

THE BEST MAN

An Original Screenplay

by

Malcolm D. Lee

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A1 == Script Fly.com ==
EXT. CHICAGO SKYLINE - DAY

A1

Establishing: Chicago skyline.

1 EXT. HARPER'S BROWNSTONE -- DAY

1

It is early autumn. HARPER STEWART, Black, 28, handsome, simply but fastidiously dressed, gets out of a his Volvo with a weekend bag and bounds up his steps two at a time.

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*
*

2 INT. HARPER'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

2

Before he can insert his key, the door swings open revealing a slightly disheveled (food stained blouse, tousled au naturale hair, ripped jeans), but extremely cute and adorable ROBIN JONES, 27. She's armed with a fork-full of colorful food.

HARPER

Robin! Baby, I got some great news!!

ROBIN

Try this. Tell me what you think.

*

HARPER

You know I don't like new ...

She shovels it in his mouth and he is surprisingly pleased.

HARPER

(continuing)

Damn, that's good.

*
*
*

ROBIN

Yah, mon. 'Tis good.

*
*

She kisses him and pulls him inside and it is in more disarray than she is. Harper looks around and he is not pleased. He follows Robin back into the kitchen (another disaster area) as she attends to her pots.

ROBIN

(continuing)

Thanks for letting me use your kitchen. I nearly panicked when my stove broke.

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*

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED:

2

Harper instinctively starts cleaning up the mess she's created, trying to regain some semblance of order.

ROBIN

(continuing)

Sorry about the mess. I have like 3 jobs going at once here. It's crazy.

HARPER

Uh-huh.

ROBIN

So hey!! What's your news? What's the deallie, yo?

HARPER

Oprah Winfrey wants Unfinished Business for her January book of the month club show.

*
*
*

ROBIN

Harper, you're kidding. Oh my God. Your first novel?

HARPER

(nodding)

When my agent said that Oprah Winfrey demanded a preview copy, I got nervous. But apparently Oprah was impressed with that Esquire article I did on her last year. And she loved the book.

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*

ROBIN

When's the release date?

HARPER

We go to print next month.

Robin squeals, jumps into his arms wrapping her arms and legs around his torso. She pelts him with kisses.

ROBIN

Oh, baby. I'm so happy for you!!
That's so great. Oops the callaloo.

She gets back to her stove for the taste-testing as Harper brushes the remnants of Robin's food off of his urban-chic outfit.

CONTINUED

HARPER

Yeah. Well, this is just the
beginning, y'know? I still got
plenty to do before this is over ...

*
*
*

Robin smiles at him admiringly.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Hey. Harper?

HARPER

What?

Robin looks at him with bedroom eyes and begins to purr like
a kitten. She unbuttons her blouse as she approaches him.

HARPER (CONT'D)

What are you doing? People can see
in here.

ROBIN

(still purring)

So, let them see.

HARPER

You are such an exhibitionist.

ROBIN

(purring)

So. I'm horny.

HARPER

You're horny?

ROBIN

You know how I get when you're
excited.

HARPER

(Jamaican accent)

But wop'nin' wit de food, beauty?

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED: (3)

2

ROBIN

Me say me tired o' shrimp, mon.

She sits him on a chair and straddles him. They kiss.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Good. 'Cuz me 'ave no shrimp 'ere.

They laugh as they continue to kiss.

A3 EXT.CHICAGO SKYLINE - DAY

A3

Establishing: Chicago skyline.

3 INT. HARPER'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

3

Highlighted by candles, sensuous jazz, and incense, Harper & Robin (in post-coital relaxation) sip White Zinfandel and caress one another in a steaming-hot salt bath.

ROBIN

Mmmmm. I missed you. I'm glad you decided to come back in town before you headed to New York.

HARPER

Yeah, me too, baby. Did I tell you I dedicated the book to Lance and Mia?

ROBIN

Um-hmm. That's really sweet. You sound pretty excited for them.

HARPER

I am. We've all been waiting for this day to come. Those two were made for each other.

ROBIN

I can't wait to meet your friends ...

HARPER

I'm telling you, Rob. When that 20 city book tour starts I gotta be on point ...

*
*
*

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED:

3

ROBIN
Come on, Harper...

HARPER
What?

ROBIN
You never live enough for today.
You've accomplished so much already.
For once just enjoy the moment. At
least for a little while, OK?

HARPER
Robin, if I start believing my own
press, I won't make it out the gate.
I've got to stay focused.

ROBIN
All work and no play makes Harper a
very dull boy.

HARPER
Yeah, whatever, man.

ROBIN
(mocking)
"Yeah, whatever, man." You're not
feeling me, huh?

HARPER
I felt you getting your freak on.

ROBIN
Only with you, boo.

HARPER
Now that's what I like to hear.

ROBIN
(relaxed)
Mmmmm-hmmmm. Me too.
(sigh)
I could be like this with you
forever, Harper.

HARPER
(freezing up)
What? What do you mean?

CONTINUED

ROBIN

(laughing)

Relax. OK? All I mean is that I really like being with you. You said yourself that I'm the best girlfriend you've ever had. You've never been with somebody this long or had this much fun. Face it. We fit together.

HARPER

Yeah, but...

ROBIN

You love me don't you?

HARPER

Of course I do. But it's not that simple.

ROBIN

It is to me.

Harper is stumped for words as most men in this situation are.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Wow. Dead silence. Nice.

She gets out of the tub.

HARPER

Robin...

ROBIN

Nooo. Think I'll get some sleep.

She walks out of the door dripping water everywhere. Harper puts a finger gun to his head and pulls the trigger.

*

*

A4 EXT. CHICAGO HIGHWAY - DAY

A4

Driving shot of billboards of Chicago celebs: Michael Jordan, Oprah Winfrey, Roger Ebert. Sears building, other landmarks.

Harper's Volvo drives by.

*

4 INT. HARPER'S CAR - DAY

4

Robin has the wheel. Harper tries to break the silence.

HARPER

Breakfast was great, honey.

Robin nods and smiles pleasantly. The awkward silence continues.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Look, baby about last night ...

*

ROBIN

Harper, it's OK. I know you love me. I'm not an insecure person. But I do have doubts sometimes.

*

*

*

HARPER

About what?

*

ROBIN

Well, like this wedding reunion with your friends. I don't know what I'm really walking into.

*

*

*

HARPER

Oh, baby. They're going to love you.

*

*

ROBIN

Really? Even Kendall?

*

*

This strikes an uncomfortable yet familiar chord within Harper.

CONTINUED

4 CONTINUED:

4

HARPER

Y'know I cannot believe that you're
jealous of a character in my book ...

*
*

ROBIN

Not just a character. An icon. An
ideal: Your soulmate - Jackson's
soulmate. And she's nothing like me.

HARPER

She's not like anybody, Rob. She's
a combination of a lot of women I
knew in college. Why would I lie
about that?

*
*
*
*

ROBIN

I don't know. That's what scares me.

HARPER

Oh boy, here it is. Here's the drama.
I thought I had finally avoided it
with this relationship.

ROBIN

I'm not perfect, Harper...

HARPER

Let's just drop this please. Jesus.

ROBIN

I had to let you know how I feel...

*

HARPER

Are you still coming to the wedding?

ROBIN

Of course I am. Nothing has changed
about that. I want you to have fun.
Hang out with your boys, reminisce.
I'll still be there Sunday.

CONTINUED

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

HARPER
Fine. Good. Great.

Robin looks sorry that any of this was brought up.

5 EXT. O'HARE AIRPORT - DAY

5

They sit parked at the curb. Robin stares at him.

ROBIN
I really hope you get all that you
want out of this weekend. Take care
of "unfinished business" and close
that chapter of your life.

HARPER
And what's that mean?

ROBIN
Hear me out, Harper. Something is
holding you back from "us". You
haven't resolved something about your
college days. Like maybe you have to
prove something...

*
*
*
*

HARPER
I don't have anything to prove,
Robin. You're over-reacting.

*
*

ROBIN
Maybe I am. With the book. But not
this. Whether we're going to be
together or not, you should really
let that go.

HARPER
Oh, with or without you, huh?

ROBIN
I don't want to be without you,
Harper. But I'm not going to play the
fool either.

There is an awkward beat between them. Harper leans over to
kiss her on the cheek. *

*
*

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED:

5

ROBIN (CONT'D)
Damn. No lip action, huh?

HARPER
You're gonna be late, Rob.

ROBIN
OK. I love you.

Harper gets out and grabs his bag. She shrugs her shoulders.
He waves good-bye and walks toward the terminal. Robin pulls
off. He pauses briefly and looks at her before heading
inside.

6 OMIT

6 *

7 INT. O'HARE AIRPORT -- DAY

7 *

Harper, sitting in the terminal searches through his bag and
comes across the latest issue of Sports Illustrated with a
post-it note and a smiley face that reads "Thought you might
enjoy!! Love you." Harper shakes his head and tries to resist
smiling as he inspects the cover. It is a football player, in
a New York Giants uniform with his arms folded across his
chest. This is LANCE SULLIVAN.

The headline reads "GIANT STEPS - Lance Sullivan leads New
York to 6-0 start into bye-week." Harper smiles admiringly
at it. As he flips through it he gets very pensive.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)
Ladies and gentlemen we are now
boarding flight 451 to New York . .

Harper breaks out of the daze, packs up his things and gets
up.

8 EXT. NEW YORK SKYLINE (MOVING) -- DAY

8

Establishing.

*

8 EXT. LA GUARDIA AIRPORT - DAY

8

Harper exits the terminal to see a smiling Black bohemian who looks like he jumped out of page 17 of the Fall J. Crew catalogue pulling up in a minivan. This is JULIAN MURCHISON aka MURCH.

MURCH

Harper!!

Harper smiles big when he sees him.

HARPER

Murch, my man. What's up?

They hug.

9 INT. MURCH'S MINIVAN - DAY

9

Murch and Harper drive alongside the West Side Highway.

MURCH

. . . And I had to take a gun away
from one of them last week.

*
*
*

HARPER

Seems like you're the one "At risk",
Murch. Not them wild-ass shortys.

*
*

MURCH

Oh, they're not so bad. They just
need some guidance.

*
*

HARPER

Didn't that firm you worked at last
summer offer you a 6-figure salary?

MURCH

Yes, they did. But I have to pass the
bar first.

CONTINUED

HARPER

Look, Murch. All I'm saying is if
you're gonna be stressed, you should
at least get paid for it.

*
*
*

MURCH

Brother, I know. But I can't abandon
my people.

*
*

HARPER

Julian Murchinson: the steadfast
champion for the disenfranchised.

MURCH

Ha, you sound just like Shelby.

HARPER

Ah, Shelby.

They ride in awkward silence for a few moments.

HARPER (CONT'D)

She's really gonna be a great FBI
agent. She's headstrong. Take charge.

*
*

MURCH

You think she's a domineering bitch.

HARPER

(taken aback)

What? I never said that. I mean we
all felt she was a bit...pushy - to
a degree.

*
*
*

CONTINUED

9 CONTINUED: (3)

9

MURCH

But you know I like strong women.

HARPER

Yeah. Like Audre Lorde, right?

MURCH

(reluctant)

Yes.

HARPER

And what's that quote of hers you always tell the kids. "If you allow yourself to be crushed-" No. "If I allow myself to be eaten-?"

MURCH

"If I didn't define myself for myself I would be crushed into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive."

Harper looks at him as if to say "get my meaning?"

MURCH (CONT'D)

You are lucky I love you like an adopted brother.

HARPER

I know. I know. Come on, man. Shelby's cool. In her way.

MURCH

Well, you certainly did not make her any kind of cool in your book...

Murch freezes as Harper looks at Murch incredulously.

MURCH (CONT'D)

Uh, I mean...not like I read it...

HARPER

You read my book, Murch?

MURCH

No.

HARPER

What are you doing with my book?

CONTINUED

9 CONTINUED: (4)

9

MURCH
(panicky)
I don't have it. Jordan does.

HARPER
Jordan's got my book?

MURCH
No.

Harper knows he's bullshitting and Murch is caught.

10 INT. BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION (B.E.T.) STUDIOS - 10

In the control booth directing the taping of BET Teen Summit is JORDAN ARMSTRONG, a confident, sophisticated, sexy, young woman who is in total control of her surroundings. *

JORDAN
Camera 2 give me a close on Dr. Wood.
Alright, Larry? Let him know he's got
30 seconds before commercial. *

A production assistant shows Harper and Murch into the adjoining "green room." Murch thanks her as Harper, upon seeing Jordan, can't take his eyes off of her.

HARPER
She's already running things, huh?

MURCH
You should not be surprised. She is
the only one more driven than you. *

HARPER
That's great.

Harper looks at her with reverence and Murch observes it.

MURCH
When's the last time you saw Jordan?

CONTINUED

10 CONTINUED:

10

HARPER

(still locking)

Back in March. She was producing a music video for Brandy and VIBE had me cover it. But we didn't really spend much time. Y'know, I had a deadline, she had a...

Harper turns around and stops in mid-sentence when he discovers Murch staring and smiling at him.

HARPER (CONT'D)

What? What, nigga?

MURCH

You, my brother, have been withholding information.

HARPER

Ohhh, here we go...

MURCH

You two got busy in undergrad didn't you?

HARPER

No, Murch. No.

MURCH

What about the book? Jackson and Kendall - that's you two, I know it. They seized a prime opportunity to make grass sandwiches: "A passionate night of love-making so intense..."

HARPER

Embellishment sells books, Murch.

MURCH

So what really happened?

HARPER

Nothing.

MURCH

You are lying!

CONTINUED

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

HARPER
See? You should be in court
cross-examining folks.

MURCH
Come on. Out with it.

Harper lets out a sigh and rolls his eyes at Murch.

11 INT. CAMPUS NEWSROOM - NIGHT

11

Flashback: (1993)

In a messy campus newsroom. Harper works on a computer and Jordan studies at a separate table. They are alone. The room is only lit by their two desk lamps.

HARPER (V.O.)
Senior year during finals. The
year-end issue was off to the printer
and the staff had left for the night.
We stayed because we had studying to
do. But we were mad tired...

Harper swigs coffee. Jordan downs caffeine pills with a diet
Coke. Despite that they are still nodding off. *

HARPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Only Stevie Wonder was gonna help us
that night.

Then Jordan wakes from her desk with a start at the sound of Stevie Wonder's "As." She turns to see Harper turning up the volume on the office stereo. She smiles and gets up.

They sing the words to one another and start dancing, laughing and acting silly. Harper kisses her forehead.

They hug one another in their playfulness and then pull apart from one another and look at each other, and start kissing each other passionately, hungrily. They rub and fondle each other with urgency.

12 INT. B.E.T. STUDIOS (GREEN ROOM) - DAY

12

Murch sits in bewilderment at the story.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED:

12

MURCH
And you didn't tell us?

HARPER
There wasn't really anything to tell.
Besides, you know you can't keep a
secret.

MURCH
What? What do you mean I can't keep
a secret?

HARPER
You weren't supposed to tell me you
had my book, were you? *

MURCH
(can't deny it)
Just finish the story *

13 INT. CAMPUS NEWSROOM - NIGHT

13

Flashback: (1993)

Jordan unbuckles his belt, Harper nibbles on her earlobe and
searches for the clasp on her bra. They are set to bone!

Then the CD skips, repeatedly and they get distracted. They
break from one another and look over at the stereo equipment.
They look at one another and seemingly have come to their
senses. Jordan walks away from Harper and he just stands,
clearly wanting more.

HARPER (V.O.)
Looking back it's one of those
moments you wish you could have back.
But at the time it wasn't right. *

14 INT. B.E.T. STUDIOS (GREEN ROOM) - DAY

14

Jordan wraps up the show. The production assistant points
Harper and Murch out to Jordan. She immediately gets her bag,
turns away from the window, and straightens herself out. In
the foreground Harper talks to Murch. *

CONTINUED

14 CONTINUED:

14

MURCH

Not right? You two are ridiculous.

*

HARPER

What? She was taking the internship
in LA. I was headed to grad school ..

*

*

MURCH

In other words the two control-freaks
could not lose control and get
freaky. Right?

HARPER

Y'know. I'd almost forgotten how
corny you could be. Almost.

MURCH

I thought that was a pretty good play
on words...

15 INT. B.E.T. STUDIOS CONTROL ROOM -- DAY

15

As Harper and Murch continue talking Jordan takes a breath
and makes sure that her clothes and hair are together. Then
she releases her tension.

JORDAN

Stop it. It's no big deal. This is
my boy. This is business.

A carbon copy of Jordan appears behind her smoking a
cigarette and looking ten years older. This is Jordan's
mentor, ANITA.

ANITA

Good job, Jordan.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED:

15

JORDAN
(caught off-guard)
Oh, thanks, Anita. It was OK. I
think I can do better with...

ANITA
(indicating Harper)
Is that him?

JORDAN
Oh. Yes. Yes, indeed. That's Harper
Stewart. Lance Sullivan's best man.

ANITA
Mm-hm. You sure we can't get a camera
into that wedding? It could be huge. *

JORDAN
I know. I'm still trying, but
they've been pretty adamant.

ANITA
Keep trying. Your boy is cute.

JORDAN
We're just friends, y'know.

ANITA
Uh-huh. You ready?

Before Jordan can respond, Anita swoops in on Harper
introducing herself and making small-talk. Jordan looks at
her for a moment, then grabs her things and follows.

16 INT. B.E.T. STUDIOS (GREEN ROOM) - DAY

16

Harper looks at Jordan as she enters with her on-cue smile.

JORDAN
What's up, Harper?

HARPER
Jordan Armstrong.

ANITA
Harper, I've always enjoyed your
writing. But that book of yours,
(more)

CONTINUED

ANITA (cont'd)
wow! You nailed it. And your girl
here - talk about a fan - she has her
nose in that preview copy every free
moment she's got.

Harper looks at Jordan with raised eyebrows and a smile.

JORDAN
It's my job to keep up with what's
current.

HARPER
Of course.

ANITA
Harper, can we get you on Teen Summit
or profile you on Tonight with Tavis? *

HARPER
Sure, I'd like that.

ANITA
Great. We'll even get Jordan to
produce it. What d'you think, J?

JORDAN
Why not? We have the inside track.

ANITA
This is going to be fabulous. It was
a pleasure meeting you both. I've
got to run. Take care now, Harper.

Anita sweeps out of the room as swiftly as she came into it.

MURCH
Wow. I have never heard someone talk
as fast as that.

HARPER
That's gonna be Jordan in awhile.
What's up with thieving my shit, J?

JORDAN
Please. Advanced publicity will not
hurt your book, honey. Don't front.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED: (3)

16

HARPER

Yeah. Alright. So what's up, girl?
Gimme some love.

JORDAN

Oh, hey. Sorry. How are you doing?

She kisses him very awkwardly. Harper hugs her as if she were a long lost lover. She laughs nervously.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Yeah well. It's good to see you. So,
like Anita said, we want to get you
in the studio.

HARPER

I'm all yours.

Harper stares at her but Jordan averts her eyes. Harper, noticing her apprehension gets a little uncomfortable himself.

JORDAN

Good. You guys ready to go?

Harper holds the door open for her. She walks past him, careful to avoid touching. Harper notices, but plays it off. Murch follows them.

17 EXT. SOHO STREET - DAY

17

Jordan exits a store talking on her cell phone with Harper and Murch in tow.

JORDAN

(continuing)

Yes, I got the programs. Look, just
tell them big country-ass Negroes we
ain't serving no ham-hocks at the
reception. Alright? Yeah, I'll see
you later. Bye. Damn! This wedding
shit never ends.

*
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*
*

MURCH

Who wants ham-hocks?

CONTINUED

== Script Fly.com ==

17 CONTINUED:

17

JORDAN

Lance's uncles. And Mia's cousins are getting on my nerves. Wanting to meet guys and shit ...

HARPER

You should introduce them to Quentin.

JORDAN

I did. Big mistake. He got those poor girls open. Charming motherfucker.

HARPER

It's what he's good at. If they gave college credit for it he'd have his Ph.D. by now.

JORDAN

Well, Dr. Feelgood has your book.

Harper stops dead in his tracks and gets serious.

HARPER

Wait a minute. Quentin has my book?

JORDAN

Yeah. Your prep school homeboy got into town last week and swiped it off my coffee table. He knew I wasn't supposed to have it, but you know Q doesn't follow anyone's rules but his own. Sorry.

She instinctively puts her hand on his shoulder and then swiftly pulls it away as if she had done something wrong.

HARPER

Oh, s'okay. No big deal.

Something clearly bothers him about Quentin having the book.

MURCH

Well, we're all supposed to be meeting at The Soul Cafe. Quentin said he'd be there.

18 OMITTED

18

19 OMITTED

19

20 OMITTED

20

A21 INT. SOUL CAFE - NIGHT

A21

The hip Black spot where the beautiful people meet is in full swing. On the small stage the band plays and the devilishly handsome hipster, QUENTIN SPIVEY, is in the middle of a guitar solo. The honeys in the spot are definitely feeling him as Harper, Jordan, and Murch walk in.

Quentin finishes up his solo. As the audience applauds him he and Harper make eye contact. Quentin gives him a sly grin and wink. Harper nods back.

HARPER

Be back in a second.

Harper heads for the stage. Jordan watches him like a hawk.

MURCH

Do you want to get a drink, Jordan?

JORDAN

Why can't you keep your mouth shut?

MURCH

Sorry. But I don't think he's mad.

JORDAN

That's not the point! I told you...

They ad-lib their debate (which we hear). Harper interrupts Quentin macking some honeys. The two friends hug. Quentin grabs up his guitar and motions for Harper to follow him.

B21 INT. DRINKING ROOM (SOUL CAFE) -- NIGHT

B21*

Harper and Quentin sit across from one another.

*

*

CONTINUED

B21 CONTINUED:

B21

HARPER

What's with the guitar, Q?

QUENTIN

Oh this? Just a little something to add to the repetoire, shorty. You know a nigga got gifts.

HARPER

A nigga is scatterbrained. You know I had to pull some strings to get you that photographer's gig at The Post.

QUENTIN

Awww, now don't get bent, shorty. Listen. I read your book.

HARPER

Yeah, I heard. And?

QUENTIN

You got skilz, joe. I can't front. You gonna blow the fuck up. Make me want to be a writer and shit.

HARPER

You see what I mean? Photography, Music, what was it in January? Directing music videos? Now you wanna write?

QUENTIN

Don't sweat that, joe. Seriously, tho'. The book is jive like dat. But I think you might've exaggerated my character a little bit. I mean, my mama not being around ain't got shit to do with how I treat bitches.

CONTINUED

B21 CONTINUED: (2)

B21

HARPER

What makes you assume it's you I'm talking about?

QUENTIN

Give a nigga some credit, aw-ite? I ain't stupid. And I was more focused than that when I was in school.

HARPER

You're still in school.

QUENTIN

I'm just sayin', yo. You could've embellished a nigga some. I mean ain't that the buttery shit about bein' a writer? Rewriting history? Tailoring shit to fit your ideal self?

Harper gives him a pointed stare and Quentin smiles.

QUENTIN

(continuing)

I mean, for example if I was to write a book, I'd have to make my character an actor or a world-class athlete. Something to justify the inordinate amount of pussy I get.

HARPER

I feel you.

QUENTIN

Do you really, "Jackson?"

HARPER

Yes, I do. And I know where you going. So you better chill with that.

CONTINUED

B21 CONTINUED: (3)

B21

QUENTIN

"The frontal lobe," shorty? *

HARPER

There's nothing there. Leave it be.

QUENTIN

Alright. But that book being in town
this weekend has got some weird
energy. *

HARPER

Look, Dionne Warwick. Nothing's gonna
happen if you just keep your mouth
shut.

QUENTIN

All I'm sayin' is, it brought back
wild memories. Stuff I ain't thought
about in years. Knowutumsayin'?

HARPER

(long pause)

Where's the book?

QUENTIN

Up at the Hotel. *

HARPER

Who else has read it?

Quentin shrugs as a small commotion is heard. They both look
toward the entrance. Quentin smiles at Harper and Harper
glares at him as they both exit the drinking room. *

C21 INT. SOUL CAFE (ENTRANCE) - NIGHT

C21*

Entering the door is a small group of Black men. People start
to crowd them, flash bulbs go off. In the middle of the
entourage is LANCE SULLIVAN, a tall, handsome, chiseled out
of stone, chocolate Black man. He smiles for the camera,
shakes hands, signs autographs, and basks in his own
celebrity. Harper and Quentin join Jordan and Murch. *

HARPER

(continuing) *

L-Boogie.

CONTINUED

C21 CONTINUED:

C21

JORDAN

They love him here in the Big Apple.

HARPER

They're already talking Super-Bowl.

Lance signs autographs for groupies.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Shall we go get the superstar? *

Harper heads over to Lance with the rest of the crew in tow. *
He taps Lance's shoulder. Lance turns around to see Harper *
and the two share a priceless moment. *

Lance breaks into a huge childish smile. He thunders out a
laugh and embraces Harper in a tight bear hug that lifts him
off the ground.

LANCE

Harp, my man!! What's up cat-daddy?!

HARPER

Not much, big fella.

LANCE

Dog, I'm stressed.

HARPER

You ought to be. Man, what the hell
was you thinking getting married in
the middle of the season? You got
Dallas next week.

LANCE

Harp, I wasn't thinking. It's what
the little lady wanted.

HARPER

The best man is here to help out. I'm
getting you over that broom no matter
what. Even if it kills me.

LANCE

Yeah, well, not even the devil
himself will stop Mia from becoming
Mrs. Lance Sullivan, brother-man.

They laugh and smile. But just in time to break up the party *

CONTINUED

C21 CONTINUED: (2)

C21

comes a distinguished voice.

*

SHELBY (O.S.)

Juliiiannnn!

They all deflate and groan at the sight and sound of SHELBY, Murch's nagging, and controlling bourgeois girlfriend. Murch immediately downshifts into "honey-do" mode.

MURCH

Hi, Shel.

SHELBY

Well, hello, honey.

She kisses Murch and then turns to everyone else.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Well, well, well the gang's all here!
Back in effect. Break out the 40s.

*

*

ALL

(in drab unison)

Hi, Shelby.

SHELBY

Well, nice to see all of you too.

(seeing Harper)

Ah, Harper Stewart: Richard Wrong,
Langston Snooze.

HARPER

How're you doing, Shelby?

SHELBY

I heard about your book.

Harper looks over at Murch whose eyes look elsewhere.

CONTINUED

C21 CONTINUED: (3)

C21

SHELBY (CONT'D)

And I don't think it's cute. Listen,
the next time you want to
characterize me in one of your little
projects, do me a favor.

HARPER

What's that, Shelby?

SHELBY

Don't!

Harper holds up his hand and backs off. She turns to Murch.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Julian, drive me to Neiman Marcus
would you? I can't decide on what I
should wear for the wedding.

*
*
*

MURCH

I thought you were wearing...

*

SHELBY

No. I decided against that.

MURCH

But, Shel I have plans.

SHELBY

What kind of plans?

MURCH

Honey, I told you I was spending time
with the guys tonight.

SHELBY

Oh, that can wait. You have all
weekend. Only take a few hours.

Murch hesitates and Shelby, seeing his friends in support,
gets attitude.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Oh, I see. It's "Gang up on Shelby
Day." Fine, if you'd rather be with
them than me. That's fine.

She starts to walk away and Murch has to make a move.

CONTINUED

C21 CONTINUED: (4)

C21

QUENTIN

Here it comes.

She whips around to address him, her bottom lip quivering.

SHELBY

(whining)

Am I being that unreasonable?

The crew roll their eyes in unison.

HARPER

We'll see you in a few, Murch.

MURCH

Okay, guys I'll be there soon.

SHELBY

(perky)

Thanks dear. You're the best.

(serious)

Harper, I'm watching you.

She takes Murch by the hand and leads him out like a child.

QUENTIN

Damn! She be giving youngin' drama.

HARPER

You'd think she has a lo-jack on him.

They all laugh. Quentin and Harper exchange a look.

21 INT. LANCE & MIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

21

The three of them walk into a luxurious home that isn't quite lived in yet. There are plenty of packing boxes and furniture draped in blankets, but Harper is clearly impressed.

HARPER

That new contract is fat, huh?

LANCE

Obese, player.

From the top of the stairs Lance's angelic fiancée, MIA floats down the steps heading straight for Harper. She hugs him tight.

MIA

Ohhh, it is so good to see you, Harper Stewart. How are you?

HARPER

I'm good, Mia. You look great.

MIA

So do you.

LANCE

Damn, baby. How can you tell? You got him all hemmed up.

MIA

(releasing him)

Shut up, Lance. Don't pay him any mind, Harper.

LANCE

I don't see why you love that fool so much. He ain't shit.

She hold Harper's arm and looks into his eyes.

MIA

He's a true friend. Always there when you need him. Dependable. And he dedicated his first novel to us.

HARPER

You read my book, too?

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

MIA

No, but I heard great things.

Harper shoots Jordan a look. She returns a nonchalant shrug.

MIA (CONT'D)

So when's that girlfriend of yours coming? I can't wait to meet her.

LANCE

Yeah, dog. You been keeping this one under wraps.

HARPER

And with good reason. Bringing her around y'all might taint her image of me. But she'll be here Sunday.

MIA

You're always so secretive, Harper.

Jordan observes Harper suspiciously. He holds Mia's hand with the engagement ring.

HARPER

Wow! Look at the size of that rock. I'll go blind just looking at it.

JORDAN

She's doing finger curls just to lift that mug.

MIA

Stop it y'all.

LANCE

Yeah. Don't be jelly. Y'all know there's nothing too good for my Mia.

Jordan and Harper observe Lance and Mia kissing lovingly.

LANCE (CONT'D)

I love you, baby.

MIA

I love you, too, boo.

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

JORDAN

Would y'all please?! Tired of that
"Leave it to Beaver" mess. Mia what
do you need?

MIA

Girl, the caterer is tripping, the
florist screwed up the order, and
mama still can't find a dress.

JORDAN

Alright, come on. Superwoman's here.

LANCE

Hey, we ain't got all night. We got
men stuff to do.

MIA

Lance, go away. Show Harper the rest
of the house.

Mia pulls Jordan away and then looks back around at Harper.

MIA (CONT'D)

It's really good to see you, Harper.

Harper smiles back at her. Lance takes him the opposite
direction. Harper briefly pauses at a packing box with a
framed photo of Lance in the end zone praying after just
scoring a touchdown. He smiles at the memory.

HARPER (O.S.)

Front page, kid.

22 INT. SCHOOL NEWSROOM -- NIGHT

22

FLASHBACK

Harper shows Lance the same photo for the newspaper's front
page layout that features a story on "The Sophomore
Sensation."

HARPER

We were gonna use the photo where
you're dragging the 5 guys from Tech
over the goal line, but this one
tells it all.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED:

22

LANCE

Surprised you took the holy road. You ain't the most spiritual brother I know.

HARPER

It ain't got nothing to do with that, kid. All I care about is the story.

LANCE

Uh-huh. You'll see. Someday you're gonna believe in my God. Our God.

HARPER

Yeah, whatever, man. So, yo what happened at Pittsburgh, kid?

LANCE

Dog! Twins. Two sets. Waiting for me at the hotel. Some agent hooked it up. Big ass titties, player. Like punching bags...

HARPER

Praise the Lord, and pass the panties, huh?

LANCE

Words to live by, player.

They bust up laughing as Mia comes into the room.

MIA

Harper....? Oh, I'm sorry. I don't mean to interrupt, but here are the ads. And I even convinced Fridays to place one provided that they get the one next to Lance Sullivan's photo.

HARPER

Wow. You got Friday's? That's great.

Lance is impressed by what he sees and clears his throat.

MIA

I'm sorry. Hi, I'm Mia Morgan.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

LANCE
(mack-daddy vibe)
The pleasure's mine, baby.

MIA
How nice. But what's your name?

HARPER
That's Lance Sullivan, Mia.

MIA
Oh, you're Lance Sullivan?

LANCE
In the flesh.

MIA
Nice to meet you. I apologize. I
didn't recognize you. You look bigger
on television.

Harper chuckles and Lance takes that comment in stride.

MIA (CONT'D)
Harper, I've got to get to Econ, but
I can take those deposits to the bank
if you want?

HARPER
Oh, sure. Thanks.

MIA
Nice meeting you, Lance. Oh, and
great game on Saturday.

LANCE
You've seen me play?

MIA
Oh yeah. I love the game.

Lance smiles at Harper who rolls his eyes.

MIA (CONT'D)
But I think you'd get more yardage if
you used your offensive line more.
And you would want to stop planting
so hard on turf. Your knees won't
(more)

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED: (3)

22

MIA (cont'd; CONT'D)
make it to junior year if you keep
that up.

Lance is taken aback and Harper chuckles again.

MIA (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Think about it, OK? See ya.

She walks out and Harper breaks out laughing.

HARPER
She got you, mack-daddy.

LANCE
Humph. She bad. That you, player?

HARPER
Naw, we're just good friends. You
know I don't shit where I eat. Plus,
the word is she's saving it.

LANCE
Virgin? Really? You gotta hook me.

HARPER
Hell no. She's a sweet girl. And
I'd like to keep her that way. She's
on time, she does good work...

LANCE
Come on, Harp. She could be Mrs.
Sullivan...

HARPER
So could those four freaks at
Pittsburgh, bionic dick...

The two ad-lib a debate.

23 INT. LANCE & MIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

23

Back in the present Harper watches Mia sit on Lance's lap at
the piano. They hug goodnight.

LANCE
I'm set, y'all Let's bounce.

Harper and Jordan follow him.

24 EXT. RIVERSIDE DRIVE (JORDAN'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

24

Lance waits in his truck as Harper helps Jordan carry some things to her door. She still hasn't made eye-contact with him.

JORDAN

So, tomorrow. Let's let the station buy us brunch. Pick you up about 11?

HARPER

Splendid, Ms. Armstrong. That fits well in my schedule. Shall I call to confirm?

JORDAN

A sister can't be professional?

HARPER

Wooo, some things never change.

JORDAN

Change is overrated.

HARPER

Jordan, you know you could've asked me for a copy of my book.

JORDAN

What for? You wouldn't have given it to me.

HARPER

Yeah, that's true. But at least I'd know that you were still interested.

JORDAN

(knowing what he means)

Please. Don't play yourself. I want the exclusive. Let Oprah get the sloppy seconds.

*
*
*

HARPER

If that's all it is, how come you can't look me in the face?

Jordan looks him right in his eyes.

CONTINUED

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

JORDAN

Harper. Why'd you really leave your
girl at home this weekend?

HARPER

(slightly off-balance)

I uh just wanted to hang with the
fellas for a minute. Cut up a bit
before she got here. That's all.

JORDAN

Uh-huh. Good night, Harper.

Jordan walks inside and Harper smiles.

HARPER

I'll be at Murch's.

She acknowledges that and Lance beeps the horn. Harper
watches her for a beat more and then he runs to the car.

25 INT. SPIVEY GRAND, NY (PENTHOUSE) - NIGHT

25

The fellas sit around the table eating Philly steaks,
drinking brew, and bustin' Spades. Lance and Quentin pair up
against Harper and Murch.

QUENTIN

We 'bout to run a Boston on y'all
niggas. Y'all 'bout to be set.

MURCH

Do you always have to talk trash?
Come on. It's just a game.

QUENTIN

That's what all punk-ass losers say.

LANCE

Easy, Mojo. Let the boy alone.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED:

25

HARPER

Mojo! Man, I ain't heard that name
in a clip. MO to the JO!

QUENTIN

That's what I put on the ladies when
I do my thing.

LANCE

Got 'em turned the hell out, making
breakfast, buying jewelry, and trying
to figure out why they do it because
they really hate his ass.

MURCH

And then drop them like bad habits.

HARPER

He's got them singing, "Mojo, gimme
one chance. Gimme, gimme one more
chance."

MURCH & LANCE

Uh-huh, uh-huh.

The fellas bust up laughing.

QUENTIN

I know you ain't talking about
leavin' hoes strung out, Harper.

LANCE

Yeah, that's true, player. You are
"the serial monogamist."

HARPER

What?

QUENTIN

You be havin' girlfriends. Jive
public relationships, like "This is
my queen" and shit. But if she cross
that boundary you set, she gone.

LANCE

Dismissed. With the quicks.

Fellas laugh at that and even Harper has to chuckle.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

MURCH

That's only because none of them have
ever measured up to Jordan.

QUENTIN & LANCE

Uh-huh. Excellent point, counsel
Murchinson. Well done. Sustained.

HARPER

Aww, get the hell outta here.

MURCH

You know it's true. Jordan is the
best girlfriend you never had. You
guys know they kissed in undergrad?

LANCE

Up in the newsroom senior year.

MURCH

You knew about that?

QUENTIN

Yeah, we knew about that shit.

Murch looks at Harper who just shrugs his shoulders.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Nigga, you know damn well you can't
keep a secret.

MURCH

That is so messed up.

LANCE

So, is that the case, Harp? You
waiting for Jordan to slow down from
that career path for the Harper
Stewart rest stop?

HARPER

Whateva, man. Y'all buggin'. Deal the
cards.

QUENTIN

I can't believe you never hit that.

LANCE

Me neither.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED: (3)

25

HARPER

Fellas, I'm in a very fulfilling relationship. A happy and virtually drama-free two years, gentlemen.

*
*
*

LANCE

She's a stand-up comic, right?

MURCH

I thought she made jewelry.

QUENTIN

You said she was a teacher.

HARPER

She's a caterer. Took her awhile to find her creative niche in life.

QUENTIN

Well, you know I can relate. But that don't sound like Jordan.

HARPER

She's not Jordan. She's Robin.

LANCE

Man, I hope she ain't like Jordan.

HARPER

Why you say that, L-Boog?

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED: (4)

25

LANCE

'Cuz Jordan is too damn sassy and independent. And might make more cheese than you someday.

HARPER

Ohhh, so what, L?

LANCE

Hey, I love Jordan. But a woman like that don't need no man. Face it, dog. She's one step from lesbian.

The guys protest and laugh at that.

LANCE (CONT'D)

(laughing)

I'm just saying that the only way a relationship works is if the man provides the loot and the woman takes care of shit at home.

HARPER

You're like a stone-age caveman, L.

MURCH

And it is so ironic. Brothers are always on guard for the gold-diggers and yet they cannot take an educated sister who makes more money.

QUENTIN

We know you don't care, Murch. Your woman runs your ass regardless.

MURCH

Bite it. Okay, Spivey. Bite it.

LANCE

Shit. When we're married Mia's only job will be being my wife and raising our kids.

HARPER

And she's gonna be content with that?

*
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*

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED: (5)

25

QUENTIN

Man, is you kidding? Mia can't wait to drop this nigga's babies. She old-school like a mug.

MURCH

The consummate mother/whore eh?

LANCE

Word is bond, dog. Every man wants one.

HARPER

But what makes you think you want to get married now? You been dipping around on Mia for years.

MURCH

And with that new contract . . .

QUENTIN

Word, shorty. You gonna need a catcher's mit for all the pussy that'll be thrown your way.

LANCE

Man, I been had all the ass 10 men can have. My wild oats are sown. I mean how much ass can one man have?

ALL

A lot.

LANCE

Naw. It's just time, man. Marriage is sacred. My folks been together 35 years. That means something to me.

MURCH

I hear that.

Quentin grumbles.

LANCE

Besides, marriage is going to curb that appetite for more women. Marriage is the cure to promiscuity.

The fellas all laugh at that.

CONTINUED

HARPER

For someone who graduated summa cum
laude you say some dumb shit, L.

LANCE

All I'm saying is there's a time for
everything. We're in the real world
now. Real world, real things.

Lance shoots a look to Quentin.

QUENTIN

I don't give a fuck what y'all say.
Monogamy ain't natural. We ain't
meant to be with just one person. If
God had intended it to be that way,
He wouldn't have given us all that
sperm. And He wouldn't have bitches
out number us so much ...

*
*
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*
*
*
*

LANCE

So you a philosophy major now?

*

HARPER

Word. A bullshit artist.

The fellas laugh, but Quentin takes offense at the comment
and momentarily glares at Harper.

QUENTIN

Fuck y'all. Y'all know as well as I
do that ain't nothing better than
pussy. Except new pussy.

They all agree with that.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED: (7)

25

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Plus, I don't trust bitches anyway.
They just as scandalous as niggas.

LANCE
(proudly)
Not all women, player.

Quentin looks over at Harper who returns a stern glare.

QUENTIN
What? You don't think Mia never got
with no other dudes?

LANCE
I'm the first, last, and only.

QUENTIN
How do you know?

LANCE
'Cuz the pussy curve to my dick.
Besides, I know my little angel.

Lance reaches for another beer and Quentin keeps staring at him.

QUENTIN
As much sticking and moving you done?
You don't think that she's tipped out
on you? Not once?

Harper wants to change the subject, but Quentin is pushing the envelope. Lance is getting hot and squeezing his unopened beer.

LANCE
No.

QUENTIN
If she did get her swerve on you know
she'd be within her rights.

Lance is getting pissed.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
It's karma, baby.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED: (9)

25

The beer explodes in Lance's hand. He reaches across the table and grabs Quentin by the collar and violently yanks him to his face. Quentin is unfazed like he's been here before.

LANCE

I gotta take a piss.

He releases Quentin, walks into the bathroom, and slams the door. Harper looks at Quentin who relaxes and goes through his cards again. Harper is sober now.

26 INT. SPIVEY GRAND, NY (PENTHOUSE) - NIGHT

26

(Later) Murch quickly loses the battle with sleep as Quentin makes a booty call. Harper searches around for the copy of Unfinished Business. He gets Quentin's attention. *

QUENTIN

Hold on a second, baby. S'up, slim?

HARPER

(almost whispering)

The book.

Quentin points unspecifically to the coffee table and gets back to his phone call. Harper sees the book, and tries to grab it.

LANCE

Yo.

Harper looks up to see Lance smiling. Harper feigns a smile.

LANCE (CONT'D)

(taking the book)

You best get your own copy, player.

HARPER

Oh, well y'know just feeling protective of my stuff. Y'know.

LANCE

Too late for that, dog. I can't wait to read this mug. I know this shit is tight.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED:

26

HARPER
Uh . . . alright.

LANCE
You're blessed, man. The Lord is
smiling on you...

HARPER
Come on, Lance. Dead that. I make
it happen. Not some being beyond the
clouds possessing me.

Harper does a zombie walk.

LANCE
You ig'nant, dog. How you think
we're as fortunate as we are? We
lucky, man. Anyone one of us could
be poor, homeless, or . . .

HARPER
L, L, OK. Tuxedo fitting tomorrow?

LANCE
Yeah, but we gotta push it back to
like 5. Mia's got a laundry list of
thangs for this brother here.

HARPER
Oh, that's cool. Jordan and I...

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

LANCE

Yeah, Jordan. I saw how she was
looking at you tonight, player.

HARPER

What? What did you see?

LANCE

She wanna get with you. Y'all gonna
be smacking bellies this weekend.

HARPER

I thought she was one step from
lesbian?

LANCE

Bruh, please. You said you'd marry
baby-girl in undergrad. Said y'all
would be "the power couple." Kindred
spirits. Soul Mates. You meant
that. At least hit it, player.

HARPER

Hit it? Come on, L. What about all
that talk about fidelity and being
through with promiscuous behavior?

LANCE

I said me. That don't apply to you.
Look, I know you got your girl and
y'all relationship. But yo. Harp.
My brother. My ace. My man. Jordan
is fine. For once in you life, go
'head and be a dog, dog.

Harper stares at him a moment and then rubs his temple.

HARPER

I'm getting a headache. Let's go,
Murch.

MURCH

(snapping awake)

Coming dear.

Murch jumps right up and out the door. Quentin and Lance
laugh. Harper can only muster a smile as he takes a look at
the book in Lance's hand. He follows Murch out of the door.

FADE OUT.

27 INT. HARPER'S KITCHEN -- DAY

27

Robin concocts another masterpiece as she talks with Harper on the phone. The scene is intercut between locations.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED:

27

ROBIN

Well, it's not the worst thing in the world. They were all going to read it anyway, right?

HARPER (O.S.)

Yeah, I guess...

28 INT. MURCH'S BEDROOM - DAY

28

Harper, dressed only in stylish boxer shorts, lays out his clothes for the day.

HARPER

...but I just didn't think they'd take it so literally.

ROBIN (O.S.)

I'm sure it'll be fine.

(beat)

Hey. I'm glad you called me...

HARPER

Yeah, you're probably right. It'll be fine. So, did you decide what you're wearing?

Jordan comes to the door, but pauses at the sight of Harper's half-naked body. She is at first embarrassed, and then takes a full gaze.

29 INT. HARPER'S KITCHEN - DAY

29

ROBIN

Not yet.

30 INT. MURCH'S BEDROOM - DAY

30

HARPER

What about that beige...?

ROBIN (O.S.)

I think I know how to dress for a wedding, Harper. It's under control.

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED:

30

HARPER

Come on. It's not like I'm...

Harper turns to discover Jordan standing there and he gets flustered, trying to find something to cover himself. Jordan smiles and acts relaxed.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Uh...wow. Look at the time.

ROBIN (O.S.)

You gotta go?

HARPER

Uh yeah, I'll talk to...what?

31 INT. HARPER'S KITCHEN - DAY

31

ROBIN

I said, I love you.

HARPER (O.S.)

Okay. I'll call you later. Bye.

Robin looks at the receiver contemplatively.

32 INT. MURCH'S BEDROOM - DAY

32

Jordan smiles bashfully as Harper hangs up the phone.

HARPER

Uh, morning.

JORDAN

Good morning.

HARPER

I'll be right with you.

JORDAN

Chop. Chop. Time is money.

Harper grabs a towel and squeezes past Jordan who makes no conscious attempt to move out of touch this time.

CONTINUED

32 CONTINUED:

32

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Nice boxers. But I thought you were strictly a briefs man?

HARPER

Gift from Robin.

JORDAN

The girl's got taste.

Jordan smiles as Harper walks into the bathroom.

33 EXT. CENTRAL PARK BOAT HOUSE CAFE -- DAY

33

Harper and Jordan exit the restaurant with doggie bags.

*

HARPER

Oh, come on. Don't you think it's time for a hetero-sexual Black man to be on the best-seller list? Black women writers have been on the market for years. If I read one more novel where the Black man is unemployed, a dog, can't fuck...

JORDAN

If they ain't talking about you what difference does it make?

HARPER

I just hope I'm given the same leeway.

JORDAN

Well, I can't give you no leeway. You are talking about me. And you.

Harper smiles and Jordan tries to fight one back.

HARPER

You ever think about that night?

CONTINUED

33 CONTINUED:

33

Just then Jordan's phone rings and she picks it up immediately and down-shifts into business-mode. Harper watches his friend thoughtfully.

JORDAN

Anita? Hey. Um-humm. We just finished. Of course. Right. I'll fax it to you this afternoon . . .

*
*
*

A34 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

A34

Harper and Jordan walk along the park's pond.

HARPER

That Anita is pretty aggressive.

*

JORDAN

Anita just seizes her opportunities like any smart, professional person would do.

*
*
*

HARPER

Alright. Easy now.

JORDAN

Don't get me started.

*

HARPER

She got a man?

JORDAN

Why? What difference does that make?

*

HARPER

It's just a question.

CONTINUED

A34 CONTINUED:

A34

JORDAN

(pause)

No. Her career is her "man." OK?

HARPER

You got any kind of social life?

JORDAN

I mean not really. Personal and professional cross over so much I don't even know where the line is anymore. But I'm fine with that. Sacrifice is the name of the game.

HARPER

You can't let work consume you.

JORDAN

What?! Please. That doesn't even sound like you.

HARPER

Maybe I'm maturing.

JORDAN

Maybe you're full of shit. I know how badly you want that lime-light. I see it. I recognize it in myself. And you made that painfully obvious with your depiction of "Kendall."

HARPER

I call it like I see it.

JORDAN

Then you must not see yourself too well, "Jackson". 'Cuz you are exactly the same.

HARPER

Peas in a pod, huh?

JORDAN

(nodding)

Ummmm-hmmmm. Your girl must be real patient or real dumb.

CONTINUED

A34 CONTINUED: (2)

A34

HARPER

Hey, Robin deals with it. She understands that I had dreams of my life way before I thought about her. But she's starting to get that itch.

JORDAN

Ooooh. The "m"-word, huh?

HARPER

You better believe it.

JORDAN

And you have a problem with that?

HARPER

I mean, yeah. Marriage? Moving in together? The last person you'll ever have sex with? That's wild.

JORDAN

Least you're getting some on the regular.

HARPER

Ohhh. No action, huh?

JORDAN

8 months and counting. Longer than that if we're talking good sex.

HARPER

All work and no play makes....

JORDAN

...Jordan a horny nut basket.

They both laugh at that.

34 EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- DAY

34

Harper and Jordan sit across from one another in a peaceful pond-front gazebo.

CONTINUED

34 CONTINUED:

34

JORDAN

(continuing)

I do think about that night
sometimes. I wonder what would have
happened if I let myself go that
night. If we both had.

HARPER

Yeah?

JORDAN

The way it is in your book is exactly
how I pictured it.

HARPER

That close?

JORDAN

Damn near. You ever had that kind of
sex for real?

HARPER

(pause)

Well. Not exactly. But close.

JORDAN

For real? Where can a sister get
some from?

HARPER

(laughter)

You could have had some once upon a
time.

JORDAN

If I'da known how you'd turn out
maybe I would have.

(pauses)

Maybe I still can.

Jordan looks off into space. Harper isn't sure he heard her
correctly.

HARPER

What did you say?

JORDAN

Nothing. We better get those gifts.

Jordan gets up and walks away and Harper follows her.

*

35 OMITTED

35

36 INT. BLOOMINGDALES - DAY

36

Jordan stares at Harper as he and the saleswoman search the shelves and check the registry list of remaining gifts.

HARPER

I'm going for the pasta bowls and the serving utensils.

The saleswoman gathers up the order.

JORDAN

Good choice. You ever had Mia's shrimp scampi and angel hair?

HARPER

Whaaaaat? The bomb, baby. She used to cook at the drop of a hat. Good stuff too. Remember?

JORDAN

Hell yeah. That girl can throw down.

HARPER

That she can.
(wistful pause)
That girl's got a lot of talent.

Jordan stares at Harper who spends one moment too long in a pensive state. By the time he looks at Jordan a light has already come on in her head. Her eyes widen.

JORDAN

Oh. My. God.

HARPER

What is wrong with you?

JORDAN

You scandalous dog.

*

Harper walks toward the check out counter shaking his head. She follows in pleasurable astonishment.

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED:

36

JORDAN

It makes perfect sense. We just switched places.

HARPER

(to the salesman)

Could you wrap that please?

JORDAN

Mia's Kacey, you're Jackson and I'm...

HARPER

Buggin' the fuck out.

JORDAN

I'm Kendall. Jackson sexes me crazy.
But you and I never had sex. And all
Kacey and Jackson do is sleep in the
same bed together like we used to do
all the time.

*
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*

HARPER

Jordan, I think the stress of the wedding is really getting to you.

Harper leans over and kisses her forehead. Jordan squeals.

JORDAN

That's it. Oh my God. The forehead kiss. It's a dead give-away. That's your signature.

HARPER

(pause)

What do you mean "forehead kiss?"

JORDAN

Oh, your forehead kiss is very endearing. Damn near erotic. You nearly got me with it. It's passionate. It's ...

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*

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

HARPER

Bullshit. It's a fictional account of some experiences I had, some people I knew. It's a book I wrote . . .

JORDAN

In order to purge yourself. To right the wrongs.

HARPER

There she is ladies and gentlemen:
Dr. Ruth Blackheimer.

JORDAN

Whoah. You dedicated the book to them. I mean, do you want to be found out? That's sick.

HARPER

You're right because what you're suggesting is totally ludicrous. Use your head and think.

JORDAN

Well, if Lance figures out what went down, you better use your feet and run.

*
*
*

HARPER

First of all, you need a sedative. And secondly, Lance has got a million more important things to do to keep his mind from wandering on outlandish fantasies from reading my book. As a matter of fact, he won't even have time to read it.

*
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37 INT. SPIVEY GRAND, NY (PENTHOUSE) - DAY

37

Lance reads from the book and it's more than half finished.

LANCE

"White boys admired his prowess on the hardwood and his reputation with
(more)

CONTINUED

37 CONTINUED: (2)

37

LANCE (cont'd)
the ladies. They secretly deemed him
'The Ebony Humper.'" This joint is
hilarious, boy.

Harper stands dumbfounded at the door with Jordan.

JORDAN
See you later on at the church.

Harper is completely focused on Lance as Jordan exits.

HARPER
You've been reading. I uh didn't
think you'd have time.

LANCE
Yeah, me neither. I had insomnia
last night tho, player. Woooo! I am
on edge. The book was perfect
company. Quentin was right. This is
a page-turner like a mug.

HARPER
(nervous)
Ha, ha. Quentin said that, huh?

LANCE
It's a good thing you changed this
dude to a hoop star 'cuz I'll have to
disassociate myself from this shit.
This fool banged many hoes. I'm
flattered, but yo, was I that bad?

HARPER
Yes. You were.

LANCE
(grinning)
Yeah, you right. Cain't deny it. Ha
ha.

Lance walks toward the kitchen with his face buried in the
book leaving Harper to contemplate. A loud banging is heard.

CONTINUED

37 CONTINUED: (3)

37

LANCE (O.S.)

Harp!!

38 INT. HARPER'S ROOM - NIGHT

38

FLASHBACK

In a dimly lit dormitory room Harper is startled.

LANCE (O.S.)

(continuing)

Harp!! Harp!! Open up, man, Harp!!

Harper takes a breath before answering to find Lance drunk, crying, and with his Bible. He collapses into Harper's arms.

HARPER

It's okay, L-baby.

LANCE

Help me, Harp. She won't even talk to me, man. It's been over a week . . .

*
*

HARPER

(overlapping)

Lance, Lance! She's hurting. When she found out about the honeys at the Cotton Bowl...

*
*

LANCE

I know. I know. Damn it!!

(drops to his knees)

Lord forgive me and my wayward dick.

(grabs & looks at his
penis)

What the fuck is wrong with you!!

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED:

38

Harper is on edge and feeling really awkward.

LANCE

(continuing)

I gotta make this right, Harp. I
can't lose her over this foolishness.
I love her, and I'm so sorry.

Lance breaks down again and Harper hugs him. Lance shoves the
Bible into Harper's hands and starts praying. Harper rolls
his eyes at this all-too familiar ritual.

LANCE

(continuing)

Isaiah 41:13, Harp.

HARPER

L, you know I don't...

Lance grabs Harper's hand. He is very uncomfortable.

HARPER

(continuing)

"I am holding you by your right hand
- I the Lord your God and I say to
you - Don't be afraid: I am here to
help you . . . "

LANCE

Yes Lord. Yes, Jesus. Help me.

HARPER

Lance, my hand, kid . . .

LANCE

(crying)

Isaiah 1:18, dog.

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

HARPER

(finding the passage)

"Come, let's talk this over! Says the Lord. No matter how deep the strain of your sins, I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow..."

LANCE

Take it away, Lord. Please.

The fellas ad-lib some more prayer together.

39 EXT. WEST GREENWICH VILLAGE - DAY

39

Harper watches Lance finish signing autographs for a couple of giggling female groupies. Nearby Quentin and Murch browse some books. Lance catches Harper smiling as the groupies depart.

LANCE

(continuing)

I know what you're gonna say.

HARPER

They practically threw their panties at you. Teddy Pendergrass style, L.

Quentin and Murch join them as they walk up the block.

LANCE

Well, you better take notes, player. You're gonna have to beat random honeys off with a stick soon.

QUENTIN

Who? Harp? Please.

LANCE

Hell yeah, player. After he does Oprah, it's gonna be on. Harp ain't never gonna have to work for quality ass again. Panties will drop without coercion, cuddling, caressing, or hah ha ha...

HARPER

What, L? What's so funny?

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED:

39

LANCE

...or kissing on the forehead to get
'em moist.

Harper hopes that he heard wrong. Quentin perks up.

HARPER & QUENTIN

What?

LANCE

You know when Harp kisses babes on
the forehead, drawers drop with the
quicks.

MURCH

Is that true?

HARPER

(nervous laughter)

You know it didn't work that way. I
never did it to get ass...

LANCE

Bullshit, nigga. You ain't slick.

QUENTIN

Yeah, nigga you ain't slick.

LANCE

Honeys love that tender, sensitive,
paternal stuff. Mia's the same way.

QUENTIN

Oh, Mia too, huh?

Harper glares at Quentin who implodes with laughter.

QUENTIN

(continuing)

I tried that shit once, but it didn't
work for me. Guess I ain't authentic
as ol' Harp . . .

Quentin pats him on the back as they enter the tuxedo shop.

40 INT. LANCE & MIA'S HOUSE - DAY

40

Mia, in her wedding gown foundation, stands in a 3-way mirror as Jordan adjusts her veil.

CONTINUED

40 CONTINUED:

40

MIA
A forehead kiss?

Jordan nods. Mia smiles at the thought.

JORDAN
So?

MIA
So...what?

JORDAN
So what?! Mia?!

MIA
Jordan, good girls never tell.

JORDAN
Bitch, don't make me stick you.

MIA
What? What we shared was as sweet
and endearing as a forehead kiss. It
was what I needed. What I wanted. He
was a gentleman. A friend. I'll
always love him for that.

Jordan is floored.

MIA (CONT'D)
So, pearl or diamond earrings?

41 INT. TUXEDO RENTAL SHOP - DAY

41

Murch and Quentin stand in front of the mirror checking how their tuxedos fit. Quentin takes extra care with each piece of clothing. A frustrated Murch can't get his to fit correctly.

QUENTIN
Murch, my man, Bohos like you weren't
meant to wear fine Italian designer
tuxedos. But a handsome, debonair
player like me? I'm pimping this
mafucka.

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED:

41

MURCH

You know I have got my own
style...never mind.

Murch walks away and Harper steps into the mirror.

HARPER

Mojo's on the prowl again, huh?

QUENTIN

...And you don't stop 'til the
panties drop. Gots to represent up
in there, shorty. You know how many
single honeys be at weddings hoping
to meet a handsome devil such as
myself? It's gonna be a hoasis up in
that piece.

HARPER

It's funny. If you put half the
effort into your future as you do
impressing women...

QUENTIN

Nigga, I'm a pimp. So my future's
mighty bright. Thank you very much.

Harper shakes his head and busies himself in the mirror.

HARPER

Everything set for the bachelor party
tonight?

QUENTIN

Hell yeah, shorty. Pops cleared us
the penthouse suite tonight. That
shit is gonna be jive-ig'nant. Off
the hook. Luke dancers, youngin'!
Luke dancers!

HARPER

Big Poppa still trying to groom you
for hotel management?

QUENTIN

Only for the past 20 years. But I
ain't tryin' to hear that shit.
Dealing with payroll, unions,
complaining guests...

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

HARPER

I guess it's too much like a job.

QUENTIN

Fuck you, nigga. You ain't my judge.

HARPER

Hey, I'm just trying to...

QUENTIN

Y'know, it's amazing how you be
analyzing other mafuckas' shit and
don't do the same for you own ass.

HARPER

Lower your voice, Q...

QUENTIN

You done dirt too, mafucka. And
you'll do more.

Harper looks over his shoulder to see Lance looking at them.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's right. You gonna fuck
Jordan tonite. You ain't no better
than the rest of us, Harp. Your shit
just ain't caught up to you yet.

Harper can't say anything because Lance has approached.

LANCE

Everything cool over here...?

QUENTIN

(walk away)

Cooler than a fan, cat.

LANCE

Harp, what's up?

HARPER

Nothing, man. It's just, y'know, Q.

LANCE

Yeah, I know. You can't change that
fool though.

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED: (3)

41

HARPER

What you see is what you get.

LANCE

Yep. Least he's honest. More than
you can say for most mafuckas.

Harper takes silent offense to that comment. But he knows
that truer words have never been spoken.

A42 INT. TUXEDO RENTAL SHOP - DAY

A42*

(Later) Quentin -still steamed- gets his tuxedo rung up at
the cash register. Murch comes over as pleasant as ever.

MURCH

Hey, Quentin can I borrow your phone?

Quentin reaches for it and then stops himself.

QUENTIN

Yo, hold up. Who you callin', Murch?

MURCH

Shelby.

QUENTIN

Aw hell no.

MURCH

Excuse me?

QUENTIN

I said no, man. You gotta stop
letting her know your every move. Why
don't you be a man for once?

Murch tries to reach for it and Quentin rebuffs him.

MURCH

God. You are such an a-hole.

QUENTIN

And well she's a...

MURCH

Don't you dare!

CONTINUED

A42 CONTINUED: (2)

A42

Murch tries to walk away and Quentin cuts him off.

QUENTIN

(continuing)

Look, Murch. I just don't want to see
you looking all uptight and shit at
this bachelor party tonight. Get
loose. Smack some ass. And don't go
home to her.

*
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*
*
*

MURCH

You are talking crazy now.

QUENTIN

No, I'm not. Listen, just trust me.
It works.

42 OMITTED

42

43 INT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - NIGHT

43

All the wedding party has just gone through the rehearsal process. Jordan talks with Lance, but he is clearly impatient.

JORDAN

Lance, I'm not trying to exploit you.
It'll be tastefully done...

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED:

43

LANCE

This is not a media event, Jordan.
It's our wedding day.

JORDAN

It's only gonna be one camera ...

LANCE

Some things are sacred. Like between
a man and a woman? But I guess you
don't know nothing about that.

Jordan takes offense as Mia comes over to squelch the
conflict.

MIA

Hey, hey. Easy you two...

LANCE

No. My mind is made up.

Lance walks away as Jordan still feels the sting of his
words.

MIA

I'm sorry, J. He's stressed...

Jordan nods and watches Mia go over to comfort her man. She
wraps her arms around him and makes him smile. Jordan
observes them. She shakes her head and breathes out.

JORDAN

(to herself)

What am I doing?

Harper comes up behind her and puts his firm hands on her
shoulders. She nearly jumps at his touch.

HARPER

You alright?

JORDAN

Y-yeah. Yeah. No biggie.

Mia and Lance kiss. Harper smiles at that.

HARPER

Are they disgusting or what?

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED: (3)

43

She turns to Harper with something on her mind. She grabs his arm and walks him away.

JORDAN

Can I talk to you for a second?

Quentin watches them walk away and he nods his head knowingly. He spies Shelby playing watch dog, fussing over Murch. He puts himself in Murch's line of vision.

SHELBY

Why didn't you call me to tell me how the tuxedo fit?

MURCH

Uh Quentin's phone was broken.

SHELBY

You guys are wearing Boss, right? *

Quentin signals him to do all sorts of contrary things. Murch tries his best to ignore him, but he has problems doing that.

MURCH

Yes. We are.

SHELBY

Because you cannot wear an American cut. It does nothing for your frame.

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED: (4)

43

MURCH
(sigh)
Shelby...

SHELBY
While we're on the subject, are you
taking that job with the firm?

MURCH
How is that in the subject?

SHELBY
Hugo Boss. Prestigious law firm.
Need I say more?

Quentin signals for him to drive in a dagger.

MURCH
Uh, Shelby, I'm just not sure yet.

SHELBY
Well, honey you cannot keep
baby-sitting ghetto children forever.
You have to get a real job.

Quentin yells at Murch with his eyes to be more forceful.

MURCH
I do not want to talk about this. I
am not going to talk about this now.

Hesitantly, Murch walks away and cracks a half-smile. Shelby
is taken aback and goes after him. Quentin pumps his fist
proudly.

44 INT. CHURCH ANTEROOM - NIGHT

44

Harper paces back and forth as Jordan talks to him.

JORDAN
Calm down. You don't have to worry.

HARPER
Why did you have to say anything to
her at all?

JORDAN
I was curious.

CONTINUED

44 CONTINUED:

44

HARPER
Oh Jesus Christ.

Harper sits down with his head in his hands.

JORDAN
I've got something else to tell you.

HARPER
Something less dramatic please.

JORDAN
I want to make love to you tonight.

Harper slowly looks up at her in awe but is speechless.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
I think our opportunity has come again. I don't want to let it pass by twice. I've been thinking about it and the truth is I don't want to end up like Anita. No balance in my life. Constantly climbing to get to the top. And for what? To be alone? Uh-uh. Look, I know this is a bit much. But I hope you'll say yes.

HARPER
Wow. I, Jordan. Wow. How- How do you expect me to react to this?

JORDAN
I don't know what I expect. I only know what I want. What I need. Let's have our night. And then we'll see.

HARPER
But, Jordan, Robin is coming...

Jordan leans over and kisses him. It's not deep and long but it's soft and passionate. Harper kisses back with conviction.

JORDAN
Don't answer now. Think about it.

Harper still feels the passion of her kiss as Jordan walks out of the room. Harper sits there and then looks heavenward.

CONTINUED

44 OMITTED DIALOGUE

44*

45 INT. RESTAURANT (REHEARSAL DINNER - NIGHT)

45

The families and friends all sit down to the rehearsal dinner. Mia and Lance ring their glasses to get everyone's attention.

MIA

Thank you for coming to share this time with us. We are so overjoyed that so many of you came from all over to be here this weekend.

(looking at Lance)

I am so in love with this man here.

Everyone claps and gushes with "Awwwws."

MIA (CONT'D)

I wish I could take sole credit for getting swept off my feet, but Lance certainly played a part in that. That new contract didn't hurt either.

*
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*

Everyone laughs.

MIA (CONT'D)

But seriously, none of this would have been possible without our friend and counselor, best man, Harper Stewart.

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*

Harper is a little embarrassed as everyone applauds him and pats his back. Lance looks at Mia and then at Harper. He is leery of their exchange. Mia blows Harper a kiss.

MIA (CONT'D)

We love you, Harper.

CONTINUED

45 CONTINUED:

45

Harper blows a collective kiss back. Lance is in a daze.

MIA (CONT'D)

Lance?

LANCE

Uh, yeah right. Yeah. I think Mia
said it all. Yeah. Now y'all eat up
'cuz it's paid for.

Everyone laughs again and gets set to eat. Harper excuses
himself and heads to the bathroom. Lance sees him and
follows.

*
*

45 Omitted Dialogue

45 *

46 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

46

Harper stands in the urinal when Lance comes in.

HARPER

ELL! S'up, baby?

Lance locks the door and turns to Harper with a deadly serious look on his face. Harper is concerned...

LANCE

Harp, I've been thinking. Listening to Mia just now and reading your book has really made me think. Y'know?

Harper flushes and goes to the sink.

HARPER

(nervous)

Oh oh, yeah?

LANCE

Yeah. I realized something. I owe you a lot, man. Mia's right. You kept us together.

HARPER

Come on, man. Ain't no need...

LANCE

Naw. Naw. You could have easily dogged me out to Mia. I know how close you and your "little sister" are. I know that there were times that you thought I didn't deserve her. And you were probably right.

HARPER

Lance, who am I to judge...?

LANCE

You're everything, Harp. Thank you. I promise you I'm going to make her happy. I'm going to be faithful.

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED:

46

HARPER

Well...good.

Harper is really uncomfortable with Lance staring at him. There is silence for a few beats. Harper washes his hands again.

HARPER (CONT'D)

So this is it, huh?

LANCE

Yeah, man. Not a moment too soon.

HARPER

Lance, I can't believe it. You're getting married, man! The ultimate step. How can you...?

LANCE

Harp, I have to. I'm strong in mind and body, but emotionally, I'm weak. I need Mia. She's the one who makes me whole. She's my earth. My queen.

HARPER

Wow. Man, I am so far from that. I mean Robin's great, but is she the woman I'm supposed to grow old with? I'm finally coming into my own and now I'm supposed to commit to her? Do I even really know how to commit?

LANCE

You committed to that book.

HARPER

Yeah. But that was on my terms. I had sole control. When I don't have control I fuck up.

LANCE

We're human, Harp. We supposed to fuck up. Lord knows I know . . .

HARPER

No, you don't understand, L. I mean really fuck up ..

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED: (2)

46

LANCE

I understand, Harp. And I am not afraid. I made God a promise that if He gave me another chance with Mia, I'd do right by her. She's forgiven me for all my indiscretions, and that's amazing. If she slept with someone else...

*
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*

He takes a deep breath as tears well up in his eyes.

HARPER

(anxious)

What?

LANCE

I'd just have to deal with it. I wouldn't even question her about it.

HARPER

Just from faith in God?

Lance nods. Harper studies Lance's face for a long time and looks heavenward for a moment. He takes a deep breath.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Lance, I gotta say something to you.

LANCE

What's up, dog?

Just then someone tries to open the bathroom door. Harper reconsiders. Lance opens the door and his UNCLE SKEETER enters.

LANCE (CONT'D)

What's happening. Uncle Skeeter?

UNCLE SKEETER

Some fine gals in there, boy. Don't see why you wanna get married.

LANCE

'Because I don't want 5 alimony payments like yo' broke ass.

UNCLE SKEETER

Ain't too old to whup you, boy.

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED: (3)

46

LANCE
You and what platoon, big Skeet?

UNCLE SKEETER
Did I ever tell you 'bout Vietnam?

LANCE
Aww here we go...

HARPER
Yo, L, man. I'ma go eat.

LANCE
I don't blame ya, player. Get your
grub on...oh yo, what'd you wanna
tell me?

HARPER
Nothing. Just...congratulations.

LANCE
Thanks. I love you, Harp.

They smile at one another and Harper walks out.

47 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

47 *

Harper runs smack dab into Jordan on her way to the ladies' *
room. Their bodies press against one another for a few beats *
and they smile at one another. Harper tries to side-step her *
and she accidentally side-stepped with him. They nervously *
laugh and then look into each other's eyes. Then they brush *
away from one another in opposite directions simultaneously *
sighing with relief. *

48 OMITTED

48

49 EXT. RESTAURANT REHEARSAL DINNER - NIGHT

49

Harper stands with Jordan in the doorway of the restaurant as
family members hug the bride and groom good-night.

JORDAN
(slightly buzzed)
So are you coming by after all that
drinking and lap-dancing?

CONTINUED

49 CONTINUED: (2)

49

HARPER

I'm gonna call you later.

*

JORDAN

Don't have me waiting too long. This
is our night, Harper. It's in the
stars. I know you feel it too.

*

*

*

MIA

Jordan! Girl, come on.

JORDAN

I'm coming, girl! I hope you're
wearing those boxers I like.

*

*

Jordan walks away toward the cars and Harper can't help but
smile. Quentin exits the building dangling the penthouse
keys from his fingertips. Lance's frat brothers, teammates,
and cousins woof and carry on. Quentin and Lance smile.

*

QUENTIN

Shorty, you got no idea what type of
ig'nant mess we 'bout to set off
tonight.

LANCE

Lead the way, dog. Lead the way.

Quentin leads the boisterous crowd to the parking lot.
Meanwhile, Murch continues to get drama from Shelby.

SHELBY

Are you going to this juvenile
bachelor party?

MURCH

Of course I am. And it is not
juvenile.

SHELBY

Oh, come on. I'm sure your "boyz from
the 'hood" would fit right in.

CONTINUED

MURCH

You really need to stop talking about my kids.

SHELBY

Well, you really need to stay with me tonight. There are some unresolved issues between us, and I think we should tackle them now rather than give them time to fester...

MURCH

I am not going to do that, Shelby.

SHELBY

Well, what am I supposed to do while you're out doing God knows what with some low-class hoochie-mothers?

MURCH

Shel, that's not really my problem.

SHELBY

Ohhh. Not your problem?

Murch has hit a nerve and looks like he might wither.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Alright. Fine. Go. Go to your stupid little-boys-only-bachelor-raunch-o-rama shindig. I don't care. Go.

Shelby starts the quivering lip. Murch looks at her and then to the fellas who are loading up into the cars. He sighs.

MURCH

Alright. Fine.

Shelby begins to smile.

MURCH (CONT'D)

See you in the morning.

Murch walks away and Shelby can't believe it. The fellas all cheer, woof, and chant, "Murch! Murch! Murch!" Murch doesn't smile. He gets in the car and looks back at Shelby who stands there with her arms folded and giving him the evil eye. Murch is clearly conflicted about his decision. He may have gone too far.

50 INT. SPIVEY GRAND PENTHOUSE (BACHELOR PARTY) - NIGHT

50

The hordes of guys spill out into the plush penthouse room and it is laid out: big screen TV, VCR, video games, a pool table, dominoes and spades tables, fully stocked bar, porno mags, and lots of erotic treats from chocolate breasts to cakes shaped like naked women.

QUENTIN

Welcome to paradise gentlemen!

They all check out the surroundings in awesome wonder.

LANCE

Harper, I gotta give you something.....

Harper and Lance walk to another room.

MURCH

Quentin, where's the phone?

QUENTIN

(with contempt)

Murch, don't do it . . .

Murch just looks at him like a whipped dog. Quentin points out the phone and is sorely disappointed at this display.

51 INT. PENTHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

51

Harper looks at the breathtaking view of the New York City skyline as Lance searches through his suitcase.

LANCE

In all the madness, I almost forgot.

In his rummaging, Lance tosses the preview copy of Unfinished Business on the bed. Harper zeroes in on the book. Lance pulls out a small jewelry box and a scrolled up document and hands them to Harper who can't take his eyes from the book.

LANCE

(continuing)

Best man got to carry the rings and the vows.

Lance opens up the box with matching wedding bands.

CONTINUED

51 CONTINUED:

51

LANCE

5K platinum, dog. Gold is played.

Lance laughs and Harper keeps focused on the book. Lance
grabs him around the neck.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's get our drink on...

They start to walk out but then Harper stops short.

HARPER

I'll be there in a second, L. Gotta
drain the main vein. Knowhutumsayin'?

LANCE

Bet. Hurry up.

Lance walks out and Harper turns to the bathroom. When Lance
is out of sight Harper grabs the copy of Unfinished Business
and holds it like it's gold. Just then Quentin passes by the
door and sees exactly what Harper is doing. The two exchange
a pointed stare as Harper stashes it in his jacket. Quentin
glares at Harper before walking away. Harper breathes easy,
exits the room, and gets more confident with each step.

*
*

HARPER

Let's get our drink on!!

52 OMITTED

52

53 OMITTED

53

54 INT. MAIN PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

54

Guys are all loud and boisterous excepts for Murch who sits
on the couch with the phone receiver.

*
*

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED:

54

MURCH

Wait, Shelby don't hang up again ...

Murch hits the redial button as Quentin comes over with a tall mixed drink. Quentin snatches the receiver from him.

MURCH (CONT'D)

Quentin, what are you doing?

Quentin stops him with his finger over Murch's mouth.

QUENTIN

Shhh. Drink.

Murch looks at him, clinks glasses and then drinks.

A55 INT. PENTHOUSE FOYER -- NIGHT

A55*

A knock comes to the door. One of the party-goers, WAYNE looks through the peep hole. His eyes and smile widen.

WAYNE

Oh, it's on! It's on and poppin'!

He opens the door and in come 5 voluptuous strippers and their bodyguard, FANDANGO. It is on, indeed. Miami bass music pumps loud and the party goers stop what they are doing to find a good seat. They bark, whoop, and holler for the strippers, four of which enter the living room immediately.

The fifth stripper looks at the wild men whooping, and she looks less than thrilled. This is CANDY. Murch notices her briefly before drowning his sorrows with another shot. She walks to the back.

55 OMIT

55

56 OMITTED

56

57 INT. MAIN PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

57

Lance's frat brothers and teammates drag him into the center of the room. The strippers converge.

FANDANGO

Yeah!! We 'bout ta git freakedafied
in this bieyyatch ta-nite, niggas!!

STRIPPER #1

Is this the unlucky man?

STRIPPER #2

The one they call L-Boogie?

The fellas are titillated and scream out, "That's him. Word up. Get him girl." Lance nods his head and smiles. A bass version of Boogie-Oogie-Oogie plays and the strippers get buck-wild!

BOTH STRIPPERS

Well, boogie down, baby.

STRIPPER #1

I'm gonna boogie-oogie-oogie 'til I
just can't boogie no more.

STRIPPER #2

Boo-gie, Boo-gie some more.

The music pumps loud, fast and fierce and the strippers gyrate, jiggle, and fondle all over Lance. Fellas jump out of their seats and crane their necks to see what's happening. Lance takes the strippers by their arms, and walks them over to Harper. Murch takes another shot.

LANCE

Get yourself a taste, fool.

Harper welcomes the double team, and he returns their grinding and jiggling. Fellas throw down money chanting "Go, go, go, go."

LANCE (CONT'D)

That's my nigga there!! Set it off
tonight, dog. Bite that ass, boy!!

CONTINUED

57 CONTINUED:

57

The strippers strip an inebriated Harper of his jacket and toss it away. The copy of Unfinished Business falls onto the floor. Lance, puzzled, picks it up. He looks at Harper with suspicion. Harper is too busy grinding to notice. Lance conceals the book and then focuses back to main attraction. Murch sits dazed, drunk, and depressed. Quentin begins rolling a marijuana blunt.

58 INT. PENTHOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

58

Fandango gets Candy.

FANDANGO

Girl, you gots to handle your bidness tonight. These some paid, high-falutin' niggas up in here.

She nods her head as he walks toward the living room.

59 INT. PENTHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

59

The fellas whoop and clap for strippers as they collect their money off of the ground. Fandango enters the room with all the style of a low-class pimp.

FANDANGO

(continuing)

Y'all like that, huh?

Fellas cheer in affirmation.

FANDANGO (CONT'D)

We got mo' fo' yo'. Right now Fandango - that's me - and Sweet Cheeks 'bout to bring you something luscious and shug-ray. Allow me to introduce the flava we call, Caan Daay! Give it up niggas! Give it up!

CANDY emerges to the song "Candy" by Cameo. She shakes her groove thing. Guys throw dollars at her feet. Murch is riveted. She singles him out and approaches him seductively and jumps on his lap butt first.

CANDY

Oooh, daddy. Pump me. Pump Candy.

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED:

59

The fellas go bananas. Murch tries to grind, but instead he stops and buries his face in her back. She smells like heaven. And he is lifted into the sky.

MURCH

Do you love me?

CANDY

Oooh, what, daddy? What'd you say?

MURCH

Do you love me?

CANDY

Oooh, yes, daddy. Candy loves you.

Murch is in heaven and hugs her around her waist. The fellas all get a big guffaw out of that.

60 INT. PENTHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

60

(Later) The party has wound down. Some guys leave, others stand around talking, and some are passed out cold. Lance stands at the doorway of his room laughing with Wayne.

WAYNE

Grabbed old-girl like a 5 year-old
grabs his momma.

LANCE

He overdid it tonight. Order him
some coffee and make him drink it.

WAYNE

You got it boss.

Wayne walks away and Lance walks into his bedroom feigning laughter. When he sees that Wayne is gone he pulls out Unfinished Business, heads for the bathroom, and shuts the door.

61 INT. PENTHOUSE FOYER -- NIGHT

61

Murch, trying to appear sober, waits for CANDY to emerge. The *
other four dancers come out from the back room talking loud *
and counting their money. Candy is more reserved. Murch *

CONTINUED

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approaches her.

MURCH

Excuse me. Candy?

CANDY

Yeah?

MURCH

I . . . I really enjoyed your show. You were excellent.

CANDY

(walking away)

Thanks. Thanks alot.

MURCH

Listen. Um . . C-can I call you sometime?

CANDY

(routine and rehearsed)

Sorry, baby, but company policy forbids me to give out my number. But here's my card for Sweet Cheeks, and if you are ever in need of a stripper just call and ask for Candy. Ok? I gotta go.

She hands Murch the card and walks out of the door. Murch is seemingly defeated, but then goes after her. Harper is on the phone in the background talking to Jordan.

JORDAN (O.S.)

So what's up?

HARPER

(tipsy)

You mean beside this shank between my legs?

JORDAN (O.S.)

Oooh, boy don't tease me.

Harper laughs.

JORDAN (cont'd)

So I guess you're coming.

HARPER

Oh yeah. You're coming too.

JORDAN (O.S.)

Oooh, promise me.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

88.

HARPER

You got it.

JORDAN (O.S.)

See you in a bit.

Harper hangs up the phone, contemplating his decision. He smiles and takes a shot of alcohol and walks away.

62 EXT. SPIVEY GRAND - NIGHT

62

Fandango and the other strippers sit in his car waiting impatiently for Candy. Murch talks with her but is steadily losing her attention.

FANDANGO

Candy, come on, girl. We 'bout to get our eat on. Go to IHOP.

CANDY

I'm coming you guys. Just hold on.

62 CONTINUED:

62

MURCH

I don't mean to bother you. I really don't. I - I just thought we had a connection back there was all.

CANDY

Look, baby. It kind of goes with the job. Y'know? Provide the fantasy? That's the business. But I keep my personal life very separate.

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MURCH

Right. You'd have to. Please forgive me. You did a great show.

CANDY

Thanks.

She begins to walk away.

MURCH

B - because if you didn't define yourself you'd be crunched into other's people's fantasies of you and eaten alive.

Candy stops in her tracks and turns around to Murch.

CANDY

What did you say?

*

MURCH

Sorry. It's just a little quote I use to inspire my students ...

*
*

CANDY

Audre Lorde. I know.

Murch is speechless. He pinches himself.

MURCH

Yeah.

Candy smiles slightly.

63 INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

63

Quentin sits with Wayne sharing a blunt. Harper comes from the background and gets in Quentin's ear.

HARPER

Got any jimmys for a brother?

Quentin looks up him and Harper just smiles and winks.

QUENTIN

You 'bout to create some new skeletons, huh, shorty?

HARPER

Something like that. I'll tell you all about it in the morning.

QUENTIN

Naw. This time around leave me out of it. Five years is long enough to be carrying your fuckin' guilt.

Quentin hands him the condoms and Harper grabs his arm.

HARPER

You know you are still the same spoiled, rich brat you were in prep school. Lashing out at the world for your shortcomings. And jealous of your friends' success. You need to grow the fuck up.

QUENTIN

For a hypocritical cowardly bastard, you talk a lot of shit, Harp. Yeah, I've had my share of fuck-ups. But I paid for all of 'em. You just been lucky. That's all.

Harper takes the blunt. He takes a long arrogant toke and looks Quentin directly in the eye.

HARPER

Well I must have what you'd call "good karma". Don't I?

QUENTIN

Your time's coming.

CONTINUED

63 CONTINUED: (2)

63

HARPER

Yeah. Whateva, man.

Quentin walks away as D'Angelo's "Shit, Damn, Motherfucker" oozes out of the stereo system.

64 INT. PENTHOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

64

Lance reads and flips through the pages looking for something to catch his eye. He finds something. His eyes narrow and his face contorts. He brings the book closer to his face and shifts his sitting position to full attention. We hear Harper narrating.

HARPER (V.O.)

Kacey had cried a river on Jackson's shoulder that night. Not only were the rumored exploits of the "Ebony Humper" becoming too commonplace for

CONTINUED

64 CONTINUED: (2)

64

HARPER (V.O.)

(continuing)

her to handle, but she'd also had her fill of the false paternity suits and the groupies' crank phone calls. Sure, Brian meant the world to her, but she wasn't going to play the fool any longer. She wanted revenge.

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65 INT. HARPER'S ROOM - NIGHT

65

Flashback: Harper studies at his desk. Mia approaches dressed only in his robe. She stares at him lovingly. He gets up to hand her a steaming cup of tea and kisses her forehead. He sits back down to study. Mia watches him.

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HARPER (V.O.)

(continuing)

The sweetest payback for his random indiscretions would be a personal one of her own.

*
*

She looks over his shoulder pressing herself into his back. Harper begins to look uneasy. She wraps her arms around his neck and chest and nuzzles his neck.

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HARPER (V.O.)

(continuing)

But how could Jackson be a part of that? What did he have to gain from that other than the guilt of betraying the brotherhood that he shared with Brian? But he was responsible for bringing them together and thus accountable for her misery.

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Harper turns to her. They share a pointed moment. She cannot be rejected. She rolls into his lap and they begin to kiss. Her robe slides off of her bare shoulders.

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66 INT. PENTHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

66

Back in the present, Harper snatches up his jacket, slings it over his shoulder, and walks toward the bedroom.

67 INT. PENTHOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

67

Meanwhile, Lance continues reading and starts to burn up.

HARPER (V.O.)

(continuing)

But Jackson resisted temptation ...

68 INT. HARPER'S ROOM - NIGHT

68

FLASHBACK (1992)

Harper and Mia climax together, moaning in ecstasy.

HARPER (V.O.)
(continuing)

And found his most unflattering set
of pajamas for her and tucked her in.
She too had come to her senses. But
she had one last request.

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MIA
Can we do it from the back?

HARPER (V.O.)
She asked to be held. And he had to
oblige her. She was his friend. He
was her protector. So they cuddled,
and though this boundary probably
shouldn't have been crossed, their
bond was made stronger that night. He
was there for her, and she was
comforted.

69 INT. PENTHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

69

Harper walks into the bedroom searching his jacket for the
book, and he can't find it. But he isn't panicked. Yet.

HARPER
Yo, ELL! I'm 'bout to break. Yo,
son. I'm gonna blow her back out
tonight. She don't even know.

70 INT. PENTHOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

70

Lance can only hear Harper's narration and he is enraged.

HARPER (V.O.)
As she slept in his arms, beautiful
and angelic, Jackson sealed the
innocent evening with a kiss to her
frontal lobe.

He slams the book shut.

71 INT. PENTHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

71

Harper looks on the floor, but still can't find the book. A primal scream is heard coming from the bathroom. Everyone turns to it as Lance nearly breaks the hinges off of the bathroom door. With rage in his eyes and the book gripped in his hand, he sees Harper. Harper is in a panic now.

LANCE

You!! You fucked Mia!!

Lance throws down the book and charges Harper full-throttle, swinging his fists wildly. Harper tries to fight him off, but to no avail. Fellas try to jump in, but they are thrown off.

LANCE (CONT'D)

You dirty back-stabbing bastard!! You mafuckin' sonofabitch!! I'm gonna kill you!!

HARPER

Lance, you, you don't know what you're saying...!

LANCE

Oh, yes I do!! "Kissed on the frontal lobe." I know what that shit means!! You supposed to be my boy!!

Quentin stands toking his blunt and watching Harper get his ass kicked. Lance picks him up by his collar and slams him against a wall. Harper struggles against him.

HARPER

L!! You're making a mistake. You been drinking. I wouldn't do that!

Lance throws Harper across the room like a rag doll. Fellas try to restrain him, but they have no luck. He grabs Harper again, and they struggle to the balcony. Lance leans Harper over the balcony railing. Quentin comes over to get a closer look.

72 EXT. SPIVEY GRAND, NY -- NIGHT

72

The other strippers wait impatiently as Murch and Candy stand smiling and talking.

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED:

72

CANDY

Thank goodness I'm in my final
semester because it's been hard to
pay that tuition. So...

MURCH

You're shaking what your mama gave
you.

Candy laughs. The strippers and Fandango roll their eyes.
Candy glances skyward and notices something Lance leaning
Harper over the balcony railing.

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CANDY

Omigod!

*

MURCH

What's the matter?

*
*

Murch looks up to see what's going on.

MURCH

Omigod!

He rushes toward the building then stops, and turns back
around.

MURCH (CONT'D)

Don't leave. I'll get you home. I'll
pay for your time. Don't go. Please.

*
*

She nods. Murch runs inside.

*

CANDY

Be careful.

73 INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

73

The party guests hold onto Lance's arms.

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED: (2)

73

LANCE

Y'all back the fuck up. I'll drop
his ass!

They do so. Harper is scared shitless. He looks over at
Quentin who's just standing there. Harper pleads with him to *
help. *

HARPER

Don't drop me, Lance. God, please.
Oh God.

LANCE

Oh, you want God now? Ain't that a
bitch.

Harper's petrified. Quentin gets in Lance's ear.

QUENTIN

L-baby, you ain't gonna do this.

LANCE

Yes, I am.

QUENTIN

Come on, L. You're gonna marry a
beautiful woman tomorrow. She loves
you and only you, shorty.

HARPER

Listen to him, Lance.

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED: (3)

73*

QUENTIN

Look, we know Harper's a bitch-ass.
But he's your man 100-grand. He
ain't do that to you. Karma don't
come back that strong, shorty.

HARPER

You know he's right, Lance. Q's
honest. You said it yourself. He
wouldn't lie.

QUENTIN

Even about you being a bitch-ass?

HARPER

Yes, yes! Especially that.

QUENTIN

God don't want this, L. Pull him up.

Lance is conflicted, but he comes to his senses and pulls
Harper back onto the balcony. In a daze he walks back into
the room. All eyes are on him. He grabs the book, stares at
it and nearly cries. He recomposes himself and stares
blankly at everyone.

LANCE

The mafuckin' wedding is off.

No one is sure how to react and all stand flabbergasted and
frozen by the announcement. Lance stares directly at Harper.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Get the fuck out.

Everyone scrambles to get their jackets and make their way
out of the joint with the quicks. Harper tries to speak.

HARPER

(breathless)

L, wait. Don't...

Lance hurls the book at Harper.

LANCE

You...you go to hell.

Lance walks back into the bathroom like a zombie and slams
the door. Harper makes eye contact with Quentin who walks

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED: (4)

73

into the other room toking on his blunt. Murch comes inside.

MURCH

Whoah. Harper, what happened?

Harper picks up his book, gets up, and pulls himself together as best as he can before he walks out alone. Murch stands confused.

MURCH (CONT'D)

Damn! I'm always out of the loop.

74 INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

74

Handkerchiefs drape over lamps. A bump-n-grind R&B song permeates the atmosphere. The doorbell rings. Jordan, dressed in a sexy kimono holds a tray of hors d'oeuvres gives the room a spray of air-freshener. She puts the items down and checks her reflection before she opens the door. Harper is there looking disheveled and sorry.

JORDAN

You are really destroying this groove up in here.

HARPER

(barely audible)

Sorry.

He walks in and she closes the door.

CONTINUED

74 CONTINUED:

74

Harper goes to the couch and nurses his bruises. Jordan sits down next to him.

JORDAN

Lance figured it out didn't he?

HARPER (CONT'D)

Yup. He found out, beat my ass, and called off the wedding.

JORDAN

What? Was he serious?

HARPER

I hope not. He was drunk. Maybe not.

JORDAN

Oh God. Are you alright?

HARPER

Yeah. But thanks to you I can trade my appearance on Oprah for the Jerry Springer show.

JORDAN

Thanks to me?

HARPER

Yeah. They'd be in total marital bliss by the time the book was supposed to come out, but your "I want the exclusive" ass I got a severe ass-whipping. Thanks alot.

Jordan tries to formulate her thoughts.

HARPER

(continuing)

And what the hell is that smell?

Jordan hauls off and smacks Harper.

JORDAN

You've got a lot of nerve blaming me for your skeletons, mister!

CONTINUED

74 CONTINUED: (2)

74

HARPER

Jordan

JORDAN

I am not through, Harper. You wrote that book not me. OK? You aired your dirty laundry no matter how you tried to disguise it. You got me fired up. Thinking that my life is empty and that we could have been great together. You, Harper. Not me. You!

HARPER

Okay. Okay. Calm down. We're both a little emotional right now, J. Come on. Me and you. Peas in a pod.

JORDAN

Well, if I had the luxury of an ass-kicking maybe I could calm down. But I've been drinking tequila shots and my hormones are raging out of control. I'm emotional. I'm horny. So I don't wanna hear about no goddamned peas.

HARPER

But

JORDAN

Fuck you and good night!!

She storms to the bedroom and slams the door.

HARPER

Can't we just hold each other?

FADE OUT.

75 INT. LA GUARDIA AIRPORT - DAY

75

Harper, shabbily dressed in his tuxedo tries to keep up a good appearance as he waits for Robin. She emerges from the gate dressed in her usual imperfect-but-cute style. Harper forms a weak smile behind his sunglasses. He kisses her.

CONTINUED

75 CONTINUED:

75

HARPER

H-hi.

ROBIN

Morning. You look so handsome.

HARPER

(barely audible)

Thanks.

ROBIN

Don't worry. I'm not wearing this.
I just didn't want to get my dress
wrinkled on the plane. Think I can
change at the church?

HARPER

I- I don't...Sure. I don't know...

ROBIN

Hey, are you alright?

Harper nods weakly.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Well, come on let's get going...

Robin begins walking away, but Harper's legs won't support him. He needs the wall for support and then slumps down in a chair. Robin stops walking and talking when she notices Harper isn't with her. She heads back toward him.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Come on, honey. Harper...?

With a trembling hand Harper reaches out, grabs her arm
tightly and pulls her close to him wrapping his arms around
her waist. Robin is self-conscious now.

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CONTINUED

ROBIN (CONT'D)
Harper, what's wrong with you?

She takes off his sunglasses revealing his bruises. She is taken aback but maintains her composure.

ROBIN (cont'd)
Okay. It's alright. Just get up. Come on, baby. Tell me what happened.

He continues to hold her tightly, and she strokes his head.

76 INT. AU BON PAIN - DAY

76

Harper has just given Robin a review of the past 36 hours, and she takes it all in. Harper waits for her response with caution.

ROBIN
Did you sleep with her?

HARPER
No.

ROBIN
But you were going to. You wanted to.

Silence is Harper's answer. Robin shakes her head and exhales. After a musing pause.

ROBIN (cont'd)
I am so disappointed in you. I know you feel like shit now, but I'm not going to lie to you. You compromised yourself, our relationship, Lance and Mia's . . .

HARPER
(nodding with guilt)
I know.

ROBIN
I'm glad you told me. At least now I know where I stand with you.

76 CONTINUED:

76

HARPER

Robin, that's not true. I...

ROBIN

Don't. I may not be perfect, but I'm strong.

Harper is at a loss for words.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I hope you can make this right,
Harper. The wedding starts soon.

HARPER

I know, but what am I gonna do? I've
been looking all over for Lance this
morning. I can't find him anywhere.
Even if I do, how am I gonna convince
him to get married now?

ROBIN

Well, I don't know. That's your bag.
I have a plane to catch.

She begins to get up. Harper is desperate.

HARPER

Wait, Robin! I cannot do this alone.
Please don't leave me now. I need
you.

She looks at him with a gang of mixed emotions. She studies
Harper's pitiful face. She nods her head.

ROBIN

OK. I'll go with you. I owe it to
myself to see what's been holding you
back from me all this time.

HARPER

Thank you, Robin.

He attempts to hold her hand, but she pulls away.

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED: (2)

76

ROBIN

You're welcome. Come on.

She walks away. Harper is grateful, but disappointed.

77 EXT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - DAY

77

Shelby stands at the doors of the church in a very expensive designer dress. The groomsmen's limo pulls up. Quentin and Murch head up the stairs. Murch sees Shelby, and he walks over to her.

MURCH

Shelby, I have something...

SHELBY

Julian, please. Let me speak. Before you say anything, I want you to know that I forgive you.

MURCH

You do?

SHELBY

Yes, I know now that you were succumbing to that testosterone peer pressure. I also know you wanted to be with me last night. And it ate you up that you couldn't.

Murch tries to get a word in edgewise but is unsuccessful.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

It just made sense that you should continue to suffer and think about the jeopardy that you put our relationship through rather than let you have your way.

MURCH

Shel, I have to tell you...

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED:

77

SHELBY

Shhh. whatever it is I'm sure it can wait until the reception. You better get inside...

Shelby is distracted by one of the guests cautiously coming toward them. It's Candy, the stripper, dressed conservatively, but still a knock out. Murch beams when he sees her. *

MURCH

Candace! I'm glad you could make it. You look great.

CANDY

(referring to her dress)

Is it okay? I didn't really...

MURCH

It's great. It's more then great.

Shelby - pissed off - clears her throat to get their attention.

MURCH (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry. Candace, this is Shelby. Shelby, Candace.

CANDY

How're you doing? Nice to meet you.

SHELBY

Hah, I'm so sure.

CANDY

So, should I sit anywhere?

MURCH

Sure, I'll see you at the reception.

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED: (2)

77

CANDY
(smiling sweetly)
Okay. Thanks, Julian.

She goes inside and Murch watches her. Shelby is livid.

SHELBY
Who was that...that...pop tart?

MURCH
Shelby, it's over. I am not the man
for you and you are not the woman for
me. Let's just stop fooling one
another. I hope you find what you're
looking for because that's what I
plan to do. I have to go. Bye, Shel.

Murch runs inside while Shelby stands mouth wide open. In the
background Harper and Robin pull up in a cab and come up the
steps. Quentin smirks at Shelby and points to the ground.

QUENTIN
You better pick that up.

SHELBY
What.

QUENTIN
Your bottom jaw.

HARPER
Q!! Morning, Shelby...

SHELBY
Oh go to hell!!

Shelby storms inside.

HARPER
Meet you there. We'll do lunch.

QUENTIN
What's up? Where's Lance?

HARPER
I don't know.

QUENTIN
What?!

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED: (3)

77

HARPER

Robin, Quentin. Quentin, Robin.

ROBIN

My pleasure.

Murch emerges.

MURCH

Hey, Harper. Hi. You must be Robin.

QUENTIN

This fool can't find Lance.

MURCH

Really? Oh, that's not good. Not good. What are we going to do?

HARPER

(frantic)

I don't know. I don't know...

QUENTIN

Well, you better figure something out...

The fellas bicker as Lance, dressed in the previous night's clothes, gets out of a cab, and storms up the stairs. Robin sees the massive locomotive headed toward them. She taps Harper.

HARPER

(noticing)

Lance!!

Lance keeps walking and says nothing. They step in front of him.

MURCH

Good morning, Lance.

QUENTIN

Nervous, L-Boogie?

LANCE

I told you fools the wedding is off.
I'm telling my parents face to face.
Then I'm out.

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED: (4)

77

A smarmy Quentin grabs Lance by the arm.

QUENTIN
(like last night)
Come on, L-baby. You ain't gonna...

LANCE
Man, shut the fuck up. That bullshit
ain't working today. Get out my way.

He wrenches free and moves forward. Harper steps to him.

HARPER
Lance, look. I know you're upset...

Lance's ice-cold stare shuts Harper up. Robin is scared for him.

LANCE
Why are you even here, man? You
ain't got nothing to say to me.

Harper shrinks back. Lance walks into the church. They all stand dumbfounded for a moment until Quentin and Murch go after him. Harper can't move. Robin is shocked.

ROBIN
Whoah!

HARPER
You see. He won't listen to me.

ROBIN
Yeah, but you have to make him.

HARPER
How, Robin? How?

ROBIN
I dunno. Divine intervention? Just
get in there. Be creative.

HARPER
(dazed)
Divine intervention?

Robin grabs him firmly and looks into his eyes.

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED: (5)

77

ROBIN

Hey. You can do this. You have to.

Harper looks at her and goes inside. Robin watches him. When he's out sight she lets go of her good face and exhales.

78 INT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - DAY

78

Jordan (in front of Lance) walks backwards trying to reason with him while Quentin, and Murch try their best to hold him back, but Lance just drags them along, albeit slowly. *

JORDAN

Lance, come on. Calm down..

MURCH

Lance, no. Do not do this.

QUENTIN

Dog, wait.

MR. & MRS. SULLIVAN await at the front of the church for Lance's news. Harper comes in to see the chaos.

LANCE

Mama!! Daddy!! I've got to tell you something!!

The gathered wedding guests don't know what to think. Mrs. Sullivan looks worried. Mr. Sullivan just laughs. Lance keeps walking, and he's more than halfway down the aisle. This is the end! Harper has to do something quickly before it's too late.

HARPER

Lance!! You gotta pray, man!!

Lance stops in his tracks, shrugs everyone off and they clump to the floor. He turns to Harper. Jordan's heart is in her throat.

LANCE

What did you say?

HARPER

Pray, man.

CONTINUED

78 CONTINUED:

78

LANCE

You want me to kick yo' butt again?

HARPER

(desperate)

Come on, L. You haven't done it today. Ask your God. Ask our God, man.

(getting on his knees)

Let's pray together, Lance. Pray with me, brother.

Lance looks at Harper as if he were an alien. The crew waits with baited breath for a response to Harper's desperate plan.

79 INT. CHURCH BATHROOM - DAY

79

Robin dressed in a very classy dress stands in a mirror pinning her hair. She looks at herself critically. Tears well up in her eyes, but a deep breath fights them back.

ROBIN

It'll be fine, Rob. Hold it down.

She packs up her stuff without finishing her make-up.

80 OMIT

80

81 INT. BRIDE'S MAIDS ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

81

Mia is in a tizzy. All the bridesmaids and wedding coordinator try their best to calm her. Robin peeks in to see Mia is a bundle of nerves and emotions. *

MIA *

I should have worn the pearls. Oh my Lord, did I order the right food? *

The bridesmaids "yes" her to death and until Mia looks toward *

CONTINUED

81 CONTINUED:

81

the door and sees Robin. Robin gets self-conscious. Mia gives her a glassy-eyed stare.

*
*

MIA
(continuing)

Hi?

*

ROBIN

Oh, uh I. Hi, Mia. I'm Robin.
Harper's...girlfriend.

MIA

Oh my Jesus. Robin, yes...

Mia hugs her warmly as if she were a long lost friend and continues crying (happy tears). Robin can't help but smile.

MIA (CONT'D)

How are you, my sister?

ROBIN

I'm fine. But are you alright?
Because you really look beautiful.

MIA

(between sniffles)

Oh thank you. Yes, I'm fine. I've got jitters! I know I'm driving my girls crazy. I've been fine for weeks, but my wedding day is finally here! I just want everything to go right. It's silly, but if this day isn't perfect...

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Just then, Jordan bursts in the room in a panic.

JORDAN

Mia, I'm sorry. Honey, you better sit down. I have something to tell you...

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*
*

MIA

Jordan, what is it?

CONTINUED

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

Jordan! Robin's eyes light up! The icon!

JORDAN
(babbling)

Maybe, this is all my fault. I don't
know. I let my career rule me...

MIA
J, baby you're scaring me.

Mia will die if she hears the truth. Robin gets tense.

JORDAN
It's Lance. He...

ROBIN
...he's running late, Mia.

Jordan looks at Robin in a mad confusion and some derision.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
I'm Robin. Nice to meet you.

Jordan shakes her hand with trepidation. Robin feigns a
smile.

MIA
Running late?

ROBIN
Um yeah. That's what I uh came in
here to tell you. He's just running
a little late. But he's here now.
Right, Kendall I mean, Jordan?

JORDAN
Yeah. He's here, but...

ROBIN
And he knows how important this is to
you. You see Harper told me all
about last night. The guys just got
a little wild at the bachelor party.
You know, boys will be boys.

MIA
Girl spare me the details, please.

CONTINUED

81 CONTINUED: (3)

81

ROBIN

Oh, I'm sure they were on their best behavior, Mia. I'm sure of it.

She looks directly at Jordan who has to look away.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

So, we have a little C.P. time for now. But they'll wait for you.

MIA

Yeah. That's right. This is my day. Calm down, Jordan. I need you to keep your head today.

Jordan just nods as she and Robin exchange looks. Mia smiles and stares at Robin. She gets self-conscious.

MIA (CONT'D)

Girl, I'm sorry, but Harper is one lucky man. You got it going on for real. Your style is so cute.

ROBIN

Oh. Thanks. But I didn't really get to finish my girly stuff...

MIA

Well, honey. Let's get all dolled up. I need a touch-up too.

Robin smiles at her as Mia whisks her away. Jordan is clearly still worried about the bigger picture.

82 INT. PASTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

82

Murch and Quentin continue peeking through the door as Lance stands defiantly in the room facing Harper. With clenched fists he looks as far as one can look from praying. To say Harper is shitting bricks would be a gross understatement.

HARPER

Just pray whenever you feel it, man.

Lance stares until Harper gets the idea to grab a Bible.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Which chapters, L?

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED:

82

LANCE
How about Exodus 20:14.

HARPER
(searching)
Great. Here it is. "Thou shalt
not...commit adultery."

Lance's stare is ice-cold. Murch and Quentin look at each other and shake their heads.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Okay. Look, L. I'm just trying to
stop you from making a big mistake.

LANCE
By running up in my woman?

HARPER
Man, is that all you wanna hear?

LANCE
I want the truth. You can't hurt me
anymore than you already have. So, I
want to know.

HARPER
No, you don't man! All you...!
(deep breath)
All you want to hear is how great a
running back you are, and that your
bride-to-be is perfect. But the truth
is you need to get better at your
lateral moves, and Mia slept with
your best man a long, long time ago.

Lance grabs Harper by the collar and slams him into the wall.

LANCE
(seething)
Y'know I could've killed you last
night. I still could now.

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED;(2)

82

HARPER

But that's not gonna change a thing,
Lance. I made a terrible mistake,
and I'm sorry. I would give my right
arm for it not to have happened. But
it did. It just...happened.

LANCE

I suppose you just lost control?

Harper can't answer that. Lance releases him with a shove.

HARPER

Come on, Lance, you said you'd
forgive her if she ever...

LANCE

So now I'm a hypocrite?!

HARPER

You're just not being realistic,
Lance. This isn't the Bible. It's
the real world. And Mia is as close
to perfection as you're gonna get.

LANCE

You got balls telling me how to feel
about of this. Nigga, please. I ain't
one of your characters. This ain't
one of your stories. You can't
control this outcome. You are not
God!

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CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED: (3)

82

HARPER

(desperate)

Lance, just listen to reason...

Lance screams as he flips over the pastor's desk. There is nothing but silence between them. Harper is out of options.

LANCE

(quietly)

I knew. Always in the back of my mind I knew she'd been with someone else. But never in a million lifetimes did I think you'd be that self-serving back-stabbing bastard.

HARPER

Lance, you can hate me forever, but not Mia. She loves you, man. She's crazy about you. Your ideal woman is staring you in the face and...

(pause)

...you're made for each other...

(thinking)

You two just fit together.

Harper and Lance are thinking now. Quentin and Murch wait.

LANCE

(long pause)

She's my earth, my queen. You know?

HARPER

Yeah. I know.

Lance looks skyward and Harper waits. Slowly, Lance gets on his knees. Murch and Quentin pump their fist, hi-five and head toward church. Harper sighs big relief.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Okay, I'll get your tuxedo...

Lance grabs Harper's hand and squeezes it tightly.

LANCE

Harper, I'm a Christian so I have to forgive you. But it doesn't mean I have to like it.

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED: (4)

82

HARPER

Okaaaaay?

LANCE

You better find your way to deal with your issues too. Writing can't purge you completely. So I suggest you acknowledge Him, Harp.

HARPER

Him who?

Lance furrows his brow at him. Harper gets it.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Oh. Uh Lance, I really think I should get that tux...

Lane crushes Harper's hand and yanks him down to his knees.

LANCE

You promised you'd get me over that broom no matter what. Don't back out now. Recognize His strength. Respect it.

HARPER

(wincing)

Okay. Okay. Recognize. Respect.

Lance glares at Harper before bowing his head and immersing himself in a silent prayer. Harper eyes him and then around the entire room. He feels very awkward. and doesn't really know what to do. He looks at Lance one more time in his most heart-felt prayer. Harper then looks skyward, contemplates and makes a decision. He respectfully bows his head and prays as best as he can.

83 INT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - DAY

83

The church organ plays as Lance, Harper, Quentin, Murch and the other groomsmen stand at attention. Jordan comes down the aisle. Harper crosses his fingers and she just cuts her eyes at him. Harper notices Robin sitting in the pews and she is more together than we've ever seen her. He smiles proudly at how beautiful she is. She makes eye-contact with him and then turns away uneasily to see Mia coming down the aisle.

CONTINUED

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

Mia is an angel. Her dress is stunning virgin white, her make-up is flawless, her hair is perfect, and her smiling face beams as she looks at her husband to be. Meanwhile, Lance trembles.

84 INT. HARPER'S ROOM - NIGHT

84

Flashback (1992)

Harper and Mia have sex in a doggy style position.

MIA

Ohh, Harper...

85 INT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - DAY

85

Lance blinks hard as if his eyes sting him.

86 INT. HARPER'S ROOM - NIGHT

86

(Flashback) Mia sits on top of Harper grinding him heavily.

87 INT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - DAY

87

Mia looks at Lance in adoration. Tears start streaming down his face. Mia fights back her own tears, but they flow. The bridesmaids start doing the same as Mia gets to the altar.

PASTOR

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today in the sight of God to join this man and this woman in holy-matrimony. If any person can show why these two people should not be wedded eternally let him speak now or forever hold his peace...

Lance emits a small yelp. The groomsmen and Jordan wait with baited breath. Robin is on the edge of her seat. Lance forms a crooked smile and then motions for the pastor to continue. Big sighs all around.

CONTINUED

87 CONTINUED:

87

PASTOR (CONT'D)

The couple have written their own wedding vows that they will speak to each other and in front of you, their family and friends. Mia?

Jordan hands Mia her vows. Mia looks at Lance with adoration.

MIA

Lance, my friend, my love, my hero, the purest manifestation of manhood I shall ever know, I invite you this day and always to share my sacred space. The love which leads me to my hearts' joy and teaches me to be faithful to my personal truths. As I stand beside you this day, I offer you the very heart of me, filled with sacred love - pure, unconditional, and everlasting. For love bears all things, endures all things, believes all things. Love never fails, and I do love you, Lance, body, mind, and soul.

*
*

Folks weep in the pews. Lance cries like a baby. Harper pats him on the shoulder and hands him his vows. Lance takes them, looks at them, and then at Mia. Harper crosses his fingers and pleadingly looks skyward. Lance clears his throat.

LANCE

(through tears)

Mia, my darling, my love, as I stand here beside you this day, know that there is nothing greater than love, for God is love. And having faith in you and belief in our love makes life worth living. In this world of uncertainties, I find comfort and peaceful assurance in you. As sure
(more)

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CONTINUED

87 CONTINUED: (2)

87

LANCE (cont'd)
as I am gazing upon your angelic face
I am made whole today. For a woman's
virtue is a man's greatest glory.
From this day forth we will love one
another as God loves us.

Lance bawls, as does Mia, the wedding party, Robin, and the
entire church.

PASTOR
(choked up)
By the power invested in me, I now
pronounce you, husband and wife.
Please kiss your bride.

He does. There isn't a dry eye in the house. Lance and Mia
turn toward the wedding guest and jump the broom. They walk
down the aisle and the wedding party follows. Cameras snap
and flash.

88 OMITTED

88

89 OMITTED

89

A90 INT. RECEPTION (SPIVEY GRAND BALLROOM) - NIGHT

A90

Lance and Mia receive congratulations, but Lance is still
going through inner turmoil. Robin comes in and hugs Mia.

MIA
Ohh, thank you for coming, Robin.
Lance, this is Harper's girlfriend.

Robin hugs Lance who gives her a once over.

ROBIN
Congratulations you two. It was a
beautiful ceremony. Beautiful vows.

LANCE
Thanks.

CONTINUED

A90 CONTINUED:

A90

MIA

Come on, girl let me show you to your table.

Mia leads her away. Harper (at the bar) sees them passing through the room, but Robin fails to make eye-contact with him. He instead makes eye-contact with Jordan who averts her gaze. He turns his attentions to his 4th attempt at his best man speech. Quentin steps up to order a drink. They share an awkward pause.

HARPER & QUENTIN

Q, I....

Listen, Harp...

They both laugh.

HARPER

Sorry. Quentin, I just wanted...

QUENTIN

Don't mention it. It was for the best. You did good, shorty. Sorry, 'bout those verbal jabs last night.

HARPER

I deserved them, Q.

QUENTIN

Yeah, you did.

*

Quentin reaches in his jacket and hands Harper his glasses.

*

QUENTIN

You might need these for your speech, shorty. Unless you wanna shoot from the hip.

*

*

*

*

Harper takes the glasses and looks at Quentin circumspectively.

*

*

QUENTIN

Trust me. It works.

*

*

CONTINUED

A90 CONTINUED: (2)

A90

He pats Harper on the shoulder and orders a drink. Harper shakes his head and smiles before resuming his speech.

90 INT. RECEPTION - NIGHT

90

(Later) Robin and Uncle Skeeter and the rest of the her table laughing. Conversely, Shelby is having a miserable time as she downs her fifth glass of Champagne.

Over at the dais the wedding party eats dinner. Candy and Murch enjoy each other's company. Nearby, Mia is all smiles and Lance is all inner turmoil.

Harper rings his glass to get everyone's attention. Mia smiles and Lance glares. Quentin watches. Robin listens attentively as does Jordan. All eyes are on him. He puts down his prepared speech and looks a bit nervous without it.

HARPER

(long pause)

Mia gave me too much credit for this union. Because I am the one who has learned from them what it means to truly commit to another person. They've taught me the importance of seizing the moment. Because we can never go back. We live for today. Not for what was or what could have been. And what will be no one can say. But sometimes you just have to step out on faith...

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CONTINUED

90 CONTINUED:

90

Mia smiles. Lance loosens up and does the same.

HARPER (CONT'D)

And believe that what you've built
together is worth preserving. When
you are made for one another as much
as these two are...

With moist eyes he looks directly at Robin.

HARPER (CONT'D)

It's definitely worth preserving.)

(pause)

To the bride and groom. Mia, Lance,....
I love you both. May God bless your
union.

*
*

Everyone claps. Harper takes his seat and wipes his tears. Robin has lost it completely. Jordan smiles, applauds, and wipes her tears. Quentin pats him on the back and they shake hands. Mia blows him a kiss. Lance gives his the power fist. Harper acknowledges them both. Lance looks at Mia, hugs her tight and kisses her temple and forehead. Harper peers through the standing ovation for Robin, but her seat is empty. He is disappointed.

WEDDING COORDINATOR (O.S.)

Time to toss the bouquet, Mia!

91 INT. RECEPTION - NIGHT

91

All of the single women bunch up in a crowd readying themselves for Mia's bouquet. Shelby eases her way into the crowd and gets right into the thick of things. Mia tosses the bouquet over her head and Shelby slyly and forcefully nudges a young lady out of the bouquet's trajectory to grab it. The young lady is stunned and quizzically looks at Shelby who expresses no shame. She holds up the bouquet triumphantly and walks away.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

Alright now. All the fellas. Come
on. Catch the garter.

No guys move at all.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED:

91

WEDDING COORDINATOR (CONT'D)

Oh, don't be that way. Come on now.

Guys reluctantly stand in a crowd with their hands in their pockets. All the ladies shake their heads at them. Quentin, Harper, and Murch stand in the back laughing about Shelby. Robin is still nowhere to be found. Lance tosses the garter over his head. It flies through the air and part like the Red Sea as it descends. Harper instinctively reaches for it, but bumps Quentin's hand on the way up and like a magnet to steel Quentin's hand catches the garter. The whole room goes wild as Quentin looks up to see Shelby across the room dreading the next part of the ceremony. They both get dragged to the middle of the dance floor. Shelby sits in a chair with her arms folded. The band strikes up a romantic ballad. The fellas chant "Q, Q, Q, Q, Q." She eyeballs him evilly. Realizing he has a crowd he smirks and gets down on one knee with the garter. Everyone laughs hysterically. Quentin slips off Shelby's shoe sensuously.

SHELBY

Just put it on, Quentin.

QUENTIN

Don't rush me know, baby.

He caresses her calf. Everyone hoots and hollers. She smacks his hand away.

SHELBY

Cut it out.

Quentin stretches the garter playfully over his nose and chin. The place goes bananas. He lifts Shelby's foot to his mouth and clenches his teeth on her big toe. He closes his lips on her toe and the garter rolls onto her foot. Shelby is getting turned on but is very self-conscious of the crowd.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Quentin! Stop it. I'm not playing.

Quentin just looks in her eyes and rolls the garter up her thigh. The higher he gets, the more people start to whoop and holler. Shelby pushes Quentin away and runs to the other room. Everyone applauds as Quentin takes a bow. He chases after her. Jordan comes over to Harper.

HARPER

Go to her, Q!

CONTINUED

== Script Fly.com ==

91 CONTINUED: (2)

91

JORDAN

Quentin better look out. Shelby'll
put a hurting on him.

They exchange looks and then smile.

HARPER

Hey, um have you seen Robin?

JORDAN

I don't think she's far. Believe me.

Harper looks around the room and she's nowhere is sight.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Hey. Dance with me?

Harper hesitates.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I just want to talk to you a minute.

Harper nods and takes her by the hand, and they dance close.
Across the room Robin emerges from the ladies room wiping
away her remaining tears. She sees Harper and Jordan, but
before she gets too upset, here comes Uncle Skeeter.

UNCLE SKEETER

Cut a rug with a was vet, darlin'?

ROBIN

Sure, Uncle Skeeter.

92 OMITTED

92

A93 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A93

Quentin has cornered Shelby. She is pacing, trying to get
away from him, but he keeps cutting her off.

CONTINUED

A93 CONTINUED:

A93

QUENTIN

Why you wanna be that way?

Finally, she stops and stands with her arms folded.

SHELBY

I don't get turned on by silly games.

QUENTIN

Who said anything about turning you on?

SHELBY

I suppose that's your idea of fun?

QUENTIN

Hell yeah. Girl, please. I wouldn't even try turning you on. I'd need a bonfire just to thaw you out.

SHELBY

I'm not that frigid.

QUENTIN

You had me fooled.

SHELBY

That doesn't seem too difficult.

QUENTIN

Touche'. Touche'.

A waiter comes around with a tray of champagne in glasses. Quentin grabs two. He offers one to Shelby.

SHELBY

Thank you.

QUENTIN

(charming)

You're welcome.

93 INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

93

Jordan and Harper slow dance as they watch the loving newlyweds across the floor do the same.

CONTINUED

JORDAN

That was a good speech, Harper. We
all felt it. Damn, this has been an
emotional-ass weekend.

*
*

HARPER

A roller-coaster ride.
(beat)
Jordan, about last night...

*

JORDAN

(looking at him)

Last night never happened. And if I
ever hear it mentioned, I swear I'm
selling what I know to the Inquirer.
You got me?

*
*
*
*

HARPER

Loud and clear, Ms. Armstrong.

Harper kisses her on the forehead. She is appreciative and
hugs him tighter. Nearby, Robin dances with Uncle Skeeter.

Harper wistfully observes her laughing, being charming, and
fending off Skeeter's advances. Jordan notices him.

JORDAN

I saw you reach for that garter.

Harper smiles at her.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I don't blame you. She's the woman.
Don't blow it. I love you, Harper.

Jordan kisses him on the cheek and brushes his face tenderly.
She walks over to Robin and Skeeter.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Listen, I hate to interrupt, Robin.
But Uncle Skeeter promised to save me
a dance, and he's the only available
man up in here.

She and Robin exchange respectful looks.

CONTINUED

UNCLE SKEETER

Well, come on, baby-girl. You don't mind do you darlin'?

ROBIN

No. Not at all.

JORDAN

Thanks, Robin. I owe you. Listen, I think the best man needs to see you.

Robin sees Harper standing and waiting for her. She turns back to Jordan who gives her a small nod and smile.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Watch those hands now, Skeeter...

Robin smiles and chuckles having experienced the same groping. Harper comes over to her. They stand apart for a moment.

HARPER

Hi.

ROBIN

Hey.

They pull together cautiously not really knowing what to say.

HARPER

Thanks for your help today.

ROBIN

Your welcome. Great speech. I was...moved.

HARPER

I meant what I said up there. What we have is worth preserving and...

ROBIN

Harper, I don't think that this is the right time. We have a lot to talk about, and it's not going to be solved overnight. We have to figure...

CONTINUED

93 CONTINUED: (3)

93

HARPER

You know what your problem is, Robin?
You don't live enough for today.

ROBIN

What...?

HARPER

For once just enjoy the moment.

Harper takes her hand and begins to get down on one knee.

ROBIN

(self-conscious)

Harper, what are you doing?

HARPER

At least for a little while. OK?

Harper just looks at her lovingly and sincerely. Robin is in shock.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Robin Jones, will you marry me?

Robin is absolutely speechless and near tears. All attention is focused on the two of them.

HARPER (CONT'D)

(continuing)

I love you. Please?

ROBIN

(near tear again)

"Yeah, whateva, man."

Harper gets up and hugs her. Everyone surrounding them applauds. They kiss.

94 INT. RECEPTION - NIGHT

94

Later the band strikes up "Candy" and everyone dances. Candy and Murch dance together and she starts doing a nasty dance with a slight striptease and looks seductively at Murch. Murch grabs her and looks around to see if anyone sees. She laughs and playfully hits him. Uncle Skeeter gets on the dance floor.

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED:

94

UNCLE SKEETER

I'm 'bout to get it goin', y'all.

Uncles Skeeter starts off the electric slide and everyone starts getting into it, the children, the elderly, the wedding party. The whole party is in sync with the electric slide. Harper gets behind Robin, presses his body against her and whispers in her ear. She smiles and widens her eyes. She nods at him, and he takes her hand, and he takes her hand to lead her out of the ballroom.

95 INT. SPIVEY TOWERS PENTHOUSE BEDROOM - DAY

95

It is morning. Two figures stir awake from underneath the sheets. It is Quentin and Shelby. They wake up simultaneously, think for a moment and then turn to one another. They stare for a few beats and then jump out of bed.

BOTH

Oh hell no. What have we done? No way. I'm out. I will never drink again.

FADE OUT.

The End.