

This is that script

This
is that
CORP

LIFE DURING WARTIME

By
Todd Solondz

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Many of the characters in LIFE DURING WARTIME first appeared in WELCOME TO THE DOLL HOUSE and HAPPINESS. Below is a list of who was who:

ALLEN.....Philip Seymour Hoffman
JOY.....Jane Adams
TRIST.....Cynthia Stevenson
HARVEY.....Bill Buell
BILL.....Dylan Baker
MARK.....Mathew Faber
MONA.....Louise Lasser
ANDY.....Jon Lovitz
KRISTINA.....Camryn Manheim
HELEN.....Lara Flynn Boyle
BILLY.....Rufus Read

Josh Pollack

APA

INT. NJ RESTAURANT - EVENING

JOY and ALLEN sit opposite each other. JOY looks a little upset.

ALLEN
Joy?

JOY
...Yeah?

ALLEN
Are you okay?

JOY
Uh-huh...

ALLEN
You sure? Ever since we got here
you seem a little...upset.

JOY
Oh, no, no...just a little...deja vu.
But I'm happy. Promise.

ALLEN
(a beat.)
Okay...well, I got you a little present.

JOY bursts into tears.

ALLEN
Joy, Joy...What's wrong?

JOY
I...I...

ALLEN
Is it your...?

JOY
No, no. I'm so sorry, Allen...It's
okay. I'm okay...Here, let me
open it now.

She unwraps his gift.

ALLEN
It's an original Gainesvoort repro-
duction. Late 1880's.

JOY
(a beat.)
W-where did you find this?

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ALLEN
E-bay.

JOY
Oh, Allen...This-

ALLEN
Turn it over! Look at the bottom!...

JOY sees her name inscribed.

ALLEN
Isn't that amazing? I found it just
like that! An antique!

JOY bursts into tears.

ALLEN
W-what's wrong?... You don't like
it?

JOY
I'm sorry, Allen... I didn't mean to...
It's nothing.

ALLEN
Are you sure?

JOY
Thank you.

ALLEN
(a beat.)
You're welcome.

JOY
Let's order.

ALLEN
(to the WAITRESS)
Excuse me, Miss?

The WAITRESS comes by, turns to ALLEN.

WAITRESS
Hello! Good evening!

ALLEN
Hi, I was wondering if you could
please bring us some menus?
(the WAITRESS does not respond.)
...Miss?

WAITRESS

Say again?

ALLEN

Say?...er...well...I was just wondering if you could...bring us some menus?...I mean...and are there any specials?

Pause. The WAITRESS is looking hard at ALLEN.

WAITRESS

What did you say?

ALLEN

...Um...I just wondered what you were...um...

He breathes heavily.

WAITRESS

I know who you are.

ALLEN

I'm sorry...I don't...Have we met?

WAITRESS

(spits in ALLEN's face.)

Fucking pervert!

ALLEN

I'm s-sor...I-.

JOY

Miss, he's changed! He doesn't do that anymore! We even threw out the phonebook...Really, he's a different person!

WAITRESS

His voice is the same.

She hurries off.

JOY

...Allen? You don't still...

ALLEN hangs his head, maybe breaks down.

INT. FLORIDA "TULIP" RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TRISH and HARVEY are seated together, laughing. A pause.

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TRISH
You know what I like about you?

HARVEY
What?

TRISH
You're so...normal. God, it feels
so good to be with someone who
isn't...*WEIRD!!!*

They laugh.

HARVEY
Or *SCREWED UP!!!*

They laugh again.

TRISH
Or *SICKO-PERVY!!!*

They let the laughter subside.

HARVEY
So are your kids off at college?

Josh Pollack

TRISH
I wish!

APPA

HARVEY
Mine are all out of the house. Hell,
I'm out of the house! Kicked out,
that is!

Dry laughter.

TRISH
(a beat; stretches out her hand)
Feeling lonely?

HARVEY
Divorce is...not easy...after 35
years together...Hell, I haven't
even been with a woman outside
of Marj. I'm not sure I'd know what
to do if...

TRISH
Harvey, it's okay, it's okay. What
you're feeling is normal...

HARVEY
I can't talk about my sex life...

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TRISH
I can't talk about mine either.

HARVEY
There's so much I don't understand...

TRISH
Sometimes it's better not to understand.

HARVEY
(a beat.)
My son Mark--he's a great kid--
my best friend in the world--he
moved down here...I wanted
to be near him so I moved here
also...solidarity...father/son...

TRISH
That's so...beautiful.

HARVEY
He's a beautiful son.

TRISH
You're a beautiful father.

HARVEY
And you're...

TRISH
Don't say it.
(a beat.)
Say it.

HARVEY
Say what?

TRISH turns away, upset.

HARVEY
You look like a tulip.

TRISH blushes. HARVEY takes her hand.

HARVEY
Trish...I can't afford to fail, not again...

TRISH
(a beat.)
I hate failure.

Josh Pollack

APA

A waiter refills the water glasses. HARVEY releases her hand.

HARVEY
(a beat.)

Marj and I met on a blind date.

TRISH
So did Bill and I...
(a beat.)

Harvey?

HARVEY
Yes?

TRISH
Have you ever been to Israel?

HARVEY
No...but it's...it's where I want to
be buried.

TRISH
(moved)
Oh, God, me too...

Josh Pollack

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

HARVEY and TRISH stroll over to her car, whose license plate reads, SOCCERMOM.
He kisses her.

APA

TRISH
Oh, my God, you're so not my
type...I don't know what's come
over me...

HARVEY
Love, Trish...Love!

INT. TRISH'S PLACE - NIGHT

TIMMY is in his bedroom, composing his bar-mitzvah speech:

TIMMY (V.O.)
"What does it mean to become
a man?" A bar-mitzvah speech
by Timmy Maplewood.
According to my brother Billy,
who's in college, becoming a
man means you are ready to
take on certain responsibilities.
For example: learning to stand
up for yourself and what you

believe in, even if it means everyone will make fun of you or say what you're doing is wrong or just plain hate you and put things up on the internet about you that are totally untrue, even if it means getting beaten up, your face smashed in, wedgied raw and hard or just plain tortured, even if it means being kicked out of school or arrested and put in jail.

If my father were alive..."

The front door to the house opens and TRISH walks inside. A car takes off outside.

TIMMY

Hi Mom.

TRISH

Hi Hon... Is Chloe in bed?

TIMMY

Yeah. But how come you're back so late? It's after midnight.

TRISH

Oh, Timmy... Timmy...

TIMMY

What?

TRISH

I'm in love.

TIMMY

(a beat.)

Really?

TRISH nods, sighs.

TIMMY

But you just met him!

TRISH

I know, but...

TIMMY

What's he like?... Is he like Dad was?

TRISH

Oh, no. He's totally different. Harvey's a... a real man.

TIMMY
But Dad was a real man also.

TRISH
Yes, but...I don't know how to
put this, but it's like...he has this
power...

TIMMY
What do you mean?

TRISH
I mean, like he just touched me,
touched my elbow, right here...
just like this...and...and...

TIMMY
And what?

TRISH
I got...wet...all over.

TIMMY
Just by touching your elbow?

TRISH
I know it's strange, and it's so
hard to explain, but...it's like...
felt things I never even knew I
could feel...

TIMMY
Like what?

TRISH
Like...like a tulip, just opening
her petals...

TIMMY
You felt like a tulip?

TRISH
Oh, my God! What am I saying?
How can I be talking about this
with you? What is wrong with
me? Cuckoo-cuckoo!

TIMMY
But Mom, why? Why can't you
explain?

TRISH
Because you're still a child.

Josh Pollack

TRISH

TIMMY
But I'm almost...almost a man!

TRISH
Ah! A man...

TIMMY
(a beat.)
Are you still wet?

TRISH
Oh, no...I dried myself with a
paper towel. Now come, let's
go to bed...

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

BILL is lying on his cot. The door opens. He rises.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

BILL walks out through the prison gates.

INT. BUS - DAY/NIGHT

BILL sits alone, dozes off.

DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. DAY - PARK

BILL is sitting alone on a park bench. In the distance he can see a couple lolling in the grass, a jogger, children on a jungle gym. All is tranquil...

INT. BUS - DAY

BILL wakes up, anxious.

EXT. MIAMI BUS TERMINAL - DAY

BILL emerges into the sunlight, suitcase in hand, and looks about.

EXT. STREET - DAY

BILL walks through a seedy neighborhood. He stops at a fleabag hotel, goes inside.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

BILL lies down on the rumpled bed. He turns his head, sees a pubic hair.

He looks through his wallet, finds an old APA ID card, some family photos, a faded gift certificate to any Loew's Theatre, and about thirty-five dollars.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

BILL searches through a phonebook. He dials the phone.

TRISH (V.O.)

Hello?...Hello?...

She hangs up.

INT. COMPUTER OFFICE - DAY

MARK WIENER is at his desk, he answers the phone.

MARK

Mark Wiener... Oh, hey, Dad.
How's it going?... Yeah... Yeah...
What?!... Wow!... No, I mean,
it's just so... fast! I mean... Yeah...
Oh. Okay... I see... That makes
sense... Well, let's talk later then...
Okay... I promise... Bye.

A COLLEAGUE stops by.

COLLEAGUE

Hot date?

MARK

No.

The COLLEAGUE smirks and moves on.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MARK sits at the bar, nurses a drink. He smiles at a woman who then looks the other way. A DRUNK MAN turns to him.

DRUNK MAN

Man, did anyone ever tell you you
were ugly?

EXT. CONDO COMPLEX - NIGHT

MARK pulls into his spot.

INT. MARK'S CONDO - NIGHT

MARK wolfs down some fast food, turns on his computer.

He logs onto a dating site. He scrolls down pictures of women seeking men, reads the ads.

He sees an ad of a sexy woman, her face blurred out. He types:

MARK (V.O.)

Dear Vulvalicious283,

I saw your ad and thought you looked really hot. I'm 30 and I work out every day. Would you be interested in going on a date with me?

Sincerely, BigJim75.

He sends off the e-mail.

EXT. AIRPLANE FLYING - DAY

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

JOY drops her luggage when she sees her mother, cries out "Mom!"

Oh, Joy!

MONA

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Mona's car speeds along.

INT. MONA'S CAR - DRIVING

MONA and JOY cruise along the highway. Her license plate/car sticker reads: "I H8 MEN."

MONA

The schmuck. All men are schmucks.

JOY

Really, he's not. We just need a little time apart...to...um...reeval-uate...

MONA

Wake up and smell the coffee!
He's a perv, through and through.
Born a perv, and he'll die a perv.

EXT. CASA RATON - DAY

The car passes security and drives into the condo complex.

INT. CAR - DAY

MONA has parked the car. JOY sees MONA sniffing.

JOY
Mom? Are you okay?

MONA
I'm sorry, it's just... Well, I know
it's sadness that's brought you
here, and I know I probably
shouldn't say this, but... I'm so
happy you're here... I've missed
you so much, you never visit,
and I know, who am I? But I've
been so lonely since that prick
your father left me...

JOY
Oh, Mom... But what about Trish?
Doesn't she...?

MONA
Trish has a life. She's got three kids,
a real job. And your other sister...
I'm sorry.

(wipes away her tears.)

Now come: you'll see: you're gonna
have a new outlook on things. And
you're never gonna want to go back
to New Jersey ever again.

EXT. A SHOT OF THE MOON - NIGHT

INT. MONA'S PLACE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

JOY rises from her bed, as in a trance.

INT. MONA'S PLACE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

JOY passes MONA sleeping in her bedroom.

INT. CONDO HALLWAY - NIGHT

MARK steps out to take out his trash, shove it down the garbage chute. Far down at the opposite end is a figure dressed in white, wraith-like, coming round a corner, approaching: JOY. She walks past him, barefoot, passes into an elevator, disappears.

INT. CONDO LOBBY - NIGHT

JOY walks past the security staff, who pay her no heed.

EXT. GOLF COURSE /TENNIS COURTS- NIGHT

JOY drifts across the desolate spaces.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

JOY crosses the road.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL - NIGHT

JOY walks across the parking lot.

INT. MCDONALD'S - NIGHT

JOY approaches the counter.

APA
CASHIER

Can I help you?

JOY

Yes, could I please have two Big
Macs and a large Coke?

CASHIER

Fries with that?

JOY

No, thank you.

INT. MCDONALD'S - NIGHT

JOY stuffs herself with the Big Macs.

ANDY suddenly appears.

ANDY

Um...Hi.

JOY

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A-andy!

ANDY
Can I join you?

JOY
Oh, please!...Please sit down!

He sits opposite her.

ANDY
I've missed you.

JOY
...Oh, God, Andy, I've missed you,
too!

ANDY
I felt so bad for what I did...

JOY
It was my fault...

ANDY
No, no, it was mine. I shouldn't
have.

JOY
(a beat.)
It must have taken a lot of courage.

ANDY
I dunno...I was just so sad...I don't
really remember much, it was so
long ago. But I think I must have
done it the right way 'cause I wasn't
really conscious of anything hap-
pening.

JOY
That's good.

ANDY
The plastic bag was probably key.
Without it...

JOY
Oh, that would have been horrible.

ANDY
Too horrible...

JOY
You could have ended up...

Josh Pollack

ATPA

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ANDY

A vegetable. I know.

JOY
(a beat.)

I always felt so guilty...

ANDY

No, you shouldn't have. I...Well,
I guess I just overreacted.

JOY

I should have married you.

ANDY

Really? Do you think you'd have
been happy with me?

JOY

It was a beautiful ashtray that you
gave me, my name engraved...
I should have...

ANDY

I shouldn't have spoken the way
I did. I should have let you keep
the ashtray.

JOY

That's okay... Things worked out
alright in the end, I mean...

Pause.

JOY

Do you miss...life?

ANDY

I dunno...I miss...I miss my room...
my laser disc collection. I spent
so many years...

JOY reaches out to caress his hand. Pause.

ANDY

I'm sorry I said you were shit
and I was champagne.

JOY

That's okay. The truth sometimes
hurts.

Pause.

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ANDY

Do you think we could have another go at it? I mean...like on a trial basis...

JOY

But Andy...I'm married.

ANDY

That's okay. No one has to know... It'll be our secret, just you and me... together...

JOY

I have so many problems, Andy... My husband and I...I don't know what to do...He's a...Oh, and I feel so betrayed, so...But still I...

ANDY

Sometimes cheating is good for a marriage.

JOY

No, don't say that! Cheating is wrong! Unfair! Hurtful...

ANDY

But one man...for the rest of your life...it's unnatural...

JOY

But being with you now would be unnatural, and I'm trying to improve things...

ANDY

(a beat.)

Tell me, Joy. Please...After all that's passed...Knowing all you know now... Do you wish you could have...been with me...before?

JOY

(a beat.)

No.

Pause.

ANDY

Eat shit, you fucking cunt. You think you're "improving" other people's lives? "Saving" them or "freeing" them from...from what? What do

you know about other people?
What?! You don't know shit. You
may think you do good in life, you
may think you're "sensitive" and
"kind"...that you spread peace and
love, that you make the world a
"better"--well, you're *wrong!* Be-
cause *you're* shit! And yes--*I'm*
still champagne!!!

ANDY vanishes.

INT. ALLEN'S PLACE - DAY

ALLEN wanders through the house; looks at photos of Joy and other mementos. He sits and stares at the phone, finally picks it up and dials. He has been drinking.

MONA (V.O.)
Hello?..Hello?..Is that you, you
fucking perv?
ALLEN
...Is Joy there?
Josh Pollack

MONA hangs up.

INT. ALLEN'S PLACE - NIGHT

APA

ALLEN rifles through his medicine cabinet, collecting vials of prescription pills. He is shaking and sweaty.

INT. ALLEN'S PLACE - DAY

ALLEN sleeps, fully dressed, while the phone machine answers the phone. A couple empty pill bottles rest on the night table, as do a couple empty bottles of vodka. A torn plastic bag partially covers his head, crumpled. A message is left:

KRISTINA (V.O.)

Hi...um...Allen? It's Kristina. I know
I said I wouldn't call you at home...
and I know I said I wouldn't spy
on you anymore, but...well, did
she leave? For good?...I know
I'm a terrible person for wishing
these things, but...well, I really
need to talk to you...just a little
conversation...a little chat...don't
worry...You know I know you
know you can trust me, Allen...
Oh, please answer the phone...

Please...Alright. It's okay if you don't today...but maybe tomorrow? or Wednesday? or Thursday? Or Friday? My schedule is totally open, but I have to be careful because of the police...They're after me, but I'm innocent, I didn't do anything wrong...But I know you know that. And you know I know you know...And I know only you can understand that. I know only you can understand what I'm going through...what pain and... and...Oh, Allen, if I don't see you soon...I'm not sure how much longer...

The phone machine cuts her off. ALLEN opens an eye.

EXT. OFFICE PARK - DAY

A beautiful day. Mild highway traffic.

INT. ALLEN'S OFFICE - DAY

ALLEN is working at his computer...barely. A COLLEAGUE suddenly swings by.

COLLEAGUE
Hey! How was your weekend?

ALLEN
Great!...Great!...

COLLEAGUE
You see the Lakers?

ALLEN
Oh, yeah!...

COLLEAGUE
(mimics scoring a basket.)
Incredible!

ALLEN's phone rings. He picks up, signals his COLLEAGUE to wait.

KRISTINA (O.S.)
Hello, Allen. It's Kristina...I know you asked me not to call you at work, but-

ALLEN
C-can you please hold on for a second?

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COLLEAGUE
(sympathetic; mouths this:)

The lady?

ALLEN nods.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

Allen, I can't wait any longer. I need you. I need you now...and Allen... I know you need me, too. I know it. You know it. And you know I know you know I-

ALLEN

Great! I'll see you later, then!

COLLEAGUE
(winking)

Or is it the "lady-friend"?

ALLEN forces some laughter for his COLLEAGUE after he hangs up. The COLLEAGUE makes some crude sexual hand gestures.

COLLEAGUE

Don't worry. It's all been recorded. The government knows everything.

He cracks up.

EXT. ALLEN'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

ALLEN is at the wheel, drinking.

EXT. ALLEN'S PLACE - NIGHT

ALLEN parks his car, aslant. He wobbles out, pauses by the house entrance.

KRISTINA emerges from behind some shrubbery.

KRISTINA

Hi.

INT. ALLEN'S PLACE - NIGHT

ALLEN and KRISTINA lie atop his bed, facing each other.

KRISTINA

Did you miss me?

ALLEN

Yeah.

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KRISTINA
Really?

ALLEN
Really.

KRISTINA
All those years I was locked up...

ALLEN
Yeah...

KRISTINA
But you never wrote to me! Every
day I waited for a letter, a sign from
you...and then I found out you got
married to that *WHORE!*

ALLEN
She's actually very nice. I think
you'd like her.

KRISTINA
Really?

Josh Pollack

ALLEN
Really. She's nice and kind...and
generous. She's anti-war, anti-
prejudice, anti-death penalty...
always trying to make this a better
world, and really...she's made me
a better person, a more compas-
sionate, more loving, forgiving...

ALLEN weeps. Pause.

KRISTINA
I'm sorry, Allen. I can be so pre-
judiced...and then when I never
heard from you...But now I un-
derstand. And to be dumped by
such a...nice person. Oh, God,
Allen...I so understand now why
you didn't want to speak to me
for so long. I'm sure I'd have
felt the same way if you'd been
the one who strangled Pedro the
doorman, snapped his neck, and
then chopped him up into pieces
so he could fit in your freezer--
even if it was self-defense...So
you don't have to explain your-
self. You're here. We're here.

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That's all that matters...

EXT. SYNAGOGUE/HEBREW SCHOOL - DAY

TIMMY suddenly comes running out of Hebrew School.

EXT. STREET(S) - DAY

TIMMY bikes furiously, tears streaming down his face, breathless.

INT. TRISH'S "OFFICE" - DAY

TIMMY runs inside, winded. TRISH looks up from her desk as she finishes up a phone call.

TIMMY

Mom?

Yes, Timmy?

TRISH

TIMMY

(catches his breath; then.)

Is Dad really dead?

TRISH

(a beat)

T-timmy!...Why are you asking me this now?

TIMMY

Adi Fleischer told me he found him on the internet. And that he was sent to jail in for raping young boys. And now everyone at school is saying my Dad is alive....and that he's a pedophile!

TRISH

(hugs her teary son.)

Oh, Timmy, Timmy...Shh...It's okay...

TIMMY

He said he was a faggot!

TRISH

Oh, Timmy...

TIMMY

And then he said I was a faggot!
And so...so then I...

TRISH

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Timmy, what did you do?!

TIMMY
(a beat.)

I didn't do anything. I just ran away.
Like a faggot.

TIMMY bursts into tears.

TRISH
Now Timmy. Listen to me: you
are not a faggot. And your father...

TIMMY
He's alive?

Pause. TRISH nods.

TRISH looks away. And he's a...?
TIMMY
Why didn't you tell me?!

Josh Pollack

TRISH
I don't know...I thought it'd be better
for you to think...to think maybe
he was in heaven...

TRISH

TIMMY
But I could have helped him!

TRISH
No! No one could help him. He
was beyond help.

TIMMY
Where is he now?

TRISH
Locked up. Up north. It doesn't
matter.

TIMMY
(a beat.)
Does Billy know?

TRISH
Billy's older...Billy's...in college...

TIMMY
(a beat.)

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I hate you.

TRISH

Timmy, please...Forgive me. You have to understand...I had to protect you! I wanted you to grow up free and happy!...As if he were dead!

TIMMY
(a beat.)

Fuck you, bitch.

He leaves the room. CHLOE peeks in from outside the room.

CHLOE

Mommy?

TRISH

Yes, Honey? Are you ready for me to take you to karaoke class?

CHLOE

I ran out of my Klonopin. Do you have any? I can have first?

TRISH

Of course, Honey. Go in my medicine cabinet.

CHLOE

Okay.

CHLOE goes to the bathroom. TRISH does her best to stay strong.

CHLOE (O.S.)

I can't find it!

TRISH

Then just take a half a Wellbutrin. They're on the bottom right, next to the Percoset.

CHLOE (O.S.)

Okay.

TRISH

You know what—just bring over the whole bottle!

TRISH breaks down.

EXT. TRISH'S PLACE - NIGHT

INT. TIMMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TRISH knocks on TIMMY's door. TIMMY does not look up from his pillow. TRISH enters the room.

TRISH

Sweetheart?...Timmy, I know how you must feel...Like I felt when I found out...like you were lied to. And yes, I did lie. But I lied to you because I loved you, because I wasn't going to let any harm come to you. Because you mean more to me than anything in the whole world. It's okay to cry. Crying is good.

TIMMY

What if I become one, though? I don't want to be a faggot. There's a kid in my Language Arts class and he's so gay!

TRISH

You won't, you won't. I promise.

They hug.

TIMMY

I'm sorry I called you 'bitch.'

TRISH

That's okay, Honey.
(rises to leave.)
Sweet dreams.

She leaves.

INT. TRISH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TRISH pops a couple pills, then TIMMY enters, in pajamas.

TIMMY

Mom...?

TRISH

Are you okay, Honey?

TIMMY

Yes...but I need to talk to you.

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TRISH

Uh-huh? Go on...

TIMMY

Well...what exactly *does* a man do to a boy when he's...raping him?...I mean, I know, of course exactly what you do with a girl and all...but with a boy...Where do things go?

TRISH

(hugs him.)

Oh, Timmy, Timmy...

Pause.

TIMMY

Please tell me...Really. I need to know...I'm almost a man!

TRISH

(a beat.)

Okay. I'll try... Well, you know how things are different between boys and girls...

TIMMY

Yeah.

TRISH

Well...they're the same between boys and boys.

TIMMY

Uh huh.

TRISH

So...it's like...it's like when Harvey touched me for the first time. On the elbow...That's all it takes, is a touch...just a touch can be enough...

TIMMY

You mean, if a man just touches me...

TRISH

No man should ever touch you.

TIMMY

But what if he does? Or by accident?

TRISH

Josh Pollack

APA

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You scream.

TIMMY
(a beat)

Adi Fleischer said pedophiles
stick their penises into your...tushie.
Is that what Dad did?

TRISH

Adi Fleischer doesn't know what
he's talking about. There are other
things that...Your father may have
been a pedophile but...he was
also a man...and a father...and some
things...

TIMMY

Oh, Mom! I don't want *anything*
ever to go inside me. Not ever!

TRISH

Oh, Timmy, Timmy... Don't worry...
Nothing, nothing ever will get inside
you, not so long as I'm around..

Josh Pollack

EXT. TRISH'S HOUSE - DAY

BILL stands outside, across the street, hidden behind a tree. He watches TRISH get into her s.u.v. and pull out of the driveway.

Once he sees that she is out of sight, he crosses over to the house, checks out the back, finds an unlocked sliding glass door, opens it.

INT. TRISH'S HOUSE - DAY

BILL wanders around the empty house. He sees a karaoke set-up; a platter of cookies; a stray Rubik's cube; real estate notebooks; Twister; video games; a menorah. He stops to pause before photos of Trish, Billy, Timmy, and Chloe.

He walks in Timmy's bedroom, then Billy's. Inside the latter he sees papers, envelopes, and notebooks cluttering a desktop. Some weed stashed in a drawer. Condoms. He rifles through the papers, searching...He finds a college curriculum guide. A copy of *Oliver Twist*. He sits down on Billy's bed, leans back.

DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. PARK - DAY

Same as earlier, only now a boy (OLIVER)--the one illustrated on the cover of *Oliver Twist*-- appears in the distance, heading his way.

INT. TRISH'S HOUSE - DAY

BILL awakens from his daydream. He takes a college brochure; spots some loose change, but resists taking it.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

It is a very high-end affair.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

BILL sits in a corner, nursing a drink. He sees a couple leave a generous tip on their table. He is considering stealing it when the WAITER suddenly scoops it up.

JACQUELINE, a striking woman "of a certain age", is sitting at the bar. She looks over at BILL and makes eye contact with him, then slinks over to his table. She has long nails.

JACQUELINE

Mind if I join you?

BILL

Please.

She sits.

JACQUELINE

Forgive me, but...please tell me you're straight.

BILL

I am.

JACQUELINE

Oh, thank God!

She signals a waiter to bring over another drink.

JACQUELINE

So what're you doing here all alone?

BILL

Work.

JACQUELINE

You like your work?

BILL

It pays.

JACQUELINE

Good. So we don't have to talk about it.

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BILL
Are you alone?

JACQUELINE
Married, alone...same thing.

BILL
No. Alone is alone.

JACQUELINE
(a beat.)
I'm good at reading people,
you know.

BILL
What do you read now?

JACQUELINE
Well, You're a man. And you're
alone. And you're straight. That's
enough for me.

BILL
You are good.

JACQUELINE
My first husband was a fag.

BILL
(a beat.)
Must've been hard.

JACQUELINE
The only man I ever loved.

BILL
What happened to him?

JACQUELINE
Stuff.

BILL
(a beat.)
Any kids?

JACQUELINE
Not anymore. Just a pack of
wolves.

(a beat.)
And they're out for blood.

BILL
How so?

JOSH POLLACK

APA

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JACQUELINE
They've decided I'm the villain.
I'm a monster.

BILL
Why do they think that?

JACQUELINE
'Cause I *am* a monster.

BILL
People can't help it if they're
monsters.

JACQUELINE
They can't be forgiven either.

BILL
(a beat.)
Have you asked for forgiveness?

JACQUELINE
I'm not a fool. If I were them, I
wouldn't forgive me, either. In
my family there are only winners
and losers.

BILL
And only losers ask for forgive-
ness?

JACQUELINE
Only losers expect to get it.
(drinks.)
Your room have a view?

BILL
(a beat.)
No.

JACQUELINE
Same here. Anyway, who the
fuck needs one?

BILL
Why do you feel that way?

JACQUELINE
What are you? A shrink?

Pause. JACQUELINE is upset. BILL caresses her hand.

JACQUELINE
I need more than a caress.

INT. JACQUELINE'S HOTEL ROOM SUITE - NIGHT

BILL and JACQUELINE make love. Perhaps she cries out, "Thank you! Thank you!"

LATER: CAMERA pans from JACQUELINE asleep in bed to BILL in the bathroom. He is looking at himself in the mirror as he puts on his shirt. He pauses to examine the scratch marks that streak his face, neck, back.

BILL glances over to see that JACQUELINE is still asleep, then lifts her wallet from the dresser.

JACQUELINE

How much do you need?

(BILL freezes.)

It's okay. I understand. It was hard work. I'm old.

(no response.)

I've got more in my pocketbook. Take it all.

BILL takes all the money he can find, pauses.

JACQUELINE

What are you looking at?

BILL looks down.

JACQUELINE

Don't start pretending like you care. Like I'm *not* a monster. Like I still have a heart that...shit...

She breaks down.

BILL

Forgive me.

JACQUELINE

Fuck off, prick!

BILL leaves.

EXT. "TULIP" RESTAURANT - EVENING

MARK is standing waiting out front. He sees a WOMAN standing, approaches her.

MARK

...Um...Vulva-?

The WOMAN turns away, creeped out. ANOTHER WOMAN appears, MARK tries again.

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MARK
...Vulvalicious?

ANOTHER WOMAN
Pookie...

MARK
...Mark...Wiener.

He shakes hands.

INT. "TULIP" RESTAURANT - EVENING

MARK and POOKIE sit together at dinner.

POOKIE

I know I really should change my
screen name... It used to be more
neutral, just my age and sex and
the word "friendly", but then I got
a lot of really scary men...

Pause.

MARK
I'm really glad you didn't leave when
you saw what I looked like.

POOKIE

Me too.

MARK
(a beat.)

I read an article about how they deep
freeze the tuna here before serving it,
so there's no bacteria.

POOKIE
(a beat.)

You're really good at conversation.

MARK
Thanks. I actually took a course at
the Continuing Ed Annex. It really
helps you with being natural and
engaging.

POOKIE
I know. I...I took the same course.
Except I did it on-line.

MARK

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Gee, it really works.

MARK laughs unnaturally, then cuts it short. They look away. Pause.

POOKIE
You have nice fingernails.

MARK
(a beat.)
Thanks.

MARK looks at Pookie's fingernails, but they're all chewed up, so he says nothing.

EXT. BAR/CLUB - NIGHT

MARK and POOKIE get out of their cars and walk inside.

INT. BAR/CLUB - NIGHT

MARK and POOKIE dance to a pop song.

INT. CONDO HALLWAY - NIGHT

MARK leads POOKIE to his place. They go inside. JOY passes by in the b.g., in a trance.

INT. MARK'S PLACE - NIGHT

MARK and POOKIE stand by his bed. They kiss. Then:

MARK
Pookie, there's something I feel
I should tell you.

POOKIE
What's that?

MARK
I mean, before anything goes too
far.

POOKIE
What?...

MARK
I have a younger sister. Her name
is Missy.

POOKIE
Uh-huh...

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MARK

Well...she thinks I molested her little baby daughter. They tried putting me on trial, but the case was thrown out. There wasn't enough evidence. There wasn't any evidence. But the papers had already done their number on me...I just thought you should know first, before you get too involved or anything.

POOKIE

What did you do?

MARK

Nothing. I'm not guilty.

POOKIE

I mean, what did she accuse you of doing?

MARK

(a beat.)

Sticking my finger inside the baby's vagina.

POOKIE

(a beat.)

Which finger?

MARK

(a beat.)

Right index.

POOKIE

Oh...

MARK

It's 'cause she knows I'm right-handed.

POOKIE

I'm right-handed also.

MARK

(a beat.)

It's hasn't been easy. I mean, I had to move away, away from my home, Jersey...my...start a new "life" down here...And I didn't even do anything wrong!... But everyone--almost everyone... I'm just lucky I had a father who

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stood by me, believed in me...

POOKIE

(a beat; comforts him.)

I was once raped...almost.

MARK

I've never been raped.

POOKIE

Sometimes 'almost' is worse than
the real thing.

MARK

(a beat.)

Anyway, I just feel it's important for
you to know the facts.

POOKIE

(a beat.)

But why the index?

MARK

I dunno. I may never know. My
sister is a very sick woman.

POOKIE

Well, thank you...for sharing.

MARK

Also, I don't have Herpes.

POOKIE

(a beat.)

I do...but it's dormant now.

MARK

(a beat.)

Umh...genital?

POOKIE nods. She is upset. He takes her hand.

MARK

I read they're really close to a
cure.

POOKIE

I don't think so. I mean...

MARK

Really, it's only a common viral
infection. And I think it's estimated
that 80 million Americans have it.
Really, this is a battle you can win.

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I've done research on this. Just
in case. Is it...tingling now?

POOKIE
(a beat.)

I should go.

MARK
Oh. Did I say something...?

POOKIE
No, no...

MARK
'Cause I thought we were really...
um...

POOKIE

I know...

MARK
(a beat.)

My father just met someone on
a blind date... They're gonna get
married... Just like that...

POOKIE
(a beat.)

Forgive me.

She leaves.

INT. TRISH'S PLACE - TRISH'S BEDROOM - DAY

TRISH and HARVEY make love.

INT. TRISH'S BEDROOM - LATER - DAY

TRISH and HARVEY lie down, spent. He lights up, passes her a cigarette.

TRISH
Fuck family. Fuck motherhood.
Fuck the kids. I just don't care
anymore.

INT. TRISH'S BEDROOM - LATER - DAY

HARVEY is getting dressed.

TRISH
What I said before...about the kids

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and family and...I didnt' mean it.

HARVEY

I know.

TRISH
(a beat.)

Love really can change a person.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

JOY and TRISH sit at a table.

TRISH

Oh, Joy. I'm so happy to see you.

JOY

I'm so happy to see you, too.

TRISH

And you know something?

JOY

What?

TRISH

(a beat.)

You look good.

JOY

Really?

TRISH

I mean it. You've put some meat on your bones. You used to look so peaked all the time, I thought maybe she's got some rare blood disease, but Trish, I said, leave her alone, she's old enough, if she wants to be "vegetarian" to prove some "point"...Oh, golly!...So? Are you back to red meat?

JOY

No.

TRISH

Well, even so--God knows how, but that "tofu" is working, girl!

JOY

Thanks. You look good, too.

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TRISH
You know what my secret is?

JOY
What?

TRISH
I met someone.

JOY
Really! That's great!

TRISH
And...

JOY
And...?

TRISH
We're getting married.

JOY
No!

TRISH
The kids haven't met him yet, so
provided they like him...

JOY
Oh, Trish...

TRISH
Billy I'm not worried about, but
Timmy and Chloe, they're...
they're still children...

JOY
I know...

TRISH
But it's a secret still. No one knows.
Not Helen. Not even Mom.

JOY
I promise I won't tell a soul...but
don't you think you're maybe
rushing things a bit? I mean, men
are...I dunno...and after Bill...

TRISH
Bill was *totally* different.

JOY
Still-

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TRISH

No! The past is the past. Dead, gone, wiped my hands, forgotten. It's got nothing to do with me. Or the kids. We live in Florida now.

JOY

I'm sorry.

TRISH

Now Harvey, on the other hand... well, he's not very attractive, he's older, he's not even very well off... He's divorced--poor thing had a horrible, horrible wife...But he's Jewish, he's pro-Israel--he voted for Bush, but only because of Israel, he knows the President's an idiot, don't worry--and he's totally family-oriented. A real *mensch*. Joy...I need this to work.

JOY

Have you...?

TRISH nods.

JOY

And was it...?

TRISH

Like Hiroshima. I mean...

JOY

Oh, Trish. I'm so happy for you.

TRISH

Thanks. Me too...Oh, but you! What about you? You haven't told me a thing!

JOY

Oh, I'm fine...

TRISH

How's Allen?

JOY

Oh, fine, fine...Just don't listen to Mom. Really, everything's the same...Fine...I just needed to get away for a bit, a little me-time...

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TRISH

What about your work with the ex-cons? How's that going?

JOY

Oh, fine, fine...God, I miss them already!

TRISH

But my God, working with those criminals and...rapists...I don't know, Joy...don't you ever think about working with victims? Good people?

JOY

Not all criminals and rapists are bad, Trish.

TRISH

Well, I don't know what your dictionary says, but it's pretty clear in mine. Oh, but I'm sorry, I don't mean to criticize. It's your profession... and I respect that...I just couldn't do it. You're a saint. Really.

JOY

Really, it's just a job.

TRISH

You know, Joy, there's something I've never told you...I guess, being the older sister, sibling rivalry and all...but now that we're so much more bonded...well, I've always believed deep down--and so did Mom and Dad and Helen, we discussed it all so many times--when you got married to Allen we all thought you were so...brave.

JOY

But...why?

TRISH

(a beat.)

I may as well confess: I've known everything. We all have. In detail. Allen's... "problem"...His...And how you tried so hard to cure him... so he could be normal...and how you thought he eventually was cured...as if...Oh, Joy, you know there are no secrets in the family.

And you especially...you must know by now you've always been an open book...But you seemed so *desperately* happy, and we all so *desperately* wanted you to be happy...and it seemed like if it wasn't Allen...well...I'm sorry, I'm so sorry...But it's important we be open with each other and...Joy, you're a beautiful woman...even if you're past your...and I mean, I really think--from the bottom of my heart--you should just drop him, drop your job, drop everything and move to Boca. Down here... it's easy to forget...everything... and start all over. Like me! Fresh! As if you were still young! I mean, what will you miss? What really matters outside of family? Friends come and go...A job is just a job... Shopping, food, TV--everything same here as anywhere else... Oh, please don't take this the wrong way, Joy! It's just I love you so much!

JOY'S UNLACK

She hugs JOY.

INT. MONA'S PLACE - DAY

APPA

JOY enters, sees EVANGELINA the maid painting MONA's fingernails.

MONA
Joy? Is that you?

JOY
Yeah. Hi.

MONA
Did you have a nice lunch with Trish?

JOY
Oh, yeah. It was nice.

MONA
You have no idea how much your sister loves you.

JOY
I know.

MONA

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People can make fun of her all they like, but you know something? She keeps it real.

JOY

Yeah.

MONA

It's not like your sister Helen, who doesn't talk to us anymore since she started seeing that movie star.

JOY

Oh, Mom. Don't get so upset. I'm sure it's just a phase...

MONA

I've already written her out of my will. I don't want her to have anything. You and Frish, that's all.

EVANGELINA rises.

EVANGELINA

Esperate un ratito, ok?

MONA

Gracias, Evangelina.

MONA touches EVANGELINA's hand. She disappears.

JOY

(a beat.)

Mom...

MONA

Yes?

JOY

When did you first realize things weren't...right...between you and Dad? I mean, like was it after being married...five years? or ten? twenty...?

MONA

(a beat.)

The wedding night.

JOY

W-what happened?

MONA

Oh, Joy...Why do you want to know such things?...What's past

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is past...

JOY

Please, Mom...

MONA
(a beat.)

What can I say?...It was horrible.

JOY

What did he do?

MONA

I probably should have told you
when you were young, but I was
afraid it would...damage you.

JOY

Tell me...please...

MONA

Well...I was only 19 then, maybe
20...I looked a little like Paris Hilton
back then...

Josh Pollack

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Paris Hilton plays MONA as a young newlywed. She looks at herself in the mirror, dressed in a nightgown.

MONA (V.O.)

I was so young and innocent...so
nervous and excited...and I'd never
been with a man before, I didn't
know what to expect. I was like
you, more focused on doing good,
civil rights, marching with Martin
Luther King, protesting Vietnam...

BACK TO MONA:

MONA

But then I met your father, and
he was so handsome then, so
cute, just like that singer who's
gay, oh, what's his name, Evan-
gelina knows...

(calling)

Evangelina? Quien es ese cantante-?

EVANGELINA(O.S.)

Ricky Martin!

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MONA

That's it!

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ricky Martin plays her husband as a young man. He lies on the bed in his pajamas.

MONA (V.O.)

Anyway, I figured he was nervous,
too. I don't think he had very much
experience, either.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

YOUNG MONA is still standing in front of the mirror.

MONA (V.O.)

So I just stood there, looking at
myself in front of the mirror, and
imagining what it would soon be
like to be...touching him...in places
I'd never touched...and never seen...

INT. MONA'S PLACE - DAY

EVANGELINA turns on the vacuum cleaner.

MONA

Come. I don't want to disturb
Evangelina.

She leads JOY into

INT. MONA'S BEDROOM - DAY

MONA closes the door behind them, they sit down.

MONA

So.

Pause. JOY sees MONA getting upset.

JOY

It's alright, Mom. You don't have
to...

MONA

It's okay...

INT. NEWLYWED SUITE - NIGHT

YOUNG MONA approaches the bed, pauses to smile at him.

MONA (V.O.)
So I came into the bedroom...
and I saw him under the covers...
He looked so cute I had to stop
and just look at him lying there...

YOUNG LENNY
Mona?

YOUNG MONA
Yes, Lenny?

YOUNG LENNY
Can you take off your nightgown?

YOUNG MONA smiles, blushes, "Oh, Lenny...", and gets under the covers next to him.
She kisses him.

INT. MONA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Josh Pollack

MONA
I knew it was time to step it up,
take it to the next level, that this
was it...but I thought kissing him
would be enough. I mean...Joy,
I didn't know anything! No one
had told me...I didn't come from
a healthy and nurturing family like
what I made for you and your
sisters...Well, then all of a sudden
I felt something...

BACK TO THE HONEYMOON SUITE - NIGHT

YOUNG LENNY has pulled back the sheets.

YOUNG MONA
W-what's...?

YOUNG LENNY
Do you like my little friend?

YOUNG MONA
L-lenny, what are you doing?

YOUNG LENNY
Please, Mona...Give him a little
kiss.

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YOUNG MONA

Kiss...what?

YOUNG LENNY

"Hello Mona...!"

MONA screams and runs off, back to the bathroom, where she is heard vomiting.

INT. MONA'S BEDROOM - DAY

MONA

I never felt so...disgusted...so humiliated...I mean, that...*thing!*...No one should ever have to...

INT. YOUNG MONA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

YOUNG MONA watches YOUNG LENNY from the slightly open door.

MONA (V.O.)

...And then next thing I did I peeked back in, I thought maybe I was just overreacting a little...but then I saw him lying on the bed...and he was moving, I thought maybe he had an itch, something...but he was *humping!* Humping my pillow!

BACK TO MONA

talking to JOY.

MONA

And that's when I realized: He doesn't want to make love to me. He wants to just use me to satisfy his own...it's like I'm no different from that pillow. It could have been the mattress. Or the the bed post. Just hump and... All the years I had to scrub the stains he left on the carpeting, the car seat, Nana's needlepoint...

QUICK MONTAGE OF MONA CLEANING STAINS.

MONA (cont'd)

Now I'm sure there must be men out there--men who really love women, who love, period...but

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it wasn't my fate to marry one.

JOY

(a beat.)

How did you ever end up having...
sex?

MONA

I shut my eyes...and I thought of
the future...A mother makes sacri-
fices.

JOY

So there never was...pleasure?

MONA

It was forty years of rape. Every
time...brutalized. But when I look
at you and Trish and even Helen
who I don't speak to anymore, it
was worth it.

JOY

Oh...

MONA

Sex should be a beautiful thing...
But then your father had to ruin
it all.

JOY

You mean, because he has a...

MONA

Penis. Yes. A penis.

JOY

But Mom...

MONA

Did you ever see his penis?

JOY

Um...no...

MONA

Just the memory of it...its size...
its force...I'm lucky I'm alive.

JOY

I...I never knew...

MONA

And it's only because the size of

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my heart is bigger than the size
of his penis that I am here today.

JOY
(hugs MONA.)

Oh, Mom...

MONA

Your father was a disgusting man.
Perverted, sick...Scum. Oh, God...
(a beat; pulls away from JOY.)
Still, he's your father and you should
love him.

JOY
(a beat.)

So now you think maybe I *should*
go back to Allen? Be more under-
standing?

MONA

No, Honey. Cut your losses. Better
to be selfish...like your sister Helen...
than giving and loving like me.

EXT. AIRPLANE FLYING - DAY

EXT. LOS ANGELES - HELEN'S PLAGE - DAY

JOY gets out of a taxi and walks up a path to the front door, carrying her luggage. HELEN
appears. They hug as they cry out each other's names.

EXT. L.A. RESTAURANT - EVENING

HELEN and JOY sit opposite each other, in the garden.

HELEN

Oh, God...I'm so happy to see
you...so happy you found me...

JOY

Me too.

HELEN

I'd been feeling so guilty...

JOY

Oh, but really, Helen, you didn't do
anything wrong...

HELEN

I know, but still...

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JOY
Everyone understands.

HELEN
I know, and I forgive them, but
even so...

JOY
Cutting ties with Mom, Dad... Trish
especially... It must have been hard.

HELEN
It was. Really, I can't tell you...

JOY
I missed you, but...

HELEN
It's alright. I understand. And I for-
give you.

JOY
I just felt bad, I mean... when I
couldn't reach you, 'cause you
were unlisted...

HELEN
I had no choice. Oh, and Joy, I can't
tell you how many times I thought
about calling you...

JOY
Really?

HELEN
But I was too guilt-ridden.

JOY
Oh, Helen... and all this time we all
thought you were just ashamed of
us, of being related to us, like it
would ruin your career or something...

HELEN
Ashamed?! Joy, how could you
think I'd-?!

HELEN pulls a handkerchief from her purse.

JOY
I'm sorry. I should have had more
faith. We all should have been more
understanding.

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HELEN

I was going through a very intense time...I'd given up on poetry. It'd become too...too easy. I felt like I was being crushed by the...*enormity* of my success and...and I was afraid...But you know something: turns out writing a good screenplay is a much harder--and purer--process. But people don't realize...

JOY

(a beat.)

Still, it must, at least, be neat going out with...Keanu.

HELEN

There is nothing 'neat' about it.

JOY

I'm sorry. That was a stupid thing to say.

HELEN

It was fucking idiotic.

JOY

You're right.

HELEN

(a beat.)

And I mean, like, we're a country at war now!

JOY, startled, takes this in, hangs her head. They sip at their cappuccinos. Suddenly Helen's cellphone rings. She looks at it, reads the caller ID, doesn't answer it.

HELEN

Uch. Salman. He needs another fatwa.

(she signals to the waiter for the check.)

So: how long do you plan on staying out here?

JOY

I dunno. I thought maybe if I could stay with you just till I got my life together...

HELEN

How much time are we talking?

JOY

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I dunno. I'm sure I could find a job within a couple of months...or weeks, *days*...if I really set my mind to it..

HELEN

What are you going to do out here?

JOY

Try working with ex-cons again. I've had a lot of success with penitentiaries back east, and California, well, there are so many prisons here, so I thought...

HELEN

And if that doesn't work out?

JOY

Oh, anything, really. Anything's fine.

HELEN

Anything.

JOY

Yeah. Anything...Say, do you know Joni Mitchell? I've heard she lives out here, and she's someone I've always thought I'd really connect with, like she'd really *get* me, you know? Maybe she could give me some advice.

HELEN

(a beat.)

Can I give you some advice?

JOY

Please!

HELEN

(a beat.)

No. Actually I have no advice for you.

HELEN takes out her credit card, hands it with the check to the waiter.

JOY

Did I say something wrong?

HELEN

No. Why?

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JOY

Then why do you still have to
make fun of me?

HELEN

Make fun?

JOY

Yes!

HELEN

I'm not...

(a beat; upset)

Oh, God, please, Joy... I try, I really
do... But you... Keanu... everyone
thinks I mock them, that I'm cruel
and condescending... that I have
no heart... and it's really hard... It's
hard on me... 'cause I really do love
you... I do... and I know how you
didn't come all this way and hurt
me down for nothing, now you
really just want my advice on men
and marriage and Allen and why
nothing ever works out and you
feel like a total loser, the self-dis-
gust, the self-loathing, life has no
point, it's over, you're basically
dead, blah blah, blah blah, blah
and you think maybe I have the
answer, but Joy, I'm only human!

JOY

(a beat.)

I'm sorry, it's my fault, I shouldn't
have...

HELEN

It's okay. I'm used to it. I can take
it... but thanks.

Recovered, HELEN signs the check, takes back her credit card.

INT. HELEN'S PLACE - NIGHT

JOY listens to the distant lovemaking sounds of HELEN and her lover. ANDY appears,
starts undressing.

ANDY

Sorry about before. It's just I'm
off my medication and... Really, I
didn't mean what I said.

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JOY

What are you doing here?

ANDY

I dunno. I saw you all alone and I thought...

JOY

(a beat.)

What?

ANDY

Well, just listening to Helen and Keanu...I couldn't help thinking...

JOY

What?

ANDY

What about you and I spend the night together...just like old times!

JOY

But we never spent the night together before. Old times—we never did anything. I wouldn't let anything happen.

ANDY

But wouldn't you like to change things? Change the past? Fix everything like it could have been? Done the *right* thing?

JOY

Oh, Andy...

HELEN is heard climaxing.

JOY

(a beat.)

Do you think Helen's happy?

ANDY

Yes.

JOY

I think she's faking it.

ANDY

Sometimes just pretending can be better than the real thing.

JOY

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Oh, but I hate pretending. Everyone pretending...

ANDY

I'm sorry.

He slips into bed beside her.

JOY

Imagine a world where no one pretended...

Pause. JOY kisses ANDY. He gasps. Pause. She pulls away, upset.

JOY

Please forgive me. I tried. But I just can't fake it.

JOY weeps. Then suddenly ANDY lunges for her, grappling to make love to her. Finally she manages to throw him off and onto the floor.

ANDY

Sorry. Bad aim.

He disappears.

INT. TRISH'S KITCHEN - EVENING

CHLOE watches TRISH chopping up some greens for a salad. She is wearing rubber gloves.

CHLOE

Mommy?

TRISH

Yes, Honey?

CHLOE

Do you think baby greens feel pain?

The doorbell rings.

TRISH

Timmy, can you get the door?

INT. TRISH'S FRONT FOYER - EVENING

TIMMY opens the door. He sees HARVEY standing there with tulips, MARK beside him.

HARVEY

Hi! Harvey Wiener! Nice to meet

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you! You must be Timmy...

TIMMY looks at HARVEY's extended hand, shakes it politely, if formally.

TIMMY

Nice to meet you.

HARVEY

And this is my son Mark...

TRISH appears, CHLOE in tow, and hugs HARVEY; more handshakes, greetings, laughter.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

TRISH, HARVEY, MARK, TIMMY, and CHLOE are seated around the table eating.

HARVEY
Mmm! This chicken is fantastic!

TRISH
Really? It's not too dry?

HARVEY
Are you kidding? And the *sauce!*

Josh Pollack

TRISH
It's Israeli style.

CHLOE
Mommy, the baby greens--they're looking so sad...

HARVEY
Pass 'em over! I'll cheer 'em up!

The salad is passed.

TRISH
Chloe is studying karaoke after school. Her teacher thinks she has a lot of potential.

HARVEY
I bet!

TRISH
Would you like to sing for Harvey after dinner, Chloe?

HARVEY stabs a lettuce leaf. CHLOE runs from the table, in tears. TRISH gestures to ignore the incident.

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TRISH

It's the Klonopin. She's on a new dosage.

HARVEY

Oh.

TRISH

So Mark, what do you do?

MARK

Systems analysis.

Pause.

TRISH

Sounds interesting!

MARK

It is to me, actually, in the same way reading tax return instructions can be for the autistic. But I have no illusions that what I do is of any interest to anyone else, even amongst specialists. I'm something of a functionary, but without ambition, or even hope of ambition. I plateaued in grad school, then lost interest, except in maintaining a base salary adequate to financing a low-overhead subsistence.

TRISH

Are you seeing anyone?

MARK

No.

HARVEY

He used to go out with this really great gal Naomi, she won a Westinghouse, I think, in-

MARK

Dad. Please. That was...so long ago. And it never even went anywhere.

HARVEY considers what to say, but then says nothing. Pause. TRISH tries to help:

TRISH

You know, Mark, I work in real estate and there are lots of girls who would give their right arm to

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go out with someone like you:
someone settled and serious, a
real class act.

HARVEY

You know, she does know what
she's talking about here.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

TRISH and HARVEY gaze at the moon and stars. He put his hand on her elbow. TIMMY
looks up from his gameboy. MARK stands off to the side. CHLOE gazes off, hollow-
eyed, perhaps caressing a leaf.

TRISH nudges HARVEY.

TRISH
(referring to TIMMY.)

Talk to him.

HARVEY
(approaches TIMMY.)

So, Timmy. Your Mom tells me
you're gonna be bar-mitzvah'd
soon.

Yeah.

TIMMY

HARVEY

I remember my bar-mitzvah.
(a beat.)

You remember yours, Mark?

MARK

Yeah.

TRISH

Timmy's preparing a special
speech--a *dvar torah*. Isn't that
right?

TIMMY

Yeah.

HARVEY

What's the topic?

TIMMY

It's on becoming a man.

HARVEY

Interesting!

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TIMMY

But really the focus is on forgiveness. Like when you're supposed to forgive someone, even if you don't want to. Things like that.

HARVEY

Like forgive and forget?

TIMMY

Well, like for example...say I punched you in the face. If I said I was sorry, would you forgive me?

TRISH

(a beat.)

Well, of course he would. But why would you do such a thing?

TIMMY

That's not the point, Mom.

HARVEY

I understand: Yes, I would forgive you...but I think I'd ask for an explanation!

TIMMY

So that you believe I'm really sorry?

HARVEY

Well...Look, like I said, I'm sure I'd forgive you...but I'm not sure I'd forget!

A little laughter.

TIMMY

But let's say, for example, a terrorist blows up your office building. Do you still forgive?

TRISH

God forbid!

TIMMY

But what if the terrorist had a good reason?

TRISH

Terrorists by definition do not

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have good reasons!

TIMMY

But what if your family were
killed and tortured, wouldn't you
want to do something about it?
To protect others?

HARVEY

Timmy, these terrorists are...evil.

TRISH

And cowards!

HARVEY

They're not like you and me.

TRISH

Are you saying you'd forgive the
9/11 terrorists?

TIMMY

Well, of course, you can't forgive
these terrorists. They're dead!

Pause.

MARK

If it's possible to forgive and forget,
or to forgive and *not* forget, when
would you forget, but not forgive?

HARVEY

Hmm. Good question, Mark.

TIMMY

(a beat.)

I think it's possible someone does
something really terrible to you,
like really horrible, something that
hurts you so bad it's so painful...
maybe then it's better to forget
and live without all that pain instead
of forgiving and remembering.

INT. FRONT FOYER - NIGHT

HARVEY and MARK are saying their final good-byes as they walk out the front door.
TRISH closes the door behind them.

TRISH

So what did you think?

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CHLOE
That Mark seemed so sad. Like...
like he'll always be a nerd, no
matter what.

TIMMY
Yeah, but I liked him. He seemed
interesting. He gave me his e-mail,
in case I ever get a computer
virus.

TRISH
But what about Harvey?

CHLOE
He's old, Mommy.

TIMMY
Yeah, Mom. He seemed nice
enough—but I'd really have to
talk one-on-one with him. And
really, I don't know how long he's
got to live.

JOSH POLLACK

INT. MARK'S PLACE - NIGHT

MARK sits and stares at his computer. Finally a twinkling sound from the computer.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN (DIALOGUE IS TO BE READ AS IT'S TYPED):

BIGJIM75: Hey.

VULVALICIOUS283: Hey. (emoticon 'smile'.)

BIGJIM75: I'm glad you didn't delete me.

VULVALICIOUS283: Who is this?

BIGJIM75: Mark Wiener.

VULVALICIOUS283: ('addled' emoticon.)

BIGJIM75: We had dinner last week.

BIG JIM75: Remember?

VULVALICIOUS283: Oh. Yes. Sorry. I got you confused with someone else.

BIGJIM75: I had a really good time.

BIGJIM75: It's too bad about the TIVO.

BIGJIM75: ...Hello? Pookie?

VULVALICIOUS283: I should tell you: I have certain needs. I don't want to waste your
time or my time so I may as well tell you them. But it's not easy, because I'm so consumed
with shame. ('frowning' emoticon.)

BIGJIM75: Go on.

VULVALICIOUS283: Well, see, I have these fantasies...

VULVALICIOUS283: I...

VULVALICIOUS283: ('bashful' emoticon.)

BIGJIM75: Please tell me...('a hug' emoticon.)

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

MARK and POOKIE walk along the beach.

POOKIE

...Alright, I don't know why...but I trust you. And I trust my instincts... And there's no wiretapping here... and I...I like you...So:...I imagine I'm pulling into my carport. I've just come back from a late night at work...

INT. CARPORT - NIGHT

POOKIE gets out of her car, locks it, walks into the building.

POOKIE (V.O.)

I stop for a second, 'cause I think I hear a sound, a footstep... but then there's just silence, and so I go into the building...

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

POOKIE stands by the elevator.

POOKIE (V.O.)

I wait for the elevator, and I'm feeling a little unclean, a little sweaty, I just want to get into my apartment and take a shower. I think I hear footsteps again... but it's just the security guard. He smiles at me, but he's gay, it doesn't mean anything.

The elevator comes.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

POOKIE emerges from the elevator, goes to her apartment door.

POOKIE (V.O.)

I'm kind of in a bad mood, because I'd thought someone was following me, but there's nobody.

INT. POOKIE'S PLACE - NIGHT

POOKIE undresses on her way to the bathroom.

POOKIE(V.O.)

One of the things I like to do--and it's what I most like about living alone--is that I get to do a kind of slow striptease whenever I feel like it. I take off my blouse, my skirt, my heels, everything just falls wherever it lands, I take off my bra, everything, it feels so good to take everything off, no one's here, no one's watching, it's just me, I'm all alone, I rub my hands all over myself, I feel so free, so relaxed...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

POOKIE takes a shower.

POOKIE(V.O.)

Everything feels so fresh and clean, it's almost religious, like... like God is peeing on me, and I'm tingling and alive all over...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

POOKIE lies naked on bed.

POOKIE(V.O.)

And then I just lie there, as if I'm just waiting...and that's when I hear the door to the apartment open...and the footsteps again. I am a little scared, my heart starts racing...My eyes are closed but I can hear breathing...

EXT. BEACH - DAY

POOKIE and MARK still walking. Children build sandcastles in the b.g.

POOKIE

It's this man, he's a soldier, a marine... and he's throwing me down and tying me up and I feel drops of sweat and saliva splattering all over me...and next thing I know he's in-

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side me, and he's big and hard and it hurts and I ask him to please stop and he tells me to shut up and he pounds away at me, thrusting, thrusting, deeper, deeper till finally I black out...Mark.

(a beat.)

I want to be raped.

MARK

You mean, in your fantasy?

POOKIE

Well, yes...but then I wish it could be a reality. But of course I don't *really* want to be raped. Oh, God, I feel ill, I'm so ashamed.

MARK

But really, Pookie, there's nothing to feel ashamed about. That makes no sense. Rape is a very common fantasy, totally normal—despite what certain people say. Really, I know what I'm talking about. I've read a lot about this. You're okay.

POOKIE

I guess...but then I didn't get to the strange part. See, when I open my eyes, I see what the man looks like...He's like totally passed out...

POOKIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

POOKIE looks to her side, takes a peek at the face of her sleeping bedmate:

POOKIE (V.O.)

...And then my eyes wander down...to his hands, his fingers... his nails. They're clean enough, but they're long. I rub my hands, my body against them. And then I grab some nail clippers...and I cut them...one at a time...and afterwards...

BACK TO THE BEACH - DAY

MARK and POOKIE have stopped.

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MARK

...Yes?

POOKIE

I come.

MARK
(a beat.)

I don't get it.

POOKIE

Oh, I knew you wouldn't. No one does. No one *can!*

She bursts into tears. MARK looks at his nails.

MARK

Do you want to cut my fingernails?
Is that it?

POOKIE
(nods.)

But first I need you to rape me...
Oh, it's so hard to talk about this
on a first date, I thought maybe
you'd think I was strange or...I'm
glad you asked me out again. I
thought, when you didn't pounce
on me, force me to stay, try to
rape me...like most men...I
thought maybe you weren't
interested...or you were gay...

MARK
(a beat.)

I'll see what I can do.

INT. MARK'S CAR - EVENING

MARK is driving. POOKIE watches him.

EXT. POOKIE'S PLACE - NIGHT

They park the car and walk inside.

INT. POOKIE'S PLACE - NIGHT

MARK and POOKIE enter, then pause.

POOKIE

Okay. I'm gonna go into my bed-

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room and take off all my clothes,
and then lie down naked on my
bed. As soon as I call you, just
come into my room and...

MARK

Okay.

POOKIE

(hands him an army jacket.)

And here. Put this on.

She goes to her room o.s., leaving MARK alone. He puts on the jacket, then looks around,
sees a bowl of nuts, takes one, eats it.

POOKIE(O.S.)

Ready!

A beat. Then MARK slowly walks into

INT. POOKIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

POOKIE lies naked on her bed. MARK stops and stares. Pause. He looks away.

POOKIE

...Mark?

MARK

I can't rape you.

POOKIE

(a beat.)

Why not?

MARK

I don't know...and the thing is...it's
always been my fantasy. What
I've always wanted to do...Tie
and gag...stripped naked...help-
less...and now that I can...I don't
want to...hurt you. At least, not in
real life.

POOKIE

You won't hurt me. You'll make me
happy.

MARK

But if you want me to rape you...
then it's not rape.

POOKIE

But I'll be all tied up, without

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any escape...I'll be screaming,
"No! No! Please, no!" It *will* be
rape, I promise!

MARK

I dunno, I dunno...

POOKIE

But I know, / know...

MARK

Oh, but why? I mean, why...What
am I? Where did this come from,
this...?

POOKIE

It's all just pretend, Mark...

MARK

But my needs...are real...and un-
fillable...and humiliating...

POOKIE

But there's nothing to be ashamed
of, Mark. It's who you are, it's who
I am...No one chooses what he
desires.

MARK

No, and my desires are pointless.

POOKIE

Your desires *are* the point.

MARK

The point of a horrible joke. Cosmic,
annihilating...

POOKIE

But pleasure, Mark...and joy...

MARK

I know, and I know there's no logic...
but there it is: I feel only shame...
and it...I see people looking at me,
and I know what they see, and it's
not pretty...and it's not nice...I eat
my meals quickly...and alone...so
no one can see how hungry I am.

POOKIE

(a beat.)

What if I just cut your fingernails?

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MARK

I'm sorry...

POOKIE

But what about me? I opened myself up...I...I told you *everything!* I've never...

MARK

I'll forget...everything...quickly.

POOKIE

No...no...

MARK

I'm sorry...

POOKIE

Don't do this to me...Mark!

MARK pauses.

Josh Pollack

POOKIE

I know you didn't do anything to that baby. I know your hands are clean...I-I!

MARK

Forgive me.

APA

He takes off his army jacket and leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

MARK closes Pookie's door behind him, starts walking, then pauses, as if stricken, to lean against a wall for support. But he continues on.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

MARK shuffles past the nightwatchman.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

MARK arrives at his car, unlocks the door, pauses. Behind him, in the far distance, POOKIE plunges from her balcony. MARK looks behind, sees nothing, gets in the car.

ANGLE ON POOKIE

lying dead by the pool, a note pinned to her top. It reads: "Forgive me."

INT. MARK'S PLACE - NIGHT

MARK turns on the light, walks into his apartment. He finds HARVEY asleep on his bed, a bottle of vodka tipped over on the floor.

HARVEY rolls over, wakes up, sees MARK.

MARK
Are you okay, Dad?

HARVEY
Oh, I'm sorry...

MARK
Don't get up. I'll fix you some coffee.

MARK goes to his stove, turns on the coffeemaker.

HARVEY
Ohh...I just thought I'd wait...I had your spare keys...I didn't mean to...

Josh Pollack

MARK
It's okay. Stay there.

HARVEY
I'm such a fool...I'm such an idiot...

APA

MARK
Stop it. You're not making any sense.

HARVEY
Trish said she'd come over this evening, we were going to go out...

MARK
Yeah...?

HARVEY
But then she didn't show up at the restaurant...and I waited and waited...I called her at home, no answer, I called her cellphone, I left a message on her voice-mail...

MARK
So something came up. This happens to me all the time.

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HARVEY

No, but that's not it!...I mean, it turned out she'd gone shopping and there was a bomb scare at the Toys 'R' Us...her daughter Chloe swallowed some wrong medication...her cellphone ran out of power and...everything's fine now.

MARK

So what's the problem?

HARVEY

I'm not such an attractive guy, Mark, I know that. We're kind of alike in that way...But now...now I'm old. And I'm alone...And I'm not like you. I've never been alone... I don't know how to *be* alone...I don't know if...if things don't pan out with Trish...

MARK

You'll be okay. She likes you. It's obvious.

HARVEY

Nothing's obvious to me anymore. Live long enough and you realize you really don't know anything... anyone...

MARK

Well, I know. She loves you.

HARVEY

(a beat.)

You think so?...You know, she's smart, a lot smarter than she seems...

MARK

(hands him the coffee.)

Here. Drink up.

HARVEY

Thanks.

MARK

I just had a pretty rough evening also.

HARVEY

What happened?

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MARK
(a beat.)

I think I may have fallen in love.

HARVEY

But that's...that's great!

MARK

No...I think I may have blown it. I
always fuck things up...I just didn't
know how to...

HARVEY

I'm sure if you call her tomorrow
whatever happened...it'll all blow
over.

MARK

I dunno...

HARVEY

Well, I know. She loves you.

MARK

Don't say that! You haven't even
fucking met her! You don't know
shit!

HARVEY

(a beat.)

I'm sorry.

MARK

It's just...I really want this to work
out.

HARVEY puts his arms around his son. MARK cries. Pause.

HARVEY

(he drinks up the coffee.)

Mark...

MARK

Yeah?

HARVEY

I happened to notice when I went
to the bathroom before...

MARK

What?

HARVEY

You've got a lot of...magazines

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there...you know...

HARVEY winks.

MARK

Yeah...?

HARVEY
(a beat.)

If I ask you a question, will you
answer me the truth?

MARK

Go on...

HARVEY

I mean, look me in the eye and
tell me the whole truth?

MARK

What is it you want to know?

HARVEY

I've never asked you this before...
but now that there's Trish...and
her kids...

(a beat.)

Did you do anything to Missy's
baby?

MARK just stares at him, speechless. Then he rises, leaves the room, shuts the door
behind him. HARVEY hurries after him, leans against the door:

HARVEY

Oh, God, Mark, I didn't mean...
Forgive me, please forgive me!
Forget I ever said anything! I'm
a fool! I'm an idiot!...

INT. ALLEN'S PLACE - DAY

ALLEN and KRISTINA sit on the floor eating cookies and milk.

ALLEN

So how did you get out of jail?

KRISTINA

Oh, Allen...it wasn't easy.

ALLEN

Tell me.

KRISTINA

Well...jail was horrible...from the first day when...

INT. PRISON CELL/CORRIDOR - DAY

KRISTINA is escorted inside the cell. Her cellmate ASHLEIGH doesn't acknowledge her.

KRISTINA (V.O.)

I tried being nice to my cellmate, introducing myself, making friends, I mean, after all, might as well make the best of things...but Ashleigh... well, Ashleigh was just so...unfriendly.

ASHLEIGH spits at her.

BACK TO KRISTINA AND ALLEN

JOSEPH PULLACK

KRISTINA
She just called me... Oh, I can't say it... Names can be so terrible—worse than sticks and stones, I don't care what people say! Just to hear that name...

ALLEN
Lard-ass?

APPA

KRISTINA
How did you know?!

ALLEN
When I was a kid I was chubby... so I know. People are cruel.

KRISTINA
Oh, Allen, yes, it's true...but still... I like to—I *need* to believe in...well... the goodness in people's hearts...
(a beat; has a cookie.)
Anyway, what really bothered me most was the fact that I don't even eat meat anymore. I'm vegetarian—except for red meat, which is good for the complexion. But Ashleigh didn't care. She just wanted to hurt me...

ALLEN
Go on...

KRISTINA

Anyway...so there I was in prison and I thought I might as well try and make the best of things--you know, I've always been very positive thinking...

INT. PRISON GYM - DAY

KRISTINA works out.

KRISTINA (V.O.)

The prison had a fitness program--which was actually very good, one of the best in the country, in fact--I lost fifty-three pounds on it...

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

KRISTINA studies at a table.

Josh Pallack

KRISTINA (V.O.)

...and then I started doing a lot of reading in the prison library--really, there's so much to learn!...And so I did a lot of studying...

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

APA

KRISTINA receives an envelope at mail delivery. She opens it and pulls out a graduation certificate.

KRISTINA (V.O.)

...and I ended up getting a degree in marketing and communications from a mail correspondence school. I felt really proud, like I was making really big strides as a person, and next thing you know I started making friends with...

INT. RECREATION HALL - DAY

MONTAGE: KRISTINA laughs, gossips, jokes, plays Monopoly with her friends. Together they sing a pop song.

KRISTINA (V.O.)

...Fawn and Selena and Ruthette. We'd sometimes laugh or gossip, be silly or sing old songs...It was a real bonding experience...

BACK TO KRISTINA:

KRISTINA

We realized that we had *all* had horrible childhoods, and that each of us had murdered someone special: a father, a boyfriend, a child, a puppy...Pedro the door-man...But they were all so loving and caring. It really taught me something about forgiveness. You know, in a certain sense, when I look back on it, it was the happiest time of my life...

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

PRISONERS play basketball, work out, lounge about. KRISTINA jumps rope, ASHLEIGH lifts weights.

KRISTINA (V.O.)

Well, one day when we were outside I noticed Ashleigh looking a little suspicious, like she was up to no good...I started slowly walking over, when all of a sudden...

ASHLEIGH pulls something out of her pocket, tosses it, and there is an explosion. Lots of smoke. Chaos. Sirens.

BACK TO KRISTINA

with ALLEN.

KRISTINA

Oh, Allen, I was so scared, everything happened so fast, there was smoke, pandemonium, gunfire... next thing I knew I was with Ashleigh, climbing through some hole she blasted in the prison wall, and when we got to the other side we just ran all the way to freedom.

Pause.

ALLEN

Something's missing...I mean, didn't you say you and Ashleigh weren't...What happened to

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Ashleigh?

KRISTINA
Ashleigh...Allen, I can't...

ALLEN
Was there...an accident?

KRISTINA nods.

ALLEN
Is Ashleigh...in one piece?

KRISTINA looks away. Pause.

KRISTINA
The truth is...Ashleigh and I had become... 'special' friends. Fawn, Selena, Ruthette... No one knew. But every night after lights out she'd sneak under my nightie... I just pretended it was a squirrel, all cute and fuzzy... Oh, I'm so ashamed. But it's what I had to do in order to survive!

ALLEN
It's okay. Go on...

KRISTINA
Anyway, so we ended up hiding out in some woods. I used to be a Girl Scout, so I knew a thing or two about survival, but after a few days of cold and hunger, Ashleigh...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

KRISTINA and ASHLEIGH sit by a campfire. ASHLEIGH is shivering.

KRISTINA (V.O.)
Well, it was hard for her... She became so weak... That was when she started opening up to me, and she told me how her sister was a soldier who'd been killed by terrorists in Iraq, blown up, her torso never found...

AHSLEIGH
Camel fuckers!

BACK TO KRISTINA

upset.

KRISTINA

My heart almost broke...And then things took a turn...She developed a fever, stopped making sense...

BACK TO THE WOODS

where ASHLEIGH trembles at death's door:

ASHLEIGH

Pussy...Need pussy...

KRISTINA

Come, just hold tight to me...If we can just make it through one more night...

KRISTINA (V.O.)

But she couldn't. Her heart suddenly stopped beating...and then she was...dead.

BACK TO ALLEN AND KRISTINA

ALLEN

So she died from the cold?

KRISTINA

Yes...and...

ALLEN

...And?

KRISTINA

A broken neck. I'm sorry, Allen, please forgive me...but I couldn't bear to watch her suffer anymore. And then I didn't want the wolves to eat her...so after I...snapped it... I just folded her up, like a chair, and burned her to a crisp...then...

ALLEN

Yes?

KRISTINA

Ground her up. Like cinnamon...

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

KRISTINA throws ASHLEIGH's ashes into a mud pond.

KRISTINA (V.O.)

Poor Ashleigh...Deep deep down inside, underneath all her layers and layers of meanness...she was a good person, with a good heart. I think I let her...do the disgusting things she did to me...

BACK TO ALLEN AND KRISTINA:

KRISTINA

...Because she reminded me of you.

(a beat.)

Allen...if Ashleigh could do what she did to me, I'd...I'd let you do what you wanted also. No matter how much it disgusts me...I'll take my clothes off--all of them--right now. I don't care. I'm not ashamed. It's just a body...no matter how...

If you want to put anything of yours into anything of mine...if you want to...rub or...or...anything...With love there are no boundaries.

JOSEPH JACK
ALLEN

Pause. The telephone rings.

ALLEN

Sorry...

(answers the phone.)

Hello?

SPLIT SCREEN: ANGLE ON JOY

in bed at Helen's.

JOY

Allen?

ALLEN
(a beat.)

Hey.

JOY

Hey.

(a beat.)

How are you doing?

77

ALLEN
Okay. What about you?

JOY
Okay...I miss my ex-cons. Have
any of them called?

ALLEN
(a beat.)
No.

JOY
Oh.

ALLEN
So where are you?

JOY
Helen's...

ALLEN
Is Keapu there?

JOY
Yeah. In the other room. With
Helen.

ALLEN
Neat. **APA**
JOY

There's nothing 'neat' about it..
and I mean, like, we're a country
at war now!

ALLEN
(a beat.)
Yeah...Sorry.

JOY
It's okay. I mean...Who am I? I
mean...Oh, Allen...I've been
thinking and I think, I really think
we can work this through, I really
do.

ALLEN
I dunno...

JOY
I mean, maybe I should just be
more open-minded.

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ALLEN

No, no...

JOY

I mean, the more I think about it,
the more I see it all as...like a cry
for help.

ALLEN

I don't think so...

JOY

I mean, like...like a plea for under-
standing.

ALLEN

No, no, not that...

JOY

I mean, if I had paid you more
attention, instead of my ex-cons...

ALLEN

No, really, they deserve more
attention.

JOY

It's like...I realize now...It's people
like me who...

She starts crying.

ALLEN

Oh, Joy, Joy...Please...Really,
it's people like you who...who
make it even possible for...people
like me...

JOY

I'm sorry, it's just I feel I've been
so stupid and so close-minded
and conservative and unbending...
just because you have this "problem,"
which isn't even your fault, you
were probably born this way...

ALLEN

You know, sometimes it's good
to be close-minded about certain
things...I mean, just because you're
conservative and unbending doesn't
mean you're wrong.

JOY

Josh Pollack
APA

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(a beat.)
You know, you're right. I just never realized...If I'd really been open-minded...but I guess I never really was...Can you forgive me?

ALLEN
(a beat.)
What are you wearing?

JOY
Right now?

ALLEN
Uh huh...

JOY
You mean...

ALLEN
Uh huh.
JOY
You want me to...take off...?

END SPLIT SCREEN: the CAMERA pans over past ALLEN to find KRISTINA, then zooms in close on her face as she listens:

ALLEN (O.S.)
(a beat.)
Oh, God, no! No, it's just talking to you now...now you're not here... near me...next to me...I feel closer to you now than...I don't need anything...nobody--Joy, I love you. I love you. I love you...

EXT. SHOT OF AIRPLANE FLYING - DAY

EXT. JOY & ALLEN'S PLACE - DAY

JOY, carrying her luggage, walks up to the front door, takes out her keys, opens it.

INT. JOY & ALLEN'S PLACE - DAY

JOY enters, sees KRISTINA sitting at the kitchen table. Pause.

JOY
Who are you?...W-what do you want?

80

KRISTINA
I'm Kristina, and...and...
(starts crying.)
I-I'm sorry. I'll leave...

JOY
Oh, no, no! Please! Stay! I...I
just didn't..

KRISTINA
No. I should go...

JOY
But where are you going to go?

KRISTINA
I don't know. Jail...

JOY
Now don't be silly. I'm not going
to call the police.

KRISTINA
Allen was right. He said you
were really nice.

JOY
H-how do you know Allen?

KRISTINA
Allen and I...we were involved
in a relationship for about ten
years. But it's over now. To-
tally over...Here, why don't
you sit down and I'll get you
a glass of water.

JOY sits, KRISTINA fetches a glass of water.

JOY
But how did you even...?

KRISTINA
We used to be neighbors,
years ago.

JOY
But how...I mean...?

KRISTINA
I'm sorry, Joy. This must be so
very painful for you.

81

A bell goes off, KRISTINA hurries over to the oven.

KRISTINA
Sorry, that's just a little something
I've been cooking all day...

JOY
But I don't understand...

KRISTINA
Allen called me, all upset...He
told me you'd left him, that it was
all over...and so I came over,
moved in. It was hard for him...

JOY
It's true. Allen does need profes-
sional help and I...I'm not a profes-
sional. But I thought just a little tic
and maybe...Are you a...?

KRISTINA
No. I just have a degree in marketing
and communications. But Joy, don't
worry. It's all over between us.
It's you who he really loves. Me,
I was just...a temporary thing. I
really just came...to say good-bye.

JOY
I understand...and thank you.
(a beat.)
So what are you cooking? It smells
interesting.

KRISTINA
Oh, it's just some...stuff...from the
freezer. I just let things thaw, then
made a stew of it, added some...
cinnamon...

JOY
Mmmm.

KRISTINA
Here, let me get you a plate.

JOY
Oh, no, no, really, I couldn't.

KRISTINA
Please. I don't want to eat alone.
I just can't..

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JOY

But I'm veg-
(a beat.)
I'm sorry. Of course, I'll join you.

JOY tastes the stew.

JOY

Mmm...What is this?

KRISTINA

Oh, just a little of this 'n that..

JOY

(digs in.)

It's really tasty.

KRISTINA

Thank you...

(a beat.)

Joy?

JOY

Yes?

KRISTINA

Are there sometimes things you
feel you can't ever forgive?

JOY

Gee, I dunno. Sometimes I sup-
pose we all get upset and say
and do things we regret after...
like running away from someone
who loves you and...but really,
no. Deep down in my heart I
believe in "forgive and forget."

KRISTINA

But what about things like, I dunno,
rape and murder.

JOY

Even then, *especially* then, I
think it's imperative that we all
stick together. The death penalty
is a horrible, dehumanizing thing
and, I mean, after all...we're all
only human.

KRISTINA

(a beat.)

You're so nice it's unreal.

83

JOY

No....Only human.

KRISTINA

But some people are more human than others. I...I wish I were more human.

JOY

Don't say that, Kristina. You're more human than you realize.

KRISTINA

No, no, really I'm not.

JOY

You are. Trust me. I have a lot of experience with people. I work with ex-cons.

KRISTINA

Technically I'm not really an ex-con. I'm a fugitive.

JOY

That's okay. I understand. I know where you're coming from. I've been there.

KRISTINA

(a beat.)

Well, it's true, maybe deep deep down inside me there's a nugget of something not so horrible...In fact, I was thinking maybe now I could do some good. Real good... like maybe...sign up with the Army. Join the troops in Iraq. Be a real help...but I can't because I'm a fugitive.

JOY

I bet you could, though. I know they make exceptions. They do for lots of illegals...They're desperate for bodies.

KRISTINA

Really?

JOY

Really! I may be totally against the war in Iraq, but I will always support our troops.

JOY reaches out and holds KRISTINA's hand. Pause.

KRISTINA
There's something first I feel I
should tell you, Joy.

JOY
Yeah?

KRISTINA
It's about Allen...

JOY
Go on...

KRISTINA
Well, last night...well, I'm usually
not this way...but I think I lost my
temper a little last night...over-
reacted...

JOY
What happened?

KRISTINA
Well...Really, I'm normally not
a very jealous person, I mean,
who am I?... But for some reason...
I dunno. He touched a...a "button."
Everybody has buttons, I know,
but...well...I guess I'm just a little
too sensitive...jealous...

JOY
That's okay. Jealousy is only
human...

QUICK FLASHBACK MONTAGE:

- 1) KRISTINA flies at ALLEN and breaks his neck.
- 2) KRISTINA hacks his body apart.
- 3) KRISTINA grinds/purees him up in a blender.

BACK TO JOY AND KRISTINA
in the kitchen.

KRISTINA
Thank you, Joy. Thank you for

being...so nice to me.

JOY gives her a hug, and the CAMERA pulls away.

INT. TRISH'S HOUSE: DINING ROOM - EVENING

CHLOE is performing karaoke for TRISH and HARVEY: "Suicide is Painless." TIMMY sits to the side. Everyone applauds and compliments when it's over. Then:

TIMMY

Mom, could I please have a moment alone with Harvey?

TRISH

Why...yes. Sure!

HARVEY

Of course!

TIMMY

Please follow me.

HARVEY rises, follows TIMMY.

INT. STUDY - EVENING

HARVEY and TIMMY sit down.

TIMMY

My Mom says you're planning to marry her.

HARVEY

Well, one step at a time. We'll see how things go.

TIMMY

You mean, my Mom is wrong? You're not planning to marry her?

HARVEY

Timmy...I love your mother very much...

TIMMY

So are you getting married?

HARVEY

I hope so. We both hope so. A lot of that depends on you.

TIMMY

86

(a beat.)
You know, while my brother's
away at college, I've been the
man of the house.

HARVEY
I know. Your mother's told me.
She's very proud of you.

TIMMY
If something doesn't meet my ap-
proval, it's up to me to decide
what to do.

HARVEY
That's a lot of responsibility.

TIMMY
You know I'm almost thirteen.
You don't have to talk to me
like I'm still a child.

HARVEY
I'm sorry.

TIMMY
(a beat.)
I have some questions for you.
If you lie, I'll find out, and I won't
let you go through with the mar-
riage.

HARVEY
I won't lie, Timmy. I'm an open
and honest person.

TIMMY
What's your salary?

HARVEY
I can't tell you.

TIMMY
Okay. That's fair.
(a beat.)
Have you ever had sex with a
man or boy?

HARVEY
No.

TIMMY
Not a single time?

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No. HARVEY

Okay. TIMMY

(a beat.)
If you met a pedophile, what
would you do?

HARVEY
Timmy, I would never...

He reaches over to rest a hand on his shoulder. TIMMY stiffens.

TIMMY
Take your hand off me.

HARVEY
Timmy, I know where you're
coming from, and I want you to
know now I would never... Oh,
dear God, you poor...

HARVEY has drawn TIMMY into an embrace. TIMMY screams.

TRISH hurries into the room, sees TIMMY hysterical, HARVEY kneeling on the floor.
TIMMY runs over to TRISH. TRISH and HARVEY exchange looks: it's all over between
them now.

DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. PARK - DAY

Same as earlier, only now we are focused on BILL's face, experiencing sexual pleasure.
After he calms down, we discover OLIVER raising his head from BILL's lap.

OLIVER
Please, Sir...Could I have some
more?

BACK TO REALITY: INT. MOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

BILL awakes in a cold sweat.

BATHROOM - NIGHT

BILL stands undressed, looking in the mirror. He picks up a scalpel. A bottle of rubbing
alcohol. A towel. We watch his face as he prepares to perform some surgery. Done, hands
bloodied, he drops the severed body part into the toilet, and flushes.

INT. A COLLEGE DORM LOUNGE AREA - NIGHT

BILLY MAPLEWOOD and some DORMMATES lie around in a circle, semi-undressed, smoking pot, drinking. WANDA is finishing up a story:

WANDA

...See, like, my Dad had this drinking problem--which is like totally genetic--his father died at like 43 from alcohol poisoning...Anyway, so like every time things didn't go well at work, he'd get plastered, come home, and punch out my Mom, like it was all *her* fault or something.

DORMMATE #1

Are they still married?

WANDA

Yeah. Still "in love."

DORMMATE #2

Even though he...

WANDA

YES!!!

DORMMATE #2

Woe...That is like so totally fucked.

DORMMATE #3

Yeah.

WANDA

I know....So Billy. It's your turn.

BILLY

I dunno...

WANDA

Come on. This is, like, a competition!

DORMMATE #3

Yeah!

DORMMATE #1

Who comes from the most fucked up family?

DORMMATE #2

Whose parents are the most fucked up?

BILLY

Really, I can't compete.

Josh Pollack

APA

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WANDA
Billy, you're so weird, don't tell me
you don't come from a fucked up
family.

BILLY
Really, my father died. But that's
it.

DORMMATE #3
Was it suicide?

BILLY
No...

WANDA
Alright then, it looks like I win.

Yeah.
Yeah, your family's the most fucked
up.

Josh Pollack

DORMMATE #3
DORMMATE #2
DORMMATE #1
Yeah, but even so, I think I'm the
most fucked up.

APA

WANDA
You are not. I am.

Everyone is laughing. BILLY rises, starts walking away.

WANDA
Billy, where are you going?

DORMMATE #2
Yeah, don't leave!

DORMMATE #1
Come on, Billy....

WANDA
Please stay...We're just having
fun...

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

BILLY walks alone amongst some dormitories.

INT. BILLY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

BILLY enters his room and lies down. A gay Bush/Cheney parody poster hangs on the wall.

There is a knock at the door. BILLY opens it, sees BILL. Pause.

BILL
(barely audible)

Billy.

BILLY

Come inside.

He comes inside.

BILL
I needed to see you.

BILLY
How did you find me?

BILL
Stopped by your Mom's.
(BILLY is aghast; a beat.)

She was out. The house was empty.

Pause.

BILLY
You want a Pepsi?

BILL
Thanks. Diet. If you have.

BILLY gets him a Pepsi. BILL downs it.

BILLY
One more?

BILLY gets him another. BILL drinks it.

BILL
Thanks. I needed that.
(a beat.)
So how's school?

BILLY
Okay.

BILL
What's your major?

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BILLY
Anthropology.

BILL
Planning on grad school?

BILLY
Probably.

BILL
Get into research?

BILLY
Yeah, maybe. I'm doing a paper
on homosexuality in the animal
kingdom. I've read a lot about the
bonobo monkey. They share like
98% of the human genetic profile.
But they substitute sex for aggres-
sion, and regularly engage in incest,
father-daughter, father-son, mother-
son. It's a very peaceable lifestyle.

BILL
Hmm... Are you gay?

BILLY
No.

BILL
Sure? **APPA**

BILLY
Yeah.

BILL
(a beat.)
So you like women.

BILLY
Yeah.

BILL
I mean, *really* like women?

BILLY
Yeah.

BILL
Do you fantasize stripping them?
Fucking them? Raping them?

BILLY
Well, not rape, not really.

JOSH POLLACK

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BILL
No rape fantasies?

BILLY
No...no, I don't think so.

BILL
(a beat.)
Can I have one more?

BILLY gets him another Pepsi. BILL downs it, gestures for still one more.

BILLY
Why didn't you ever write?

BILL
I didn't think it would be a good
idea. Your mother and I...

BILLY
She told everyone you were
dead.

BILL
She was right.

BILLY
I went along.

BILL
Good. That's good.

BILLY
It's good you didn't write. It's
good you were dead.

BILL
I tried to forget...and then I tried
to remember. And I couldn't.

BILLY
Me too.

BILL
Forgive me.

BILLY
There's nothing to forgive. I mean,
it's all unforgiveable.

BILL
(a beat.)
They did a lot of work on me.

93

Oh? BILLY

Rehabilitation. BILL

Did it work? BILLY

I took medication. BILL

And that worked? BILLY

That and... BILL

And what? BILLY

There's nothing to worry about anymore. I mean, no... the problem's gone. One quick stroke...

...One...? BILLY

Like a capon. A gelding. BILL

They... BILLY

I. Myself. Really the only "cure."
I'm much better now. Now I can do no wrong. Now I can...now I can say I love you...and not have to worry...

BILL rises to leave.

I just had to come and see that you wouldn't...become me. Cases...people like me...Genetically speaking, I'm lucky. I mean, we're lucky: it's a recessive thing.
(a beat.)
I tried to stay the course...Three kids...

BILLY
You should've cut and run.

BILL
But you know, when you were
born...and I held you...so tiny...
the future looked so...possible...

BILL finishes up a last Pepsi.

BILLY
Please don't go.

BILL
Just keep pretending, like before.
If you pretend enough...
(a beat.)
Thanks for the Pepsi.

And he leaves. Pause. BILLY rises, suddenly rushes out the door.

EXT. BILLY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

BILLY runs, stops, looks about: no sign of his father.

INT. SYNAGOGUE - DAY

APA

TIMMY stands at the lectern and sings his *Haf Torah*.

TRISH, BILLY, WANDA, CHLOE, MONA, EVANGELINA, HELEN, KEANU, and JOY
sit in the pews up front.

INT. SYNAGOGUE HALL - DAY

Guests dance or clap to the music. MONA and EVANGELINA get down. Women
surround KEANU. TRISH flirts with the rabbi, who has his eyes on HELEN. JOY sits, eyes
glazed, despondent. ANDY appears beside her, fondling her while perhaps whispering,
"forgive me, forgive me..."

JOY is horrified. She rises and hurries away from the table.

INT. SYNAGOGUE LADIES ROOM - DAY

JOY enters and bursts into tears. ALLEN suddenly appears.

ALLEN
You're the only one who's ever
cried for me.

95

JOY

Allen!

ALLEN

Please don't stop crying.

JOY

(hugs him.)

Oh, I'll never never never stop!!!!

ALLEN

Oh, Baby...

JOY

Oh, Sweetheart, I'd do anything
for you, anything, anything in the
world, you know I would!

Really...?
Really Tell me!...Anything! Any-
thing!

Josh Pollack

ALLEN
(a beat.)

JOY

ALLEN
(a beat.)

Would you kill Kristina? And
then chop her up into pieces
and feed her to the dogs?

(JOY is too shell-shocked to speak.)

Would you do that for me?

JOY

B-but what about...? I mean...

ALLEN

What about what?

JOY

But I thought...Love...Compassion...
For...

(ALLEN is stony-faced; a beat.)

She seemed like such a nice
person...Who would have...?

ALLEN
(a beat.)

I'll never rest until I see that fat mo-
therfucker slaughtered like a pig.

ALLEN breaks down and weeps. JOY consoles him.

96

ALLEN

Oh, Baby, Baby...We were so
fucked over!...

JOY

Hush...

(a beat.)

Allen...Did you meet any angels?

ALLEN

Yeah, sure...I mean, lots...Also met
some U.S. soldiers from Iraq. One
of them missing a torso. Not happy.

JOY

But the angels...Do they think this is
the right thing to do? An eye for an
eye?

ALLEN

(nods; a beat.)

Then comes forgiveness.

ALLEN disappears

Josh Pollack

INT. SYNAGOGUE HALL - DAY

CHLOE wanders about amidst the revelers, searching for TIMMY.

EXT. SYNAGOGUE SIDE ENTRANCE - DAY

BILLY and WANDA are smoking. CHLOE appears.

CHLOE

Have you seen Timmy?

BILLY shakes his head.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

The synagogue is nearby, as is a strip mall. A few mothers/nannies watch their children play with the swings, the sandbox. MARK sits apart, near a sign that reads, "Adults not permitted entry unless accompanied by a child." He is sucking on a candy stick.

TIMMY, in his bar-mitzvah outfit, approaches.

MARK

Hey.

TIMMY

Hey.

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TIMMY sits beside him.

MARK
Congratulations on becoming a
man.

TIMMY
Thanks...and thanks for coming...
and meeting me here.

MARK
(a beat; offers him an extra candy stick.)
Want one?

TIMMY
(takes it.)

Thanks.

Some KIDS on bicycles ride by, shouting "Faggot!" A STRAGGLER passes by, shouting
"Nerd!"

TIMMY notices some band-aids on a few of MARK's fingers.

TIMMY
What happened to your fingers?

MARK
I was cutting my nails, tried to...
fucked up...

TIMMY
(a beat.)
I'm sorry I made a mistake...I
mean...Even if your Dad is a pe-
dophile...He should be allowed
to get married.

MARK
He's not a pedophile.

TIMMY
Yeah, but even if he is...

MARK
He's not.

TIMMY
(a beat.)
I know. I'm sorry.

MARK
Forget about it. It's over.

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TIMMY

What if I...?

(a beat.)

My father visited my brother up at college a few weeks ago. They hung out for a little while, and then he left...disappeared, nobody knows where...My Mom thinks he's probably lying somewhere dead in a gutter--and for real this time...But *he* wasn't a pedophile, either! He wasn't, he wasn't...

TIMMY, in tears, buries his face against MARK's chest. MARK caresses him, holds him close.

TIMMY

I'm sorry I screamed...It was still before my bar-mitzvah. I was still just a boy. I was scared. A coward! Please...please forgive me...

MARK

I will. Forgive and forget...

POOKIE appears, embraces MARK. He sees her hand, turns around, but she is gone.

* * * * *