

THE MODEL DAUGHTER

by
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THE DEFINITIVE DRAFT

EXT. A MIDWESTERN FRONT YARD--A VERY COLD DAY

A YOUNG JACOB JACOBS scampers past scattered clumps of snow, accompanied by the voice of his older self. Young Jake pries open a frozen mailbox and pulls out a Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue of a February long ago.

JAKE (V.O.)

It all goes insane when you actually start looking forward to the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue. I mean, there is a time when you're young and rosy-cheeked and you go out to the mailbox and you get angry..."What are these pointless ladies in bathing suits doing on the cover of my favorite sports magazine?" Eventually I saw the light...

Trudging back to the house, Young Jake suddenly stops and turns to the viewer, clutching the magazine against his chest. He is now wearing sunglasses.

EXT. A BEACH THAT COULD BE ANYWHERE--DAY

A couple decades older, Jacob Jacobs starkly stands in the middle of a mysteriously undefined beach, wearing a much more impressive pair of shades.

He is reflecting upon a deliriously monumental supershoot unfolding around him. PHOTOGRAPHERS hatch open their weaponry while their CREWMATES wobble up reflector boards into the air. Detached clusters of POSE-STRIKING WOMEN are the focus of the frenzy. They are called MODELS. Moving forward, Jake gives a glance to a WATCH THAT ONLY HAS A TICKING SECOND HAND.

With whinnies of "I can't help it," A GIGGLING MODEL, wearing strategically placed seashells, can not stop giggling. A bearded HE-MAN PHOTOGRAPHER and his CREW are unamused. Jake softly crosses before them and whispers to the Giggling Model. She immediately sobers up as Jake struts off.

GIGGLING MODEL

Sorry, people. Let's do it...

INT. OPEN AIR TENT --DAY

A champagne sipping MELANGE OF MODELS in various states of undress banter away as they are fitted and measured by DRONES.

BLACK TOPLESS MODEL

I know, I know, it's what I get for going back to Barcelona. They promised a "closed set" then practically set up bleachers.

(more)

BLACK TOPLESS MODEL (Cont'd)
 Every politician in Spain was there--
 with me naked on neon crucifix. But
 you know those Iced Tea people pay
 really well.

WHITE TOPLESS MODEL
 I should be so charmed. I had to
 present a medal at the Special
 Olympics last week. Nobody told me
 "Special" meant retarded...

Jake pops into the tent. The topless models catch themselves
 mid-squeal.

BLACK TOPLESS MODEL
 Oh hey Jake, it's just you....

JAKE
 "It's just me."....Ouch.

Jake mimes being arrowed in the heart.

DRESSING MODEL
 Jake, you got to call my mother and
 lie to her for me because you're
 the only one she trusts...

JAKE
 It's taken care of. The store's not
 going to prosecute you for
 shoplifting-- you're on the cover
 of their catalog for God's sake.
 Tell me that thing on your nose is
 a purple booger...

DRESSING MODEL
 (re nose piercing)
 No like?

JAKE
 Zesty, but Shannon wears a replica,
 and knowing Shannon...

A similarly pierced Model Shannon screeches into frame clawing
 at the nostrils of the Dressing Model. Jake deadpans the rest
 of his sentence.

SHANNON
 You even stole my color, you sick
 whore..

JAKE
 she might take it the wrong way..

Both girls pinch at each other's purple pierces when the machine-gun sound of a shutter-click is heard. All women mortify/freeze at the sight of a GANGLY CREATURE SWADDLED IN BLACK, head obscured by a Leica.

DRESSING MODEL

Oh, it's that grotesque little..

JAKE

H...

Jake reaches forward. The dark clad figure collapses into a military roll under through the tent. Jake chuckles, giving chase.

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

Jake bounds from the tent. He scans the spooky gremlin scurrying out of sight behind a massive beach ball. JUNE PIERCE burns across the sand beside him. Somewhere in her forties, June has could-still-be-a-model looks, wrapped in a Tigress aura that implies such a facile compliment would violently annoy her.

JUNE

Tell me that's not what I think it is.

JAKE

(smiling)

Fraid so, boss.

The duo jet off past STYLISTS strategically arranging sand on the bottom of a DENTAL FLOSS THONGED BEAUTY, who is firing an absurdly endless stream of liquid into her mouth from a squeezed bottle.

JUNE

This goddamn business...look at all this. An entire calendar shot in one weekend to raise money for the touching cause of--Hey, what country are we in again?

JAKE

It begins with a C. All these News crews filming other news crews filming photographers filming swimsuits riding too far up young women's heinies. And it's probably all for another feature about how nobody cares about the modeling industry anymore.

JUNE

Ah, if that were only true. Zurich faxed a shot of Brittany in her new haircut. It's worse than we feared. Blue-er than we feared. It's like her head's being raped by a chlorinated porcupine.

JAKE

This goddamn business...

MINDY (O.S.)

Jacob Jacobs? Hey, Jake!

Jake and June turn to a guilelessly perky and wavy-haired wonder, MINDY, waving at them in a ripped LEAR T-shirt and little else. She is holding a baby.

JUNE

Don't even think about going near that Judas sleaze.

JAKE

(cheerful depart)

Fuck off, June.

JUNE

Ask her why she hasn't got a Vogue cover in two and a half years...

June does a flustered turn and is captured by a familiar snapping sound. The creature before her lowers its camera, allowing a clear view. It is H LEAR, a perversely postured, fourteen and much more than a half year old girl who would be beautiful, very, if it wasn't for her disturbing coiffure, her Malcom X glasses, and her bizarre black-on-black outfit with a big H pin.

H

Hi, Mom.

JUNE

What are you doing here, H? Do you have any idea how unstable the government is down here?

H

I believe we're in California, mother. Anyway, you're not on duty until next week, so relax.

JUNE

Don't talk back to me. He's not supposed to take you out of Manhattan without telling me. Just because your father lets you get away with murder..

H
 "doesn't mean murder is a good
 thing."

JUNE
 You're not funny.

H
 I'm a little funny.

JAKE AND LEAR MODEL MINDY

turn from June to each other.

MINDY
 Ms. Pierce can't still be raging
 at all of us who defected to Ward
 after the break-up..

JAKE
 Of course, she can. And so can I,
 you pre-Raphaelite bitch. That your
 baby?

MINDY
 No, the prop-guy gave it to me. You
 haven't said anything about my tits,
 Jake. Aren't they great?

JAKE
 Devastating. Nature or Nurture?

MINDY
 Don't be gross. I'm a growing girl.
 Okay, a little nurture. You know,
 Doctor West on Park and 25th...Hey,
 why does your watch only have a
 second hand?

Jake locks his attention onto June snaring H by the wrist. Jake
immediately breaks toward the struggle. H trades smiles with
 him.

H
 Hey, Jake-Jake.

JAKE
 Hey.

A CAR ON THE STREET above the beach erupts with a loud
 explosion, sending all three characters cowering to the sand.

EXT. STREET ABOVE THE BEACH

A SEVERE GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER strides away from the flaming car,
 bobbing a light meter.

GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER

Yummy.

The smoke of the car drifts up to a terrace.

EXT. ON THE TERRACE--DAY

LOMBARDI gracefully waves off the rising vapors, looking every inch the spooky, vaguely European Fashion Industry Icon that he is. He looks out over the super-shoot with a disdainful snort, then turns to a SPOOKY ANDROGYNOUS WOMAN in a perfect white dress (except for a bloody bullet hole painted over the heart).

LOMBARDI

It's time.

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

Jake and June rustle up into exhaling standing positions, brushing off sand. H has vanished.

JUNE

Artistic pretentious photographers--
I hate them. And I hate your watch.
Just a second hand? Je ne 'get it'
pas.

JAKE

Where's H...

JUNE

Don't worry about it. Oh lookee,
the Ego has landed.

June motions to a Lear-Insigniaed limousine slithering to a halt on the street above.

EXT. THE STREET ABOVE--DAY

Ejaculating from the limo is the dashing Agency Emperor WARD LEAR along with the Lear's bespectacled, Asian, female counterpart to Jake, DOMINIQUE.

WARD

The little Diva-in-training comes
into my office with an I-don't-work-
for-the-agency-The-agency-works-for-
me soliloquy. Seventeen fucking
years old and she wants contact
sheet kill rights.

DOMINIQUE

"Contact sheet kill rights"--Where
do they learn this shit?

Ward does a kid-in-a-candy-store gallop to the beach constellation of bodies, cameras, and teeth.

WARD
Dominique, if this isn't heaven,
I'm an atheist.

EXT. BEACH--DAY

THREE SUNNING BEAUTIES flail atop the world's largest beach towel which reads FEBRUARY. A PURRING MEISELESQUE PHOTOGRAPHER barks out orders as his OAKLEYED ASSISTANT clinically does the actual snapping from a ladder above.

PURRING PHOTOGRAPHER
Come on girls, let there be life!
Or even death! Energy! Not that kind!
I wanna be traumatized! Thank you!
Hold the upper body--Yes!--Stop!--
Wa-ard!

Ward has sashayed onto the towel with a semi-oblivious grin. The Sunning models giggle up at him.

WARD
Lighten up, Lamar. I'm just making
sure it's not a mirage. Ladies, you
look succulent with a capital Suck.

SUNNING MODEL
Oh Ward, be still my heart...

WARD
I love a smartass and baby, yours
is Genius...

A pretty TEENYBOPPER MODEL, changing out of an outfit behind a held-by-Assistant blanket, giddily waves from a distance. Ward immediately snakes off toward her...until H gloms onto his path.

H
Hey Dad, I was wondering...

WARD
I know baby, I was a real villain
to bring you all the way down here.
You can see for yourself, I've got
so much work to do.

H
(with a laugh)
"Work?" Why can't I get mad at
you...

Ward pauses before a buffet table to scarf a little caviar. He makes a couple Big Bad Wolf gestures toward the changing Teenybopper.

WARD

Get mad at me? What kind of topic is that? I'm the hottest patriarch a girl can possess...

(heading to teenybopper)

We'll settle all this on the plane back, okay H? Love ya...

H

Settle all what? I didn't even...

Ward and H move off in opposite directions. The viewer's viewpoint slides down the table to where a cute and nervous model, MARCIE, meticulously arranges a picaresque lunch upon her paper plate. Seeing June Pierce stomp up, she wings her mini-banquet into a nearby trashcan.

MARCIE

Oh, Ms. Pierce, I'm...

JUNE

"Sorry?" No kidding. Do you know the meaning of the word "oink?"

MARCIE

My diet's not...work-...

JUNE

(touching out)

Neither's the electrolysis, Rasputin. Go back to the hotel, Marcie. Hide. We'll talk on the plane.

MARCIE

But Ms. Pierce, I...

JAKE

is working a cellular phone.

JAKE

I know he's a racist. And after that article comes out, everyone is going to know. That's why he'll need an African-American model for his campaign...I'll call you back, Bob.

Jake moodily watches Marcie being berated. He takes off his sunglasses--rubs his eyes--puts them back on. H sidles up beside him and aims her camera at the sad confrontation. Without looking, Jake deftly flips his hand in front of the lens as she snaps.

H

Jake-Jake, you ruined my picture!

JAKE

Your compassion is overwhelming.

The pair go into some mock-fisticuffs, circling themselves around the parked, planet-sized beach ball. They end up tangled together in a way that makes H very happy.

H

Why do you care so much for that stupid tribe of women?

JAKE

Models are stupid. Wow, that's original.

H

Oh that's right, I forgot, "models are actually quite bright." I swear, beautiful women get treated just like dolphins. They make a squeaking noise that sounds remotely human and everyone says "How intelligent!"

JAKE

(touching her hair)

I always forget. Pennzoil or Quaker State?

H

(playful model imitation)

"People don't understand it's hard work. Sometimes it's weally cold, right, and we have to smile like it's, you know, weally warm."

Jake tickles H into stopping. Marcie departing, June sees Jake and H goofing off, with a pang of envy. She turns away right into the path of an oncoming Ward, who has just pecked the Teenybopper good-bye. Trapped in a burst of It-would-be-immature-to-walk-away maturity, each is amused by the other's anxiety, trying to cover their own.

WARD

June...when did you get in--when do you go back?

JUNE

It's the Father of the Year. Nothing like watching Daddy give out bikini waxes...

WARD

Parenting tips from June Pierce. Rich.

JUNE

Oh, belated congratulations, I heard you opened seven more modeling schools. Way to go, Chief.

WARD

("You're jealous")
If those schools weren't making money...

JUNE

Taking money, Ward. Christ, you know you can't teach "height." You can't teach "genetics." You...

WARD

June, you're not my wife anymore, you're the competition...

June and Ward hush to radar that Lombardi's spooky androgynous female Assistant in the white avec bullethole dress has halted between them.

SPOOKY ASSISTANT

Lombardi. Now. Follow.

JAKE

peripherals June and Ward being Pied Pipered away by the Lombardi assistant.

H

Doesn't it bother you that the list of Hot Babes Throughout History is a phone book, while the list of Female Geniuses Who Changed the World barely fills the back of postage stamp?

JAKE

Well, don't blame me...

H

I'm serious. Why do women feel it's more important to--Oh my god, a watch with a ticking second hand. What a brilliant comment on the meaninglessness of time itself.

JAKE

(warmly)

Finally. I knew you would be the one to understand.

H

You and me, man. We...

JAKE

Later, H. Something's percolating...

Jake eyes June and Ward trotting up the stairs to the street. He moves off. H keeps a frown above sea level.

EXT. THE STREET--DAY

Jake trots the last of the steps to see June and Ward disappear into a streetside building. He tilts his vision to the building's terrace where he makes vague eye contact with Lombardi. Jake's attention swerves to a rumbling Taxi. Hatching out is the sadly charismatic super-model NICOLE KIMBERLY.

She steams toward a trailer which is emblazoned with a poster of an infinitely perkier version of herself bending a cigarette with the caption: SUPERMODEL NICOLE KIMBERLY SAYS "SMOKING IS NOT PRETTY." The in-the-flesh Nicole lights one up.

Jake marvels at the juxtaposition and does a deadpan wave. Nicole dryly blows a billow of smoke toward him then bangs through the trailer door. Jake exhales then turns back to see Lombardi saunter from the terrace, closing a set of doors behind him.

INT. ALMOST COMPLETELY EMPTY, BUT "DESIGNED"--LOOKING ROOM--DAY

Doors clicking shut, Lombardi faces his captive audience: June and Ward sitting stiffly side-by-side in tall back chairs.

LOMBARDI

June Pierce of the Pierce Agency.
Ward Lear of the Lear Agency. Hi.

WARD

Lombardi...I had no idea you were coming way out here...

JUNE

Mario gave me a glimpse of the new collection at the rehearsal. Next week is going to be seminal...

WARD

I never see the girl- as excited about anything as much as your shows..

LOMBARDI

Fashion is dead. Forgive me, I know that is absurd and that I say it every year, but...I've
(more)

LOMBARDI (Cont'd)
 run out of decades to cannibalize--
 my stern hemline commands are
 cheerfully ignored--the general
 public would rather just amble their
 way into-- what is the name of that
 evil, evil place-- "the Gap." I feel
 the need, I'm sure you do as well--
 the need to rage against all that
 is boring, boring, and boring--I
 have something. New. Neat.
 Historic. I call it...the Lombardi.

Lombardi raises up a gleaming, robin-egg blue pill. For
 accidental dramatic effect, an explosion rocks the building.

EXT. THE STREET--DAY

A Mass of Debris whoomps up in flames while machines
 strategically churn even more smoke.

GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER
 Soon we need the Girl...And the Gun.

INT. THE STRANGE TRAILER--DAY

Holding an ultra-tech, super-suave, silver gun with laser-
 sighting, Nicole Kimberly melancholically sits on a Trailer
 stool. Stylishly done up to perfection, she is wearing ornate
 earrings that also are working mini-clocks.

Nicole flicks on the red beam of the laser sighting. Pointing
 the gun at herself, she runs its thin laser trajectory across
 her mouth, her teeth, and into her eye.

A sharp sound knocks her out of her stupor. She scans to the
 sight of Jake ambling in through the trailer door.

NICOLE
 Take off the sunglasses if you want
 to talk to me...

JAKE
 Who says I want to talk to you? Nice
 pic.

Jake motions to a taped-to-mirror clipping of Nicole Kimberly
 in an unstylish outfit with the caption NICOLE KIMBERLY
 FASHIONS. Glasses and a goatee have been drawn on the picture.

NICOLE
 Here when I got here. What can I
 say, everybody hates me.

JAKE

Oh now, just the people who know you. Everybody else in the world loves you.

NICOLE

I tell people what I miss most is the sex, but you know, it's gotta be your sense of humor.

(to picture)

Nicole Kimberly fashions. Available at a better quasi-discount warehouse near you. Ward doesn't pimp my name for just anyone...I'm getting out of this business, Jake.

JAKE

(yawning)

Why this time?...

NICOLE

Such a jerk. You know I've been waiting around here since...since...

Nicole comically tries to catch a glimpse of her attached clock-earrings, futilely swerving her eyes from side to side. Jake touches out to examine her eye and exhales.

JAKE

I can't believe you. You're getting so late 70's/early 80's--doing drugs, dating international arms dealers...

NICOLE

Hey--International Arms Dealer. And do not disparage Drugs. They're the only thing left still worth the hype. Oh, but that's right, after Jake Jacobs left me, he doesn't even take Advil anymore.

JAKE

There's a lot of things I don't do anymore...

NICOLE

I know. You stated the rules very clearly at our last summit. I didn't give you a disease, did I?

JAKE

Not physical.

A burst of sun cuts off a mock-expression of mirth from Nicole. A BURLY ASSISTANT floats into view from the opening front door.

BURLY ASSISTANT
Hurry. We're losing the light.

INT. LOMBARDI'S ROOM--DAY

June and Ward are out of the chairs, pacing about the room.

WARD
Lombardi, friend, you got to tell us more about this little light blue pill. I mean I like a good tease as much..

JUNE
What is it you said-- "The Lombardi pill will change every life in every hemisphere." You can't leave a statement like that just hanging in air...

LOMBARDI
I can't afford any leaks with a product of such poignant magnitude and potential controversy. I've over-and-over conquered the Fashion world. With the Lombardi, I conquer the World world. All you need to know is the right campaign, the right girl, any product can become accepted and cherished. I need girls. You have girls. Discuss.

WARD
Everyone knows I have the highest supermodel ratio in my deck. And I hold the queen, Nicole Kimberly.

LOMBARDI
No supermodels, please. They've become as boring as actresses. They have names, voices, personalities, opinions. Claudia Schiffer on gun control. Monstrous. I need something fresh, uncolonized...

WARD
Youth is always in, always hot. Youth never gets old. Lear agency motto.

LOMBARDI
But I want more than innocence. I want an innocence with a potential for great social upheaval. A dangerous innocence.

JUNE

Like I've always said at the Pierce Agency, if you want the girl next door, go next door.

Lombardi cracks his neck, getting serious. June and Ward stop pacing.

LOMBARDI

Everyone is beautiful in their own special way. I don't care. Few are beautiful in my special way. The company that finds me my muse--and don't flatter yourself, the offer's been put out to Ford, Elite, and every other operation cheesy enough to call itself a modeling agency--The winner, as it were, will be my exclusive provider of models. Clothes, jeans, fragrances, luggage--and don't forget, my products actually sell.

June and Ward dizzy back into the chairs.

LOMBARDI

I have a special interest in you two. Since breaking up your agency, you've done innovative work. But it's got to be a struggle. It's not the eighties. I know you're both still paying off serious start-up debts. More than anybody, Pierce and Lear can't afford to lose me. It's simple. If one of you gets me and the other doesn't, that means one of you is at the top and one of you is on the street. You have a week to find me the Lombardi Girl. The day of my show. This lifeboat seats one. Get Ugly. For me.

Lombardi enigmatically twists back out onto the terrace. His Spooky Female Androgyne steps before the dazed June and Ward.

SPOOKY ASSISTANT

Over. Leave.

EXT. THE DESERT--APPROACHING DUSK

Hatching from the trailer, Jake and Nicole (twirling her gun) move through a gauntlet made up of all the kooky characters unveiled in this vast opening scene. June and Ward are babbling into cellulars.

NICOLE

Jesus, I don't work for you anymore.
I don't fuck you anymore--Remind
me, why are we talking?

JAKE

"I still care for you?"

NICOLE

Could you put that in the form of
an answer?

(dark chuckle)

Oh Jake, one day you're gonna lose
your Cool. I hope I'm there to see
it.

At the end of the lines is a VIETNAMESE MALE MODEL, looking
seriously haggard with his hands tied behind his back. Perfectly
set up in the background are smoke, debris, and the flaming car.

Affected by Nicole, Jake finally takes off his sunglasses. He
steps forth to take a picture. Nicole raises the imposing laser-
sight weapon to the side of the Vietnamese Male Model's head
in an immediately, recognizably exact replica of the renowned
1968 Life Magazine photograph of a Vietnamese man being executed
in a point blank gunshot.

GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER

(coldly whimsical)

Say cheese?

NICOLE

(smiling)

Blow me.

SNAP!

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET--SOME DAYS LATER

A refreshing burst of New York car-horn/road-
construction/babbling-street-person cacophony wrestles control
of the soundtrack as Jake pounds Manhattan pavement, working
a cellular. He passes a bus stand poster of the Nicole Vietnam
Fashion Shot captioned THE CALENDAR TO HELP STOP THE WAR IN (the
rest of the poster is ripped).

JAKE

"This lifeboat seats one." Christ
June, Lombardi thinks he's God...

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE--DAY

Neck-holding a cordless while tossing photos and comp cards into
two boxes both labeled NO, a frazzled June settles behind the
desk of her magazine cover covered office.

JUNE

He may be right. The show's tomorrow. A week has come and gone and we're officially drowning--Don't tell me not to freak out! We have everything riding on--"A designer drug that gives you a pure 48 hour high"--Yeah, I heard that rumor, too. Stop thinking about what the pill is. The only thing you should be thinking about is the two wittle words: "Dangerous" and "Innocence."

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET--DAY

Jake weaves pedestrians, completely unfrazzled.

JAKE

I've got two wittle words for you.
"Dawn" and "Webster."

June's cries of curiosity are flapped shut and pocketed. Smiling, Jake then glides through traffic toward a sizable but cozy apartment house.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT--MORNING

A MODEL WITH A POODLE is picking up Fifi's excrement with a plastic gloved hand. She guilelessly waves to Jake with her brown and bagged hand.

MODEL WITH POODLE

Hey, Jake.

JAKE

(framing his hands)
Quick, somebody call Mademoiselle.
Cover idea.

An EXTREMELY TOUGH DOORMAN opens the highly secured door for Jake.

EXTREMELY TOUGH DOORMAN

Hey, Jake.

INT. APARTMENT GROUND FLOOR--DAY

Like a stern casino pit boss, Jake works his way through a hallway of borderline-absurd male fantasy. YOUNG MODELETTES are tinkerbelle-buzzing about in the throes of preparing for work, wearing ensembles of pajamas, sweats, and barely held-up towels. All acknowledge Jake.

He effortlessly stabilizes a HOPPING MODEL, helping her tug on a heel before floating into a dinging, opening elevator.

INT. ANOTHER FLOOR OF THE APARTMENT--NIGHT

The elevator opens. Jake emerges, addressing a TOOTH BRUSHING NYMPH. He is counting off with his fingers.

JAKE

I'll say it again. Four things to remember about modeling. Water is a Food--Yes, he just wants to fuck you-- The pumpkin turns back into a carriage at midnight--It's 11:45 p.m.

TOOTH BRUSHING NYMPH

What was number three, again...

Tabitha, a still-young but more mature member of the profession, in a jean-blazer ensemble bobs from an apartment door, scribbling in a Filofax.

TABITHA

Hey Jake, glad you came.

JAKE

Tabitha, I thought you were supposed to be in Belgium.

TABITHA

Put on hold to next week. What exactly, is Belgium?

JAKE

Valid question. What's up? You're message sounded like a Code Red.

INT. THE YOUNG MODELS' APARTMENT--DAY

Tabitha wades Jake into the sweetly trashy utopia one would expect from three teenage girls living together without direct adult supervision. Dirty laundry and Chinese take-out artfully strewn about beneath bad poster art. Music pumping from a stereo thrown together on the carpet.

TABITHA

It's about Marcie...They brought her all the way out to that fucked-up Calendar Supershoot thing and didn't even fake using her--

Jake zeroes in on California Blonde SABRINA who's crashed on the couch in a flannel nightgown with a horrifying pink facial mask on. She pulls a retainer from her mouth and puts in a cigarette.

SABRINA

Ja-ake, don't look at me...I'm not finished.

JAKE

Sabrina, you're beautiful on the inside and that's what counts.

An array of loud, screeching, whining thuds is heard from above.

SABRINA

Will you tell that wackaroni superstar ex-girlfriend of yours to cut it out! I'm not even joking, Nikki Kim moves furniture 24 hours a-

Tabitha moves into a kitchenette, speaking in a hushed voice. A blown-up-ad behind her shows her and a beaming Marcie holding up computer software, accompanied by Japanese calligraphy.

TABITHA

Hush, Sabrina. Last summer in Tokyo, Marcie was Wonder Woman. I mean, you remember. She gets back here and she's going through Go-See hell, right--40 Go-Sees without the taste of a nibble of a real booking, if you don't count some showroom work in Queens, and believe me, no one does.

SABRINA

She's not even getting her share of the obscene phone calls round here anymore...Hey Jake, what movies has Richard Harbor directed?

JAKE

Jesus, he hasn't done anything in a whi-i-why do you wanna know?

SABRINA

Don't look at me like that. Dick's not that ancient. And besides, he did rent a limo for tonight...

TABITHA

(sneezing the word)

Slut...slut...

SABRINA

I'm sorry, you dated the guy who was your father in that Traveler's Checks spot. A father going out with a daughter--that's practically incest.

A cracking-up Tabitha hurls a sponge at Sabrina who counterattacks with a pillow. Jake wryly dodges the crossfire, moving off.

INT. MARCIE'S BEDROOM--DAY

The Living room tunage fades off as Jake curls around a bunk bed to the familiarly troubled Marcie desultorily plopped atop the top bunk, wearing only an over-sized Lombardi sweatshirt. Jake playfully grabs her knees.

JAKE

Hey Marcie, what's so funny?

MARCIE

(tearing up)

Agency's going to drop me, aren't they, Jake? They changed bookers on me. You think I don't know what that means? It's the Computer, Jake, it put me on the wrong diet, I know...

JAKE

It's crazy, this goddamn business. Listen, every good model goes through a bad phase. Clients have so many different agendas, that if your look doesn't match up, you can't take it personally...

MARCIE

I'm not ready to go back to Michigan. I never want to be ready to go back to--I was just starting to get ahead. I don't know what went-- It's just...am I pretty...still? I'm serious.

JAKE

So am I. Look at you. You just woke and you're so sweet and cute and delicious-- Hell, I'm coming up right now...

Coaxed into an involuntary giggle, Marcie cuffs her tears. Jake mock-struggles to get atop the bunk.

MARCIE

Yeah, right, you big tease. Get out..

JAKE

Sure?..sure?..Come on, pull me up. No?-- I'll talk to June, Marcie. The Agency would never hurt you...

Jake moves off with a compassionate smile. Spirits buoyed in spite of herself, Marcie warmly returns.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT--MORNING

Jake retreats from the apartment, through the traffic and into a cool trot upon the opposing sidewalk. H, in her rag-tag wardrobe (including a BLACK BY POPULAR DEMAND T-shirt), grins, pushing up her glasses, bounding surreptitiously behind him (A Versace tie blows evocatively over his shoulder).

Jake unquickens his pace to absorb A BUILDING-SIZE MURAL OF NICOLE KIMBERLY. He blinks back his concentration and scans to a JOGGING BEAUTY of glistening bandanna, magically cutting a path through New York non-glamour. Jake turns to give a parting, appraising glance. H reveals herself.

H

It's a butt, Jake-Jake. You know, the thing that poop comes out of.

JAKE

(mock-self-defense)

Hey, this is my job...

H

It's so great to think about. They all have to do it. Cindy, Naomi, Kate--all pulling down their pants, gritting their teeth, and letting fly with a big, fat...

JAKE

Stop!

Jake and H break into a quick flurry of playful mock-pummels and kicks before continuing down the street.

H

So how are things at the Big Apt.? Who'd you fuck last night? Anybody I know? Anybody you know?

JAKE

Don't say that word.

H

W, who'd you pork last night?

JAKE

Oww--go back to "fuck." I was just checking in, if you must know.

H

I must know.

JAKE

How was the Dad-to-Mom transition yesterday?

H
Intensely dramatic.

INT. FLASHBACK--H'S BEDROOM AT DAD'S PLACE--(YESTER)DAY

H is dancing wildly in her apocalyptically messy, but idiosyncratically thought-out bedroom (the viewer hears only soundtrack music). She tugs the needle off a spinning album, picks up a duffel bag, and heads out the door.

INT. FLASHBACK--DAD'S PLACE--(YESTER)DAY

Head down, she huffs across her father's bachelor pad--giving a wave to Ward, who is being spoon-fed huevos rancheros by A MODEL WEARING ONLY ONE OF WARD'S DRESS SHIRTS. He returns the wave as H closes the door.

INT. FLASHBACK--MOM'S PLACE--(YESTER)DAY

H opens another door and does another head-down huff across her mother's much more pristine abode. She nods to June, who manages a quick-nod back, while speaking to a group of JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN situated on chairs and couches.

INT. FLASHBACK--H'S BEDROOM AT MOM'S PLACE--(YESTER)DAY

H enters into her bedroom which is perversely exactly like the complicated hellhole at her Dad's place (right down to a torn Hendrix poster). She puts the needle down on a spinning album and begins wildly dancing again.

EXT. MANHATTAN SIDEWALK--DAY

JAKE
How's school?

H
Intensely dramatic.

INT. FLASHBACK-H'S SCHOOL--DAY

Bored out of her skull, H sits at the back of the class in a staring daze. A BOY STUDENT swipes a brush off a GIRLY GIRL'S desk and gives it a mischievous run through H's hair. Cackling along with the rest of the class, the boy gives the brush back to the girly girl, who hurls it into a wastebasket as if it were a dead rat.

EXT. MANHATTAN SIDEWALK--DAY

Jake gives H a shoulder-squeeze, continuing down the sidewalk.

JAKE
I'm guessing it sucks. But your Math grades are a farce for someone who's supposed to be the next female genius...

H

Only idiots get good grades and you know it. I never said I was a genius. I think I'm close enough though, that I'll probably go mad and have a tragic death. Something cool and Joan of Arc-y.

JAKE

There's a thought to keep you going through the day.

H

You laugh, but it's a fine literary tradition--the girl is so brilliant and impetuous that she must get hit by a train or have herself an extravagant suicide.

JAKE

Don't talk about suicide. Even as a joke.

H

(mock-Jewish)

Who's joking?

JAKE

That's another joke! If you commit suicide, I'll kill you. And I'll sell off your album collection. Okay?

Jake stops and touches out to her scary bangs, gliding them back with his hand. H softens. She, is for a moment, absolutely exquisite.

H

What?

JAKE

Nothing.

Jake lets the bangs bang back down. The duo turns to a set of glass doors reading THE PIERCE AGENCY.

INT. THE PIERCE AGENCY LOBBY--DAY

Jake and H wind through the Pierce agency lobby past a slew of poignantly overdone-up WOULD-BE MODELS nervously clutching portfolios. H is spooked by their vulnerability, they are spooked by her strangeness. Breaking her discomfort, H happily gives the finger to a camera up in the corner of the reception area.

INT. JUNE PIERCE'S OFFICE--DAY

ANNETTE, June's punkette assistant, slaps down a line of photo-age as June, watching the monitor on her massive desk, bellows out to the rude image of H.

JUNE
Charming. Why isn't she in school?

INT. THE BOOKER ROOM--DAY

BOOKERS encircle a spinning carousel of clipboards, barking into bleating phones about availability, fees, and measurements, scribbling into yanked out files and calendars. An entering Jake reaches out to give the carousel an anarchic spin. The bookers moan in tickled anger.

BOOKERS
JA-A-KE!

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE--DAY

Jake comfortably swings into June's pristine lair.

JAKE
H says Hello.

JUNE
I noticed. "Dawn Webster?" "The Lombardi Girl."--one day before deadline and that's your brainstorm, Mr. Vice-President? Last week I wanted Dawn to do some tests in Lingerie. She got really Farmer's Daughter about it: "I just Ca-an't"

JAKE
In another couple weeks, her book is going to be all tear sheets. Dawn's celestial and you know it.

JUNE
Fine, she's Foxy with three X-es, but I'm telling you, she can't make Lombardi cream his jeans. "Innocence"-- Sure. "Danger."-- Where? So what's going on at the Big Apt.?

Jake sidles upon June's desk to help her toss loose photos into the NO boxes. He's holding something back.

JAKE
Not much.

JUNE
 "Not much?" An apartment house full
 of unsupervised teen models on
 synchronized menstrual cycles?
 Attempt to be real.

JAKE
 (giving in)
 Marcie. In 616.

JUNE
 Oh, did she tell you that the
 computer put her on the wrong diet?
 Or that she's going bulimic, again?
 I hope you reminded her that the
 vomiting comes after the eating.

JAKE
 I told her I'd get you off her back.
 I thought we could get her in that
 fun little fake show Todd Oldham
 is doing for the children's hospital--
 (a beat)
 and then I thought, "Why?" No
 getting around it, it's Marcie's
 time. I want Pierce to cash out all
 her existing vouchers before we send
 her home.

JUNE
 Well, I am Pierce, and I say she
 can wait for the clients to pay in
 like everybody...

JAKE
 June.

JUNE
 Jacob. Okay, okay...We'll cash her
 out.
 (to intercom)
 Annette, we're starting the meeting.
 Interrupt when Dawn Webster
 arrives...

INT. THE CONFERENCE ROOM--LATER

An OBESE MALE EXEC engulfs the last of a croissant....

OBESE MALE EXEC
 She's fat.

HOTSHOT FEMALE-EXEC
 She is not!

Circling a conference table are MALE AND FEMALE AGENTS of various size and function. At the head of the table is June and reclined behind her, within a high tech windowsill, is Jake.

OBESE MALE EXEC

Okay, she's big boned and a good dancer.

OLDER MOTHERLY EXEC

She's Edge-cutting and Click's got her doing Catalog cattle calls. I think we can poach her...She's such a sweetheart...

JAKE

Hey, don't judge a book by its content.

JUNE

(to picture)

A Look like this, one--maybe two covers, then what's the point? Instantaneous overexposure. She'll totally drown in the mainstream. Could we talk about our girls now?

GAY EXEC LYLE

I think we should send Rebecca back across the water. She never calls in, leaves the set with the clothes, and when it comes to partying, she thinks it's 1977...

JUNE

Europe's a fantastic idea, Lyle. Becca can show Julie Darnell the ropes in Paris.

JAKE

The Virgin Julie? Don't you know in France, Statutory Rape is a sacrament.

JUNE

Hopefully, by the time we bring Julie back, her annoying Dallas giggle will be permanently damaged by weird cigarettes, excellent coffee, and the bodily fluids of Zillionaire EuroScum.

JAKE

Ah, a young girl in Pair-ee.

HOTSHOT FEMALE EXEC

On the subject of girls who need their cherries popped, why aren't we Concoriding Dawn Webster, the girl from Iowa...

JAKE

Wisconsin, you New York elitist.

JUNE

Ladies and gentleman, like it or not, we're positioning the little Dairy Queen as the Lombardi Pill Girl.

OLDER MOTHERLY EXEC

Dawn's glorious, but she's so unestablished for something this mammoth...

LYLE

Jake, was this your idea? I thought we had all agreed on Chica.

JUNE

Lombardi wants unestablished. He wants Dewy. He wants Quivering. And he wants it tomorrow morning. Every agency is going through the same thing. His Almightyness wants to order off the menu. And Lyle, last week Chica seemed interesting, but you have to admit, the East L.A. female gang leader vibe already seems passé...

As June rumbles on, Jake gravely stares out the window...

OUT THE WINDOW TO THE STREET BELOW

The beyond-adorable DAWN WEBSTER herself and her mother, MRS. WEBSTER, come out of a taxi. Dawn gushes up at the buildings around her. She wears a wholesomely unstylish pink monogrammed (DBW) sweater that she probably thinks is swell.

JUNE (O.S.)

All this is not to deny Dawn Webster needs help. Especially in the Lingerie Department. Putting the sex into sexy, if you will...

CONFERENCE ROOM

HOTSHOT FEMALE EXEC

I thought it was for times like these that we have a token, handsome straight male second in command.

LYLE

Yeah Jake, you're from the Midwest, too. Take her to Beefsteak Charlie's and strike up a conversation about this year's crops...

OBESE EXEC

then just whip out your magic wand and...

The table moans. Jake hatches out of his place on the sill.

JUNE

Leave the poor boy alone--but someone does have to teach Dawn Webster of Appleton, Wisconsin, that innocence is only useful when it is not genuine.

JAKE

(opening room's door)
Speak of the angel, she's on her way up. June, you take the mother...

INT. THE PIERCE AGENCY'S HECTIC BOOKER ROOM--DAY

June swerves into the Booker room to greet Dawn Webster and her overwhelmed Mother.

JUNE

(self-amused lying)
Dawn, what a lovely sweater.

DAWN

My aunt made it.

JUNE

But of course she did. And how are you, Shirley?

MRS. WEBSTER

Mrs...Ms. Pierce...I still have so many-- have you found a place for Dawn to stay? I've...

JUNE

I've just been informed of an opening at the place my ex-husband and I bought back when we worked together. Now girls from both our agencies live there. Outside a costly chicken pox epidemic in '89, it's been a good...

DAWN

"The Big Apt." Mom, it's called the Big Apt., as in Big Apartment. Oh nifty, that's where Nicole Kimberly lives, isn't it? Mom, that's where Nicole Kimberly lives. In the penthouse. I have all her workout tapes and I...

IRISH FEMALE BOOKER

Diandra, honey, stop crying. I know you don't know where you are. I know...Diandra..

The group's attention reorients to the alarmed voice of an IRISH FEMALE BOOKER, seated nearby. The viewer and an awed Dawn watch as an entering Jake effortlessly snaps the phone from the booker and takes control.

JAKE

Diandra, calm. It's okay. Everybody gets lost in the subway. Just read me a sign. Okay, you're not exactly in the right...state--but here's what you do...

Jake looks up to make dramatic-for-her eye-contact with Dawn. He winks. The film slam-cuts to...

INT. THE CONFERENCE ROOM

Still nervous and unbalanced, Dawn and the viewer find themselves at the head chair of the empty conference room chair. Jake comfortably leans into the long table-top before her.

DAWN

"Linger-ie?" I told you about doing all that sexy stuff, Jake. Ms. Pierce told me that the most important thing is to always be myself and..

JAKE

You're a model now, Dawn. Being yourself is not something you do by yourself.

DAWN

I know models aren't supposed to be all that shy, but Geez Louise...

JAKE

You're sweet, Dawn, but I know that you know things--I run up to a closing store and say, "Can I come in and buy this one thing.

(more)

JAKE (Cont'd)
It'll just take a minute." Store
stays closed. You do it. The doors
magically open.

DAWN
Yeah, our library had this rule that
no one could use the stapler, but
I..

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE

In similarly intimidating fashion, leaning against her desk,
June works over a seated Mrs. Webster.

JUNE
If you add the photographer testing
fees, printing fees, the costs of
mailing out her composite card...

MRS. WEBSTER
But when I took Dawn out of school,
you said we'd be making money...

JUNE
You will, but it takes time. That's
why the Lombardi project is so
important. And the problem of
Dawn's bashfulness...

MRS. WEBSTER
And just what is this Lombardi
product again?

JUNE
Oh I'm sure it's something terrific.
(real compassion)
You're going to have to trust us
with your beautiful child, Mrs.
Webster. Best advice, Shirl--just
let it all happen...

INT. THE CONFERENCE ROOM--DAY

Keeping Dawn off-guard, Jake pulls out a picture of a very
adultlike Dawn in a fur coat.

JAKE
Do you know whose test shot this
is? It's the coat's. You're going
to become the Babe in the Bikini
on the horse holding the Diet Cherry
Pepsi can, the Camp Counselor who
gets the mute kid to say "I love
you" by giving him Doritos. Don't
confuse your image with your self.
Leave that to everyone else.

DAWN

What's the big deal with me? You should just get another...

Annette pokes her head in the door. Jake turns in mock anger.

ANNETTE

Phone call, Jake.

JAKE

Damnit Annette, I told you to hold my calls! This is important!

Jake winks as Annette, biting her lip to keep from smiling, recoils out of the room. Shocked and flattered, Dawn straightens up in her chair with a sweet blush.

JAKE

The designer Lombardi has dropped a bomb on our little world. Every agency is in a frenzy over a single, secret project. I'm not going to get into it now, but it involves basically--You.

DAWN

So you think I'm taking this lingerie thing too seriously. I know, maybe I am, but still, I just can't...

JAKE

(to picture)
She can.

Jake and Dawn share a sweet, mutual chuckle that turns into a cathartic rumble of laughter.

INT. SOHO LOFT--AFTERNOON

Dawn lets out yet another giggle, only now she is vibrating in disturbingly stunning lingerie, battered by a powerful fan. Off-screen flashes beat off an admiring Jake's face. The earlier seen He-Man Photographer crosses before him, working.

HE-MAN PHOTOGRAPHER

That's it--that's it--chin up--Go further, Dawn--stop modeling! Give me more soul, less smile. That's it--

A little guilty, Jake breaks out of concentration to soak in various pockets of activity--LOITERING HAIR AND MAKE-UP PEOPLE smoking up a storm. TWO LOFT MODELS dangling off a couch.

LOFT MODEL ONE

Did you ever marry that Prince who asked you to marry him?

LOFT MODEL TWO
(beat)
No..Yes..I'm so hungry.

LOFT MODEL ONE
(holding up raisin)
Raisin?

LOFT MODEL TWO
(eating it)
I'm so full.

Jake next scopes a lethally casual STUDIO MANAGER ho-humming through the book of a precious MODEL HOPEFUL. As the rejected Young Hopeful takes back her book for a sheepish exit, Ward Lear brashly enters with right-hand woman Dominique and an obedient doe named HARMON KILLIBREW.

WARD
Harmon. Get painted.

JAKE
Mistah Lear...

WARD
Jacobs...How's it hanging, traitor?
What brings you to everyone's
favorite Svengali...I see. Who's
the crumpet?

Ward and Dominique saunter to either side of Jake, up and downing Dawn Webster..

JAKE
Name--Dawn Webster.

DOMINIQUE
I've heard of her. She's cute.

WARD
So she's the X chromosome Pierce
is presenting to Lombardi. Not bad,
but not Harmon Killibrew...Revel
away....

Ward motions over to Harmon being made up.

WARD
Look at that Look. Fresh cargo from
Romania. You got to get out there,
man. I'm telling you there's enough
for everybody.

DOMINIQUE
We got Miss Killibrew into the
Lombardi show tomorrow. Had to
scratch Chantal Jetson.

JAKE

Really--What about scratching your
almighty superstar Nicole Kimberly?
She told me she's quitting the
business.

WARD

(yawning)

Why this time?

JAKE

God, that's what I said. Same yawn.

WARD

Everyone wants to be Nikki Kim or
do Nikki Kim. Or both. You got to
allow some eccentricity to someone
with so much chariz.

JAKE

She's reaching her allotted
eccentricity limit, Ward...Nicole
needs help.

WARD

You know more than anyone Nikki just
needs to keep busy. So Jacobs, come
to Decadence Candy tonight. I'm
throwing a party for Harmon...

JAKE

"Decadence Candy?" I don't know,
Ward...That place gives me the...

WARD

It's Lombardi's club, so all the
agencies will be parading their
girls...Come on, it'll be awkward
and unpleasant!

JAKE

If you put it that way...

Jake snorts. Dawn momentarily averts her gaze from the flashing
camera to make bubbly eye contact with Jake.

HE-MAN PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)

Yes, yes, whatever you're thinking
Dawn...turn it up. Turn it up.

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE--DAY

June squints up from a light board of slides. Annette is holding
the rest of the phone.

JUNE

Who did he have with him, a 5'5 meter-maid from one of his modeling schools in Tulsa?...Harmon Killibrew, huh? Yeah, yeah, another fucking Romanian-- snazzy, nothing revolutionary--Mugler and I think Helmut Lang have a thing for her...What? He got her into the Lombardi show! That's no fair--all the agencies are supposed to show their girls before the show...

INT. FAMILIAR APARTMENT HALLWAY--DAY

A BEEFCAKE ASSISTANT in a Pierce T-shirt is carrying two icky flower-motif suitcases out of the Big Apt. elevator. Dawn, lugging a duffel, and Jake, working his phone, trail out behind.

JAKE

Oh June, you're just jealous you didn't think of it first. We'll find a way to get Dawn in. I'll call you later. I've got to go be an asshole.

DAWN

So Jake, can we go visit Nicole Kimberly?

Another painful squealing scraping sound is heard from above.

JAKE

Maybe later.

INT. THE TEEN MODELS' APARTMENT--DUSK

The Beefcake drops off the last of the luggage. A guilty Jake and an oblivious Dawn straggle in after him.

JAKE

Hey. This is Dawn Webster.

DAWN

Hi, there!

Tabitha and a blue-facialed Sabrina sternly cross their arms. Dawn fakes a non-frown at the silent non-welcome. A bottle of conditioner spills from her duffel. Sabrina pops off the couch to retrieve the rolling bottle.

SABRINA

Oh man, you shouldn't be using this poison--it really singes your roots. Dude, we use this shit to clean the bathtub. Venez...

TABITHA

Sabrin-a--Silent treatment? Remember?

Sabrina and Dawn flutter into the bedroom as an abandoned Tabitha seethingly gestures to a lovely white dress hanging behind her in a cleaner's bag, next to the advertisement of Tabitha and Marcie.

VETTE

I come back from the cleaners and there's Marcie, whimpering, packing. She trusted you, Jake! Man, I trusted you. Jesus, maybe I am just a brain-dead Barbie like they say in Sassy magazine.

JAKE

You're not. I'm an asshole. You know Marcie was miserable and that it's better to pull the bandaid off fast than slow.

TABITHA

You know what the great thing is? You're the one we refer to as the Nice One.

JAKE

That is sad. Don't take all this out on Dawn. She's going to need your help...

Tabitha cools a bit, leaning back against the white dress.

TABITHA

No kidding. Who made that sweater? Her aunt?

JAKE

Something like that. Listen, it's my duty to show Dawn off at Decadence Candy tonight--and well, that sure is a purty dress you got hanging...

TAB. AKA

Oh no. No fucking way, Skipper....

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CLUB--NIGHT

Dawn wondrously sprouts out of a cab wearing the white dress. Jake, nicely dressed himself, follows Dawn out. Dawn gapes up at the facade of a building. Only the thirteenth floor is lit.

DAWN

Ooh! Decadence Candy!

STREET PERSON
Change, Cinderella, some change?

DAWN
I don't really have any change,
but..

Crashing to reality, Dawn pulls a dollar from her tiny pocketbook and holds it out to the scraggly STREET PERSON before her. Jake pulls Dawn like a bodyguard toward the building entrance.

JAKE
Dorothy, you're not in Wisconsin anymore.

DAWN
(cluelessly cocky)
I know, I know. In New York you're not supposed to say Hello to strangers...

JAKE
Oh, well, as long as you're not naive.

A GIGANTIC DOORMAN comfortably sneers to the legion of begging wanna-bees behind the velvet ropes. He breaks character to nod Jake and Dawn through the door.

INT. THE LOBBY--NIGHT

Jake and Dawn move toward two chic lines leading to two elevators. A VERY RECOGNIZABLE MODEL saunters out from an opening one.

JAKE
Leaving so soon?

VERY RECOGNIZABLE MODEL
Some of us work for a living...

INT. THE ELEVATOR--NIGHT

Jake rolls into the elevator. F assesses the number 13.

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

Jake and Dawn emerge from the elevators and suck in the awesome vista of Manhattan's hottest club. It lives up to its name.

JAKE
Wow?

DAWN
Wow. Just like Vanity Fair said it would be.

Taking in the panorama, the viewer's viewpoint zeros in on a set of tables where Ward stands, holding court with a sultry seated group of people that include Dominique and a broken-englishing Harmon Killibrew.

WARD

Don't get me wrong, like any man,
I worship the idea of two
unbelievably attractive lesbians
going at it, but one of them is
going to end up bringing the other
one to their agency and...

HARMON

Wa-ard, when I meet Lombardi? You
promise--Where's viproom? I want
viproom.

DOMINIQUE

The "V.I.P." room is back there,
through that mirror, but it's very
exclusive. You need a key.

All look to a mirror patch on the back wall of the club.

WARD

And Lombardi's never given one out.
It's so annoying...

DOMINIQUE

(making fun)

It's a good thing we don't care
about such things...

HARMON

Ward, I want this V.I.P. key. You
must get--Agh!

Harmon's pouty face ignites in a nasty, blinding flash. The abrasive photographer is revealed to be H, in another unattractive hair style, wearing a ripped red blazer over a t-shirt that says REDRUM. She scampers off but Ward cuts into her path.

WARD

I admire non-conformity just as much
as everyone else, H, but there has
to be a way to keep you a little
more in line.

H

May I suggest the idea of buying
me a red Honda Scooter...

WARD

You don't want to talk to me...Cool.

H
Yo, I do want "to talk." But excuse
me if I can't be disciplined like
one of your m-a-adels....

WARD
Wait a sec--this is a June week.
What are you even doing here?--Hold
on...

Ward's attention panthers to a passing Club Model.

WARD
Crystal, long time, no drool. I
don't know what is up at your
agency...I shouldn't talk--They're
good people, but I can't believe
they're not pushing you for this
Lombardi Girl gig.

The viewer's viewpoint moves to the mythical mirrored patch at
the back of the club and then through it.

INT. THE V.I.P ROOM--OTHER SIDE OF THE TWO WAY MIRROR

All noise cuts off. The club silently bustles outside of the
revealed to be two-way mirror. Amid a sleek room of starkly
Starke design, Lombardi robotically scans model-to-model, his
breath eerily condensing against the glass. He cringes as H
passes before the mirror. Lombardi's viewpoint then zeros over
to Jake and Dawn.

INT. BY THE BAR--NIGHT

Jake and Dawn, holding a garish drink, slide across the bar,
hooking up with a charmingly debauched JAKE-A-LIKE and his BORED
MODEL GIRLFRIEND.

JAKE
Everyone. Dawn Webster.

DAWN
Hi there!

BORED MODEL GIRLFRIEND
I've heard of her...she's cute. This
place is dead.

JAKE-A-LIKE
(as she leaves)
Remember the good old days when we
could treat models like shit...Look
at them all. So Lombardi's on the
prowl for fresh meat, huh? For what?
(more)

JAKE-A-LIKE (Cont'd)

I keep hearing a rumor that he's got a little blue pill that can give a woman an instant abortion three months into term...

CHIMING-IN BARFLY

Bullshit, I have a friend whose sister knows someone who works with Lombardi and she says the Lombardi pill can keep a man's penis hard after climaxing...

JAKE

Delightful. My favorite rumor is...

Jake's face ignites in a fiercely familiar flash. H snaps his picture and scampers away. Jake impulsively dashes after her, through the thick crowd. Suddenly, he is gleefully yanked by H, down with her onto the dance floor steps. They rather comically have to shout their conversation.

JAKE

H! What are you doing here? You should be home doing something better than this...

H

You're not doing something better than this. You're doing this.

JAKE

Whatever "this" is. I got to get back. You're going to get me in trouble.

Like Tippi Hedren watching the birds pile on the jungle gym, Jake protectively scopes some MALE CLUBHOUNDS actively woo-ing Dawn.

H

Trying to protect this week's model, Jake-Jake? What do you two talk about? Has she ever read a book that doesn't involve looking for Waldo? Or is she "not your usual model?"

JAKE

No one is. Some are smart, some are caring, some are cruel, some are such idiots that you want to...The main thing about how a model's brain works is the irrelevance of the entire question.

H
 (pretending to nod off)
 Did you say something? Twat, I cunt
 hear you..

JAKE
 Have you heard of this new wonder
 product--it's called shampoo. You
 just put your head in water--

H playfully swats Jake. He bobs his head to keep eye on the ever-
 increasing swarm around Dawn.

H
 You know I only came here because
 I knew you'd be here...Anytime
 anything happens, not that anything
 has actually happened to me, you're
 the one I...

JAKE
 Oh H, you're not trying to have a
 genuine conversation in a club
 called Decadence Candy?

H
 Yes, I am...I love you, Jake-Jake.

JAKE
 What am I supposed to say when you
 talk like that?

H
 "Let's party?"

JAKE
 (condescending)
 H, you can do a lot better than me.

H
 Don't be condescending.

JAKE
 (genuine)
 H, you can do a lot better than me.
 You see me at my best. When you get
 older, you'll realize...Oh man, your
 mother...

H
 Leave her out of this. She...

JAKE
 H, I'm being literal.

Jake jettisons to the sight of June yanking Dawn from the now awesome congregation of barside worshippers. H cowers away into the dance-floor crowd.

JUNE

Get Dawn back to the barn, Jacob.
I made some calls and she's walking
the plank at the Lombardi show
tomorrow.

JAKE

Live on the runway stage, Lear's
girl against Pierce's girl. Head
to Head. Face to Face.

JUNE

Tits to Tits. Ass to Ass. Dawn, I
want Lombardi to see you perform
to the best of your adorability
tomorrow.

DAWN

Lombardi...a Lombardi Fashion Show?
The last runway work I did was for
Montgomery Ward at the mall...I'm
not ready...I...

JUNE

Bite your lips, sweetie. They need
the color.

Dawn shuts herself up by dutifully biting her lips.

JUNE

Harder...Jacob, I trust the Dawn-
Marcie transition came off okay?

JAKE

Not for Marcie.
(melancholy beat)
She was pretty. Marcie. Wasn't she?

JUNE

She was. But sometimes an overnight
success can be a failure by lunch.
Am I right?

JAKE

(undetectedly bitter)
Always. Wave, June.

Jake turns June toward Ward's table. She waves with clenched
teeth.

JUNE

Oh, hello, you greedy pig. You call
this a party?

WARD'S TABLE

Ward also beams out a clenched teeth wave.

WARD
That's it, you bitch, pretend you're
having a good time, seeing all the
friends who dropped you after the
divorce.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY VIP ROOM--NIGHT

From out the two-way mirror of the completely sound-proof VIP room, Lombardi looks from the waving Pierce camp to the waving Lear camp.

LOMBARDI
The things I do to keep the world
from being boring. The Age of
Lombardi approaches.

CUSTODIAN CHARLIE
Did you say something, Mr. Lombardi?

Revealed behind Lombardi, in a custodial outfit, is CHARLIE, Lombardi's complete opposite. Chubby, sweet, black, Charlie pushes forth a wheeled trashcan, lackadaisically cleaning up.

LOMBARDI
Just thinking aloud, Charlie. Club scene. Fashion scene. Used to mean so much more. Or did it? I can't remember. Ah, good old Charlie. Come to the glass, I need some of your normal thoughts.

INT. THE LADIES ROOM

Oblivious to the equally oblivious crush of people around her, H speaks into the ladies room mirror...Her REDRUM shirt in the mirror vaguely reads as MURDER.

H
Mirror, mirror, on the wall...I
don't hate me. I just hate you.

June angrily clacks through the bathroom crowd. She and H squawk at each other's reflections in the mirror.

JUNE
You thought I didn't see you sneak out...Well, I did. What are you doing here...in a club? You're trying to make me look as bad a parent as your father.

H

Oh now, you do a fine job all by yourself. The school play?

JUNE

Not that again. H, you're above this.

H

No, I'm n-o-t. I'm an almost fifteen year old girl, who wanted her Mommy to see her crummy school play and instead Mommy sent an assistant to videotape it. A: How lame. B: Did you even watch the tape?

JUNE

How am I supposed to know when you care what I think? I ask about your photography and you tell me to go to hell. I ask about...

H

The play sucked any way. I played the princess before she drinks the magic potion. Then Sally Nelson takes over the part...

JUNE

Ouch.

They both snicker. June takes some hair gel from the counter and does some slight, expert primping. H comically does the same but her intention seems to be to mess up her hair even further.

JUNE

So what do you want to do this week?

H

I dun-no, red Honda Scooter shopping perhaps? Or maybe just red Honda Scooter buying?

JUNE

(been through it)

Now H.....

H

I understand. My birthday is coming up and you want it to be a surprise.

JUNE

Every other week we get together and start over from the exact same point. Same arguments. Same "jokes." It's exhausting--isn't it?

H
(burping syllables)
Yes. It. Is.

JUNE
(half-smile)
I don't know whether you need a good
haircut..or a full lobotomy. I
think...H!

H sets off her camera's flash apparatus into the mirror cutting
off her blinded mother. H flees.

INT. THE CHAMBER--NIGHT

Lombardi and Custodian Charlie peer together through the glass.
Lombardi motions to Jake and Dawn Webster waiting for the
elevator.

LOMBARDI
There. By the elevator. What do you
think of her?

CUSTODIAN CHARLIE
She's a very lovely girl, Mr.
Lombardi.

LOMBARDI
Tell me Charlie, if you were to
accidentally kill this girl with
your car, would you still get out
of the vehicle and make love to her?

CUSTODIAN CHARLIE
(deadpan beat)
That's a very unusual question, Mr.
Lombardi, but I'd have to go with
a big "No" on that one, sir.

LOMBARDI
My point exactly. I appreciate your
honesty.

Lombardi puts the familiar robin-egg-blue pill in his mouth.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE THE BUILDING ENTRANCE

Jake and a gently drunken Dawn waltz from the bottom floor doors
and toward a waiting taxi.

DAWN
Gosh Jake, I know it's been said
before, but I love New York!

As the pair glide into the car, behind them a team of WELL-
DRESSED SECURITY MEN can be discerned violently tackling the
earlier-seen Street Person to the ground.

INT. OUTSIDE THE YOUNG MODELS APARTMENT--NIGHT

From night-life excitement to hallway intimacy, Jake keeps a blissed out Dawn gently at bay outside the door of her new home. Jake's POV scopes a slow-motion flicker of her nape.

JAKE

Remember, if the number above the taxi is not lit up, then don't raise up your hand...

DAWN

You know, Jake, I'm not a virgin.

JAKE

Uh-huh. Dawn. You probably can't comprehend everything's that happening to you. Don't try. The show. The contract for a strange mystery product. New York. Just pretend it's just a dream and go back to sleep.

DAWN

Whatever you say...but can we do stuff first...

Dawn leans forward with an open grouper mouth. She stops. And quivers. A detached Jake observes her like Jonas Salk over a petri dish. A wider view reveals Jake has reached beneath the white dress.

EXT. POV FROM THE FIRE ESCAPE--NIGHT

Suddenly, the viewer watches this eerie image of sexuality through a window pane at the end of the hallway. It is revealed to be the viewer's eyes, crouching on a fire escape.

INT. BACK IN THE HALLWAY--NIGHT

Jake closes his eyes, opens his mouth, and leans toward Dawn. A sickly drip of rusty water thuds down Jake's cheek, snapping him back to his senses. Jake and Dawn open their eyes to see the ceiling dented out with flooding leading to a leak splattered over their heads.

DAWN

Ick.

JAKE

(knowing it's Nicole)
Goodnight, Dawn.

INT. NICOLE KIMBERLY'S FLOOR--NIGHT

Jake smokes from the elevator into a hallway, more moodily lit than the ones below. An ugly moat gurgles from the floor's one apartment. Jake glances at his all-seconds watch, then wearies to the pitch dark open doorway. A familiar voice wafts out...

NICOLE (O.S.)
I know, I forgot, I can't use the
faucet in the second bathroom.
Something with the pipes. You were
in my dream last night, Jake, and
you know I never dream...

INT. NICOLE KIMBERLY'S APARTMENT--NIGHT

Jake plunges through the black mouth of Nicole's lair. He and the viewer immediately focus upon two glowing dots floating through the darkness.

NICOLE
Bring back any memories? The glow-
in-the-dark contact lens party?
Wasn't that the first time you
tried...

JAKE
I don't remember. You've calmed
down.

NICOLE
That shoot on the beach, I was
higher than my metabolism and...and
I said a lot of things...

The two glowing dots suddenly disappear. After a beat, Nicole's eyes reopen and the glowing dots are much closer to Jake and the viewer--part of a discernible face and body.

NICOLE
I said a lot of things I meant. You
know, I'm not going to that Lombardi
show tomorrow. Ward thinks I'm
bluffing. Dominique thinks I'm
bluffing...

JAKE
You're bluffing.

Jake slaps on a light, revealing Nicole's penthouse to be a complete disaster area. Different kinds of furniture are at war with each other in a big tangle. Artwork is on the ground upside down. A grand glass table has been completely tipped vertically on its side. Nicole pops her contacts.

NICOLE

I was moving in new furniture. But now I like the old furniture that I never liked before. Everytime I'm about to make a decision, I gotta get on a plane...Are we going to have sex?

JAKE

Jesus Nicole, pick a life already...You shouldn't even be in "the Big Apt." What happened to the Cape Cod house?

NICOLE

He made me fire another architect.

JAKE

"HE." How could I forget? Does he still hit--I don't want to know. Can't you find a nice arms dealer to go out with? I realize that whatever we had together got a little strange, but...

NICOLE

And what did we have together again?

EXT. OUTSIDE NICOLE'S APARTMENT--NIGHT

Again, the viewer gets a jarring change of POV as H clambers next level of the fire escape. She watches the ex-lovers warily orbit each other.

INT. NICOLE'S APARTMENT--NIGHT

Jake backs Nicole (in a kimono, by the way) through her detritus.

JAKE

We were two punks showing off for some non-existent documentary filmmaker and the subject was "How to be weally Cool and Fucked-up and..."

NICOLE

God damnit, I don't want to hear it! The way you dissect me and you, like I wasn't even there. I was there, okay?

JAKE

You're still there, Nicole.

Nicole does a melancholy twist around the upended-lengthwise glass coffee table. Jake drifts over to stand on the other side. As they exchange murmurs, their hands lackadaisically "touch" and untouch against the glass.

NICOLE

I was just some stringbean in some bar with a fake I.D. and you gave me your card. I wanted to make enough money to go to college and ended up making enough money that I didn't have to go to college when all along I just wanted to go to college.

JAKE

What do you want me to tell you? That I still love you? That your once, twice, three-times-a-lady..?

NICOLE

I always gag when I see a beautiful woman complain about her life and now that I'm supposedly beautiful...I guess that's what I like about my new beau-- He makes me feel nice-and-ugly--and Pain has this way of making me half-human...So what time is that show tomorrow?

Nicole achingly closes her eyes and presses her open mouth to the back of the upright glass table. Jake can only stare at the spooky sight. He disappears from the frame, leaving Nicole borderline-insanely still pressing the goldfish bowl.

Suddenly, Jake appears behind her, unraveling her kimono, and locking her into a passionately compassionate embrace.

INT. HALLWAY--OUTSIDE OF NICOLE'S APARTMENT--NIGHT

The viewer's viewpoint inhales from the darkness of the doorway to see Jake thrust out, tugging back on his blazer, more like a plane crash survivor than a post-coital-bliss participant. He snaps his head to an elevator ding.

In a superbly endless leather coat, the Euroscary Russian arms dealer "HE", does an own-the-world strut down the hall, accompanied by A FIERCE BODYGUARD. Both carry ominous cases. "He" gives an a conspiratorially male nod to Jake as he passes by.

HE

Hey, Jake...

JAKE

Hey.

"He" shakes his head down at the brown stream of water.

HE
"Women," eh?

"He" glides through Nicole's open apartment. Then closes the door. The Bodyguard takes a sturdy sentinel post. Jake presses the elevator button. Another ding. Followed by a nasty flash from a camera.

INT. THE APARTMENT ELEVATOR--NIGHT

It is H in the elevator. Jake impulsively snares her camera and smashes it into the elevator wall, shattering it in half. H's precocious demeanor crumples into a full-body quiver as the elevator hiccoughs downward. Immediately remorseful but still angry, Jake, in caged animal mode, slams a red button, temporarily halting the descent.

JAKE
H, you can't just--damnit! I'm sorry, okay. It's just you keep popping out of-- I'll buy you a new one-- a Leica, right? Lombardi's show is tomorrow morning and we're presenting Dawn Webster and you don't understand how important--I'm freaking--and I just had sex with Nicole again...damnit!

H
I know. I saw it. All of it. And you touched that girl's vagina. Somebody you can't possibly care if she lives or dies and you touched her vagina!

JAKE
Oh, I really need this--You sick, superior midget--who are you? What are you? Don't try to be my conscience-- You're not even fifteen-- you don't have to have a life for another ten years...

Jake re-slams the button, rebooting the elevator into a lurch downward. Tears and sniffles make a blubbery escape from H's head. She grasps back some composure, gritting her chattering teeth.

H
You know what's the real reason you can't take me seriously? I don't meet Pierce agency standards.

JAKE

Oh H, you're not trying to have a genuine conversation, here in an elevator in "the Big Apt.," are you?

H

Yes, I am.

The elevator opens. H bolts out. Jake violently exhales.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BIG APT.--NIGHT

H throttles forth from the Apartment building entrance. Jake huffs out after her.

JAKE

H. H! Stop. My God, I don't care what you look like, all right. I love you, okay--I'm glad you're my conscience sometimes.

H

You say you don't care what I look like-- maybe if you did care what I look like, it would be capital L Love and not little l love.

JAKE

Oh, don't get tragic on me. You scamper around in your little camouflage, making your secret nasty comments and then you pout when the world doesn't treat you right. You're not even in the world--You're hiding--You're farsighted, right?

H

Yeah, but don't...Jake-Jake...don't!

With sudden giddy intrigue, Jake plucks off H's Malcom X glasses. She tries to snap them back and they crack upon the ground. Wincing, H tears into the street, flagging down a taxi. Jake dejectedly huffs forward in symbolic chase of the fleeing cab. He then stares up to the lit-by-lights mural of the ever-smiling Nicole Kimberly.

INT. THE BACKSTAGE AREA--NIGHT

A mammoth and immaculate dressing area. Completely stocked. Perfectly still. A Virgin the night before the wedding. The sound of shattering glass wounds the tranquillity.

H's boots crunch down upon a puddle of shards. She treads the spooky environs with the mixture of fear, anger, and mystification of an atheist touring a holy shrine.

Name tags of both the recognizably real and fictional model elite are slapped beside separated groups of hanging clothes. Tables of stacked accessories ready to be ravaged. Everything is bathed in the light from glowing TV monitors (showing the Lombardi insignia) dangling above.

H picks up a stray Harper's Bazaar with Nicole Kimberly on the cover. She strikes a match and lights the magazine aflame, thrusting it toward a rack of clothing. Jarringly, H (and the viewer) gets a multi-glimpse of herself in a long row of dressing mirrors.

H stamps out her arson attempt, then zombies toward the mirrors. She plops into a seat, tugs back her hair from her glassesless face and stares.

A SLAM CUT is made to a mini-montage. H dumps red roses from a glass vase--She splashes and squirts an incomprehensible stew of shampoo-bleach-oil-dippity-do goo into the vase--H's head rockets under a thundering faucet of water. Her hand tips the vase of shampoo pudding onto her famished hair.

H pounds the red cross of a First Aid cabinet, banging it open, revealing a bottle of pills.

Piece by piece, H's ratty and sweaty old wardrobe flutters disembodied into a trashcan--Bare back to the viewer, H self-scissors her hair in brilliant, Fugitive-style--Tugging on a princess-like dress, H pushes forth a large wheeled cart and lays out a red sheet upon it.

With a constellation of tin-foil pieces wrapped around hair strands, H scribbles out a note with operatic calligraphy. She puts the note into an envelope marked JAKE--which is next to a glass of water.

In extreme close-up, H's eyes open into a mirror. Perfectly mascara-ed. And finally, the full red lips of H blow a kiss.

The screen goes black. Double doors are opened from the inside, revealing the dressing room and the door-opener H in her full glory. Her hair and face and existence have been jaw-droppingly transformed. But before the viewer can get a good look, she is on the move.

She situates the red-sheeted cart right before the door and climbs inside it. She handfuls the pills into her mouth with assistance from the glass of water. She lies back in the cart, laying the JAKE envelope upon her chest. She closes her eyes and shivers.

INT. THE BACKSTAGE AREA--THE NEXT DAY

Daylight beams begin to spotlight the more-than-Sleeping Beauty H. Suddenly, a door in the background is crunched open.

Female BACKSTAGE WORKER ONE, speaking into a head-set, rumbles in along with male BACKSTAGE WORKER TWO, who is carrying an infinite load of wigs that pile up over his head.

BACKSTAGE WORKER ONE

Yes, Lombardi...We're already here.

We came in the back way. Yes, sir.

(to other worker)

Lombardi's decided against the wigs.

Bumbling forth with only peripheral vision, Backstage Worker Two thuds forward and obliviously dumps the wigs over the tragic vision of beauty that is H. Yawning, he gives the wheeled cart a backhand kick that sends the cart scurrying against a wall, under a table, out of sight.

Lombardi magnetically emerges from the front with a brief curious glance to the already-open doors. He takes a grand POV view of the dressing area and snaps his fingers.

The viewer immediately flashes into the pandemonium of Models going into messy metamorphosis avec last minute fabric surgery and accessory swapping. Jake struts the thoroughfare casually tucking and nipping a SHARP REAL-LIFE SUPERMODEL.

SHARP SUPERMODEL

God, she screws any asshole who knows what an F-stop is--Hey, why have you kept the Lombardi Girl thing from me and don't give me the "looking for a fresh face" crap you gave Amber.

JAKE

"He's looking for a fresh face."
Now settle down. Don't forget I know your real name and am not afraid to use it.

Flickering by Jake, a double-sided DRESSING MIRROR ON WHEELS is pushed back and forth to meet Model need. The mirror rolls up to June, STYLIST CLIVE and Dawn Webster, in an adorable dress.

DAWN

Toe-first then-heel, toe-first then-heel, toe-...

CLIVE

June, his shows are always torture, but his clothes are always genius and a half. I want to adopt a daughter just to give her this dress...

JUNE

(wistful)

Me, too, Clive.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIRROR

A HAIRDRESSER does some last-minute surgery to a pouting Harmon. Ward (on cellular) and Dominique circle behind.

HARMON

I think I know my hair bit better than you do...

HAIRDRESSER

Oh honey, I know that's what you think...

HARMON

Ward, she talk-back me...

DOMINIQUE

Harmon, just calm down and collect your thought. Ward, Nikki Kim still hasn't showed. I know she likes to do her own face, but it's getting...

WARD

What?...Wait...

(into cellular)

She's not a supermodel, she's a model. That means that thing on her neck is not a beauty mark, it's not a birthmark, and we ain't making it a goddamn trademark. Take a match and burn...

Ward slaps shut his phone mid-sentence. He, along with June on the other side of the mirror, watch Lombardi determinedly cut a path through the Chaos (June and Ward reflexively touch out to Dawn and Harmon). Lombardi murmurs to a NOW MALE SPOOKY ANDROGYNOUS ASSISTANT who looks a lot like the female S.A.A.

LOMBARDI

When they arrive, have them put in the front row, between Salman Rushdie and that bitch from Bazaar. And when you have a free second, start a rumor that the Lombardi pill is a cure for AIDS.

SPOOKY MALE ANDROGYNE ASSISTANT

It could be offensive to use the horror of AIDS to hype the Lombardi. You're playing with people's emotions.

LOMBARDI

That's what I like about it. Pretend to be talking on a phone near a group of models. That should get it going. Position A.

SPOOKY MALE ASSISTANT
(cool megaphone)
Everyone. Position A! Be Brilliant!

The hanging monitors flick on a view of the empty runway (THE VIEWER NEVER LEAVES THE BACKSTAGE AREA). The Sharp Real-Life Supermodel saunters through a last minute gauntlet of Primpers before going through an ominous dark tunnel. Cheers are heard from outside, accompanied by a blast of music.

JUNE

swerves from the sight of the familiar Model on the runway monitor to Dawn bouncing nervously before the Dressing Mirror.

DAWN
Isn't Clive a hoot? I mean, I never knew homosexual people were such wonderful men.

JUNE
Don't be nervous, Dawn. That's the most beautiful dress in the collection, and let me tell you a secret, Lombardi only gives the best to the best. Good Luck.

Dawn beams off. The mirror is pushed away to reveal a disgruntled Tabitha tugging a bizarre mini-mini dress, wobbling forward.

TABITHA
Ms. Pierce, this dress is most seriously distorted...I can't.

JUNE
Tabitha, let me tell you a secret, Lombardi always gives his most experimental pieces to the models he admires the most. Good Luck.

The wide-eyed Dawn goes through the final Toucher-Upper Checkpoint, before disappearing into the black tunnel. She passes a VORACIOUS, BUT THIN Model attacking a small buffet. A JEALOUS MODEL can barely hold in a sneer.

JEALOUS MODEL
You're actually eating the backstage buffet. What gives...

VORACIOUS BUT THIN MODEL
I know, I must look totally obnoxious. Last week, in Munich, I had a tapeworm implanted in my stomach. I'm telling you, changed my life. Seventy percent of everything I eat goes to the worm.

JEALOUS MODEL

That sounds amazing. Can you hook me up with a surgeon out here...

The viewer's viewpoint bobs beneath the table where H, head poking through a sea of wigs, continues to hibernate in a world far from this one.

Jake, June, Ward, and Dominique watch their phillies round the track, cautiously pleased.

JUNE

She's a natural, thank God...Oh, the next time H crashes at your place, give me a call...

JAKE

What? But she...

Jake takes a shock wave. June breaks off to watch Lombardi look through an open slot in the wall. He smiles and strolls off to make his rounds. June and Ward simultaneously beeline to him.

Lombardi approaches an ECCENTRIC MODEL, who has a red AIDS ribbon pierced through her nose. He non-chalantly but fiercely bites the Eccentric Model's bare shoulder. She sails off, non-plussed by the bite mark. Lombardi suddenly spins to puppy dogs June and Ward.

LOMBARDI

She's fabulous.

JUNE

Which she?

LOMBARDI

Both she-s. Your Dawn Webster and your Harmon Killibrew. I am going to need seventeen more minutes of unstained meditation. Then you will have your answer. Oh, it may make you giddy to know that this morning I rejected the proposed Lombardi Girls of every other agency in New York...

WARD

Giddy with a bullet. But there's more you should know about Harmon...

JUNE

And Lombardi, in all my years, Dawn...

LOMBARDI

Silence! Do not make me regret
letting you agency people backstage.
Unstained meditation! Turn up the
music!

The music pumps up in volume, consuming the soundtrack...Holy montage! Staccato runway images of OTHER MODELS, in groups and pairs, fill the monitor screens.

A SMOKING MODEL clacks toward the black tunnel getting in as many desperate sucks of the cigarette as she can. Entering the tunnel, she passes her cig to an exiting-out Model (being tugged on a leash by a MASKED TOPLESS AMAZON), who resumes smoking.

Dawn and Harmon clack to a stop backstage. With Indy 500 pit crew grace, Stylists ninja out to completely de-accessorize and rehouse the girls, peeling them out of streetwise leather bomber jacket outfits and into sober evening-wear ensembles with wigs. June and Ward look on with similar anxiety.

Tabitha spills a glass of red wine on her white blouse. Jake hands her a live iguana to place over the stain.

Lombardi rips off a revealed-to-be-fake tattoo off Harmon Killibrew's back and slaps it onto the neck of Dawn Webster.

A SQUIRT GUN FIGHT BETWEEN UNCLOTHED MODELS whinnies by a yawning Jake and Ward sitting together on a small set of steps.

WARD

She's never forgiven me for
pronouncing her name "Kay-ran"--I'm
sorry, I like it more than Karan.
Why does...

JAKE

Nicole and I, we...we hung out last
night. I was sure she'd come through
today...

WARD

Forget about it. Inconsistency is
only thing I can count on with
Nicole Kimberly. But a good model
knows when to act like an
outrageous, annoying little flake.
A Lombardi show is not one of those
times....Lombardi seems to like
Harmon though. She's a good kid--
gives head way too politely, like
I'm taking her temperature--but
she's a good kid.

JAKE

I thought you stopped getting high
on your own supply...

WARD

Since when do blow jobs count.
Listen Jacobs, I have a rule. I
never date any of my girls. Sure,
occasionally I commit sex with them,
but you know, nothing that
sticks..What's with your watch?

JAKE

Hey, H didn't happen to stay with
you last night, did she?

WARD

H? We're in a June week now. I'll
be the first to admit it, Jacobs:
I love my work and my family
suffers. H, she throws me, such a
scruffy little thing. I don't
get...

Jake and Ward bound up to the sound of a crash. Self-consciously
"making an entrance," Nicole Kimberly careens a BACKSTAGE
ASSISTANT, sending her clipboard papers flying. Nicole is
wearing wire rim glasses and a seedy denim jacket over a SAVE
THE MANATEE T-shirt. Tugging on a headdress, Dawn pants next
to Jake.

DAWN

Look, I told you I'd be in a show
with Nicole Kimberly! Jake, look!

JAKE

Don't look too closely, my dear.

NICOLE

is cut off from burrowing forward by Ward, who rushes up in a
sweating, damage control mode.

WARD

Nikki Kim, running a little late
today-- that's okay...Whaddya say
we go back to the Big Apt. and
just...

NICOLE

You didn't think I'd quit, did you,
Ward? I'm not modeling anymore!

Jake thrusts before Ward like an overconfident bomb squad
leader.

JAKE

You're modeling now, Nicole. The
attitude, the outfit, the
glasses...You have 20/20 vision.
"Save the Manatee"-- Did you buy
the shirt for the cause or the
color?

NICOLE

Oh, just because I'm pretty, I'm not allowed to help preserve the existence of an entire aquatic species? You're sad...but hey, thanks a lot for last night's Hall of Fame pity-fuck!

Jake pulls Nicole beside a large pillar. Every head in the area has turned to the beautiful, bubbling volcano.

JAKE

You wanna get out--I can get you anywhere in the world with two phone calls, along with anything you want.

NICOLE

Problem solver man! Go on, tell me I can do anything if I put my mind to it!

(scary whisper)

I can't go back, Jake. I've flirted with major world leaders, both male and female. Been to all the great cities of the Earth--mostly the airports, mind you--I've had this amazing, exciting life I was never really comfortable with and never really even liked but that doesn't mean I want to curl up by the book with a good fireplace. I can't!

Dawn gulps in sadness at her fallen hero as June hauls her past, toward the tunnel. Jake firmly locks onto Nicole, feigning composed maturity.

JAKE

Nicole, you can't confuse your image...

NICOLE

Oh man, I'm getting the whole Jake's greatest hits boxed-set. "Don't confuse your image with yourself"--well, which one did you "bone", Jake? We didn't get it on until I got my first cover, did we?

JAKE

It's pointless to argue. We both have the answers from the back of each other's books. It was a mistake to be with you sexually last night. I was an asshole...

NICOLE

Oh God, I hate when you do that--
 "I'm an asshole." "This goddamn
 business"-- You think you can be
 all mean and rotten and it doesn't
 count if you say in advance you're
 being mean and rotten. Well, just
 because you always call yourself
 an asshole doesn't mean you're not
 one. Get it? Don't touch me..!

Jake recoils. Nicole spins off, toppling a rack of clothes.

WARD AND DOMINIQUE

watch the clothes crash in total deadpan.

WARD

What can I do? Fire her? Fire Nicole
 Kimberly?

DOMINIQUE

A household name, she is.

WARD

Did you know she really does go out
 with an arms dealer? I thought June
 made that junk up to give me another
 ulcer.

NICOLE

weaves through a frightened thoroughfare of Models and Stylists.

NICOLE

Yes, she couldn't handle success!
 It's true! I feel bad about selling
 workout tapes of myself when I've
 never worked out in my life! I have
 no business sense and I'm proud of
 it! I've lied so many times about
 my age that I don't remember how
 old I am! Having sex with rock stars?
 Overrated! You know there's more to
 life than looking good-- I just
 can't remember what! Yes, I am a fuck-
 up! Truly!

The Obese Pierce Agency Exec thuds beside the wounded Jake to
 regard her.

OBESE EXEC

Wow, what a cunt, eh?

JAKE

You're fat.

Jake blusters away.

NICOLE

is suddenly tugged by the Sharp Real-Life Supermodel. She points up to a monitor that shows a beaming Dawn gliding down the runway.

SHARP REAL-LIFE SUPERMODEL
Look Nicole, it's the next you.

NICOLE
Groovy. Does that mean I don't have
to be me anymore?

The Sharp SuperModel, spooked, lets go of Nicole, watching her bang off the buffet table. Beneath the wobbling table, H stirs awake with a gently rumbling cough and a pained squint of the eyes.

Nicole pounds through the exit door into heavenly daylight. The Spooky Male Androgyne Assistant cuts before the eerie image.

SPOOKY ASSISTANT
Position Z!

JUNE AND WARD

zip Dawn and Harmon into identical wedding dresses. The girls clack up to wrap arms around the flapped out elbows of Lombardi. The trio royally disappears through the tunnel to great applause. Jake takes it all in, still unhinged from Hurricane Nicole.

H

phoenixes out from underneath the table and into frame. Head down, rubbing her eyes, she tentatively aches forward like a mermaid just given legs. Above her, the monitors show Lombardi, Dawn, and Harmon being bombarded by flowers on the runway. -

BY THE TUNNEL

With cheers booming from the outside and the inside, Lombardi emerges out from the tunnel, still curled around Dawn and Harmon, who hold tossed flowers. He saunters the bedazzled young ladies up to their drenched-in-anticipation guardians June and Ward. Jake watches the confrontation from a detached distance.

LOMBARDI
No.

JUNE
What "No?"

WARD
Who "No?"

LOMBARDI

Harmon Killibrew--I love her flavor,
but not her energy. Of course she's
beautiful, but what else is new? She
exudes inferiority. Harmon has that
certain "Je Sais Quoi" that anything
cute--be it a model or a poodle--
has. That is to say, she's Boring.
Could put a crack baby to sleep.
Bye-bye.

Lombardi adds something in Romanian, then coolly pecks a tearing
up Harmon on the chin. She whimpers off. Jake holds in a laugh.
H obliviously plods behind him.

LOMBARDI

Dawn is going to make millions,
June, but she's just too Baseball-
Hot Dogs-Apple Pie-Chevrolet to be
the Lombardi Girl. Dawn could use
a little trauma on her cheeks--a
good screw, perhaps. Or maybe just
a very bad one. I love her energy,
but not her flavor.

Lombardi smooches an ashen Dawn, then breezes off into a swarm
of Congratulators. June and Ward are statues of Stunned. Behind
them, H does a catholic kneel before a sink and splashes her
face.

INT. THE FASHION SHOW SPACE

The viewer is finally allowed into the performance area--which
is now a sea of empty white folding chairs and discarded program
debris. Lombardi strolls the side of the desolate runway, with
his Spooky Male Assistant. June and Ward pathetically putter
above the pair.

LOMBARDI

Bergdorf will probably try to get
some sort of exclusive on the
charcoal blazers...

(looking up)

My God, June-Ward, get out of here.
Go to the after-party with everyone
else...

JUNE

But Lombardi, please...

WARD

All of New York failed you. Give
us a clean slate. In a week, I...

Jake eases up behind June.

JAKE

There's something you should know
about H--I'm worried. I saw her last
night, but she didn't stay with me.
She...

JUNE

(spinning around)

The biggest project of our lives
is crumbling right in front of us
and you're babbling about my
daughter. Focus!

INT. THE BACKSTAGE AREA--DAY

Fiercely rubbing her temples, H floats from the sink, gaining strength and recovering senses. She is transfixed by the gaping black tunnel. She straightens her posture and involuntarily primps her hair finding herself in an inexorable sashay into the black.

INT. THE FASHION SHOW SPACE--DAY

An exhausted Jake crashes down into one of the folding chairs at the foot of the runway. He cocks his head back and closes his eyes as June and Ward continue their desperation act above. Lombardi marches up to confront them.

JUNE

I'll be the first to admit, Dawn
has some growing up to do. But if
she just had some of your
guidance...

WARD

What if I made Harmon bald? Hear me
out...

LOMBARDI

You've seen my mind do a lot of
fascinating things. "Change" is not
one of them. I entrusted you with
something sacred and you people
collapsed like Communism. Now I'll
have to call in Europe. Thanks to
you, my timetable has been
completely...

Lombardi cuts off like a faucet, mesmerized. June and Ward spin. In a grand, classic motion, H comes to a glowing halt at the other end of the runway. More than ever, the astounding transformation of H is displayed in full, unobstructed beauty. The viewer is thinking exactly what June, Ward, and Lombardi are thinking.

JUNE

Dangerous...

WARD
Innocence.

LOMBARDI
Picture!

Instantly electrified, Lombardi vividly swings out a fierce finger snap to his Spooky Assistant, who flaps out a Polaroid camera and snaps a single shot of the trembling H.

In slow motion, Jake uncocks his head up. He is the most blown away of all by the new H. Simultaneously dazzled and outraged, Jake remains glued in his front seat, watching the ensuing events as if it were theatre.

June and Ward scramble around Lombardi, who holds out the rapidly developing Polaroid. The snapshot becomes clearer and clearer. The Industry Titans begin to rumble towards jubilation as the truth is revealed: H works. She is photogenic.

LOMBARDI
Yes.

JUNE
What "Yes?"

LOMBARDI
Everything Yes. She's my girl. No question. She's the Lombardi Girl.

June and Ward drift back, reeling in bliss.

WARD
The Polaroid never lies. June, her bones...Her bones are paralyzing.

JUNE
I've even seen her naked, Ward, and I never realized she could be this good. Did you see the expression on Lombardi's...

The word "Lombardi" assassinates their shared joy. Jake darts his eyes back and forth to the players above.

WARD
No way, June! She's Lear material!

JUNE
H and I are much closer, Ward! You know that, much closer!

WARD
That may be true, but she likes me!

JUNE

She likes you the same superfluous way she likes ..Scrabble and..Junior Mints! H and I have an enormously complex primary group relationship!

June and Ward bustle over to plead their case to a disoriented H.

JUNE

H, I fight with you because I love you.

WARD

H, I don't fight with you because I love you.

H

Is this live?

Ward pulls out a checkbook and starts scribbling.

WARD

How's this for live, H? A little advance.

JUNE

I didn't think even you could sink so....Trying to buy your daughter--you sir, are without shame...

JUNE

(over his shoulder)
Ten thousand dollars! H, I can double that...

JAKE

(under his breath)
What kind of insane play is this?

Lombardi slowly turns down to the viewer and Jake.

LOMBARDI

You had something to do with this, didn't you, Jacob?

JAKE

I guess I did.

H

You better believe he did...He had everything to do with it.

JUNE

(delighted shock)

You knew. You knew all along. You crazy two must have been up all night concocting--that's what you were trying to tell me about H just now and I didn't even listen. What a fool I am and what a messiah you are.

LOMBARDI

Everyone else waited for an angel to fall from a cloud into their lap. You created your own truth. I look up to very few people. Today you are one. Way to go, Jake Jacobs.

H

(slyly)

Yeah, way to go.

WARD

(stammering)

All I know is that H has only one last name. Mine. And if you think I'm going to just lay down...

JUNE

Well, "all I know" is that it's a Me Custody week...

WARD

That works to my advantage. H'll remember what a monster you...

LOMBARDI

This is 'all mildly entertaining, but enough. Who gets the commission on this girl is something that can be settled outside my consciousness. We have a campaign to commence. I want rolls and rolls of H, H, and H.

With wickedly alert POV pans, Jake scans from character to character as they go into warrior mode. June excitedly tugs dazed H back through the tunnel. H stops to sotto voce down to Jake...

H

Am I in the world now, Jake?

Jake next scopes Ward strutting the opposite direction to the foot of the runway, where he shouts into a cellular.

WARD

I want a dossier reminding me of everything my daughter enjoys. And get the lawyers into this; I'm not afraid to get rough. Tora, Tora, Tora...

Ward pops off the runway. Jake spins his view to Lombardi and his Spooky Male assistant coming off the stage, crossing before him.

LOMBARDI

Set a press conference to announce this, this H. Make it a luncheon. Salmon. The Age of the Lombardi approaches...

Suddenly very alone, Jake zens up out of his seat into a drift to the top of the now empty runway. It is his turn to perform.

JAKE

Yeah, H. You're in the world now.

EXT. THE MANHATTAN SIDEWALK--DAY

Tie blowing over shoulder, maintaining his runway smolder, Jake passes a bus stop poster reading, black letters over white, "LOMBARDI IS COMING." He then looks out to a hanging team of painters "whiting out" the Nicole Kimberly mural on a grand scale.

INT. BOOKER ROOM--THE NEXT DAY

Jake launches the carousel of clipboards into a superviolent spin without a spec of mirth on his face. Oblivious to his bile, the bookers happily squeal "JA-A-KE!"

THE CONFERENCE ROOM

The Agency Crew is loosely laughing in an aggressively casual atmosphere, each regarding a Polaroid as Jake enters.

OLDER MOTHERLY EXEC

There he is! Genius at work!

LYLE

You know, they're all going to come after this guy now--Casablancas, Eileen, even Ward can't deny you're the key to H.

JUNE

Just remember, Jacob, any offer those saps make to you, they probably can't afford...not that I can afford you, either.

OBESSE EXEC

Oh, H is so original. I never realized how much she looked like you, June...

JUNE

I never realized what she looked like. I used to think H wore her hair the way she did to hide three little sixes.

JAKE

I don't want to pop everyone's parade, but H hates the business. She was reacting to--we had this fight...

JUNE

Stop being so modest, Jacob. I don't know what you said to her, but H has communicated a desire for a change o'pace.

HOTSHOT FEMALE EXEC

And she's going to get one. Her photo session is in two hours. With Demarchelier, no less. Contracts should be ready by this afternoon.

JAKE

Your daughter as a model...the Lombardi Girl...June, this is crazy...

JUNE

Isn't it? I hope you're not still mad about that check writing escapade yesterday. That was Ward and I being obnoxious. You know how he brings out the him in me. We promised H that you'd take her to the session. Is that cool?

JAKE

(mind racing)

It's cool.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREETS--AFTERNOON

Jake walks with a casually but definitely fashionably dressed H. She gleams a myriad of lingering looks from various passersby.

H

What's everybody's problem?

JAKE

You're good looking. Deal with it.

H
I will! I am. I'm more than dealing
with it. I like it.

JAKE
Jogging and smoking at the same
time, clutching a calorie chart,
on your way to a steam. Using the
word "go-see" in sentences. Having
everyone be amused by everything
you say whether it's amusing or
not...You sure you want to get into
all this?

H
Do you ask all your models that?

JAKE
Not really.

H
Then don't ask me. I don't wanted
to be treated any different.

JAKE
Tough. You're getting treated
different.

Jake holds out a folded piece of paper. H snares it.

H
Is this the contract?

JAKE
It was in an envelope marked JAKE.
Along with an empty bottle of pills.
Stagehand at the Fashion show gave
it to me.

H unravels it. The viewer recognizes the insane scribble. It's
her suicide note. She immediately tears it to shreds, letting
the pieces flicker through the air.

JAKE
You attempted suicide, H.

H
(sadly, slowly)
No. I would have taken more pills.
I was attempting a suicide attempt--
if such a thing is possible. Maybe
I just really, really wanted to get
some sleep. Doesn't matter now.

They come to the building entrance. H presses a button marked
PHOTOGRAPHY.

JAKE

It does matter. I feel responsible.
I blew up at you that night. I was
in the middle of a complicated adult
situation...

H

(angrily rejuvenated)
Oh, is that what it was? Why are we
talking about this? Why are you
giving me such a hard time? I thought
getting the Lombardi Girl was this
gargantuan, utmost important
thing...Well, you got her! What are
you going to do about it?

JAKE

Of course I want the contract. It's
just, reading that note--H, you're
not yourself.

H

Maybe I don't want to be.

The buzzer buzzes. H thrusts into the door.

INT. GENERIC STUDIO

Dressed in a tuxedo with a little fake moustache and a cigar
in her mouth, H strikes a campy male pose. She raises her
(gloved) hands in the air. They are on fire.

INT. WARD'S PLACE--NIGHT

Speaking on the phone, Ward resurrects out of a slouch on his
bachelor pad couch, perking the interest of Dominique on a
chair.

WARD

That's, that's wundebar, H.
Absolutely wundebar. You will not
regret giving me this chance...

DOMINIQUE

What? Tell me.

Ward hangs up the phone with a giddy grin. An UNEXPLAINED MODEL
is revealed to be curled in a fetal nap on the couch.

WARD

H says that it is only fair that
both Mama Pierce and Papa Lear get
a chance to present their cases on
why she should sign with them. We're
still alive. I thought Jacobs got
her, but we're still alive. Where's
that dossier?

DOMINIQUE

Fantastic news, Ward. But going back to a less cheerful subject: What did we decide to do with Nicole Kimberly, the face that sunk a thousand ships?

WARD

It's all been arranged. It's Rehab time. Laughing all the way to the tank...I just sent a car over.

INT. NICOLE KIMBERLY'S PLACE--DAY

Nicole is glumly packing a suitcase giving a zombie stare to a droning TV Set showing images of the robin egg blue pill.

TV NEWSCASTER

The President has decided to send more troops, but more on that later. The designer Lombardi has all of New York and all of the world trying to figure out what's in the mysterious, robin-egg-blue pill he calls the Lombardi. It's been rumored to be everything from the ultimate aphrodisiac to a cure for Aids...

Nicole bends down to snort the smile off a Happy Face made of cocaine. At a table behind her, her Arms dealer beau, HE, and his bodyguard are scrutinizing a red, circular, palm-sized device with a digital clock. They speak in Russian, until He winces to the TV screen.

HE

Turn that thing off--Damn it, don't sneak up on me like that!

NICOLE

Tea?

Nicole is revealed hovering over him with a tray holding two teacups. Grumbling, HE and his bodyguard take the cups and go back to examining their petite piece of weaponry.

Nicole walks to a closet, pulls out some clothes, and carries them to her suitcase. In the background, HE and his bodyguard are now crumpled to the ground. Nicole closes the suitcase.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BIG APT.--DAY

Nicole stands starkly by a mountain of luggage. A DRIVER is dutifully taking them and loading them into a limousine. Nicole steps before a creepy FEMALE STREET PERSON.

NICOLE

Trade?

The Female Street Person sheds her ratty coat as Nicole shakes off a luscious unfake fur. The Female Street Person bolts away with her new skin before the insane pretty lady changes her mind.

Nicole picks up a brown grocery sack from her suitcase stack. As the Driver busily heaves in another load, Nicole saunters past him and hails a taxi.

DRIVER

Miss Kimberly, where are you...Wait!
You can't!

EXT. CENTRAL PARK--DAY

H trots across Central Park, behind a camera crew truck. She wears a sleek jogging outfit and a T-shirt that reads FAMINE:!! ENVIRONMENT:YES. She is accompanied by an absurd squadron of maniacally grinning MALE MODEL BEEFCAKES, also in jogging gear.

INT. TIMES SQUARE SBARRO'S--NIGHT

In a seedy, scary-orange lit, Times Square pizza palace, Jake and June sit at a back table, Last Supper style, side by side, unfacing.

JUNE

I wanted a place where no one would see me lose it. Including my Maid.

(a beat)

This is too bad to be false. H said you had an attitude problem. One minute she's running into Pierce's arms and the next minute she's coming up with a complicated time-sharing plan with Lear, so both agencies can take turns at representation with a final decision to be made later. She was so close and...

JAKE

H has been...troubled. I just wanted to make sure she knew what she was doing-- that she was doing the right thing...

June violently pushes away her pizza cheese splattered paper plate.

JUNE

My God, Jacob, of course it's the right thing. Look at her--she was an arrogant, unpleasant little person who thought she could get away with...and now she's beautiful.

(more)

JUNE (Cont'd)

On what planet is beauty not an improvement? You should know by now how important it is to keep personal distance from yourself and the client.

JAKE

H is not a client. H is H.

JUNE

If it wasn't for your storybook relationship with Nicole Kimberly, she would not have gone over to Lear. I've never really given you a hard time about it--because you're the best agent there is and because Nikki Kim is an Advance Placement Psycho-freak. It's just--we can't blow this one on some emotional tift. All that Lombardi money could finally put the agency in the clear. We need H bad.

A WILD NEW YORK CHARACTER shouts aloud, hopping away from a screen that shows paramedics carrying off two shrouded bodies with an inset glamour photo of Nicole Kimberly.

WILD NEW YORK CHARACTER

You see dat? You see dat? That crazy supermodel bitch up and killed her boyfriend and his damn bodyguard! Believe that shit? Bitch's on the loose!

JUNE

As I was saying...

Jake rises up out of his chair in a daze. He shakes himself out of it. June gets up too.

JAKE

If this is the world you want for H and the world she wants for herself-- I'll make it happen. Like I always do. Just don't kid yourself that I, alone, got us into today's situation.

JUNE

I know--she's punishing me as much as anyone. She sees a clear opportunity to get goodies from both her parents. I knew it was too easy--signing H to be the Lombardi girl.

JAKE

There's no getting around it. Ward's going to have to be a father. And you're going to have to be a mother. At least for the next week.

JUNE

But you know, for the first time, H wants to be a daughter. I really think this is going to work.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET--DAY

Swathed like Audrey H. in Breakfast at Tiffany's, H is photographed sashaying a Manhattan sidewalk, cigarette holder in one hand and a shopping bag in the other. Her mother, her father, and a group of cheering construction workers look on proudly.

INT. ART MUSEUM--DAY

Ward and H stroll the halls of a modern art museum.

WARD

Society used to only desire women with super hair, super teeth, and super tits. Now society desires women who are intelligent, motivated, and responsible--with super hair, super teeth, and super tits.

H

That's great, Pop.

• WARD

Just being straight with you. You need guidance, H. Sign with me. You think being June Pierce's daughter's tough, can you imagine working for her? When you go to McDonald's, you'll look to the fry cooks with jealousy. Modeling can be pretty severe, but I remember how to make glamour feel glamorous, how to make beauty feel...

H

Beautiful?

WARD

We're on the same wavelength. But H, it takes more than looks. You've got to..

INT. THE ELEVATOR UP TO DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Fluidly continuing Ward's train of thought, June corners H in a rumbling elevator.

JUNE

...be able to create a specific mood, who cares if you're feeling it. The photographer says Virgin, the Stylist says Tramp; you've got to be both.

H

(sadly seduced)

The way I feel doesn't matter. It is the way I'm told to feel. The way I become what others want.

JUNE

We're on the same wavelength...You really should be signing with me.

Mother and Daughter turn through the opening elevator doors into the oppressively hip chaos of Decadence Candy.

INT. THE PIERCE AGENCY CONFERENCE ROOM--NIGHT

A beaming H is teetering across the conference table in a long dress and high heels, balancing THE ODYSSEY on her head. Jake sits at the end.

H

I know I always ragged on modeling, but the way I look at it--I'm-I'm going undercover, Jake-Jake. I wanna see what it's like to work for my parents, 'all right, I wanna see what it's like to be liked by my parents. You know they actually make eye contact with me now and not just because I cut my bangs.

The book drops from her head. Suddenly standing beside her, Jake catches the book before it can hit the table.

JAKE

That was better, but you're still not relaxing your neck. Try it again, but be natural. And stop talking.

H gulps at her drill instructor. She takes the book and re-commences a walk from the other end of the table.

INT. ART MUSEUM--DAY

Ward pauses for some museum contemplation.

WARD
Now this, this is a superb piece.
Formal, unpretentious....

Ward is seen to be looking at the Janitor's mop in a bucket.

H
Oh man, Dad, modern art jokes? I need
you to be serious. It's like you
gave up on me when you found out
I wasn't a little doll to spoil and
baby.

WARD
Things are different now.

H
Things are different now as in 'you
realize how horrible it is to be
condescending' or things are
different now as in 'I'm a model
and you'll do anything to please
me'?

WARD
(such a kidder)
Yes.

H
(can't help laughing)
Da-ad, that wasn't a true or
false....Listen, I appreciate the...

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Amid the swirling hot-and-happeningness of Decadence Candy, H
finishes her train of thought after taking an unpleasant sip
from her ornate Dawn Webster-style Kalhua drink.

H
...attention you've been giving me,
Mom, but I wish everything between
us wasn't so, so...You're not
listening.

H looks over to June, who is clinically scribbling on a notepad.

JUNE
H, I never write down the grievances
of a model unless she's very
important to me...

H
(smile of disbelief)
I'm your daughter.

JUNE

Of course you are, H...shoot. And try not to smile. Less wrinkles for the set.

(deeply blinks)

I'm sorry, H. Smile all you want, baby. Nothing makes me happier than your smile.

June rises up and pulls H for a cold and clinical, but paradoxically heartfelt, hug. H is spooked...and then touched.

INT. LOMBARDI'S VIP ROOM

From the club's soundproof VIP chamber, behind the two-way mirror, Lombardi soaks in the hug of June and H. The wizened Custodian Charlie squirts some Windex onto the mirror/window and begins wiping.

LOMBARDI

The future begins with one letter: H. The last pure, undiseased epiphany of our time. What do you think?

CUSTODIAN CHARLIE

She's just a kid, Mr. Lombardi. Geez, I remember back in the days when Beauty was something you could fuck.

LOMBARDI

(a scary smile)

Oh Charlie, you're such a janitor...I wonder what this girl will be like when she comes out the other side of what I have planned for her.

Lombardi unmutes CNN images of H on a TV banked in the wall.

NEWSCASTER (T.V.)

Thousands more are dead in this, the latest tragedy coming out of Africa. But before we take you out there, and before we give you the latest on fugitive Nicole Kimberly, let's drop in on the island of Manhattan to visit with H Lear, the new model who is as mysterious--and as hot--as the Lombardi "mystery product" she promotes...

EXT. SEEDY NEW YORK STREET--NIGHT

A stained Nicole Kimberly lowers down a newspaper article about H onto her body like a blanket (Her grocery bag acts like a pillow). She lies back on a bus bench, beneath an ad featuring herself. She tightens herself into a shivering ball.

INT. STUDIO--DAY

Wearing good naturedly playful lingerie, H rolls in and out of frame across a white carpet. A wider view of this test shot shows Lombardi pulling up H off a polar bear carpet. He "accidentally" does a creepy stroke over her behind. H shudders.

INT. PIERCE AGENCY CONFERENCE ROOM--DAY

Representatives of both Pierce and Lear line each side of the Pierce conference table bitterly fine-tooth-combing a contract. Lombardi sits at one end of the table. H sits at the other.

LOMBARDI

Why I am here?

WARD

This interim contract establishes who sees H when and who pays what expenses. But on page 18, as you can see, Pierce is trying to...

JUNE

I'm sorry, it's the Lear people who came up with page 33, number five, little a, which states....

LOMBARDI

(cracking his neck)

Again. Why should I remotely care?

JAKE

Because it's publicity you can only dream of.

All swerve to the commanding presence of Jake, who completely takes over the meeting from his usual position in the windowsill. A re-smitten H draws a little heart.

JAKE

Two parents fighting over a child has a primordial pull with the public that your artistically accomplished teasers can't begin to touch.

HOTSHOT FEMALE EXEC

But Jake, the contract still has inconsistencies.

JAKE

The contract is fine. The only thing that needs to be noted is the last page which I worked out this morning: "H will make the decision of which agency she works for, Pierce or Lear, at a birthday party held in her honor, next week. At Decadence Candy." Obviously, the potential for drama, controversy, and human interest is vaguely unlimited. We have a press conference about it in twenty minutes.

Jake exits the windowsill. The others watch in awe; Lombardi is especially impressed. H puts the words "Jake-Jake" over her homemade heart. Ward sees this out of the corner of his eye.

INT. YET ANOTHER NON-SPECIFIC STUDIO--NIGHT

Dressed as Joan of Arc, H is untied from a studio stake. She trots behind a dressing room curtain. The viewer's viewpoint floats over to see H undress. A minuscule camera is revealed to be set-up above, pointing sickeningly downward.

INT. THE SOHO LOFT--DAY

A GROUP OF NEEDLESS-TO-SAY NUBILE MODELS (including Tabitha and Dawn Webster) in fun gear are having a tug of war match in the middle of the earlier-seen Soho loft. The viewer's viewpoint tiptoes behind a curtain where, sitting on crates, Ward and Dominique smooth-talk Jake.

JAKE

Mr. Lear, are you trying to seduce me?

WARD

Damn right I am. I see the way H looks at you. You've always been there for her when her parents weren't. I don't know what kind of squabble you had last week, but she still really loves you, man.

DOMINIQUE

Bottom line. We know we can't sign H without signing you. We're prepared to, as much as it kills me, since I've worked here longer and think I'm just as talented as you...

WARD

She's just being witty and ironic.

DOMINIQUE

You'll get a full partnership with Ward. Much cushier than the vice-prez gig you got going now--more money, more benefits, bigger stock package.

JAKE

It's kind of you, but June has offered to bump up...

WARD

What about the intangibles, Jacob... Remember all the fun we had before the split. We have a bond that you and June could never share. We are the men who have actual sex with the women other men daydream about while doing it to their plain-jane girlfriends from behind.

DOMINIQUE

Please, talk openly, Ward, don't let my presence keep you from...

WARD

Not now, Dom...Let's make this work, Jacobs. You the man.

Jake huffs a flattered smile. An exhausted, sweating Dawn Webster slinks up, managing to simultaneously sip a water bottle, smoke a cigarette, and shake out of her top. She pecks Jake's head.

DAWN

Hey, Jake. What movies has Richard Harbor directed?

Jake loses his smile.

INT. NON-SPECIFIC STUDIO--DAY

One hand chained to a wall, H, in shredded but stylish Dungeon-wear stretches her body as far as it can go, and then a little bit further, toward a vast urn filled with the Lombardi pills. The flamboyant Meiselesque photographer screeches her to stretch even farther. Degrading pictures are taken.

INT. TEST SHOT CLOSE-UPS OF H'S FACE

In a series of close-up cuts, the face of a naked shouldered H goes from smiling to screaming to giggling to crying, before settling upon an unnervingly placid stare. Her mouth opens. There is a pill on her tongue. The image freezes.

INT. SUBWAY--NIGHT

Posters of the bare shouldered, open-mouth-with-pill H are splashed upon a subway station wall above a TOURIST GETTING PUMMELED BY A MUGGER. The posters are captioned "JUST WHAT IS THE LOMBARDI?"

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE--DAY

Another of the H/Lombardi posters is plastered over an AIDS awareness poster in Washington Square.

INT. MANHATTAN STREET CORNER--DAY

The last of a striking line of H/Lombardi posters (reading "IS AMERICA READY FOR THE LOMBARDI?") is slapped up on the side of a Manhattan edifice. Jake is revealed to be staring at them.

Suddenly, a Lear Insignia-ed limousine squeaks to a stop. In baseball cap and biker jacket, H herself pops out of the car to race toward an opening-up Pierce Insignia-ed limousine at the other corner edge. She awkwardly brakes at the sight of Jake.

H

hey.

JAKE

hey. You look good.

H

Thanks. You see Me and Katie on the Today show?

JAKE

Missed it.

H

Oh, it was so taffy! I said the most important two words in modeling are "Grilled vegetables." It got a big laugh...

A body shifts on the ground behind them--a Homeless person that upon closer examination is Nicole Kimberly.

JAKE

How's the new, improved mother/father thing? Intensely dramatic or what?

H

It's...better.

INT. JUNE'S PLACE--NIGHT

In Pierce insigniaed aprons, June and H are sizzling up some grilled vegetables. H breaks away to do an exaggerated tiptoe to a cookie jar. June grabs her and tickles away...

INT. WARD'S PLACE--NIGHT

In a Lear-Insigniaed apron, H giddily busts out from the tickling grip of Ward. He holds up his two fists. H taps one of them. Ward reveals a cookie. H gleefully chomps into it.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET

JAKE
How's school?

H
School--I haven't been--with the campaign building in intensity, with Lombardi about to announce the true meaning of the pill any day now-- I was there last week, though-- School, that is. Like for a day.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM--DAY

Darling H holds court in the back of the class, regaling a predominantly male group of students and a MALE TEACHER with inaudible tales of glamour. The Girly-girl jealously combs her hair at a nearby desk. Paparazzi flash outside the window.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET--DAY

H smiles, trying to be light and sweet. Trying.

H
It's funny--I went from being the least popular girl in school to the most popular without ever actually making any friends...

JAKE
Lot of similarities between most popular and least popular.

H
Yeah, but if you gotta choose...

JAKE
H, you would tell me if something's wrong. I know Lombardi can get a little...

H
 (offensively defensive)
 I'm excellent, okay? Jesus Jake-Jake,
 it's just modeling, not Bosnia. You
 know, I'm not a child.
 (calming herself)
 I'm sorry. I've been a real brat,
 I mean, bitch. I've been a bitch
 lately. I gotta--I'm running
 superlate--Klaus is doing this shoot--
 You should really drop by--He's the
 best--Everyone's going to be there--
 This was nice. Seeing you on the
 street and--Drop by!

H bounces forward to give a sheepish semi-hug, then dashes into the exiting limo. Jake drifts by a balled-up-on-the-ground Nicole, non-chalantly dropping a quarter in her cup.

INT. THE STUDIO OF THE GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER--DAY

At the sound of the plunking coin, STYLIST ONE and TWO roll model H's baggy pants up and bunch up the excess behind her legs with severe metal clamps. Another clamp tears back her hair. An intricate village of needles acupuncture H' blouse from behind to make a snugger fit.

STYLIST THREE callously thrusts up H's breasts into a severe Push mode. He then takes a piece of duct tape and tapes a necklace onto the back of her neck. Stylist One gently pulls H's feet out of her moccasins and proceeds to nail them to the floor. He then slips H's feet back in.

GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER
 Don't speak. Stand completely
 still...And relax.

The viewer's viewpoint pulls out on a completely finished H being shot by the earlier-seen German Photographer. The viewer continues to recoil to reach the sight of June and Ward watching in rapture from director chairs. They speak, not taking their eyes off H.

WARD
 Luminous.

JUNE
 Absolutely...Three days until the
 big birthday bash. Most of us will
 have a good time.

WARD
 Cocky. I like that in a loser.

H winks. June and Ward both wink back, grinning until peripheralling each other.

ANOTHER PART OF THE STUDIO

An entering Jake has a different view of H--the clamps, the pins, and the tape that are literally and figuratively behind her. A slithering up Lombardi causes Jake to end his soulful appraisal with a long blink.

LOMBARDI

A pill that satisfies your hunger for a week. Or does the pill change the color of your race. People all over the country are placing orders to buy the Lombardi and they don't even know what it is. Isn't it amazing?

(focusing ahead)

Look at her, Jake. The daughter they never had is the daughter they always had. Who would have thought--H. Beneath the shell of an unpleasant, ratty little scamp was a more significant person than ever thought possible...

JAKE

Is it a better person?

LOMBARDI

"Better Person." I am not sure I know what that means. I do know this--before, H did not, how do you say, register. She did not exist. Does now.

JAKE

It's a big planet, Lombardi. You'd be surprised what goes on behind your back.

LOMBARDI

You are an interesting character Jake, but do not bore me by...Where do you think you're going?

H

Jake-Jake, you came...

H moves after the exiting Jake but, forgetting her shoes are nailed to the floor, instead topples to the ground, ripping a quirky, background sculpture down along with her.

June and Ward frantic to her aid, along with hysterical studio Managers. H is half-flattered and half-freaked by the attention.

JUNE

Oh honey, are you okay?

WARD

Do you want paramedics, sweetie?
Quick, somebody boil some water or
something.

H

No, no, I'm, I'm fine. Really, both
of you, I'm fine. Thanks Mom. Thanks
Dad.

LOMBARDI

You heard her. Our little H is fine.
Now unbutton her slacks, bring out
the tank, and put on the snorkel...

Lombardi helps her up in a feely-feely way that makes the viewer squirm. Stylist One unbuttons H's pants. The other stylists roll up a glass tank. Lombardi thrusts a snorkel in her mouth. Beauty is not pretty.

EXT. OUR FAMILIAR TORONTO, I MEAN, NEW YORK STREET--DAY

The Nicole Kimberly mural has been completely painted over and replaced by the beginnings of a mural of H--only her hair has been painted on. Another day's growth on his stone face, Jake turns from the faceless mural and bulldozes toward the agency doors.

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE

Assistant Annette holds up a brochure to June, showing Honda scooters of various colors. A red one is circled.

JUNE

Terrific...Go ahead and...

June turns gloomy as she sees the pretty scraggly Jake shuffle through the agency doors via the video monitor.

INT. THE BOOKER ROOM

Smoking a cigarette, a loose and savvy Dawn Webster is playfully combing her wise female IRISH BOOKER'S hair. Sabrina converses with another nearby booker wearing a rainbow facial mask.

DAWN

I got it--oh way no way. At the go-
see, I gave those pervs my best
"Don't think I'm nifty look.

FEMALE IRISH BOOKER

Don't let June hear you talk like
that. Covers impress the folks back
home, but these dull, badly-lit jobs
are the ones that pay, lass.

DAWN

Okay, okay, but push it back until
after Berlin...Hey, Jake!

Jake struts past Dawn. The Bookers, in one giddy "You're-not-going-to-get-us-this-time" reflex, slap their hands on the carousel of clipboards to hold it in place. Jake broods past them in sizzling obliviousness. The bookers are crestfallen.

BOOKER

Jake?

Jake flicks out an index card out to a passing Annette.

JAKE

Annette, I need you to track an
address. Tell me the second you get
it, no matter what I'm doing.

INT. THE HALLWAY--DAY

Jake makes a surly swerve into June's office.

JUNE

Yesterday H almost sprained her
ankle running after you, Jacob.

JAKE

Maybe you shouldn't have nailed her
feet to the floor, June.

JUNE

I didn't nail!....

June stifles a snarl and slaps a multi-page contract down before
Jake.

JUNE

The public is going crazy. The media
is worse. Between all the rumors
of what the Lombardi actually is,
all the stories of my battle with
Ward, and all the editorials about
H's age-- Did I tell you H has her
own web-site?

JAKE

Is there a gas station between all
that you're saying and a point?

JUNE

Tomorrow's her birthday. And the
party. And the decision.

June slides forward a vivid embossed card proclaiming "H
DECADENCE CANDY THE BIG ONE-FIVE." Assistant Annette invades
the drama.

ANNETTE
Contest finalists.

JUNE
Yeah, yeah, all right.

Without further explanation, Jake drearily twists his chair around, back to June. As DAISY-FRESH MODEL HOPEFULS parade in and out of the room in every possible costume and lack thereof, Jake and a leaning-forward June communicate in seething whispers.

JUNE
Listen. H loves you. Big Time.
That's the only detail in all this
madness that is obvious. So get it
in print. I don't want an awkward
"Is she going to walk to her Mommy
or her Daddy?" moment at the party.
Get her alone. Get her to sign.
(cringing to unseen girl)
Ooh--It's customary in this country
that if you're going to get them
done, get them done the same size...

JAKE
(cringing as well)
They're not even the same color.
Hope she kept her receipt...Whatever
feelings H has for me, I'm not going
to abuse them for the sake of the
company.
(toward fashion disaster)
Hello, Cleveland...

JUNE
We are not abusing H's love. We are
just using it a little. H is a very
attractive young girl. You shouldn't
feel bad if you start to have
thoughts-- I completely understand.
You and H have always had a strong
bond, who am I to prevent you two
from exploring...

JAKE AND JUNE
(toward a certain girl)
Now she's great...

JAKE
Offering up your daughter--You've
gone over the line, June. Until this
week I never even knew there was
a line, but...
(toward certain girl)
Nice sleeves. I do a lot of
heroin...

JUNE

(agreement ala girl)

A lot... Don't you dare get all
"disillu-usioned" on me--your job
is every man's fantasy. What
happened to Jake Jacobs, the affable
hick-loverboy-- Buckleberry Finn
in a river of Pussy. You've been
so high and mighty and...

(toward short beauty)

Honey, you're 5-4, go be an
archeologist...

Bullshit-smiling to the incoming phillies, Jake swiftly rises,
clinging his chair around the desk next to June, launching into
acidic whisper.

JAKE

You're right. My job's every man's
fantasy, but you know, when fantasy
becomes reality, something gets lost
in the translation. You find
yourself walking around thinking
of concentration camps so that
constant erection of yours will go
back down in your pants; but then
you see, your brain gets used to
the old concentration camp trick
and your happy boner won't go away.
And let me tell you, when that
happens, when fantasy has completely
taken over...

JUNE

Shut up, just shut up, you
freak...After the way you talked
to Lombardi yesterday and me today,
you'll never work in fashion
again...

JAKE

Don't threaten me. I'll walk H down
to Ward's office just to see the
color of your vomit.

The last ~~girl~~ sashays by, almost comically trying to get the
attention of shocked zombie June. Jake blossoms up. June breaks
from her trance and claws his arm.

JUNE

Jacob. Please. I don't know what
your twisted erection fable means.
I only know this: Whether you
intended it or not, somehow
something you said or did got H to
admit she is physically desirable.

(more)

JUNE (Cont'd)

The secret is out--for better, for worse, her life will never be the same. Is it not better to have H here at Pierce where you can watch over her?

Jake stiffens his grip around the contract and the invitation card. He speaks very quietly.

JAKE

I don't know whether you're being Concerned Mom or Shrewd Agent...

JUNE

(human)

For what it's worth, neither do I. Word of advice: Just let it all happen. Come on, Jacob, H will be able to tough out anything that comes along. She's never been the kind of kid who skips around Central Park catching Frisbees.

JAKE

Maybe you should have thrown her one.

H (O.S.)

You're not trying to have a genuine conversation in the office of June Pierce, are you?

Looking quite lovely, H is revealed to be standing in the doorway.

JAKE

Yes, I am. H, you can't possibly understand everything that's going on...I think we should all settle down and...

H

"Can't possibly understand..."--I told you, Jake, I'm not a child!

JAKE

I know...you're not a child. And you're not an adult. And June and I aren't adults either. Nobody's a child. Nobody's an adult. Everybody's everybody--and we're all shit.

JUNE

He didn't mean that H. It's the medication talking...

H surrenders in silence to Jake's disgust. Annette sheepishly eases into the room, holding a post-it.

ANNETTE

Uh Jake, I have that address--You told me to tell you the second I...

Jake snaps the paper from her hand and smokes out the door.

EXT. A THOUSAND MILES AWAY IN MICHIGAN--MORNING

Jake exits a taxi (with a "serving all of Michigan" label). He gives a glance across the quaint Main Street U.S.A. A CHUBBY GIRL and HER MOM are making a gushing promenade into a decrepit Lear Modeling School. Jake turns around toward the entrance of a polished "Family Diner"

INT. THE NICE FAMILY DINER--DAY

Unshaven in thousand dollar duds, Jake stands out among the taciturn midwestern patrons. He stops before a "Please Wait to be Seated" sign. A coffee-pot carrying waitress bounds past.

WAITRESS

The hostess will seat you in a sec.

Dressed Michigan "nice," the hostess clings up a menu. It is Marcie, the troubled model from earlier.

HOSTESS MARCIE

Smoking or non...Jake?

JAKE

Hello, Marcie.

INT. AT A BOOTH--DAY

Jake and a glum Marcie silently sit across from each other in a booth. A COUNTERFUL OF MEN steal glances at the grading-on-a-curve gorgeous Marcie and gives glares to the unkempt slicker Jake.

MARCIE

New York to here. Quite a trip for you.

JAKE

Yeah. Quite a guilt-trip.

MARCIE

You really hurt me, Jake. Coming all the way out to apologize isn't going...

JAKE

I'm not here to--obviously, I'm sorry-- but I didn't come out here to get forgiven. I came for your anger. I was hoping you could hurt me back. Like order a milkshake and smack the glass over my head.

MARCIE

That sounds good...But you were just doing your job. You guys keep saying what a nasty business it is, so a person can't complain when you're being nasty.

(a beat)

The way I figure things, us models, or ex-models, we're like fireworks. Make a beautiful explosion then poof-- gone. I just hope I was one of the good ones, like the way you sometimes say, "Ooh, that was a good one" before the next flare goes up.

JAKE

You were a good one, Marcie. Your Mom says you're getting a teaching certificate. That's terrific...

MARCIE

I guess.

(more excitedly)

Hey, isn't that big party at D.C. tonight? The one where H has to choose-- shouldn't you be in New York?

JAKE

No. I don't think I should be. I got H into all this. She was so original and strange and now...

MARCIE

(with affection)

Man, we hated her, us girls. Foul mouthed, rude...I could tell she was beautiful. I knew she'd come around. What, you afraid if you're little pal gets mixed up in the fashion world, she'll become involved with people like you?

JAKE

Something like that.

MARCIE

Lombardi gets into some freaky stuff. You better be looking out for her...

JAKE

How can I? How do you save a damsel in distress tied to the tracks when you're one of the people driving the train. It doesn't matter. I'm quitting. For some reason, I wanted you to be the first to know--I'm getting out of this goddamn business once and for...

MARCIE

But you're Jake Jacobs, the agent of agents. Whatever it is that you do, Jake, that's what you do. You can't just not do it. You have to be around women. You don't choose your life. Your life chooses you.

JAKE

If I do keep doing what I do, will I ever be able to do it differently?

MARCIE

Heck if I know. I'm 19.

JAKE

22. But who's counting?

Jake and Marcie laugh recalling the attention of the Counterful of guys.

* MARCIE

Look at them...They think I'm the most beautiful girl in the world.

JAKE

You are. You all are. I got a party to go to.

Jake looks down to the solitary second hand ticking around his watch.

INT. CLOSE-UP OF H IN THE MIRROR

H wipes a post-shower patch of condensation off a bathroom mirror-- just enough to reveal her eyes.

H

Mirror, mirror, on the wall, I stand at the verge of a threshold of a Dawn of a new something.

(more)

H (Cont'd)
 Is this a good dream or a bad coma?
 Please let Jake-Jake forgive me and
 me forgive he. Shit, the limo's
 waiting. Happy birthday, young
 lady.

INT. THE BUILDING ENTRANCE OF DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

From H's POV, the viewer's viewpoint emerges out of an opening limousine...then breezes past the exploding paparazzi and the considerable clamoring-to-get-in crowd behind the velvet ropes.

DOORMAN
 Happy Birthday, H.

INT. THE BUILDING LOBBY--H'S POV--NIGHT

H's viewpoint glides into the bustling building lobby.

DOMINIQUE
 Happy Birthday, H.
 (into head-set)
 She's here.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

The elevator doors float open and the viewer's viewpoint blasts into Decadence Candy, done up in a "If Fellini threw a sweet sixteen party" vibe with large and neat glass Lombardi-pill-replica-mobiles hanging overhead.

The immediate crowd, in artfully cool party hats, turn and cheer. Previously seen Modeling Agents and LIZ SMITHESQUE N.Y. CELEBS eek out birthday wishes. Ward Lear thrusts into view to put his arm around the camera (H). As he speaks, he walks H and the viewer around in a circle.

WARD
 Tonight's your night. Crushes will
 come and go, H, but your father is
 a man who will always be there for
 you. Join the Lear Team. I love you.

The POV scans up to a DJ in a booth.

DJ
 The birthday girl is. in. the.
 House!

WARD
 (cutting in)
 Look who I brought by! Your pals from
 school!

A PERFECT ETHNIC MIX OF H CLASSMATES sit in smiling, but stiff, tableau. They bleat out uncomfortable Hello-s as H's POV backs away.

Assistant Annette pulls the camera down into a seated position across a table from June Pierce. Between the viewer and June is a big birthday cake with a Candy model of H going down an ice cream runway.

JUNE
Happy birthday, honey.

MALE HEAD BOBBING IN
You look very beautiful...

JUNE
Out! H, I just want to say whatever decision you make tonight, I'll be...who are we kidding, you're going to sign with Pierce. It's where you'll feel the most at home. With me and Jacob.

H (O.S.)
Where is Jake-Jake?

Annette bends down to whisper in June's ear.

ANNETTE
We've called his apartment thirty times and there's still no sign.

JUNE
(beaming out)
He's caught in traffic, H. Just called from his cell-phone.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER BOBBING IN
H, you must be so excited! How excited are you...

June stands. Her view of her daughter has been completely blocked by a hungry E-channelesque camera crew. The Spooky Male Androgynous Assistant of Lombardi's slides up beside the disturbed mother.

SPOOKY MALE ASSISTANT
Pow-wow. Now.

The assistant leads June away, past the earlier-seen Tapeworm Model and her formerly Jealous friend. They are conspiratorially patting each other's tummies.

EXT. THE STREET BEFORE THE MURAL--DUSK

More operatically destitute than ever, a filthy and shivering Nicole Kimberly stares up to the mural of H, clutching her brown grocery sack against her chest. The mural is completely finished except for H's eyes.

Nicole turns and trudges off, straight into a construction site portable potty, clunking the icky green door behind her. The viewer backs away.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--LOMBARDI'S TABLE

The Male Androgyne leads June up to a table at the edge of the club where Lombardi charismatically lounges alone. The almost identical Female Androgyne leads up Ward from another direction.

LOMBARDI

June Pierce of the Pierce agency.
Ward Lear of the Lear agency. Have
a seat.

WARD

Can't we chat in the VIP room? I've
never really had the chance to--I
would think by now we know each
other well enough--

LOMBARDI

You're not getting in the VIP room,
Ward. Sit down. Has H decided which
one of you lives and which one of
you dies?

Awkwardly shaking their heads, June and a still-pouting Ward sit around Lombardi. All stare out to the frenzy--the reporters, the cameras, the hungry for attention-and-everything-else crowd.

LOMBARDI

Isn't it amazing?

JUNE

What exactly is the "It" that is
so amazing?

LOMBARDI

Please, please, June, do not try
to reduce all this to something
tangible. This is about creating
and maintaining an atmosphere.
Fashion is about bringing the entire
world to that five seconds before
you come and leaving it there.

JUNE

Oh.

WARD

How 'bout it? What exactly is "The
Lombardi," Lombardi? I know the "all-
media unveiling" is not until
tomorrow, but...

LOMBARDI

You're right, Ward. It's about time
you be let in on my little secret.

Lombardi opens his palm, beholding two light-blue pills. June
and Ward tentatively pinch them up.

JUNE

I forgot what the latest rumor is...

WARD

Well, my sources still say it's
either a designer drug or a cure
for AIDS. Now Lombardi, I stopped
doing drugs and miraculously enough
I am without a virus, so...

LOMBARDI

It is not a designer drug. It is
not a cure for AIDS. It is something
much more exciting.

June and Ward plant the pill in their mouth. Amusing expressions
of confusion and freaked familiarity pass across their faces--
followed by the sight of each of them blowing a bubblegum
bubble.

LOMBARDI

The Lombardi is a Diet Bubblegum
Breath Mint and it will be hitting
stores late next week. Let me
explain. You see, for the Lombardi,
I wanted to create an atmosphere
of controversial significance and
dangerous innocence. The
conflicting rumors of notorious
drugs and cures, along with the use
of a mysterious under-underage
SpokesNymph, seem to have created
the desired mood, do you not agree?
And the whole custody thing--
delicious.

Lombardi takes another superior gander over the mass of
partiers.

LOMBARDI

Lull the people into thinking they
are getting something revolutionary,
something that will change their
lives, then turn around and give
them...whatever. Jeans,
perfume...gum. Have fun tonight.
I'll check back with you later...

Lombardi whisks himself away, leaving June blown away and Ward
just blowing.

JUNE

Can you believe--all this...for this?

WARD

For the money he's shelling out,
I be-lieve. What's wrong with gum?
I like gum. Gum is good.

Rising, June spits out hers. She and Ward drift together through the revelry. They eye a pack of Human Vultures clustering around H, camouflaging her from their view.

JUNE

Are we horrible parents--getting
H involved in all this insanity?

WARD

You've been talking to Jacobs too much...

JUNE

Lions eat their young. But nobody's a bad parent the way a human is a bad parent. "Act like a Lady."
"You're embarrassing me." "Why can't you be more like what I want you to be?" A squirrel would never say that shit.

WARD

Squirrels? You're losing me, June.

JUNE

We named our daughter, "H." What a dumb name...

WARD

Come on, it's a cool name.

JUNE

Dumb name. What does it stand for?

WARD

I don't know...Hydrogen?

June involuntarily laughs out loud, marveling at the absurdity of the man next to her.

JUNE

We were married...

WARD

(smiling)

Sure was.

June and Ward come upon a perversely grand stack of wrapped gifts on a cordoned-off table. Bookending the gifts are two obviously wrapped Honda scooters.

JUNE

Scooter?

WARD

Red?

(sad chuckle)

Too bad one of us is getting an unhappy ending tonight.

JUNE

Don't be too rough on yourself. You did the best you could...you do understand, with Jacob on my side...

WARD

(smooth taunt)

Really. And just where is your resident cool guy? Heard he's brooding around with a barely socially acceptable growth on his face.

JUNE

Jacob is...we all have our crises of conscience in this business...

WARD

Speak for yourself. Oh, but I wouldn't worry--I'm sure you'll be able to sign E on the strength of your own "extraordinarily complex primary group relationship"--I wouldn't worry.

JUNE

(sudden smile)

I won't.

Through the ex-couple's POV, an impeccably groomed Jake makes a traditionally magnificent entrance into the club, contract tucked under his arm. The viewer races to him.

Jake moves through the crowd with woozy determination. He weaves beside Tabitha and an unfamiliarly unmasked Sabrina.

SABRINA

Hey, Jake.

JAKE

Sabrina...I didn't recognize you with your face on.

Jake's attention is severely distracted by a shocking naked spine in a backless dress--poking out from the crowd. The nude back turns around. It is H, laughing with adorable abandon. She swerves for some dramatic eye contract.

They immediately float toward each other. H is glowing. Jake half-nervously half-smiles, a little freaked by the undeniable magnetism of it all. Then suddenly, Lombardi is seen cutting off H. As Ward blockades Jake.

WARD

Jacobs. Welcome back to the world. Really. I'm not a fool. No matter what I do for H, no matter how many presents I bring H, H is going to sign with you and June because of you. The key letter in all this is "U".

JAKE

Can we talk about this later?

WARD

There is no later. I've got like no seconds on the shot clock. But I've got a great last play.
(snapping fingers)
Dominique!

Dominique rushes forward with a black portfolio case. The viewer's viewpoint glides by her. Like the Pope offering communion, Lombardi lifts an ornate key before H's widening eyes.

LOMBARDI

A key. To my heart. To my soul. And most importantly, to my VIP room. An honor bestowed to no one--except my janitor. And now you. Rendezvous in 22 minutes.

Lombardi presses the key into H's palm. He gives her a sickly smooch before heading off, passing Ward and Jake. Dominique flips open the black portfolio, revealing impressively professional drawings of a building-front with a suave sign reading JAKE'S, as well as chic interiors.

WARD

Your own agency, babe. I've already lined up an army of Thai investors to pony up the start-up funds.

DOMINIQUE

This is your chance to personally change the face of fashion.

WARD

Just think, you as the head of
Lear's sister agency. H will of
course go to the main office with
me, but...

JAKE

You guys did a lot of work here,
but you don't get it, I...

A somewhat familiar crashing noise is heard. Jake and Ward and everyone else pivot around to see a cackling Nicole Kimberly tripping up a WAITER into a painful bellyflop. Nicole has completely re-metamorphosed herself back into being a glamorous icon of unstained beauty.

WARD

Is there anything more terrifying
than a girl who's been told all her
life that she's cute when she's
drunk?

Jake uses Ward's discomfiture as an opportunity to escape. Jake 360's about trying to scope H. She appears.

H

Come here often...

JAKE

H. Happy Birthday.

H

(raising up the key)
I hope so. Come on...

NICOLE

shoves an exasperated, I-don't-get-paid-enough SECURITY GUARD backward. She stands starkly raising her arms as if part of some tribal ritual. The crowd warily circles her in fear and wonder, treating her like the mother-ship in Close Encounters. Cameras start to flash.

DJ

A fugitive from the law is in the
house!

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

The foreboding fortresslike door of the VIP room sesames open. A coolly deep-agenda Jake and a girlishly giddy H bound into the unsettling quiet of the den of stylishly sterile iniquity.

H

The VIP room of Decadence Candy,
can you believe it? This so rocks.
(more)

H (Cont'd)

Wasn't it awesome? The way we looked over at each other. I mean, you gotta admit. The way we were separated by people we didn't want to talk to and now...Classic.

JAKE

Anytime anything happened we used to talk. Now everything's happened and we...

H

I know, I've missed you. These past weeks, they've been pretty incredible-- but without my best friend to share them with...

H drifts to Jake with longing.

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

Annette excitedly whinnies into June's welcome ear.

ANNETTE

And he's in there with H now!

JUNE

I knew Jake would come through.

(pointing)

Look at her go.

Before them, Nicole Kimberly is seen batting a camera out of the hand of a poor SHUTTERBUG. It shatters into a pillar. She snares the camera of another PHOTOGRAPHER, pummels him in the stomach, then shoves the long-lens weapon into the guy's pants. She presses a button causing it to machine-gun snap an infinity of pictures.

As she skips ahead, the viewer's viewpoint zeroes in on her waist...specifically to the opening scene's super-suave, silver, ultra-tech gun, which ever-so-slightly pokes from her beltline.

INT. THE CHAMBER--NIGHT

Jake matadors out of H's amorous path. She slowly slides on her stomach upon a couch before the window to profile her astonishing bare-back. She kicks off her shoes with childish would-be allure. Connoisseur Jake can't help but take a slow-motion Terminator glance across her supple spine.

H

Aren't you supposed to spank me?
Fifteen times, with a pinch to grow
an inch? Lombardi won't be coming
back up here for a...

JAKE

What are you doing? Why do you want me to kill a friendship that's practically as old as you are just because you put on some warpaint and brought yourself up to code...

H

(flicker of seriousness)
Did you ever think not being intimate is what is ruining the friendship?

(back to light charm)

Grant me that I'm not your usual jailbait. Malls depress me and Melrose Place is an enigma I have no intention of unraveling. My God, an actual smile from you...

H arcs from the couch. A sobering Jake recoils, the contract slides from his armpit, thudding to the floor. Spell broken, H clumps up the document.

H

Oh, goody gumdrops, the Holy contract. Guess we better put this baby to bed before the evening gets too tense...Gotta pen?

Jake tosses her a beautiful silver pen. She catches it and clicks it into writing mode.

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

A freaked Team of Security Guards point out a gallivanting Nicole to an incoming pair of POLICE OFFICERS.

The E-channelesque Camera crew corners Nicole. The Giddy Entertainment Reporter pokes out her microphone.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

The biggest surprise guest at H Lear's birthday bash has got to be supermodel-slash-criminal Nicole Kimberly, or Nikki Kim, as she is known to "insid..." Oh Nicole, can we ask you a couple questions...

NICOLE

Oh, okay, but I get to crush your skull with that cheesy microphone first. Deal?

Nicole tears the microphone from the shocked and confused reporter and slams her across the face with it. Security people bash through the crowd and begin wrestling with Nicole.

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

Oblivious to the commotion through the glass behind her, H slouches herself upon the couch, squinting at the contract. Jake is curled in a corner away from the two-way mirror.

H
Let's see here. Blah-Blah. Blah-blah. Oh, and Blah-blah. I'm telling you, this goddamn...

JAKE
Don't. Don't say "this goddamn business." Stop pretending you're not human. You're not a model, H. You're the real thing...

H
Geez Jake-Jake, don't start that again...Besides, it's too late. I'm a client. Watch.
(scribbling)
Hey, this pen doesn't write...

JAKE
I know. And it's not too late. Modeling diminishes you--not every girl--but definitely you. You're in way under your head, H. And are you really having so much fun? Lombardi is getting weird on you, isn't he? Touching at you, peeking at you, whispering things in...

H
Shut up, he's a genius! And you're an asshole! Give me a pen!

H scribbles the non-pen frantically then flings it.

H
No! Don't do this, Jake-Jake. Just let it happen. I knew it was going too good coming in here...No speeches!

JAKE
Fashion and modeling, magazine covers and movie stars--it used to be this silly fantasy realm off to the side of reality. Now it's reality that's off to the side. God isn't Dead. He's masturbating.

H
Are you deaf? I don't want your speeches.

JAKE

That was your speech. The Old H.
Two months ago.

H

So what? Who would you rather be
stranded on a desert island with?
Old H or new H. Be Honest.

H begins humming the Final Jeopardy Answer-writing music.

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

Dawn Webster slinks from the elevator in black. Hard to believe
it is the same gushing, wide-eyed girl who had emerged from the
elevator weeks before. A Handsome Jerk huffs up.

HANDSOME JERK

Hi, you're Dawn Webster, right? Tell
me, would you find it sexist if I
called you an extremely desirable
young woman?

DAWN

No.

HANDSOME JERK

That's so great to hear, I find that
so many girls....

DAWN

("You don't get it")
No...I won't fuck you.

The Handsome Jerk is left in flames as Dawn stares out to see
Nicole being manhandled into submission by cops and security
guards. A childlike quiver of sadness breaks across her face.

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

Jake smolders out from the dark corner of the VIP room,
eventually taking an intimidating position on the couch.

JAKE

I'll take Old H. 365-24-7-E-T-C
Period.

H

Bullshit. I've seen the girls who
you have sex with. Why do you have
to use me to make some statement?
Why can't you treat me normal?

JAKE

If you were normal, I wouldn't be
here. I wouldn't give a damn.
(more)

JAKE (Cont'd)

I'd be happy for you-- "Ooh, you're a model! You were on TV! You snorted smack with who outside of where at what party?" You're more than that. You have a mind that's meant to do things never done before. You're the most extraordinary young girl...

H

Stop it! I don't want to be any of those things anymore--
 "Extraordinary" "Young" or "Girl!"
 "Extraordinary" is worthless. It's lonely. It just gives you all these thoughts you can't do anything about and everyone thinks you're weird and you just end up putting a suicide note in an envelope with some guy's name on it. I know the game now and I know how to win. I want to be lovely and liked. I want women to be jealous of me and men to stutter in my presence. Being smart and "brilliant" and extraordinary is for losers! Figuring out why everything is wrong in the world is horrible! It's boring! Being interesting is boring!

JAKE

(tenderly calming her)

Shh, H, it's okay. No speeches..

Seemingly exhausted, H gently crushes her skull against Jake's chest. In a lithe ballet move, she swings herself around into a complete straddle of the disarmed Jake.

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

Nicole savagely breaks from the security force. She tears forth her omnipotent weapon from the opening shoot and fires twice into the air. All the shiny, happy people of the party hit the deck in terror.

With stoneface elegance, and with the help of pinpoint laser-sighting, Nicole fires to the DJ's turntable, completely killing the music. Uncool shrieking is the only sound filling the air.

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

Breathlessly unaware of the inaudible fireworks going on outside, H lightnings forward her face for a jarring French kiss. No, Jake does not break off the kiss yet. Now he breaks off the kiss.

He forcefully but not violently twists H's body off him. He bolts up, spinning his back against the two-way mirror so only the viewer can take in the psycho-panorama. Going completely zen, Jake murmurs down to H, who is skulking on the couch, suddenly feeling very uncomfortable in her sexy dress.

JAKE

I'm not your man, H. I'm your Family. There's no way you can tell me I'm not your family, because, with your parents, there's no way for you to know what a family is...

H

Don't talk like this! You're spoiling everything! Last thing I need is more family...

JAKE

You don't need a lover, H. You need love. I love you.

(sad laugh)

All my life I used "I love you" as a strategic lie to have sex, now it's a truth I'm using not to have it.

H

I am so happy I've given you this..this...breakthrough! That I'm this life lesson you've learned!

JAKE

You're angry that I care for you? That I want to protect you..?

H

I can hire people to do that shit! I don't want to be pro-tec-ted! I want to be touched. I'm beautiful. Ask anyone! Lombardi, Woman's Wear Daily, the Mayor-- they all say I'm gorgeous. You must fuck me. That's the way it works. Without the Fuck, my feelings don't count. They're a crush. They're an infatuation. The Fuck is the currency of choice on this planet. The Fuck is the mode of exchange. It all comes down to the Fuck! I'm the Lombardi Girl, you must fu--

Jake swooshes down next to H on the couch to put his hand smoothly over her mouth. H's cool and corrosive front completely crumbles into the sobs of a child.

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

One of the Cops makes a charge toward her. Nicole effortlessly, almost without even looking, shoots the officer in the leg, sending him wailing to the ground.

With trench-warfare expertise, June crawls past the bodies of the quivering and crying ex-suave. She reaches Ward and Dominique who are flattened on their stomachs in dazed deadpan.

JUNE

What is she doing? You're her agent!
How can you just lie there?

WARD

You want her? She's yours. Dominique,
send the Pierce agency over the
paperwork...

Nearby, our familiar Young Apartment Models are huddled together beneath a table.

SABRINA

I'll never touch another drug again.
For a long while.

TABITHA

When we get home, Webster, your
Nikki Kim posters are coming off
the goddamn wall...

Touched by something deep inside, Dawn shimmies determinedly forward across the floor, away from her friends. She passes a bored Lombardi, yawning behind a pillar. He glances to the candy model of H doing a deadman's float in the runway of now melted ice cream. This causes him to take a familiar-style key from his jacket pocket and slink off.

NICOLE

zeros in on another attractive target: herself. She beholds the mirror on the wall ahead of her. She hoists up her mini-cannon and its laser wobbles up to Nicole's reflection. The red beam bounces all the way back to Nicole's smiling face.

INT. THE CHAMBER

The viewer tilts down from the sight of the red dot on the VIP room side of the two-way mirror to the battered and tranquil couple of Jake and H, entwined in each other's arms.

H

I don't know what I'm doing, what
I'm..

JAKE

You don't have to say anything...

H
I want to know...It's so easy to
give in. To everybody. To anybody.
Affection that's a lie feels a lot
better than cruelty and indifference
that's the truth.

JAKE
It may feel better, but it's not
better. You deserve more.

H
Who doesn't?
(a beat)
Thanks for being my whatever-you-
are.

JAKE
(rising)
Thank you for being my whatever-you-
are. I guess you know now, modeling
is not this big evil thing. When
it comes to things like "ex-ploi-
tat-ion," modeling agencies are
nothing-- nothing next to parents,
friends, and lovers...Damn.

Jake's finally focuses through the two-way mirror, to the mind-
boggling image of Nicole Kimberly pointing a red laser seemingly
right at him with 300 people cowering at her feat. Jake
immediately bolts.

H
What are you--Jake-Jake, don't go!
Not yet! Please...

H curls back into the couch with a return to weeping.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY

Dawn Webster starkly stands, commanding the whimpering crowd's
attention. Nicole immediately speeds her laser-sight trajectory
toward Dawn's pristine forehead.

DAWN
Please, Nicole Kimberly, ma'am..You
shouldn't..

NICOLE
Whee. It's the new me.

DAWN
I care about you so much. Back home,
you were like the Sun to me...every
(more)

DAWN (Cont'd)
 time I saw you in a magazine or on
 TV, you'd make me so happy because
 I wanted to feel as beautiful as
 you looked...

June and Ward exchange glances of "Is this for real? mirth."

INT. THE VIP ROOM

A hand softly caresses H's hair. Watering eyes closed, H aches back to receive sweet neck kisses.

H
 Oh, Jake...

The viewer's viewpoint inhales to reveal that H is not being comforted by Jake, but by reptile Lombardi. They twist for a real kiss.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Melting, Nicole lowers her gun before the maiden.

NICOLE
 What's your name, kid?

DAWN
 Dawn--Dawn Webster.

NICOLE
 Dawn Webster...I could really use
 a hug..

Dawn tenderly floats forward. Nicole head-butts her to the ground. Nicole aims down with her gun...but then swerves her attention to Jake, who stands unafraid before her.

JAKE
 Hello, Nicole.

NICOLE
 Oh, hi Jake!

Nicole whips up her gun toward Jake, but he pounds it out of her hand. He claws her by the hair and hurls her against a table. She crawls beneath the tablecloth. Everyone warily rises to see what happens next. Jake rips off the tablecloth. No one is there.

INT. THE CHAMBER

H opens her eyes to see she's kissing Richard III instead of Romeo. In gagging shock, she squirms from the ever-suave Lombardi and twists up off the couch.

H
What are you--

LOMBARDI
I apologize. It seemed as if you
wanted a friend.
(rising)
We've grown so close these past
weeks. I feel that I...

H
We should really get back to the
party...What the...

H takes her first panting glance through the glass to see the
sea of wailing and traumatized guests.

H
What's going on? Why is everyone
screaming and crying? This is my
birthday...

LOMBARDI
Oh, one of those supermannequins
went native. Forget about it. It's
boring.
(removing jacket)
I must say I'm surprising myself
right now...Like all great women,
you inspire male genius.

Lombardi pythons closer to a trembling H, leaning against a
wall, with comfortable prom date demeanor.

LOMBARDI
You want your first time to be
something special. It will be--

A single tear makes a pronounced trek down H's cheek. Lombardi
pokes out to it with his pinky, then gives the tear-clinging
pinky a spooky suck.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Nicole pops up from behind a table, holding in a body-racking
ream of laughter. Like a playful little girl who's devoured too
much salt water taffy, something is bulging in her mouth. She
pulls from her pocket an envelope marked JAKE and hands it to
him. He warily backs away from her, clutching it.

INT. VIP ROOM--DAY

Painfully trying to maintain pleasant demeanor, H does a deft
twist away from Lombardi to the door--it doesn't open. Like a
very well dressed heat-seeking missile, Lombardi moves
determinedly forward.

LOMBARDI

Is there something in the air tonight? Or is it just me?

H

It's just you.

LOMBARDI

Do not be glib! I expect nothing less of you, and nothing more, than perfection. I can understand you being intimidated by my affection. But stop being boring and get over here...

H

Did you ever think that maybe it's not the world that's boring, maybe it's just you...

LOMBARDI

Silence! You are my current feminine ideal. Bought and paid for. I determine how you are utilized--Do you have any idea how fortunate you are--a girl usually has to kneel before forty men before getting to me--

Lombardi makes a sweaty lunge and locks onto H's wrist. He pulls her back into his chest, vampire-gnawing her neck from behind.

H

Let go of me. Please, sir. Don't...You creepy..!

LOMBARDI

Oh H, you're so much more interesting as an image...

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Jake opens the envelope. The note inside reads: SAY "SAY CHEESE."

JAKE

Say Cheese.

Nicole smiles, revealing what is in her mouth. It is the red, palm-sized device that her Arms dealer boyfriend had been handling. A digital clock on the object in Nicole's mouth reads 00:19.. 00:18.. 00:17.. Everyone within seeing distance freaks back and races for cover. Everyone but Jake. He begins laughing. Nicole laughs, too, as much as she can.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM--FLASHBACK DAY

The viewer is taken to an unsettling flashback. A laughing Jake is leaned against the Pierce agency conference table, holding up a test shot photo of a Younger Nicole in a fur coat. Exactly as Dawn Webster did, a Younger Nicole sits before him, laughing away at the loss of her innocence.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

June and Ward exchange looks as Jake and Nicole continue to cackle. The digital clock reads 00:09..00:08..00:07..

A CLOCK IN THE CLUB

strikes midnight.

AT THE BAR

The earlier-seen Bored Model turns to her Jake-a-like boyfriend.

BORED MODEL
This place is dead.

THE DIGITAL CLOCK

on the device in Nicole's grin goes to 00:03..00:02..00:01..

AN EXPLOSION

is reflected in the pupils of Jake's eyes. His head violently recoils out of frame.

THE OUTSIDE WINDOWS

of Decadence Candy blow out in pieces.

THE TWO-WAY MIRROR

shatters into dust revealing the shockingly primal image of Demon Lombardi clawing and pawing Innocent H.

JAKE'S WATCH

cracks to a stop upon impact halting the path of the second hand.

THE HUNGRY CROWD BEHIND THE VELVET ROPES

is rained down upon by falling shards.

JUNE AND WARD

drop their jaws at the perfectly framed sight of their daughter being molested by the devil in the now-naked-to-the-public VIP room.

THE TABLE OF PRESENTS

gently ignites into flames. Openly losing it, the Clubgoers bound up from their cowering-on-the-floor positions into a wailing exodus into the jammed elevators and out the staircase doors.

DAWN

quivers up, completely disoriented. She sidesteps some moaning, crawling Partiers when all of sudden one of the light-blue glass Pill Mobiles cracks from its mooring above her and sails into a brutal crash upon her face, sending her down to the ground with a horrific howl.

H

runs into her mother's arms. June envelopes her body around her daughter, not breaking eye-contact from Lombardi.

LOMBARDI

sneers out from the remains of the VIP room, shaking his head at the flaming, smoking hole in the middle of his club. Cracking his neck, he then struts to the Spooky Androgynous Female Assistant who is hovered over the bleeding, screeching Dawn Webster, snapping Polaroids. Lombardi takes one from the Assistant with a "Good work" nod.

A waft of flamage lands upon Lombardi's shoulder setting his upper face and torso aflame. He roars to the ground, burning in anger. Custodian Charlie casually blasts him with a fire extinguisher. The Androgynous Assistants rush to his aid.

Custodian Charlie hooks the extinguisher to the side of his wheeled trashcan. With a ho-hum, "just doing my job" non-expression, he pushes his can through the pandemonium of fleeing people; picking up debris, emptying ashtrays, folding up tablecloths, as if it were the aftermath of a Bingo game.

Charlie chugs past a table upon which is the tangled, prostrate figure of Jake Jacobs. The viewer's viewpoint rises above him and the rest of the remains of an unforgettable evening.

JAKE (V.O.)

Trust me. It's a happy ending.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET--BEAUTIFUL DAY

In vague slow-motion, Jake smoothly grooves through New York pedestrian traffic, looking the epitome of cool in his remarkable sunglasses. He passes AN IDLE CABBIE leaning against his vehicle, reading WITH A BANG: THE NICOLE KIMBERLY STORY while chowing down a chili dog.

JAKE (V.O.)

Nicole Kimberly got the tragic demise H so desperately desired for herself. I suppose it's sad, but I had never seen Nikki as happy as she was that night at Decadence Candy. My doctors are quick to point out that her explosion did not do me a whole heck of a lot of good...

The viewer's viewpoint inhales a bit to reveal that Jake is using a red cane. Not without charisma, he is without sight. Smiling, he turns into a building front with a sign reading JAKE'S

JAKE (V.O.)

But I would disagree. Sure, I lost some capabilities. But I gained some others. I started an agency. Not the one Ward Lear planned for me. Not one anyone would have planned for me.

INT. JAKE'S OFFICE

Still in his now-very-purposeful sunglasses, Jake comfortably sits behind an unpretentious desk. He is talking to a LARGE, HIGHLY UNMODELESQUE, 34 YEAR OLD WOMAN with a very friendly but not unfascinating look to her.

JAKE (V.O.)

My agency has no height requirements, no weight requirements, no requirements period. I sign my clients by talking to them, not looking at them. It's not like being blown up by my ex-girlfriend has given me the ability to see into people's souls. But it's close.

The viewer glides past a haphazard COLLAGE of advertisements involving a myriad of delightfully unfashionable MEN AND WOMAN of every race and shape. As Jake continues, the Highly Unmodelesque Woman is replaced in the chair by a rapid-fire montage of WIDELY VARYING, STRANGELY COMPELLING, DECIDEDLY UNGLOSSY AND IMPERFECT HUMANS.

JAKE (V.O.)

Using people to sell things and communicate things on the basis of something other than their personal appearance--Of course, it's a gimmick. But as gimmicks go, it's a good one. The agency is doing phenomenal business.

(more)

JAKE (Cont'd)

I may be out of on the street by the end of next month--but at least I've met some pretty incredible people.

The final personage to flash into the seat is H Lear. She has retreated from her over-made-up look to something much more natural-- the happy medium between her model self and her actual-self. As she speaks, she mischievously moves Jake's coffee cup.

H

If it's between that and the Clark's macaroni and cheese commercial-- forget it. You don't understand, I love Clark's macaroni and cheese. Love. You can make it yourself, takes like ten minutes--I mean, I could eat a bathtub of it...

JAKE

Okay that settles it. I'll make the deal, they're dickening us around on a couple points, but it'll happen.. It's a good gig for you. That spot will run forever. With the Residuals alone, we can sweeten your college fund and cut a nice check to that Animal Rights foundation. I'll get the Clark's people to kick a lifetime supply clause into the contract.

H

Yum!

Jake reaches for his coffee cup. It's not where it was. He and H laugh, the latter pushing it back into place. The viewer does a sharp pan to the familiar face of June Pierce slouched in a chair against the wall in uncharacteristic street clothes.

JUNE

You know if you let her work more than twice a month, she could build a college, not just a college fund. Now there's an Australian consortium who want to H to market their new cosmetics line around the world. And they pay money, not macaroni...

JAKE

I'd expect such advice from June Pierce, head of the Pierce modeling agency.

(more)

JAKE (Cont'd)

But you see, I've talked to her mother, coincidentally also named June Pierce. She seems to think her child should have a childhood.

JUNE

(high irony)

Yeah, I seem to remember her saying that. Woman's a fucking idiot. Lets her kid walk all over her...

H

You're not funny.

JUNE

I'm a little funny.

Mother and daughter smile at each other.

INT. WARD'S PLACE--DAY

Ward lies on his back on a leather couch, speaking into the air as if talking to a psychiatrist. The viewer gets some Jake voice-over before listening in...

JAKE (V.O.)

June Pierce realized it took as much time and mental effort to be a bad critical parent as it does to be a good forgiving one, so why not be a good one for a while. And then there's Ward Lear...

WARD

..and I can't get that night at Decadence Candy out of my head. It's just...it's just...I don't understand why everything can't be...sexy...

(wistful look)

Nicole Kimberly...I never fucked her. You think you're going to have time to give your love to everyone, but...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

How is your daughter?

WARD

Oh, she's great. Our relationship is kind of screwed...but she's great. That's what matters, right?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Ward, I don't wanna play the psychiatrist game anymore.

WARD
That's okay, honey.

A swerve of the viewer's viewpoint reveals the off-screen voice belongs to YET ANOTHER YOUNG BEAUTY ONLY WEARING YET ANOTHER ONE OF WARD'S DRESS SHIRTS. Ward does a he-man float from the couch and plants a kiss on his baby's lips.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF "JAKE'S"--DAY

Jake and H emerge from "Jake's." Taking him by the hand, H leads Jake smoothly into the flowing thoroughfare. They pass the city's new building-size mural. It is of Dawn Webster, a light blue bubble in her mouth, severe but artful red slashes upon her cheeks. LOMBARDI--THE GUM OF THE NINETIES is printed towards the bottom.

JAKE (V.O.)
Oh. Lombardi found himself a Lombardi girl. Set himself a sales record. I guess you could say Dawn Webster was at the right face at the right time. I try not to think too much about it.

EXT. BENEATH THE MURAL--DAY

Lombardi's Spooky Male and Female Androgynous Assistants snap Polaroids of the mural above. They hand the pictures into a limousine.

INT. LIMOUSINE--DAY

A shriveled hand takes the pictures. Lombardi is revealed, his face and neck burnt and broiled in a way that is painful to look at. Resting her head against his shoulder is the facially cut-up Dawn Webster. Both mutants stare directly at the viewer. And yawn.

EXT. THE MANHATTAN STREET--DAY

Shaded Jake breaks from intense concentration, turning to the sound of a revving motor. H is tugging on a helmet and hopping onto a red scooter. As she rides away, shouting goodbye, Jake untangles his red cane and taps down the pavement with a growing smile.

JAKE
Lombardi's game of "The person who cares the least the first wins" is one I can no longer play. I think I've finally lost my Cool. What Nicole always wanted. Go ahead and call me boring, just don't call me bored.

(more)

JAKE (Cont'd)

My friend H Lear would have made a pretty good tragic heroine, but she got away. Maybe she's the start of a trend. Maybe the world is about to evolve into a place where the girls get to do what they really want. But then again, maybe I'm just blind--

Jake's narration cuts off and the soundtrack music changes as the sightless Jake bumps into THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LITTLE GIRL IN THE WORLD. Cane clacking to the ground, Jake shivers as the sunny Girl passes, holding the hand of HER MOTHER. The viewer abandons our heroically deluded protagonist and stays with the adorable girl, heading into a door which is marked DOCTOR HERBERT WEST.

INT. THE DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM--DAY

The most beautiful little Girl in the world and her mother enter into a crowded waiting room. A MYRIAD OF YOUNG MODELS OF DIFFERING RACE AND HAIR COLOR drift by, holding big pieces of bloodied gauze to their faces.

On the waiting room table are various familiar fashion magazines. All the cover girls have a quirky form of facial disfigurement. A Time magazine cover captioned THE LOOK OF THE NOW shows Dawn Webster in her giddy scarred glory. The most beautiful little Girl in the world and her mother pass through.

INT. THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE--DAY

A door swings open to reveal a POV of a starkly lit doctor's office with a luxurious chair in the middle of it. The most beautiful little Girl in the world pops herself into the chair with a beaming expression.

A DOCTOR moves behind and opens out a straight razor. He delicately holds back the head of the Girl and raises the razor to her cheek. The Most Beautiful Little Girl in the World smiles as the film fades to black.