

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN CUL DE SAC - NIGHT

We START ON a view of an idyllic cul de sac, the street lights glowing softly, as the camera moves past PERFECT HOMES, with manicured hedges and well-kept lawns.

This is suburban bliss personified.

JEFF (V.O.)

You know, they say very few of us will ever find true happiness in this world. But I don't believe that. Because we've found it. Right here. On this street.

The camera comes to rest on a lovely white, two-story house - which promptly EXPLODES!

CUT TO:

EXT. O'KEEFES' BACKYARD - NIGHT

TITLE CARD READS: 2 WEEKS EARLIER

We START ON - JEFF GAFFNEY (30's), standing at a backyard patio table, continuing his pre-lapped speech from the previous scene.

A Chris Isaak CD plays softly in the background. It's a perfect suburban evening - good friends, decent food, a backyard littered with children's play equipment.

Sitting next to Jeff, is his wife Karen (30's) along with two other COUPLES - DAN and MEG CRAVERSTON and DAVE and BRIDGET O'KEEFE (all of them are white, except Bridget, who's Japanese).

JEFF

And, more importantly, we found it here with you - our best friends.

KAREN

Jeff, you promised no speeches.

JEFF

I know and it's not a speech, I just want to say one thing...  
(beat, to the others) As you know, we dropped the boys off for summer camp this morning...

KAREN  
(nervous)  
Mikey forgot to pack his Momo.

The other women, all of them mothers, wince. Jeff puts a reassuring hand on Karen's shoulder.

JEFF  
(gently)  
He's a big boy, he doesn't need a Momo.

KAREN  
He's 9. He needs a Momo.

JEFF  
The point is, this is the start of an exciting time for us. Re-connecting in an empty house for first time in 11 years...

Karen blushes as their friends hoot and make good natured jokes like - "naked time".

JEFF  
Karen will also be fulfilling a dream and launching her interior design business this summer. The Craverstons are her first official clients...

Excited and supportive clapping...

MEG  
(excited, to the O'Keefes)  
Re-doing the downstairs bath.  
Giving it the artist's loft feel.

BRIDGET  
Your bathroom?

MEG  
Think Brooklyn. Exposed brick, visible plumbing...

KAREN  
(offering)  
I suggested French Country.

JEFF  
See? Exciting. But, it would mean nothing if we couldn't share it with you guys.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

Which is why I took the liberty of brewing my latest summer ale in honor of us - six best friends who fit together like hand in glove.

Surprised laughter and warm smiles, as Jeff circles the table passing out bottles.

JEFF (CONT'D)

(proud)

I call it "Six Friends IPA" I even put a custom label on it. See, the hand in the glove...

Jeff points to the label on the beer. Sure enough, the beer label prominently features a gloved hand.

DAVE

(re: the label)

Hey, look at that.

DAN

Uh, Jeff, the hand has six fingers.

The group double-checks their beer labels - yep, SIX FINGERS.

JEFF

I know, it's supposed to. The hand is us.

DAN

We're a mutated hand?

JEFF

Not a mutation, a metaphor. Six fingers, six friends. If it was anatomically correct, someone would be left out and that would defeat the whole point.

DAVE

Well, I think it's great metaphor, Jeff. And a great beer. Your best yet.

JEFF

Thank you, Dave. I knew you'd appreciate it.

Jeff sits down, taking a contented sip of his beer. He takes Karen's hand, as she smiles at him.

KAREN

It really is good.

Jeff kisses her hand. Meanwhile, Dave exchanges a quick, careful glance with Bridget. Then...

DAVE

You know, Bridget and I have some news of our own to share...

They pause for a pregnant beat, then...

DAVE/BRIDGET

We're moving to Hawaii!

Everyone REACTS. Jeff looks stunned. Then...

JEFF

Okayyyy, I get it. Very funny. I give a big speech about the power of friendship and you say you're moving away. Nice one. That is so you, Dave. And this is exactly the kind of fun we can have all Summer.

KAREN

Uh Honey--

JEFF

Hey, guess what - Karen and I are moving to the moon! We're gonna adopt an alien! I love you, Gleep-Glop! Ahh, this is great. Who else wants to make up a crazy story?

KAREN

(re: their faces)

Honey, I don't think they're making it up.

DAVE

We're not. Our realtor found a couple who couldn't wait to get in the neighborhood. They made us an offer and we went for it. All cash, 7-day escrow - we'll be saying Aloha by Monday!

JEFF

Monday?!

Dave passes around his cellphone, displaying a photo of a HOUSE located in a lush, green Hawaiian field.

BRIDGET

Raising our children in a tropical paradise has always been our dream.

JEFF

Since when? I've never heard that dream. Have you heard that dream, Dan? Have they been dreaming dreams I'm not aware of?

Jeff looks for support from the equally shocked Dan and Meg Craverston...

DAVE

C'mon, Jeff. Don't you have dreams you don't share?

JEFF

No, I don't. Because this is my dream! I'm living it! My wife, my job, my children learning wilderness skills at camp, this cul de sac, these friends! Look at this label! (beat, quietly) You turned my beer into a lie.

BRIDGET

(disappointed)  
We thought you'd be happy for us.

KAREN

(quickly)  
Of course, we're happy for you. It's just so sudden, that's all.

Meanwhile, pre-occupied with her own concerns, Meg leans towards the group...

MEG

Here's what I love about the loft concept--

KAREN

Not now, Meg.

And, with that, we CUT TO...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON - Jeff's hands flipping through a ring of Polaroids. They are ALL pictures of Jeff in identical poses, but wearing different outfits. They have captions like "Annual Performance Review", "Taco Tuesday", "Harassment Workshop", "Retaining Water"...

Each one is a slight variation on "business casual" - sometimes featuring a corporate golf shirt, or a denim shirt with the logo of his company - AMERICAN DYNAMICS prominently displayed - always with some kind of standard issue pleated slack.

Jeff pauses on the last one - "Buck Up!" He sighs...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - KAREN'S WORK AREA - DAY

Jeff, now dressed in the "Buck Up!" outfit, enters...

JEFF

(focused on his outfit)

Well, I realize this is the third time I've bucked up this week, but I'm just too raw about Dave leaving for anything else...

He looks up to see that the room, along with family photos featuring their boys, is covered with design materials - SKETCH PAD, MAGAZINE PHOTOS, WALLPAPER CATALOGS, TILE SAMPLES, COLOR PALATES and SKETCH after SKETCH after SKETCH - all of them of bathrooms. Still in her bathrobe, Karen works away at her desk...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Whoa, what's going on here?

KAREN

(rapidly)

I'm trying to figure out how to put a urinal in the Craverston's bathroom, that's what's going on.

JEFF

What?

KAREN

She wants Brooklyn loft, Jeff!  
She's never even been to Brooklyn!  
(beat, depressed) Oh, why did she have to start watching "Girls"?  
Why, why, why?

Jeff takes a look around the room, taking in the manic output of work...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Did you take Patrick's medicine again?

KAREN

No, what makes you ask? (beat) And what if I can't do this, Jeff?

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

My first job and I'm stalled on a bathroom.

JEFF

Okay, hold on, let's not start thinking negative here. Interior design is your calling, you've said it a million times--

He wraps his arms around her...

KAREN

(slightly less than sure)  
I've always thought it was.

JEFF

Remember - success is just failure that doesn't get you down.

KAREN

Is that one of your H.R. slogans?

JEFF

Why? Do you like it?

He's interrupted by the SOUND OF TRUCKS pulling up across the street. Through the window, the Gaffneys see -- MOVING VANS. Both of them drift to the window...

KAREN

New neighbors aren't wasting any time, are they?

This just makes Jeff sad...

JEFF

(sinking)  
No chance they'll be as cool as Dave and Bridget. (beat, wistful)  
Our only interracial friends. I loved that about them.

EXT. AMERICAN DYNAMICS - DAY

Establishing shot of Jeff's workplace - the towering headquarters of a large AEROSPACE AND ELECTRONICS CORPORATION, specializing in DEFENSE CONTRACTS.

We see Jeff pull his car in through the GATED ENTRANCE, past SECURITY and into a very large parking lot.

INT. AMERICAN DYNAMICS LOBBY - LATER

Establish the high security. People are wanded/  
searched/carded both entering and exiting. They turn over  
phones, etc. On the way out, briefcases are searched,  
computers are checked... Nothing goes in or out.

Jeff enters the lobby. Clipped to his pocket, an ID BADGE.  
Jeff greets his co-workers, he seems to know everyone:

JEFF

Hey Sanjay! What's up, Wonsuk?  
Buenos morning, Javier.

Jeff breezes through checkpoints, swiping his badge. Moving  
through the lobby, Jeff runs into his neighbor, Dan  
Craverston.

JEFF

See the moving vans?

DAN

Couldn't miss 'em. What do we know  
about the owners? Anything?

JEFF

Haven't arrived yet. Apparently  
they're from the Northeast. And  
their name is Jones. (beat) Bet you  
anything they're not interracial.  
This is NOT how this Summer was  
supposed to go!

DAN

Well, we've always got  
Junetoberfest to look forward to.

Jeff smiles, giving Dan a friendly pat on the back...

JEFF

True, at least there's that. Have a  
good day, buddy.

With that, their paths diverge - Dan veers right, following a  
large sign that reads - EMPLOYEES WITH SECURITY CLEARANCE  
LEVELS 1-4 TO THE RIGHT. ALL OTHER EMPLOYEES TO THE LEFT.

Jeff goes left, towards minimum security.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - MIKEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The room is decorated with sports posters, book shelf, desk,  
a toy basket, bean bag chair, bunk bed...

We see Karen sitting on the edge of the bed, holding a STUFFED MONKEY in one hand, a cordless phone in the other...

KAREN

Camp Massapoag? Hi, Karen Gaffney, Mikey and Patrick's mom. Right, we spoke the other day. (beat) I just wanted to check on the Momo situation. Because I have him right here, I could Fed Ex him...or, better yet, I could drive Momo to Mikey.

Karen stands up, pacing...

KAREN

Yes, I know you think he's fine, but, trust me, if he doesn't get enough sleep, you will have a mess on your hands. He needs his Momo. (beat, emotional) And frankly, Momo needs his Mikey. (beat) Hello?

Realizing she's been hung up on, Karen sighs and lowers the phone...

KAREN (CONT'D)

(softly)  
Alright, Momo, back to the urinals.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - KAREN'S WORK AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Karen is again hard at work on her bathroom/loft design, when her attention is drawn to the window - as a sleek SEDAN driven by a MAN and a sporty SUV driven by a WOMAN pull up behind the moving vans across the street.

The cars park, the drivers get out - both STUNNINGLY ATTRACTIVE and IMPECCABLY DRESSED, radiating a CHARISMA and ENERGY that Maple Circle rarely sees. They are the SAME COUPLE from the opening scene - Tim Jones and his wife DIANA JONES. This is TIM and DIANA JONES.

KAREN

Wow...

She watches Mr. and Mrs. Jones walk to their front door, pausing on the top step for a PASSIONATE EMBRACE and a DEEP KISS in front of their new home.

KAREN (CONT'D)

(flushed)  
Oh, wow...

She puts her hand to the glass as if to touch them.

INT. JEFF'S OFFICE - HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT - LATER

Jeff's office is filled with the tools of the trade: H.R. swag, motivational posters (including one featuring the slogan "Success Is Just Failure That Doesn't Get You Down"), stress balls, etc. Yes, it's corny, but Jeff actually believes in this stuff.

As he sits at his desk, staring at a framed SOUVENIR PHOTO of himself and Dave O'Keefe INDOOR SKYDIVING - the two of them floating, smiling, having the time of their lives. We see another employee, OREN, quietly hunched over Jeff's computer, which is located on an adjacent return.

There's a KNOCK at Jeff's office door, which then pushes open, as two young male engineers, YANG and ALI, poke their heads into the office.

YANG

You wanted to see us?

Jeff looks up...

JEFF

Ah, yes, Yang...Ali, come in, have a seat... (beat, to Oren) Oren, normally, mi computer is su computer, but would you mind coming back another time?

OREN

Really? I just started...

JEFF

You can check E-bay later, okay? This important.

As Oren gets up from the computer and heads for the door.

OREN

(annoyed)

Why can't they just give us internet access upstairs?

JEFF

Not my call. Take that up with security. (beat) Door please...

Oren doesn't close the door, forcing Jeff to get up and close it himself.

ALI  
(warily)  
Is something wrong?

JEFF  
No, not at all, I just thought we could talk about the little flare up between you two on the 5th Floor yesterday.

Ali and Yang exchange an uncomfortable look.

YANG  
Are we getting written up for that? Because I emailed him last night and apologized. He said he was fine. Pretty much cleared the air.

JEFF  
Understood. And no, you're not getting written up.

Yang and Ali look relieved. Then, Jeff leans in, suddenly serious...

JEFF  
But I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't at least walk you through a couple exercises.

Jeff takes two stress balls off his desk, handing one each to Ali and Yang, who seem totally unsure of this whole thing.

ALI  
Look, maybe you could just write us up. That might be easier.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Karen is closer to the glass now, watching through the blinds with her son's SPYTECH headpiece, as Tim waters the lawn with a hose, glancing up and down the block, waving at various passersby. Diana emerges from the house with a glass of orange juice. And a kiss. She looks spectacular.

Karen looks down at her own baggy T-shirt and sweats.

KAREN  
Who are these people?

INT. JEFF'S OFFICE - LATER

Jeff continues to work with Ali and Yang, who are now facing each other, knees almost touching, holding stress balls.

JEFF

Come on, Yang. Just look Ali in the eye and tell him how you feel.

Turning his chair, Yang takes a deep breath, then...

YANG

(unburdening)

Sometimes, Ali, I feel like you belittle my contributions to the...  
(beat, turning to Jeff) I can't say the name of the project, because you don't have Security Clearance.

JEFF

That's okay, just call it Project X. Keep going, you're in a safe place here...

YANG

(back to Ali)

Okay, well...sometimes, I feel like you demean my work on Project X because you're jealous.

ALI

(insulted)

Jealous?

YANG

I think you envy my abstract processing skills...

Ali shakes his head - *this is ridiculous.*

JEFF

(to Yang)

Don't make assumptions. Be specific...

YANG

(picking up steam)

Okay, well, I know you covet my ability to translate 3 and 4 dimensional objects into numerical expressions.

ALI

What--

JEFF

Let him finish, Ali. You've got the stress ball for a reason, use it.  
(beat) Continue Yang...

Just then, Jeff's CELLPHONE BUZZES with a TEXT MESSAGE from Karen - "New neighbors!" With the text, a SERIES OF PHOTOS, taken through Karen's window.

YANG

You resent my workspace because  
it's near a window and yours isn't.

Fascinated, Jeff EXPANDS the photos and scrolls through them, getting his first look at the amazing Joneses in broad daylight - shots of Tim watering. Diana with the orange juice. Then shots of Tim mowing the lawn. Diana checking the mail box. Talking to the cable guy. The two of them coming back from a jog. Doing normal things, but, oh so stylish and so good looking...

JEFF

(softly)  
Whoa... (beat) Good God...

Yang and Ali continue to talk, but their voices drift away, and we linger in Jeff's head space, as he focusses on the image of the Joneses. But, the moment is suddenly broken, as Ali hurls his stress ball, bouncing it off Yang's forehead.

ALI

You got a hand job from Sharada  
Ganjali?! You're a dead man!

YANG

I thought you knew! I thought you  
knew!

SUDDENLY - Ali jumps up from his chair and - WHUMP! - he tackles Yang to the floor! Jeff scrambles to separate them.

JEFF

Shit... SHIT! Ali, stop! Release!  
This is no way to resolve a  
workplace dispute! (beat, screaming  
for the door) Can I get security in  
here please?! And more stress  
balls!!

Just then, another EMPLOYEE pokes his head into the office...

EMPLOYEE

(to Jeff)  
Mind if I hop on your internet?

EXT. CUL DU SAC - LATER

Jeff drives his car up the street. He flashes a quick glance at the moving van and movers across the street, then pulls quickly onto his driveway.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff hurries into the house, calling out...

JEFF

Karen, I'm home. Still spying on the neighbors? Scale of 1 to 10, O'Keefe's being 9.5's, how do they rate?

Jeff rounds the corner to the living room and FREEZES.

JEFF'S POV - the new neighbors, Tim and Diana, sit smiling on the couch on either side of Karen. Awkward.

JEFF

(flustered)

Oh... You're here...

Tim Jones stands and holds his out his hand.

TIM

Ah, you must be Jeff. We dropped by to introduce ourselves. I'm Tim and this is my wife Diana.

She shakes Jeff's hand. Wow, she is striking...

DIANA

We're the Joneses.

JEFF

Hello, Joneses. (beat) And Karen wasn't spying on you guys, that was just a little...joke...

TIM

Hey, don't worry about. Times like these, a couple strangers move in, you'd be crazy not to spy on them. Want to know if a couple freaks have moved in, am I right?

Tim's relaxed smile immediately puts Jeff at ease.

JEFF

Oh, you're no freaks. I can tell that already.

Jeff sits and pours himself a coffee from a carafe on the table.

DIANA

We are so excited about Maple Circle. Such a lovely community.

TIM

In China, they don't even have a word for this kind of street.

JEFF

They don't have a word for cul de sac?

TIM

Not one like this, they don't. The closest they get is "xinzang he linghun de kuaile di difang", meaning happy place of heart and mind. Still, doesn't quite capture things, does it?

KAREN

(filling Jeff in)

Tim's a travel writer and Diana's a social media consultant for global financial institutions.

DIANA

And, in my spare time, I run a needlepoint and crafting blog. That's my real passion.

JEFF

Incredible...

TIM

What can I say, I'm a lucky guy.

Smiling, Tim turns to his beautiful wife as if they were suddenly the only people in the room. They kiss. Their smoldering sexual chemistry making things even more awkward for Karen. Jeff stares transfixed...

JEFF

Hey, Tim, isn't it funny how we both hold our coffee cups not by the handle?

Karen gives him a look - wtf?

TIM

Hey, I guess we do. Anyway, we shouldn't take any more of your time. But before we go, we brought you a little something...

Tim produces a gift box and hands it to Karen.

TIM

I made it myself.

JEFF

My God - you MADE this? It looks just as good as a box you'd buy in the store.

KAREN

(to Jeff)

I think there's something inside.

Karen opens the box - a beautiful sculpture of COLORED GLASS. Jeff picks it up, turning it over in his hands...

JEFF

Wow, it's beautiful. (beat, confused) What is it?

DIANA

A sculpture. Tim blows his own glass.

TIM

(nodding)

Learned it from a Hungarian master I profiled for a magazine piece a few years back.

KAREN

I don't even know what to say...

TIM

Don't say anything. Just put it in the middle of the room where the light can play off it. (beat) Like this. Let it be a conversation piece...

But, as Tim takes the sculpture from Jeff and places it on the coffee table, the conversation dies, as another awkward pause settles over the room. Karen's thoughts turn inward, completely unnerved by this amazing, talented couple. Meanwhile, Jeff is head over heels...

JEFF

God, I feel like we should have gotten you something now... Do you have a stress ball?

He pulls one out of his briefcase and starts to hand to Tim. Then, reconsidering...

JEFF

No, that's stupid. (beat, to Karen) What else do we have?

TIM  
Actually, I'll take the stress ball, Jeff. You'd be surprised the tension that comes with travel writing.

DIANA  
Thank you for the coffee, Karen.

Tim and Diana begin to exit -

JEFF  
Ever been to a Junetoberfest party?

DIANA  
Junetoberfest?

KAREN  
(almost apologetically)  
We do it every year.

JEFF  
It's great. The whole neighborhood comes. We're a tight knit group. Most of us work together.

TIM  
At American Dynamics?

JEFF  
Yep. And I home brew all the beer! That's my passion.

KAREN  
(to Tim, thoughtfully)  
How'd you know where Jeff works?

DIANA  
Jeff must have mentioned it.

TIM  
Hm?

KAREN  
He didn't.

JEFF  
Honey, I'm sure I--

TIM  
No, she's right, Jeff. You never said anything.

Awkward beat. Then, Tim smiles. Turns the stress ball over.  
On the back: AMERICAN DYNAMICS.

TIM

Lucky guess. And we wouldn't miss  
Junetoberfest for the world.

EXT. GAFFNEY HOUSE - NIGHT - THE JUNETOBERFEST PARTY!

It's Friday night and the party is in full swing. A big BANNER with Gothic lettering welcomes everyone to JUNETOBERFEST! The theme carries over to the Oompah music on the playlist and the brats on the grill.

Karen watches Diana, surrounded by neighborhood women, showing off pictures of their kids on their cell phones. Meg makes a bee line to Diana, fawning all over her.

ANGLE ON - Tim, in mid-story, surrounded by a group of men, including Jeff, hanging on his every word. They've never met anyone like him before...

TIM

...so, there I am, alone in the middle of the Empty Quarter, no more water, dying of heat stroke - I am literally writing Diana a good-bye note - when what do I see coming up over the horizon? The exact same camel whose life I'd saved three years earlier.

Jeff dutifully hands Tim another bottle of hand labelled beer...

JEFF

(amazed)

Oh my God, did he remember you?

TIM

No, he didn't remember me, Jeff. He's a camel. But, I was able to ride him back to civilization. Filed my story with fifteen minutes to spare. Then I caught a flight to Cairo and was making love to Diana that very same night...

With that - POP - Tim does a super cool move where he opens the beer with his wedding ring. He takes a casual sip, then glances at the custom label - "Jeff's Ale Mary".

TIM (CONT'D)

(to Jeff)

Nicely done, brewmeister.

Jeff laughs, touched by the compliment. As Ali presses forward.

ALI

(to Tim, in awe)

How do I be you? Please, just tell me and I'll do it.

As the other men murmur in admiring agreement...

TIM

Oh, come on...trust me, this life is not as great as it sounds. The world can be a dark and disturbing place - not like here.

JEFF

(blurting out)

There's no cul de sac's in China!

The other men give Jeff a weird look - what is he talking about? He's obviously trying a little too hard. But, Tim is un-phased, gives Jeff a reassuring pat on the back...

TIM

(patient)

That's true, Jeff. There's not. (beat) But, I want to hear more about you guys. Now, let me see if I've got this straight... (beat, pointing) Engineer, engineer, computer engineer, encryption, advanced systems analyst... And you all work at American Dynamics? (beat, to Jeff) And, Jeff, you're in Human Resources over there? So you know where all the bodies are buried...

This gets a big laugh from the American Dynamics crew. They're all loving Tim.

JEFF

Sworn to secrecy, my friend. Sworn to secrecy...

And, with that, Jeff tries to open his bottle with his wedding ring and breaks the whole top of the bottle off. As the rest of the men look at him in shock...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Oh boy... Wow, I may have done that wrong... That's a lot of blood...

Tim whips a handkerchief from his back pocket.

TIM  
(totally in control)  
Don't worry, I can fix this. You'll  
be good as new...

As Tim holds Jeff's hand and constructs some kind of expert field dressing, Jeff looks on in awe, woozy from the blood loss and held over heels...

EXT. PARTY - LATER

A group of guests are gathered around a hotly contested dart game. Just as Diana arrives at the game, we see Dan Craverston line up his final throw. He launches his dart - THUMP - scoring a triple twenty. As the other guests applaud his victory, Dan turns to Diana:

DAN  
You can say it. You're impressed.

DIANA  
You seem to be very skillful.

DAN  
Neighborhood champ five summers in a row. (beat, offering a dart) You want to try?

Diana flashes a look to Tim, who stands across the party watching her. Then, she politely demurs...

DIANA  
I would only embarrass myself.

DAN  
Oh, come on, it's easy. I'll even show you the famous Craverston grip.

YANG  
Hey, you've never shown me the Craverston grip...

DAN  
Yang, there's a lot of things I'd show her that I'd never show you. Now, come on, Diana, hold it like a pencil...

Diana gives another look to Tim, then reluctantly takes hold of the dart...

DAN (CONT'D)  
There you go, even pressure with the thumb and index finger.  
(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)

Now, cock the wrist, elbow out...  
and throw.

The dart flies awkwardly from her hand... a guest ducks, the errant dart flies over his head- hitting a balloon that's tied in a bunch to a nearby chair - POP! Wow, that was bad...

DIANA

(embarrassed)

I'm afraid I'm not very good.

DAN

Well, you do throw like a girl. But when a girl looks like you, she doesn't have to be good...

This gives Diana pause.

DIANA

Perhaps I should try again. Do you mind if I skip the Craverston grip?

DAN

Sure. Just watch out for the balloons.

Diana looks to Dan, her eyes going cold. Then, several darts, she turns and hurls each one like she's throwing knives - thump, thump, thump, thump - every dart in the bull's-eye.

The crowd is stunned, but Diana simply smiles and gives a nonchalant shrug...

DIANA

(to Dan)

Do you want me to show you how to throw like a girl?

A blown away Yang starts slowly clapping, applause that is soon joined by everyone else watching.

ANGLE ON - Karen across the yard, watching. Meg Craverston stands next to her, still talking...

MEG

How's my bathroom coming?

KAREN

(distracted)

Oh, it's all I do. All urinals, all the time...

As Meg blathers on, Karen's wander over to the window - where she sees Tim Jones casually moving through her house. With a quick glance, he quietly goes upstairs.

Karen considers this - why is he going upstairs? Then...

KAREN  
Hold that thought, Meg. I'll be  
right back...

Karen moves for the house, Meg calls after her...

MEG  
I want to see some sketches, Karen!

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Karen enters and looks around. Empty. She looks up at the second floor, wondering... Slowly, she climbs the stairs...

UPSTAIRS -

Karen reaches the top step, enters the hallway. All is quiet. But, as she moves down the hall, Tim Jones suddenly emerges from one of the rooms...

KAREN  
Tim?

TIM  
Whoa, hello, Karen... Didn't  
realize anyone was here. I was  
looking for the bathroom.

KAREN  
(confused)  
You were in Jeff's office.

TIM  
Yeah, wrong turn. Lovely home, by  
the way. You have a great eye.

KAREN  
(caught off-guard)  
Thank you...

TIM  
Was that your design work I saw in  
the downstairs den?

KAREN  
(even more off-guard)  
Yes, it was...

TIM  
You're very talented. Keep up the  
good work.

He flashes that winning smile, giving her a WINK, then turns to go. He's almost won her over, until...

KAREN

By the way, Tim, the upstairs bathroom is at the end of the hall.

TIM

No thanks, I'm good.

KAREN

Oh, but I thought you said you...

She trails off, as Tim is already heading downstairs, leaving her confused.

Karen steps to Jeff's office - flips on the light. Jeff's American Dynamics ID card sits on the desk - but everything appears undisturbed.

INT. GAFFNEY HOUSE - JEFF AND KAREN'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Karen sits on the edge of the bed, lost in thought. Jeff enters in boxers and t-shirt, his hand expertly wrapped in a BANDAGE.

JEFF

Except for the Party Time Pilsner being a tad hoppy, I'd say tonight may have been a best-ever Junetoberfest. And has anyone ever fit into a neighborhood faster than the Joneses?

KAREN

I don't know, did they? There's... something off about them.

JEFF

The Joneses?

KAREN

I can't put my finger on it, but they're just so accomplished, stylish, overly affectionate with one another...

JEFF

And the problem is...?

KAREN

Well, what are they doing here?

JEFF

Jeez, Karen, if charm, great fashion sense and palpable physical chemistry are suddenly reasons to judge your neighbors, then this cul de sac has taken a dark turn.

KAREN

Do you really see yourself hanging out with guy like Tim Jones? Indoor skydiving together?

JEFF

(a little hurt)

What? You can't believe a guy like Tim would want to be my friend?

KAREN

No, honey, that's not what I'm saying...

JEFF

(relieved, almost girlish)

Oh, good. Because I really like him. (beat) Look at this bandage he gave me. Stopped the bleeding in like 2 seconds. (beat) Apparently he wrote an expose on Doctors Without Borders and picked up a few tips...

Karen looks at the bandage for a second - clearly some kind of expert field dressing.

KAREN

Did you know he was in your den tonight?

JEFF

So...?

KAREN

So... He said he was lost, but... He's navigated the bazaars of Marrakesh, he can't find a bathroom? And when I showed him where it was, he said he was good and went downstairs like nothing happened. And he gave me a wink. (beat) You don't find that odd?

Beat. Jeff sits next to Karen, looking serious, trying to be sensitive...

KAREN (CONT'D)

Why are you making your "listening" face?

JEFF

Karen, I'm going to tell you something I learned very early in Human Resources, sort of a basic truth about human beings. (beat) When people have to poop, especially around people they don't know, they get embarrassed.

KAREN

That's your explanation? He had to poop?

JEFF

Yes, he probably had to poop. (beat) And, the reason seem so affectionate towards one another, is probably because they haven't had to mute their passion around kids like we have. But, this is our summer, the summer of us. And we don't have to mute it for anyone. (beat) I love you, Karen...

With that, Jeff throws his leg over his wife and proceeds to kiss her in the most uninspiring prelude to love-making you've ever seen. The man has no game...

KAREN

Are you kidding me?

JEFF

(catching himself)  
I'm sorry... I'm so used to rushing it before the boys can make their way down the hall. (beat) I'll dial it back.

KAREN

Thank you.

As Karen pulls the straps of her tank top back into place, Jeff lets out a deep breath, then...

JEFF

Look, all I know is, I'm a professional people person. It's what I do, it's what I know. And I can tell you, with the confidence of 16 years of experience, the Joneses are good, decent, honest people.

INT. AMERICAN DYNAMICS - LOBBY

Someone walking... we find his ID badge... The ID badge has Tim's picture but the name reads: JEFF GAFFNEY. *Tim has cloned Jeff's ID somehow...*

He breezes through security. Since he's headed for LOW CLEARANCE, the guard doesn't pay too much mind...

CLOSE ON -

HANDS TYPING on a computer keyboard. Reveal -

INT. AMERICAN DYNAMICS - JEFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Tim Jones is the man on the keyboard!

ON THE SCREEN:

It looks like any dad's desktop - pictures of Karen, the kids, etc. Tim takes a moment to enjoy Jeff's photos. He really does seem like a nice guy. But Tim has a job to do...

He notices a link on Jeff's ToolBar -- he clicks it, revealing the website to:

WHAT ALES YOU?

Everything for the home brew-master

Westfield Mall, Atlanta, Georgia.

Tim takes note -- then types...

The screen goes black - now there's a "console" mode with text prompts - the guts under the mac or windows facade.

Tim types and the computer responds with a flashing message -

**REMOTE ACCESS NODE**

He types:

**DISPLAY GUEST USERS**

After a beat -- a list of names displays.

**SANJAY GANESH**

**OREN TISBURY**

**ALI AHMED**

**SERGE TIBLINSKY**

**RASCAL FLATTS**

ON TIM:

TIM  
"Rascal Flatts?"

He types in a command:

Nothing. And then --

**THE SCREEN FILLS WITH ENCRYPTED DATA**

Tim leans back, taking this in.

TIM  
Thank you, Jeff. Thank you very  
much...

INT. WHAT ALES YA - DAY

A home brewing supply store - everything the home brewer  
could possibly want.

Jeff strolls the aisles, examining all the home brewing  
paraphernalia - he's like a kid in a candy store, examining  
pressure gauges, copper wiring, bottling equipment...

...when suddenly, he hears a crash, as several items fall  
from an adjacent aisle...

VOICE (O.S.)  
Son of a...

Jeff rounds the corner to see Tim Jones, awkwardly fumbling  
with several items that have dropped from the shelf...

JEFF  
(amazed)  
Tim? Hello, neighbor...

TIM  
(startled)  
Oh, hey Jeff... (beat, re: the  
mess) Wow, this is embarrassing...

JEFF  
No, no, it happens... Let me help.  
What are you doing here?

As they put the fallen items back onto the shelf...

TIM  
(confiding)  
Well, to be honest...  
(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

I found your love of home brewing the other night rather contagious. Figured I could use a hobby.

JEFF

You mean besides glass blowing.

TIM

Right. Besides that...

JEFF

Hey, I get it. You want a manly hobby. Well, you came to the right place. Come with me...

With that, Jeff takes Tim's arm and pulls him towards the clerk.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Ed, I want you to set my friend Tim here up with the works. Scales, tubing, filters - all of it. (back to Tim) Welcome to the wonderful world of home brewing, Tim. Prepare to have your life changed...

INT. WHAT ALES YA - LATER

Jeff and Tim leave the cash register, having just paid for their purchases. Jeff is carrying his grain purchase, Tim is loaded down with his new home brewing equipment.

TIM

(re: the equipment)

Wow, this is quite an undertaking. (beat) I would have been lost in there without you, Jeff.

JEFF

Happy to help. (beat, wistful) You know, I always fantasized about passing my brewing knowledge down to my sons, but, seeing as how they're still underage...I'd be honored to take you on as my apprentice.

Tim glances over to the adjacent TASTING ROOM, where a few beer aficionados taste the latest creations from the huge vats behind the bar...

TIM

You know, all this talk of beer has got me pretty thirsty. The least I could do is buy you a few rounds.

JEFF

Only on one condition - you let me  
buy you a couple first.

TIM

(pleased)  
Deal.

As Jeff turns and heads for the tasting room, Tim smiles -  
everything going according to plan.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - KAREN'S WORK AREA - DAY

Karen's at her computer. But instead of working on the  
Craverston bathroom, she's typing in - "Tim Jones Travel  
Writer"...

- Article and book titles come up, along with photos of Tim  
on various international adventures - racing a Vespa along  
the Italian coast, enjoying a Bedouin wedding, playing soccer  
with children in a Brazilian ghetto, blowing glass in  
Hungary, etc.

Karen now Googles - "Diana Jones Social Media Consultant".

- Karen clicks on a company WEBSITE, showing Diana working  
with heads of international finance and banking.

Another website: Diana's NEEDLEPOINT AND CRAFTING BLOG...

- Entry after entry of Diana demonstrating Martha Stewart-  
like home-making skills. Well, more like Martha Stewart as  
portrayed by an incredibly sexy movie star.

Karen takes it all in, thinking, wondering - it's all so  
perfect, too perfect. Suddenly, she notices something out the  
window. She grabs the Spytech headpiece from the desk and  
slaps it on.

KAREN'S POV - Diana hurries from the house, carrying a pair  
of high heeled shoes and a SILVER CASE. She pauses to slip on  
the shoes. Then, rushes to her car and peels away, racing off  
down the street.

ANGLE ON - Karen, thinking, wondering - what was that all  
about?

Then, in a flash of IMPULSE, Karen jumps up and runs from the  
room...

INT. KAREN'S CAR - MINUTES LATER

Wearing sunglasses and a baseball hat, Karen trails Diana's car... She follows her through the streets of the city. Staying just far enough behind so as not to lose her...

Karen picks up her iPhone, fiddles and hits the screen.

KAREN

I'm recording this message in case anything happens to me. I am following Diana Jones, who I-

SIRI (V.O.)

Calling Diana Jones.

KAREN

What? No!!!

Karen frantically cancels the call. When she looks up, Diana is turning into the PARKING LOT OF A LARGE MALL.

INT. MALL - MINUTES LATER

Wearing a pair of dark sunglasses, Diana moves purposefully through the mall. Behind her, weaving in and out of passing shoppers, Karen tries to keep her in view.

Up ahead, Diana briskly passes the food court, where an older MAN IN A SUIT gets up from his table and begins to follow her. Karen is now more intrigued than ever...

Suddenly, Diana stops at one of the mid-mall kiosks, giving a quick look around. The Man In The Suit also stops, pretending to tie his shoe, giving his own look around. Karen stops, too, ducking into a doorway to avoid detection.

Karen peeks out and sees that Diana and the Man In The Suit are on the move. Again, Karen follows...

Finally, Diana turns into a Barnes & Noble, followed by the Man In The Suit...

INT. BARNES & NOBLE - DAY

Diana peruses one section of the store, the Man In The Suit peruses another. Karen watches, from behind an aisle.

Diana pulls a BOOK off the discount rack, then drifts to an isolated bench between aisles...

Karen loses her for a beat, then, peering around the corner, she sees the Man In The Suit suddenly appearing in Diana's aisle. He hands her a book - THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY.

MAN IN SUIT

Here's something worth reading...

Diana hands him the book she's been carrying - GOING ROGUE: The Autobiography of Sarah Palin. They have a brief, MURMURED CONVERSATION, Karen can't believe what she's seeing...

KAREN

(softly)

Oh my God. It's a drop.

Suddenly, the clandestine meeting is over and the man walks off, forcing Karen to duck into the adjoining aisle as he passes. A moment later, Karen looks back to Diana's aisle, but Diana is gone.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Shit...

Karen searches the nearby aisles, then sees Diana at the counter, paying for her book and walking from the store...

INT. TASTING ROOM - LATER

Jeff studies a small tasting glass, containing a darkly colored amber brew, holding it up to the light. He observes its color, density. Satisfied, he takes a quaff, lets it roll on his tongue, swishes it in his mouth, savors it, inhales through his nose - then, finally, swallows. He ponders for a moment, then...

JEFF

Mmm, ambitious. Caramel, toffee...  
Definitely some vanilla. Nice malty finish. Not easily done. That might be a keeper, my friend.

Jeff jots some notes down in a moleskin note pad.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You getting the vanilla?

TIM

(tasting)

Now that you mention it, yeah, I am getting vanilla. Damn, you're good.  
(beat) Must come in here a lot with the guys from work.

JEFF

Sometimes. Or by myself. It depends...

TIM

Yeah, probably see enough of them around the office, right? Always poppin' in to use your computer.

Jeff pauses...

JEFF

Did I tell you they did that?

TIM

Someone did.

JEFF

Well, it wasn't me. The Human Resources Department is surrounded by a wall of trust, built upon a foundation of confidentiality. Without that, we're nothing.

With that, Jeff dumps the rest of his beer into a nearby bucket, then turns to Tim, who stares at the discarded beer and the missed opportunity...

TIM

So, I take it this isn't one of those times where we get drunk and start spilling our innermost secrets?

JEFF

Sounds like a dream. But, during a tasting? I'd rather put ketchup on a steak - which, I have been known to do. While I'm here though, I keep a clear head and clean palate. (beat) Shall we move on to the porter? Heard great things...

Jeff motions to the bartender, signalling for the next tasting round...

Just then, Jeff's phone rings. He checks the number, then...

JEFF (CONT'D)

One sec...  
(into phone)  
Hello?

INT. MALL - DAY

Cellphone pressed to her ear, Karen trails Diana into a large Neiman Marcus-style DEPARTMENT STORE.

INTERCUT BETWEEN KAREN AND JEFF AS NECESSARY

Karen ducks behind displays as she follows Diana through the store...

KAREN

Remember I told you something was off about the Joneses? Well, my instincts were right on. I just followed Diana to the mall - four words - Bridges. Of. Madison. County.

JEFF

(alarmed)

What? What are you talking about?

Jeff glances quickly at Tim, then holds up a finger, indicating this may take a minute. Then, he steps quickly away from his bar stool, where he can speak without being heard...

JEFF (CONT'D)

(whispering)

And why are you following Diana?!

KAREN

(rapid fire)

Because I have intuition, Jeff. And, sure enough, there was a man in a suit and a Sarah Palin autobiography and it was the craziest thing I've ever seen!

Karen notices that Diana has stopped in the LINGERIE DEPARTMENT, intently browsing the merchandise. This only makes Karen more intrigued...

Meanwhile, Jeff, takes a deep breath, trying to get ahold of the situation...

JEFF

Karen, this is crazy. You are clearly sublimating your anxiety about the kids being gone and your insecurities about your career and what defines you as a woman with--

KAREN

Don't even BEGIN to go there. How about you sublimating the absence of your children and your lack of intimacy with your wife by developing a man crush on our new neighbor?!

JEFF

I do not have a man crush!

Jeff flashes a look at Tim, who may or may not have overhead. As Jeff steps out of frame, to continue his conversation with even more privacy, we STAY ON Tim...

...who impatiently looks at his watch. He sees Jeff, still distracted by his call with Karen, then makes a decision. Pulling a small vial from his pocket - he puts a few drops into Jeff's beer.

Meanwhile, Jeff has his back to Tim, still on phone...

JEFF (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

I am a people person, Karen. I connect. And it just so happens Tim and I share many similar interests, including an appreciation for craft beer and a deep sense of community. Something you seem to have lost.

KAREN

Oh, really? Well, guess what? The Chinese DO have a word for cul de sac. It's "si hutong"...or something like that. I looked it up and I'm telling you - these people are up to something. (beat) Gotta go.

JEFF

Karen--

Too late. She's hung up.

Jeff re-approaches the bars, holding his phone, looking troubled...

TIM

Something wrong?

JEFF

Uh, not really, no... Just, stuff...

Tim nods...

TIM

Marriage is full of "stuff", isn't it?

JEFF

You seem like you and Diana have it pretty good.

TIM

Do we? Well that just means we fake it well. But, we're a couple, just like anyone else.

JEFF

(pleased)

That's exactly what I told Karen.

Then, Jeff picks up his new beer and goes through his tasting ritual. He holds it up to the light. Takes a mouthful, lets it roll on his tongue, swishes it in his mouth, savors it, inhales through his nose - then, finally, swallows. He ponders for a moment, tapping his tongue on the roof of his mouth, as if trying to place a surprising taste...

TIM

(concerned)

Something wrong?

JEFF

No, no...it's a classic Porter. Well-balanced, overtones of chocolate...but then, on the finish, almost like the faintest hint of baking soda and burnt onion maybe?

Tim looks surprised - this guy is good.

JEFF (CONT'D)

(to the bartender)

Am I right on that, Derek? Burnt onion.

BARTENDER

If you say so, Jeff. You're the man with the palate.

Jeff takes another, larger mouthful - rolling, swishing, savoring, inhaling - swallows.

JEFF

Yep, definitely some burnt onion there. Unusual choice...

Jeff thinks for a beat, as the beer, and, more importantly, THE DRUG begin to kick in.

JEFF (CONT'D)

But, I like it. A lot.

With that, Jeff drains the entire glass in one deep gulp.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Hit me again, Derek. Hit me again.

Then, Jeff turns and takes a long, deep look at Tim...

JEFF (CONT'D)

You have the most captivating eyes.  
(beat, realizing) Was that out loud?

Tim smiles, pleased with how this is going. Putting a comforting arm around Jeff's shoulder.

TIM

It's okay, now's the time to share.  
(beat) Why don't we start with a little more about the guys who use your computer?

A brief pause, as the chemicals continue to chip away at Jeff's wall of trust and the foundation of confidentiality.

JEFF

Who do you want to know about?

TIM

We'll just go down the list...

Tim pulls a sheet of paper from his pocket. On it, a list of names - the same list he'd been jotting down the night he broke into Jeff's office.

TIM (CONT'D)

Sanjay Ganesh...

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LINGERIE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Diana strolls the aisles, selecting the occasional item - LACE THONG, BUSTIER, GARTER AND STOCKINGS...

Several rows over, Karen keeps a low profile, watching closely, mesmerized...

Diana pulls out her CELLPHONE and makes a call. Talking in a low voice, she heads for the dressing rooms.

Fascinated, Karen grabs some random ITEMS off the rack and moves to follow, when she is STARTLED by a SALESWOMAN.

SALESWOMAN

Would you like me to start a room for you, ma'am?

KAREN

(quickly)  
No, thanks... I'm fine!

INT. DRESSING ROOM AREA - MOMENTS LATER

The CURTAIN to Diana's dressing room is closed, her VOICE barely audible, as she talks into her phone...

Karen rounds the corner, moving quietly, inching closer, trying to make out Diana's words and put the pieces of this puzzle together...

Suddenly, the curtain to Diana's room FLIES OPEN - revealing Diana standing boldly in a thong and low-cut lace bra, her phone still clutched in her hand.

Karen is startled beyond words. And, by the way, Diana looks amazing...

DIANA  
(coolly confident)  
Hello, Karen.

KAREN  
(nervous, stammering)  
Diana, hi... Oh my gosh, I can't believe this. Here I am, lingerie shopping, minding my own business, then - boom - out of nowhere, there you are. Wow. (beat) Anyway, I should be going.

As Karen quickly turns to go...

DIANA  
No, wait...

The authority in Diana's voice makes Karen pause.

DIANA (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
To be continued...

Diana hangs up and steps to Karen, completely unconcerned that she is now several feet outside of her dressing room.

DIANA (CONT'D)  
(re: the phone)  
I was just leaving Tim a voicemail. He likes to hear from me when I'm trying on lingerie. I tell him what I'm putting on, how it looks, how it makes me feel...

As she says the word "feel", Diana lets her fingertips slide gently along her own breasts, barely contained by the lace bra. She moves closer to Karen, who tries to avert her eyes.

KAREN

(weakly)

That must be nice for you two...

DIANA

It's one of our things. A couple has to have a "thing" to keep the spark alive. (beat, whispering) Do you and Jeff have a "thing"?

KAREN

(flustered)

Of course we do, yeah... Lots of "things". (beat, searching) One thing is, uh, we like to do it real fast before the kids come running into our room. That can be very hot... the fear of getting caught... By your children.

DIANA

But, your kids are gone, aren't they? Time for something new. Is that why you're buying lingerie? (beat) Let's see what you decided on.

Karen glances nervously at the random items she pulled from the rack, unsure of what she actually selected.

KAREN

(re: her items)

Oh no, this is nothing. Actually, I hate shopping. Sometimes I think I'd rather have my fingernails plucked out.

DIANA

No you wouldn't.

KAREN

I should go.

She turns, but, lightning quick, Diana has her hand on Karen's wrist.

DIANA

No, no... Don't be shy. I'm sharing with you. It's only fair. (beat) Show me what you think is sexy...

With that, Diana lifts up one of Karen's items -- some large, sexless underpants. Diana cringes.

DIANA  
(re: the underwear)  
Oh, Karen, this is never going to  
do. We have to fix this.

Just then, the saleswoman comes around the corner, startled  
to find Diana in her underwear standing so close to Karen.

SALESWOMAN  
Everything alright?

DIANA  
(to the saleswoman)  
Would you mind grabbing some items  
for my friend to try on? Let your  
imagination run wild...

KAREN  
(softly)  
Please don't...

But the eager saleswoman is already hurrying off.

INT. TASTING ROOM - DAY

The drug has *really* kicked in - the wall of trust all but a  
memory. In fact, Jeff is now dishevelled, emotional, and way  
over-sharing.

JEFF  
And Oren? Don't get me started on  
Oren. First of all, that's not his  
real hair. You should know that  
right off the top. And that guy he  
lives with, the one he calls his  
"roommate"? I mean, hello, just  
come out of the closet already.  
It's 2015.

Tim rolls his eyes, steering this interrogation is like  
wrangling cats...

TIM  
Let's keep it focused on your  
computer. What does Oren do when  
he's in your office?

JEFF  
Oh, you mean Mr. E-bay?

Jeff looks around the bar, as if about to divulge a big  
secret. Then, he leans in...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Hello Kitty paraphernalia. The man's obsessed. And did you know she's not a cat?

TIM

Who?

JEFF

Hello Kitty. She's actually a girl dressed as a cat.

TIM

(despite himself)

That makes no sense. She looks exactly like a cat. Her name is Hello Kitty.

JEFF

I know, I know. I'm just telling you what Oren told me. He's the expert.

TIM

(frustrated)

Alright, let's just stay focused...

JEFF

Right, focused... (beat, to the bartender) Another burnt onion!

TIM

Now, what can you tell me about Dhameer Mustafa?

JEFF

Ah, yes, Mr. Online Poker. (beat) And porn. Loves his porn.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Karen stands in her regular bra, clutching her just removed shirt to her chest, desperately trying to cover herself. Diana stands behind her, going through several newly selected lingerie items...

DIANA

That's an unfortunate bra, Karen. From now on, I want you to forget everything you learned about functional breast support. Today is about the lost art of seduction.

Diana points to her own low cut, almost see-through bra.

KAREN

Look, I really don't feel comfortable doing this.

Diana reaches up to gently touch Karen's shoulder.

DIANA

I don't know why you wouldn't. Two women sharing a dressing room, it couldn't be more natural. (beat) By the way, you have beautiful skin. I hope Jeff appreciates that.

Karen gives a half-hearted shrug, as Diana holds up a see through baby doll nightie and whispers into Karen's ear...

DIANA (CONT'D)

Of course, a woman has to let herself be appreciated. Otherwise, a couple can get into a terrible rut. They start to drift, lose sight of themselves, the woman starts looking for answers, wondering about other lives, letting her imagination project onto other people, conjuring all sorts of fantasies. When all she really had to do was focus on her own life and the power of her own natural gifts.

With that, Diana unclasps the back of Karen's bra. Karen's hands shoot up, pinning the bra to her chest to keep it from falling. She turns to Diana.

KAREN

(unnerved)

Are you talking about me?

DIANA

I don't know. Am I? Are you in a rut, Karen? Are you filling your empty house with questions about your purpose?

Diana picks up a revealing shelf bra and thong combination...

DIANA (CONT'D)

And how do you feel about your nipples?

Karen closes her eyes, wishing she could just disappear.

INT. WHAT ALES YA - LATER

Jeff exhales, practically collapsing on the bar after a long purge...

JEFF

(exhausted)

That's everything. All I got.  
(beat) God, it feels good to get  
this off my chest. I can't believe  
I was carrying so much around with  
me.

TIM

Yeah, well, I appreciate the  
candor, Jeff. I'll see you  
around...

With that, Tim starts to leave. It's a little cold. He's gotten what he needed...

JEFF

Whoa, whoa, you're leaving? Aren't  
you forgetting something?

Tim pauses...

TIM

Am I?

JEFF

Well, I shared with you. It's only  
fair that you share something with  
me. Isn't that what friends do?

For a beat, Tim just looks at Jeff - this trusting, earnest, and decidedly good man, whom he has reduced to a disoriented, secret-spilling mess. Then...

TIM

Okay, I'll share something...  
Sometimes, I really hate what I do  
for a living.

Tim gives Jeff pat on the shoulder - and this time, it actually feels real.

JEFF

(touched)

See, that wasn't so hard, was it?  
(beat) Of course, you know what we  
have to do now...

We see a SPARK come to Jeff's eye, then...

CUT TO:

INT. "SKY'S THE LIMIT" INDOOR SKYDIVING - LATER

A large indoor complex, featuring a huge Plexiglas wind tunnel.

Tim and Jeff are now suited up for indoor skydiving. Jeff looks ridiculous. Tim looks somehow like the skydiving suit was custom tailored for him. Jeff looks thrilled. Tim looks rather nonplussed.

JEFF

Ready?

Jeff gives the operator a "thumbs up", then we hear the whir of turbines. Suddenly, Jeff and Tim are lifted skyward on a huge ball of compressed air. Jeff is like an excited child, flapping his arms, delighting in the sense of flight, as they rise up through the wind tunnel...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Isn't it exhilarating? We're like two birds, two man birds...floating above the earth on our cloud. Nothing can touch us up here.

Jeff starts doing spins and somersaults.

JEFF (CONT'D)

What a rush. Come on, do some tricks. Where's your sense of adventure?

TIM

You should probably know, I've jumped out of plenty of planes before. This is nothing like that.

Jeff looks a little stung.

TIM (CONT'D)

(feeling bad)

Right. We'll do some tricks.

With that, Tim begins executing his own somersaults and spins, with each one, enjoying himself even more.

Side by side, the two men let themselves go, relishing in the freedom of flight. The rush of turbines is replaced by sweet, carefree music, as their pirouettes and twirls become more graceful. Grasping onto one another, they begin to execute a series of balletic, tandem stunts, like something out of a dance number from an old MGM musical. It's magical.

The music subsides for a moment --

JEFF

Tim, do the Chinese really not have a word for cul de sac?

TIM

Literally? Yes, they do. Si huotong. But, metaphorically, it's not even close.

JEFF

There's something you should know about me - I like metaphors.

TIM

There's something you should know about me - the other night in your house, when Karen caught me upstairs, I had to poop. I was too embarrassed to say anything.

JEFF

I know. And it's okay. Sometimes pooping scares me, too.

As they smile and float off together, we MOVE TO...

EXT. CUL DE SAC - NIGHT

His hair blown straight back from the sky-diving and a broad smile on his face, Jeff guides his car up the block and pulls into his garage...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff enters the house...

JEFF

Karen? Karen... You here?

KAREN (O.C.)

(softly)

I'm in the living room.

He walks toward her voice...

JEFF

(vindicated)

You are not going to believe the day I had! And guess who loves being a man bird --

He enters the living room...

...and holds up souvenir photo of Tim and Jeff indoor skydiving. It's exactly the same as the one he had of himself with Dave O'Keefe.

JEFF (CONT'D)

That's right, Tim Jones. We totally bonded. And you thought it wouldn't happen...

Jeff pauses, as he realizes Karen is sitting on the edge of the couch with a bathrobe pulled tightly around herself.

JEFF (CONT'D)

What are you doing in your robe?  
Are you sick?

KAREN

(anxious)

I was just thinking, that's all. What am I really doing this summer, Jeff? Sending my kids away, re-designing bathrooms, hoping to find my calling? Is that going to make me feel complete? More connected to you? And what if I don't even have a calling? Some people don't, you know.

JEFF

Where is this coming from?

KAREN

(shaking her head,  
processing)

And suddenly these new neighbors come along and they seem like they have it all together. And with me in this vulnerable place, it's probably only natural that I would get suspicious, try to find fault with them. When really it's about me... And us...

With that, Karen stands up and drops her robe - revealing a lace chemise and a barely-there red bra and panties ensemble.

Jeff is afraid to move, for fear it's only a dream...

JEFF

(stunned)

Oh, Sweet Jesus, what is happening?

KAREN

Diana said we need a "thing". A little ritual, between us, to light a spark and keep things fresh...

JEFF

You talked to her about us?

KAREN

(nodding)

She's unusually intuitive. (beat)  
And she said I need to learn how to  
let myself be appreciated...

JEFF

Oh my God, yes! She's so right. I  
want to appreciate you right here  
on the couch...

Jeff moves for Karen, ravenously pulling her into his arms  
and kissing her.

KAREN

(gasping for breath)

Jeff, wait. Slow down! I still have  
more to say--

JEFF

No, don't speak. Don't think. Just  
feel...

As he pulls her to the couch...

KAREN

Jeff, please, wait... Stop.

JEFF

I can't stop, Karen. I'm a man on  
fire.

He kicks his legs out awkwardly, knocking over the glass  
sculpture that Tim had given him. It SHATTERS into multiple  
pieces...

KAREN

Jeff?!

JEFF

Oh, dammit!

They look down at the shattered sculpture - glass litters the  
floor. In the middle of the glass wreckage, a SMALL PIECE OF  
ELECTRONICS. They stare at it for a long beat...

KAREN

What is that?

JEFF

I have no idea. (beat, re: the  
wreckage) Is this going to be a  
mood killer?

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

Because I felt like we were in a  
good place a moment ago...

Ignoring him, Karen picks up the mysterious item. She studies it for a beat - it's some kind of device. Suddenly, Karen drops the device like it's on fire and slaps her hand over Jeff's mouth...

KAREN

(blurting)

You know what, let's just go back  
to our love making... It was so  
hot, where were we? (beat) Oh, God,  
yes... That feels good.

JEFF

(muffled by her hand)

What feels good?

Turning back to the bewildered Jeff, Karen puts a finger to her lips.

KAREN

(whispering)

Shhh.

Pulling her hand from Jeff's mouth, she grabs a PEN from his pocket and scribbles a MESSAGE on her PALM and holds it up to Jeff's face...

JEFF'S POV: The message on Karen's palm - "It's a bug!"

JEFF

(confused)

Wha--

Karen again puts a finger to her lips - Shhh - then leaps from the couch.

KAREN

I know, let's put on some music. A  
soundtrack for our passion...

Karen sprints to the stereo, turns it on and pushes the dial to FULL VOLUME.

As the room fills with the blaring Top-40 sounds of something ridiculously poppy like MAROON 5's "Moves Like Jagger" or PSY's "Gangnam Syle", she DIMS the lights and we MOVE TO...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The lights are off, the music still blaring, the electronic device still resting on the carpet where Karen dropped it, as we MOVE THROUGH what appears to be a dark and empty house.

Upstairs - TV sets are on FULL VOLUME, the shower is running, creating a sea of WHITE NOISE.

Finally, we see the closed door of Jeff and Karen's bedroom closet and the soft GLOW OF LIGHT coming out from underneath the door.

INT. BEDROOM CLOSET - SAME TIME

Jeff and Karen are on the floor, sharing a FLASHLIGHT between them. Karen is a bundle of nervous energy...

KAREN

(manic)

I knew something was off about the Joneses. Suddenly, Tim sneaking into your office makes a little more sense, doesn't it? (beat, ashamed) Ugh, I can't believe I let her dupe me into this lingerie. But, then she was in her underwear and I was in my underwear... God, she was so persuasive!

JEFF

Wait, you two were in your underwear together?

KAREN

Get your mind out of the gutter, Jeff. It wasn't erotic, it was a charade to throw me off the scent. She knew I was following her and she totally played me. (beat) We have to call the cops, tell them there's a bug in our house...

JEFF

You don't know that's a bug. Do you even know what one looks like? Maybe it's a battery.

Karen thinks.

KAREN

You're right. We can't call the cops, we'll sound crazy.

JEFF

Yes, exactly.

KAREN

We'll need more evidence.

With that, Karen scurries from the closet...

JEFF

That's not what I meant! (beat)  
Karen, wait!

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff hurries out of the closet...

JEFF

Karen, I love you and I know you miss Patrick and Mikey. I miss them too. But, Parents Weekend is in two weeks. Can't we just hang on 'til then? Maybe do some of your breathing exercises. They might center you...

Karen is crouched by the bedroom window.

KAREN

I don't need centering, Jeff. Now, shhh and get down...

Karen raises a pair of kids SPY GOGGLES to her eyes and peers out the window to the Joneses' house...

KAREN (CONT'D)

It's quiet over there. Too quiet. They're probably busy watching us watching them...

JEFF

They're not watching us, Karen. They're out to dinner with Oren and his roommate.

KAREN

Really?

JEFF

(nodding)

Tim mentioned it while we were skydiving. You should have seen us up there, we were so in sync. I didn't know where he ended and I began.

Karen shakes her head, not even listening...

KAREN

I knew those dart skills of hers weren't on the up and up. From now on, I go with my instincts. A mother knows things.

JEFF

What does being a mother have to do with obsessing over your neighbors?

KAREN

Everything. We protect the nest.

JEFF

But, the kids aren't here. It's an empty nest. There's nothing to protect.

She's already on her feet, moving from the window...

JEFF (CONT'D)

What are you doing now?

KAREN

First, I'm changing out of this ridiculous lingerie.

JEFF

(disappointed)

I'm never going to see that on you again, am I?

Karen gives him a "you've got to be kidding me" look, then, marching back towards the closet...

KAREN

Then I'm going over to the Joneses' house to figure out who they really are.

Scrambling to his feet...

JEFF

What? No, Karen, stop. I will not allow you to do this! I am officially drawing a line in the sand. Do not leave this bedroom!

EXT. TIM AND DIANA'S BACKYARD - MINUTES LATER

Dressed in dark clothing, Karen steps into the Joneses' backyard with her flashlight. As she goes to one of the Joneses' kitchen windows, a desperate Jeff comes into the yard...

JEFF

Okay, Karen, this is the last line I'm drawing. Stop, please. You could go to jail for this...

KAREN  
Only if I'm caught.

With that, she pulls on a pair of GARDENING GLOVES...

KAREN (CONT'D)  
(re: the gloves, excited)  
See? No fingerprints.

Then, she pulls a BUTTER KNIFE from her pocket and turns to the window, using the knife to jigger the lock...

KAREN (CONT'D)  
This back window never locked all the way. Drove Bridget crazy, but Dave was always too lazy to fix it.

She successfully flips the latch with the knife...

KAREN (CONT'D)  
(pleased)  
Got it. (beat, raising the window)  
Now, are you coming?

Karen pulls out another flashlight and hands it to Jeff...

KAREN (CONT'D)  
Because you'll need to cover those hands.

INT. TIM AND DIANA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff tumbles through the open window, his SOCKS now covering his hands, as Karen scans the room with her flashlight - observing furniture, bookshelves, artwork on the wall.

As he climbs awkwardly to his feet...

KAREN  
(shocked)  
Oh my God, look...

JEFF  
(concerned)  
What?

KAREN  
There's no flow to this room. The couch should be across from the fireplace, the end table is totally in the wrong place. (beat) That's just an observation, by the way, I'm not saying it's evidence of anything...

Karen moves past him to the kitchen. Observing the POTS AND PANS hanging from the overhead rack...

KAREN (CONT'D)

However, these pots have never seen a flame. That's a little strange for someone of Diana's talents, don't you think?

JEFF

Or maybe they're new pots. New house, new pots. Makes sense.

As Karen searches the drawers and cabinets...

KAREN

(brightening)

Empty spice rack. Really? The woman who entertains the blogosphere with her amazing recipes has no spices?

JEFF

Come on, Karen, you cannot judge a woman by her spice rack.

KAREN

Oh, please, plenty of women have been judged by their spice racks. (beat) Now check for signs of needlepoint. I bet that's another web of lies.

As Karen continues her search, we DISSOLVE TO...

INT. TIM AND DIANA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Jeff shines his light on a group of FRAMED PHOTOS hanging on the wall. Each photo depicts the super-stylish and attractive Joneses in a surprisingly generic pose, almost as if someone had Photoshopped in the heads of two models.

JEFF

(earnestly, to the photos)

I'm so sorry for breaking into your house like this. All I wanted was for us to be friends...

Meanwhile, Karen searches the bedside table drawers...

KAREN

(frustrated)

Dammit, nothing...

As she moves for the bedroom door...

JEFF

Right and there's nothing remotely  
incriminating in this entire  
house...

He follows her out of the room...

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff hurries to catch up with Karen...

JEFF

As far as I'm concerned, the  
Joneses are very normal people--

Jeff follows her into one of the bedrooms...

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

...and finds Karen standing frozen in the middle of the room,  
which features a long table occupied by several computer  
monitors, high tech audio equipment and stacks of files...

On a wall - a large white board, featuring Jeff's photo in  
the center of the board, surrounded by the photos of several  
of his co-workers. A large X has been drawn through Jeff's  
photo. Also on the wall - a question mark and the word  
"SCORPION".

JEFF

Okay, this is a little weird.

KAREN

My God, that's everyone you work  
with. The Joneses are some kind of  
spies. They're targeting American  
Dynamics!

Jeff looks like he's going to be sick...

JEFF

How could I have been so blind? He  
totally used me. The skydiving, the  
beer tasting - it was one big lie.  
(beat, re: the photos) And I told  
him everything about those guys.  
Everything. I destroyed the wall of  
trust. I even told him about Oren's  
hairpiece!

KAREN

That's a hairpiece?

An emotional mess, Jeff's mind racing, as he looks around the room...

JEFF  
(emotional)  
What have I done? Look at all this stuff...

With his awkward, sock covered hands, Jeff starts rummaging through the equipment on the desk, examining various high tech devices. As he picks up a small oblong metallic device, which looks precisely like some sort of expensive FOUNTAIN PEN...

JEFF (CONT'D)  
I've handed the whole neighborhood and the entire company...over to evil!

Suddenly, the pen device in Jeff's hand makes a sharp - PFFFT - sound and releases a little puff of smoke.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
(confused)  
Whoa...

KAREN (O.S.)  
(weakly)  
Jeff?

Jeff turns to see a wobbly Karen - with a small tranquilizer BARB lodged in the middle of her forehead. Jeff's eyes immediately go wide...

JEFF  
Oh my God.

KAREN  
(woozy)  
What happened?

JEFF  
Nothing, honey. Nothing happened.

And, with that, Karen collapses to the ground.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Oh, shit. I killed her! Karen!

He rushes to her, slapping her face.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
(desperate)  
Karen, wake up. Please. It's me, your husband. I never should have doubted you.  
(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

You've got so much to live for...  
Who will finish the Craverston's  
bathroom? Don't leave me, I love  
you!

With that, Karen's heavy eyelids begin to flutter open...

KAREN

(woozy)  
Honey? Is that you?

JEFF

Oh, thank God! Karen, you're alive.

KAREN

What's happening? Everything's so  
blurry and I'm so dizzy and warm  
and open to the universe...

JEFF

I know, just stay with me, Karen.  
Stay in the light... No, I mean get  
out of the light! Dammit, which is  
it??!

KAREN

(to the photos on the  
board)  
Oh, hey guys, guess what? We're in  
a spy's house... A spyzouse...  
spizoose...

Just then, Jeff hears a distinct SOUND.

JEFF

(panicked)  
Oh, crap, the garage door!

He rushes to the window, looking out to the street, where he  
sees the Joneses' car pulling up.

JEFF (CONT'D)

We've got to get out of here...

KAREN

I can't feel my legs. What happened  
to my legs? I used to have so many  
legs.

JEFF

Don't worry, I'll carry you. We  
have to move...

Straining, he picks her up, throwing her limp body over his  
shoulder, racing from the room...

KAREN  
(excited)  
I can see your tushy crack!

INT. TIM AND DIANA'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff hurries down the stairs, with Karen over his shoulder, her hand feeling for the barb...

KAREN  
(woozy)  
Jeff, my forehead hurts. Why does my forehead hurt?

JEFF  
Because I shot you. I'll explain later. We're not safe here...

Jeff reaches the bottom of the stairs, rounding the corner into the family room, smacking her head against the door frame.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Sorry!

KAREN  
You're welcome!

Jeff races through the family room to the open kitchen window, where he pulls Karen off his shoulder...

KAREN (CONT'D)  
(groggy)  
My hero. You're so cute. I love you. Even though you shot me.

JEFF  
I know, I love you, too. Even though you talked me into this.  
(beat, with regret) I can't believe I let you talk me into this...

He gives a terrified glance behind him, then pushes her through the open window. He goes through right behind her, landing outside with a THUD.

A moment later, we see Jeff pop back into view with Karen's butter knife, which he uses to secure the window latch. Then, ducks back down, disappearing from view again, just as...

... Tim and Diana enter the room. Through the window - no visible sign of Jeff and Karen.

EXT. CUL DE SAC - MOMENTS LATER

With Karen again over his shoulder, Jeff BURSTS OUT of the bushes lining the side of the Joneses' house and scampers towards the safety of their own home.

KAREN

Wheeee! Remember in college when my parents almost caught us and we hid in the bushes just like that?

JEFF

Of course, I remem-- Wait, we didn't date in college.

KAREN

I love you, baby!

JEFF

I love you too, now shut UP!

As they disappear down their side yard, we MOVE TO...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff drags Karen into the kitchen. Still terrified, he keeps the lights off and stays low to avoid detection from the Joneses' house, which is visible through the kitchen window.

JEFF

(panicked)

Oh my God, oh my God... Why did we break into their house?! We should not have done that.

Slumped on the floor, leaning against the kitchen cabinets, Karen is still under the full effect of the tranquilizer...

KAREN

What's all the yelling about?  
You're too cute to yell. Let's cuddle. I'm going to call you Mr. Cuddles.

She reaches for him, but he rebuffs her advances.

JEFF

We're not cuddling, Karen. Our neighbors are spies. Jesus, I wonder who they work for? The Chinese? Do you have to be Chinese to work for the Chinese? Or is that just in their restaurants. Maybe they're from Russia.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

Or another company. Nations,  
corporations - it's all the same  
these days.

She reaches for him again...

KAREN

You're like a little stuffed  
animal. I just want to snuggle...

JEFF

You don't want to snuggle, Karen.  
That's just the tranquilizer  
talking. See?

He pulls the barb from her forehead and hands it to her. Jeff then rises to peer out the kitchen window at the Joneses' house, while the still-woozy Karen studies the tranquilizer for a beat, then tosses it aside...

KAREN

Well, I don't care, mama's feeling  
frisky. Snuggle me, snuggle me  
hard!

Karen reaches for Jeff, who again pushes her away...

JEFF

Karen, stop, please...you can't  
even move your legs, it wouldn't be  
right. (beat, re: the Joneses) Just  
look at them over there, they duped  
us all...

JEFF'S POV: In their well-lit living room, Tim and Diana stand very close to one another, passing a glass of wine back and forth, a distinctly erotic playfulness to their actions.

KAREN

(still groggy)  
Why don't you just call the cops,  
tell 'em everything - the whole  
shebang.

JEFF

I can't do that. I have to tell the  
company first. We have very strict  
procedures and protocols about how  
to deal with this sort of thing.  
National Security could be at  
stake...

Karen starts to nod off again in Jeff's arms. He sighs, then peeks his head up to look at the window at the Joneses.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You broke my heart, Tim Jones! You  
broke my heart!!

As Jeff watches Tim pour more wine into Diana's glass, we  
MOVE TO...

INT. TIM AND DIANA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Diana takes a sip of wine, as Tim places the bottle on the  
counter.

TIM

Enjoy yourself this evening?

DIANA

I did. Oren's roommate was quite  
charming.

TIM

All in all, I'd say things are  
going pretty well...

She considers it for a beat, then...

DIANA

Shall we make them even better?

She gives him a sly smile, a deep kiss, then turns and heads  
upstairs. Tim takes another sip of wine then moves to follow  
her...

UPSTAIRS--

Tim follows a trail of Diana's clothing down the hallway,  
when something catches his eye.

He turns and steps cautiously into the room with the computer  
monitors, audio equipment, files and photos. His eyes scan  
the room, then notices the fountain pen/tranquilizer gun from  
the desk and SNIFFS it...

Then, he turns to the computer, makes a few keystrokes and  
brings up a SECURITY CAMERA...

ON THE MONITOR - We see Jeff running through the Joneses'  
house, tranquilized Karen over his shoulder. SMACK - Once  
again, we see Karen's head bounce off the door frame.

Behind Tim, Diana appears in the doorway, striking a  
seductive pose in the exact same lingerie ensemble we'd seen  
her in earlier that day.

DIANA (CONT'D)

You know I hate to be kept  
waiting...

Tim turns around, a troubled expression on his face. He points the pen/dart gun and her - and presses the trigger mechanism. CLICK - nothing happens.

TIM

(deadly serious)  
I think we have a problem.

EXT. AMERICAN DYNAMICS - DAY

Establishing shot of a new workday at the company.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - DAY

Jeff sits across from a very serious security officer, CARL PRONGER, who holds up the tranquilizer barb that had been lodged in Karen's head.

CARL PRONGER

(reviewing)  
So, let me get this straight. Some  
kind of tranquilizer, which you  
claim you shot your wife with...

JEFF

Accidentally...

Pronger lifts up a jar containing the "bug"...

CARL PRONGER (CONT'D)

An alleged surveillance device...

Carl sets the jar down.

CARL PRONGER (CONT'D)

And a bunch of pictures of American  
Dynamics employees.

JEFF

Exactly. (beat) My wife was right  
from the beginning. I should have  
listened to her. (beat, upset) And  
Tim, he completely exploited my  
love of craft beer. Asking me  
questions about employees - Who  
used my computer? Who had reasons  
to be disgruntled? (beat) I told  
him everything! I completely  
violated the Human Resources Oath.

CARL PRONGER

You have an oath?

JEFF

Officially, no. But, I gave one to myself. (verge of breaking down)  
And I pissed all over it!

Carl gives a slow nod and unobtrusively pulls a TYPED FORM from his desk and prepares to write on it.

CARL PRONGER

(casually)

Change of subject, Jeff. What are your thoughts on the possibility of a One World Government? A small collective of influential figures, possibly based out of Switzerland, who view world events like their own personal pieces on a chessboard?

JEFF

Well, it is rather far fetched. On the other hand, you hear things about secret societies and Freemasons and-- (beat, realizing) Wait a minute, are filling out a 640 Form on me? For employees possibly experiencing paranoid delusions? You can't do that, I helped design that form!

CARL PRONGER

Look, if I had a nickel for every time someone with an Eric Snowden-complex came into this office with his nutsack a flutter and a half-baked conspiracy theory after he and his wife binge-watched a season of Homeland, I'd be a very rich man.

Pause. A new look comes over Jeff's face - decisive, confident. He leans forward.

JEFF

But what if what we saw is real? The company could be at risk. My neighborhood could be at risk. You're just going to sweep that under the rug with a form?

CARL PRONGER

I'm just doing my job.

As Carl jots some more notes on the form, Jeff pauses for a long, reflective beat...

JEFF

You know, it's funny, I remember walking a new Security Officer by the name of Carl Pronger through his Employee Benefits paperwork. It was probably about 6 1/2 years ago now, but, boy, did he hate to fill out forms. I practically had to do the whole thing for him.

CARL PRONGER

That was you? You remember that?

JEFF

What do you think I do down in H.R., Carl? I connect with people. And when I see a man that doesn't want to fill out a form, I think - of course he doesn't. Because he's a man of action. I fill out forms. I happen to love forms. But you? That's not the Carl Pronger I met. (beat) And, for the record, my nutsack does not flutter easily. This is real.

For a long moment, Carl says nothing. Then...

CARL PRONGER

Alright, Gaffney, here it goes. I'll do some digging, learn a little more about these devices. I've got a friend, ex-military - you don't need to know more than that. But, if these Joneses are who you say they are? Well, you just hang tight and wait for my call. We'll talk about it then...

JEFF

How long do I have to wait? We live across the street from these people. We could be in danger!

CARL PRONGER

You're right. Most murder victims are killed by someone they know.

JEFF

What?!

CARL PRONGER  
Just putting it out there. Stay  
calm, Gaffney. I'll be in touch.

As Jeff nods weakly, we CUT TO...

INT. JEFF'S CAR - LATER THAT EVENING

Post-work, Jeff drives nervously up his street...

JEFF  
(softly)  
Stay calm, stay calm...

He trails off, as he approaches the Joneses' house, staring out at it through the driver side window. Wondering about the dark, sinister activities lurking inside...

Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he catches something in front of his car. With a startled SHOUT, he slams on the brakes - SCREECH - coming to a stop inches from...Tim Jones standing in the middle of the street.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
(startled beyond belief)  
Jesus...

But, Tim is already coming around the car, rapping on the driver's side window. As Jeff rolls the window down...

TIM  
(coolly)  
Hey there, neighbor. You almost ran me over.

JEFF  
(shaken)  
Yeah, I didn't see you there...

Tim nods thoughtfully for a beat, then...

TIM  
I need you to help me with something in the backyard. (beat) That's what neighbors do, right? Help each other?

JEFF  
(evasive)  
You mean right now? Because, uh, it's not actually the best time--

Tim cuts him off, placing a strong hand on the door of Jeff's car.

TIM

Come on, Jeff. Don't make me start thinking everything I'd heard about the suburbs was a lie. (beat) Park your car.

Jeff gulps hard, nodding, sweat starting to bead on his forehead.

He pulls his car onto his driveway, then climbs out, hesitating...

JEFF

(desperate)

Maybe I should go inside...let Karen know I'm here.

TIM

I'm sure she already knows, Jeff. She's a watcher, that one. (beat) Now, come on, let's do this.

With a beckoning, yet insistent, wave of his hand, motions for Jeff to follow. Jeff gulps hard, he has no choice...

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff follows Tim into the backyard, noticing a half dug shallow pit on the edge of the back lawn. An AXE and a CHAINSAW are laid out on the patio table. On the ground, a roll of PLASTIC SHEETING.

JEFF

(cautiously)

So...why the sudden project?

TIM

Because, something's been eating at me, Jeff. I couldn't put my finger on it, but then, last night, it hit me. And now I'm doing something about it.

JEFF

Oh, I see...

Jeff glances to the house and sees a stone-faced Diana standing at the window, smoking a cigarette, unblinking, watching them...

TIM

You don't mind digging, do you?

Tim tosses Jeff a shovel and nods towards the shallow pit.

JEFF  
(confused)  
What? Why?

TIM  
Because a hole doesn't dig itself,  
Jeff, I thought you knew that. Now  
dig...

EXT. BACKYARD - A BIT LATER

Jacket off, covered in mud and sweat, Jeff is in the trench,  
digging. It's now about knee deep.

Diana is still watching from inside. Still stone-faced. Still  
smoking.

As Tim unrolls the plastic sheet...

JEFF  
(nervous)  
So, what exactly are you putting in  
this hole?

TIM  
Oh, I don't know. Maybe some  
azaleas. Maybe something bigger.  
Just keep shoveling...

Jeff gives an obedient nod, continuing his work, as Tim picks  
up the axe...

TIM (CONT'D)  
So, what do you think? (beat, re:  
the axe) Should we do this the slow  
way?

With the other hand, Tim picks up a chain saw...

TIM (CONT'D)  
Or make it quick?

JEFF  
(panicking)  
I don't know. I don't even know  
what we're doing. Please tell me  
why I'm digging...

TIM  
(serious)  
You're digging because I'm trying  
to fix a problem, Jeff. I've got a  
wife in there who's very upset and  
I'm trying to make things better.  
You understand how that is, right?

Jeff nods slowly, glancing at the house and Diana...

TIM (CONT'D)

We think we had a break-in last night.

JEFF

What?

TIM

Shocking, isn't it? Quiet neighborhood, like this. You'd think someone would have heard something, seen something...

Long pause...

JEFF

(carefully)

Did they?

TIM

That's what I'd like to know.

JEFF

Well, we didn't see a thing. Or hear anything, if that's what you're--

Jeff is interrupted by Tim pulling the cord and starting the chainsaw - VROOOM. Tim lowers some safety goggles, standing over Jeff for a long beat, then turns and walks across the yard, to a large tree, which he proceeds to cut down with a smooth slice of the chainsaw. SMASH - it crashes to the ground, only a few feet from Jeff.

Tim turns the chainsaw off, walking back to where Jeff is standing...

TIM

Really opens the yard up, doesn't it? Diana always hated that tree.

JEFF

Wait, so this is really about yard work?

TIM

You tell me? Is it?

Before Jeff can answer, he's cut off by the RINGING of his cellphone.

JEFF

I gotta get that!

Jeff fumbles for the phone in his pocket...

JEFF

Hello?

INT. CARL PRONGER'S VAN - SAME TIME

Carl is driving his van, cellphone to his ear...

CARL PRONGER

(excited)

Well, Gaffney, I'll hand it to you.  
Those devices you gave me? They're  
the real shit. This is big.

INTERCUT WITH CARL AND JEFF AS NECESSARY

Aware that Tim is watching him, Jeff pretends like he's talking to Karen...

JEFF

Oh, hi, Karen... Just over at the  
Joneses. Digging a hole.

CARL PRONGER

What?! Is this a secured line?

Jeff glances at the house, Diana is nowhere to be seen.

JEFF

Uh, that's hard to say, honey. Very  
hard to say.

Meanwhile, Tim starts up the chainsaw again, cutting branches off the fallen tree, still watching Jeff. Jeff presses his finger to his ear, trying to better hear the phone...

CARL PRONGER

Never mind, we'll discuss it in  
person. Midnight tonight, Midland  
Mall parking structure. Top level.  
Look for the blue van. Bring  
coffee. And your wife. I like the  
way her mind works. We need to  
strategize before we take this  
upstairs.

JEFF

I understand, honey. I'll be right  
there.

CARL PRONGER

Don't start getting weird on me,  
Gaffney. We play this smart, it's  
got promotion written all over it.

(MORE)

CARL PRONGER (CONT'D)  
For both of us. Midnight tonight.  
Don't be late. (beat) And make mine  
a latte.

With that, Carl hangs up, leaving Jeff to ponder the  
significance of what's just happened.

Tim turns the chainsaw off...

TIM  
Problem?

JEFF  
No, no problem. That was Karen. She  
wants to take a bath. With me.  
Water's getting cold.

Awkward pause.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Got to go...

With that, Jeff tosses his shovel, grabs his clothes and runs  
from the yard...

Tim watches him go with an expressionless face.

EXT. CUL DE SAC - CONTINUOUS

The sweaty, dirty, frazzled Jeff runs from the Joneses' side  
yard, crossing the street towards his house, giving a  
terrified look back at the Joneses, when - BOOM! - he slams  
into his own mailbox, collapsing to the ground.

DAN (O.C.)  
You okay, buddy?

Looking up, Jeff sees Dan Craverston standing nearby. He's  
letting his dog take a crap on Jeff's lawn.

JEFF  
Yeah, yeah, I'm fine... Why is your  
dog shitting on my lawn?

DAN  
Don't worry, I'll clean it up. What  
were you doing at the Joneses?

JEFF  
It's not what I was doing...

Jeff glances quickly at the Joneses' house, then...

JEFF (CONT'D)

(confiding, softly)

It's what they're doing. (beat) The Joneses aren't who they say they are.

DAN

What are you talking about?

JEFF

Karen and I snuck into their house last night. They've got surveillance equipment, files on everyone at American Dynamics... Pronger, from Security, is on it now. We're meeting him tonight in the mall parking lot. He says it's big.

DAN

Jesus Christ...

JEFF

I know. They duped us all. (beat, emotional) I really thought we were getting our six-fingered hand back.

Dan looks like the air has been sucked from his balloon...

DAN

(also emotional)

Yeah, six-fingered hand. (beat)  
Dammit!

Dan turns to leave, quickly leading his dog down the sidewalk. Jeff watches him go, sharing his pain...

Then, realizing Dan never picked up after his dog...

JEFF

Hey, clean this up!

EXT. MALL - NIGHT

Establishing shot of the local mall, still and calm at this early hour. We see the PARKING STRUCTURE, empty except for a lone VAN parked on the top level.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - SAME TIME

Jeff's car winds its way up the levels of the structure towards the top...

INT. JEFF'S CAR - SAME TIME

Karen holds a tray of LATTES on her lap, as Jeff drives.

JEFF

Now, I should warn you, Carl can be a little prickly. I think that's just how these security types are, so don't let it throw you. He's actually very good at what he does and I know for a fact he likes the way your mind works.

Karen smiles, pleased by the compliment.

KAREN

He does? That's nice to hear.

She slides her hand into Jeff's and it's a clear moment of connection for them. Jeff drives his car out onto the top level, towards Carl Pronger's lone van. Carl is out front.

JEFF

Look, there's Carl...

KAREN

(confused)

Is he in a bathrobe?

JEFF

(equally confused)

Appears so, yeah...

KAREN

Why is he hanging laundry?

Sure enough, Carl is wearing a BATHROBE and hanging laundry on a makeshift CLOTHESLINE. A TABLE and CHAIRS have been set up nearby. If it wasn't a parking lot, it would feel rather homey. As Carl waves to them...

JEFF

(concerned)

Uh, just be cool, okay. A man's personal life is his business...

Jeff guides his car into a nearby parking spot.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff and Karen climb out of their car, Karen still holding the lattes.

CARL PRONGER

Gaffney, you made it. Right on time. And with my latte. I knew I could count on you...

JEFF

Good to see you, Carl. This is Karen, my wife.

CARL PRONGER

Pleased to meet you, Karen. Welcome to my home away from home. Or, to be more accurate, my home. But not for long... (beat) Please sit. I'll just clear this laundry out of the way for you...

Carl grabs a LAUNDRY BASKET and moves it from the table. As they sit down, Karen leans towards Jeff, whispering...

KAREN

Where did you find this guy?

JEFF

He's Deputy Security Director. And a man of action.

Carl sets the basket down and returns to the table.

CARL PRONGER

Everything alright?

JEFF

Yeah, it's great. I'm just, uh, a little surprised, that's all. When you said you wanted to meet at your van, I didn't realize you were living in it.

CARL PRONGER

(wincing)

Well, it's sort of a painful subject, to be honest. But, since you and I are compadres in this thing now, I can be open with you. Truth is, I've been living in the old Econoline here ever since my wife kicked me out of the house so her lesbian lover could move in.

As Karen flashes a "what have you gotten us into" look...

JEFF

Oh... I'm sorry to hear that.

CARL PRONGER

Well, shit happens in life. But, thanks to you bringing me in on this, Jeff, I've finally got my mojo back.

KAREN

What exactly is it that we're in on...

Karen trails off, noticing a mysterious glowing RED DOT on Carl's forehead. Weird...

KAREN

Uh, Carl, you have something...a red dot, on your forehead.

PRONGER

(defensive)

Yeah, it's called adult acne. Thank you for noticing. I've tried everything. Now, can we just--

BAM, BAM, two GUNSHOTS slam into Carl's forehead, sending him flying backwards, killing him instantly. Now, we understand the red dot - laser sighting for a high powered rifle.

Jeff and Karen SCREAM and dive for cover. BAM, BAM - a FIGURE in BLACK fires at them from across the parking lot.

Suddenly, we hear the ROAR of an engine and Tim Jones' car RACES up from the bowels of the parking garage. Tim is driving, Diana is leaning out holding a large PISTOL with an extended magazine. Now, Karen and Jeff are really scared!

KAREN

(terrified)

Oh shit! It's the Joneses!

The car speeds straight for them. Karen SCREAMS, as a BURST of gunfire leaps from Diana's gun. But, the shots fly over their heads towards the figure in black, who jumps on a black motorcycle. He RETURNS FIRE, then guns the engine...

Tim whips their car around, as Diana exchanges fire with the guy on the motorcycle...

ANOTHER BLACK MOTORCYCLE arrives from the lower levels of the structure, the RIDER also firing a GUN!

Bullets spray. Motorcycles weave in and out. Tim expertly guides the car, as Diana fights back with a BARRAGE of gunfire...

Jeff and Karen try to hide behind Jeff's car, which instantly gets riddled with bullets, shattering windows, blowing out tires, catching fire...

JEFF

Oh God, run, run!

Jeff and Karen take off running. Tim yells at them...

TIM

Get down! Stay down, dammit!

JEFF

You stay away from us! And God  
bless America!

TIM

We're here to save you, you idiot!  
Get down...

But, Jeff and Karen, as terrified of Tim and Karen as they are of the motorcycles, continue running...

TWO MORE motorcycles appear, then TWO MORE - Diana takes one out with an EXPERT SHOT. Then throws her door open to SIDESWIPE another, sending the rider flying off the parking structure...

Tim brings their car to a SCREECHING stop right in front of a cowering Jeff and Karen...

TIM (CONT'D)

Get in the car! Now! You will die  
out here! We're the good guys!

JEFF

How do we know you're good? Prove  
it!

A spray of bullets from an oncoming motorcyclist explode around Jeff's feet, causing him to scream. Diana spins and shoots over her shoulder, BLASTING the approaching rider...

DIANA

(coolly)

Would a bad guy do that? Now get  
in! Hurry!

Jeff and Karen jump into the Joneses' car...

INT. JONESES' CAR - CONTINUOUS

Tim speeds off in pursuit of the remaining motorcycles. The SILVER CASE Diana had been carrying the other day is now open on the front between them. It is loaded with a cache of weapons.

JEFF

What is happening?! Who are these people?! And, Tim, are you or are you not trying to steal secrets from American Dynamics? Because, if you are, I think we've made a terrible mistake getting into your car...

As Tim drives into the lower levels of the garage, chasing after the motorcyclists...

TIM

We're not stealing secrets, we're trying to stop the people that are stealing. And protect you from them.

JEFF

You had me dig my own grave!

TIM

To scare you, so you wouldn't do anything stupid - like this!

DIANA

Why would you break into our house? What kind of neighbors are you?

KAREN

The kind who wondered why you bugged our house. What kind of neighbors are you?! (beat) Are you in the CIA?!

DIANA

(to Tim)

I told you she was the smart one.

She leans out the window firing more shots. Then, as she ducks back into the car, reloading, Diana points out another motorcyclist evading them...

JEFF

But why would you bug me?! I work in H.R., I don't even have security clearance!

TIM

True. But someone used your computer to commit treason against the United States of America.

JEFF

It wasn't me, I swear!!

TIM

You, a criminal mastermind? Never crossed my mind. But, I had to use you to get to them. That's why I drugged you at the beer tasting.

JEFF

(shocked)

I was drugged?! No wonder I broke the wall of trust!

KAREN

So, it was all lies... Are you two even married?

TIM

(nodding)

That's one thing you can't fake.  
(beat) And I do love glass blowing.

DIANA

(to Tim)

Turn, turn, turn!

TIM

(beat, annoyed)

I'm turning!

Tim cranks the steering wheel, sending the car into a tight, spinning 180, before coming to a stop and giving her a clear shot of an approaching rider. BAM, BAM - she drops him with two expert blasts through her open window.

TIM (CONT'D)

(to Diana)

Happy now?

DIANA

I'd be happier if our cover didn't get blown. 10 years, 30 countries, nobody found us out and we couldn't even last a week in suburbia. Who puts a bug in a glass sculpture?!

TIM

What about you, Madame Darts Champion?

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

And look at what you're wearing.  
This is not how you dress on a cul  
de sac.

DIANA

Oh, please - who says living in the  
suburbs means you have to dress  
like a sexless elementary school  
nurse?

KAREN

(to Jeff, self conscious)  
Is that how I look?

JEFF

No. At worst, elementary school  
principal.

SMASH - a rider has pulled up behind them, shooting out the  
rear window of the car. Karen and Jeff SCREAM and dive for  
cover, as Diana turns around to see the rider behind them.

DIANA

(to Tim, re: the rider)  
Dammit, give me the Glock.

Tim hands Diana a new pistol. She turns and - BAM, BAM -  
drops the pursuing rider.

As Tim floors it, pursuing the last two riders, Karen and  
Jeff hang on for dear life in the back seat...

JEFF

(distraught)  
The whole time I was being used...  
What about when you told me you  
hate your job? That sounded real.

DIANA

(to Tim)  
You told him you hate your job?!

TIM

Goddammit, Jeff, I told you that in  
confidence! (beat, to Diana) But  
frankly, yes, sometimes I do hate  
this job. I'm sick of all the  
manipulation, the lying...

JEFF

(finishing)  
...the making friends, then  
betraying them in a deceitful,  
cruel, hurtful manner.

TIM  
Yes, exactly!

DIANA  
Why is this all coming out now?!

TIM  
I don't know. Jeff's a good listener. He touched something in me.

JEFF  
Thank you, Tim. I'm still angry, but I appreciate that.

DIANA  
(stung)  
You know who else is a good listener? Me! When the other person knows how to communicate...

With that, Diana grabs a modified shotgun with a pistol grip stock and stands up, popping out of the open sun roof. She fires several shotgun blasts at two final motorcyclists, taking them both out, sending man and bike careening across the garage floor.

DIANA  
(still stung)  
I thought you knew that about me!

EXT. SUBURBAN CUL DE SAC - LATER

Tim's car, with its bullet holes and shattered back window, makes its way up the street, parking in their driveway.

As the two frazzled and weary couples climb out of the car, Tim approaches Jeff...

An awkward silence settles in, as the repressed truths and hidden secrets of a marriage are now laid bare. Finally...

JEFF  
(gingerly)  
Can I ask one more thing? Tim, that day at What Ales Ya... Was that just about drugging me so I'd betray my co-workers? Or was it also about two guys becoming friends?

Silent beat, then.

TIM  
(admitting)  
It was just about drugging you.

JEFF  
(sinking)  
Oh...

At his emotional rock bottom, Jeff can only shake his head, as Karen puts a comforting hand on Jeff's shoulder. Finally, after a silent beat...

TIM (CONT'D)  
(sincerely)  
The indoor skydiving was about becoming friends.

JEFF  
(hopeful)  
Really? Yes! (beat, to Karen)  
See? I told you we bonded.

Jeff throws his arm triumphantly around his wife, who smiles at him.

DIANA  
(confiding)  
And, Karen, you really were the first person to blow our cover. In another life, you might have made a good spy...

KAREN  
Maybe that was my calling. (beat, adding) So, what are we supposed to do now?

DIANA  
I think Jeff should call in sick and you guys should leave town for a few days until we finish this thing.

JEFF  
Really?

TIM  
(nodding)  
It's the summer of you, right? Take some you time.

Tim and Diana walk toward their home.

Jeff and Karen exchange a concerned look, then turn and head across the street for their house.

JEFF

You know, I'm going to go out on a limb here, but - once you get past the lies and the deception and her frightening talent with firearms - they're actually pretty great people.

KAREN

(thoughtfully)

They are...

Reaching their front walk, Jeff and Karen turn to give another wave to the Joneses, who pause at their door to return the gesture. A touching moment of warmth and increased understanding between neighbors...

The Joneses turn and enter their house, as Jeff and Karen step to their own front door, undoing the lock.

A quiet beat of suburban tranquility, then - BAM!! The Joneses' house EXPLODES!! As a huge FIREBALL shoots into the sky.

Jeff and Karen stumble into the street, staring in horror at the fiery remains of their neighbors' house.

EXT. CUL DE SAC - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

FIRE TRUCKS and POLICE CARS load up and pull away from the rubble of the Joneses' destroyed home.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - VARIOUS ROOMS - SAME

Jeff and Karen, panicked, tear through the house, throwing clothes and random objects into suitcases, grabbing bottles of water, cell phones, family pictures off the fridge, cans of food -

KAREN

Where are we going?!

JEFF

I don't know! Anywhere! Away! Out!  
Get the passports!

KAREN

We've gotta get the kids! And my  
mother!

JEFF

What does she have to do with this?

Suddenly, the lights in the house flicker...and go out. Karen lets out a quick, panicked scream...

KAREN

Oh my God, Jeff, oh my God-

JEFF

We probably just blew a fuse.  
A house exploded - the whole grid  
is probably going haywire. I'll  
check the fuse box.

He turns to go, then stops, suddenly nervous...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Maybe you should come with me. Just  
to be safe.

INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Guided by a flashlight, Jeff and Karen head down the stairs to the fuse box... Jeff opens it up, sees the blown fuse...

JEFF

(relaxing)

Oh, thank God. Just a breaker.  
Nothing to worry about...

He flips the circuit breaker...

REVERSE ANGLE - to capture both of their relieved faces. Behind them, we see a basement converted into a PLAYROOM for boys - FOOSBALL TABLE, PINBALL MACHINE, DRUM SET, etc.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, behind Jeff and Karen, we also see - Tim and Diana Jones standing over a man and woman TIED TO TWO CHAIRS. Diana is holding the SPLIT WIRES from a lamp, both ends now crackling with the newly restored electricity...

The sound of the crackling causes Jeff and Karen to jump and turn around...

...and realize that, not only are Tim and Diana not dead, but that Dan and Meg Craverston are gagged and tied to chairs.

KAREN

Ahhhh!!!!

JEFF

Holy crap!!!!

Their clothes rumpled, faces smudged with dirt, the Joneses still looking amazing.

TIM

Shhh... Don't scream. It's not what you think.

Jeff and Karen exchange a terrified glance.

JEFF

(carefully)

So, you didn't kidnap our friends and tie them to chairs?

TIM

Okay, it is what you think. (beat)  
But, not for the reason you think.

KAREN

Dan's the one selling secrets from American Dynamics.

Tim stares at Karen for a beat, a little disappointed he didn't get to make the big announcement. Then...

TIM

(to Diana)

You're right, she is good.

JEFF

Oh my God, Dan?

Dan and Meg look away in shame. Tim holds up a necklace with a small USB dongle hanging from it.

TIM

He was wearing this when we dropped by. It's a decryption key that decodes top-secret military plans. Like the ones Dan's been stealing from American Dynamics. The same ones that get quite a price on the black market...

DIANA

In the wrong hands, this is the kind of thing that could re-route the flight path of a Tomahawk missile.

Jeff is reeling. It's all coming at him so fast...

JEFF

Wait a second... (beat, to the Joneses) Why aren't you dead? We saw you go in the house. We saw it explode!

TIM

Things aren't always how they appear, Jeff. I thought you knew that by now.

INT. TIM AND DIANA'S HOUSE - EARLIER THAT NIGHT

We've returned to the moments before the explosion - only now we are seeing it from the Joneses' perspective. They wave back at the Gaffney's and step into their house...

DIANA

*So is there anything you like about your job?*

TIM

*I do love the travel writing.*

DIANA

*First rule of espionage, don't fall in love with your cover.*

TIM

*Actually, the first rule is don't fall in love with your partner. And we broke that a long time ago.*

She gives a wistful nod, as Tim sets his keys on the entry piece and puts his arm around her. Then, as they step further into the house - they hear a soft CLICK.

Tim and Diana freeze, looking down - they've triggered a small TRIP WIRE! A flash of recognition on their faces...

SLOW MOTION - Tim and Diana sprint through the house, towards their PLATE GLASS WINDOWS and the safety of the backyard. As they dive through the WINDOW-

KAREN (O.C.)

Hold on...

We FREEZE ON the image of Tim and Diana mid-dive, glass shattering around their leaping bodies, and MOVE TO...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Karen stares in disbelief...

KAREN

You dove head first through a plate glass window? Come on.

TIM

Fact is, diving through a window isn't that hard. Simply a matter of speed, pose, trajectory, and the thickness of the glass.

DIANA

Basic op training. Finish the story...

EXT. TIM AND DIANA'S BACKYARD - EARLIER THAT NIGHT

We return to a frozen image of Tim and Diana mid-dive, piercing the glass...

The image UNFREEZES and we're out of slow motion, playing in real speed, as Tim and Diana land on the ground, tucking and rolling into THE HOLE JEFF DUG as...

...the house EXPLODES in a massive ball of fire. Tim and Diana huddle together, as DEBRIS rains down on them.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Karen shaking her head, trying piecing it all together...

KAREN

So, who did it? The people from the parking garage?

TIM

They all work for the same person. An international arms dealer called the Scorpion.

DIANA

Carries a pearl-handled nine shooter in his waistband at all times and sells weapons to everyone from Hezbollah to the North Koreans. The Agency's been after him for years.

Trying to makes sense of it all, Jeff crosses to a KEGERATOR that sits near his home brewing setup, pours himself a beer.

KAREN

Calls himself the Scorpion? That's so lame.

JEFF

What happens now?

DIANA

Now we get them to talk. (beat)  
Spread your legs, Danny boy, Mrs.  
Jones has some work to do...

Diana steps towards Dan, the wires hissing in her hands, as she roughly rips the duct tape from his mouth. Jeff and Karen exchange a frightened glance.

JEFF

Whoa, whoa...hold on, Dick Cheney!  
You can't do that in our basement.  
(beat) Seriously, can we talk for a  
minute?

DAN

YES! Talk! And stay away from me!

As Jeff pulls Tim and Diana to the side for private discussion...

TIM

(to Jeff, whispering)  
Look, I really don't enjoy this  
part either. But it is a pressing  
matter of national security...

DIANA

The Scorpion now knows he's being  
watched, he's moved the drop up to  
tomorrow night -- *we don't have a  
lot of time.*

Jeff and Karen exchange a glance...

KAREN

It does sound kind of important...

JEFF

Well, you don't have to do it by  
torturing them. They're human  
beings, connect with them.

Diana gives Tim a "seriously?" look.

KAREN

(explaining)  
He's a people person.

JEFF

Watch...

Jeff pulls up a chair and sits down with Dan and Meg. He pulls the duct tape off Meg's mouth and she instantly starts to scream...

MEG

Help! Help! Anyone! We're being held hostage!

JEFF

Shhh, Meg, no one can hear you. We sound proofed the basement when Patrick took up the drums.

MEG

Ah, shitballs...

JEFF

Now, look... I don't know what's going on here, but no one is judging you, okay? We live in confusing times. Mistakes happen. We lose our way, find ourselves adrift... (beat, emotional) And, God, sometimes we feel so vulnerable, so unsure of our purpose and our place...

DAN

Are you talking about us or you?

DIANA

Oh God, can we please water board them and get this over with?

Jeff ignores her -

JEFF

But, I'm also talking about you, Dan. Up there on the Sixth Floor, doing God knows what, because I don't have security clearance. But, I know you pour your heart into your work. And for what? Intellectual stimulation? A pat on the back from a Division Head? Sometimes, that's just not enough. Is it, Dan?

Jeff has hit a nerve. Seeing this, Tim grabs a chair, brings it over. Sitting down with them...

TIM

(thoughtfully)

You know, sometimes I feel like the lines between right and wrong have become blurred and faded. I'm not even sure what those words mean anymore.

JEFF

And a man starts thinking to himself - hey, what about me? Where do I fit into all of this? Where's my piece of the pie?

Tim gives Dan an understanding look...

TIM

It happens...

Dan can't help but nod, like they're looking into his soul.

JEFF

(almost whispering)

Did you know that every time an employee submits a request for a raise, it passes through the H.R. Department? I've seen your requests, Dan. I know they've been denied...

And, with that, Dan BREAKS...

DAN

(sobbing)

Do you have any idea how hard it is raising four kids on a rocket scientist's salary?! I've got tuition to pay for, gymnastics lessons, braces... It's bleeding me dry, Jeff. Dry!

MEG

Stop talking, you idiot!

JEFF

And you, Meg. I know how challenging it must be, obsessively comparing yourself to other women.

MEG

(bitterly)

You don't know anything.

JEFF

I know enough. Tell me this - do you really want to live in a fake Brooklyn loft? Or do you just want people to like you?

Instantly defensive, Meg is about to defend herself, but Jeff puts a calming hand on her shoulder...

JEFF (CONT'D)

Shh, it's okay. We all want to be liked. And just like my office, this basement is a place of non-judgement.

Finally, Meg begins to nod, giving way to her own tears. Diana turns to Karen...

DIANA

(conceding)

Boy, he really does connect.

Karen nods with pride.

DAN

(through sobs)

I was in a bad place, Jeff. And then, one night, out of the blue, the Scorpion approached me on a message board for aerospace engineers. For the first two months, I thought I was just blowing off some steam with a peer. And then he made me an offer.

MEG

(equally distraught)

A really good offer. That's when we decided on the remodel.

JEFF

(softly)

And when you decided to lie and tell me you were checking your fantasy baseball roster on my computer, when you were really using it to send highly-classified military secrets...

Beat. Tim nods. *Yup.*

Suddenly, Jeff LAUNCHES at Dan and grabs him around the neck...

JEFF

You son of a bitch! You big, fat, lying bastard! I'm going to kill you!

DAN

Agggghh! What happened to the non judgement?!!

Meg and Karen scream, while Tim manages to pull Jeff off Dan.

DAN

I never meant for anyone to get hurt, I swear! And I never mentioned you and Karen to the Scorpion. He doesn't know who you are. I didn't think he'd ever go so far!

MEG

Can we get that lawyer now?

Suddenly, the sound of a RINGING PHONE silences the room.

DIANA

What was that?

Another RING. Diana starts for Dan.

DIANA (CONT'D)

It's coming from his pocket. (beat, suspicious) Who's calling you?

She reaches into Dan's jacket pocket and pulls out a PREPAID cellphone. She hands it to Tim, who sees it's coming from a blocked number...

TIM

(re: the phone)

It's the Scorpion, isn't it? He's calling to set up the exchange.

Another RING. Diana draws a gun, pointing it at Dan and Meg.

DIANA

Answer this phone. The two of you are going to lead us to him.

DAN

No way. He'll sniff us out a mile away. You know what he's capable of.

Diana pulls back the hammer of her gun...

TIM

(deadly)

Do you know what she's capable of? Especially when National Security is at stake?

RING.

DAN

(panicked)

You meet with him.

(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)

Pretend you're us. Use my name, I give you permission.

DIANA

He thinks we're dead. Our cover was blown, remember?

TIM

Pick up the phone, Dan.

DAN

(sobbing)

I can't do it. I'm not a spy! I'm an H.R. guy from the suburbs!

The room is thick with tension - what's going to happen?! Finally, Jeff speaks. Softly, we almost can't hear him -

JEFF

Give me the phone.

TIM

Wait. Think about what you're saying...

RING.

Jeff grabs the phone from Tim's hand and sets it to SPEAKER MODE...

JEFF

Hellooo.

A silent beat, then, from the phone, an ELECTRONICALLY DISGUISED VOICE...

VOICE (OVER SPEAKERPHONE)

Hello? Mr. Rascal Flatts?

Rascal Flatts? Jeff and Karen look at Dan...

DAN

(ashamed, whispering)

I like their music... It's a little poppy for country, but those harmonies--

MEG

Shut UP.

VOICE

Hello?

JEFF

(into phone)

Ah, yes... Hi. This is Rascal.

VOICE

Are you ready to make the deal?

JEFF

Of course. Definitely. My wife,  
Mrs. Flatts, and I are very excited  
about it.

VOICE

Tomorrow night. The Odyssey Hotel.  
9pm. Go to the V-Bar. A booth will  
be reserved for you. Bring the  
requested item and wait...

Long pause.

JEFF

(unsure)

Wait for what?

VOICE (OVER SPEAKERPHONE)

You'll be sent for.

JEFF

At V-Bar. Okay. Is there a dress  
code?

(Tim shoots him a look)

Never mind, I can look that up  
online.

VOICE (OVER SPEAKERPHONE)

Now destroy this phone.

Click. The line goes dead. We hear the soft DIAL TONE. Then,  
as the full realization sinks in...

JEFF

Oh my God, this is insane. I have  
to cancel that meeting!

Jeff dives for the phone, but Tim's strong hand is suddenly  
on his wrist...

TIM

(empowering)

Stop. You did the right thing.

JEFF

(weakly)

I did?

DIANA

(proud)

Jeff and Karen, welcome to the sexy  
and exciting world of international  
espionage and covert operations.

As Jeff and Karen exchange an amazed glance, Mission Impossible-style music takes us to...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

Jeff is flipping through his "clothing combo" Polaroids.

JEFF  
(quietly to himself)  
What to wear to a sting...

VOICE (O.C.)  
Hey!

Jeff turns around. A SCARY-LOOKING GUY with a beard, large nose and dark glasses is hurrying into the room! And he's got a BIG BLACK BAG!

JEFF  
(cowering behind the bed)  
AGH! Kill me, spare my wife,  
please! Just make it quick!

The man takes off the glasses. It's Tim in disguise, fake nose and all.

TIM  
Jeff, chill. It's me. I had to go  
out to get a few things. Like this.

He unzips the bag, revealing a brand-new, tailored suit.

JEFF  
How did know you my sizes?

TIM  
Jeff, I know when you had your last  
colonoscopy. I even have the video.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

Tim and Diana stand with Jeff and Karen.

TIM  
I promise - you will never be in  
any danger whatsoever. Once you're  
in the room with Scorpion, you just  
give him Dan's decryption key.

DIANA  
The Scorpion will plug it into a  
computer, to verify that it works.  
Which it will.

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - MASTER BATH - LATER STILL

Jeff stands in front of the mirror, getting dressed in the new suit. It's the best suit he's ever worn.

DIANA (V.O.)

Then he'll give you the money. And you leave. Proceed to the lobby, get into your minivan and go home. That's it.

CLOSE ON Jeff as he knots his tie.

TIM (V.O., CONT'D)

Jeff will have a miniature surveillance mic sewn right into your tie. It's top-secret technology. Undetectable.

CLOSE ON a pair of leather SHOES.

TIM (V.O.)

And a tracking device has been embedded in the heel of your shoe, enabling us to monitor your every move.

CLOSE ON an American Dynamics stress ball. Jeff grabs it and puts it in his pocket.

EXT. ODYSSEY HOTEL - ROOF - NIGHT

A SECURITY GUARD mans his station on top of the roof, when, suddenly, a BLOW to the back of his neck drops him to the ground. As he falls out of frame, REVEAL Tim, disguised again as the bearded, large-nosed guy and Diana disguised as a curly-haired man. They wear MAINTENANCE JUMPERS and carry BLACK DUFFEL BAGS.

TIM (V.O.)

Diana and I will secure a position on the hotel roof and establish a command center.

They unzip the bags, revealing a cache of weapons and equipment: laptops, GPS, earpieces.

TIM (V.O.)

Once you're safely away from the hotel, we will swoop in with a team of Navy SEALs and apprehend the Scorpion.

Behind them, in the distance, we see a BLACK HELICOPTER hovering.

Diana gives the helicopter a "thumbs up", then she and Tim remove their disguises and unzip their jumpers to reveal tight-fitting COMMANDO SUITS...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - MASTER BATH - NIGHT

Jeff studies himself in the mirror. Still full of tension...

Suddenly, Karen appears behind him in the bathroom doorway. She's wearing a gorgeous RED DESIGNER DRESS, with a long slit up the side and high heels. Her hair and make up been have done perfectly - she looks like a new woman.

Jeff sees her reflection first, then, stunned, turns to look at her face to face...

JEFF

Oh my God, that's the dress they gave you?

KAREN

(nodding)

I can't believe we're doing this.. Do you think Diana was right? In another life I could have been spy?

JEFF

You do have good instincts. Like when we broke into their house and you made me wear socks on my hands... Normal people don't think like that.

KAREN

(touched)

Thank you.

Looking down at the slit in her dress, Jeff notices something - the lace top of a thigh high stocking - sticking out from underneath her dress.

JEFF

Whoa, are you wearing the lingerie you had on the other night?

KAREN

I just figured, if we were going to do this...we should do it right.

They exchange a look, seeing each other for the first time in a long, long time... The tension of impending danger is replaced by a different type of tension, as their eyes stay locked on one another.

KAREN

How much time until we have to be  
at the hotel?

JEFF

45 minutes.

A silent beat. Then, suddenly, they are kissing. Hungry and  
passionate. Their spark ignited to a flame.

JEFF (CONT'D)

(passionate)

Now, I know why I picked up that  
call!

As the Mission Impossible music comes up again, we CUT TO...

EXT. ODYSSEY HOTEL - 45 MINUTES LATER

A hip high-rise hotel, glass and steel glittering with the  
reflected light of the city...

We see the Gaffney's minivan pull up to the valet station.  
Jeff and Karen step out, looking absolutely amazing and  
glowing with a newfound confidence.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

QUICK CUTS of Tim and Diana -

- Tim monitors a LAPTOP displaying a detailed GPS grid of the  
hotel, a red dot corresponding to the tracking device in  
Jeff's shoe monitors his and Karen's movement.

- Diana snaps a MAGAZINE into a SUB-MACHINE GUN.

- Tim puts an EARPIECE into his ear, a small RADIO  
TRANSPONDER on his belt and clips a small microphone onto his  
collar.

- Diana slips PISTOLS into shoulder and boot HOLSTERS.

- Together, Tim and Diana secure ROPES and REPELLING  
EQUIPMENT.

- The BLACK HELICOPTER continues to hover in the distance.

INT. ODYSSEY HOTEL - ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Karen and Jeff stand side by side Jeff straightens his tie,  
re-tucks his shirt, as Karen checks her make-up.

Then, she slips her hand into his, the elevator DINGS and opens up and we see the crowded entrance to the decadent V-Bar - they truly are stepping into another world.

INT. V BAR - CONTINUOUS

Jeff and Karen go up to a large BOUNCER.

JEFF

Hello. We're Mr. and Mrs. Rascal Flatts. We have a table reserved for us. That's not our real names.  
(leans in)  
We're having an affair.

Karen swats him - they're having fun.

The bouncer checks his list, then nods to an scantily clad young HOSTESS, who motions for Jeff and Karen to follow her.

She leads them through the bar, past rows of tables, each one occupied by intriguing and exotic people. Jeff spots an empty table, by the window, featuring an amazing view of the city...

JEFF (CONT'D)

(excited)  
That must be our table.

But, the hostess leads them right past the table into the kitchen, where four large EASTERN EUROPEAN men stand waiting in front of an open service elevator. These are the Scorpion's HENCHMEN.

HENCHMAN #1

Come...

As Jeff and Karen step into the service elevator...

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Tim and Diana stand near the edge of the rooftop, primed and ready to go. Diana is buzzing with excitement.

DIANA

You know, we pull this off, we can pick our next assignment.

Just then, something comes over Tim's earpiece. He replies...

TIM

Yes, sir. (beat) What? Why? (beat)  
No. Of course not, sir.

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)  
(hangs up, beat)  
They're pulling the plug.

DIANA  
What?

TIM  
Mission is off. New intel. They  
want to keep the Scorpion in place  
and go after his buyer. Someone in  
Jakarta.

DIANA  
Jeff and Karen?

TIM  
We wait for them to come out,  
extract them, and we're done.

DIANA  
(disappointed)  
Well, that's no fun.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

The four henchmen lead Jeff and Karen into a large suite. Several LIT CANDLES adorn the room. On the balcony, a MAN and a VERY EXOTIC and SEXY WOMAN in a latex mini-dress look down at the patio and pool below, where people at the V-Bar are partying. They turn and walk toward the room...

CLOSE ON a PEARL HANDLED 9 SHOOTER tucked into the man's waistband. WE PULL BACK to reveal that the gun belongs to notorious international criminal, THE SCORPION. And, despite the James Bond-vibe of the evening, the Scorpion is surprisingly nondescript - a balding, pudgy, American - but dressed in a Prada suit, with slicked back hair and wire framed glasses. Think Paul Giamatti as a rogue weapons dealer.

A few other henchmen enter from an adjoining room -- all carrying assault weapons.

Scorpion suddenly pauses. He gives Jeff a strange look. He walks closer, studying Jeff's face. The moment is very tense.

SCORPION  
Hm.

He walks over to a couch and sits, while nodding to a couple of henchmen, who immediately start frisking Jeff and Karen.

SCORPION

I hope you don't mind. It's just a formality. You can never be too cautious in this line of work.

Another henchman comes over and wands them. As the wand moves toward Jeff's tie, he glances over to Karen. But no alarm goes off. *Phew*. A henchman reaches into Jeff's pocket.

HENCHMAN #1

All clean. Just this.

The henchman puts Jeff's stress ball on a coffee table.

JEFF

Pleasure to meet you, Mr. Scorpion.  
I'm Flatts. Rascal Fla-

SCORPION

Shut up. The decryption key.

Jeff hands him the key. The Scorpion puts the key in his computer. The documents pop up to his satisfaction.

SCORPION

Give them the money.

An underling hands them a briefcase. Jeff and Karen get up to leave. *Wow, that was easy.*

Just as they get to the door...

SCORPION (O.C.)

Jeff Gaffney.

Jeff and Karen freeze. Scorpion walks over to them.

SCORPION

We knew the encrypted files were being sent from a computer belonging to a Jeff Gaffney. The name rang a bell... but I couldn't place it.

Scorpion holds up the American Dynamics stress ball.

SCORPION

You're the H.R. guy.

JEFF

Pardon? No, I'm an engineer. Rocket scientist to be precise.

(nervous, sweaty)

MIT-trained Rocket Scientist here.

Awkward, terrifying silence.

SCORPION

You don't remember me? I was a contractor at American Dynamics back in '02 to '05. And you're Jeff Gaffney, VP of Human Resources, right?

JEFF

I'm sorry, but you've made a mistake...Mr. Scorpion.

Scorpion takes out his PEARL-HANDLED REVOLVER, points it at Karen's head, and COCKS BACK THE HAMMER.

SCORPION

Think carefully before you lie to me again.

JEFF

Okay, yes! I'm the H.R. guy! But you have what you want, so who cares?!

SCORPION

Who's your accomplice?

JEFF

Nobody. It was just me. I stole all that top-secret stuff. I wanted the money. We're remodeling our bathroom.

KAREN

Brooklyn Loft style.

SCORPION

Bullshit!

JEFF

It's a viable design choice-

SCORPION

No! That you stole these plans on your own. That's impossible.

JEFF

W-why?!

SCORPION

Because you don't have...  
(getting in Jeff's face)  
...the security clearance.

Scorpion turns to his men.

SCORPION

This is a setup. Call in the helicopter. We have to get out of here fast.

The henchmen train guns on Jeff and Karen - they're not going anywhere.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Meanwhile, Tim has heard the entire exchange. - he's radioing for backup.

TIM (INTO MIC)

Decoys have been made. Repeat. Decoys have been made. We're going in to extract and need backup.

RADIO (V.O.)

Negative. Just get out of there.

TIM (INTO MIC)

Repeat. *We are going in, need backup.*

RADIO (V.O.)

Negative. Collateral damage. It's an abort. Just leave them. That is a DIRECT ORDER. Do you copy?

Unsure, Tim looks at Diana.

DIANA

You know how this works, Tim. We have orders. Think of the bigger picture.

TIM

And you wonder why I hate this job.

A quiet beat.

DIANA

(conceding)

Fine, I admit it - I like them too...

RADIO (V.O.)

Do you copy?

TIM (INTO MIC)

I'm sorry, sir. But, that's not how we do things on Maple Circle. We're going in.

We hear the radio squawking - *What the hell are you doing? Abort!* Tim shuts it off.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

Jeff and Karen are being held at gunpoint.

SCORPION

Who are you working with? Tell me now, or this is only going to get worse.

JEFF

No one, I swear. You have this all wrong. Please, at least let my wife go! She has nothing to do with this!

SCORPION

Quiet! (beat) You know, I'm trying to think of a scenario where either of you are still alive tomorrow... Sorry, it's just not coming to me.  
(turning to men)  
ETA on the helicopter?

HENCHMAN #1

Seven minutes.

SCORPION

Take four guys. Secure the roof.

The henchmen run out. Scorpion crosses to his the sexy woman (his GIRLFRIEND).

SCORPION

You said you wanted some excitement...

He opens a silver case and hands her a large gun. She smiles.

INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

No sooner do the henchmen get into the stairwell...when they're engaged in a SHOOTOUT with Diana and Tim. Two henchmen are KILLED. The other henchmen retreat downstairs.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The henchmen run back to the room -

HENCHMAN #1

Agents. On the roof...

SCORPION

Did you get a look at them?

HENCHMAN #2

Yes. They were, well... very good looking.

HENCHMAN #1

Uncommonly good looking...

SCORPION

Son of a bitch. The Joneses!

Scorpion motions to his men - *get out there!* More henchmen run out of the room.

INT. STAIRWELL - SAME

Back to Tim & Diana, in the thick of a GUN BATTLE. Outnumbered, they drop back.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Back in the room, Scorpion and the henchmen are nervous.

SCORPION

Okay, if they get through that door, the first thing I want them to see - these two idiots with guns to their heads!

This is the behind-the-scenes staging of a reveal we've seen in a million movies -

SCORPION

Okay, Bruno, you stand next to the wife with the AK-47, Sven, you stand next to Gaffney with the magnum - no, the glock - nah, stick with the magnum. Wait, you're all a little blocked by that lamp. Everyone move about three steps to the left, too far, back, back... okay, stop. Does that look weird to anyone else?

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Diana and Tim take out a few more guys. They're closing in on the hotel room door. They BLOW THE DOOR OPEN and see...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

A perfectly-staged tableau of Jeff and Karen standing with guns held to their heads. Tim and Diana crouch outside the door, calling to the Scorpion -

DIANA

Scorpion. We don't want you. Just let those two go and you can walk away.

SCORPION

Oh, I'm walking away. You two, on the other hand, I wouldn't be so sure...

Suddenly MORE armed henchmen stream into the hall from different stairwells. Reinforcements from Scorpion's helicopter. The Joneses are surrounded.

Tim and Diana sigh. They surrender their weapons and are brought into the hotel room at gunpoint. They exchange a sheepish look with Jeff and Karen.

JEFF

Where are the SEALs? I was told there would Navy SEALs.

Scorpion walks right up to Tim, getting in his face. He's relishing this moment.

SCORPION

The famous Tim and Diana Jones.  
(beat) Tell me, have you ever had your hands and feet bound together and then been dropped from a helicopter into the ocean?

TIM

Yes.

SCORPION

So smug.

Scorpion suddenly punches Tim hard in the stomach. Tim doubles over.

This is THE LAST STRAW FOR JEFF.

JEFF

Whoa, whoa, what the hell has gotten into you - Hal Springborn?

Shocked, all eyes look at him...

HENCHMAN #1  
Who's Hal Springborn?

JEFF  
He is. I recognized him the moment  
I walked in.  
(to Scorpion)  
I handled your parking space  
dispute, remember?

The henchmen look at Scorpion. *Hal Springborn?*

SCORPION  
I don't know who Hal Springborn is.  
But I do know you have to die now.

SCORPION'S GIRLFRIEND  
(shaken)  
I made love to a "Hal"?

RANDOM HENCHMAN  
He told me his name was Carlos  
Enigma.

Sensing the growing distraction of the guards, Diana looks to a room service tray, where a STEAK KNIFE is partially visible under a used napkin...

DIANA  
Jeff, tell us a little more about  
Hal.

SCORPION  
SCORPION! I GO BY SCORPION!

JEFF  
Yep, yep, that's the Hal I  
remember. Petty and temperamental.  
I knew you were upset about the  
parking thing, but this whole arms  
dealer thing is a bit of an  
overreaction.

SCORPION  
Jesus, what is this? Amateur hour?  
This is not about a parking spot!  
This is soooo beyond parking spots.  
It's about the thrill of black  
market commerce, the exploitation  
of global political unrest for my  
own personal gain... (beat) But  
that parking spot was bullshit. I'd  
been there three years and they  
still had me in Lot D! On the other  
side of the highway.

(MORE)

SCORPION (CONT'D)

I had to cross the footbridge, rain or shine! It wasn't right!

JEFF

(to Scorpion)

Hey, I'm still in Lot 4, you don't see me selling weapons do you?

SCORPION

Well, you don't really have the security clearance.

But, Jeff is so far beyond security clearance at this point...

JEFF

Jesus, what is wrong with people like you? Why can't anyone ever be satisfied with what they have? It's not enough to have a house, a decent job, a wife, some kids, some friends, a hobby you're passionate about. No, you need millions and millions of dollars. And for what? Designer clothes? A yacht? A hot girlfriend of indeterminate mixed race--

(aside to SCORPION'S GIRLFRIEND)

Actually, your ethnicity is irrelevant to my point and I apologize for bringing it up -

(back to Scorpion)

- a pearl-handled nine shooter, the latest iPhone, a downstairs bathroom with a urinal and exposed plumbing, a Williams-Sonoma pasta maker-

KAREN

(aside to Jeff)

I think they get the gist.

JEFF

Not one of those things are going to make you truly happy! You want to know what makes Jeff Gaffney happy?

SCORPION

I couldn't give a fu--

JEFF

(full of scary rage)

YOU WILL NOT INTERRUPT ME UNTIL I'M DONE!

Tim and Diana are stunned. *Wow, Jeff's losing his shit.*

JEFF

I like making my own beer, floating  
in a wind tunnel with a friend...  
And what really makes me burst with  
uncontainable joy is the way  
Karen's nose wrinkles when she  
laughs!

KAREN

(quietly)  
My nana says it's because I laugh  
with my eyes.

JEFF

Goddamn right she does. But you'll  
never know about eye-laughing or  
indoor skydiving or anything else  
that matters, Hal Springborn,  
BECAUSE YOU HAVE APPARENTLY MISSED  
THE ENTIRE FUDGING POINT OF BEING  
ALIVE!!

(beat, calmer)  
Which is to be nice to each other.

Jeff gives a big exhale. The room is silent.

Tim sees Diana eyeing the knife. They exchange a look.

TIM

(to Scorpion)  
Wow, Hal. I always just assumed  
this was about your small-penis  
complex.

Furious, Scorpion punches Tim hard in the stomach again. Tim  
is bent over, gasping.

SCORPION

Now shoot them all -  
(pointing at Jeff)  
starting with him!

The henchman look at each other - is he serious? The henchman  
holding the gun on Diana lowers it, just for an instant...

THWUCK! A knife is lodged in that henchman's throat. He  
crumples.

In a FLASH OF ACTION, Tim yanks the pearl handled revolver  
from Scorpion's pants and, without even looking, fires the  
gun over own his shoulder, taking out the henchman who had  
been holding him at gunpoint. Simultaneously, Diana dives for  
the downed henchman's submachine gun.

AND ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.

SCORPION  
(diving to the floor)  
Kill them!!

Bullets begin to spray the room, Tim and Diana run for cover.

TIM  
(to Jeff and Karen)  
Get behind the couch.

Scorpion's girlfriend points her gun at Jeff and Karen.

SCORPION'S GIRLFRIEND  
DIE, LOSERS!

Karen screams. Jeff yanks Karen to the floor as the couch explodes with bullet hits. Feathers everywhere.

AND WE PLAY THE ENTIRE SHOOTOUT from Jeff and Karen's POV. MAYHEM AND NOISE ALL AROUND as they huddle together.

JEFF  
Are you okay?!

KAREN  
Yeah, where's the mean lady?!

BLAM, BLAM, BLAM! A nearby lamp explodes, shards of glass and sparks rain down.

JEFF  
I don't know! Karen, I'm so sorry!  
I should never have answered that  
phone!

AN O.S. BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM.

KAREN  
I'm glad you did! I love you!

TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!! CHUNKS OF PLASTER explode around them as the wall is strafed.

JEFF  
I love you, too! I'm sorry that I  
used Tim Jones and home brewing as  
ways to avoid having a more  
meaningful dialogue with you!

KAREN  
And I'm sorry that I've let my  
struggle for self-respect put a  
wall between us!

BA-BANG! The overhead lights are blown out, plunging the room into near-darkness.

JEFF

You're an amazing designer AND you have an untapped natural gift for intelligence work!

KAREN

And you're the sweetest man I've ever met AND you make really good beer!

BOOM! A WOMAN'S BODY lands beside them. They SCREAM!!

The woman suddenly twitches, rolling over and coughing blood into Jeff's face before she dies. It's Scorpion's girlfriend.

KAREN

Here, I have a wet nap.

She tenderly cleans the blood off of Jeff's face.

JEFF

Thanks, Karen.

They look into each other's eyes. They *do* have something Scorpion will never have.

With one final O.S. GROAN and THUD - THE BATTLE IS OVER.

Jeff and Karen tentatively sneak a look around the couch - Tim and Diana are the only ones left, the henchmen are all dead... but...

JEFF

Where's the Scorpion?

Tim runs out of the room. The others follow.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tim and Diana see the Scorpion running around a corner. They give chase, Jeff and Karen following behind.

As soon as they turn the corner, a GRENADE ROLLS TO THEIR FEET. *Shit!!* Reveal the Scorpion, grinning at them. They RUN THE OTHER WAY, toward a DEAD END window!

JEFF

We're cut off!

TIM

We'll jump for it.

KAREN

What?! We can't do that!

DIANA

Sure we can. The pool is under that window. Jump feet first so you don't break your neck.

BAM, BAM! henchmen appear again, but Tim and Diana pin them back with gunfire.

TIM

Go!

Jeff grabs Karen's hand and they keep running to the window.

KAREN

Jeff, no!

Too late, Jeff is already doing his own version of the Joneses' amazing "dive through glass" move - except Jeff slams into the glass with a THUD - AND IT DOES NOT BREAK. He collapses in a daze onto the carpet.

Tim appears at Jeff's side.

TIM

It's triple pane. Plus, it opens.

Tim opens the window, helps Karen and Jeff onto the ledge.

TIM

Way to commit, though. Now, JUMP!

Karen looks at the pool, several stories below. She looks at Jeff, freaked out.

JEFF

We can trust him. He's our neighbor.

As Tim and Diana coming running toward the window, Jeff and Karen lock hands like Butch and Sundance, and...

EXT. ODYSSEY HOTEL - POOLSIDE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Four BODIES fly from the shattered window four floors up...

...and SPLASH into the pool, to the absolute amazement of the hip crowd partying at the poolside bar.

A long beat, then four heads pop up - Jeff, Karen, Diana, Tim - they're alive!

The stunned crowd APPLAUDS, admiring hands pull the couples from the water. Jeff and Karen cling to one another...

JEFF

(to someone recording on  
their phone)

Can you email that to me? I really  
want to show my kids.

KAREN

I've got water in places that  
should not have water in them.

Tim and Diana pushing through the crowd to join them...

DIANA

Are you guys okay? No one's hurt?

JEFF

(amazed)

You came for us.

TIM

Of course we did.

Jeff smiles turning to Karen...

JEFF

And you found it hard to believe  
they wanted to be our friends.

KAREN

(conceding)

I was in a bad place...

A helicopter takes off from the roof of the hotel.

TIM

There goes Hal Springborn.

KAREN

God, I wish I had a Stinger missile  
right now.

DIANA

How many times have I said the same  
thing?

The front of the hotel is crowded with police cars and fire engines. Jeff, Karen, Tim and Diana stand with some of the authorities, as a BLACK SUBURBAN pulls up. A window rolls down, revealing a top-level CIA DIRECTOR.

TIM

Uh oh...

Tim and Diana approach the car, where the Director is reviewing a dossier.

DIRECTOR

So, you were ordered to pull out, but instead, you proceeded to kill 10 people, demolish a hotel suite, and jump out a window in front of 200 witnesses... And in the process let the Scorpion get away. He must be halfway to Jakarta by now.

DIANA

Well, if we'd killed him, you would've given us shit about that.

The Director is not amused. He notices Jeff and Karen, watching from a few yards away...

DIRECTOR

Who are they?

Jeff gives a friendly wave to the Director.

JEFF

(friendly)

Hello. We're the neighbors. The ones you were going to leave to die.

KAREN

(waving sweetly)

Nice to meet you!

A quiet beat. Then, without returning their wave, the Director exits the car, pulling out his CIA credentials, heading for the police and fire authorities...

DIRECTOR

(to Tim and Diana)

I'll take care of everything here. Stand by for your next assignment.

A quiet beat, Tim and Diana look at one another. Then...

TIM

Yeah, we're going to have to think about that.

The Director pauses.

DIRECTOR

Think about it? Maybe you don't understand - we're giving you another shot.

Tim takes Diana's hand and they looks to Jeff and Karen. Jeff understands perfectly...

JEFF

Si huotong...

The Director gives Jeff a puzzled look.

JEFF (CONT'D)

It's Chinese for cul de sac. (beat)  
But, it doesn't come close...  
metaphorically.

The Director looks at Jeff for a beat, then just shakes his head.

DIRECTOR

(to the Joneses)  
You'll miss it.

As the Director walks off...

JEFF

(calling after him)  
Friends don't lie to each other!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CUL DE SAC - MORNING - SIX MONTHS LATER

Three homes. A for-sale sign in front of the Craverston house. A BRAND NEW HOUSE sits where the Joneses house was. The neighborhood is decorated for Christmas.

The sound of MACHINE GUN FIRE takes us to...

INT. JEFF AND KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY

START ON - a television set displaying a First-person shooter video game. Bad guy after bad guy is gunned down with ruthless precision...

REVERSE ANGLE to reveal Diana, standing in the Gaffney's living room, working the controller with amazing skill...

DIANA

I love this. I don't even break a nail.

PULLING WIDER - We finally see PATRICK and MIKEY, the Gaffney's two kids, standing impatiently to next to Diana. The house is full of holiday decorations.

PATRICK

Are we ever going to get a turn?

MIKEY

I thought you said you'd never played this before...

DIANA

All yours. By the way, the Glock pulls left. You'll have to compensate.

FROM THE KITCHEN - Jeff, Karen and Tim enter with snacks, drinks. Jeff and Tim are wearing identical Christmas sweaters. Karen slides her arm around Jeff - there's an easy physical chemistry between them now.

JEFF

Okay, everyone, gather 'round. I want to make a toast.

(raises his bottle)

First of all, to friendship and an amazing Holiday Season for all of us...

The others raise their bottles in acknowledgement.

JEFF (CONT'D)

...and to Tim's outstanding new Christmas Spice Ale, "Jonesing for the Holidays"!

TIM

Too much nutmeg?

JEFF

Are you kidding? It perfectly offsets the cardamom.

DIANA

(looking at the label)

There's a gloved hand with four fingers...?

JEFF

(proudly)

That was my idea. And I'd also like to congratulate Karen and Diana on the success of their new Interior Design and Home Security firm. Who knew that would work?

The women exchange a look, then...

KAREN/DIANA

We did.

JEFF

Well, most importantly, I want to  
make a toast to life's most  
enduring gift -- friendship.  
Cheers!

They all raise their glasses in a celebratory toast...

EVERYONE

Cheers!

As they clink glasses and drink in warm acknowledgement...

TIM

So, what do you guys think about a  
little travelling this summer?

JEFF

Yes! Two words - Epcot Center.

DIANA

We were thinking somewhere a little  
more exotic.

JEFF

More exotic than Epcot?

KAREN

Where did you have in mind?

Tim and Diana exchange a look, then...

TIM

How about...Jakarta?

And, with that, we...

FADE OUT.

THE END