

ONE COOKS. THE OTHER DOESN'T

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Prod. #211016, 5116

A Lorimar Production  
for the CBS Television Network  
3970 Overland Avenue  
Culver City, CA 90230

REVISED FINAL DRAFT

January 5, 1983

PLEASE NOTE:

The majority of changes in this revised draft are either technical or reflect a number of necessary name changes (Please see the following list of characters).

A new opening TITLE SEQUENCE to precede scene 1 will follow shortly.

ONE COOKS, THE OTHER DOESN'T

CHARACTERS

MAX BOONE

JOANNE BOONE

TRACY BOONE

BENJAMIN BOONE (Formerly Alex Boone)

DANNY

STEWART

FRED DUNBAR (Formerly Frank Willard)

HOBSON (formerly Hodgkins)

BUTCHER

MR. CUTLER

MRS. CUTLER

MR. BARRON (formerly Mr. Banoff)

MRS. BARRON (formerly Mrs. Banoff)

WAYNE

BUTANSKY (formerly Feeney)

GREEN (formerly Garber)

MCCORMICK

SUE

MARTHA

BILL

BARTENDER

PAULINE

MYRA

FADE IN:

A INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING - TITLE SEQUENCE A

Where the rising sun barely illuminates the room. MAX BOONE: 40ish and attractive; is in bed with TRACY BOONE: 23, beautiful and vulnerable. Both are sound asleep. After a moment, Tracy stirs and then becomes wide awake, very fast. Wearing a baby doll nightie, she slips swiftly but gently out of bed; a lady with a mission. She exits.

A1 INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - MORNING A1

as Tracy enters. She turns on the hot water tap to let it heat up as she pops 2 slices of white bread into the toaster. She dumps some instant coffee crystals into 2 cups labelled "MAX" and "TRACY", measuring only by eye (and poorly). The tap water is beginning to look a bit steamy as Tracy fills the 2 coffee mugs with the warm water, stirring both cups with her finger. She removes the toast from the toaster; both pieces are black and smoking. Tracy, with perfect aplomb, takes a knife from a drawer and blithely scrapes the carbon from both slices, then places the coffee and toast on the breakfast table, arranging them ever so neatly. Looking terribly pleased with herself, she exits the kitchen.

A2 INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - TITLES CONTINUE A2

as Tracy enters. She crosses to the sink and looks at her reflection. She looks fabulous. She quickly improves her hair with a few deft wrist flicks of her hand. She pinches a little life to her cheeks. She puts perfume behind her ears and sprays her mouth with Binaca.

A3 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - MORE TITLES A3

We follow Tracy back into the bedroom where she gently slips back into bed next to Max. She begins stroking his neck. Max stirs gently, gradually waking. RINGGG goes the alarm clock. Tracy reaches over to silence it just as Max comes fully awake and puts his arms lovingly around her. They kiss, briefly but warmly.

TRACY

Your breakfast is ready.

MAX

(a man who owns  
the world)

Let's have breakfast in bed  
this morning.

He holds her and kisses her as the last title appears.

1 EXT. MEDIUM PRICED HOUSE - DAY

1

with a sign on the lawn reading "FOR SALE - BOONE REALTY".  
- At the curb is a late model 4-door Buick with a large  
- magnetic sign on the door reading "BOONE REALTY - HONK IF  
YOU'RE HOMELESS". Out from the house comes MAX, LOOKING  
dapper in suit and tie, along with MR. and MRS. CUTLER; a  
couple in their 20's. As they move down the walk Max is  
selling hard:

MAX

The entire house was painted just  
six months ago, so when I tell you  
the place is in move-in condition,  
I mean --

MRS. CUTLER

(interrupting; firmly)

Mr. Boone, we can't afford a  
200,000 dollar house!

MAX

(cheerily)

Of course you can't! You think  
you'll ever have to pay this baby  
off? No way! You assume the  
existing first, take a wrap-around  
interest-only second, and then  
each month you only pay --

MRS. CUTLER

Mr. Boone, that's awfully risky!

MAX

But this country was built by  
people willing to take risks:  
The Pilgrims landing at Plymouth  
Rock, Lewis and Clark, blazing a  
trail through the wilderness --

\*\*

\*\*

MR. CUTLER

The Donner family crossing over the  
high Sierras towards --

\*\*

MAX

Exactly!

\*\*

MR. CUTLER

The Donners got lost in the snow  
and wound up eating each other.

\*\*

MAX

I'm sorry to hear that...

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

MRS. CUTLER

\*\*

80,000 dollars, Mr. Boone, that's our bottom line.

MAX

(a long beat;  
sympathetic)

I wish I could help you folks, but... the market's terribly inflated these days.

MRS. CUTLER

I guess business is pretty bad...

MAX

(fierce pride)

Business is terrific!

MR. CUTLER

You mean you're actually selling some houses?

MAX

I didn't say that.

2 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

2

A comfortable townhouse with the master bedroom upstairs; kitchen, living room and guest bedroom downstairs. TRACY BOONE enters the kitchen carrying two large market bags. Tracy is 23 and beautiful with a terribly sensuous look about her; a veritable love kitten. Tracy, humming happily and tunelessly to herself, stuffs one huge bag into the refrigerator and the other into the unlit oven. She fills a teakettle with water and turns on the flame.

Tracy crosses to the living room and puts an Aerobicize record on the stereo. A large picture of Max and Tracy is on the mantle. Shedding her skirt to reveal the leotard underneath, Tracy drops to the floor as the speakers blare a disco tune accompanied by a sensuous VOICE imploring us to "lose that cellulite!" Tracy, exercising her already shapely limbs, starts to work up a sweat.

3 THE TEAKETTLE IN THE KITCHEN

3

Begins WHISTLING in competition with the stereo.

3.

4 TRACY

4

Is exercising like crazy and doesn't hear the O.S. WHISTLE.

5 THE TEAKETTLE

5

Soon runs out of steam as the hot flame underneath remains on.

6 EXT. BANK AUTOMATED TELLER - DAY

6

Where Max, with 8 people behind him, watches as the MAN in front of him receives a wad of cash from the machine.

MACHINE VOICE

It was a pleasure serving you and have a nice day.

The Man pockets his cash and moves away as Max steps smartly up to the machine.

MAX

Hi. How's it going?

Max inserts a card and pushes some buttons. A raspy buzz from the machine like a Bronx Cheer and Max's card is shoved back at him like an insult.

MACHINE VOICE

We are sorry. This transaction cannot be consummated due to insufficient funds.

Max turns brightly to the people behind him.

MAX

It's obviously a mistake. You know these machines.

Max turns back to the machine and tries to reinsert his card. This time the machine won't even accept it. As Max tries to shove his card into the slot:

MACHINE VOICE

This is not a mistake. This transaction cannot be consummated due to insufficient funds.

\*\*

MAX

Hey!! I don't have to take this! You're a machine! You're here to serve me!!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAX (CONT'D)

(turns to crowd)

Who's in charge around here,  
anyway; us or them? We built  
these machines and they're trying  
to take over! Can you believe  
it? We're being victimized by a  
pack of electronic demons! Don't  
-- let -- them -- do -- it -- to  
-- us!!

A round of applause from the crowd. Max shoots his  
cuffs and marches off. Once away from the crowd, Max  
begins gesturing and muttering to himself.

7 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

7

Where the lights are low and the dining table is set  
with tablecloth, silver, flowers and enough candles for  
a high mass. Max enters through the front door and  
looks pleasantly surprised. He smiles as Tracy enters  
from the kitchen, one hand behind her, looking terrific  
in a low-cut dress. She gives him a passionate kiss  
and then hands him a glass of some green, frothy con-  
coction.

MAX

(indicates candles)

Did somebody die?

TRACY

Happy anniversary.

MAX

(perplexed)

Hey, don't tell me I forgot our --

TRACY

You didn't. It's only been six  
months but I know how much you  
love a celebration. Sit.

Max sits down at the table as Tracy disappears into the  
kitchen. Max takes a sip of the drink, grimaces, and  
pours the rest into a vase. Tracy re-enters carrying a  
large, covered serving dish. She beams proudly:

TRACY

Lobster in black bean sauce,  
broccoli with water chestnuts,  
moo-shi pork, butterfield shrimp,  
and curried beef. Voila!

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

Tracy whips off the cover to reveal six white cartons of Chinese take-out food. Max looks duly impressed.

MAX

Hey! Looks terrific!

TRACY

(serving him)

We better eat everything. One of these is supposed to be an aphrodisiac, but I forgot which.

MAX

(proudly)

That's the last thing we need, Angel Toes! \*\*

Max begins eating as Tracy starts serving herself.

TRACY

So... Max... how's business?

MAX

Fabulous.

TRACY

You never talk about work anymore.

MAX

It's just... selling houses.

TRACY

We're okay, aren't we? I mean, if we were in any kind of money trouble, you'd tell me, wouldn't you?

MAX

Everything's great, Tracy.

Tracy looks at Max for a long moment, then produces a wrapped package from under the table. Max looks surprised.

TRACY

It's a six-month anniversary present. Open it.

Max unwraps the package to reveal two 78RPM record albums.

MAX

Wow!! Charlie Parker! The Bird!!

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

TRACY

I know how much you love good saxophone music.

MAX

Good? Parker's the greatest! Hey, these must've cost a --  
(catches himself)  
... must've been hard to find!

TRACY

I had to go to almost every record store in town.

MAX

(moved)  
No one ever went to so much trouble for me...

TRACY

Joanne must've bought you presents.

Max gets very busy inspecting the records.

MAX

Please don't bring up Joanne, Ex-wives and Chinese food don't mix.

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

TRACY

I don't feel threatened by Joanne, anymore, really. You were married to her for eighteen years. That's a big part of you and I want to share it.

MAX

(a slight edge)  
Share it? You don't share a person's life like an egg roll!

Tracy suddenly looks very hurt and vulnerable. Max puts on a danceable record.

\*\*

MAX

Do you want to dance.

\*\*

They begin to dance together.

\*\*

MAX

(a beat)  
We had a rotten marriage.

TRACY

I thought you said you had a good marriage.

\*\*

(CONTINUED)



7 CONTINUED: (4)

7

TRACY

(kisses Max's hand)

I don't want that to happen to us,  
Max. All I want is to be your wife.  
All I want is to make you happy.

\*\*

MAX

(takes both her hands  
in his)

You make me very happy, Angel  
Toes. Why didn't I marry you  
first?

TRACY

Because I was three years old.

MAX

(rising; a sensuous smile)

Well, you're not three years old  
now!

Tracy, returning the sensuous smile, rises and puts her arms around Max's neck. Max sweeps Tracy into his arms and carries her toward the staircase as Tracy nuzzles his ear.

8 INT. AD AGENCY OFFICE - DAY

8

Where a smartly dressed JOANNE BOONE, energetically pacing her small office, is talking on the phone with its long extension cord. Joanne is 39 and attractive, with obvious warmth and is immediately likeable.

JOANNE

Mr. Osborne? This is Joanne  
Boone.

(a beat)

Fine, thank you. Look, I'm going  
to recommend you kick off your  
campaign with a double-page spread  
in Cosmo.

Fred Dunbar enters Joanne's office and quietly closes  
the door behind him. Fred is an unctuous 35.  
Joanne looks nervous. \*

JOANNE

(continuing; into phone)

Can you hold a sec, Mr. Osborne?

(puts hand over phone;  
to Fred. )

Please leave the door open, Mr.  
Dunbar. \*

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

DUNBAR

I think you'll want it shut. \*

JOANNE

If I have to fight you off again... \*

DUNBAR

I'm not here to attack you, Joanne.  
I'm going to fire you. \*

JOANNE

Thank God. You had me worried  
there for ---

(into phone)

No, Mr. Osborne. I don't think  
you want the inside cover and  
could you please hang on for just  
another jif? \*

DUNBAR

Joanne, I don't think you have the  
team spirit. \*

JOANNE

I don't play on your kind of team  
and there's a law against this  
sort of thing.

(into phone)

Mr. Osborne, I think you should  
know that this organization is  
grossly overcharging you for your  
entire advertising campaign and --  
(a beat, grim)

Yes, he's here. \*

Joanne, with a look of terrible distaste, hands the  
phone to Dunbar who takes it pleasantly. \*

DUNBAR

(into phone)

Hey, Charlie. \*

(a beat)

Sure, we'll get you another account  
exec this afternoon.

(a smile)

Yeah, a guy this time. \*

Dunbar winks at Joanne who just stares at him in shock. \*

9 EXT. CITY SUBURBS - LATE AFTERNOON

9

As Joanne pulls into the driveway of her two-bedroom  
house. She stops the car and slumps dejectedly over  
the wheel.

10 INT. JOANNE'S KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

10

Where BEN BOONE is doing homework at the table and munching from a huge sack of potato chips. Ben is 13, somewhat overweight, wears thick glasses and still reads close to the page. Ben peers up as Joanne enters.

BEN

Hi, Mom.

JOANNE

Ben, do you have to eat that junk food all the time? If you'd eat carrots, maybe you could see again.

BEN

You're in a terrific mood.

JOANNE

(opens fridge)  
Put the chips away, I'm making dinner.

BEN

I'll have a large pepperoni pizza and a tankard of ale.

JOANNE

(removing vegetables)  
We're having hamburger and salad.  
(with forceful eye)  
Lean hamburger. Low-fat milk.  
How was school?

Ben peers up at Joanne as she begins slicing vegetables.\*

BEN

We saw a film on Helsinki, Finland. The winters are 80 below and last 13 months out of the year. Seems like a neat place to visit. In sex education we learned how sperms unite with eggs to make babies. In light of that you might want to continue your life of celibacy.

Joanne hasn't been listening. Tears are welling in her eyes. Ben blinks sympathetically at her.\*

JOANNE

I got fired...

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

BEN

\*

We both knew it was coming.  
 (a beat)  
 You'll get another job...

JOANNE

We were barely making it on the  
 money I was earning...  
 (a beat)  
 What did the dentist say?

BEN

I need braces. They can wait.

JOANNE

Did the dentist say that?

BEN

\*

No.

11 INT. JOANNE'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

11

She's working at a desk full of bills and looking dis-  
 couraged when Ben enters in his pajamas, with a bag of  
 peanuts. A long ominous silence, then:

\*

BEN

\*

(a perfect Bogart  
 imitation)  
 Listen, sweetheart, I think you  
 can help me. I'm looking for  
 anything, a name, a phone number,  
 an unclaimed parking ticket... a  
 few facts.

JOANNE

I can't pay the mortgage. I can't  
 pay the doctor bills. Plus  
 seventeen other individuals and  
 firms...

BEN

\*

When's the last time Dad sent a  
 check?

JOANNE

Ben, your father's and my financial  
 situation is none of your business.

\*

BEN

Him and his new wife.  
 (a beat)  
 The chippy.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

JOANNE

She is not a chippy. I told you  
not to call her that!

(a beat)

She's an infant.

12 INT. MAX'S REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

12

A small, neatly furnished store front office where Max stands  
at the house-for-sale bulletin board randomly stamping some of  
the brochures with the large word "SOLD." DANNY, Max's  
Associate, enters and reacts.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

DANNY

We haven't sold any of those.

Max continues stamping. Danny shrugs understandingly.

DANNY

(continuing)

Okay, I can relate to that. Hey,  
if it gives you a sense of  
fulfillment and heightens your  
self-esteem, go for it.

The PHONE RINGS and Danny picks it up.

DANNY

(continuing)

Boone Realty.

(a beat)

Sure. Hold on.

(to Max)

It's Joanne

Max suppresses a shudder and picks up his phone. Danny  
in the b.g., eavesdrops with interest.

MAX

(cheerfully)

Hi, honey, you at work?

13 INTERCUTTING: JOANNE IN HER KITCHEN

13

In jeans and blouse, seated at the table with the help  
wanted ads, talking on the phone.

JOANNE

(icily)

Please don't call me "honey."

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

MAX

Your check's sitting on my desk.  
It goes in the mail today.

DANNY

Are you actually giving her the  
old "check's in the mail" routine?

Max shoots Danny a withering look.

JOANNE

Are you giving me the old --

MAX

It goes in the mail! Today!

14 EXT. SIDEWALK NEAR MAX'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

14

As Max and Danny walk toward Danny's Datsun, parked  
at the curb.

\*  
\*  
\*

DANNY

I don't want to violate your space,  
Max, but I'm going to have to ask  
you for some backpay. I know the  
place you're in, but what I'm  
confronting is a lot of hostility  
from my creditors. I think I can  
deal with it for another few  
weeks...

MAX

Okay, I'll take care of it.

They stop at the car. Danny unlocks a door.

DANNY

You didn't have to sell your car,  
did you?

MAX

(cheerily)  
No, Tracy just needed it today,  
that's all.

They enter the car.

DANNY

Max, it's not healthy what you're putting  
yourself through. I used to do the same thing until  
I went to the Deep Sensitivity Marathon two weeks ago.  
You ought to go. Let me sign you up. You've  
got to acknowledge what's happening inside.  
You've got to verbalize your anxieties and  
then share them.

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

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

MAX

(an edge)

Don't do this to me, Danny.

DANNY

Then just say it, Max. Say we haven't  
sold a single thing in over five months.  
Let it out and I promise you...

\*\*

MAX

(very defensively)

We happen to be very close with  
that house on Harper Road.

\*

DANNY

(slips key into  
ignition)

'Close' only counts in nuclear  
warfare.

\*

\*

MAX

I am an optimistic person and I  
only like to surround myself with  
other optimistic persons.

\*\*

\*\*

DANNY

(a beat)

I hear what you're saying.

Danny twists the key and starts the engine.

\*

15 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

15

As Max climbs the stairs from the living room to the  
master bedroom

15A INT. MAX'S BEDROOM

15A

where the bathroom door is closed and we hear the SOUND  
OF THE SHOWER. Max, forcing on a happy face, begins re-  
moving his jacket and tie. He calls out:

\*

MAX

Hey, Angel Toes! Your lover's  
home!

TRACY'S VOICE

Hi, Max! How was your day?

MAX

Fabulous! What about yours?

TRACY

(sing-song)

I had a little problem ...

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

MAX

(mutters to himself)

Welcome to the club...

Max notices an expensive new negligee laid out on the bed. As he inspects it, Tracy enters from the bathroom, wrapped in a towel. She points to the negligee.

TRACY

Do you like it?

MAX

I don't know. How much was it?

TRACY

I read in this magazine how women use lingerie to keep sex alive.

MAX

I thought it was alive. How much was it?

TRACY

It was on sale. It was marked down from ---

MAX

HOW -- MUCH -- WAS -- IT??!!

TRACY

(starting to get nervous)

Only -- a hundred and twenty dollars. \*

MAX

A HUNDRED AND TWENTY DOLLARS??!

TRACY

(wide-eyed)

Max, are we in trouble?

MAX

A HUNDRED AND TWENTY DOLLARS TO KEEP SEX ALIVE??!! YOU WANT IT TO LIVE FOREVER??!!

TRACY

(terrified)

Oh my God, Max! We are in trouble! Why didn't you tell me??!! I kept asking you and asking you!!

(CONTINUED)

MAX

(coming down fast)

It's nothing, just a little ---

TRACY

I'll take it back tomorrow!  
Tonight!! The stores are open  
till...

MAX

Tracy, I'm sorry. I didn't mean  
to upset you.

TRACY

(on a heavy guilt trip)

How stupid of me! All I do  
is spend and spend while you're  
out there working and slaving!

MAX

Look, Tracy...

TRACY

I'm not helpless, you know! I  
could get a job!

MAX

Tracy, please...

TRACY

I'm perfectly capable of earning  
money. I did it before, I can do  
it again.

MAX

No wife of mine is going to ---

TRACY

I sold sandwiches, I watered plants,  
I delivered pizzas...

MAX

TRACY!!!

TRACY

(coming down fast)

Yes, Max?

MAX

(super gentle)

It's just a little financial  
squeeze. Just temporary.  
Everything's going to be fine,  
really.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (3)

15

TRACY  
(picks up negligee)  
But this thing goes back tonight.

MAX  
Tomorrow. Tonight we see how it works.

Max puts his arms around Tracy who cuddles against him.

16 ANGLE ON MAX'S BED - LATER THAT NIGHT

16

The room is dark save for a street light filtering in through a window. Max and Tracy are under the covers. Max is on his side, facing away from Tracy, his eyes staring off. Tracy snuggles up to him like a contented kitten.

MAX  
Tracy...?

TRACY  
Mmmmm...?

MAX  
You said you had a little problem today...?

TRACY  
We can talk about it tomorrow.

MAX  
Why don't we talk about it now...?

TRACY  
It's just the car...

MAX  
(keeps staring off)  
What -- about -- the car?

TRACY  
I... I had a little accident...

MAX  
Tell me about it...

TRACY  
The left front end.  
(MORE)

\*\*\*

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

TRACY (CONT'D)

They want six hundred and eight dollars to fix it, but they said I was lucky, it could've been worse. It still runs, but it makes a grinding noise. You don't hear it if the radio's on.

(a beat)

Loud.

MAX

(gritting his teeth)

As long as you weren't hurt...

TRACY

Do...do you want to know about the other car?

Max just squeezes his eyes shut.

17 INT. JOANNE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

17

As Joanne paces the room nervously, talking on the phone. In the b.g. kitchen we see Ben at the table, doing homework and decimating a bag of pretzels.

JOANNE

(into phone)

Please, Mr. Falk, another thirty days. I know I'll get a job.

(a beat)

How about if I refinance?

(a beat)

What do you mean there's no more equity?

(beat)

I invested the money, that's what I did! It's not my fault the investments turned bad!

(beat, moves away from

Ben, hissing)

You mean in this day and age you can actually evict a woman and her child from their own home??!!

(beat)

Unbelievable!!

Joanne slams down the phone in frustration and looks around, spotting Ben in the kitchen. She crosses angrily to him and snatches away his bag of pretzels.

JOANNE

(continuing)

How many times do I have to tell you don't eat before dinner!

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

BEN

It's oral therapy. Those pretzels  
could save you millions in  
psychiatrist's bills later on.

Before Joanne can reply, the PHONE RINGS. Joanne grabs  
it, still holding the pretzels.

JOANNE

Hello?

18 INTERCUTTING: MAX IN HIS OFFICE

18

MAX

The check's in the mail. You  
should get it tomorrow morning.

JOANNE

(sudden relief)  
Thank God!

MAX

I just wanted you to know so you  
wouldn't worry.

JOANNE

You always come through, Max, even  
if you are five months late.

MAX

Do me a favor? For old time's  
sake?

JOANNE

Sure.

MAX

Could you hold the check? Just  
for a little while?

JOANNE

(beat; the age of ice)  
How -- long -- is -- a -- little  
-- while?

MAX

Sixty days!

JOANNE

SIXTY DAYS??!! ARE YOU CRAZY??!!  
Not SIXTY SECONDS!! As soon as I  
get my hands on that check I am  
racing to the bank!

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

MAX  
They won't cash it!!

JOANNE  
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO ME??!!  
DON'T YOU REALIZE I'VE GOT  
PROBLEMS??!!

MAX  
(very reluctantly)  
I've got a few of my own...

JOANNE  
WHAT?!! THE GREAT MAX BOONE  
ACTUALLY ADMITTING HE'S IN  
TROUBLE??!!

MAX  
You don't have to raise your voice.

JOANNE  
I am not raising my voice, I AM  
SCREAMING!

MAX  
It's just that the real estate  
market's down and ---

JOANNE  
WELL, THE SUPERMARKET'S NOT!!!

19 JOANNE

19

Slams down the phone in high dudgeon and tosses the bag  
of pretzels to a blinking Ben. \*

JOANNE  
Here! Overdose!

Joanne snatches a slip of paper from the wall and be-  
gins rapidly punching a phone number.

JOANNE  
(continuing; into phone)  
Miss Hyatt? This is Joanne Boone.  
I have to know if you've made a  
decision about that job opening!

(a beat)  
What do you mean you already hired  
someone? What was wrong with me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

JOANNE (CONT'D)

(a beat)

No, Miss Hyatt, there has to be a reason! Was I too old, too young? Was I too fat, too skinny? Was it how I dressed? Did I spray when I talked? There's got to be a reason!!

Joanne slams down the phone and sinks into a chair next to Ben. Ben slides over the bag of pretzels. Joanne \* takes a huge handful.

20 EXT. JOANNE'S HOUSE - DAY

20

With a large sign on the lawn reading "FOR SALE BY AUCTION. CONTACT EASTLAKE REALTY." A van labelled HOBSON ANTIQUE FURNITURE is parked in front. A BEEFY MAN carries an armchair from the house to the van.

21 INT. JOANNE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

21

As Joanne escorts HOBSON, a snooty woman carrying a clipboard around the room. HOBSON runs her hand \* over an armoire.

JOANNE

It's a Queen Anne.

HOBSON

Eighty-five dollars.

JOANNE

Come on! We paid almost a thousand for it! They said it was Queen Anne.

HOBSON

Maybe Princess Anne. Eighty-five dollars.

JOANNE

(whipped)

Okay...

Hobson makes a note on her clipboard and crosses to the piano.

HOBSON

You sure you don't want to sell this?

(CONTINUED)

JOANNE

One second.

We FOLLOW Joanne into the kitchen where Ben is study- \*  
ing and munching Granola. Joanne gently takes the \*  
Granola away as Ben blinks up at her.

JOANNE

Ben, are you playing the piano \*  
because you have a real feel for \*  
it or because I'm forcing you?  
Give me an honest answer.

BEN

Because you force me. \*

JOANNE

Right.

Joanne hands the Granola back to Ben and exits the \*  
room.

22 EXT. TINY COTTAGE - DAY

22

As Max exits the rear door with MR. and MRS. BARRON and  
their five children. The back yard is the size of a  
postage stamp surrounded by a depressing fence that is  
leaning inward.

MRS. Barron \*

It's much too small for us, Mr.  
Boone.

MAX

You can add on. Easy!

MR. Barron \*

(looking around)  
Add on? Where?

MAX

(pointing grandly)  
Up. Three, four stories. It's  
unlimited!

MR. Barron \*

That means we'd be paying 200,000  
dollars... for a foundation?

MAX

So make an offer. They won't  
shoot you.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

MR. Barron  
 (a beat; firm)  
 Ninety grand. Tops.

MAX  
 They'll shoot you.

23 EXT. JOANNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

23

With the "FOR SALE" sign still on the lawn. Joanne's car, with a U-Haul attached, is parked in the driveway. Joanne and Ben looking depressed, are finishing loading the trailer with suitcases, clothes, books and pictures. As Joanne takes a last, sentimental look at her former home, Ben gets into the car and pops a cassette into the dash stereo. It's LOUD ROCK. Joanne enters the car and reacts to the music. \*

BEN  
 It's New Wave. It'll cheer us up. \*

JOANNE  
 It's punk and it's making me even more depressed. Put something else on. \*

BEN  
 I don't like anything else. \*

JOANNE  
 And -- I -- don't -- like -- this!!

Ben shrugs, reaches under the seat and produces a Sony Walkman. He places the headset over his ears and transfers the cassette from the car stereo to the Walkman. The MUFFLED MUSIC is barely audible. Joanne looks relieved. \*

BEN  
 (very loud)  
 Happy? \*

JOANNE  
 Delirious.

BEN  
 (not hearing her)  
 WHAT???

Joanne sighs, grits her teeth and starts the car. \*

24 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

24

Where Max and Tracy, both in pajamas, are playing Monopoly. Max lands on Boardwalk. Tracy squeals:

TRACY  
It's mine! I own it!!

MAX  
(hiding irritation)  
I know you own it, Tracy.

TRACY  
With one hotel, you owe me two thousand dollars.

Max counts out the money. He has very little left.

MAX  
You don't have to gloat...

TRACY  
I'm sorry, Max, it's just that the real estate business is so exciting!  
(a beat)  
Want something from the kitchen?

MAX  
A glass of apple juice.

Tracy rises and crosses toward the door as Max sneaks some money from Tracy's huge pile.

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

25 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

25

As Joanne's car and trailer pull up and park in front. Joanne, clutching the wheel, is numb. Ben, next to her eating a Big Mac, fries and shake, glances over at her.

JOANNE  
I can't do this.

BEN  
Fine. We'll just keep driving around till we run out of gas.

JOANNE  
We are out of gas.

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

26 OMIT

26 \*

27 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

27 \*

BEN

\*

Mom! Do something!

\*

JOANNE

I can't let go of the wheel.

Ben sighs, puts his food aside and tries prying Joanne's fingers off the wheel. No luck. Ben sighs again, slides out of the car and crosses to Max's door. Joanne remains rooted in the car. Ben squares his shoulders and rings the doorbell. Max opens the door and stares wordlessly at Ben.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

BEN

\*

Hi. I'm Ben, your son.

\*

MAX

I thought you looked familiar.  
You run away or something?

BEN

\*

Mom's out in the car.

Max stares out into the street, seeing the U-Haul.

MAX

What's with the trailer, you're  
moving?

BEN

\*

(Humphrey Bogart)

The way I figure it, pal, ya got  
three choices. One: cough up the  
loot you owe us and we keep going.  
Cash. No checks.

MAX

(Jimmy Cagney)

You dirty rat. Nobody puts the  
arm on Big Max.

BEN

\*

Two: the old lady takes you to  
court and they dump ya in the pen.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

MAX  
(a bit annoyed)  
Okay, Ben, the joke's wearing  
thin.

BEN  
(straight and serious)  
Or three: we're both moving in  
'til you pay what you owe us.

MAX  
What!?!

\*\*

Tracy, wearing a modest robe, appears behind Max.

TRACY  
(sweetly)  
Hi, Ben.

\*\*

BEN  
(curtly)  
Yeah...

Tracy, reacts as Joanne walks up behind Ben, carrying  
two suitcases. Joanne, fighting hysteria, sets down  
the cases.

MAX  
Joanne, what are you...

\*\*

JOANNE  
Don't say a word. I dare anybody  
to say a word. I thought about  
every alternative before coming  
here...even going door to door  
and asking for ---

MAX  
But, you can't...

\*\*

TRACY  
(interrupting)  
Max, who is this woman??!!

MAX  
(marvelous aplomb)  
Tracy, I'd like you to meet  
Joanne. Look, Joanne...

\*\*

TRACY  
Joanne? Your Joanne?

MAX  
Right, she's...

\*\*

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

JOANNE

I'm nobody's Joanne...not any more.

MAX

Look, Joanne, you can't just barge in --

JOANNE

No, Max, you look! I lost my job! I lost the house! I sold everything to pay the bills. I tried to get an apartment but I didn't have first and last month's rent. I don't have first month's rent. I'd go home to my parents but they're dead!

MAX

I know there's a little problem...

\*\*

TRACY

(utterly confused)  
I don't understand.

MAX

Well...

\*\*

JOANNE

(as if to a child)  
It's really very simple, sweetheart. Little Joanne has no place to make beddy-bye 'cause your big Daddums --

MAX

Come on! Stop it, Joanne!!

\*\*

TRACY

(to Max)  
Is she asking to stay here?!

JOANNE

(tons of sarcasm)  
Oh, Max, she's a gem! I mean, bright?!

TRACY

(whirls to Joanne)  
Lady, you got a big fat mouth!

\*

BEN

I'll be in the car if anyone --

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (4)

27\*\*

JOANNE

STAY!!!

TRACY

(draws herself up)

This is my house as well as Max's.

Ben can sleep inside.

(jabs finger at Joanne)

You can sleep in the car!

JOANNE

NOT A CHANCE, KIDDO! You want us  
out of here? Give us some money  
for a decent motel room!

MAX

I...I don't have any cash on me.

JOANNE

(picks up suitcases)

Then you better have an extra  
bedroom!

MAX

There's got to be some practical  
solution, right?

\*\*

BEN

I suggested one of those religious  
cults, but Mom won't shave her head.

Joanne shoulders her way past Max and Tracy into the  
apartment. Ben follows, sheepishly. Max and Tracy  
just stare at each other in puzzled apprehension.  
Then, as they close the door behind them, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

28 INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

28

Where Max, wearing only a pajama bottom, is at the sink brushing his teeth. Max is muttering to himself and gesticulating. Tracy enters, brushing her hair.

MAX

I promise they'll only be here a couple of days. I just need time to work things out.

TRACY

It's okay, Max. Really.

MAX

It's terrific of you to let them stay. I mean, she is my ex-wife and all.

TRACY

I never would've invited her...

MAX

I'm sorry she was rude to you.

TRACY

She's been through a lot. Pressure makes people nasty. She's not really nasty, is she?

MAX

No... not really.

TRACY

I know you love me, Max, and I really don't feel threatened by her... but you never told me she was so pretty.

MAX

Not as pretty as you, Tracy.

Max kisses Tracy's cheek, getting toothpaste foam on her face.

29 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

29

The room is dark. Joanne's suitcases, clothes, books and pictures are piled in the middle of the room.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

Ben, his eyes shut, is lying on the couch in his pajamas, covered by a blanket. Max, still in pajamas, tiptoes down the staircase and crosses to Ben. Max looks down at Ben's peaceful face and is about to lean over to kiss him when:

BEN

(eyes closed; Bogart)  
You ain't gettin' mushy on me, are you, Skipper?

MAX

(Edward G. Robinson)  
Nah. Big guys don't smooch.

BEN

(kissing him anyway)  
Good night, Dad.

MAX

Good night, Ben.

Max crosses to the closed door of the guest bedroom. Light can be seen underneath. Max knocks softly.

JOANNE'S VOICE

Come in...

29A INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

29A \*

Max enters the tiny room. Joanne, dressed as before, sits on the edge of the bed smoothing a small pile of currency on her lap. A closed suitcase is on the bed next to her.

MAX

You okay?

JOANNE

(looking down)  
Eighty-seven dollars. That's every cent I have to my entire name.

MAX

I'm very close to selling this real expensive house on ---

JOANNE

(eyes still down)  
Oh, stop it, Max! You haven't changed a bit!!  
(a beat)  
I don't like this any more than you do.

(CONTINUED)

29A CONTINUED:

29A

MAX

(super bright)

Hey, cheer up! Everything's going to be great! You'll get yourself a new job easy! I'll sell some houses and pay you everything I owe you, plus a few extra bucks for good measure! You'll see!

Joanne finally looks up and skewers Max with a withering glare. She is dishevelled and exhausted and at the end of her tether and she sums it all up with:

JOANNE

Oh, Max, blow it out your ear!!

30 INT. GUEST BEDROOM - CLOSEUP - SMALL CLOCK - EARLY MORNING 30

On the night stand. It reads 5:30 as we WIDEN OUT to see Joanne, in pajamas, slide swiftly out of bed. It's the first day of the rest of her life and Joanne definitely has it together.

30A INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING 30A \*  
Joanne enters. Ben snores softly on the couch. Joanne peers up the staircase to Max and Tracy's room. Their door is still closed. \*

30B INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING 30B \*  
As Joanne enters. She opens the refrigerator. Inside is a wilted orchid and a jar of peanut butter. She takes the teapot from the stove and fills it at the sink, but water runs out the bottom. She turns it over and sees the bottom has been burned out. She turns the kettle back on the stove and looks pensive. \*

31 EXT. 24 HOUR SUPERMARKET - EARLY MORNING

Where Joanne's car, with the U-Haul still attached, is parked cattawampus across the almost deserted parking lot. Joanne, wearing jeans and blouse, exits the market carrying two huge shopping bags.

32 INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - MORNING 32

The table has been set for four with juice, fruit, preserves, the works. Joanne, an apron over her clothes, is at the stove. She is breaking eggs with one hand and stirring crepe batter with the other. She is a pro. World class. Max and Tracy enter sleepily in their robes. They look surprised. Joanne turns brightly to them, not missing a culinary beat.

(CONTINUED)

JOANNE

Good morning. I didn't know your breakfast habits so I took the liberty. Everyone hungry?

TRACY

No!

MAX

Yes!

TRACY

(hint of hostility)  
You didn't have to do this.

JOANNE

(ignoring it)  
I just wanted to express my appreciation for your hospitality. Please. Sit down. Start with the juice and fruit.

Max and Tracy mechanically take seats as Ben wanders in wearing a bathrobe with a bulging pocket. Ben sleepily sits down next to them. \*

JOANNE

(continuing; making crepes)  
Grilled Virginia ham, scrambled eggs with onions, mushroom crepes ... hope everyone likes crepes.

TRACY

Max only eats toast and coffee in the morning.

MAX

Not this morning!

BEN

I always have a hearty breakfast.

Tracy resists the temptation to reply. Max and Ben attack the fruit and juice as Joanne deftly serves the eggs, ham and crepes. Tracy just nibbles on an orange slice, watching as Joanne pours coffee for everyone.

BEN

(eating like a champ)  
Good, Mom.

MAX

Outstanding!

(CONTINUED)

JOANNE

Tracy? You're not eating?

TRACY

My husband likes his women slim  
these days.

Joanne looks hurt and Max looks angry. Ben, sensing  
trouble, takes his Sony Walkman from his robe pocket  
and slips the headset over his ears. \*

JOANNE

Look, Tracy, I know how you feel  
and I don't blame you a bit for  
being hostile. I'd react the same  
way.

They resume eating in silence for a moment. Tracy  
watches as Joanne replaces the coffee pot on the stove.  
As Joanne returns to her seat:

TRACY

Where did you find that coffee  
pot?

JOANNE

I... I bought it. You... uh...  
didn't have one.

TRACY

We don't need one. We like instant  
coffee. We have a perfectly good  
teakettle. Why didn't you use it?

MAX

Tracy, it's not important why --

TRACY

Yes, it is! I want to know why my  
kitchen utensils aren't good enough  
for our... guest, here.

MAX

Tracy...

TRACY

(firmly, to Joanne)  
I asked you a question.

JOANNE

Your teakettle has a hole burned  
on the bottom.

(CONTINUED)

TRACY

Is that the end of the world? Do we get disaster relief?

MAX

Tracy!

TRACY

Anyone with a lick of sense would boil water in a pot.

JOANNE

Anyone with a lick of sense wouldn't drink instant coffee!

MAX

STOP IT! BOTH OF YOU!! RIGHT NOW!!!

Joanne and Tracy just glare at each other. Ben, listening to his own private music, is in a world apart. Max looks from Tracy to Joanne, both of whom are now gazing at their plates. \*

MAX

(continuing)

There's no reason we can't be civilized about this! It's an uncomfortable situation but we're all going to have to make the best of it!

(a beat)

Would you get me some more coffee, Angel Toes?

At the exact same moment, both Tracy and Joanne rise to fill the request. Both women suddenly freeze as Max blanches. Tracy and Joanne stare angrily at each other for a beat and then Tracy whirls to Max.

TRACY

You called her Angel Toes, too?

JOANNE

No. I was Angel Toes, ONE! You're Angel Toes Two.

MAX

ENOUGH!!!

Tracy, almost in tears, races out of the kitchen. Max follows, hard on her heels. He catches up to her near the top of the stairs. Tracy whirls to him:

TRACY

I don't want that woman in my house!!

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (4)

32

MAX

I don't either, Tracy, and I'm going to bust my hump to get her out of here!

TRACY

(a deadly threat)

If I wind up in a room alone with her...

MAX

You won't! She'll be out all day on job interviews. You can relax. I'll bring home dinner.

TRACY

(very grimly)

No. I'll take care of dinner.

MAX

Fine. The Colonel, McDonald's, whatever...

33 INT. GOURMET BUTCHER SHOP - DAY

33

Where a niftily dressed Tracy, carrying a large hand-bag, stands across the high counter from the pleasant. 50ish BUTCHER. Tracy looks very professional and cool.

TRACY

Yes. I'd like a four to six pound salmon, with a large pocket for stuffing. And I'd like it to be fluted.

BUTCHER

(puzzled)

Fluted?

TRACY

(her eyes wander)

Flatted?

They look at each other for a moment, then Tracy sags. She removes a cookbook from her purse, opens it to a turned down page and shows it to the Butcher.

BUTCHER

Oh! Fileted! That means boneless.

TRACY

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

BUTCHER

(smiles)

Big dinner party?

TRACY

(defiantly)

Oh, yes!

34 INT. MAX'S GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

34

Where Joanne, in business suit with her shoes off, is propped in bed. Max stands next to her. Ben is sprawled on the floor, wearing his headset, doing homework and munching a bag of Fritos. \*

JOANNE

I'm just not hungry, Max.

MAX

She's gone to a lot of trouble...

JOANNE

Max, I am exhausted. I can't afford to put gas in my car so I had to walk to six job interviews.

MAX

Any luck?

Joanne skewers Max with a baleful glare, then:

JOANNE

I'll just stay here. There'll only be trouble if I go in.

MAX

There'll be trouble if you don't.

A KNOCK on the door and then:

TRACY'S VOICE

Max, please tell the ex-Mrs. Boone that dinner --- is --- served.

MAX

Make an effort, Joanne.

TRACY'S VOICE

We are having stuffed salmon, fresh artichokes, fresh pureed spinach and dandelion salad.

Max and Joanne exchange looks.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

MAX

We're all in this together.

Joanne sighs and swings reluctantly off the bed as Max crosses to Ben and pulls the headset away. \*

MAX

(continuing)

Dinner, champ. Dandelion salad. \*

BEN

Oh, yum.

35 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

35

Where Joanne's stuff is still in the middle of the room. The dining table has been gloriously set for four; linen, silver, candles, the works. The dinner looks awful, especially the salmon which still has its head and tail in place and looks like it died in agony. One fishy eye glares accusingly at Tracy.

Dead silence as Joanne and Max, forcing smiles, pick listlessly at their food while Tracy just grimly watches. Ben, however, eats ravenously.

After a long moment Tracy suddenly bursts into tears and races up the stairs. Max looks helpless, he knows there is no way he can comfort her. He glares at Joanne who rises and exits to her room. Max, looking terribly beleaguered, stares at Ben, who is now gorging himself from Joanne's picked-at plate. \*

BEN

Worst food I ever ate in my life. \*

Max keeps staring as Ben keeps chomping. \*

36 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

36

Where Tracy, apparently nude, is under the covers lying on her back with her arms folded behind her head. Max, wearing only a pajama bottom, enters from the bathroom and slips into bed next to her.

TRACY

If I called the police would they forcibly remove her?

MAX

That was a great dinner, Tracy.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36\*\*

Max begins snuggling, stroking and kissing Tracy. She doesn't respond, but she looks like she's summoning all her energy.

TRACY

Dinner was a disaster, but I do know what I'm very, very good at.

MAX

The best in the world...but we'll have to be a little quiet.

TRACY

No! I am not going to do anything different just because she's here!  
(turns to him maniacally)  
Are you ready?

\*\*

MAX

(a beat)

Give me a minute.

Max slides out of bed and we FOLLOW him into the bathroom. He turns on the water in the shower. He turns on the water in the tub. At this late hour, everything makes a CRASHING sound.

37 INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

37

Where Joanne, lying in bed reading, looks at the ceiling as she hears the CRASHING SOUNDS OF WATER. She hears the sound of an ELECTRIC RAZOR, then a HAIR DRYER, then the sound of APPLAUSE and "HEEEEEERE'S JOHNNY!!" Joanne resumes reading, deadpan.

38 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

38

With all the noise, as an expectant Max crawls back into bed with an even grimmer Tracy. The portable TV casts flickering shadows over them. Tracy turns away from Max. Max reaches tenderly for her. She moves away. Far away. Max looks beleaguered and frustrated. He slides out of bed and takes a large, black case from his closet. Tracy watches.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

TRACY

No. Not in here.

Max exits the bedroom with the case, closing the door behind him.

39 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

39

As Max, carrying his mysterious case, walks down the staircase into the semi-darkness. One by one we hear the sounds of water and TV turned off. Max sits down on the pile of Joanne's stuff and is about to open his case when he reacts to a soft snore from Ben on the couch. Max sighs, rises and exits the room with his case.

40 INT. MAX'S UNDERGROUND GARAGE - NIGHT

40

As Max, still wearing only his pajama bottoms and clutching his black case, pads barefoot toward his car which now has a badly bashed front fender. The magnetic sign is attempting to hide the bash but it's doing a lousy job.

\*  
\*  
\*

Max gets into the front seat of his car, rolls up all the windows, slides the seat back, puts the black case on his lap and lovingly opens it. Inside is an old brass saxophone. Max puts the sax to his lips and begins to play. We hear a mournful chorus of "THE PARTY'S OVER", and it makes you want to cry.

\*\*

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

41 INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - MORNING

41

Max is at the sink muttering; gesticulating with one hand, shaving with the other. Tracy enters, looking contrite. She slips her arms around Max's waist.

TRACY

I'm sorry about last night, Max.  
I was being very selfish.

MAX

It's okay, Tracy. I understand.

TRACY

(seductively)  
Tonight... if you still want me.

MAX

I always want you.

TRACY

I'll be so quiet you won't even  
know I'm there.

MAX

Don't overreact, okay?

TRACY

I'll go make breakfast.

Max jumps as he nicks himself with the razor.

MAX

Please don't start anything with  
Joanne.

TRACY

Joanne? Who's Joanne?

Tracy, humming tunelessly, exits the bathroom as Max continues to shave, mutter, and gesticulate.

42 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - MORNING

42

As Max, looking natty in a 3-piece suit, checks his reflection in the mirror and crosses toward the closed bedroom door. We hear MUFFLED SOUNDS O.S. Max opens the door and freezes as the sounds are revealed to be:

TRACY'S VOICE

(shouting)  
You don't have to clean up my  
house!

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

JOANNE'S VOICE

(loud)

Ben just spilled a glass of water  
and I was only...

TRACY'S VOICE

I don't care if he dumped a tanker!!!  
I don't want you cleaning my house!  
Do you understand??!!

42A INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

42A \*

Where Joanne and Tracy, both in robes, are glaring at each other over the pile of Joanne's stuff. Ben, carrying schoolbooks and wearing his headset, is just scooting out the front door. Max descends the stairs.

TRACY

(continuing; to Joanne)

I said do you understand??!!

MAX

(crossing to her)

Tracy!!

JOANNE

(to Tracy)

What I understand is that you're  
behaving like an infant!!

TRACY

Don't you dare talk to me like  
that in my house!! Don't you  
dare!!

MAX

Tracy, please!

TRACY

(to Joanne; points  
to Joanne's stuff)

And I want that junk out of my  
living room! Now! Or I'll toss  
it into the street!!

MAX

TRACY! STOP IT!

Joanne storms into her room and slams the door. Max reaches tenderly for Tracy who whirls angrily to him.

TRACY

Is this my house??!!

(CONTINUED)

42A CONTINUED: (2)

42A

MAX

Of course, it's your house.

TRACY

Then get out of here and leave me  
alone!

MAX

Me? What did I do?

Tracy bolts for the staircase. Max follows. Tracy  
races into the bedroom and slams the door. Max tries  
the knob. Locked. He knocks softly.

TRACY'S VOICE

GO AWAY!!!

Max looks frustrated. Joanne's door opens. She pops  
her head out and looks up at Max at the top of the  
stairs.

JOANNE

Leave her alone, Max, she's  
teething.

Max throws a murderous glare at Joanne who pops back  
into her room and locks the door. PUSH to Max looking  
beleaguered and impotent.

43 EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET - DAY

43

As Max walks along the sidewalk "muticulating" (mutter-  
ing and gesticulating). Some anxious reactions from  
passersby. As Max nears his office he calms himself  
with an effort and forces on a happy face.

43A INT. MAX'S OFFICE - DAY  
as Max enters, SINGING:

43A \*

MAX

When the moon hits your eye  
like a big pizza pie  
that's amore.

Danny looks up from his desk and smiles knowingly.

DANNY

That bad, huh?

MAX

(all innocence)  
What?

(CONTINUED)

43A CONTINUED:

43A\*

DANNY

Joanne and Tracy. They're at each other's throats.

MAX

No way!! I know how to handle my women.

DANNY

Oh, Max, Max, Max... when are you going to stop playing games with --

MAX

Hey! Spare me the therapy rap, okay?

DANNY

Okay, Max. I know where you're coming from.

MAX

Tracy and Joanne are getting along fine. Just fine!

44 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

44

Where Joanne and Tracy, now dressed, are going at it.

JOANNE

Don't give me that! I know you and Max were sleeping together before we separated!

TRACY

That's a lie! I never went out with Max till after he left you!

JOANNE

He didn't leave me! I left him!!

TRACY

Hey, lady, if you want to go through life lying to yourself ---

JOANNE

Going through life??!! What would someone like you possibly know about that??!!

45 INT. MAX'S OFFICE - DAY

45

Where Danny is doing paperwork and Max is on the phone:

(CONTINUED)

45

CONTINUED:

45

MAX

Mrs. Reynolds, we're dealing with an issue here that's more important than mere money. Your husband will understand what I mean and I'd like --

(a beat)

I know your husband's gone and I'd appreciate it if you'd have him call me when he gets back.

(a beat; impatient)

Yes, Mrs. Reynolds, I understand he's gone and as soon as he --

(a beat, chagrined)

Oh! You mean... that kind of 'gone'... I'm sorry, I didn't know.

(a beat; embarrassed)

Yes, we'll be at the funeral...

Max hangs up. Danny catches his eye. Max sighs wearily.

MAX

Mrs. Reynolds is gone...

DANNY

I got the picture...

(checks watch; rises)

Hey, we have to meet with the Arnolds if we want that listing. Do you have the papers.

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

MAX

Damn it! I left them at home. I completely forgot.

\*\*  
\*\*

DANNY

Sure when two women are fighting you could forget anything.

\*\*  
\*\*

MAX

They're not fighting.

(starting out)

You wait here, I'll go get the papers and come back.

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

DANNY

There won't be time and it's on the way...unless, of course, you don't want to see them fighting.

\*\*  
\*\*

MAX

They're --not -- fighting!!

46

INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

46

As Tracy and Joanne keep tearing into each other.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

TRACY

This is my house!! Where do you  
get off barging in here, taking  
over the place like some Queen of  
Sheba??!!

JOANNE

You think I want to be here??!!  
In the same house as you!!??

TRACY

If you didn't want to you wouldn't!!  
Where's your pride??!!

JOANNE

My pride??!! It's in the same  
place as my alimony and support  
payments!!

47 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

47

As Max and Danny exit Max's car, parked at the curb,  
they walk toward Max's front door. We hear the MUFFLED  
SOUNDS of the argument.

\*  
\*

DANNY

Sounds like an argument.

MAX

(lamely)  
It's probably the TV. Tracy loves  
those soap operas.

48 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

48

Where Joanne and Tracy are still going at it.

TRACY

I sold him sandwiches, that's all!  
We never had relations while he  
was married!

JOANNE

I didn't say you had relations! I  
said you had sex!

TRACY

We never went all the way but I'll  
tell you what we did do!

JOANNE

You held hands!

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

TRACY

We did a lot more than that, lady!  
And right in your own living room!

JOANNE

(clenched teeth)  
You were never in my living room!

TRACY

(going for the kill)  
Green carpeting? Family pictures  
on the piano? You had a Boston  
fern that needed light. I moved  
it into the kitchen.

JOANNE

(nearing hysteria)  
MY PLANT? MY HUSBAND? MY LIVING  
ROOM??

TRACY

(the coup de grace)  
Your piano always needed dusting.

JOANNE

WHY YOU ROTTEN LITTLE...  
(gropes)  
... CHIPPY!

Joanne, with murder in her eye, moves swiftly to Tracy who stands her ground bravely. In the b.g. we see the front door open just wide enough for Max to poke his head in. Max reacts in shock as Joanne slaps Tracy hard across the face. Max pops his head outside and closes the door.

49 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

49

As Max, on his front doorstep, turns to Danny who obviously didn't see the slap. Max looks shocked; Danny looks puzzled.

DANNY

What's wrong?

MAX

(trying desperately  
to recover)  
Nothing! They're not even home!

Danny reaches for the door knob but Max beats him to it. Max clutches the knob, effectively barring entry.

(CONTINUED)

DANNY

For God's sake, Max, get in touch with reality! Your wife and your ex-wife are not getting along! It's normal and it's natural! There's nothing to be ashamed of and it doesn't diminish you as a man to admit it!!

MAX

(a bit unhinged)  
Everything -- is -- fine.

Danny slowly and firmly removes Max's hand from the door knob.

DANNY

We are going in there together, Max, you and me. We are going to confront the situation and you are going to acknowledge it. It's for your own mental health!

49A INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

49A

Danny opens the door and enters the living room, almost dragging Max in with him. Both Danny and Max react to the totally unexpected sight of Joanne and Tracy hugging each other and crying like two warm, intimate friends. Max is open-mouthed; Danny looks baffled. Joanne and Tracy turn to the men and AD LIB pleasant greetings. Danny returns the greetings; Max is speechless.

\*  
\*

JOANNE

We were just going to make some lunch...

TRACY

Would you guys like to join us...?

Max, looking numb, just turns and exits the apartment. Danny shrugs, smiles, tosses a casual "peace" sign to the women and hustles after Max. Joanne and Tracy smile fondly at each other.

50 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

50

Where Max sits on the edge of the bed as Tracy paces excitedly in front of him. Both are dressed as before.

TRACY

Oh, Max, we said some terrible things to each other. Awful! And then... we slapped each other.

\*

(CONTINUED)

\*  
\*  
\*

MAX

I saw... It wasn't like you,  
being so... unfriendly.

\*

TRACY

Max, I never even gave her a chance!  
And then that slap. I mean, it  
really opened my eyes!

MAX

Yeah, well...

TRACY

She's a wonderful person, you know  
that! She's sweet and considerate  
and loving and ---

MAX

I'm just glad you're not fighting  
any more.

TRACY

(a dramatic beat)

You know what, Max? I suddenly  
felt like she was... my mother.

Max accepts this admission with mixed emotions.

51 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

. 51

Where Joanne and Tracy, both in jeans, are working like  
a well-oiled team; integrating Joanne's stuff into the  
apartment. Pictures on walls, books into bookcases;  
everything seems to fit and spruce up the room.

TRACY

I never really had a father. He  
ran off when I was five. My mother  
--- talk about a mess. She got  
married four more times. She never  
wanted me to get too friendly with  
any of her husbands. She used to  
go: 'Tracy Louise, be polite to  
them the way you would in business.  
Be a guest in your house.'

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

TRACY (CONT'D)

(a beat)

I tried looking for my father once. I called everyone in the phone book named William Hollister. I asked everyone of them if they were my dad. They all said no.

Tracy looks reminiscent. Joanne looks moved.

52 EXT. SMALL HOUSE - DAY

52

With Max's Buick parked in front as Danny and Max finish driving a "BOONE REALTY" sign into the miniscule front lawn. An old, overgrown tree casts heavy shadows over the front of the house. Max begins walking around the house, making notes on a clipboard as Danny follows, snapping Polaroids.

DANNY

All the roof shingles are starting to curl off...

MAX

Rustic.

DANNY

Not much of a front yard...

MAX

Minimal upkeep.

DANNY

That old tree is keeping all the sunlight out of the living room

MAX

Shaded entry.

DANNY

Max, Max, how do you do it? How do you stay so unflinchingly optimistic?

MAX

You've got to look on the bright side. There's always a bright side to any situation.

DANNY

(grudgingly)

Even having your ex-wife move in with you...

(CONTINUED)

MAX

Look, Tracy and I could've fought it and made everyone miserable. But we decided to make the best of it. I get to see my son everyday ... and Joanne... well, she's kind of nice to have around.

DANNY

The philosophy of Max Boone: If you're shoved in a vat of manure, plant strawberries.

MAX

(grins)

And make sure you keep your head up.

DANNY

So how long do you plan to have Joanne around?

MAX

Not long. Just 'til business picks up.

DANNY

Don't hold your breath.

(a beat)

Haven't you ever thought about getting her married off?

(a grin)

No more alimony payments.

MAX

(uneasy)

Yeah, well...

DANNY

You know, she is an exceptionally attractive woman.

MAX

(mixed emotions)

Yes... she is...

DANNY

Too bad they outlawed bigamy.

MAX

(defensive)

One wife is plenty, thank you very much.

53 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

53

Where Joanne and Tracy are almost finished integrating Joanne's stuff. The room looks great.

TRACY

I met Max when I was selling sandwiches office-to-office. Cream cheese with olives on pumpernickel, that was his favorite. I taught him how to rollerskate. I took him to see the Rolling Stones. He'd never seen them before. He wanted to take care of me. Nobody ever wanted to take care of me.

JOANNE

Max is very good about taking care of people... when he's financially able.

TRACY

It works both ways, Joanne. I take care of him, too.

JOANNE

(delicately)

Is that going to be enough for you?

TRACY

What do you mean?

JOANNE

Taking care of Max. Is that all you want for yourself?

TRACY

Sure, for right now. It's a big job and I've still got a lot to learn.

(a beat; embarrassed)

I barely know how to cook.

JOANNE

Would you like me to... show you?

TRACY

(excited, delighted)

Would you???

JOANNE

Sure.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

JOANNE (CONT'D)

(checks watch)

I've got about an hour before my  
next job interview.

TRACY

(a tentative smile)

Could you teach me how to boil  
water without burning a hole in  
the pot?

Joanne laughs; Tracy giggles.

54 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

54

Where Tracy, under the covers, is reading a book. Max,  
wearing only a pajama bottom, slides in next to her.  
Max glances at the book's title.

MAX

'How to Be Your Own Best Friend'?

TRACY

Joanne gave it to me. It's very  
interesting.

MAX

I hope this new relationship  
doesn't get out of hand.

TRACY

(a bit defensive)

What's that supposed to mean?

MAX

(mollifying like mad)

Hey, I just mean that she's not  
going to be around here long,  
that's all.

Max begins snuggling, stroking and kissing Tracy.

TRACY

Please, Max, Joanne's downstairs.

MAX

So this time we'll be quiet.

TRACY

But I still know she's there.

(CONTINUED)

MAX  
I'm sure she'd approve. I'll get  
a note from her, if you want.

TRACY  
Be serious, Max.

MAX  
(more snuggling)  
I'm trying, I'm trying.

TRACY  
(pulling away)  
You're making me very guilty.

MAX  
Guilty? About what?

TRACY  
About you and me making love when  
Joanne has nobody.

Pow! Max has no answer for this. His eyes glaze. He  
eases slowly out of bed and puts on a bathrobe. He  
takes his sax from the closet and exits the room as  
Tracy resumes reading and we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

55 INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

55

As Max enters from the outside door wearing his bath-robe and carrying his sax. He opens the fridge and pokes around in the freezer as Ben in pajamas, pads sleepily in. Max turns to him:

\*

MAX

Hey, champ, it's two in the morning.

BEN

I figured that was you playing the sax.

MAX

Sorry, I rolled up the windows.

BEN

It sounded good. You're getting a lot of practice lately.

MAX

Yeah...  
(a beat)  
Want some ice cream?

BEN

Is the Pope Polish?

Ben sits down at the table as Max gets two spoons and puts a gallon ice cream container on the table between them. As they talk they both eat from the container, passing it back and forth between them.

MAX

So... how's everything going?

BEN

I found a video arcade in the neighborhood. I met some kids there that live around the corner. It was fun.

MAX

You seem to be adjusting as well as your mother. I just wish you'd try being a little pleasant to Tracy.

BEN

Is this going to be a lecture?

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

Max shakes his head. They eat in silence for a moment, then:

MAX

Tracy's dad abandoned her when she was a kid.

BEN

I knew this was going to be a lecture.

MAX

I'm just trying to say that I'd never disappear on you. You'd always know where to find me.

BEN

I know.

MAX

We haven't seen each other much since your mom and I split...

BEN

Every other weekend. That's more than a lot of my friends get.

MAX

I think about you every day, Ben.

BEN

I think about you, too, Dad.

MAX

I feel very guilty.

BEN

You shouldn't. I think we've got a better relationship than most kids I know. But if it makes you happy to feel guilty...

MAX

I love you, Ben.

BEN

I love you, too, Dad, and I want you to know that I'm grateful for any crumb of attention you toss me.

MAX

(a beat)

Let's quit while we're ahead.

56 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

56

Which, with all Joanne's books and pictures in place, looks terrific. Max enters through the front door, wearing a business suit. He looks expectant.

MAX

Daddy's home!

Tracy enters from the kitchen wearing an apron.

TRACY

You're awfully early. Ben is still in school. \*

MAX

(a seductive smile)  
Precisely my plan.

(a sniff)

That's a great smelling roast.  
(points to kitchen)

Joanne isn't in there with you, is she?

TRACY

No, I'm soloing tonight.  
(a grin)

I took Joanne with me to pottery class this morning. She had the only vase that didn't explode.

MAX

She's supposed to be looking for work, Tracy.

TRACY

She is, Max, right now. But she needs some recreation.

MAX

So do I.

Max reaches warmly for Tracy but she pulls away.

TRACY

Please, Max.

MAX

It's okay, Tracy, we're alone in the house.

TRACY

I know, but --

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

MAX

(angry)

Right! Joanne doesn't have anyone!! So, let's find her someone! Go fix her up with one of your old boyfriends!

TRACY

(inspired)

Max! What a terrific idea!! I'll make some phone calls right now!!!

Tracy races into the kitchen as Max just slumps; rejected and dejected. After a beat Max crosses wearily back to the front door. \*

57 INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - DAY

57

Where Tracy sits at the breakfast table with a handwritten list of names and phone numbers. Most of the names have been crossed off. She's been on the phone for hours.

TRACY

It was good talking to you again, Ralph. Give my best to your new wife, okay?

(hangs up; crosses another name off list)

Bummer.

(dials another number)

Stewart? Hi, it's Tracy.

(a beat)

Yes, it has been a long time. You're not married or anything, are you?

(a beat; a smile)

Oh, that's great. Look, I've got a new place and how'd you like to come over for dinner?

58 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

58

Where Ben with his headset and a box of Cracker Jacks, is on the floor doing homework. Joanne enters through the front door looking exhausted, bedraggled and depressed. Ben sees her and hides the snack but Joanne doesn't even care. Joanne crosses to her room. \*

58A INT. GUEST ROOM - DAY

as Joanne sags onto the edge of the bed and, after a moment, starts to cry. \*

59 INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - DAY

59

As Tracy finishes on the phone:

TRACY

Sure, Stewart, tonight'll be fine.  
Make it at 8:30, okay? See you  
then.

A triumphant Tracy hangs up the phone and puts a big  
circle around Stewart's name. She rises and Exits.

\*

59A INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

59A\*

Where Ben is still wearing his headset and stuffing  
his face. Tracy enters and crosses to Ben.

\*

\*

TRACY

\*

Ben?

Ben ignores her. Tracy reaches down and plucks Ben's  
earphones off his head. Ben is annoyed.

\*

\*

BEN

\*

Hey!

TRACY

You know, Ben, you're a nice  
looking boy. You're bright and  
you've got a great sense of humor  
and you're spoiling it all.

\*

BEN

\*

Gimme back my ears!

TRACY

All you do is eat.

\*\*

BEN

\*

(Bogart)

Dames like a guy with meat on his  
bones!

TRACY

That's right, Ben, make a joke of  
it. Eat and joke, joke and eat.  
Too bad. You're getting to the  
age where you'll want girls to  
like you.

\*

BEN

Heavy-set men have sex.

TRACY

Not -- as -- much.

(CONTINUED)

59B

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

59B \*

AS Tracy enters and sees Joanne sitting on her bed, looking forlorn. Tracy kneels by her and takes her hands. Joanne barely manages a smile. After a moment.

\*  
\*  
\*

TRACY

I've invited a very attractive man for dinner and we are going to cook our buns off!

60

INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

60

Where Max and Tracy are dressing for dinner. Tracy looks excited. Max looks annoyed.

MAX

Who is this Stewart guy, anyway?

\*

TRACY

He's a very nice person.

MAX

Yeah? What does he look like?

TRACY

(smiles)  
He's about the handsomest man I've ever met.

A pang of jealousy hits Max and he tries to hide it.

MAX

What does this turkey do for a living?

TRACY

When I dated him he was a TV repairman...

MAX

A TV repairman??!! You're fixing up my ex-wife with a --

TRACY

It was your idea, Max! I thought you wanted her to get married.

MAX

Sure, but not to some penniless schlep! Why couldn't you find her someone with some -- some substance!

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

TRACY

I did the best I could!

MAX

(a beat)

Tracy, what did you tell this guy  
about Joanne?

TRACY

He doesn't know there is a Joanne.

MAX

What??!!

TRACY

I had to get him over here, Max.  
There's a time and a place for  
everything.

MAX

(a long beat)

Tracy, if you think your fish  
dinner was a disaster, just wait  
'til you see this one.

TRACY

(wide-eyed innocence)

Trust me, Max.

Max just stares incredulously at Tracy.

61 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

61

Where the table is again set gloriously, this time for five. Surprisingly, the evening is a success, at least for Joanne and Tracy who are both beaming at STEWART, a 28-year-old version of Warren Beatty. Joanne looks very beautiful and very up. Max looks uneasy. Ben looks bored. Dinner is a savory roast, which everyone is heartily eating... except Ben, who picks at his food.

\*  
\*

STEWART

Mr. Boone, I must say you have  
excellent taste in wives.

Max just grunts. Stewart beams at Joanne and Tracy:

STEWART

(continuing)

You know, you two could almost be  
sisters. I can see the resemblance.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

Dislike herself, Joanne almost giggles. Max looks bugged.

MAX

So... how's the TV repair business?

STEWART

I don't do that anymore, Mr. Boone. I have my own company, now. Maybe you've heard of us. We're called Fungus.

Max looks blank. Joanne recognizes the name. So does Ben, with an incredible passion:

BEN

Fungus??!! You own Fungus??!!  
That's fantastic!!

MAX

Fungus...?

BEN

Video games, Dad! They're in all the arcades, all over the country! Space Marauders, Astro Scorpions, Oddball... all the kids play them! They're fabulous!

STEWART

You play our games, Ben?

JOANNE

Play them? He's hooked on them!

STEWART

Ben, we have three new ones that we're going to be consumer-testing. Our factory's not far from here. Would you be interested in giving us your opinion?

BEN

I sure would! Wow!! Wait 'til I tell the guys about this!!

STEWART

(smiles at Max)  
We picked the name 'Fungus' 'cause our games grow on you --

MAX

(nodding grimly)  
-- like a fungus. Terrific.

(CONTINUED)

JOANNE

Stewart, I wonder if you remember a Fungus ad campaign presented by Bradley and Bates.

STEWART

I sure do. We couldn't afford it at the time, but it was one of the most creative campaigns I'd ever seen.

JOANNE

That was my campaign.

STEWART

Really?! Joanne, it was brilliant!

JOANNE

Thank you, kind sir.

Joanne looks coquettish and Max looks even more bugged.

TRACY

I'm so glad everyone's getting on so well.

JOANNE

Ben, honey, you're not eating. \*

BEN \*

I'm not hungry, Mom.

Ben and Tracy exchange secret looks. Max goes for the throat: \*

MAX

Video arcade games, huh?

STEWART

Yes, sir.

MAX \*

Friend of mine went into business selling those plastic hoops -- remember those? Lost a fortune.

Stewart knows what Max is up to but he's going to be cool if it kills him.

STEWART

I know what you mean, Mr. Boone. I was kind of worried that video games might turn out to be some kind of flash-in-the-pan fad...

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (3)

61

JOANNE

According to an article in Fortune Magazine, it's one of the super growth industries of the 80's.

\*

MAX

(still trying)

Yeah, I know those growth industries. Starting out, you're lucky to break even.

STEWART

Well, our first year was pretty rough, but last year wasn't bad.

(the coup de grace)

We're going public soon so it's no secret we just grossed 128 million dollars...

MAX

(knows when he's licked)

Pass the salt...

62 INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

62

Where Joanne and Stewart are alone, doing the dishes. Joanne washes, Stewart dries and they make a great team.

STEWART

How about having dinner with me tomorrow night?

(grins)

Not here, though. I feel a little uneasy around your ex-husband.

JOANNE

Stewart, I must tell you that in spite of the way Max behaved, I haven't enjoyed an evening like this in a long time.

STEWART

So let's have dinner.

JOANNE

I'm a little embarrassed about this whole thing. I know you expected a date with Tracy.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

STEWART

Joanne, can I be very honest with you?

JOANNE

Of course.

STEWART

I've been compulsively busy the past few years getting the business started. The few women I've met have been a disappointment. Tracy was fun, but... you're different. From anyone I've ever met. I find you incredibly attractive both physically and intellectually, and I don't have any hangups about age. I like Ben a lot, too.

\*

JOANNE

(a long beat)

I'm not that much older than you.

63 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

63

As Joanne and Stewart walk hand-in-hand toward Stewart's car: a new Clenet roadster parked behind Joanne's car. Stewart gets into the Clenet as Joanne stands alongside.

STEWART

See you tomorrow night?

Joanne nods. Stewart stretches out of the car and kisses Joanne softly on the lips, then starts the engine and drives slowly off. Joanne watches him go, the floats to the front door where Max stands glowering, like an angry papa.

MAX

He's too young for you.

JOANNE

Tell me about 'too young.'

63A INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

63A\*

Joanne brushes past Max and enters the living room where Ben and Tracy are standing, grinning at her. Tracy makes a circle with thumb and forefinger. Joanne nods gratefully.

\*

BEN

Jackpot, Mom.

\*

(CONTINUED)

63A CONTINUED:

63A\*

JOANNE

Sometimes there's a little justice  
in life.

Max, in the b.g., glowers even deeper.

64 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

64

Where Max is on the edge of the bed, removing his shoes. Tracy enters from the bathroom, wearing a shorty nightgown.

TRACY

I told you everything would work out. He's handsome, he's rich, and he obviously likes Joanne. Ben, too. What more could you want?

MAX

Not a thing...

TRACY

Say: 'Thank you, Tracy, you done good.'

MAX

I'm a little tired, okay?

TRACY

Want me to rub your shoulders?

Max nods and lies back wearily. Tracy crawls into bed and begins rubbing Max's shoulders. Very sensuously.

TRACY

(continuing; a beat)  
Max... if I promise to be real quiet... could we make love?

MAX

Joanne's downstairs...

TRACY

It's okay, Max, I think she's got somebody now.

Max greets this news with a terrible mix of emotions.

MAX

(after a long beat)  
I've got this terrible headache...

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

Max closes his eyes and Tracy gazes at him in puzzlement as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

65 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

65

Where Max and Stewart are alone, seated across from each other. Max wears slacks and sport shirt. Stewart looks commanding in an expensive suit. The door to the guest bedroom is closed. Max is minutely inspecting his fingernails. Stewart is working a Rubik's cube. The silence and tension is painful. Finally: the door to the guest bedroom opens and Tracy, wearing a very plain housecoat, appears. She makes a grand flourish behind her:

TRACY

Ta-Daaaa!!!!

Into the living room steps Joanne, looking utterly marvelous. Her clothes have color and dash, her hair has flair, her makeup is impeccable. Joanne looks totally together and confident. She pirouettes once for the men. Max, staring at Joanne in awe, remains seated. Stewart, grinning like a Cheshire, rises.

STEWART

Joanne! You look fabulous!

JOANNE

Thank you. Ready?

STEWART

Willing and able.

Tracy gives Joanne a proud peck and squeeze, whispering:

TRACY

Knock 'em dead, tiger.

Stewart crosses to Joanne and takes her hand. They exchange "goodnights" with Tracy. Max remains silent.

STEWART

Good night, Mr. Boone.

MAX

Yeah...

JOANNE

Don't anybody wait up.

Joanne and Stewart are out the door as Max still remains seated, a bit numb. Tracy crosses to him, plumps down in his lap, and puts her arms around his neck.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65\*\*

TRACY

Well... Ben is at a friend's and  
Joanne's on a date.

(giggles)

I feel like a horny married woman  
who finally got all her kids out  
of the house.

She nuzzles Max's ear. Max looks like he's making a  
momentous decision.

MAX

Yes!

(rises with Tracy in  
his arms)

Now, we are going to make love  
like two sex-crazed teenagers.

\*\*

TRACY

You bet we are!

And, like Rhett Butler with Scarlett O'Hara, Max carries Tracy up the staircase. Beaming grimly.

66 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - MUCH LATER THAT NIGHT

66

Where Max and Tracy are in bed. Tracy is asleep, smiling. Max is awake, staring. After a moment, Max slides carefully out of bed and dons a bathrobe. We FOLLOW him down to the darkened living room where Ben is asleep on the couch. Max pads, barefoot, over to the guest bedroom. The door is open. Max peers in. The room is empty; the bed is unslept in. Max's eyes narrow. He pads over to Ben and shakes him gently. Ben's eyes open. He looks fuzzily up at Max.

BEN

Oh! Hi, Dad.

MAX

Where's your mother?

BEN

Didn't she go out with Stewart?

MAX

Yes, she went out with Stewart.  
It's 3:30 in the morning and she's  
not home!

(CONTINUED)

66A CONTINUED:

66A

BEN

\*

(a long beat)  
 Would you mind not playing the sax? Go eat something. Works just as good.

MAX

(a beat)  
 I brought home some fresh bagels for breakfast. Want to split one?

BEN

\*

I'm on a diet.

MAX

What diet?

BEN

\*

Dad, can I please go back to sleep?

Ben closes his eyes. Max stares at him for a moment.

66B INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

66B\*

As Max enters.... opens the bread box and takes out a poly bag of bagels. Then he notices the kitchen clock reading 3:40. It seems to taunt him. Max replaces the bagels, untouched, and we FOLLOW him to the front door. He opens it and peers out. After a moment, Max steps outside, softly closing the door behind him.

67 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

67

As Max stands by Joanne's car and looks around. The street is dark and deserted. Max takes a deep breath and begins ambling slowly and aimlessly along the sidewalk. At 3:40 in the morning, barefoot and in a bathrobe, Max is taking a walk. "Mutilating" again.

A red Corvette rolls up alongside Max, heading the opposite way. WILMA, an attractive woman of a certain age who is alone in the car, leans out the driver's window. \*\*\*

WILMA

\*\*\*

Were you talking to me?

MAX

I was talking to myself.

WILMA

\*\*\*

Would you like to talk to me?

MAX

No, thank you.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

WILMA

\*\*\*

Have a nice evening.

The Corvette drives off as Max resumes his mobile mutilating. \*\*\*

After a moment, the Corvette (having made an O.S. U-turn), pulls up to Max, heading the same way. WILMA \*\*\*  
leans out the passenger window: \*\*\*

WILMA

\*\*\*

(continuing)

Hello, again.

MAX

I'd really prefer being alone, if you don't mind.

WILMA

\*\*\*

I don't believe in forcing a relationship.

The corvette drives off. Max resumes his mutilations. \*\*\*  
The corvette rolls up again, from the opposite direction.

WILMA

\*\*\*

(continuing)

Okay, so I am forcing a relationship.

MAX

Look, isn't this against the law or something? \*\*\*

WILMA

\*\*\*

What are you, a one-man citizen committee?

The Corvette drives off again. She gives him a withering look. Max resumes his soul searching. Max breaks off as he hears a car engine behind him. He turns to see a car approaching slowly. It looks a lot like the Cordoba. Max is really pissed.

MAX

I'm just not up to this.

Max breaks into a run. Suddenly, unexpectedly, the car behind Max turns on a set of flashing red roof lights. Max, running, doesn't notice. The car accelerates and pulls alongside Max, who refuses to look over at it. It's a police car with two uniformed cops inside. BUTANSKY drives, GREEN rides shotgun. Green leans out\* the window toward Max.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

GREEN  
Excuse me, sir, mind pulling over?

Finally, Max looks over to the cop car and reacts. Heavily. He SCREECHES to a halt. So does the cop car. Both Green and Butansky get out of their unit and cautiously approach a trembling Max, who slowly raises his hands. \*

BUTANSKY  
That's not necessary, sir.

GREEN  
Just keep your hands in sight.

Max slowly lowers his hands, holding them away from his body.

BUTANSKY  
May we ask what you're doing out at this hour?

MAX  
I -- I was just -- taking a walk...

BUTANSKY  
Barefoot?

GREEN  
In a bathrobe?

BUTANSKY  
At four in the morning?

MAX  
Looks bad, huh?

GREEN  
We've seen worse.

BUTANSKY  
Do you have any identification, sir?

MAX  
No, not on me, but -- yes, of course! I have a birthmark on my right shoulder!!

Green and Butansky look grim. Max looks contrite.

GREEN  
Not quite what we had in mind...

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

MAX

Look, Officer, could I please go home?!

Butansky and Green exchange looks. Green nods. Butansky \*  
turns to Max:

BUTANSKY

You have the right to remain silent.  
If you give up that right --

MAX

Oh, my God!!!

68 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - MORNING

68

Where Stewart's Clenet is parked at the curb. After a moment, the police car drives up and stops behind it. Green and Butansky are in front, Max is in the rear. Max looks on top of things.

MAX

They're home. That's his car.

GREEN

Everything's going to be fine, Max. Go have yourself a big breakfast.

MAX

I sure will. Bagels and cream cheese. I can hardly wait!

Max, still in his robe and bare feet, exits the police car and stands eyeing his apartment. Butansky leans out.

BUTANSKY

I'll get my wife to call you this afternoon.

MAX

You'll love that house, Arthur. \*  
It's just perfect for the both of you. And with plenty of room for kids.

GREEN

Take care, Max, sorry we had to hassle you.

MAX

No sweat, Lloyd. Hope you nab that flasher. \*

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

Butansky and Green wave goodbye and drive off. Max eyes the apartment, then checks his reflection in the Clenet's side-view mirror. He runs his fingers through his hair, straightens his robe, and pads smartly to his front door.

\*

69 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - MORNING

69

As Max, looking bedraggled, enters the kitchen, still in robe and bare feet. Joanne and Stewart, wearing the same clothes from last night, are seated across from Tracy, wearing a housecoat. They are finishing a big breakfast of bagels, lox, cream cheese and coffee. The wall clock reads 9:15. Everyone reacts to Max, who is forcing himself to be calm.

MAX

Good morning, everyone.

TRACY

(rising; concerned)

Max! Where have you been??!!

MAX

I just went for a little walk. Everything's fine. Please. Sit down and finish your breakfast.

Tracy sinks slowly into her chair as Max remains standing.

JOANNE

Max, I know you were worried and I know I should have --

MAX

(mild sarcasm)

Worried? Why should I be worried?

(looks around)

Where's Ben?

\*

STEWART

I drove him to school.

MAX

That was very considerate.

(rummaging around)

Y'know, for the past six hours, my mouth has been absolutely watering for a toasted bagel.

(CONTINUED)

TRACY

(a beat; very nervous)

There... there's no more bagels,  
Max.

STEWART

I'm afraid I ate the last one, Mr.  
Boone.

MAX

(contained anger)

As a guest in my house, you're  
entitled. Any coffee left? I'm  
dying for a cup of coffee.

Tracy picks up the pot and shakes it. She looks more  
nervous.

TRACY

I... I guess I gave the last cup  
to Stewart...

MAX

Uh-huh...

JOANNE

I'll make some fresh.

MAX

No. Please. Don't bother. Maybe  
a glass of warm water...

STEWART

I'm sorry, Mr. Boone.

MAX

(bearing down on him)

Sorry? Sorry for what? You have  
dinner at a man's house, take his  
ex-wife on a date, keep her out  
all night and, as if that wasn't  
enough, you drink his last coffee  
and eat his last bagel! And then  
you say you're sorry? Is that  
what your mother taught you?

Tracy looks stunned. Stewart and Joanne rise. Just in  
time.

STEWART

I'd better get to work.

JOANNE

I'll walk you out.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (2)

69

MAX

Stop by anytime. My house is yours. Both of yours.

As Stewart and Joanne exit, Max grabs a remnant of bagel from Stewart's plate and wolfs it down. Tracy watches very, very nervously.

70 INT. MAX'S UNDERGROUND GARAGE - LATER THAT MORNING 70

As Max, in a three-piece suit, strides purposefully toward his car. Joanne, wearing a smart business suit, stands near the still bashed-in Buick. Max looks angry.

JOANNE

I have an interview at 11, but I've got to talk to you first. I want you to know that I'm trying like crazy to find a job so I can get Ben and me out of your hair. \*

MAX

Feeling a little guilty about sleeping with some guy on the first date?

JOANNE

That's none of your business!!

MAX

It took me 12 dates to get to you, but that was 20 years ago. \*

Joanne just stares at Max in terrible, open-mouthed hurt. Max suddenly softens.

MAX

(continuing)

I'm sorry, that was a rotten thing to say.

(an odd vulnerability)

Are you going to marry Stewart?

JOANNE

Max, I just met the man!

MAX

That didn't keep you from sleeping with him!

JOANNE

Stop it, Max, you're way out of line!!

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70 -

Max takes a long beat. He looks like he wants to reach out and touch Joanne but can't work up the nerve.

MAX  
(tenderly)  
Joanne... I... I still --

JOANNE  
No, Max! Don't say it! Don't even think it!! You've got a wonderful wife who loves you so desperately it's almost criminal!!

They look at each other. They both seem to want to touch but know it's verboten. After a moment:

JOANNE  
(continuing)  
I just hope you don't make the same mistake you made with me...

MAX  
(a faint edge)  
Oh? And what was that?

JOANNE  
Let her into your life, Max. Be open with her. And help her grow as a person, not just as Max Boone's wife.

MAX  
(a long beat)  
Thank you for the fascinating lecture in psychology 1A. I'll have to share that with my friend Danny. I mean, I know where you're coming from and I do want to get in touch with my feeling --

JOANNE  
Max! Cut it out!!

MAX  
(opens car door)  
Need a lift?

JOANNE  
I've got my own car, thank you! \*

Max nods, gets into the Buick and starts the engine. The car drives off with a terrible GRINDING NOISE. Then we hear the loud SOUND OF THE CAR RADIO as Joanne stands watching, and we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

71 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

71

Where Ben is on the floor with headset and homework but no snack. He looks considerably slimmer. Tracy enters through the front door, dressed for shopping, carrying a Ticketron envelope in her hand. Ben sees her, smiles and removes his headset.

BEN

Hi, Tracy.

TRACY

Don't think I haven't noticed that you're losing weight.

BEN

(Bogart)

You get a guy hooked on you, move through his life like a hurricane, then walk out. You spill blood everywhere you go.

TRACY

I want you to know that you look terribly handsome.

Ben almost blushes. The compliment feels good. Tracy hands him the envelope. Ben looks puzzled.

BEN

What's this?

TRACY

A prize. For losing weight.

BEN

(opens envelope)

Wow! Two tickets to the Black Sabbath concert. Tracy!! Thank you!!

TRACY

Take a friend. Maybe a girl?

BEN

I -- I'd like to take you. Would you go with me?

TRACY

Ben. ... I'd be absolutely honored.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

Ben, in a gesture that speaks volumes, offers the headset to Tracy. She puts it on and smiles with delight. \*

Tracy begins dancing. Expertly. Ben looks enchanted. He begins clapping in time to the unheard music. They are so wrapped up in each other they don't notice that Max has just come home from work, entering through the front door. PUSH to Max's face as he watches his wife and son who seem almost the same age. Max's face is a mix of pleasure and pain. \*

72 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

72

Where Max, his tie and jacket off, is on the edge of the bed blowing a soft blues on his sax. The door is closed. After a moment the door opens and Tracy enters. Max finishes a refrain and stops playing.

TRACY

Play some more, Max. You haven't played for me in so long...

MAX

Ben tells me you bought him some tickets for... \*

TRACY

(fast, guilty)

Max, I know things are tough, and I didn't take a penny from the checking account! I've been scrimping on my household money, just a few dollars every week!

MAX

(moved)

To buy tickets for Ben ... \*

(crosses to her;  
hugs her)

Tracy Louise Hollister Boone, you are the sweetest girl who ever lived.

TRACY

Ben wants to take me. \*

(guilty)

The concert's tomorrow night.

MAX

Tomorrow night? Come on, Tracy, you know the McCormicks' party is tomorrow night.

(CONTINUED)

TRACY

I know.

MAX

And it's important that we be there. It's business.

TRACY

But I always feel so uncomfortable at the McCormicks.

Max turns away from Tracy and walks aimlessly toward a window. Tracy looks terribly vulnerable.

MAX

It's okay. You go to the concert with Ben. It's more important. \*

TRACY

(crossing pensively to him)

Max... There's something else...

MAX

Now what?

TRACY

(biting her lip)

I want to get a job...

MAX

No! There's no need for you to work. Business is going to pick up any day now.

TRACY

Max, it's not the money.

MAX

Then what?

TRACY

I want to do something with my life.

MAX

You are doing something! You're taking care of me, just like I'm taking care of you!

TRACY

But you still work. Why can't I? I really miss working.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

72

MAX

(a beat, softening)  
Is a job that important to you?

TRACY

(total vulnerability)  
Max, I've got to start growing  
up. I'm twenty-three and I haven't  
gotten it right yet. \*

MAX

(very moved)  
I -- I know that feeling...

73 INT. MAX'S OFFICE - DAY

73

As Max enters from the street and stops by Danny at his desk. Max hands Danny a thick envelope.

MAX

Back pay. Some of it anyway. I  
figure you need the money as bad  
as anyone.

Danny opens the envelope to reveal it stuffed with cash. He looks quizzically at Max who shrugs.

MAX

(continuing)  
I've got this Swiss bank account  
that I only use -- NO! That's not  
true!

(very painfully)

I borrowed against my life  
insurance. It's all I've got  
left.

DANNY

(gently)  
It was really painful for you to  
tell me that, wasn't it?

Max just nods. Danny rises, crosses to Max and puts the envelope in Max's pocket. Max looks embarrassed.

MAX

Hey, come on!

DANNY

I'm okay, Max. I can wait 'til we  
sell that house on Harper --

(CONTINUED)

73

CONTINUED:

73

MAX

We're never going to sell that white elephant!!

DANNY

You're right, Max, and I'm extremely proud of you for admitting it. You're taking your first steps toward emotional stability. You're being open and honest. Why haven't you done it before This is the eighties, everybody's letting it out. It really helps.

\*\*

\*\*

MAX

You think so?

\*\*

DANNY

Absolutely.

\*\*

MAX

Okay, alright. I feel like a total loser...

\*\*

DANNY

The word 'loser' is a pejorative term and it's subject to a vast--

MAX

I'm almost forty years old and I've got nothing to show for it! No assets, no savings, no property, NOTHING!

\*\*

DANNY

A man's worth is never measured in purely materialistic --

MAX

Two years ago everyone was making a fortune in condominiums! I poured every cent I had into this construction project. By the time it was done, the condo market was dead! I lost my entire life savings!

DANNY

(a bit distressed)

Let it out, Max. Let it all out. It's therapy.

MAX

(warming to it)

We haven't sold a thing in over six months! Zilch! I owe four months back rent on this office, two months on my apartment and I am just inches from eviction everywhere!! And don't ask about my car!!

(CONTINUED)

73

CONTINUED: (2)

73

DANNY

What's a car? A man's personal relationships are what really...

\*\*

MAX

As far as my personal relations are concerned, I've got a gorgeous young wife that most men would kill to have! But I'm starting to have very strong feelings toward my ex-wife...who is going out with a young, rich, handsome guy who absolutely adores her! And my son is also developing a strong attachment to him. I'm going through a mid-life crises so severe that the governor could easily declare me a one-man disaster area!! About the only solution I haven't tried is suicide, but now that I've depleted my insurance, I'm no longer worth any more dead than alive!!!

Danny, with tears welling in his eyes can only stare at Max who is beginning to look thoroughly catharsized.

DANNY

No wonder you've been holding it all in...

(CONTINUED)

MAX

(almost jubilant)

Danny, I should have taken your advice a long time ago! You're absolutely right! It's good to talk about it. I feel better than I've felt in years!! Thanks for drawing me out. I'm going to get us some coffee.

(grins)

It'll cost a substantial share of my remaining funds, but so what??!!

Max, looking enormously relieved, exits the office. PUSH to Danny who looks so miserably depressed he's almost suicidal. Danny remains rigid in shock for a moment, then begins muttering and gesticulating. The mantle has been passed.

DANNY

I didn't really want to hear all that...

Where Joanne, in a housecoat, is on the couch watching TV. Max descends the staircase looking grand in an expensive suit. Joanne smiles at him. \*

JOANNE

Paul Newman, you're finished!

MAX

Just an old rag I had laying around.

Max crosses to Joanne who rises and begins tying Max's tie. It's apparently an old routine between them.

JOANNE

Ben and Tracy were like kids when they left for the rock concert. \*

MAX

I know...

(a beat)

How are the interviews going?

JOANNE

Don't ask.

(a beat)

Stewart offered me a job.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

MAX  
 (a beat)  
 Going to take it?

JOANNE  
 I don't know.

MAX  
 Well, don't take it on my account.  
 I -- I kind of like having you and  
 Ben around.

Joanne just gives Max an uncomfortable look, then finishes tying his bowtie. Max checks it in a wall mirror.

MAX  
 (continuing)  
 You seeing the boy tycoon tonight?

JOANNE  
 He's out of town. On business.

MAX  
 (sudden impulse)  
 Joanne, come with me to the  
 McCormicks. You know everybody.

JOANNE  
 It wouldn't look right.

MAX  
 Who cares?

JOANNE  
 Max, they're really a bunch of  
 jerks.

MAX  
 I know, but it's business. And  
 wouldn't you just love to see the  
 looks on their faces when we walk  
 in together?

JOANNE  
 (a long beat; a grin)  
 What should I wear?

75 EXT. McCORMICK HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

\* 75

A large, imposing room in a mansion. About thirty well-dressed guests, all about Max's age, clustered in groups.

\*

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

A Pianist plays soft pop as waiters circulate with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Despite the attempt at warmth, the atmosphere is frigid. \*

The babble of conversation suddenly ceases as Joanne enters on Max's arm. She is wearing the same outfit she wore for Stewart. They both look glorious. All eyes are on them as they pause in a clearing for effect. McCORMICK, the host, crosses beamishly to them.

McCORMICK

Max, good to see you. Joanne, what a surprise.

Joanne and Max AD LIB pleasant greetings with McCormick.

McCORMICK

(continuing)

Where's Tracy?

(a beat, a grin)

Out rollerskating?

MAX

Ben took her to a rock concert. \*

McCORMICK

They must make a cute couple. C'mon, say hello to the A-list.

McCormick escorts them to SUE, MARTHA and BILL.

MARTHA

Max. Joanne! Don't tell me you two are back together!

MAX

Just for the evening...

JOANNE

Max hired me from Rent-a-Spouse.

SUE

Joanne, I love your dress. Adolfo?

JOANNE

Boone. I made it myself.

SUE

I didn't know you sewed. I knew you cooked.

BILL

So... Max? How's the real estate business?

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (2)

75

MAX

It stinks. On ice. \*

Joanne shoots Max an amazed look as Bill laughs.

BILL

Ah, Max, you always were the kidder.

MAX

Wasn't I...

McCORMICK

Well, it's nice to see you two together, even if you're not together.

Joanne's eyes cage and she shoots an imploring look at Max who gets the signal.

MAX

See you good folks later. We're going to circulate.

Joanne and Max move swiftly off as we FOLLOW. Joanne leans close to Max:

JOANNE

(sarcastic)

Such terrific people.

MAX

They get even jerkier as they get older. I didn't think it was possible. \*

JOANNE

Okay, Max, we made our entrance and we got our reactions. You ready to go?

They stop by the bar.

MAX

I've got to talk a little business.

JOANNE

Oh, Max, why do you bother?! Twelve years we've been coming to the McCormicks and you've never sold anyone anything!

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (3)

75

MAX  
 (a bit hurt)  
 Leave a man his dreams, Joanne...

JOANNE  
 (very contrite)  
 I'm sorry, Max. Go get 'em!

Max gives Joanne a thumbs-up sign and walks off.  
 Joanne signals to the young, attractive BARTENDER.

JOANNE  
 A double bourbon.

BARTENDER  
 (a warm smile)  
 Got some I.D.?

JOANNE  
 (smiles back)  
 Thanks. I needed that.

As the Bartender mixes the drink, Joanne reacts sourly to the entrance of PAULINE. Middle-age has not been kind to Pauline. Joanne tries to hide her dislike for her.

PAULINE  
 Joanne. How good to see you again.

JOANNE  
 Good seeing you, Pauline...

PAULINE  
 Are you and Max --

JOANNE  
 No. Tracy's out with our son.

PAULINE  
 How nice for them both.

The Bartender hands a big drink to Joanne who grasps it like a lifeline. The Bartender leans close to Joanne and whispers.

BARTENDER  
 I think you'll need another...

JOANNE  
 Right.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (4)

75

Joanne takes a grateful gulp of her drink as the Bartender works, watching in fascination as Pauline bores in:

PAULINE

None of us understand why Max married her.

JOANNE

He married her because he loves her.

PAULINE

We had her to a dinner party. She couldn't carry on a conversation. We talked about books we'd read. She doesn't read. Not even junk.

JOANNE

She's reading.

PAULINE

We talked about politics. Forget it. She didn't know who Margaret Thatcher was. She didn't even know about Poland.

JOANNE

She's twenty-three and her body's firm. That's all she has to know about Solidarity.

PAULINE

I just wanted to tell you that the girl's practically brainless.

Max appears in the b.g. Neither woman notices.

JOANNE

(gets increasingly louder)  
For your information, Tracy is not brainless! She is bright and sweet and considerate and she wouldn't hurt a living soul if her life depended on it!! Tracy is my husband's wife and we both love her very much!!!

Pauline looks like she's been clubbed and the terrace is so quiet you can hear a feather fall. Everyone, including the waiters and musicians, are staring at Joanne who, with head high, marches over to Max and takes his arm. Max grins at her. The Bartender begins applauding.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (5)

75

BARTENDER

I don't get it, but I love it!

Max and Joanne walk off arm-in-arm, past the gaping crowd.

76 EXT.MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

76 \*

As Max and Joanne, walking hand in hand, exit the underground garage and approach Max's front door.

MAX

Twelve years I've been going to the McCormicks and never sold anyone anything.

JOANNE

And, tonight...?

MAX

(grins)  
Bombed out again. Not even a nibble!

JOANNE

(a beat)  
Max, I've never heard you talk like this before.

MAX

Just trying to be honest. And open.

They stop near the doorstep as they hear the soft, muffled sound of ROCK MUSIC from inside the apartment.

JOANNE

Did you leave the stereo on?

MAX

No. The kids must be home...

(catches himself)

I mean Ben and Tracy.

(gazes warmly at her)

You were magnificent tonight, you know that? Like Joan of Arc at the stake.

JOANNE

(mock shudder)

Bad metaphor...

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

MAX

I really enjoyed being with you.

JOANNE

(peers at him)

I enjoyed being with you. It was like old times.

MAX

No. Better than old times.

They gaze at each other for a long time and then they kiss; softly, gently and warmly like two people just beginning a relationship. Joanne breaks away looking terribly guilty.

JOANNE

My God, we can't do this!

MAX

(love in his eyes)

Joanne...

JOANNE

No! This is crazy! I've got to get out of this place!

MAX

Just as soon as I sell a house you'll be able to --

JOANNE

No! It's gone on too long!  
(a beat; firm)  
I'm taking that job with Stewart.

MAX

Joanne, you can't!

JOANNE

I've got to! This is no good for anyone!!

They stare at each other for a long beat and then Joanne slowly reaches for the door knob. She opens the door and enters the apartment, leaving Max outside with a terrible look of loss.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

FADE IN:

77 EXT. MAX' APARTMENT - DAY

77

Where Joanne's car is parked at the curb attached to another U-Haul trailer. Joanne and Tracy are on the curb next to a pile of Joanne's stuff which they are handing piecemeal to Ben in the trailer's bed, who is arranging it neatly. No sign of Max. The mood is bittersweet.

\*

TRACY

(to Joanne)

I -- I hope we can stay friends...

JOANNE

Are you kidding? First paycheck goes for a pair of rollerskates and you're going to show me how!

TRACY

As soon as you teach me to bake.

JOANNE

Deal!

TRACY

(a wistful beat)

I wish you could've been my mother.

JOANNE

Settle for sister?

TRACY

Anything...

Joanne gives Tracy a fond hug and kiss and then looks down at the pile. Only a single picture is left. Tracy takes it.

JOANNE

I'm going to take one last look inside, make sure we haven't forgotten anything.

Joanne exits toward the house as Tracy hands the picture to Ben who smiles at her.

\*

BEN

I lost another five pounds.

\*

TRACY

I'm very proud of you, Ben.

\*

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

BEN  
I'm going to miss you...

TRACY  
You're only moving six blocks  
away. (a neat Bacall)  
If you ever need anything, just  
whistle. You know how to whistle,  
don't you, Steve? You just put  
your lips together and blow.

78 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

78

Which looks very empty with Joanne's pictures and books  
gone. Joanne is checking a bookcase as Max descends the  
staircase.

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

MAX  
(looks around)  
Place looks a little bare...

JOANNE  
You'll get used to it again.

They just look at each other. The PHONE RINGS and Max  
picks up the receiver.

MAX  
Hello?

DANNY'S VOICE  
(excited)  
Max, it's Danny! Guess what?!

MAX  
(grimly)  
The sheriff padlocked our front  
door...

DANNY'S VOICE  
We just sold that house on Harper  
Road!!! Just like you said we  
would!! Max!! All your troubles  
are over!!

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

MAX  
(glumly)  
Sure...

DANNY'S VOICE  
Max? What's wrong?

MAX  
Haven't you learned not to ask me  
that?

79 INT. MAX'S OFFICE - DAY

79

As Danny hangs up the phone. Since we last saw him he's developed a disturbing facial tic. Danny begins muttering and gesticulating.

80 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

80

As Max hangs up the phone and turns sadly to Joanne.

MAX  
I just earned a very big  
commission.

JOANNE  
Congratulations...

MAX  
(a beat)  
So... you're working for Stewart...

JOANNE  
(a long beat)  
Max.. I never slept with him that  
time he kept me out all night.

MAX  
(somewhat relieved)  
Thank you for telling me that.

JOANNE  
I thought it might ease your mind.

MAX  
It does...but that was three weeks  
ago. What's been happening lately?

JOANNE  
Give me a break, Max, okay?

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

MAX  
(smiles)

Okay.

Joanne returns the smile. And then the smiles turn to looks of love and longing and sadness. They remain apart, immobile. Tracy appears, unseen at the open b.g. door. She just watches them and she knows. PUSH to Tracy; utterly expressionless.

81 INT. MAX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

81

\* \*\*

Where Max, comes downstairs in robe, crosses to telephone, anxious as he dials a phone number.

\*\*

\*\*

MAX  
(after a beat; into  
phone)  
Hi, Danny, it's Max.

INTERCUT:

82 INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - DANNY ASLEEP

82

\*

Phone RINGS. Danny looks very displeased and quite twitchy.

DANNY  
Yes, I know.

MAX  
(fast; urgent)  
Listen, I've got to talk to someone  
and I hope you don't mind...

DANNY  
Go for it...

MAX  
I know you're terrific at all this  
interpersonal stuff and I really  
need some advice.

Danny, with a dazed look, puts the receiver down on the nightstand and turns away from it. Max continues unabated.\*\*

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

MAX

(continuing)

I think I'm falling in love with Joanne again but I still love Tracy although I don't think I'm in love with her anymore, if you know what I mean. But I feel terribly responsible for Tracy and I'd rather cut off my arm than bring her any kind of pain. Sometimes I think maybe I should sacrifice my own happiness for Tracy's and other times I think that, hey, I owe something to myself. You know what I mean?

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

(No response)

Danny?!

Danny, having heard none of this, picks up the phone.

DANNY

(half asleep)

A man's got to take responsibility for his own actions.

\* \*\*

MAX

(a beat; ponders; smiles)

You're right. You're absolutely right!! I think I should tell Tracy exactly how I feel and then try to work things out from there.

83 BACK TO MAX'S LIVING ROOM

83 \* \*\*

Tracy comes downstairs to the living room and Max suddenly looks very anxious to ring off.

\*\*

MAX

(continuing)

Hey, thanks a lot, You've been a terrific help.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

83 CONTINUED:

83\*\*

As Max hangs up the phone and crosses to Tracy who looks a bit grim, as if she desperately needs... something. \*

TRACY

Who were you talking to?

Max stands, staring at Tracy, desperately trying to summon enough courage to be honest with her. But he can't. Finally:

MAX

Let's go upstairs and make love, Angel Toes. I want to see that wonderful look on your face. \*\*

Max puts his arms around Tracy and nuzzles her neck. She doesn't respond... well... not totally.

TRACY

C'mon, Max, I'd like to think there's more to our relationship than sex.

Max remains silent.

TRACY

(continuing; an edge of panic)  
Isn't there?

MAX

(as convincingly as possible)  
Of course there is, Angel Toes.

Max pulls away from Tracy and they stand and stare at each other; into the depths of each other's soul (or a reasonable approximation thereof).

84 INT. MAX'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

84 \*

Where Danny is at his desk muttering and gesturing. Max walks in and stares at Danny.

MAX

What's wrong?

DANNY

Nothing.

MAX

If you've got any problems, it helps to talk about them.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

Danny skewers Max with a withering look. Max shrugs and crosses to his desk as Tracy bursts into the office.

TRACY

MAX!!

Max turns to her and she launches herself excitedly into his surprised arms.

TRACY

(continuing)

I got a job! A real job!!

MAX

(forcing enthusiasm)

Tracy, that's wonderful!!!

TRACY

The hours are great and the pay's even better and it's got a real future!!

MAX

We are going to celebrate!

TRACY

Oh, Max, you should have seen me at the audition!

MAX

Audition?

TRACY

I'm in show business!!

MAX

You're kidding!!

TRACY

No!! I'm a singing telegram!

Max tries to look impressed.

85 EXT. FAMILY RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

85

One of those cutesy theme places, like Victoria Station, where all the staff, including the parking lot attendants, are dressed up like engineers, conductors, etc. Max, dressed as young as he can manage, exits the restaurant with Tracy. Both have a forced gaiety about them.

\*  
\*

TRACY

You always pick the right places  
for a celebration.

MAX

(affectionately)

You got to know your customer.

Max hands a parking ticket to an Engineer who lopes off into  
the dark recesses of the lot in search of the Buick. \*  
Max and Tracy are standing near a small knot of People  
who become very interested in the ensuing conversation.

TRACY

It's over, isn't it?

MAX

It sure is, babe. We made enough  
commission on Harper Road to  
last --

TRACY

I don't mean our money problems,  
Max, I mean our marriage.

MAX

(rocked)

What are you saying??!!

A BABBLE of reactive comments from the waiting people.

TRACY

I'm saying that you still love  
Joanne. More than ever.

Another babble of comments from the People, like "Aww,  
the poor kid." Max shoots them all a dirty look and  
hustles Tracy off to a more secluded spot. He looks at  
her for a long, painful moment.

MAX

I would never do a thing in this  
world to hurt you.

TRACY

I know you wouldn't Max, and neither  
would Joanne. But I see the way you  
look at each other. You belong  
together. You two are more purely  
in love than anyone I've ever seen.

(CONTINUED)

MAX  
(miserable)  
Tracy... I... I...

TRACY  
It's okay, Max. I don't need you  
like I used to. I thought I needed  
a father, but I've outgrown that.  
Do you understand what I'm saying?

MAX  
I.... think... so... but...  
(a long beat)  
... what do we do now?

TRACY  
Go to her, Max. Just... go to  
her.

MAX  
But what about you?

TRACY  
I'll be fine, Max, really. That  
silly telegram job is just  
temporary. I'll find something a  
lot better.

MAX  
I know you will!

TRACY  
You and Joanne really taught me a  
lot about how to get along in  
life. I'll never forget it.  
(a beat)  
I'm really glad I got married.  
(a beatific smile)  
Now I know what everyone's talking  
about.

Max embraces Tracy and holds her as he would a grown  
daughter. Max looks challenged, Tracy looks content,  
and the People watching look very interested.

With a large, illuminated sign reading "ELECTRONIC  
TRADE SHOW - FUNGUS INTERNATIONAL WELCOMES THE WORLD."  
Max's Buick stops under the portico. Max, dressed as  
before, exits his car and enters the hotel, a man with  
a mission.

87 EXT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

87

Rigged as a video game player's wet dream. The Fungus logo dominates the room: a huge, surrealist mushroom with one bite missing. Twenty-five video games are against the walls. A huge serving table groans with soda, wine and deli. The show STAFF, twenty young adults in Fungus T-shirts, circulate through the room with food, drink and order pads.

A voluptuous BLONDE in a too-tight T-shirt, mans a registration table. A FEMALE SECURITY GUARD roams among the one hundred GUESTS. There is noise and lights and kids and music...controlled pandemonium.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

Ben, wearing a Fungus T-shirt and looking even slimmer, is demonstrating a machine to a chattering cluster of Japanese kids. All the kids have Fungus T-shirts; many are wearing them over their regular clothes including one Arab child who wears it over his flowing robe.

\*

88 MAX

88

Still muttering and gesturing appears at the ballroom entrance. The Blonde receptionist eyes him suspiciously but Max doesn't notice. He stops, overwhelmed by the crowd and the din. He looks around.

89 MAX'S POV ON JOANNE

89

Looking very busy, but on top of things, as she strides through the crowded room, AD LIBBING warm greetings to the guests. Joanne looks smashing in a new outfit. Over her breast she wears a pin in the shape of a bitten mushroom with the legend: "JOANNE BOONE - PUBLICITY." She is intercepted by Stewart, looking fabulous in a Pierre Cardin suit. They exchange a few unheard words and a brief kiss; neither notices Max. Joanne continues on to a REPORTER, who is making notes on a pad.

90 MAX

90

Pulls himself together and strides into the room, moving purposefully through the sea of guests toward Joanne. Max's loins are girded for the toughest selling job of his life. He looks a bit demented.

91 MAX'S POV ON JOANNE

91

Talking to the Reporter. Joanne sees Max and looks surprised and apprehensive. She turns back to the Reporter.

JOANNE

Excuse me, Marv, I'll be right back.

92 JOANNE AND MAX

92

Come together in the center of the room, near a large cluster of guests. Max is obsessed; man must have his mate!

MAX

(a bit too loud)  
Joanne! It's all settled!

JOANNE

(puzzled)  
What's settled?

MAX

(a bit louder)  
Us! Tracy gave her blessing! We can get married again!!

A few heads turn. Joanne looks very embarrassed.

JOANNE

(hisses)  
Max, are you crazy! Keep your voice down!

MAX

(still louder)  
We'll buy a house! I can get us a terrific deal on this three-bedroom --

JOANNE

Stop it, Max! I don't know what's got into you, but ---

MAX

(even louder)  
Isn't it wonderful??!! You and me and Ben together again!! Like old times!

JOANNE

Max, I have work to do! Will you please get out of here!!

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

MAX

Not without you!

Max reaches for Joanne but she pulls away. Looking totally confused and upset, Joanne turns away from Max and walks off. Max pursues her relentlessly.

93

BEN

93 \*

Is totally involved with the crowd of chattering kids and is oblivious to the scene between Max and Joanne.

94

STEWART

94

Isn't. He walks swiftly to MYRA, the uniformed security guard, and points off. Myra, who is about Max's size, just nods and marches off. Stewart stands watching.

95

MAX AND JOANNE

95

Are heading toward another knot of people who stare at them.

MAX

JOANNE! I'M NOT LEAVING HERE  
WITHOUT YOU!!

JOANNE

(stops, whirls to Max)

You're making a scene! Everyone's  
staring at us!

MAX

I don't care if the whole world's  
watching!!

Max gestures broadly on "whole world" and his sweeping arm accidentally hits a young man carrying a huge tray of wine glasses which all fall to the floor with a terrible CRASH that catches even more attention. Joanne is mortified!

JOANNE

Now look what you've done!!

MAX

I'll tell you what I've done!  
I've come here to -- GRAAWKKK!!

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

Max has just been grabbed from behind by Myra, the guard, who has Max in a choke hold guaranteed to cause irreversible brain damage in three minutes.

A group of people, thinking this is part of the show, HISS and APPLAUD their approval. Max is starting to pass out and Joanne is appalled. \*

JOANNE

Myra! Let him go!

MYRA

I'm sorry, ma'am, but my orders are to escort this individual out!

JOANNE

But you're strangling him!

MYRA

Oh...

Myra releases the chokehold and Max, a bit blue in the face, starts to sag to the floor. Myra catches Max by the forearm and holds him erect. Max, limp and dazed, rubs his neck. Joanne looks very concerned.

JOANNE

Max, are you okay?

MAX

Grawfff...

MYRA

He'll be fine, ma'am.

Myra begins moving Max toward the exit with a firm grip on his forearm. Max walks with an odd, bobbing lope. Joanne remains rooted in confused frustration. Max, regaining his wits, tries to pull away from Myra's grip, but it's steel. Max looks at Myra's face and reacts:

MAX

You're a woman!

MYRA

You're observant.

MAX

(at the end of  
his rope)

I might have known. I MIGHT HAVE  
KNOWN!!

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: (2)

95

Max tries to pull away again, but it's no good. While still being semi-dragged toward the exit, Max turns back toward Joanne and shouts in a hoarse, strangled voice:

MAX

Joanne! Listen to me, Joanne!

(all stops out)

I need you! I'm no good without you! Joanne! We're no good without each other!!

Joanne, still rooted, looks tortured. The guests look moved.

MAX

(continuing;  
another tack)

Joanne! Think of our little boy!  
He needs a full-time father!  
Joanne!

96 BEN

96

Looks distraught as he struggles through a sea of guests.

BEN

Dad!! I'm coming, Dad!!

Stewart, looking concerned, blocks Ben's progress.

STEWART

Don't, Ben. He wouldn't want you to see him like that.

Ben tries to maneuver around Stewart, but he's trapped.

97 EXT. HOTEL PORTICO - NIGHT

97 \*

As Myra deposits a very shaken Max against a pillar. Myra removes a parking ticket from Max's shirt. (It's very foggy out).

MYRA

I'll get your car. Wait here.

Myra exits the hotel to find a parking attendant. Max looks drained and dejected. He suddenly reacts to:

JOANNE'S VOICE

Max!

(CONTINUED)

Max, with an effort, draws himself erect and steps away from the pillar as Joanne rushes up to him and stops a few feet away. They look at each other. Joanne is unreadable. Max makes a last ditch effort:

MAX

Joanne, I love you! I want to share my life with you! I want to help you grow as a person!

JOANNE

(grimaces)

Is that how it sounded when I said it?

MAX

(very fast)

Even worse, but that's okay. Marry me, Joanne! I swear it won't bother me that you'll still be working for Stewart.

(a beat)

Although I'm sure he'll fire you.

JOANNE

He can't. I made him sign a three-year contract. Iron-clad.

MAX

(a hair deflated)

Smart move...

JOANNE

Oh, Max, I'm all mixed up...

MAX

Just answer me one question... do you love me? Huh? Do you love me?

JOANNE

(a long beat)

Yes...God help me, I do...

BEN'S VOICE

(his best Bogart)

Of all the gin joints in all the towns all over the world, she walks into this one.

Joanne and Max turn to Ben as he enters scene. From somewhere a million piece orchestra begins a heart-stopping version of "AS TIME GOES BY."

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED: (2)

97

JOANNE

Please, Ben, your father and I  
are having a very personal  
discussion.

MAX

(to Ben; a perfect  
Claude Rains)  
Tell me, M'sieur Rick, whatever  
brought you to Casablanca?

BEN

(still as Bogart)  
I came for the waters.

MAX

But we're in the middle of a desert.

BEN

I was misinformed...

Max and Ben, looking pleased with their performances,  
grin at each other. Joanne, who's obviously been  
exposed to years of this, just rolls her eyes. Then  
she sighs and startles them both with:

JOANNE

(a poor Bogart)  
Looie, I think this is the  
beginning of a beautiful  
friendship.

A reaction from Max and Ben and then suddenly all  
three are in each other's arms, hugging and kissing  
and crying, as the MUSIC SWELLS and we...

FADE OUT.

THE END