

"I Think I Love My Wife"

Written By

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&  
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\*\*THIS MOVIE IS RATED "R". IF YOU DON'T LIKE RATED "R" MOVIES  
PLEASE DON'T READ.

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OPENING CARD: "Here's to those who love us, if only we cared.  
Here's to those whom we'd love, if only we dared."

INT. SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

We have entered the home of RICHARD AND ERICA COOPER. The place LOOKS very Norman Rockwell. PICTURES are on the mantel and ESSENCE MAGAZINES on the coffee table. RICHARD, 38, is an investment banker. He is married to ERICA, 36, a high school English teacher. She's six months pregnant.

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INT. HALLWAY BETWEEN BEDROOMS - MORNING

We hear their DAUGHTER, KELLY, crying in one of the rooms. Richard comes out of the master bedroom and stands in the doorway of Kelly's room. He is tying his tie in a hurry. "Good Morning America" is on the T.V.

RICHARD

Shh... shh... Daddy loves you.  
Mommy will be right there.

She stops crying. He goes back into his room. The instant he leaves the doorway, the crying starts again. He runs out again, sticks his head back in her room, now pulling on his shoes.

RICHARD

Come on now, baby. Mama's coming.  
Shhh. Daddy loves you.

She stops. He repeats this a few times. Each time he leaves, she cries instantly and each time he reappears he is closer to being ready for work. Finally, fully clothed, he gets the baby out of the room and walks to the bathroom holding her.

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RICHARD

Who's my baby? Kelly's my baby.  
You love your daddy?

He knocks on the bathroom door. We can HEAR the shower running.

RICHARD

Erica... Erica.

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ERICA (O.S.)

Yeah, come in.

He opens the bathroom door and we see Erica's beautiful naked back as she wraps a towel around herself and starts to dry off.

RICHARD

Here, can you take her? I gotta  
get outta here.

ERICA

I got her.

Erica takes the baby. Richard kisses her.

ERICA

You better stop. You're gonna get  
wet.

RICHARD

It's okay, I have my raincoat on.

They kiss.

ERICA

Call me if you're going to be late.

RICHARD

I will.

As he walks away from her, he looks back. We are seeing a  
beauty shot of Erica smiling holding the baby. The perfect  
wife. The CAMERA PUSHES INTO HER VERY SLOWLY.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Hi, I'm Richard Cooper. I've been  
married for seven years and I'm  
bored out of my fucking mind.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - DAY

Erica is now playing with their daughter in her playroom.  
Both are on the floor.

RICHARD (V.O.)

And that's my wife, Erica. She is  
the last. She's the last woman  
I've ever taken on vacation, the  
last woman I ever took out to  
dinner, the last woman I ever had  
sex with and, by the way, like a  
lot of married couples, we don't  
have sex -- correction, we don't  
fuck. Oh, we have intercourse less  
than eight times a year, but we  
never fuck.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Richard and Erica are in bed. Richard makes a move to touch her.

ERICA

Honey, I don't want to do anything.  
I've got a headache.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Another day in bed.

ERICA

Please don't touch me. My hair  
hurts.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Another day in bed.

ERICA

What are you doing?!

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

RICHARD (V.O.)

I went though the same thing every  
married man does: I married my  
wife, she had kids and went nuts.

ERICA

I want another baby.

RICHARD

What are you talking about? You're  
having a baby.

ERICA

Yeah, but I'm ready for another  
one.

RICHARD (V.O.)

But we worked it out. We went to  
couples therapy and I got my ass  
kicked by both of them.

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## INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK

A pregnant Erica is crying as the therapist writes on a pad and gives Richard (who we don't see) disapproving looks.

ERICA

He doesn't listen to me. It's like  
I'm not even there. We're two  
strangers living in a house.

ANGLE ON: Richard with bandages on his face, a black eye and a fat lip.

RICHARD

I'm sorry.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Most men would go out and cheat.  
But here's what happened when she  
*thought* I was cheating.

## INT. LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

The house is dark. Richard makes his way to the stairs quietly. Suddenly we hear a punch land, Richard falls.

RICHARD

Hey! What's going on?

ERICA

Mutherfucker, you didn't think I  
was going to find out?

RICHARD

Ow! My eye! You've got it all  
wrong, baby!

ERICA

Tell that to your bitch!

## INT. KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY

Erica is adjusting Richard's tie. She gives Richard a kiss.

RICHARD (V.O.)

But now everything's okay... it's  
just that I'm bored out of my mind.

RICHARD

I love you.

Richard turns to go, but Erica pulls him back by the tie.

ERICA

I love you, too. Oh, after work  
pick up two boxes of pampers.

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INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - LATER

Richard sits among OTHER PASSENGERS on his daily commute to work. He opens his briefcase, pulls out a newspaper and an iPod. He puts the headphones on and presses a button. He plays some Wu Tang Clan and starts reading the New York Times.

Richard looks around at the WOMEN in his car.

RICHARD (V.O.)

So our marriage was normal, which  
meant I wasn't getting laid.

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A pretty girl stands holding a pole. To Richard it appears to be more seductive than it is.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Now what I don't understand is, how  
can my wife not have sex with me  
and then send me out into a world  
with so many beautiful women? I've  
always liked looking at women, but  
now I stare at them like a damn  
psycho. I have to do everything I  
can to resist them.

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The camera PANS to another BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMAN putting on her lipstick.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Oh yes, look at her. Put on that  
lipstick, baby. Oh yes, put it on.

ANGLE ON: a BLONDE WOMAN on her cell-phone.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Look at her on the phone. Yes,  
dial those numbers. Let me see you  
talk. Yeah, say something dirty.  
What's wrong with me?

ANGLE ON: a SPANISH WOMAN reading the paper.

RICHARD (V.O.)

What about her? Turn that page.  
Yes, that's nice. Read baby.  
Yeah, read for daddy. That's it.  
Maybe I should just drive to work.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK - A LITTLE LATER

The morning COMMUTERS bustle through the streets on their way to work.

RICHARD (V.O.)

I don't really like living in New Jersey. It's so boring, but that's what Erica wants. You know how that goes. I LOVE Manhattan. I love the flow of the crowd. I love the mix of people.

EXT. MIDTOWN - LATER

Richard in midtown. He is moving in the throng.

RICHARD (V.O.)

I love that-- oh shit!

We see SIX BLACK AND PUERTO RICAN THUGS walking down the street toward Richard.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Let me get my ass across the street.

Richard crosses the street. The thugs pass by. All is well.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LATER

Richard walks through the busy lobby toward the elevator. He stands waiting for the elevator.

RICHARD (V.O.)

I work as an investment banker at a place called "The Gotham Asset Company." I'm one of the only blacks at the firm.

(MORE)

RICHARD (V.O.) (cont'd)  
As a matter of fact, there are so  
few here that I think I know every  
black person in the building.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - SAME

Richard is walking the hallway. He sees the cleaning lady  
mopping the floor.

RICHARD  
How's it going, Pam?

PAM  
What's up, Richard?

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BATHROOM - SAME

Richard walks into the men's bathroom and sees the janitor  
emptying the garbage.

RICHARD  
What's up, Ron?

RON  
Good morning, Richard.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSSTAND IN THE OFFICE BUILDING - SAME

Richard buys a Kit Kat at the newsstand. The elevator comes  
and Richard boards.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
It's not that bad. Everybody here  
treats me pretty good, but I have  
to admit, being one of the only  
blacks here makes me a little  
paranoid, but I guess I'm okay.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Richard enters the open multi-cubicle area of this financial  
office and walks through the EMPTY bullpen. He stops at his  
mail slot. He glances through some mail. He puts his  
raincoat and briefcase down and starts using a computer.

As he types, he unwraps the Kit-Kat bar, cracks off half of it, leaving the other half on the desk. Just then ONE of TWO SECRETARIES, TRACY, arrives. TRACY is a 26 YEAR OLD, PRETTY, DARK-HAIRED WHITE WOMAN. She's dressed very professionally. It's all business between these two.

TRACY

Morning, am I late?

RICHARD

No, I'm early. I'll get off this in a second.

She hangs up her coat. Richard goes over to the printer and removes the printout, reading it. He then goes into HIS OFFICE, which is private.

INT. RICHARD'S PRIVATE OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A nicely appointed office. A DEGREE or TWO hang on the wall, FAMILY PHOTOS, ETC. Not a huge office but it has a great view of midtown. Richard does some quiet work. He is really concentrating.

EXTREME CLOSE UP SEQUENCE: WORKING

A series of quiet (no music), extreme close ups showing:

RICHARD'S PEN as he writes on a report.

RICHARD'S EYES as he reads a flow chart (wearing glasses?).

RICHARD'S FINGER as he traces a line down a very dense sheet of stock figures. We see he wears a gold class ring. He traces down the stock codes next to their current value until he settles on a single figure and taps it once.

RICHARD

(whispering)

There you are.

Richard highlights the figure and rips the sheet out, going back out his office door.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Richard opens the door onto a now BUSY office. Everyone is arriving at work.

RICHARD

(handing Tracy the print-out)

(MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)  
Tracy, this is what we're doing  
today. Where's George?

GEORGE, Richard's colleague, a well dressed bespectacled  
WHITE MAN, and MARY, the other receptionist who is exactly  
like Tracy but HISPANIC, walk up the bullpen aisle, talking  
loudly until they reach George's private office which is next  
to Richard's.

MARY  
Why is there always a track-fire?  
Every morning I'm sitting on a  
train waiting for a track fire.

RICHARD  
C'mon, Mary. They tell you it's a  
track fire because they don't want  
to say rat stampede.

TRACY  
George, your wife is on the phone  
and Veronica called.

GEORGE  
Okay, call back Veronica and tell  
my wife I'll call her later.  
(to Richard)  
Rich, you want to go over that  
stuff before Landis gets in?

Just then, MR. LANDIS, the boss walks in. Landis is a 55  
YEAR OLD WHITE MAN, a Gene Hackman type.

MR. LANDIS  
Too late. I'm here. 'Morning  
everyone. Cooper, can you bring  
those contracts to my office ASAP?

RICHARD  
No problem. I'll get them right  
now.

MR. LANDIS  
Tracy, send somebody to Starbucks.

TRACY  
It's already done.

MR. LANDIS  
Alright. Let's get to work,  
people.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

George pops his head in the doorway.

GEORGE

Lunch?

Richard gives him a look like "you ask this everyday and you know the answer."

GEORGE

Had to ask. Who knows, you might just say "yes" one day.

EXT. MIDTOWN - DAY

We see PEOPLE in line at a chicken/pita stand, a line going outside of a McDonald's and a long line at the Soup Nazi stand on West 55th street. Mary and Tracy sit on a bench in Bryant Park, eating salads, chatting.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION AREA - SAME

The reception area is empty.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - SAME

Richard is at his desk pouring over papers hard at work.

EXT. MIDTOWN - LATER

We see the SOUP NAZI closing his place. We see the chicken/pita stand closing down. We see a HOT DOG MAN pouring dirty hot dog water into the street.

RICHARD (V.O.)

They say New York is the city that never sleeps, and it's true, but what they don't say is that every day around three PM, after lunch New York takes a little nap and that's when I like to get out of the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNEY'S NEW YORK - DAY

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY'S - MEN'S DEPARTMENT - LATER

Richard is in the MEN'S DEPARTMENT of the store looking at shirts. A SALESMAN approaches him.

MUSIC: Department store muzak.

SALESMAN

Can I help you find something?

RICHARD

No, I'm just looking.

He looks further. An average looking SALESWOMAN approaches him.

SALESWOMAN

Have you seen the new Prada suits?

RICHARD

No thanks. I'm just looking.

A GAY SALESMAN approaches, not over the top but still gay, comes over with cologne.

GAY SALESMAN

Excuse me, sir, would you like to try the new fragrance from Calvin Klein?

RICHARD

No, that's okay.

He follows Richard and sprays a little in the air.

GAY SALESMAN

You should really try it. It's fantastic.

RICHARD

Hey, man, don't spray that shit on me!

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY'S - MEN'S SHOE DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Richard is now looking at some shoes. Another SALESMAN approaches him.

SALESMAN

Can I help you with anything?

RICHARD

No, just looking.

A beautiful ASIAN SALESGIRL approaches him.

SALESGIRL

Can I help you?

MUSIC STOPS.

RICHARD

(referring to a shirt)

Yeah, do you have this in blue?

She picks up a green shirt and holds it up to his body.

SALESGIRL

You should try this green one.

RICHARD

I don't like green.

SALESGIRL

No, you should. Go try it on.

Richard shrugs.

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY'S MEN'S DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

We see Richard in the dressing room, buttoning up his shirt. The salesgirl walks in before he's got it buttoned up and is now sharing the tight space with him.

SALESGIRL

That looks great on you.

RICHARD

Really? You think so?

SALESGIRL

It's sexy. I like it.

Richard looks again.

RICHARD

I don't know. I don't normally wear stuff like this.

SALESGIRL

You should start. You look really handsome in it. Hey, Lisa...

The Asian salesgirl draws back the curtain. A beautiful BLACK SALESGIRL, LISA, joins them in the dressing room which is now even more cramped. Lisa looks him up and down. Both girls are standing very close to him and staring at him in the mirror.

RICHARD

(looking in the mirror)  
You think so?

BOTH SALESGIRLS

Yes, very handsome.

Just then the gay salesman that was trying to sell the cologne sticks his head in the dressing room.

GAY SALESMAN

I think it looks great on you.

RICHARD

Okay, I'll take the shirt!

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - EVENING

Now the CROWD OF COMMUTERS hurries to catch their trains back home to the suburbs. PEOPLE on line at a bus stop.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLY'S BEDROOM - SAME

Kelly's nursery is decorated in a HELLO KITTY motif. Erica is putting Kelly in her crib. She HEARS the front door open and close.

ERICA

Daddy's home.

Richard enters the room. Looks into the crib. Kisses Erica. She smiles putting down his stuff.

RICHARD

How's it going?

ERICA

Watch this. How big is Kelly?

Kelly raises her arms over her head.

KELLY

This big.

RICHARD

Hey, big girl!

ERICA

Where's Kelly's nose?

Kelly points at her own nose.

KELLY

Right here.

RICHARD

Alright! Now where is Kelly's esophagus? Where's Kelly's Patella? Where's your femur?

ERICA

(chuckling)

Give her a break. She's only two.

RICHARD

So what? There're white kids her  
age taking the bar exam. She's  
gotta keep up.

Richard pulls his turtleneck off, but stops when it is  
covering his face. He peeks out of the neck at Kelly.

RICHARD

Hey, Kelly! Look out! Turtle-  
man's gonna getcha! Turtle Man's  
gonna getcha!

Kelly laughs. Erica laughs.

Erica sees his SHOPPING BAGS.

ERICA

You went shopping?  
What did you buy?

He takes the shirt out of the bag.

ERICA

I thought you didn't like green.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION AREA - NEXT DAY

Richard enters wearing the green sweater. He starts toward  
the door to his office.

TRACY

There's a woman in there waiting  
for you.

RICHARD

A woman? Who?

He enters his office.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A very BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMAN has her back turned to us.  
She's smoking a cigarette and WEARING super-tight low riding  
SEVEN jeans over her perfect-stop-traffic ass, a red PRADA  
top over stop-air-traffic tits and MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes on  
her perfect feet. She turns around in SLOW MOTION and we  
meet NIKKI.

RICHARD

Damn.

NIKKI

I knew you wouldn't recognize me.

RICHARD

Nikki?

NIKKI

What? Did you think I was dead?

Richard puts his stuff down, settling into his office and tries to act like he's not affected by her.

RICHARD

I don't know. I wasn't really thinking about you.

She takes a slow drag off her cigarette, smiling.

RICHARD

You know, people don't smoke in offices anymore.

He goes over and opens a window.

NIKKI

You don't seem happy to see me.

RICHARD

No, hey. I'm happy to see you.

He gives her a quick, uncomfortable hug, then moves away.

RICHARD

So, what brings you here?

NIKKI

I came to see you. I just bumped into Simon at Starbucks and he told me you worked here, so I figured I'd come up and say hi.

RICHARD

How's Simon doing? He owes me a call?

NIKKI

He's alright. Just got out of rehab.

(then impressed)

(MORE)

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NIKKI (cont'd)

Look at you. You're a big man  
here?

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RICHARD

Not really. I have a few people I  
have to answer to, but I'm not  
complaining. They take good care  
of me.

Richard takes his daily Kit-Kat out of his pocket, cracks off  
half and starts eating it, leaving the rest on his desk and  
leans back in his chair. Nikki sees pictures of Richard's  
family on his desk.

NIKKI

Are you married?

RICHARD

Yes, for seven years. That's my  
daughter, Kelly, she's two and  
that's my wife, Erica. We have  
another baby on the way.

NIKKI

Really? You? You got married?  
You walked down the aisle? You  
said "I do"? Are you happily  
married?

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He looks at her for beat.

RICHARD

Uhh yeah... I'm happily married.

NIKKI

Really, I don't know. You didn't  
say it right.

RICHARD

Really? How should I have said it?

NIKKI

I know you shouldn't have had to  
think about it. I hear ice  
cracking.

RICHARD

What?

NIKKI

When I was in Boston College I used  
to walk across the Charles River to  
get to school.

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(MORE)

NIKKI (cont'd)

You ever walk across a frozen river  
and hear ice cracking? That's the  
scariest sound in the world.

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RICHARD

Don't worry, my ice is fine. You  
married?

NIKKI

Me married? Hell no!

Phone RINGS. Richard answers it.

RICHARD

(to Nikki)

Excuse me.

(into phone)

Hello?... Yeah, come right now.  
I'm not doing anything.

He hangs up the phone.

NIKKI

Am I in the way?

RICHARD

No, you're okay. So what are you  
doing with yourself?

Nikki sits on his desk, picking up the other half of the Kit-  
Kat and eats it.

NIKKI

Nothing great. I work at the Blue  
Bar. You know, right next to  
Nell's.

RICHARD

Next to Nell's? I don't think I've  
been to a club in like six years.

NIKKI

Damn, you really did settle down.  
I'd like to settle down, but I  
still like to hang out real late.  
I like to have breakfast when  
everybody else is eating lunch.

RICHARD

Ooh, what a rebel.

They share an uncomfortable silence.

RICHARD

Hey, look, sometimes I'm free in the afternoon. If you call maybe one day we could have a late lunch.

\*

NIKKI

You don't want to have lunch with me. You're just trying to make up for being so mean when you walked in.

RICHARD

No, listen, it would be great to see you and catch up.

The intercom BUZZES. Richard picks up his phone, now all business. Nikki sees this and leaves.

RICHARD

Yeah... Okay, let's go over that tomorrow...

(to Nikki)

Later, Nikki.

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - EARLY EVENING

Still wearing the green sweater, Richard sits with other PASSENGERS on his way home. He's got his headphones on listening to Wu Tang Clan.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Seeing Nikki made me realize how uncomfortable I'd become with women. I'd like to think that before I got married I knew how to talk to women.

INT. TIMES SQUARE - FANTASY

Richard is walking through Times Square in SLOW MOTION. PEOPLE pass him by. He's dressed in an Armani suit, cool shades and expensive shoes, very slick and rich looking. He has an intense look on his face. The general atmosphere tells us this is not reality.

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MUSIC: "Excuse Me Miss" by Jay-Z plays.

Through some subtle VISUAL AND SOUND EFFECT, Richard's body lights up for a second.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: Richard's face. As he begins to exude sheer confidence.

ANGLE ON: SEVERAL CLOSE UPS of SEVERAL WOMEN, who were walking by, peering at Richard as they pass him, instantly falling for him.

ANGLE ON: RICHARD drinking it in with a deep breath (kind of like Keanu in the last scene of "the Matrix").

RICHARD (V.O.)

If I was single I'd be dangerous.

A WOMAN walks by. She seems very busy and successful.

RICHARD

Excuse me, do you want to have sex with me?

WOMAN ONE

Of course I do.

RICHARD

Then come on.

He leads her off.

INT. TIMES SQUARE - FANTASY

Richard approaches ANOTHER busy looking WOMAN.

RICHARD

Hey, let's go to a hotel.

WOMAN #2

But I have an appointment.

RICHARD

Yeah, an appointment to give me some. Come on, bitch.

INT. TIMES SQUARE - FANTASY

Then ANOTHER WOMAN, WOMAN #3.

RICHARD

Excuse me, are you a prostitute?

WOMAN #3

Yes, I charge one thousand dollars.

RICHARD  
Well, I'll charge two thousand.  
You better bring your ass on.

She pulls out a wad of cash and hands it to him. They leave.

INT. TIMES SQUARE - FANTASY

Richard approaches a cute, young girl.

RICHARD  
Excuse me, Miss--

CUTE GIRL  
Get the fuck out of here.

She walks off, leaving him standing there.

RICHARD  
Maybe it is a good thing I got  
married.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Richard walks into the kitchen after a hard day's work still carrying his briefcase. Erica is feeding Kelly who sits in a high chair. "Girlfriends" is on the TV.

RICHARD  
(gives Erica a kiss)  
Hi, honey. I'm home.

ERICA  
Hey, I'm almost done with her.  
I'll have your food ready in about  
half an hour, okay?

RICHARD  
Take your time. I'm not that  
hungry.

Richard bends down to Kelly.

RICHARD  
Hey, Kelly, give daddy a kiss.

Kelly puts some carrots in Richard's mouth instead. Erica laughs.

RICHARD

Thank you, Kelly. So how was school today, honey?

\*  
\*

ERICA

It was fine. I'm starting to get tired of these kids rubbing my stomach. Kelly, tell daddy how busy we were today. First, we went to music together then she had a play date at Brian's house.

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RICHARD

Any B-L-A-C-K kids?

\*

ERICA

Not one. I'm thinking about joining a "Mommy and Me" group in Teaneck. I gotta figure something out.

RICHARD

We should take her to see her cousins next week.

ERICA

We should do that. How was work? Anything happen with you today?

RICHARD

Nothing. Just work.

ERICA

Okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

Richard buying a Kit Kat.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - A WEEK LATER

Richard is in a packed elevator. EVERYBODY is in a suit and tie. Richard is the only black on the elevator. He looks straight ahead.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

Richard is on the phone with a prospective client.

RICHARD

Yes, I know you're working with Cross and Lubitch, but I think you're going to see some trends in the market soon which will point you our way.

Mary sticks her head in.

MARY

There's a Nikki Tru on line one.

Richard nods to her and she leaves.

RICHARD

Okay... No, no... This is just a courtesy call to make you aware that our doors are open... Good... Thanks, Walter. Bye.

He punches another line on the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE/NIKKI'S APARTMENT - SAME

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INTERCUT BETWEEN RICHARD AND NIKKI

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Nikki's on the phone. She's sitting on her bed wearing a Metallica t-shirt and panties.

NIKKI

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Hey, you wanna do lunch today? I just got up. If I jump in the shower right now I could be there in about an hour.

RICHARD

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I can't do it today.

\*

NIKKI

How about tomorrow?

RICHARD

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Tomorrow? Okay, but not until two.

NIKKI

I'll see you tomorrow.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Richard hangs up. George comes in his office, fired up.

GEORGE

You want to go to lunch?

RICHARD

No.

FADE OUT:

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - THAT EVENING

Richard and Erica are having dinner with ANOTHER UPWARDLY MOBILE BLACK COUPLE, ALLAN and JENNIFER. The WAITRESS is pouring them wine, she is very hot and Richard is trying not to notice.

ERICA

(re: waitress)

She's pretty, huh?

RICHARD

Who?

JENNIFER

Anyway, Allen still wants to live in New York, but I told him you can't raise a kid here.

RICHARD

What do you mean you can't raise a kid here? People have been raising kids here for centuries. Those Columbine kids weren't from New York. What's their excuse?

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

JENNIFER

So let me get this straight-- you're saying education is overrated?

RICHARD

No, I'm saying that *school* is overrated. Education is great, but school teaches kids so many lies.

ERICA

I'm a teacher. I don't teach kids lies.

RICHARD

Yes, you do. You know what my favorite lie that they teach in school is? The one where they say that the Indians sold Manhattan for what was it-- sixteen dollars.

ALLEN

How do you know that was a lie? Were you there?

RICHARD

Come on, it doesn't make any sense. The Indians sold Manhattan for sixteen dollars? The White man took everything when he got here why would he buy Manhattan? That's like a rapist asking for a date. I don't think so.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

RICHARD

What grown man has kids sleeping in the bedroom?

JENIFFER

I admit it's weird, but it doesn't mean he's guilty.

ERICA

I blame the parents.

RICHARD

I know you think he's innocent, but he'll never baby-sit my kids.

ERICA

Okay, honey you made your point. You don't need to scream.

RICHARD

Scream? What are you talking about? I didn't scream.

ERICA

Just forget it.

RICHARD

What's wrong? When we go out and I don't talk you get mad, now we're out and I'm talking and you're still mad.

Jennifer jumps in breaking the tension.

JENIFFER

I need to go to the ladies room.  
(to Erica)  
You want to come?

ERICA

Yeah, I better go.

They leave Richard and Allen alone.

RICHARD

Damn! Why is she so mad all the time?

ALLEN

It might not be you. She's been upset at work a lot lately, too.

Richard's looking at the waitress. She smiles back.

RICHARD

Do you see this waitress? She's killing me.

ALLEN

I know what you mean.

RICHARD

This is ridiculous. I'm gonna say something.

ALLEN

Come on. Let's just pay the check and get outta here.

RICHARD

Nah, nah. Somebody's gotta say something. Excuse me, could you come up here for a minute?

Right then the MAITRE'D comes over.

MAITRE'D

How are you doing, gentlemen? Has everything been satisfactory?

RICHARD

The food was great. We just had a problem with our service.

MAITRE'D

Really? Did she bring your food on time? Was she rude?

RICHARD

No, no. Nothing like that. The service was great, but just look at her.

MAITRE'D

Jessica?

\*

RICHARD

Yes, Jessica. We came here for a quiet dinner with our wives. We don't need this shit. Do you know how hard it was to try and not notice her all night? I couldn't even enjoy my food. My wife's trying to tell me something about my daughter, next thing I know I got these big tits asking if I want an appetizer.

\*

MAITRE'D

I'm very sorry, sir.

RICHARD

The next time I come in here with my wife you better send the oldest, ugliest man you got to come and take my order, you got it?

MAITRE'D

Yes, sir.

RICHARD

Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING

Richard sitting with OTHER PASSENGERS on his way to work.  
He's got his headphones on listening to the Wu Tang Clan.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Richard is on the phone.

RICHARD

Well, what do you expect for those  
prices? You get what you pay  
for...

We HEAR a knock on the door. Mary sticks her head in.

MARY

Nikki's here to see you.

RICHARD

(covering the receiver  
with his hand)

Really? It's two already?

\*

He looks at his watch.

RICHARD

Okay, let her in.

Mary closes the door.

RICHARD

(into the phone)

Well, if you're interested in going  
over some figures give me a call.

He hangs up.

Nikki enters and closes the door behind her. As the door  
closes we see that Mary's watching her go in and is giving  
her a dirty look.

NIKKI

What's up? You ready for lunch?

RICHARD

Yeah. I'll be with you in two  
seconds.

Nikki sits down in a chair, takes out a cigarette and lights  
it.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

They're seated at a table by the window. Nikki smokes.

RICHARD

...and you were with Nelson. He  
was out of his mind when he was  
with you.

NIKKI

I know. Poor Nelson. Hey,  
remember when we all went to the  
Vineyard? Remember?

She stares into his eyes. He stares back, resisting.

RICHARD

Vaguely.

NIKKI

Vaguely? You weren't married then.  
We both kinda cheated on your best  
friend, but big deal. That's old  
news. You and I always had bad  
timing.

RICHARD

When I met you, you were going out  
with Nelson.

NIKKI

I called you after we broke up and  
you were with... what's her name?

RICHARD

Marci.

They're silent for a beat as Richard looks around.

RICHARD

Where'd you find this place? I've  
been working in this neighborhood  
for years and I've never seen it.

NIKKI

I just stumbled across it one day.

RICHARD

So what's going on with you?

NIKKI

Well, I live with Teddy on the West side. We also have a place in D.C.

RICHARD

What does he do?

NIKKI

He's a promoter. So he's away a lot. It's almost like having my own place.

(Beat)

Do I know your wife?

RICHARD

I don't think so.

NIKKI

Is she white?

RICHARD

No! Why'd you say that?

NIKKI

Don't get offended. Remember that girl you brought to Andre's party?

RICHARD

That was one girl at one party. What am I, branded? Some of you sisters don't notice a good brother 'til a white girl gets him.

NIKKI

Okay, I didn't mean anything by it. So... do you and your black wife still fuck?

RICHARD

Excuse me??

NIKKI

Don't be offended. I'm curious. Everybody I know who's married tells me after a while they don't fuck anymore.

RICHARD

So, do you love this guy?

NIKKI

You didn't answer my question.

RICHARD

I know. So, do you love this guy?

NIKKI

Teddy? No. I like him a lot.

He's just... Poor Teddy.

(beat)

So, how did you meet your black wife?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD

I was playing football in Central Park. She was there with her class. I don't know. There was something calm about her. I just had to meet her.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

MUSIC: We HEAR "Summertime" by Will Smith over the following--

Richard is on the football field. He looks over to see a younger Erica. She is surrounded, up to the waist, in CHILDREN. Richard stares at her. She looks up at him. He smiles. We HEAR somebody yell "hike." We see the other GUYS in the background yelling at Richard, who is still grinning at Erica. The ball lands at Richard's feet. He is oblivious. The other guy runs over and knocks the shit out of Richard.

\*  
\*

MUSIC stops.

BACK TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - PRESENT DAY

Richard is looking at his food, silently, engrossed in the memory. Nikki snaps him out of it with a chuckle.

NIKKI

(semi-sarcastic)

Aw, you're in love with your wife.  
That's sweet, Ritchie.

RICHARD  
Something wrong with that?

Richard is a little uncomfortable.

NIKKI (CONT'D)  
Hey, I'd love to get domesticated,  
have some kids, stop all this  
bullshit. If you have any friends  
for me let me know. I'm getting a  
little too old for the club scene.

RICHARD  
I don't know how you do it. Being  
tired all the time, smelling like  
smoke, there's always a fight.  
Gotta know the doorman, gotta have  
the right sneakers. Some girl  
won't fuck me cause my car's not  
nice enough. Meanwhile this  
chick's on the bus. Everybody's  
got a Jersey on. I don't know if  
I'm in a club or a training camp.

Richard's cell-phone rings.

RICHARD  
(to Nikki)  
Excuse me.  
(into phone)  
Yes...

As Richard is on the phone the waiter puts the check on the  
table. Richard picks it up and puts a credit card in it.

RICHARD  
(into phone)  
Okay... No, I'll be back in the  
office in about ten minutes...  
Okay.

He hangs up.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
(to Nikki)  
I gotta get back to work.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE TIMES WARNER CENTER - TWO DAYS LATER - SATURDAY

It's one of the only malls in Manhattan.

INT. SHOPPING MALL - LATER

Richard and Erica, who's holding Kelly, are walking through a mall.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
The next Saturday Erica and I came  
into the city to do some shopping.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIA'S SECRET - MOMENTS LATER

Richard is in the panties section, holding his daughter, Kelly, waiting for his wife. He is looking around at some OLD WOMEN buying lingerie.

RICHARD  
(under his breath)  
God bless these gals, still working  
on the marriage. Good for them.

Richard picks up a pair of skimpy panties off a rack.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
Honey, why don't you get these? I  
like them.

Erica is sifting through a bin with some OLDER WOMEN. She looks at what skimpy panties Richard is holding up.

ERICA  
Okay, well let's find your size so  
YOU can wear them.

RICHARD  
Very funny. I don't know why you  
come to Victoria's Secret to get  
these big-ass panties.

Richard holds up a HUGE pair of panties.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
You could've gotten this shit at a  
gas station.

ERICA  
Don't curse in front of Kelly.

NIKKI (O.S.)  
Hey, Richard!

They look up to Nikki, who crosses to them. She's holding the same panties Richard wanted Erica to get.

RICHARD

What are you doing here?

NIKKI

Picking up a few things. I thought you lived in Jersey.

RICHARD

We do, but Erica wanted to come into the city.

(to Erica)

Honey, this is an old friend, Nikki.

Erica and Nikki shake hands.

NIKKI

Very old...

RICHARD

You remember Nelson? She went out with Nelson for a while.

NIKKI

(to Kelly)

And what's your name?

ERICA

Don't be shy. Speak up, girl.

KELLY

Kelly.

NIKKI

Hello, Kelly. She's beautiful. Just like her mom.

ERICA

Thanks.

(to Kelly)

Say, "thank you," Kelly.

Nikki touches the lingerie Erica picked out.

NIKKI

These are cute. Are they from the Angel Collection?

RICHARD

No, they're from the "parachute" collection. We use them to jump out of planes.

ERICA

Stop it! No, I tried those. When Tyra Banks wears it it's a teddy. When I put it on it's a grizzly.

NIKKI

You could wear anything you want. I've got to go. You guys take care.

Richard and Erica say good-bye. Nikki leaves.

ERICA

So, she's the one Nelson tried to kill himself over? She doesn't seem dangerous. I like her. What does she do?

RICHARD

I think she works at some club in the village. I don't know how she found me. She just stopped by one day to say hi.

\*  
\*

ERICA

When?

\*

RICHARD

About a week and a half ago.

ERICA

You never mentioned it. How come you didn't tell me?

RICHARD

I don't know. I guess I just forgot.

ERICA

Did you forget anything else?

RICHARD

No.

ERICA

Okay. Well let's go upstairs. We  
need pillowcases.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING

Richard sitting with the OTHER PASSENGERS on his way to work.  
This time he's reading the paper.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK

A TRAFFIC COP directing traffic. PEOPLE at a newsstand.

INT. OFFICE - MONDAY MORNING

Richard enters. Mary is typing and Tracy is standing behind  
her.

MARY/TRACY

(in unison)

Nikki called.

RICHARD

How long ago?

TRACY

Just now. She said she'll be by at  
five.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Richard on the phone.

Richard talking to Mr. Landis

Richard on the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. - RICHARD'S OFFICE - THAT EVENING

Richard is at his desk working. A KNOCK on the door.

RICHARD

Come in.

It's Nikki. She has two shopping bags. She sets one on a chair.

NIKKI

This is for me.

She crosses to his desk and hands him the other bag.

NIKKI

And these are for your daughter and the new baby. I was thinking about you guys all weekend. You looked so cute together.

Richard takes a LITTLE DRESS and LITTLE SHIRT out of the bag.

RICHARD

This must have cost a lot. Thanks.

\*

NIKKI

Don't worry about it.

\*

\*

A KNOCK on the door. Nikki gets up from the desk and goes to the window. Tracy pops her head in.

TRACY

Mary and I are leaving. Do you need anything before we go?

RICHARD

No, I'm okay. Good night, Tracy.

TRACY

(to Richard)

Good night.

NIKKI

Good night.

\*

Tracy ignores Nikki and exits.

NIKKI

I don't think your secretaries like me.

\*

\*

\*

RICHARD

They're not even thinking about you.

\*

\*

\*

INT. RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

Tracy looks at Mary and they both shake their heads as they walk out.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Nikki is still sitting on the windowsill.

NIKKI

Hey, you got any singles?

RICHARD

(going through his wallet)

Yeah. I've got about seven or eight bucks. What do you need?

NIKKI

Come here.

She takes the money from Richard.

RICHARD

What are you doing?

NIKKI

Feeding the fish. Watch this.

Richard leans out the window as Nikki drops a dollar bill. It flutters down to the sidewalk, before it hits the ground a shocked pedestrian jumps and catches it.

Richard and Nikki laugh. Nikki drops more money down. We see a dollar on the ground.

ANGLE ON: Richard and Nikki in the office.

RICHARD/NIKKI

Come on, bum. Get it. Get it bum.

Ahh, he missed it.

ANGLE ON: The street right as the bum passes it, a white college kid scoops the dollar up.

ANGLE ON: Richard and Nikki.

RICHARD/NIKKI

Damn.

ANGLE ON: Street as two people fight over a bill.

MAN #1  
That's my money.

\*  
\*

MAN #2  
No. Fuck you. That's mine.

\*  
\*

ANGLE ON: Richard and Nikki.

\*

RICHARD  
Oh shit. Let's get out of here.

\*  
\*

He closes the window quickly.

\*

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - LATER

Richard on the train with the bags he got from Nikki listening to his iPod. An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN walks by. Richard just takes a look and shakes his head.

INT. RICHARD'S LIVING ROOM - THAT EVENING

Richard shows Erica the little shirt and dress.

ERICA  
This stuff's not cheap. Should we... invite her to dinner?

RICHARD  
No. Let's not. I don't want Nikki coming around here.

ERICA  
I thought she seemed nice. I think you're just judging her on her past. People grow, people change. Look at you.

\*

RICHARD  
She seems nice, but she's complicated and needy. She's living with one guy, then she's living with another, going to Miami just for some Puffy party. She just won't grow up.

Erica smiles at him politely.

ERICA

Okay, I got it. Don't invite her to dinner. So do you want lima beans or corn?

RICHARD

Lima beans.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING

We see Richard walking through a CROWDED train looking for a seat.

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - MORNING

There's Nikki outside smoking a cigarette. Wearing a green Prada sweater and tight Seven jeans. They walk and talk. She looks upset, like she might have been crying.

RICHARD

Hey what are you doing here? Are you okay?

NIKKI

Teddy and I broke up last night. I'm so upset I haven't slept.

RICHARD

What happened?

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Richard and Nikki are in an elevator. There are a couple of other PEOPLE on with them.

NIKKI

I don't know. We had been fucking all night and he just fell asleep. Can you imagine?

RICHARD

No.

NIKKI

I couldn't take it. I mean if we're fucking and I fall asleep that's just great. If we're fucking and then we both fall asleep that's okay. But if we're fucking and then just you fall asleep that's fucked up. I guess you married people don't have these kinds of problems.

\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD

Yeah. Lucky me.

\*  
\*

NIKKI

No, really, you are lucky. If I was smart I would've dated a guy like you instead of messing with these idiots. I'm getting too old for this shit.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

\*

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Richard and Nikki are in his office. A few minutes have passed. Richard has taken off his coat.

\*

NIKKI

It's almost like we broke up a few months ago, but I just didn't know it. But now I've got to move. Can you put me up for a couple of days?

\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD

(struggling)

Ah, no. Our place is small. We've got the baby coming. We're moving a nanny into the guest room.

NIKKI

I love kids. I could be your new nanny.

RICHARD

I don't think my wife would--

NIKKI

Got cha. I'm just playing with you. Damn, you should have seen the look on your face.

\*

Richard starts doing a bit of paper work. Nikki notices his iPod and starts looking at it.

NIKKI

Oh, you have an iPod. You still listen to Wu Tang all the time?

RICHARD

Yup. All the time. You got a good memory. I'm not done downloading music yet.

She scrolls through the songs.

NIKKI

Boy, you got some nigger ears.

RICHARD

Nigger ears? What are you talking about?

NIKKI

Look at this... Luther Vandross. Patti LaBelle, LeVert, Wu Tang, Tribe, P.E., Snoop, Jodeci. Ya know, white people make music too.

RICHARD

One day you think I have a white wife now I got nigger ears. I told you I wasn't done yet.

NIKKI

No Nine Inch Nails, no Radiohead, no U2, no Chili Peppers. Look, let me put a little something on here for you. Open your horizons.

She takes out her iPod, connects it to his with a wire, downloading some music. She scrolls to one song and shows it to him.

NIKKI

And this one... you listen to this on your train ride tomorrow. This is from me to you.

RICHARD

I'll listen with my nigger ears.

She puts back her iPod, starts leaving. On her way out, she runs her hand through Richard's hair playfully.

NIKKI

See you later. I gotta find an apartment. Let me know if you get a divorce, okay?

RICHARD

I'll let you know.

She leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. COOPER HOUSE - NIGHT

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

Richard and Erica saying good-bye. Richard's about to go to work again. "Good Morning America" is on the T.V. \*

ERICA

So have you heard from your friend Nikki?

RICHARD

No, I don't think I'll be seeing her again. She likes to disappear.

ERICA

Ah that's too bad. I finally got her a thank you card for those clothes she got Kelly.

RICHARD

Well, give me the card and if she stops by I'll give it to her.

ERICA

I thought you said she disappeared. \*

RICHARD

Well she might reappear. And if she does I'll give her the card that you bought for her. Do you have it?

ERICA

It's all the way upstairs. I'll give it to you later.

RICHARD

Okay.

Richard kisses Erica and playfully grabs her ass. She moves away.

ERICA

You better go. I have to get Kelly ready for a play-date.

RICHARD

Any black kids?

INT. TRAIN - MORNING

Richard is on the train. He takes out his iPod, scrolls through some songs and clicks on the songs that Nikki put on there for him. He hates the first few songs and clicks fast then he finally stops at "Closer" by Nine Inch Nails. While the music is playing we see that Richard is affected by what he's hearing. He looks like he's going to sweat. He loosens his collar. The CAMERA is just on Richard, *but about 8 seconds in we'll cut to different WOMEN on the train lip syncing the lyrics.*

NINE INCH NAILS

"YOU LET ME / VIOLATE YOU / YOU LET  
ME DESECRATE YOU / YOU LET ME  
PENETRATE YOU / YOU LET COMPLICATE  
YOU / HELP ME / I'VE BROKEN APART  
MY INSIDES / HELP ME / I'VE GOT NO  
SOUL TO SELL / HELP ME / GET AWAY  
FROM MYSELF / I WANT TO FUCK YOU  
LIKE AN ANIMAL / I WANT TO FEEL YOU  
FROM THE INSIDE / I WANT TO FUCK  
YOU LIKE AN ANIMAL / MY WHOLE  
EXISTENCE IS FLAWED / YOU GET ME  
CLOSER TO GOD."

The last line of the song is sung V.O. by Nikki. Richard snaps out of his fantasy and we see an OLD LADY smiling at him.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard is at his file cabinet going through some files.  
Tracy walks in. She's got an attitude.

TRACY

Nikki's here. What do you want me to do?

RICHARD

What's wrong with you?

TRACY

Nothing. What do you want me to do?

RICHARD

Just let her in.

Tracy walks out. Nikki walks in.

RICHARD

What's up? Did you find an apartment yet?

NIKKI

Actually I came to ask if you'd come with me to look at a place in Harlem. I'm just a little scared to go up there alone.

RICHARD

You know, if you're scared to look at this place in the daytime maybe you should be looking someplace else.

Richard walks out to the reception area and speaks to Tracy.

RICHARD

Tracy, when you send out the roster for the Bank of New York, don't forget the second tier reports.

TRACY

Don't forget you have a conference call at twelve.

RICHARD

They don't need me for that, right?

He calls out to George.

RICHARD

George?

GEORGE (O.S.)

Yeah.

RICHARD

Do you need me for that conference  
call at twelve?

George enters the reception area across from his office.

GEORGE

I don't need you. You need me.

Nikki watches from the doorway of Richard's office. George  
glances over and sees her.

RICHARD

(noticing)

Ahh George, I want you to meet  
Nikki.

(introducing)

Nikki. George.

She enters the reception area and shakes George's hand.

GEORGE

Please to meet you.

NIKKI

You, too.

RICHARD

So, I'll see you this afternoon.

Richard and Nikki leave. George watches them leave,  
wondering...

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY

Nikki and Richard are in the back of a cab.

NIKKI

I don't know how you can stand  
working in an office. It looks so  
unreal to me. Everyone's dressed  
the same.

(MORE)

NIKKI (cont'd)

Everyone's so busy working for some big company that doesn't give a fuck about them. It's sad.

RICHARD

Hey, people have to work. If people like me didn't work, people like you couldn't shake their asses in clubs all night.

NIKKI

Hey, did you listen to any of that music I put on your iPod?

CUT TO:

EXT. BUILDING IN HARLEM - LATER

The building isn't bad, but the building next to it is gone. Just a lot full of rubble. Richard and Nikki get out of the cab and walk into the building. Richard looks around at the FOLKS hanging around on the street. He sticks out in his nice suit. He looks uncomfortable.

NIKKI

What's the matter? You're not afraid of your own people are you?

RICHARD

My own people? I don't know these niggers. I'm from Brooklyn.

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The LANDLADY leads Richard and Nikki into the room. It's very small and very basic.

LANDLADY

Here it is.

NIKKI

The ad said there's a balcony.

LANDLADY

I lied.

NIKKI

Oh.

LANDLADY

I don't know if the bed is big enough for the both of you. This place is really for students.

NIKKI

We're not a couple.

RICHARD

I'm just a friend.

LANDLADY

A friend? So which one of you is paying the rent?

NIKKI

I am.

LANDLADY

Sure you are.

Richard gives Nikki and the landlady a look.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL FACULTY ROOM/INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

\*

INTERCUT RICHARD AND ERICA

\*

Erica is on a phone in the faculty lounge, as she drinks her coffee. Other TEACHERS are lounging also. She is eating a sandwich and some fries.

ERICA

(into phone)

I have two more classes today. I threw up during the last one. The kids loved it. I wanna have this baby already.

RICHARD

(into phone)

You don't have to be working right now. You should just take your maternity leave now.

ERICA

(into phone)

I don't want to waste it.

As she speaks, ALLEN, (the guy from dinner) also a teacher sits next to her. He takes a french fry from her plate and eats it casually.

ERICA  
(to Allen)  
If you want some more take it.

RICHARD  
(into phone)  
Who are you talking to?

ERICA  
(into phone)  
Allen. He was eating my fries.

RICHARD  
(into phone)  
Oh.

ERICA  
(into phone)  
I think I'm going to wait 'til the baby is born and we can use my leave to go away someplace. What are you doing?

Tracy sticks her head in.

TRACY  
Nikki's here.

Richard gives Tracy the "okay" sign.

RICHARD  
(into phone)  
Nothing, just work. Listen, I gotta go. I'll call later, okay?

He hangs up the phone. Nikki walks in.

NIKKI  
Hi.

RICHARD  
What's up? How's your new place?

NIKKI  
Small, but I like it. You have some time? You want to get out of here?

RICHARD

Um... sure.

NIKKI

Let's go.

She gets up. He gets up. George sticks his head in.

GEORGE

Hey, partner.

(noticing Nikki)

Oh, hi.

RICHARD

George, you remember Nikki?

GEORGE

Sure. Nikki, hi.

They shake hands.

GEORGE

(to Richard)

You know what, can we talk for just a second? I need to know just a couple of things before I make this call.

RICHARD

Sure. Nikki, why don't you wait outside. I'll be out in a minute.

GEORGE

Sorry, I won't keep him long.

NIKKI

No problem.

Nikki leaves. George closes the door and leans on the desk, looking at Richard severely. \*

RICHARD

So-

George is concerned.

GEORGE

What-the-fuck are you doing?

RICHARD

What's wrong?

GEORGE

Do you want to mess up your whole life? What the fuck is wrong with you?

RICHARD

I'm gonna try that again. What's wrong, George?

GEORGE

What's wrong?! This bitch Nikki. That's what's wrong. I can't believe you got this bitch up in the office everyday.

RICHARD

George. Nikki's just-

GEORGE

You got a kid on the way. You got a good wife. Are you crazy?

RICHARD

George, slow up. I'm not fucking her.

GEORGE

She's fucking you, Richard. She's already fucking you. You just don't know it. I'm telling you...

RICHARD

Okay, first of all, nothing's going on. Second of all, how's this coming from you? You cheat on your wife all the time. Last year, you were fucking Tracy and Mary at the same time and I didn't say shit to you.

GEORGE

That's different. I don't give a fuck about any of these bitches I fuck them, then "Hey, bitch, get the fuck out. I gotta pick up my wife." You on the other hand, you're like Captain-Save-A-Ho. You like to be needed and Nikki knows it.

\*  
\*

RICHARD

I appreciate it, dad, but I'm alright. She's a friend.

GEORGE

A friend? Right. She's gonna fall  
man. And when she falls, she's  
gonna land on you.

Richard leaves.

INT. ELEVATOR - A LITTLE LATER

Nikki and Richard are standing. Richard is pensive and  
stirred by what George said.

NIKKI

You okay? You seem upset.

RICHARD

You know what, we shouldn't do this  
anymore.

NIKKI

Do what? What are you talking  
about?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD

Our whole "hanging in the afternoon  
lunch" thing. It doesn't look  
good. I think we gotta stop.

NIKKI

Stop what? We're not doing  
anything. Look, I'm not trying to  
fuck you. I'm not trying to fuck  
anybody. I just wanna hang out  
with my friend.

\*  
\*  
\*

She holds his hand in hers. Richard looks into her doe eyes,  
sees pain, and it melts him.

RICHARD

I'm your friend. It's just that I  
don't need any drama.

\*

NIKKI

Then come on, let's hang. No  
drama, I promise. Let's go  
somewhere and just chill.

\*

She leads him off, still holding his hand.

RICHARD

You wanna get something to eat.

NIKKI

Not really. Let's go somewhere different.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER

CUT TO:

INT. CAR SHOW - SAME

They are in a big Convention Center with cars displayed all over. Richard and Nikki are strolling in the hot car section. Porsches, Ferraris, concept cars are glittering at each display, doors open and velvet ropes around them. There are HOT GIRLS strolling around, SECURITY GUYS at the cars and car FANS checking everything out.

RICHARD

I've been wanting to come here, but I've just been too busy.

NIKKI

It's only here for a few more days.

RICHARD

Man, look at these cars.

NIKKI

Look at these girls. I wonder how much they make.

RICHARD

Wow! Porsche turbo. That's hot.

They walk over to a Porsche prototype which is heavily guarded.

NIKKI

My friend, Brad, has one of those. They're horrible on gas.

RICHARD

Yeah, but I bet they're great on pussy.

NIKKI

Did you say something?

RICHARD

No. Nothing. Is Brad your new boyfriend?

NIKKI

No, he likes me, but it ain't going to happen. Poor Brad.

Nikki walks over to the car, stepping gracefully over the velvet rope. ONE of the SECURITY GUARDS sees her. He smiles and holds the door for her as she slides into the seat. Her skirt rides up, showing her fine legs.

NIKKI

Come on, Richard. Get in.

Richard walks over and gets in the passenger side.

NIKKI

I love the smell of a new car. You should get one of these.

Nikki puts the seat way back and puts her feet up on the dash.

RICHARD

You know how much I'd have to make, to buy a car like this? For me to get a "Porsche," I gotta buy my mother a Taurus, my wife a Volvo, and then maybe I can get a Porsche. Even then, where does the baby seat go in this thing?

NIKKI

Well, I'm gonna get one someday and you're gonna be old and wish you had one.

RICHARD

Well, you're gonna be broke someday and you're gonna wish you hadn't. Let's look at the rest of this stuff so I can get back to work.

CAR SHOW MONTAGE:

Richard and Nikki having a good time. They sit in different cars: Ferraris, Nascars, etc.

They play a racing simulation game, they talk to HOT MODELS. Richard sits in a two seater, between Nikki and a HOT MODEL, etc.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Erica is playing with the baby. She picks up the phone.

ERICA  
(into phone)  
Hi, Tracy. Is Richard there?...  
No, I tried his cell... Okay.  
Well, just let him know I called  
again... Okay, bye.

Erica hangs up the phone looking slightly concerned.

INT. CAR SHOW - SAME TIME

While Nikki and Richard are sitting side by side in a race car we see them glance into each other's eyes, and for the first time we can see that they have feelings for each other. Richard opens the door of a new Mustang and the alarm goes off. Richard and Nikki run.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Nikki is walking Richard back to the office.

RICHARD  
I really had a nice time.

NIKKI  
I had a nice time too. I'm gonna  
miss you this weekend.

RICHARD  
I'm going to miss you, too.

They stop in front of the building and look at each other. It feels like they might kiss but they don't for now.

RICHARD  
I thought you said "no drama."

NIKKI  
There's no drama.

RICHARD  
Bye, Nikki.

NIKKI

Bye, have a good weekend.

She kisses him lightly on the lips and leaves. He watches her walk away and starts to skip down the street. Frank Sinatra, "I Got The World On A String" starts to play. We see Richard give a BUM some money, kiss an OLD LADY then the music stops and the smile leaves his face. Richard runs right up to the camera and yells (we don't hear anything).

\*  
\*

EXT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S BACKYARD - FALL DAY

\*

Richard is pushing Kelly on the swing set as Erica walks up.

ERICA

I called your office yesterday around three forty-five and nobody knew where to find you. I called your cell, no answer. I paged you, you didn't page me back.

RICHARD

I was probably getting something to eat at the deli.

ERICA

Well, I called you a few times. You should let people know where you're at and keep your phone on. What if something was wrong with Kelly? What if I got hit by a car?

\*

RICHARD

I'm telling you, I went to get something to eat at the deli.

ERICA

I didn't say that you didn't go to the deli. What's wrong with you?

RICHARD

Nothing. So what do you want to do tomorrow? A movie? We could have brunch with Allen and Jennifer.

ERICA

We always do that. Why don't we do something different?

CUT TO:

INT. CAR SHOW - THE NEXT DAY

Richard and Erica are walking among the family cars. Richard is a little uncomfortable. While they're walking they pass the model Nikki spoke to the day before. She nods at Richard when Erica's not looking.

ERICA  
Are you okay?

RICHARD  
Huh? Yeah. I'm great.

SECURITY GUARD  
(to Richard)  
Can't get enough, huh?

ERICA  
Who was that?

RICHARD  
I don't know.

ERICA  
Hey, there goes the new mini-vans.  
Let's check them out.

SMALL MINI-VAN MONTAGE:

Just like the "cool" car montage but in this one Richard isn't excited. He's bored out of his mind. No pretty girls here. Just FULL-FIGURED WOMEN. Erica is really into the mini-vans. Richard opens a mini-van and the alarm goes off.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Richard is in a meeting with George and some CLIENTS. George is going over some charts. Richard's cell-phone RINGS. Everybody in the room looks around like "whose phone is ringing."

RICHARD  
(uncomfortable)  
Sorry. That's mine.

He answers it.

RICHARD

Hello?...

The music blast from his cell phone and we hear...

NIKKI (V.O.)

Hey, it's Nikki.

RICHARD

(to the room)

Hey, excuse me for a sec.

He moves to the corner of the office, talking quietly into the phone. George and Mr. Landis look at Richard like he's crazy.

RICHARD

What's up? I can't really talk I'm in a meeting...

INT. BAR/INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

INTERCUT NIKKI AND RICHARD

Nikki is on the phone at the bar where she works. It's empty and they're setting up stools for the night, but the music is LOUD.

NIKKI

Okay, I just have to ask you something but I'm afraid you'll get mad at me.

RICHARD

Nikki, I can't do this. I'm in a meeting.

NIKKI

Just promise me you won't get mad.

RICHARD

Fine. I promise.

NIKKI

Okay, I need a little favor. Can you help me get my things out of Teddy's apartment?

RICHARD

Now? I told you I'm in a meeting.

NIKKI

No, tomorrow.

RICHARD

Okay, I'll see you tomorrow.

ANGLE ON: George, eyeing Richard as he talks.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - NEXT DAY

Richard and Nikki are in a cab on the Westside Highway.

RICHARD

Alright, so where's this guy live?  
I got things to do.

NIKKI

We should be at the shuttle in  
about twenty minutes.

RICHARD

Shuttle? What are you talking  
about? Shuttle where?

NIKKI

D.C. Our first apartment is there.  
I left a lot of my stuff there. He  
left town, so now's my chance.

\*

RICHARD

I'm not going to another state with  
you to some guy's apartment to pick  
up your shit. That's crazy!

NIKKI

D.C.'s not another state. It's a  
thirty minute flight. It's quicker  
than going to Brooklyn. You'll be  
back at your office before  
lunchtime besides you live in  
Jersey. That's another state.

\*

\*

RICHARD

Get the fuck out of here. I'm  
not...

CUT TO:

EXT. AERIAL FOOTAGE OF WASHINGTON D.C. - LATER

Taken from a landing plane.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME DAY

Nikki and Richard sit on the flight as it taxis to the gate.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to  
Ronald Reagan International  
Airport. It is now safe to use  
electronic devices.

Richard gets on his cell-phone.

RICHARD

(into cell-phone)

Okay, I'll be back by three. I  
have some errands to run. You know  
what? If Nikki calls, tell her  
I'll call her back to her tomorrow.

He hangs up. Nikki smiles.

NIKKI

Ooh. You're a good liar.

RICHARD

Shut up. We're catching the two  
o'clock shuttle back. No later.  
You better not have too much stuff  
to carry on, 'cause we're not  
checking shit. I have a meeting at  
four.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - LATER

They approach a building. We see a COUPLE of POLICE CARS on  
the block.

NIKKI

(to the driver)

It's right here on your left. You  
can stop at the green car.

RICHARD

I wonder what all these cops are doing here.

NIKKI

This neighborhood is crazy.  
There's always cops around here.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - SAME DAY

Nikki and Richard reach a door inside the apartment complex.  
She is looking for her keys.

RICHARD

So how many cities did you live in with this Teddy guy?

NIKKI

Here and New York. In Miami I lived with his brother, that's how I met him.

(still looking in her purse)

Where the hell are my keys?

RICHARD

You lived with a guy, then left him and moved in with his brother? How the fuck did you pull that off? I have a hard time telling my wife I want pancakes.

NIKKI

Hey, I'm not saying it was easy. I really didn't want to hurt him, but I had to follow my heart.

Richard thinks about it. Then...

RICHARD

That's what I like about you. You don't care what anybody says. You do whatever you want.

NIKKI

You're wrong. I don't do whatever I want. I try to do whatever I want. Big difference.

(beat)

Damn, he changed the locks.

RICHARD

Okay, let's get butta here.

NIKKI

No, wait a minute. Let me try one more thing.

\*  
\*

Nikki walks down the hall and knocks on a door.

\*

CUT TO:

\*

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

CHUCK, the MUSCULAR SUPERINTENDANT of the building, takes out some keys and easily opens the door, letting them in.

CHUCK

No problem. In you go.

Nikki kisses him on the cheek and he leaves.

CHUCK

Call me, baby. I still didn't forget.

NIKKI

Neither did I.

Richard follows Nikki into the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Nikki and Richard walk in. Nikki starts going through stuff while Richard looks around. The large windows look out onto the POURING RAIN. He finds a photo album on a table and looks through it. We SEE old pictures of Nikki. Nikki at the prom, as a cheerleader, etc.

RICHARD

It's really coming down.

(dawning on him)

We gotta get a flight. What time is it?

He looks at his watch. Nikki is oblivious going through her things.

NIKKI

Just one second. Here, can you carry these?

She hands Richard a bunch of DVD's and a man's shirt. She pulls off her shirt, down to her bra, and starts pulling on a different one that she found.

RICHARD  
South Park? I didn't know you  
liked South Park.

NIKKI  
I love it. That's my favorite  
movie.

They both start singing.

NIKKI/RICHARD  
*"Shut your fucking face, uncle  
fucker / You're a motherfuckin'  
bitch, uncle fucker / You're an  
uncle fucker / Yes, it's true /  
Nobody fucks uncle quite like you."*

A voice is HEARD off screen.

TEDDY (O.C.)  
Can I help you?

They both turn, startled, to find TEDDY, a fat guy with dread locks, dressed in a football jersey. He stands at the open door.

NIKKI  
Teddy. I'm just-

TEDDY  
Who the fuck is this? You brought  
your man to my crib? So this is  
the nigga.

Teddy walks up to Richard and Richard stick out his hand to shake.

RICHARD  
No, no, I'm not the nigga. I  
assure you, I am not the nigga.

Teddy cuts him off with a slap to the face. He drops the shirt on the floor.

TEDDY  
Don't drop my shirt on the floor,  
bitch!

RICHARD

Oh shit, look, I'm sorry I didn't know..

Teddy swings at Richard. Richard covers up. The blow hits him on the arm and head and he falls, knocking down a lamp that falls and breaks.

TEDDY

Hey, nigger, that shit's Chinese.  
You owe me four grand.

Teddy starts punching and kicking at Richard who is curled in a ball.

NIKKI

Teddy, calm down.

TEDDY

No, you calm down. I can't believe you brought this nigger in my house.

NIKKI

Stop it, Teddy! Stop!

TEDDY

Stop what, bitch?! You want some of this?

He runs over and grabs her hair. She screams. A voice is HEARD off screen. Richard jumps on Teddy's back.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey! Watch your mouth.

They all turn around to see TWO COPS standing at the open door.

TEDDY

What the fuck do y'all want?

COP #1

We were responding to a burglary upstairs. Is everything okay?

TEDDY

This mother-fucker broke into my apartment, and this bitch-

He pulls her by the hair. She screams.

COP #2

Hey!

The two cops run over and separate them. They are now restraining a furious Teddy.

TEDDY

Get off me, you fucking cop punk bitch!

COP #2

Just settle down, Pal.

TEDDY

Fuck you! You settle down.

COP #2

Okay! Is this what you want?

They start beating him up, Rodney King style.

TEDDY

Aaah! Bitch ass cops! Fuck the police! Fuck the police! Fuck the police! Thug life! Thug life!

Nikki runs over to Richard and helps him up. The cops are still beating Teddy.

NIKKI

Richard, are you alright?

RICHARD

Yeah. Let's get out of here before they start whooping our ass.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They sneak out as the cops beat the hell out of Teddy.

NIKKI

We can't just leave him like that. They might kill him.

RICHARD

What are we gonna do? Call a cop?

Just then we HEAR gun shots.

RICHARD

Oh shit! Let's go.

INT. TAXI CAB - MOMENTS LATER

The rain is pouring down REALLY hard on their cab, which is stuck in traffic not moving.

NIKKI

I'm so sorry. I am so sorry! I thought he was out of town.

Just then Nikki leans over and kisses Richard and for a couple of seconds they're making out in the cab until Richard pushes her away.

RICHARD

Get off of me! What the fuck is wrong with... I gotta get back to work.

NIKKI

Don't worry, you'll make it.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Mr. Landis, George and some CLIENTS are waiting. Mr. Landis looks at his watch. It reads 4:05PM.

MR. LANDIS

Did he say anything to you? Where the hell is he?

GEORGE

You know, I'm sure he has a good explanation. You know his wife's pregnant.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - SAME

Richard and Nikki are trying to get through airport security. Richard keeps beeping, removing his keys, belt -- all in a tense hurry, then beeps again. He has to be screened by a SECURITY GUY with a wand.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Mr. Landis, George and the clients are still waiting.

MR. LANDIS

Okay, I think we should start.

They all start opening their folders to begin.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - THAT NIGHT

George and Mary are putting on their coats and turning the lights out in the office.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT GATE - THAT NIGHT

Richard and Nikki sit in a very crowded gate area.

AIRLINE PERSON P.A. (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen. Our flight  
is going to be further delayed. We  
don't have clearance to leave the  
gate yet but as soon as we do we'll  
let you board. In the meantime...

Richard has his head in his hands. Nikki sits quietly beside him.

INT. OFFICE - THAT NIGHT

We see the cleaning lady from earlier mopping the floor.  
Everybody's gone.

\*

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Erica sits at the kitchen table, looking down at her dinner. Richard's dinner sits across from her. She looks solemn, a bit sad. She is waiting for a while then the door opens and Richard is there, looking haggard.

ERICA

What happened to you? Why are you  
late?

RICHARD

I had a shit day, honey. Just... a nightmare. First the train then the traffic then the rain.

ERICA

You want to talk about it?

He kisses her.

RICHARD

No. Just let me clean up. I'll be right back. Go ahead and eat.

He leaves the room, taking off his coat.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S KITCHEN - 15 MINUTES LATER

Richard and Erica sitting down and eating and not saying anything to each other. First, we have the camera CLOSE-UP on Erica just eating. Then we have the camera CLOSE-UP on Richard eating and thinking. Then we see Richard look at the T.V. where we see the news--

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Today in Washington, D.C., a man named Teddy Smith shot and wounded two police officers. He was later apprehended after a violent stand-off.

Richard stops eating.

ERICA

(off his reaction)

Are you sure you're okay?

RICHARD

Yeah. I'm fine. I'm great. Just tired. Can I get some more rice?

INT. TRAIN - NEXT DAY

Richard on his way to work. He's listening to his iPod. He looks tired and slightly disheveled.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Richard walks into his office, taking off his coat. He reaches in the pocket and is startled to find the boarding pass from the night before. He holds it in his hand, considering what if it'd been found. He sits at his desk, ripping it to pieces and lets out a breath of relief. Just then Mr. Landis walks in.

MR. LANDIS

Okay, Cooper, what happened to you yesterday? You look like shit.

RICHARD

I can explain. I was...

MR. LANDIS

Did your mother die?

RICHARD

No.

MR. LANDIS

Did your father die?

RICHARD

Ah, no.

MR. LANDIS

Did your wife or child pass away?

RICHARD

No, sir.

MR. LANDIS

And I can see that you're breathing which means you have no fucking excuse, Cooper! You're on probation. If you mess up one more time you're fired. You fuck up my money, I'll fuck up yours. Am I understood?!

RICHARD

Yes, sir.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Richard and George walk out together.

GEORGE

Need a ride?

RICHARD

Yeah, could you just drop me off at the train station?

GEORGE

Come on, I'll drop you.

INT. BMW - LATER

George is driving Richard in his nice car. They pull up to Grand Central Station.

RICHARD

Look, George, I'm sorry about the other day. I had a family emergency.

GEORGE

Hey, you don't have to explain shit to me. I said my piece just don't let it fuck with your work again. You know, when you mess up like that the whole office starts looking at me like, "where's your friend?" You wouldn't believe some of the racist shit they say when you're not around.

RICHARD

Like what?

GEORGE

You don't want to know. I just hope she's worth it.

RICHARD

What are you talking about?

GEORGE

You know what I'm talking about. Hey, I got something for you.

George reaches into the glove compartment and hands Richard a blue pill.

GEORGE

Here.

RICHARD

What's this?

GEORGE

What do you think it is? It's  
Viagra.

RICHARD

You just keep Viagra in the glove  
compartment?

GEORGE

Right next to the Altoids.

RICHARD

I don't need it.

GEORGE

Rich, you've been married seven  
years. These girls have changed  
since you were single. They're  
working out, they're watching porn,  
they're doing yoga. It's like they  
got "rodeo pussy" and if you don't  
have enough dick you're gonna get  
tossed off.

\*

\*

\*

RICHARD

For the last time, I'm not fucking  
her.

GEORGE

Well, if you don't fuck her you're  
gonna fuck somebody. I can see it  
in your eyes. You're gone, man...  
Okay, what's going on with you and  
your wife?

RICHARD

Nothing we're fine. Alright! We're  
doing just fine.

GEORGE

You're not fine. If you were doing  
just fine you wouldn't be fucking  
it up. Listen, I know I gave you  
that pill for Nikki, but if you  
really want to be happy use it on  
Erica.

George laughs at Richard who doesn't want to hear it. Richard  
leaves the car and George pulls away.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Richard and Erica are driving home from the supermarket with Kelly.

MUSIC: "Chop Suey!" By System of a Down plays in the background.

ERICA

Honey, what's wrong?

RICHARD

Nothing. I'm fine. What are you talking about?

ERICA

You seem preoccupied lately. It's like you're a zombie. What the hell is wrong?

RICHARD

Hey, do you read the papers? Do you see what's happening in the market? Things are fucked up right now. I got a lot on my mind. I gotta take care of this family.

ERICA

No, I don't see what's happening because you don't tell me anything. You keep it all inside and when I ask you a simple question you yell like I did something wrong to you. Did I do something wrong?

RICHARD

No, I'm sorry.

ERICA

Stop being sorry... just talk to me. Damn! And what the hell is this music you're listening to?

RICHARD

What? You don't like it?

ERICA

No, I don't. I got in the car the other day and all my CDs are gone. What happened to my Usher? My Beyonce?

RICHARD  
You know what, you've got nigger  
ears.

\*  
\*  
\*

ERICA  
Nigger what?! Don't fucking talk  
to me like that? Nigger ears?!  
What is that? What are you talking  
about?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - MORNING

Richard is on the train listening to his iPod.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
Boy, did I fuck up. My job had me  
on probation. My wife was becoming  
suspicious. And on top of that,  
being one of the only black people  
in the office was starting to get  
to me.

\*

QUICK CUTS of WHITE PEOPLE in the office speaking very  
nicely.

A WOMAN behind her desk.

NICE WOMAN  
Good morning, nigger.

A MAN in an elevator.

NICE MAN  
Nice suit, nigger.

Mr. Landis passes by.

\*

MR. LANDIS  
How you doing, Richard? How're the  
wife and the nigglets?

\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD (V.O.)  
I was losing my mind. Nikki tried  
to call me, but I didn't want to  
hear it.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE

Richard at his desk going over some paperwork. Tracy sticks her head in.

TRACY  
Nikki's on line one.

RICHARD  
Tell her I'm not here.

TRACY  
Yes.  
(then, into phone)  
He's not in.

INT. OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

Richard walks into the office. As he passes Tracy's desk--

TRACY  
Nikki called twice. What do you  
want me to say if she calls again?

RICHARD  
Just tell her I'm not here.

TRACY  
Yes.

INT. TRAIN - ANOTHER DAY

Richard is on the train just reading the paper.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Richard walks past Tracy's desk on his way out with a client. The phone rings and before Tracy can pick it up--

RICHARD  
I'm not here.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Nikki's on her cell-phone.

NIKKI

Could you just tell him I got a new  
job and to give me a call?

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kelly is in bed as Richard reads her a story. Erica pops her \*  
head in the room and looks on approvingly.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - AFTERNOON

CARD READS: Two Months Later. \*

We SEE Christmas decorations all over the place. Richard is  
looking at shirts and a SALESMAN comes up to him.

SALESMAN

Can I help you find something?

RICHARD

No, I'm just looking.

He keeps looking. An AVERAGE LOOKING SALESWOMAN approaches  
him.

SALESWOMAN

Have you seen our suits?

RICHARD

No, that's okay.

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - JEWELRY DEPARTMENT - SAME

Richard is in the jewelry department looking at watches when  
he HEARS--

NIKKI

I think the pink Rolex is really  
cute.

RICHARD

Hey, what are you doing here?

NIKKI

Just spending money I don't have.  
When I saw you I started to not  
even come over here... but then I  
though you looked over here and I  
didn't want you to think I was  
ducking you...

(beat)

So are you still mad at me? You  
won't take my calls. Are we okay?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT - SAME

Richard and Nikki are now walking around the women's  
department.

RICHARD

So, my boss is mad at me. My wife  
is mad at me. But it's okay, I'll  
live.

NIKKI

You know, if I thought you were  
happy I wouldn't even bring this  
up, but why are you still with your  
wife? Every time you talk about  
her you seem depressed.

RICHARD

I don't know... I'm with her 'cause  
she was with me when I had no  
money. Because she's a good mother  
to Kelly. I guess I'm with her  
because I love her.

NIKKI

You didn't say it right.

RICHARD

Don't start that shit again. How  
the hell am I supposed to say it?

\*

NIKKI

You're supposed to say you're with  
her because you love her and you  
can't live without her, but you  
can't. You're with her because you  
feel indebted. You're not in  
love, you're in loyal. That's sad.

RICHARD

What's so sad about that? At least  
I'm in something. I got a family.  
You're the sad one. Who do you  
have?

NIKKI

Don't throw the family shit at me.  
You and your wife don't talk, you  
don't fuck. You've got nothing but  
your kids.

RICHARD

You don't know anything about kids.  
You don't know anything about  
marriage.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

NIKKI

Well, I know if you were really  
into your wife you wouldn't want to  
hang with me so much. If that's  
what family is then I'll wait.

\*  
\*

RICHARD

Wait for what?

NIKKI

For the real thing. For real love.  
Or a good sponsor. But I'm not  
settling for anything in between.

\*

RICHARD

You ever think of getting a skill?

NIKKI

Oh, I got skills.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - LATER

Nikki is dropping Richard off at his office. They stop to  
say goodbye.

NIKKI

What are you doing tonight? You  
want to go to a club?

\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD

Tonight? I can't do that. What  
would I tell my wife?

NIKKI

You don't tell her about the  
daytime why should the nighttime be  
any different?

RICHARD

What's so big about tonight?

NIKKI

A guy I met at the restaurant is  
going to introduce me to one of the  
owners of Tavern on the Green who  
might be able to give me a hostess  
job.

RICHARD

What do you need me for?

NIKKI

Okay, I know this guy is after me.  
Damn, he comes to the restaurant  
every night. Anyway I want you to  
come with me so he'll think I'm  
seeing somebody. Plus, I just want  
you to tell me what you think about  
him.

\*  
\*

RICHARD

Do you like him?

NIKKI

Why? You jealous?

RICHARD

No, I'm not but you want my opinion  
of the guy, you must like him a  
little bit.

NIKKI

Please. He drives a Bentley and  
wears a big watch with diamonds. I  
don't go for that stuff. He  
produces records. His name is  
Delite. It's so pathetic, like his  
mama named him Delite. What kind  
of grown ass man is named Delite?

\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD

Tonight? I don't know how I'm  
gonna get out the house.

NIKKI  
Why don't you just start a fight?

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Erica is at the oven getting dinner ready.

RICHARD  
Honey, I'm home.

ERICA  
Hey, dinner's almost ready. Why don't you go and wash your hands while I set the table?

RICHARD  
Okay, so what's for dinner?

ERICA  
I made some chicken and--

RICHARD  
Chicken?

ERICA  
Yes, what's wrong?

RICHARD  
Chicken, again? Why do we have chicken every day? I'm tired of chicken.

ERICA  
I thought you liked chicken.

RICHARD  
I don't like it every day. I feel like I've got feathers coming out my ass.

ERICA  
This isn't about chicken. What's wrong?

RICHARD  
What's wrong is there are other animals running around. Have you heard of lamb chops, pork chops? Just asking, just asking.  
(MORE)

\*

RICHARD (cont'd)

If I didn't say anything you'd give  
me chicken until I die.

ERICA

Are you crazy?!

RICHARD

I will be if I eat another piece of  
chicken.

Richard starts to exit.

ERICA

Where are you going?

RICHARD

To get some ribs.

He SLAMS the door.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - MOMENTS LATER

Richard still sits alone. He glances over and sees an OLD  
MARRIED COUPLE.

RICHARD (V.O.)

What the hell is wrong with me?!  
How could I yell at Erica like  
that? I'm losing my mind. I gotta  
go home. Next stop I'm gonna get  
off this train and go home to my  
wife. That's what I'm gonna do.  
I'm going home.

\*

\*

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Music is playing. Richard makes his way through the CROWD.  
The place looks like a Lenny Kravitz video. He looks out of  
place in his suit and is being lead through the club by a  
BEAUTIFUL FRIEND of Nikki's named, HOPE. It's a club so  
EVERYBODY IS YELLING.

HOPE

Hi. I'm Hope. I just got off the  
phone with Nikki. She told me to  
take good care of you. She's  
running a little late.

\*

RICHARD

Late! How late? Where is she and where are we going?

HOPE

I don't know where she's at. She didn't say. I'm taking you to the VIP section. Don't worry she'll be here.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S KITCHEN - SAME

Erica is stunned by what just happened with Richard. We see her take a moment and shake her head in disbelief. Then we watch her stand up and start to walk. The CAMERA follows her to the bedroom. She goes to a clothes hamper, pulls out a pair of Richard's pants and starts to going through the pockets. From there we do VARIOUS QUICK CUTS of Erica's hand going through Richard's pockets.

TIME PASSING MONTAGE:

\*

INT. NIGHTCLUB - SAME TIME

Richard is just waiting.

CUT TO Richard having a drink, looking at his watch.

CUT TO Richard tapping Hope on the shoulder.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Erica is going through the pockets of a jacket. She looks determined.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - SAME TIME

Richard is still waiting at the club. He taps Hope's shoulder again.

RICHARD

Did you hear anything from Nikki?

HOPE

No, not yet. I'll let you know.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Erica is taking a whole dresser drawer and dump it on the floor.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. VIP SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Richard is sitting in a booth looking at his watch. Just then from off camera we HEAR--

GIRL (O.S.)

Did you wear it yet?

RICHARD

Excuse me?

REVEAL it's the Asian salesgirl and the black salesgirl from the department store earlier in the movie.

ASIAN SALESGIRL

Did you wear the sweater? I sold  
you a sweater a few months ago. I  
work at Barney's in the men's  
section.

\*  
\*

RICHARD

Yes, yes... I remember you, too.  
The green sweater. What are you  
doing here?

\*  
\*

BLACK SALESGIRL

We're just hanging out. We're here  
every week. Wednesday's the best  
night. We're going to the bathroom  
and do some ecstasy. You wanna  
come?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Richard looks shocked.

RICHARD

Ah, you know I better not, I'm  
waiting for somebody. Maybe next  
time.

\*

ASIAN SALESGIRL

Come on, it's totally natural. I  
got it from a doctor I know.

RICHARD  
Okay, just a little bit.

\*

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S BEDROOM

We CUT to Erica in bed watching David Letterman's opening monologue. She's on the phone.

--SPLIT SCREEN--

INT. SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Allen is on the other end.

ALLEN  
Are you sure nothing's going on?

\*

ERICA  
I don't think so. I've been through his stuff. Richard's been really stressed out lately. He's under a lot of pressure at work and we have a new baby coming. I'm sure he's somewhere just getting his head together.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK OF NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Richard is back in the booth. His jacket is off and he's down to his t-shirt. He's very high. He's holding a bottle of champagne. The Black salesgirl is in her bra. The Asian salesgirl is rubbing against Richard. It's crazy. Richard is singing along to a Ying-Yang Twins song.

\*

\*

RICHARD/SALESGIRLS  
(singing)  
"Wait til' you see my dick"  
"Wait til' you see my dick"  
"Wait til' you see my dick"  
"Wait til' you see my dick"  
"You will never get enough"

\*

\*

\*

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S BEDROOM/INT. ALLEN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

\*

SPLIT SCREEN

\*

Erica and Allen on the phone.

ALLEN

You're probably right. Having kids is scary. There's something about fatherhood that makes you feel like you have to be a responsible adult.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Richard now has two champagne bottles and is singing even louder with his shirt unbuttoned. He's dancing with the gay salesman from earlier in the movie. Dancing to a FAT JOE song.

RICHARD AND GAY SALESMAN

(singing)

"MY NIGGERS DON'T DANCE / WE JUST  
PULL UP OUR PANTS,  
AND DO THE ROCK-AWAY,  
LEAN BACK, LEAN BACK,  
LEAN BACK, LEAN BACK"

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - EVEN LATER

The girls and the gay salesman are now dancing without Richard. PAN from the girls to Richard, who is now sitting down, realizing how fucked up he is. He's burnt out. He mops at his forehead with a napkin, tries to focus, and looks at his watch. He realizes it's very late. Richard climbs out of the booth, past them, searching through the CROWD and finding Hope.

RICHARD

Where the hell's Nikki?

HOPE

I just got off the phone with her. She told me to tell you she's sorry she's not going to make it. She said she's going to Miami with some guy named Delite. Something about Puffy having a party.

\*

\*

At that moment Richard starts to sober up while EVERYBODY around him is having the time of their lives. He can't believe what he just heard. He's crushed. Suddenly his phone is ringing. He checks the caller I.D. screen.

ANGLE ON RICHARD'S PHONE: It reads "Home". Richard, realizing he can't answer the phone in the club, runs fast for a back door.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - LATER

ERICA

Where have you been? Are you gonna tell me why you were acting so crazy? Screaming about chicken... Are you fucking some bitch?! Are you fucking somebody? I swear if I find out you...

RICHARD

No, no! I'm not fucking around. I swear to God. I'm sorry. I was wrong to scream at you like that. I've just been really stressed out about work and the baby, and I just needed some air.

ERICA

You still haven't told me where you've been.

RICHARD

I just went to a sports bar and watched the game. That's all.

ERICA

Okay, well next time just tell me that's what you wanna do.

RICHARD

I'll let you know next time.

INT. TRAIN - THE NEXT MORNING

Richard pulls out his cell phone and dials.

NIKKI (V.O.)

Hello, this is Nikki. I'm not here to take your call. Remember love is God and God is love. (Beep)

RICHARD

(into phone)

Nikki, it's Richard. I don't know what happened to you last night and I really don't care. I'm married, you're single. Don't call me, don't come by the office. Don't e-mail me, don't fax me.

\*  
\*  
\*

INT. OFFICE - DAY

\*

Richard is in the office.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Now that Nikki was gone I was finally able to focus on work and my family.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM - DAY

Richard, Erica and Kelly in a Music Together class. Everyone is singing the Itsy-Bitsy Spider song.

CLASS

(all singing)

*"The itsy-bitsy spider came out the water spout. Down came the rain and washed the spider out."*

FAMILY MONTAGE:

As we hear them continue to sing we--

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERMARKET

\*

Richard and Erica are pushing Kelly through the produce section.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

EXT. LIVING ROOM

Richard, Erica and Kelly are sitting under the Christmas tree unwrapping gifts.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM

Richard and Erica in a Lamaze class.

END FAMILY MONTAGE

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM

Everyone is still singing.

CLASS  
*"And the itsy-bitsy spider came out  
the spout again."*

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE

Richard and George are in the office talking to A CLIENT.  
Richard looks at his BlackBerry, then runs out of the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The streets are PACKED WITH PEOPLE. Traffic's at a stand-still. There's not a cab to be found. Richard is running down the street like a bat out of hell.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A very sweaty Richard gets off an elevator and runs to a desk. There are TWO YOUNG BLACK NURSES there.

RICHARD  
Excuse me, is this the maternity ward?

NURSE #1

Yes, it is.

RICHARD

I'm looking for Erica Cooper.

NURSE #2

(looking him up and down)

Oh, are you the baby's daddy?

RICHARD

No, I'm her husband.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Erica, holding the NEW BABY, hears Richard. He comes bursting in the door.

ERICA

Richard, it's a boy!

He runs up and hugs and kisses her. He takes the boy, holds him up and kisses him. They are all very happy.

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE

There's a paper stork on the front door that says, "It's A Boy!"

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Richard and Erica are playing with the baby boy.

RICHARD (V.O.)

After all the relatives left I took a week off to help out and it was finally time to get a nanny. Erica wanted to do the hiring but I took care of it myself. I wanted to make sure that the nanny wasn't the slightest bit cute. The last thing I wanted was two women in the house who I couldn't fuck.

A very OLD, GRAY-HAIRED NANNY comes in carrying the new baby.

EXT. STREET

Richard is walking to work, looking stoically straight ahead. As he walks we SEE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN passing him by.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
Now I went to work and I looked  
straight ahead. I wasn't  
fascinated by every woman I saw.  
As a matter of fact they annoyed  
me.

A BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMAN walks by putting on lipstick.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
What's wrong with her? She should  
do that shit at home.

A BEAUTIFUL RED HEAD walks by on a cell-phone.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
Who the hell is she talking to? I  
wish she would shut-up.

We see a NAKED WOMAN in heels wearing glasses and holding a briefcase. Richard walks by her without even taking a look.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
I told you, I'm not bullshitting.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - ONE MONTH LATER

Richard is at his desk working with Tracy helping him over his shoulder.

RICHARD  
Okay, we're gonna start with these  
three accounts, and then work our  
way to the newest ones. You better  
order in, there's lots to do.

We HEAR a knock on the door.

RICHARD  
Come in.

Nikki enters.

\*

NIKKI  
Miss me?

\*

RICHARD/TRACY

Shit.

CUT TO:

FREEZE FRAME: RICHARD'S FACE.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Right then I knew I should've  
kicked her out or called security  
or just told her I was busy. But,  
I couldn't.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Richard and Nikki are sitting in a booth.

NIKKI

So... what's new? Did Erica have  
the baby?

RICHARD

Yeah, we had a baby boy. He's two  
months old. His name is Brian.  
What's new with you?

NIKKI

Well, I just got back from St.  
Barts with Sean. A boy? Good for  
you.

RICHARD

And Sean is... what? The guy who  
buys your toothpaste? What  
happened to Delite?

NIKKI

I think he's gay. He liked a  
finger in his ass a little too much  
for me. Poor Delite. Now I have a  
fiance, Sean. I can't wait for you  
to meet him.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

RICHARD

Get outta here. You're getting  
married?

\*

NIKKI

Yup, I did it. I'm closing the  
deal. Sean's a banker. He's got a  
real job like you.

\*  
\*  
\*

(We never see Sean. We hear his voice, we see him shake hands with Richard, but we never see his face.)

\*  
\*

RICHARD

So what is it? Real love or a sponsor?

NIKKI

You know, I was at a party a couple of months ago and I was talking to this guy, he must have been about forty and something felt weird. We weren't talking about anything out of the ordinary just books and while we were talking this little twenty-two year old girl walks by and he just says, "excuse me" and runs over and tries to talk to her. I was a little embarrassed and then I realized what was wrong. For the first time in my adult life I was having a conversation with a straight man who wasn't thinking about fucking me. It never even crossed his mind. So when I met Sean I said to myself "I gotta make this work." We're getting married in June.

\*

INT. BABY'S ROOM - EVENING

Erica sits by the crib holding Kelly. Richard is looking at the other baby.

ERICA

Look, Kelly, look at the baby. You see, that's your brother. That's your brother, Brian. Say Brian. Brian.

\*  
\*  
\*

KELLY

Brian...

RICHARD

That's my girl. Kelly, "E" equals what?

\*

KELLY

MC squared.

RICHARD

That's my love.

Richard is down to his turtleneck. He pulls his turtleneck over his face and plays peek-a-boo.

RICHARD

Hey, Brian, Brian. What's up, boy?  
Turtleman's gonna getcha. Look out  
for the turtleman.

\*

Erica and Kelly laugh.

ERICA

So how was work? Anything happen?

\*

RICHARD

No, nothing happened. Just work.

ERICA

(laughing)  
Allen told me the funniest thing  
today...

Richard gives her a look.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOMEN'S CLOTHING STORE - MIDTOWN - DAY

\*

Nikki greets Richard at the door. They kiss on the cheek.

RICHARD

So this is where you shop these  
days?

\*

\*

\*

NIKKI

Well, Sean owns the building and  
the one next door. So I'm over  
here a lot.

\*

\*

\*

RICHARD

It's nice.

\*

Nikki looks over Richard's shoulder.

\*

NIKKI

Here comes Sean now.

\*

\*

Richard turns. (We don't see Sean, we just see his arm  
extended.)

\*

\*

NIKKI

Richard, this is Sean.

They shake hands.

\*

SEAN (O.S.)

\*

Pleased to meet you.

\*

(to Nikki)

I gotta get back. Don't forget  
you're meeting me at Nobu at nine.  
Don't be late. Richard, if you're  
ever in Malibu look us up. Bring  
your wife. We'll all go to dinner.

\*

RICHARD

That sounds good.

Richard watches Sean kiss Nikki and leave.

\*

RICHARD

Malibu? That's great. Malibu?  
I'm never in California. I guess  
I'm going to need a new lunch date.  
(beat)

\*

So this is... What you want? You  
and Sean... you're happy... you  
love him?

NIKKI

Do I love him? Not right now. But  
ten years from now, who knows? I'm  
going to be just like you -- nice  
house, nice husband, easy dull  
life. But I can tell you that I'll  
never love him the way I love you.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

RICHARD

Come on, don't go there. You and  
me... we just got bad timing.

\*

\*

NIKKI

I know. But don't you think we'd  
make each other happy?

\*

\*

RICHARD

Everybody says you're supposed to  
be happy. That's bullshit! If  
everybody was happy everybody  
wouldn't be happy. Everybody can't  
be happy.

\*

\*

NIKKI

I'm not talking about everybody,  
I'm talking about us. You and me,  
happy together.

\*

RICHARD

My life is not about what I want.

\*  
\*

NIKKI

I hear ice cracking.

\*

They both look at each other for a beat.

NIKKI

Sean is leaving for L.A. tomorrow.  
Why don't you come by my place so  
we can say goodbye?

\*

A short beat.

RICHARD

Okay, I'll see you about two  
o'clock?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Richard makes a move on Erica.

ERICA

What are you doing, honey? Just go  
to sleep.

INT. TRAIN - THE NEXT DAY

Richard is on the train listening to his iPod.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDTOWN - DAY

\*

Richard walking through the CROWD to work. He looks at his  
watch. It's nine AM.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

Richard is having a meeting with a couple of CLIENTS.  
Richard looks at his watch, it reads 12:30 PM.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Richard sits in a CROWDED room with his other COLLEAGUES as a businessman makes a proposal. Richard glances up at the clock it reads 1:05 PM.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

Richard on the phone. He looks at his watch, it reads 1:15PM.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - LATER

Tracy and Mary are typing away. Richard leaves his office and speaks to Mary.

RICHARD  
Hey, I'm going to get some lunch.  
If anybody calls tell them to call  
back in about an hour.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY - LATER

Richard walking down a CROWDED street. We see him thinking as we HEAR a voice-over.

NIKKI (V.O.)  
Why don't you come by my place  
tomorrow so I can give you a real  
goodbye?...

We SEE Richard walk into a CVS convenience store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - LATER

Richard comes in and gets a bottled water and we watch as he walks up and down the aisles looking for something. We don't see what he's looking for. A STORE CLERK approaches him.

STORE CLERK  
Can I help you find something?

RICHARD  
No, I'm okay.

We SEE Richard still looking down a couple of aisles. Finally he goes to the CROWDED counter and asks the CASHIER--

RICHARD  
(almost whispering)  
Excuse me, do you have any condoms?

CASHIER  
Sorry, I didn't hear you.

RICHARD  
(a little louder)  
Do you have any condoms?

CASHIER  
Oh, condoms. Sure, right here.

She points behind her and we see what looks like a hundred different types of condoms.

CASHIER (CONT'D)  
What kind do you want?

CLOSE UP: Richard's eyes looking at the condoms, then away.

RICHARD  
I'll take the blue box.

CASHIER  
Three pack or twelve pack?

CLOSE UP: Cashier's eyes. She looks down at Richard's hand.

CLOSE UP: Richard's hand, his wedding ring. He quickly covers it with his other hand.

ANGLE ON: RICHARD, he is now sweaty.

RICHARD  
Uh, three pack.

CASHIER  
Twelve pack is cheaper.

WE ARE NOW CUTTING VERY FAST from Richard, the cashier, the condoms, the magazine, ANOTHER SEXY WOMAN in line behind Richard. His breathing quickens.

RICHARD  
Look, just please give me a small  
box of fucking condoms.

The cashier puts them on the counter.

INT. STAIRWELL - LATER

We see Richard walking up the stairs to Nikki's apartment with his briefcase. He stops. Puts his briefcase down. Pulls out his wallet, opens a compartment and pulls out a Viagra pill. He looks at it then swallows it. Then he takes off his wedding ring.

EXT. NIKKI'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Richard walks to her door carrying his briefcase and knocks.

RICHARD

Nikki?

He turns the doorknob.

NIKKI (O.S.)

It's open. Come in.

Richard goes into the apartment, walks through it to the bathroom. He opens the door. It's filled with steam. As the steam escapes through the open door, he sees Nikki in panties, bra and a pair of black Jimmy Choo shoes. She's rubbing lotion on herself. She walks over to the shower and cuts it off. Then she hands Richard the lotion she's holding and says-- \*

NIKKI

You made it. I was thinking you might not come. I thought you'd get scared and not show up.

RICHARD

Scared of what?

NIKKI

I don't know. Just scared. Could you rub some of this on my back?

He puts down his briefcase takes the lotion and starts to rub it on her back. He's a little nervous. He rubs a little in then stops.

RICHARD

I think I got it.

She puts her arms around him and gives him a lite kiss.

NIKKI

Thank you.

She walks away from him to the other side of the room. We see Richard in the foreground. As she walks away we hear her say--

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Do you mind if I keep these shoes on?

RICHARD

It's okay. I don't mind.

MUSIC STARTS: "DARLING NIKKI" BY PRINCE.

PRINCE

*I KNEW A GIRL NAMED NIKKI /  
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY SHE WAS A SEX  
FIEND...*

Richard starts to take off his jacket. Nikki walks to the bed and lays down flat on her back. Her head is on a pillow. The song keeps playing. Nikki stares at Richard as if to say, "what's up?"

PRINCE

*I MET HER IN A HOTEL LOBBY  
MASTURBATING WITH A MAGAZINE...*

Richard stares back at Nikki. Then with his back to her he pats his crotch. He can't believe how hard he is. This Viagra shit works. Nikki is on the bed laid out. She's looking hard at Richard. All we see of her is her head and her breast as she says--

NIKKI

What are you doing all the way over there? I thought you weren't scared.

RICHARD

I'm not scared. I'm just looking at you.

NIKKI

Well come over here, I won't bite.

Richard slowly walks across the room and stands at the foot of the bed.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I'm really going to miss you.

RICHARD

I'm going to miss you, too.

Just then Nikki puts both her ankles on Richard's shoulders. We can see that she still has her shoes on. The CAMERA goes from her face to Richard's face. We never see her crotch. Then she says--

NIKKI

So what are you waiting for?

AT THAT MOMENT, we see Richard reach down and take off her panties. Remember we never see her crotch. The reason we know that Richard took off her panties is because we saw them come past her left shoe. Richard starts to pounce on her and Nikki says--

NIKKI

Wait. Take off you sweater.

Richard begins to take off the turtleneck until only his face shows.

AT THAT MOMENT, he turns to see himself in the MIRROR next to Nikki on the bed and FREEZES. He looks horrified by what he sees because what he sees is the turtleman. The character he acts out with his son and daughter. We FLASH back to see Richard in the earlier scenes playing turtleman with his kids. THE MUSIC DROPS OUT SUDDENLY. THERE IS NO SOUND. NO MUSIC, NO AMBIENT SOUND. TOTAL SILENCE.

The silence is broken as he takes a deep breath and looks in the mirror. He pulls the shirt back on, gathers up his things and leaves the apartment as fast as he can. The MUSIC starts back up where we HEAR Prince screaming "Nikki, Nikki!" The music keeps playing.

NIKKI

What's wrong? What's wrong? Where are you going?!

CUT TO:

EXT. - NIKKI'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

We SEE Richard running down Nikki's staircase.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

We SEE Richard walking fast down a city street looking a little shaken. Prince is still playing.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE/ RECEPTION AREA - LATER

MUSIC STOPS.

Tracy is on the phone.

TRACY

Listen, I'll be there at four. Wait for me.

Richard enters and walks straight to his office without a hello. He looks upset and sweaty from running.

TRACY

I'm glad you're back. You have a few calls to return.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - SAME

He shuts the door, paces around nervously. He then goes to the phone and after a deep breath, dials. We HEAR a phone message with Erica's voice.

ERICA (V.O.)

Hello. You've reached the home of Erica and Richard. Nobody's here to take your call so leave your name and your number, and we'll get back to you.

Richard hangs up. Then he leaves the office walking by Tracy and Mary.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - MOMENTS LATER

MARY

When will you be back?

Richard leaves without a sound.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKKI'S APARTMENT - LATER

Nikki still naked is smoking a cigarette and talking on the phone.

NIKKI  
(into phone)  
Yes, just sitting here doing  
nothing... Yeah, I'll bring it...  
Okay, honey. I'll see you  
tomorrow... Love you, too.

She hangs up the phone and looks real sad. A tear rolls down her cheek.

EXT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - LATER

Richard walks in the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Richard walks in like a mad-man and starts looking frantically for Erica.

RICHARD  
Erica... Erica...

Richard runs upstairs, opens his bedroom door and finds his wife, Erica, having sex with their friend, Allen--from behind.

ERICA  
Fuck me. Fuck me.

RICHARD  
Nooo...

BACK TO:

INT. RICHARD'S LIVING ROOM - REALITY

Erica is at the desk grading papers. Richard walks in again like a mad-man.

ERICA  
You scared me. What are you doing home so early? Everything alright?

RICHARD  
We're are the kids?

ERICA

I just dropped them off at my mother's house.

RICHARD

Everything's fine. I was just missing you and thought I'd come home early.

ERICA

Are you sure that's it? For once could you be honest and tell me what's really wrong with you?

MUSIC STARTS

Richard and Erica start to talk/sing at each other, but not "sing sing" more of a talk-sing like the beginning of a Barry White or Rick James and Teena Marie record. Romantic music plays throughout the end of this scene.

RICHARD

You know, baby, I just wanna tell you how sorry I am for being so cold. It's not that I don't like being married. It's just that sometimes it feels like the walls are closing in on me.

ERICA

I understand, baby. But it's not just you. I gotta admit that I've been distant too. I haven't always been nice. As a matter of fact, sometimes I'm as cold as ice.

RICHARD

So cold. So cold. You've been very cold, baby.

ERICA

But one thing I have to ask you, baby... it's time I know the score, but the thing I have to ask you is how come you don't make love to me anymore?

RICHARD\

It's been a long time.

ERICA

A mighty, mighty long time.

RICHARD

Baby, I still want you and I've wanted you for so long. But every time I touch you, you act like I did something wrong.

ERICA

No, I don't.

RICHARD

Yes, you do.

ERICA

No, I don't.

RICHARD

Yes, it's true... I don't want to leave.

ERICA

Neither do I.

RICHARD

I still want you.

ERICA

I'm gonna cry.

RICHARD

Where are the kids?

ERICA

I told you. They're gone.

RICHARD

In that case, we should make love.

BIG ENDING NOTE IN UNISON:

RICHARD AND ERICA

All night long. Yeah.

Big swell in the music and then it stops.

RICHARD

I love you, baby.

ERICA

I love you, too.

At that moment, Erica and Richard start kissing passionately and taking each other's clothes off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COOPER HOUSE - LATER

We see Richard come out of the master bedroom just like in the beginning of the movie. We see him put on his coat and walk over to Erica and give her a big kiss goodbye. V.O. starts as Richard leaves the house. Al Green's, "Let Get Married" is playing.

RICHARD (V.O.)

A lot of people have rules about what's cheating and what's not. Some people say if you're in another country it's not cheating. Some people say if you're in another room it's not cheating. I used to think I was a good father and a bad husband, but now I that I'm older I realize that if you're cheating on your wife, you're cheating on your kids.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME TIME

We see Nikki sitting in first class gazing out the window with her iPod on.

RICHARD (V.O.)

I'm really going to miss Nikki and the bad thing is I can't tell anybody about it. I gotta keep this whole thing to myself.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN

Richard is sitting down, puts his iPod on and is looking out the window as the train moves.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Any guy I'd tell would think I was crazy for not having sex with her. And any woman I tell would think I was a dog for letting it get that far.

INT. AUTO SHOW

Richard and Nikki at the auto show.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE

Nikki walking into Richard's office.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT

Richard and Erica sitting at one of the same restaurants he was at with Nikki.

BACK TO:

INT. TRAIN

Richard on the train.

RICHARD (V.O.)  
It just wasn't the right time. You  
know when all is said and done, I  
think I love my wife.

We see Richard start nodding his head to whatever music is playing on his iPod. A BEAUTIFUL BLACK GIRL walks by him. Richard takes a look and shakes his head in disbelief.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END