS
 Guilty.

Lisa gets to work.

INT. LISA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lisa talks ON THE PHONE, locking up and shutting off lights.

LISA

Yes, I said yes. He's successful and charming and I won't want to die if anyone sees us together.

(negative sound)

I wouldn't say "excited." It's kind of a broccoli date, is that wrong?

(nods)

Because it's good for me. Right, like a baby step.

(laughs)

I hope he's not taking me out for broccoli.

(chuckles)

Okay. Love you, too. 'Night.

She pockets her phone and turns off the light. A beat later, she flicks it back on.

On the floor by the air vent: a FLUFF OF LINT. The only evidence of Braden having been there earlier. She looks around from Braden's POV.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa stands in the doorway, scans the room to see what Braden saw if he ventured beyond the air vent: *perfume bottles on the dresser, books on the night stand, the neatly-made bed.*

She takes out a sexy nightie, but changes her mind and just slides in bed naked. It feels so good, she moans a little.

She closes her eyes and brushes her fingers across her cheek, over her lips... Skims her hands over her breasts.

On the night stand, her phone BUZZES.

BRADEN - TEXT

Hi.

LISA

(to self)

He reads minds, too?

LISA - TEXT

Hi.

BRADEN - TEXT

I want to come over.

Lisa struggles with this one. Finally answers--

LISA - TEXT
It's late. I'm in bed.

BRADEN - TEXT
Even better. ;-) Did I wake you?

LISA - TEXT
No.

BRADEN - TEXT
Did I... interrupt something?

Lisa sucks in a breath. *What the hell?* She looks around for a spy cam. Indecisive about how to respond, she finally types--

LISA - TEXT
Yes.

BRADEN - TEXT
Do you mind?

LISA - TEXT
No.

She waits. Then her phone pings a REQUEST FOR VIDEO CHAT. She stares at it, then quickly declines.

BRADEN - TEXT
We're doing the same thing, Lisa.

She whimpers a little.

BRADEN - TEXT (CONT'D)
I'm already thinking about you, but this would be much more interesting if we could see each other.

LISA
(to self)
Oh god. Fuck fuck fuck. Fuck.

Then she taps out--

LISA - TEXT
OK.

The phone pings another REQUEST FOR VIDEO CHAT.

She tucks the sheet over her breasts, props the phone on the night stand, and accepts.

And there's Braden with the sexiest grin ever.

BRADEN

Hi again.

He's in bed, shirtless. His biceps flex, a slow rhythm that hints at what the rest of that arm is doing O.S.

LISA

Hi again.

Her phone slips. She repositions it against the lamp.

LISA (CONT'D)

Sorry. I don't have a stand and my lighting is awful.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BRADEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

BRADEN

You look beautiful. What little I can see of you, anyway.

Lisa's got a death grip on the sheet against her chest.

LISA

This will probably not come as a surprise, but I've never done this before.

BRADEN

You've never masturbated?

LISA

(chuckles)
No, I've done that.

Braden's eyes go dark.

BRADEN

No one else has ever watched you?

LISA

No one else has ever asked.

BRADEN

(growly sound)
My inner caveman just killed a bison with his bare hands.

Lisa chuckles.

LISA

I am so far out of my comfort zone
right now, I could be attending via
satellite.

She takes a deep breath, lets the sheet slide to her waist.

BRADEN

God, you're gorgeous.

The way his voice catches, Lisa almost believes it.

She watches his reaction as she touches her breasts.

His biceps tighten and hold a moment.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Put your hand in your panties.

LISA

I'm not wearing any.

BRADEN

Fuck. Touch your pussy for me.
Please.

Lisa holds his eyes and skims her hand down her belly...
under the sheet.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Tell me how it feels.

LISA

It feels good.

BRADEN

You can do better than that.

LISA

Jesus. Fine. I'm hot. Swollen.
Wet. God, I'm fucking drenched.

Braden's face tightens and his biceps still again.

BRADEN

Show me.

Lisa freezes.

LISA

Can't you just take my word for it?

BRADEN

I need to see how you touch
yourself, so we can both imagine my
tongue on you.

FUCK. He makes a convincing argument.

Lisa moves across the bed, letting him see every inch of her.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

You. You should see what you do to
me. What you've always done to me.

LISA

Okay. Let me see.

BRADEN

God, Lisa.

He disappears from view. Then she sees him. ALL of him.

Lisa strums with more purpose.

Braden watches intently, matching tempo.

Lisa moans her release. Braden follows a heartbeat later.

SAME SCENE - MORNING

Lisa jerks awake. Confirms she's naked under the covers. Her
entire being sags with morning-after regret.

LISA

Shit.

INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa scrubs herself raw in the shower.

Shuts off the water. On the counter, her phone BLEEPs with a
voice mail. *So not ready to talk to Braden.* She braces
herself and plays the message--

MAN'S VOICE (FILTERED)

*Mrs. Taylor, this is Paul at Camp
Big League. Again. The check still
hasn't cleared, and as you know
full payment is required for--*

She deletes the voice mail. Dries off violently.

LISA
 (to phone)
 Send a text to Vance.

MALE SIRI VOICE
Okay, Lisa. What would you like to say to Vance?

LISA
 Hey asshole, Jake's camp called again. For the love of fuck, please pay them before they kick him out.

MALE SIRI VOICE
Here's your message. Are you ready to send it?

Lisa considers a moment. *Sure, why not?* Sends it.

She wraps her hair in another towel. Her phone BUZZES.

VANCE - TEXT
Working on it. Nice language btw.

Phone BUZZES again.

BRADEN - TEXT
Good morning...

Lisa can't deal. She turns the phone face down.

INT. LISA'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Lisa edits lawyer portraits. She opens the next photo to edit: *Thomas*. He's undeniably handsome.

Her phone BUZZES.

BRADEN - TEXT
You okay?

She taps back--

LISA - TEXT
Sorry- editing. It's not easy making lawyers seem life-like. LOL

BRADEN - TEXT
Ha. You busy later?

Lisa makes an unhappy little noise.

LISA - TEXT
*I've got a lot going on today. Text
me tomorrow?*

She watches the phone for a response that never comes.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Lisa's dress shows more cleavage than she's comfortable with,
judging by the way she keeps tugging on it.

She's slipping her shoes on when the DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. LISA'S FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

She pastes on a smile and opens the door--

LISA
Hi, you're early--

--to Braden. He looks her up and down with appreciation.

BRADEN
Looks to me like I'm right on time.

LISA
Sorry. Didn't realize it was you.

Avoiding eye contact, she steps outside.

EXT. LISA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She makes a production of locking the door.

BRADEN
Yeah, I got that.

LISA
I was on my way out.

BRADEN
Got that, too.

He lets her pass and follows her down to the sidewalk.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
Nice dress.

LISA
It's old. I wore it to your
sister's wedding.

BRADEN

I remember. It still looks amazing
on you.

LISA

Thanks.

She risks a glance at his face. Sees hurt and anger there.

BRADEN

And you hate me now.

LISA

I don't hate you.

BRADEN

So much for not bullshitting each
other. I knew you weren't editing
all day.

LISA

Actually, I was.

BRADEN

Then why won't you look at me?

LISA

Because I've seen too much of you.
That shouldn't have happened.

BRADEN

Why not?

Then Thomas pulls up in an expensive convertible.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

(not about the car)

Fucking classic.

Thomas gets out of the car and kisses Lisa's cheek.

THOMAS

You look beautiful.

BRADEN

(excessively deferential)

G'night, Ms. Taylor. I'll be by
tomorrow to mow the lawn.

THOMAS

You look familiar. Have we met?

BRADEN

I don't believe so, sir.

LISA

Thomas Porter, Braden Healey.

Her eyes beg Braden to behave.

LISA (CONT'D)

Braden's an old family friend.
He's been helping out around here
while my son's at camp.

THOMAS

Yes!

(shakes Braden's hand)

Of course, Brady Healey! Great to
meet you. I'm a fan. You went to
high school with my daughter and I
followed your college career. Your
injury was the shits.

BRADEN

(gracious)

Yeah, it was, but thanks. Who's
your daughter?

THOMAS

Olivia Porter. She was a
cheerleader and you had some
classes together over the years.

Braden glances at Lisa, mischievous glint in his eye.

BRADEN

Olivia yeah. Sweet girl. Pretty too
if you won't hit me for saying so.

THOMAS

Not at all. Hey, she's home for the
summer and she's not dating anyone.
You should give her a call.

BRADEN

Maybe I will.

He catches Lisa clenching her jaw.

THOMAS

Guess we should get going or we'll
lose our reservation.

Thomas opens the door for Lisa, walks around the car.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Great to meet you, Brady.

BRADEN
You too, Mr. Porter.

Braden makes sure Lisa's in then shuts her door.

Lisa catches Braden staring at her thighs and tugs her skirt down. He winks at her.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
You kids have fun.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER - NIGHT

Mid-dinner. Lisa smiles politely as Thomas drones on.

THOMAS
He was the star of my college
fantasy football team for four
years. Such a talented kid.
(fishing)
You seem to know him well.

Crap. Is she busted?

LISA
Oh, no. Not really. I've known him
a long time, but not *well*, no.

THOMAS
Just between us adults, Olivia had
such a crush. And I'll be honest, I
really hoped they'd date, too.

LISA
(clenched jaw)
Now they probably will.

Thomas passes his phone to Lisa.

THOMAS
There she is, my little girl.

ON THOMAS'S PHONE: a stereotypical CHEERLEADER with a broad white smile and perky everything.

LISA
I'm sure she's just his type.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Relieved and alone, Lisa hangs her dress. She avoids her reflection in the mirror.

INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - LATER

In a scalding shower, Lisa tries to scrub off guilt and self-loathing. Instead, her mind and body respond to her own touch. She stops the hand sliding down her stomach.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - LATER

Wrapped in a short, belted robe, wet hair dripping down her back, Lisa gulps a glass of water.

A KNOCK.

Braden stares at her through the sidelight window.

BRADEN
Open the door, Lisa.

LISA
No. It's late and I'm not dressed.

BRADEN
Open the door.

LISA
Whatever it is can wait 'til
tomorrow.

BRADEN
No, it can't.

He holds her eyes as he finds the key under the flower pot.

LISA
Fine. Okay. Put the key back, I'll
be right out.

Braden enters.

LISA (CONT'D)
Listen, I'm sorry I let things go
so far. It was wrong.

Braden shuts the door, walks toward her. She backs away.

LISA (CONT'D)
It was all wrong. I should've said
no before. I'm saying it now.

Braden's eyes look hungry, but his smile is warm.

BRADEN
I'm not asking now.

With a tight grip on her robe, Lisa backs into the cabinet.

LISA
Seriously, Braden. Get out or I'll
call the police.

Braden pulls out his phone, hands it to her.

BRADEN
It's unlocked.

He LIFTS HER ONTO THE COUNTER. Pushing her thighs apart, he drops to his knees and goes down on her.

Lisa gasps. The phone slides out of her hand and skitters across the counter. Her fingers tangle in his hair.

LISA
Braden.

BRADEN
(kisses her inner thigh)
Should I stop?

LISA
Yes. But don't.

He resumes what he was doing. If Lisa's responses are any indication (they are), Braden is very good with his mouth.

BRADEN
So damn sweet. I knew you would be.

He straightens and kisses her.

She hesitates... then returns the kiss, letting her hands explore his chest and shoulders.

Braden scoops her off the counter and she wraps her legs around his waist as he walks them out.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dark, but for a small lamp.

Braden sits on the edge of the bed, watching Lisa's eyes as he tugs the belt and her robe opens. With reverence, he slides his hands up her rib cage and cups her breasts.

Lisa watches her fingers trace the leather bracelet on his wrist. *This is Braden and this is really happening...*

Braden moves toward her left breast, murmuring--

BRADEN
A thousand socks...

LISA
Wait. Stop.

Braden freezes. Lisa lifts the hem of his shirt.

BRADEN
Christ, you had me worried there
for a second.

He yanks off his shirt.

Lisa finally explores him, touching, tasting, the ambassador
for every woman who will never fuck an Abercrombie model.

LISA
You're overdressed.

Braden strips off his jeans and boxers.

Lisa kneels and continues her exploration...

BRADEN
Lisa. *Jesus.*

His fist tightens in her hair. He tugs her to stand.

LISA
In me.

BRADEN
Fuck. Yes.

He grabs his jeans, finds a condom.

Lisa leans against the pillows. Braden crawls up her body,
teasing with his lips and tongue, finally kissing her mouth.

LISA
Now. Braden, now.

BRADEN
Yes.

He slams in to the hilt as they kiss, ravenous.

LISA
God!

She rakes her nails down his back, digs them into his ass.

BRADEN

If I'd had any idea ten years ago
that you'd feel this good, I
would've jacked off even more.

Lisa's breathless chuckle becomes a gasp as Braden pulls back
and rams home again... and again.

LISA

Oh... I think I'm... I've never...
Like this...

She climaxes and takes Braden along with her.

SAME SCENE - MOMENTS LATER

Braden pulls her back against his chest and kisses her
shoulder, holding her close while they catch their breath.

Lisa stares at the opposite wall, JAW CLENCHING. One of her
hands creeps down to hide her belly. Her face reflects myriad
questions that have no answers.

Then her expression changes to incredulity and she blurts--

LISA

You're still hard?

BRADEN

Not "still," but I'm hard again,
yeah.

LISA

My god.

BRADEN

You do this to me.

Lisa rolls over, looks down.

LISA

You're twenty-three. A good sneeze
would do that to you.

BRADEN

I'll cop to a decent recovery time.
But no one else has ever made me so
hard I could break a fucking
cinderblock with my dick.

Lisa chuckles and reaches for the appendage in question.

LISA
Flattery will get you everywhere.

BRADEN
Hey.

He stops her hand and waits for her to make eye contact.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
That wasn't flattery. It was
honesty.

LISA
Oh.

BRADEN
I swear, somehow, I'm gonna make
you see yourself the way I see you.
But first, I'm gonna make you
scream again.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

LUNCH CROWD. Natalie's trying to see into Lisa's soul and
Lisa's trying not to let her.

NATALIE
Are you gonna make me drag it out
of you?

LISA
Drag what?

NATALIE
Your date with Thomas. Tell me.
But don't get graphic, 'cause I
still have to work with him.

LISA
It was nice. He's a nice guy.

Natalie's head nods like she fell asleep, startles awake.

LISA (CONT'D)
We had dinner at that new fusion
place. Riding in his convertible
didn't turn my hair into a nest.
That was a surprise. He walked me
to the door, I kissed him on the
cheek and that was it.

NATALIE
 You seeing him again? 'Cause you
 look like you need to get laid.

Lisa barks a laugh. Slaps a hand over her mouth.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
 So you *did* sleep with him?

LISA
 No. I did not sleep with Thomas.

Natalie narrows her eyes, then lights up.

NATALIE
 Tell me everything. Don't skimp on
 the adjectives.

LISA
 (miserable)
 We had sex and then he left.

NATALIE
 That bad, huh? A lot of fumbling
 around?

LISA
 He doesn't fumble.

Natalie glares at her.

NATALIE
 I work on the chain gang. I will
 never touch anything that beautiful
 so for my own vicarious and
 prurient interest, you need to be a
 bit more forthcoming with the info.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Leaning in the window, Lisa watches Braden push the mower
 across her back yard.

LISA (V.O.)
 Fine. He's gorgeous, he's smart,
 and he knows his way around a
 vagina. There. You happy?

NATALIE (V.O.)
 Are *you*?

EXT. LISA'S YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa crosses the yard with a glass of iced tea.

LISA (V.O.)

More like terrified, but I'm trying to think of it like a once-in-a-lifetime vacation to Hawaii or someplace. You can't stay forever and you can't come back, so you've gotta experience all of it while you're there.

Braden shuts off the mower, gives her a sexy grin.

LISA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And though you know you'll be heartbroken when it's time to check out and go home, the trip was totally worth it.

Braden drains the glass. A drop of condensation lands on his chest, slides slowly. We've seen this before. *A lot has changed since then.*

Lisa licks the drop off his skin. Braden sucks in a breath, his whole body tightens in response.

She runs a hand down the ridges of his stomach, traces the low waistband of his shorts.

BRADEN

No, ma'am.

He captures her hand before it travels further.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

You deserve better than a sweaty fuck on a lawn chair.

He strokes her palm with his thumb. It's erotic.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Let me go home and grab a quick shower. And when I get back, I'm gonna take my time with you.

LISA

That sounds promising, but I'll throw your clothes in the wash and you can shower here.

She takes her hand from his grasp, palms his hard-on.

LISA (CONT'D)
I'd buy a ticket to see that.

INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - LATER

Braden stands under the spray, eyes closed, head tipped back.

Lisa leans on the counter, watching the water cascade over every golden inch of him.

His eyes open. He works the bar of soap into a lather.

BRADEN
You look dirty. I think you'd best
get in here.

LISA
Nope, I'm clean. Only my mind is
dirty.

Braden soaps himself with slow, sudsy strokes.

BRADEN
I'll make it worth your while.

Lisa clenches her jaw. She's dying to join him, but the
OVERHEAD LIGHT is on and...

LISA
I'm enjoying the show from here.

Braden's eyes narrow, but he drops the subject -- as well as
the object of their mutual affection. He looks disappointed.
Rinses off quickly and efficiently.

Lisa sighs. *Show's over.* Braden cuts the water and opens the
shower door. Lisa hands him a towel.

LISA (CONT'D)
You're mad.

BRADEN
Yeah. I am.

He wraps the towel around his waist. Takes her neck between
his warm, damp hands and strokes her jaw with his thumbs.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
But not at you. I'm pissed at
Vance. At Hollywood. At fashion
magazines. Whoever's responsible
for you not knowing how absolutely
fucking beautiful you are.

He kisses her softly at first, then with something to prove.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Lisa and Braden snuggle, naked and spent.

LISA
Okay, so about the MCAT.

BRADEN
You wanna talk about that *now*?

LISA
Uh-huh.

Braden thinks a moment, then--

BRADEN
All right. I'll take it again, if--

LISA
Really?

BRADEN
--if you'll model nude for a life drawing class.

Lisa sits up, hugs a pillow like a shield.

LISA
What? No. Showing off a little for you is one thing, but *that* doesn't turn me on at all.
(well, maybe a little)
You think mortal embarrassment will improve my self-image?

BRADEN
I took the class as an elective and the models were all ages and sizes. No one cares what you look like. Everyone's respectful. It's not a sexual atmosphere at all.

LISA
So why do you want me to do it?

Braden tries to pry the pillow away from her, then sighs and lets her hang onto it.

BRADEN
Because I love your body, and I want you to love it, too.

INT. COLLEGE ART CLASSROOM - EVENING

White-draped platform with pillows surrounded by easels, etc.

Wearing a bathrobe, Lisa takes instruction from a CUTE LITTLE OLD MAN -- the PROFESSOR. She wipes sweaty palms on her robe.

Diverse COLLEGE STUDENTS arrive and prepare for class.

LISA (V.O.)
If I do this, you swear you'll
retake the MCAT?

BRADEN (V.O.)
Yep.

The Professor props the pillows, gestures as he explains how he wants Lisa to pose. She nods, nervous smile. He says something that makes her laugh.

LISA (V.O.)
And soon. Not like a year from now
or something.

The Professor turns and addresses the class.

BRADEN (V.O.)
Soon. Like a month.

LISA (V.O.)
Oh god. I can't believe I'm even
considering... And you'll study
this time.

She unties her robe, holds it closed. Mental pep talk.

BRADEN (V.O.)
I will study this time.

LISA (V.O.)
Will you be there?

BRADEN (V.O.)
Up to you.

Lisa takes a deep breath and DROPS THE ROBE. Gets into pose as gracefully as possible, despite her nerves.

LISA (V.O.)
No. I think-- no.

The students focus on their work, only glancing at Lisa for reference. The atmosphere is nonsexual, almost meditative.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lisa holds a different pose. She's calm and relaxed, now.

The Professor gives the class a break. Most wander out.

Lisa pulls on her robe, sips a bottle of water. Stretches.

A PRETTY YOUNG ARTIST smiles at her.

PRETTY ARTIST

Thanks for sitting for us. Is this your first time?

LISA

That obvious?

They chuckle.

PRETTY ARTIST

Not at all, I've just never drawn you before. You're a great subject. Wanna see?

And have her self-esteem punched in the neck?

LISA

No, that's okay.

PRETTY ARTIST

(knowing look)

You've got nothing to be afraid of.

Lisa hesitates... then walks around the girl's easel.

ANGLE ON the sketch pad. It's covered with bare-bones drawings, various poses of a nude woman with the body Lisa's always hated -- but she's beautiful.

No way those drawings are supposed to be her. Lisa smiles politely and walks to the next easel. And the next.

And despite variations in style and perspective, they all depict the same beautiful woman with the same body.

Lisa blinks back tears.

INT. LISA'S FOYER - NIGHT

Braden enters and Lisa closes the door.

BRADEN

Bar was busy. Got here as fast as--

Lisa pushes him back against the door, kisses and gropes him.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
Guess you're not mad at me for
making you do that.

LISA
(between kisses)
Not mad. Thank you.

BRADEN
Mm... you're welcome.

He deepens the kiss, but she pulls away, tugging his hand.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa TURNS ON THE OVERHEAD LIGHT. She tosses her shirt on a chair, shimmies out of her jeans. Takes off everything.

Braden tracks her every move with hot eyes. He follows her into the steam-filled

BATHROOM

Braden closes the door as Lisa gets under the spray. She keeps her eyes open, watching him watch *her* as she soaps her breasts and belly.

BRADEN
Look at you... Jesus, you're so
fucking sexy.

His eyes devour her as he strips, joins her under the water.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lisa and Braden sit at the table, MCAT review materials scattered around. She reads--

LISA
"Which of the following is not a
distinguishing characteristic of a
species?"

Braden watches her with hungry eyes, idly rubbing his thumb through the condensation on his iced tea glass.

LISA (CONT'D)
Are you with me here?

BRADEN

Yep. "Which of the following is not a distinguishing characteristic of a species?"

LISA

Okay... Is it "the sharing of a common gene pool; reproductive isolation from all other groups; ability to mate within the group--"

BRADEN

Ability to mate within the group. Give me a harder one.

LISA

They're all hard to me.
(skims... reads)
"Which of these vertebrate tissues or organs is best adapted for anaerobic respiration? Skeletal muscle; brain; cardiac muscle; or smooth muscle?"

Braden thinks a moment.

BRADEN

Skeletal?

LISA

That's right. Doing great so far.

Braden hooks a foot on her chair, maneuvers her to face him.

BRADEN

I've been studying. Like I promised.

He scoops his hands under her ass, pulls her onto his lap.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

I think I deserve some positive reinforcement.

His mouth does delicious things to her neck. She squirms.

LISA

You make a powerful argument...

She slides off his lap, kneels between his legs. Takes her time unfastening his jeans.

LISA (CONT'D)

But I can't let you miss any study time this close to the test date.

He pushes her hair off her face, grins.

BRADEN

I'll be fine.

LISA

(as if he hadn't spoken)
I'm gonna take a little break, now, and while I'm on break you're gonna read the cardiac imaging section.

Her fingers tease under the waistband of his boxers.

LISA (CONT'D)

And when my break's "finished," I expect you to answer all the questions correctly.

BRADEN

You're kidding.

LISA

I don't have to take a break.

BRADEN

Damn. You're kind of evil.
(finds the section)
You gonna make me read out loud?

LISA

Up to you, long as you absorb it.
My break starts when you start.

Braden glares down at her, then reads--

BRADEN

"Cardiac radionuclide imaging is" --
fuck -- "relatively easy to perform and exposes patients to--"
(groans)
"--exposes patients to less radiation than comparable studies."
Jesus, you're good at that.

Lisa looks up, smiles sweetly.

LISA

Keep reading.

BRADEN

(grits teeth)

"The volume of infracted, ischemic, and normal myocardium can be quantified, which is" -- god, this isn't gonna take long.

Lisa doesn't budge.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

"--which-is-valuable-in-determining-prognosis." *Fuck!*

He tosses the book and grabs her hair.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lisa unlocks the door. Braden slings a backpack over his shoulder. They kiss.

BRADEN

You help me study like that all through med school, I'll graduate top of my class.

LISA

I'm sure you'll have no trouble finding girls in med school to help you study like that.

BRADEN

(scowls)

I'm gonna forget you said that.

(nuzzles her neck)

Maybe I should lay you out on the table and make you forget it, too.

Lisa whimpers a little. Forces herself to push him away.

LISA

I have an excellent memory, but come by after work and give it your best shot.

EXT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

A Big Box Office Supply truck drives away.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

No more office supplies. Just a big, dark, empty space.

Lisa has an EVICTION NOTICE in one hand, PHONE in the other.

NATALIE (FILTERED)
I'd hate to see you walk away.

LISA
What choice do I have?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NATALIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Natalie's buried with work, talks to Lisa on speaker.

NATALIE
Maybe we can negotiate a grace
period for the back rent.

Lisa looks around the empty room.

LISA
And when I still can't pay it?

NATALIE
Eviction takes time. It requires
hearings and other things I can
delay with careless ineptitude.

LISA
Thanks. But I can't justify trying
to keep it.

NATALIE
What's the saying? Do what you love
and the money will follow.

LISA
Hasn't worked so far.

NATALIE
Because you don't love paperclips!
(urgent)
You have the studio for a few more
weeks. *Use it.* Take the kind of
pictures you've always wanted.

LISA
Nat... I love you, but I don't
think I've got it in me anymore.

NATALIE

Yes, you do. Are you the same person Vance married?

LISA

No, but--

NATALIE

No, and you're not the sad little person he divorced, either. You are a talented, sexy badass, so snap out of it and do whatever it is sexy badasses do.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lisa tries to relax and vibe with the studio like a sexy badass would. She takes a deep breath. *Freedom!* The possibilities are endless! She has so many choices!

Too many. It's overwhelming, actually.

And kind of depressing, for some reason.

And terrifying. Really terrifying.

She sits on the floor and has a loud, wet panic attack.

INT. SULLY'S PUB - LATER - EVENING

Lisa makes her way slowly through the rowdy young HAPPY HOUR CROWD. Between bodies, she spots Braden working the bar, chatting and making drinks beside a CUTE FEMALE BARTENDER.

Like a sexy badass, Lisa squeezes into a spot at the bar and watches Braden, waiting for him to notice her.

CUTE FEMALE BARTENDER

What can I get you, hon?

LISA

(shit)

Oh, um. White wine, I guess.

Female Bartender nods, steps away. Lisa watches SEXY GIRLS flirt and offer Braden a shot. He turns them down with a smile. Laughs and adds their cash to the tip jar.

Lisa leaves \$10 on the bar, ducks back into the crowd before Braden sees her.

INT./EXT. LISA'S CAR - DRIVING - LATER

Annoyed with herself, Lisa turns into her neighborhood.

An EXPENSIVE SEDAN GOING THE OTHER WAY slows beside her.

Shit. Lisa stops, cautiously unrolls her window.

LISA

Hi, Elena.

ELENA (40s) looks sad and lonely, despite her pretty smile.

ELENA

It's good to see you, Lisa. How have you been?

LISA

Oh, y'know. Keeping busy. You?

ELENA

Brady's home for the summer.

LISA

Is he?

ELENA

He's so grown up, now. You'd hardly recognize him.

LISA

I can imagine.

ELENA

Is Jake enjoying camp?

LISA

He'd enjoy it more if they weren't threatening to send him home early for nonpayment.

ELENA

Oh. I'm sorry.

LISA

Not your fault.

ELENA

I'll try to talk to Vance, but you know how he is.

LISA

He won't let me forget.

INT. LISA'S FOYER - LATER

Just inside the door, Lisa's mid-argument with VANCE (now late 40s). He's holding legal documents.

VANCE

Why harass Elena? The studio was a dumb idea. I told you that.

LISA

You've never even seen it, and--
No, y'know what? Fuck off.

Vance is surprised to see her stand up for herself.

VANCE

Let's just sit down and--

LISA

What are you gonna tell Jake when the camp kicks him out?

VANCE

They won't.

LISA

Then why am I getting calls every day saying they will? I'll forward them to you from now on.

VANCE

(re: documents)

Calm down. Sign these and we can settle up with everybody tomorrow.

LISA

I'm not refinancing my house to buy Elena a new kitchen!

VANCE

What? Don't be stupid. Where'd you get that idea?

Braden enters behind him.

BRADEN

You call her stupid again, I'll send you home in a box.

LISA

Braden...

VANCE

(to Lisa)

Wow, you've been bitching about me to everybody, huh? Hang on, let me give you my boss's number...

Braden stands with Lisa. Vance looks confused, then laughs.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Really? Oh Jesus. Elena's gonna shit. She is gonna *shit*.

LISA

Vance, stop.

VANCE

Does Jake know? No, he doesn't, does he?

LISA

You realize you're threatening to hurt the only two people in the world who love you.

VANCE

Sign these and I won't tell them.

BRADEN

(livid)

You need to stop talking.

VANCE

(to Lisa)

Whoa. Deja vu. He used to say that to me when he was a kid.

BRADEN

Yeah, but I can actually do something about it, now.

Lisa squeezes Braden's hand. Vance notices.

VANCE

Seriously, Lisa? This is how you get back at me?

LISA

Yes. You're all I think of when I'm coming my brains out with Braden.

Vance is stunned silent. Braden stifles a laugh.

VANCE

Classy. I'm not surprised, though.
You were jerking him off before his
balls dropped.

Braden SHOVES him out the door. Vance lands on his ass.

BRADEN

You don't talk to her like that.

VANCE

What the fuck?

BRADEN

Go home. And if you say anything to
hurt my mom, you'll be shitting
your own teeth for a week.

Lisa shuts, locks the door. Stares at Braden, staring at her.

INT. LISA'S HOME OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa and Braden sit on the sofa. She's shellshocked.

BRADEN

"You're all I think of when I'm
coming my brains out with Braden?"

That gets a laugh out of her.

LISA

It was naive to think they'd never
find out.

BRADEN

Bound to happen at some point.
We're together.

LISA

Well, yeah, but...

BRADEN

But?

He stares her down, challenging.

LISA

But we're temporary.

BRADEN

Stop.

LISA

Ignoring it doesn't make it any less true. You'll be in med school soon and I'll be living in a fucking box under an overpass, because I have no source of--

Braden kisses her quiet before she loses her shit.

BRADEN

You done spiraling, or do I have to get creative?

LISA

No, thanks. I'm okay. For now.

(then)

I'm sad about the studio. And the money stuff is freaking me out. I think I finally have to suck it up and get a job at a portrait studio.

BRADEN

You'd hate that more than office supplies.

LISA

Probably. But I'm not excited to shoot anything else, so...

Braden studies the framed prints on the wall, wheels turning.

BRADEN

Well... where'd you get the idea for the squash?

LISA

I looked in my shopping cart.

BRADEN

Okay. How about the park bench?

LISA

Walked by it. Thought it was cool.

(discouraged)

Problem is, it's not about one picture. To get established, to make any money, I'd need to do a series. Something I can put my stamp on.

BRADEN

(contemplative)

The thing I love most in your work is how you make me see things in a unique way... the shadows on the bench, the curves of the squash.

Lisa perks up a little.

LISA

I've been thinking of things that would look interesting in a really tight shot. So far, nothing comes to mind that would lend itself to a cohesive series.

BRADEN

Maybe you're coming at it from the wrong direction. Instead of looking at the whole, then reducing it to a small part of that... what if you start with the part and only hint at the whole?

LISA

Keep talking.

BRADEN

All right... you want images that grab someone's attention... Like, you could take the world's coolest picture of a doorknob, but so what?

LISA

Exactly.

BRADEN

Small part of a larger whole... And I think it should be the kind of thing that forces an emotional response, y'know what I mean?

The air hums with the vibe of spitballing on the right track.

LISA

It's gotta be... provocative... like a sharp blade...

BRADEN

Or a nipple.

LISA

Seriously.

BRADEN

Seriously. The image of your nipple stuck with me for ten years, and not just because I was a horny kid. It's a small part that hints at the whole... It's provocative, and there are plenty more body parts to build a series on.

LISA

I am not taking pictures of my nipple.

BRADEN

So take pictures of mine.

Lisa stares at him.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

Braden poses nude on a fabric-draped table.

Lisa adjusts the umbrella, carving deeper shadows into the oblique muscles along Braden's rib cage. He shifts a little.

LISA

Sorry I didn't think to bring a cushion or something.

BRADEN

I'm good. Just get what you need.

LISA

Almost done. Turn to your stomach?

Braden rolls part-way, then--

BRADEN

Can't right now, unless you wanna cut a glory hole in your table.

LISA

Oddly enough, this was never an issue with office equipment.

Braden catches her looking, makes a show of touching himself. His grin goes from mischievous to predatory in an instant.

BRADEN

If you need any more before I haul you onto this table, you'd better get 'em quick.

LISA
I know. Jesus, I know.

She wipes a palm on her jeans, pivots the tripod head.

LISA (CONT'D)
Just this one.
(whispers)
Squeeze it for me.

The muscles of his forearm and biceps bunch like they did when she watched him on the lounge chair and in video chat.

She captures him WRIST TO SHOULDER -- a seemingly innocent picture that IMPLIES WHAT'S HAPPENING JUST OUT OF FRAME.

Working quickly, she snaps a few before he grabs her arm and yanks her on top of him.

INT. LISA'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Lisa looks at her STOCK GALLERY FROM BRADEN'S SESSION. Sexy shots with lots of skin, unique framing, no face. The WRIST-TO-SHOULDER image has been DOWNLOADED THOUSANDS OF TIMES.

Braden fills out med school applications on his laptop.

LISA
It's a model's fee.

BRADEN
I'm not taking your money, Lisa.

LISA
I've sold more of your shots in two weeks than all my other work combined. Wanna see my sales log? Apparently "sexy man" and "nude" are more popular keywords than "park bench" or "squash."

BRADEN
Shocking.

Lisa's computer DINGS an email notification.

Subject: Your Photos. Lisa skims the message, gasps.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
What is it?

LISA

(reads)

"Dear Ms. Taylor, I am heading up a new marketing campaign for Allister & Hitch Apparel. In our search for the new face of our brand, we came across your excellent photos of a faceless -- but otherwise ideal -- male model."

BRADEN

No shit?

LISA

"I'd be much obliged if you would forward his head shot and contact information. With warm regards, Declan Reece, Creative Director."

BRADEN

I don't have a head shot.

LISA

Think I've got one or two that could work...

She turns back to her monitor, hiding her blush. Opens a folder full of pictures of Braden's beautiful face. Her SECRET STASH -- candid photos of him talking, laughing or flirting, and some uncropped versions of the stock photos.

She opens an ABSURDLY HOT PICTURE OF BRADEN.

LISA (CONT'D)

This one okay?

BRADEN

(laughs, embarrassed)

I don't know. Is it?

LISA

It'll do.

BRADEN

Great. Let's roll the dice.

Lisa types a response, attaches the photo and sends.

LISA

The dice have been rolled. Now back to those applications, Kate Moss.

BRADEN
I like it when you're strict, Ms.
Taylor.

LISA
Don't start.

She points to his laptop and they both get back to work.

BRADEN
Yes, ma'am.

LISA
Or I'll whack you with a ruler.

Braden's PHONE BUZZES. He glances at the screen and answers.

BRADEN
(on phone)
Hello, this is Braden.

Lisa hears a MAN'S VOICE coming through the phone, but can't make out what's being said.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Hi, yeah. She said you might
call... Okay... Uh-huh... Not far
at all, we're in Dunwoody.
(chuckles)
No. I was a football player. I
recently graduated from UGA and I'm
applying to med schools now.

He winks at Lisa and she hears Declan's voice expressing surprise. Braden listens a bit longer, then--

BRADEN (CONT'D)
(on phone)
That sounds great, as long as
Lisa's the photographer.

Lisa waves her arms to get Braden's attention and hisses--

LISA
No!

BRADEN
(on phone)
What you saw was the only modeling
I've ever done. I wouldn't really
be comfortable working with anyone
else... I understand.

Lisa doesn't know whether to kill him or kiss him.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Sure, of course. I get it... You too, thanks.

He disconnects the call.

LISA

I know you were trying to help me, but a modeling gig like that would have covered a lot of med school tuition.

BRADEN

Yeah, you're probably right.

LISA

I *am* right. So why are you grinning like a doofus?

INT. AD AGENCY PHOTO STUDIO - DAY

Lisa walks in to see Braden in a stylist's chair. His hair has been carefully styled to look bed-tumbled.

KIMANI (30, ebony skin, natural hair) removes Braden's smock as he stands. He's bare-chested under an unbuttoned shirt, and he fills out their crotch-hugging jeans very well.

KIMANI

Remember baby, don't touch your hair or I'll have to break your fingers.

BRADEN

I got it.
(spots Lisa)
Hey, Lisa, this is Kimani. I thought she was cool until she had 'em put makeup on me.

KIMANI

You know this clown?

LISA

Since he was about half that size.

They chuckle and Kimani exits, leaving them alone.

Lisa and Braden stand awkwardly at a professional distance.

BRADEN
This is crazy, huh?

LISA
Uh, yeah. You were already
gorgeous, but Christ.

BRADEN
We've got some time to kill...

LISA
And ruin your makeup? No way.

BRADEN
You're so gonna pay for that.

Enter DECLAN REECE (46). Charming, casual with an easy smile,
he looks like the sexy professor every coed has a crush on.

DECLAN
Good to see you again, Braden.
(shakes Braden's hand)
Lisa.

He kisses her cheek, then spreads STORYBOARD SKETCHES on a
long table. They're similar to Lisa's shots of Braden.

DECLAN (CONT'D)
I know Ivy sent you these, but I
want to look at them together to
make sure we're on the same page.

LISA
Sounds good.

DECLAN
Initially, we were going for
something more straightforward.
More like what A and H has done
previously. But then I looked
through the test shots again and
all your other work, Lisa, and I
knew this was the way to go.

Lisa and Braden exchange a quick smile.

DECLAN (CONT'D)
I really respond to the whole "what
are you hiding, what am I not
seeing" thing in your work... how
it sucks you into the image, so
let's roll with that as much as
possible. Okay?

He studies Lisa's face with calm intensity, like he truly wants to be sure she's all right with his suggestions.

LISA

Perfect.

IVY (20s, edgy), Declan's assistant arrives pushing a craft services cart. Braden helps himself to a water.

BRADEN

Thanks, Ivy.

IVY

Let me know if you need anything else. You can connect to the speaker there, if you want music. Bathrooms are down the hall.

LISA

(to Braden)

You should probably go before we get started.

She cringes as soon as the words are out. Braden gives her an odd look as he exits.

DECLAN

Known him a while, huh?

Lisa tethers her camera to her laptop, boots up.

LISA

He used to babysit my son, and my ex left me for his mom.

(laughs)

That sounded flippant, didn't it?

DECLAN

(studies her)

A little. But healthy-flippant.

LISA

I'm a few years past basket-case-flippant.

DECLAN

Good to know.

They hear laughter as Braden and Kimani return.

Lisa watches on her laptop as Braden takes his mark. Kimani fixes his hair, arranges the shirt to expose more of his chest. A PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT adjusts lighting.

KIMANI

Now unbutton your jeans and tug 'em
down a little bit, handsome.

BRADEN

(grins, complies)
I thought you'd never ask.

Fuck the laptop. Lisa looks directly at Braden.

KIMANI

A little lower... we wanna see
those V-cuts you work so hard for.

Braden looks past Kimani, makes eye contact with Lisa as he works the jeans further down his hips.

Lisa chugs her water. Chokes a little when Kimani squeaks--

KIMANI (CONT'D)

Whoa! That's enough. We only need
the rainbow, not the pot of gold.

Everyone laughs.

Lisa sees Declan watching her. Gives him a confident smile.

LISA

All right. Let's do this.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lunch break. Lots of laughing, easy conversation.

Lisa reviews SHOTS on her laptop. They're similar to her first shots of Braden, but better because we see his face.

Declan slides into the seat beside her. He smiles with respect and warm interest.

DECLAN

Mind if I look?

LISA

I was gonna pull the weeds first,
but I don't mind if you don't.

She starts at the beginning, scrolls. The first few are good, although Braden was a bit stiff. The rest are gorgeous and sexy. Declan calls over to Braden--

DECLAN

You are one ugly son-of-a-bitch, my friend.

BRADEN

You're pretty ugly yourself, boss. Maybe you should be the one dropping trou for the camera.

Lisa would be totally fine with that. She hides her blush, keeps scrolling.

DECLAN

Damn. It's gonna be tough to narrow these down.

LISA

So you're happy?

Declan smiles and his eyes warm her face.

DECLAN

Ecstatic.
(looks back at the screen)
Andie will be here soon. Think they're gonna be great together.

LISA

(clenches jaw)
Can't wait.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Post-wardrobe-change, Braden stands on his mark. Lisa smiles at Braden as the Photo Assistant takes test shots.

LISA

(to Photo Assistant)
Thanks.

The Photo Assistant walks off.

LISA (CONT'D)

(sotto, to Braden)
I've never had an assistant. I don't know what to do with myself.

BRADEN

I've got a few ideas...

Lisa clears her throat, glares at him.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
You sure you're good with this?

LISA
Of course. It's not *porn*.

BRADEN
You've seen their catalogues.

LISA
I'll be fine.

She goes to her set-up, checks test shots. Declan joins her.

DECLAN
Andie's almost out of wardrobe.
How're we doing over here?

LISA
Fantastic.

BRADEN
Yo, Declan, you want me to drop my
drawers again?

DECLAN
With all my heart.

Lisa's laugh dies when Kimani approaches with--

ANDIE (early 20s, athletic, naturally gorgeous). Her tight jeans and T-shirt go well with Braden's wardrobe. If she's wearing a bra, it's the one Jennifer Aniston wore on *Friends*.

Braden says something as Andie takes her mark. Andie and Kimani laugh. They joke around while Kimani touches them up. When she's done, Declan gets their attention--

DECLAN (CONT'D)
Braden and Andie, let me see you
guys hug.
(to Lisa)
Mind if I direct starting out?

Braden and Andie hug. They're adorably sexy together.

LISA
Be my guest.

She's relieved to hide behind her camera.

DECLAN
Pick her up and spin her around.

Braden spins Andie around. They continue taking direction--

DECLAN (CONT'D)
 Yeah, I like that. Okay, don't put
 her down, yet. Hold her tight
 against you and I want you to look
 in each other's eyes... good.

Not only do Braden and Andie look gorgeous together, they've got chemistry.

DECLAN (CONT'D)
 And now let her slide down your
 body-- slower, so Lisa can get the
 shots... nice.

Braden's expression tightens with guilt and awareness of Lisa, but it also reads like urgency and lust.

DECLAN (CONT'D)
 Now hook your thumbs under the hem
 of her shirt and let her slide the
 rest of the way down... Not too
 fast. That's it, just like that.

Andie's shirt catches on Braden's thumbs as she slides down, exposing her ribcage. His leather bracelet heightens the sexiness of his hand on her bare skin.

DECLAN (CONT'D)
 Lisa, how's it look to you?

It looks like Andie's perky tits are brushing the part of Braden's chest I most enjoy licking, thanks for asking.

LISA
 Like they were made for each other.

DECLAN
 Let's see what we've got so far.

Declan leans close, his shoulder brushing Lisa's, as she scrolls through the shots on the laptop. The chemistry crackles on *this* side of the camera, too.

INT./EXT. LISA'S CAR - DRIVING - LATER - EVENING

Lisa's PHONE RINGS. She spots Braden's truck in her rearview.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT./EXT. BRADEN'S TRUCK - DRIVING

LISA

You did great today. Declan was really happy.

BRADEN

Hard to ignore the irony that as usual, my success has nothing to do with my mind.

LISA

It's a means to an end.
(sardonic)
I know it must've been torture.

Lisa's still reeling from the jealousy, chemistry and guilt mind-fuck. And she sounds it.

BRADEN

Was it torture for you, too?

LISA

Just another day at the office.

BRADEN

You going straight home?

LISA

Yes.

BRADEN

Good.

He disconnects and tosses his phone on the seat.

INT. LISA'S GARAGE - LATER

Lisa gets out of the car, drops her phone in her bag.

Braden suddenly shoves her against the car door, shutting it. He traps her there with his body and a bruising kiss. Her PHONE RINGS inside her bag, the muted tone easily ignored.

Lisa drops the bag and runs her hands up under his shirt, desperately reclaiming the territory of his chest.

Braden lifts her and she wraps her legs around his ass. Supporting her with one hand, he shoves her shirt and bra up out of the way, taking her breasts with his mouth.

In the bag on the floor, Lisa's PHONE RINGS again.

LISA

Inside.

BRADEN

Yeah.

He unbuttons his jeans.

LISA

In the *house*.

Braden grunts agreement and carries her inside, punching the button to close the garage before kicking the door shut.

INT. LISA'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Braden tumbles them to the floor, shoves his jeans down.

Lisa shucks her jeans and straddles him. Her shirt and bra are still up where he shoved them. She hides her breasts with her hands as she grinds against him.

He scowls and pushes her hands away.

LISA

(goads, almost bitchy)
Sorry they're not as perky as
you're used to now.

Braden bucks his hips so her knees come off the floor.

BRADEN

You hear me complaining?

LISA

'Course not. You're getting laid.

Braden's hands tighten on her arms.

BRADEN

Is that all you think this is?

In an instant, he pushes her belly-down on the rug, holding her in place with a tight fist in her hair.

Lisa tries to lift her ass but his hips press her back down on the floor as he fucks her -- *hard*. She moans.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Well, you're right. That's all this
is. 'Cause we're "temporary."

LISA
That's not what I meant.

She struggles again to push up.

Braden squeezes her ass with punishing hands, holding her flat on the floor as he plows into her again and again.

BRADEN
Then what *did* you mean?

LISA
It was hard to see you with her.
Touching her.

BRADEN
Really. Well, since we're being honest, I don't like the way Declan looks at you.

He rears back, drives back in to the hilt.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
And I don't like the way he *talks* to you.

He pulls out and slams back in.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
And I don't like the way you look at him and talk to him, either.

Lisa can't respond, 'cause now he's fucking her fast and deep, drilling her into the floor.

Her orgasm hits, dragging Braden over the edge with her until they're sweaty and panting on the hallway rug.

INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa washes her hands. She's tense, unsettled.

She straightens her clothes and gives up on her just-fucked hair. Knows she can't hide in here any longer. Exits to the

HALLWAY

Where Braden waits with a haunted look on his face. He grabs her in a fierce hug, whispering into her hair--

BRADEN
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry...

JAKE (O.S.)
Not really what I had in mind when
I asked you to help out around the
house, *bro*.

Lisa jumps away from Braden.

LISA
Jake! You're home early. Oh no,
what happened?

Tall and lanky, JAKE (15) holds his big duffel bag between
them, blocking her attempt at a hug.

JAKE
Dad got in a fight with the camp.
(glares at Braden)
She wasn't supposed to know you
were here.

BRADEN
Yeah, I--

LISA
He was just leaving. Go put your
bag down and I'll make you a snack.

JAKE
Should've expected this would
happen, knowing you. Right, Player?

BRADEN
You don't know what you're talking
about, Jake.

JAKE
Fuck you, Brady. Well, never mind.
Looks like my mom already did.

Braden slams Jake against the wall and holds him there.

BRADEN
Don't talk about her like that.
Show some respect.

JAKE
(mirthless laugh)
Now that's funny.

Lisa realizes she's standing there hugging herself like an
idiot. She touches Braden's shoulder.

LISA
You need to go.

JAKE
You heard her, Player, go on.

BRADEN
I'm sorry you found out like this,
Jake, but it's not what you think.

He releases Jake, backs away out of punching range.

BRADEN (CONT'D)
I love her.

Lisa's stunned. *No, he can't mean that...*

Then Braden's stormy eyes meet hers, and her heart breaks.

Jake takes advantage of the distraction, aiming a punch for Braden's jaw. Braden dodges and Jake's fist makes LOUD, CRACKING CONTACT with the wall. Jake howls in pain and anger.

Lisa puts her hands on their chests to hold them apart.

LISA
Cut it out!

Jake's fist shoots past her and hits Braden's bad shoulder. Both young men grunt in pain.

BRADEN
God-dammit.

Jake shakes out his hand, then cradles it against his belly.

JAKE
Serves you right, you dick.

Braden rubs his shoulder.

BRADEN
Nice shot, though.

JAKE
Shut up, asshole.

Lisa's eyes beg Braden to leave. He's not happy about it, but he nods and exits. She touches Jake's hand and he winces.

LISA
It still hurts?

JAKE
What do you think? I just punched a wall.

LISA

I thought you were smart enough not
to punch a wall.

She gently prods until he lets her look at his hand. It's
already turning purple and swelling.

Braden returns.

BRADEN

Sorry. Think I dropped my keys...

They're on the floor, right where he just fucked Lisa.

Lisa hardly notices Braden, because Jake's freaking out,
staring at his hand with alarm.

JAKE

Shit! Mom, what if I broke it? I
won't be able to pitch when the
season starts!

LISA

We'd better go have it x-rayed.

Braden approaches Jake cautiously.

BRADEN

Can I take a look?

Jake gives him a venomous glare, but Lisa interrupts whatever
insult he has planned.

LISA

Thank you, Braden.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lisa fills the sink with ice water.

At the table, Jake lets Braden examine his hand, but keeps
his eyes averted, scowling out the window. He winces, but
Braden has a gentle touch.

BRADEN

Make a loose fist for me... Good.
That's good. You've got all your
knuckles, see? Sometimes, this one
kind of disappears after a punch.
Then you can be pretty sure you've
got a break. Do you have any
numbness or tingling?

JAKE

No, but it hurts like a mother.
(glares)
You don't have to look so happy
about it.

BRADEN

Pain's a good thing with this kind
of injury.

JAKE

So you think I'll be able to pitch?

BRADEN

You jacked up the joints, but I
doubt there's any permanent damage.

He carefully turns Jake's hand over.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Got some swelling here around the
joint and it's already starting to
bruise.

(cartoonishly serious)

I'd say you've sprained your wrist,
young man.

Jake cracks a little smile, despite himself.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Here, keep it elevated.

He rests the injured hand against Jake's opposite shoulder.
His manner is calm and confident. *He was born to be a doctor.*
Lisa steps aside as Braden leads Jake to the sink.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Okay, now you're gonna dunk your
whole arm in up to the elbow.

He helps Jake lower his arm into the icy water.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

Hold it there for five or ten
seconds at a time.

JAKE

That's unpleasant.

BRADEN

In and out for two hours. You'll
want to do it a few times a day.

LISA
So we don't need x-rays?

BRADEN
Not unless there's a sharp pain or
new swelling or bruising.
(to Jake)
Rest it for a couple days. Keep it
elevated when you're not icing it.
I've got a couple slings at home.
I'll bring you one.

LISA
Thank you.

Her relief is palpable. Braden's bedside manner works wonders
for worried moms, too.

Braden gives her a rueful smile, then watches as Jake
continues to dip his arm in the frigid water.

BRADEN
Just like that, keep it up. You've
only got another hour and fifty-
eight minutes to go.

He grins at Jake's scowl.

Lisa opens the kitchen door. Braden slows in the doorway, his
eyes full of things he can't say.

JAKE
(not ready to forgive him
yet, but...)
Hey Brady? Thanks.

BRADEN
Any time.

Lisa closes the door. She composes herself, then watches Jake
dip his arm in the icy water. He won't look at her.

After a long moment of silence, she has to say something.

LISA
So.

JAKE
So.

LISA
I'm sorry you had to leave camp
early.

JAKE
I'm sure you are.

LISA
(sighs)
We're just good friends.

JAKE
Is that why he said he loves you?

LISA
I don't know why he said that.

JAKE
So you don't love him?

LISA
I do, but not the way you're
thinking. Not entirely.

Jake goes quiet. Studies his swollen wrist as it goes in and out of the water. Eventually, he asks--

JAKE
Was he nice to you?

There's her sweet boy.

LISA
Yes. He took care of the yard and helped a lot with my work. He was very nice to me.

JAKE
That's good.

LISA
Jake, I don't want you to be uncomfortable, so let's talk. Is there anything you want to--

JAKE
NOPE!

They laugh, breaking some of the tension.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lisa shuts the door, finally alone. She sits on the edge of the bed where Braden opened her robe that first time.

Her phone BUZZES on the dresser, where she left it earlier.
3 missed calls, 2 voice mail messages, 1 text.

She opens voice mail. Deletes a message from Vance without listening. Plays a message from Declan.

DECLAN (FILTERED)

Hey Lisa, it's Declan. Just wanted to tell you I really enjoyed working with you today. The shots look terrific, and you haven't even done your "Lisa" thing, yet-- y'know, when you crop them and wave your magic wand so I only see what you want me to see.

(self-deprecating chuckle)

Anyway. I hope we can do a lot more together. Okay. We'll talk soon.

LISA

(to self)

My "Lisa" thing.

She smiles, proud of herself and moved that Declan appreciates her work.

The text is from Braden. She braces and opens it.

BRADEN - TEXT

Hey.

She responds.

LISA - TEXT

Hey.

BRADEN - TEXT

Jake ok?

LISA - TEXT

Yup. He did the ice-dip for two hours. Stopped complaining halfway thru when he went numb. :)

BRADEN - TEXT

Ha. Is he wearing the sling?

LISA - TEXT

Yes. Thx again for dropping it off.

The dots show Braden typing... then not... then typing again.

BRADEN - TEXT

Any excuse to see you.

LISA
 (winces, to self)
 Didn't even use a smiley.

LISA - TEXT
*Can you come by tomorrow night?
 Jake will be at a friend's house
 and we should talk.*

Her phone goes dark before he finally starts typing. Then--

BRADEN - TEXT
This about what I said earlier?

LISA - TEXT
In part, yes.

BRADEN - TEXT
*OK, but just so you know... I meant
 it and I'm not taking it back.*

INT. LISA'S BATHROOM - LATER

A steamy shower. Lisa sits curled in a ball, sobbing.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lisa's eyes are red and puffy. She and Natalie eat cake, digging their forks right into the box. They're looking at PHOTOS FROM THE ALLISTER & HITCH SHOOT on Lisa's laptop.

NATALIE
 Hate to break it to you, but I
 think you're meant to work with
 humans. These are great, Lise.

LISA
 Stevie Wonder could take great
 pictures of those two.

They study a SHOT OF BRADEN AND ANDIE LAUGHING WITH LOTS OF CHEMISTRY. Lisa snuffles, can't stop the tears.

NATALIE
 Why are you doing this to yourself?

LISA
 (sobs)
 It's helping!

NATALIE
 Clearly.

She tries to close the laptop. Lisa stops her.

LISA

Really. It hurts like a
motherfucker, but it helps.

(off Andie in the photo)

I'll never look like that again,
and y'know what? I'm okay with
that. Mostly.

She forks a huge bite of cake in her mouth.

LISA (CONT'D)

He made me okay with that.

(messy, cake-y sobs)

I love the way he sees me.

NATALIE

You've always been the Lisa he
sees. And now you can see her, too.

LISA

This is all your fault!

(wipes nose on arm)

You and your "deprogramming!"

(points fork at her head)

We should've done it my way.

Natalie hugs Lisa, picks cake out of her hair.

NATALIE

Nah, then you would've missed the
good parts.

EXT. LISA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lisa walks out to where Braden leans against his truck.

BRADEN

You wanted to see me, Ms. Taylor?

His half-grin is sexy as ever, but the vulnerable look in his
eye makes him seem more boy than man.

Lisa stops just outside of hugging range. She struggles to
find the right words.

LISA

So um, yesterday was a nightmare.
Can't believe Jake tried to punch
you. Thanks for taking care of him.

BRADEN

Least I could do, considering...
How'd the wrist look today?

LISA

Better. The color is hideous, but
it's not as swollen. I made him do
the ice dip again before he left.

She rolls her eyes.

BRADEN

Not the best patient, that kid.

LISA

He did have a great doctor, though.

Braden's dimple flashes, then he sobers.

BRADEN

Any chance that doctor is still
involved with his patient's mom?

Lisa forces herself to meet his eyes.

LISA

Braden, even if we somehow kept
seeing each other now that Jake's
home, you'll be leaving soon.

BRADEN

About that... What's the point of
spending all the time and money on
med school? I've got a good thing
going with A and H. My mom thinks I
should ride it out, see where it
takes me.

That breaks Lisa's heart.

LISA

You're beautiful, so I'm sure you'd
do very well... but you wouldn't
find that fulfilling.

Braden wants to argue, but he's got nothing.

LISA (CONT'D)

You'd be miserable, and I'd never
forgive myself if I helped lock you
into a life where no one looks
beyond your face and body.

BRADEN

(frustrated)

I know. You're the only one who
ever has. That's why I love you.

Lisa finally hugs him -- briefly so as not to send mixed messages. When she pulls back, Braden's eyes are wet and she's blinking back tears of her own.

BRADEN (CONT'D)

So that's it? I'm not ready to give
you up.

LISA

We'll always be friends, and I'll
always love you.

BRADEN

(weak joke)

Now she tells me.

LISA

Go to med school. Be the smart guy
who also happens to be attractive,
instead of the hot guy who happens
to have a brain. Date women your
age who appreciate who you really
are -- you'll find them, I promise.

She smiles at his skeptical look.

LISA (CONT'D)

Let me take what you've given me,
all you've taught me about myself,
and experience the world like that
for a while.

A tear slides down Braden's cheek. Lisa wipes it, continues
before her throat gets any tighter--

LISA (CONT'D)

You're going to be an amazing
doctor.

(this kills her to say)

Maybe we'll come back to each other
one day. But I hope not. I hope you
find someone who deserves you and
loves *all* of you, someone you can
build a long life with.

Without warning, he pulls her into a tight hug.

BRADEN

I hate this. I know you're right,
but I fucking hate it.

(shaky breath)

I really do love you.

Lisa takes his beautiful face in her hands, wipes the tears from those ocean-deep eyes. *Somebody has to be the strong one, and today it's her.*

LISA

I really do love you, too.

She kisses his cheek, pushes away with a hand on his chest.

LISA (CONT'D)

(teary whisper)

Okay. Go.

BRADEN

(shakes head)

You first.

Lisa takes a step back. And another, slowly returning to her house, leaving Braden in silent tears, leaning on his truck.

Braden finally gets behind the wheel. Tail lights flash, then he pulls away from the curb.

ON THE TRUCK

Moving slowly down the street.

LISA (O.S.)

Wait!

The TRUCK ROCKS TO A STOP.

Braden gets out and CATCHES LISA as she RUNS INTO HIS ARMS.

Then she LOSES HERSELF IN HIS KISS one last time...

THE END.