

THE MODEL DAUGHTER

BY

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(ARM)STRONGER DRAFT ONE

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EXT. A BEACH THAT COULD BE ANYWHERE--DAY

One of the more beautiful faces in the world is giggling madly against a perfect sky. The face can not stop laughing. A quite unamused CAMERA CREW is revealed to be deadpan-staring at the sight of a GIGGLING MODEL, in a quasi-Botticelli stance upon a beach, wearing nothing but strategically wired seashells.

Seen only from the back, a DASHING MALE FIGURE in Prada black, cuts across the sand and whispers into the Giggling Model's ear. She instantly stops laughing with a chastised murmur.

(THE FORMERLY) GIGGLING MODEL
Sorry Jake...sorry people.

As the camera crew rouses back to life in the background, JACOB JACOBS struts away wearing devastating sunglasses and a barely perceptible smile.

JAKE (V.O.)
Are you wondering what I whispered
to her? Good. I'd hate to think just
anyone could do my job.

Jake continues his casual journey through what turns out to be a deliriously monumental supershoot--cluster upon cluster of POSE-STRIKING MODEL-AGE being shot by PHOTOGRAPHERS in turn being shot by VIDEO CREWS.

JAKE (V.O.)
It is quite a riveting story of how
a daydreaming Midwestern lad like
me, Jacob Jacobs, became the vice-
president of a major modeling
agency. But this is not that story.
This is the story after that story--
hold on...

Jake glances down to his watch. IT POSSESSES ONLY A TICKING SECOND HAND. Jake then flaps through a mammoth open air tent.

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. Reacting to the entering Jake, a pair of 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.

WHITE TOPLESS MODEL
 Barcelona was a sick joke, Jake.
 I was promised a "closed set" and
 they practically set up bleachers.
 Every politician in Spain was there--
 with me naked on neon crucifix.

JAKE
 We discussed this. I got those Iced
 Tea people to cough up another seven
 grand.

WHITE TOPLESS MODEL
 Oh, 7,000 dollars is supposed to
 buy my pride?

JAKE
 (charming asshole)
 Yes. Industry standard. And it's
 not like you can't re-sell it.

The models chuckle in spite of themselves as Jake burrows
 further into tent activity. He plucks away a glass of champagne
 from a SIPPING-WHILE-DRESSING MODEL.

JAKE
 How many days in a row did you say?

SIPPING-WHILE-DRESSING MODEL
 Come aw-wn, Jake, since when does
 champagne count...

PASSING MODEL IN BATHING CAP
 Oh Jake, I got you. You have 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.

Jake downs the confiscated champagne and flaps out the back of
 the tent.

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

Jake glides from the tent past a line of STYLISTS methodically
 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.

JAKE (V.O.)

I know what you're thinking--nice work if you can get it. But let me tell you something, when your fantasy becomes your reality, it completely fucks up your radar of what is real. My problem was that I didn't realize that was a problem...Hold on, this is my boss; June Pierce herself.

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. They weave together through the insanity on the sand.

JUNE

There you are...I'm telling you, Jacob, this goddamn business...look at all this--News crews shooting other news crews shooting 12 photographers shooting 21 girls in one goddamn weekend to create one goddamn calendar-- What country are we in again?

JAKE

Intense heat. Unstable government. I think it's California. Yo do remember this calendar shoot is a charity event for the touching cause of...

JUNE

(smiling)

Shut up, bitch. So 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. She needs to know...

JAKE (V.O.)

She's not going to stop talking. It's okay, I think I've said enough about myself already. You see, this is not just a story of "I"--it is a story of "H."

June's facially pierced assistant Annette (in a Pierce agency T-shirt) suddenly blockades them, holding up a cellular phone.

ASSISTANT ANNETTE

Ms. Pierce. It's H.

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

Flowing through the skyscrapers of the dark and rainy kingdom of Manhattan, a raggedy princess emerges onto a penthouse terrace, holding a cordless phone of her own, her hand covered in blood.

She is H LEAR, a gangly, 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 princess costume with the big H pin.

H

Hi, Mom.

EXT. THE BEACH--SUNNY DAY

June puts her best put-upon face into the phone.

JUNE

H. What? That is to say, why..are you calling me here?

MINDY (O.S.)

Jacob Jacobs? Hey, Jake!

A guilelessly perky and wavy-haired wonder, MINDY, waves away in a ripped LEAR T-shirt and little else. She is holding a baby. June chests her phone.

JUNE

Oh, don't even think about going near that Judas cooze.

JAKE

(cheerful depart)

Fuck off, June.

JUNE

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

(back to phone)

Yes, H, you were saying? That is to say, you were not saying? Hurry, I'm in the middle of something...

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

Crashed on her back atop a terrace ledge, stoically battered by nightfall raindrops, H ignores her mother's attitude.

H

I'm just super. Sweet of you to ask. Really. Listen June, I know you're not on duty until tomorrow, but I was hoping to get some parenting in advance.

(more)

H (Cont'd)
I promise I'll take the time out
of your upcoming custody week...

EXT. THE BEACH--SUNNY DAY

Jake and Lear model Mindy give a glance toward surly June.

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 whore.
(re baby)
Yours?

MINDY
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?

June passes before them with a cross-country groan.

JUNE
Oh Christ, H, you're above this...

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

H goes into an amusingly eerie voice.

H
N-o, I'm n-o-t.
(normal voice)
I'm not above this. I'm an almost
fourteen year old who wants her Mom
to see her cruddy little school
play.
(to bloody hand)
That's not the reason I'm calling...

EXT. JUNE ON THE BEACH--SUNNY DAY

futilely looks around for an escape from the conversation.

JUNE

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

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

H rockets up into a smoldering sitting position.

H

Just give the phone to Jake-Jake.

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

Furious and chastened, June holds the phone away from her in seething silence. Jake immediately breaks from Mindy and reaches out for the phone.

All of a sudden, a CAR ON THE STREET above the beach erupts with a loud explosion, causing Jake and June to cower. The phone thuds into the sand.

EXT. STREET ABOVE THE BEACH

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

GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER

Very good beginning, no?

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

Coughing smoke, Jake and June shudder and straighten. Jake clings up the cellular.

JUNE

God, I hate that Gestapo bastard.
And I hate your watch. Just a second hand? Je ne 'get it' pas.

JAKE

(into phone)
H...H..lost the connection.

JUNE

Don't worry about it. You do know Nicole Kimberly's here, right? You do recall the name--famous supermannequin, your ex-girlfriend...

JAKE

(not favorite subject)
She'll never come back to Pierce, June.

JUNE

Just look in on her. I hear she's unhappy with Lear. You broke up with her, right?

(looking off)

Oh wundebar, 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 magnetic-to-the-edge-of-sleazy Agency Emperor WARD LEAR along with the Lear's bespectacled, Asian, female counterpart to Jake, DOMINIQUE.

WARD

So anyway, 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

This goddamn business, Domininque, I don't know why I don't just...Oh yeah, now I remember...

Ward heartily pauses to inhale the beach constellation of bodies, cameras, and teeth. He bounds downward.

EXT. BEACH--DAY

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

FLAMBOYANT PHOTOGRAPHER

Come on girls, let there be life!
Or even death! Energy! Not that kind!
I wanna be traumatized! Yes! 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 darlin',
yours is Genius...

Ward trudges off. A pretty TEENYBOPPER MODEL, changing out of an outfit behind a held-by-Assistant blanket, giddily waves from a distance. Ward big-bad-wolfs toward her. Ward's MALE SECRETARY in leather pants and a Lear agency T-shirt brutally cuts into his boss's path, holding up a cellular phone.

MALE SECRETARY

Mr. Lear. It's H.

Ward shakes off the interruption like a splash of cold water then swipes the phone with forced mirth.

WARD

H, what's going on, you rascal, you
trashing my place or what...

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

H paces the slippery ledge with her cordless phone.

H

Da-a-d. Dominique says someone will
be "putting me on tape" for the play
tonight. Video, father? Um, cliché
alert...

EXT. THE BEACH--SUNNY DAY

With intentionally-comically-lustful facial gestures, Ward continues his slither toward the changing Teenybopper Model, while working the phone.

WARD

Hey, hey, I'm sending two assistants
and two cameras, that means two
angles to be watched on two screens--
eh, eh?-- Try to tell me that's a
cliché...

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

H hops from the ledge to the terrace with a cackle.

H

All right, all right, it's not a
cliché. It's something very scary,
but it's not a cliché...Why can't
I get mad at you?

EXT. THE BEACH--SUNNY DAY

Ward detours before a buffet table to scarf a little caviar.

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

The viewer's viewpoint slides down the table to where a cute and nervous model, MARCIE, meticulously arranges a sparse lunch upon her paper plate. Seeing June Pierce stomp up, she wings her 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

moodily watches Marcie sadly rumble from the table. He takes off his sunglasses--rubs his eyes--puts them back on. His attention glides to Ward on the cellular.

WARD

breaks from the buffet table, narrowing his eyes to the Changing Teenybopper Model. No more time for chit-chat.

WARD
Listen H, I got a situation here--
"Something important happened to
you?" Cool. Surprise me when I get
back.

Ward snaps shut the cellular and moves forward. June casually turns from the table, accidentally into his orbit. 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

Ward--good to see you spending some
tender quantity time with H...

WARD

Being called a bad parent by June
Pierce. That's rich. Kind of like
being called a racist by the KKK.

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." Those schools
are...

EXT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE TERRACE--RAINY NIGHT

H stares forlornly to the phone in her bloodied hand. She flings
it over the edge, blankly watching it plunge thirty stories.
The ringing of another phone beckons from inside the penthouse.
H turns and smiles.

INT. WARD'S PENTHOUSE--NIGHT

H sweeps in from the rain, all the way up to a gorgeous,
stationary phone next to a grand mirror. She picks up.

H

This better be you.

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

On a phone of his own, Jake has taken a comfortable sitting
position on the steps overlooking the beach. The German
Photographer and his Crew work intensely behind him.

JAKE

Yeah. It's me. Why do I have the
feeling you just threw another
cordless off the terrace? What's the
matter, H? You can't really be that
pissed off that we're not coming
to some school play.

INT. WARD'S PENTHOUSE--NIGHT

Neck-holding the phone, a blossoming H is taking pictures (with a very decent camera) of her crimson hand.

H

How do you know? Maybe I want to be that pissed off--Not that this show doesn't suck. I play a princess before she drinks the magic beauty potion. Then Sally Nelson takes over the part...You're telling me!

EXT. THE BEACH--DAY

Jake chuckles then stops. He looks out to June and Ward turning up the heat in their argument on the sand.

JAKE

What's really the matter, H? I figure for you to actually call June and Ward, you must have either lost your virginity or a major limb. Or both.

INT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE--NIGHT

H addresses her hand.

H

Bloody good guess, mate. First period. Ta da.

EXT. ABOVE THE BEACH--DAY

JAKE

Oh H, are you okay? That's so wonderful; I don't know what to--whoa, whoa, wait a minute, you got your period like two years ago!

INT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE--NIGHT

H

That was the summer where every thirteen year old girl on the Upper East side started bleeding except for me. I was forced to lie, okay? You wouldn't understand...I know, I know, two extra years of getting out of gym class. The guilt is overwhelming...

EXT. ABOVE THE BEACH--DAY

JAKE
I wish I could be there to celebrate
or whatever it is you gals...hold
on.

Jake swerves to the sight of a bitterly crying FEMALE MAKE-UP ARTIST storming out of a trailer door. One notices the nameplate on the door reads NICOLE KIMBERLY--that is until the angry make-up artist rips it off and throws it to the ground.

JAKE
H. Gotta go.

INT. MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE--NIGHT

Losing composure, very much revealing her age, H brays.

H
Wait!--Jake-Jake--Don't hang up!--
Please. Not yet.

Suddenly stiff, H places down the receiver. She aches over to the splendiferous nearby mirror.

H
Mirror, mirror, on the wall, when
a Little Mermaid gets her period,
where does she bleed and don't say
the sea. I am not living in a Dream
world, they are. My parents. My
lover. I am not living in a Dream
world, they are...

EXT. THE STREET--DAY

Exclamation pointing H's words, a Mass of Debris ignites into mighty flames while machines strategically churn additional smoke. The German Photographer turns to a BURLY ASSISTANT.

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

INT. THE STRANGE TRAILER--DAY

Holding a spectacularly ultra-tech, silver gun with laser-sighting, NICOLE KIMBERLY sits upon a Trailer stool. Her Intergalactic beauty barely disguises her melancholy, which says a lot about both. Stylishly done up to perfection, Nicole is wearing ornate earrings that also are working mini-clocks.

She flicks on the red beam of the laser sighting. Pointing the gun at herself, she runs its thin laser trajectory up into her eyes.

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? Ooh,
nice shot.

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
Did you see the little make-up
artiste I sent squealing out of
here? It was in her case. 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 the sense of humor. June ordered
you here, didn't she?

JAKE
Of course. To see if you'll come
back to the agency. I know
better...I know worse.

Nicole gives Jake a lazy glare, then focuses to the clip.

NICOLE
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--still so 70's--
doing drugs, dating international
arms dealers...

NICOLE

Hey--International Arms Dealer. One.
Didn't even last a month. And I'm
sorry, drugs are great. 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. It's
not like I gave you a disease...

JAKE

At least not one of the biggies.

NICOLE

Don't you ever get nostalgic? The
time we took that yummy Indian squaw
to the Royalton and paid her to--

JAKE

Nicole. Don't make me yawn again.

NICOLE

I'm not like you. I can't keep
readjusting to the ever-changing
definition of what's hot and not.

(mock-chirpy)

"Responsibility is 'IN'!"

(sudden fury)

I-swear-to-God-if-you-don't-take-
off-those-sunglasses-I'm-going-to--

A burst of sun cuts off the boiling-over Nicole. A BURLY
ASSISTANT floats into view from the opening front door.

BURLY ASSISTANT

Hurry. We're losing the light.

EXT. THE STREET--DAY

June and Ward emerge up the beach steps onto the street, still
gently snarling at each other.

JUNE

And you have her doing catalog
cattle calls...

WARD

June, you're not my partner, you're
not my wife, you're barely even my
competition, so I do not have to--

Scurrying up from opposite sides, the Assistants of both June and Ward breathlessly present their employers with an identical blue envelope. June and Ward squelch their bickering and snare them. Breaking away from each other, the agency heads each rip forth an oddly jagged piece of cardstock. June and Ward scowl in confusion, inadvertently drifting back toward each other.

It is soon apparent to them--and everyone else--that the unusually shaped cards are meant to fit together. With annoyed snorts, June yings, Ward yangs, and one perfect sheet is formed. The put-together puzzle reads MANHATTAN TOMORROW LOMBARDI.

WARD

Oh my God...

JUNE

Literally. Lombardi...

June and Ward whip away from each other again, hatching open their cellulars.

JUNE

Is the plane fueled--Listen,
closely, here's what's going to
happen...

WARD

I want the Lombardi file waiting
at the airport--latest designs,
scents, jewelry...

Discharging from the trailer between and behind June and Ward, Jake and Nicole (twirling her gun) stroll the gauntlet.

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?

JAKE

Nicole, I'm not just in this for the kicks. I take my job seriously and I'm comfortable with...

NICOLE

Oh Jake, one day you're gonna lose your capital-C-Cool. I wonder if I'll be there to see it.

At the end of the line 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. 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! Over the frozen image comes the voice of Lombardi.

LOMBARDI (V.O.)

Fashion is dead.

EXT./INT. UNNERVING MANHATTAN SKYRISE "OFFICE"--MORNING

Looking the way an intimidating fashion industry icon should, LOMBARDI turns from a majestic morning view of Manhattan. As he continues to hypnotically speak, Lombardi comes off a terrace into a room that is almost completely bare except for a handkerchief upon a pedestal...and the jet-lagged pair of June and Ward upon tall-back chairs.

LOMBARDI

I apologize. It is better to build to the operatic, than to begin there. June Pierce. Ward Lear. I trust your flight was horrible. You both look like hell. I appreciate that.

June and Ward try to rev up some ass-kissing energy.

JUNE

Mario gave me a glimpse of the new collection at the rehearsal last week. The show tomorrow is going to be absolutely...

WARD

Lombardi, I haven't seen my girls
this excited since your last show.
They think...

LOMBARDI

(Zeus-like cut-off)

As I was saying, fashion is dead.
I've run out of past 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.
Millennial. I call it...the
Lombardi.

Lombardi yanks the Lombardi-logoed handkerchief off the
pedestal, revealing a small, gleaming, robin-egg blue pill. June
and Ward rise from their chairs in awed confusion.

EXT. TORONTO, UM, MANHATTAN STREET--MORNING

In his element, Jake pounds Madison Avenue pavement, working
a cellular. As he speaks, he gives a sobered glance up to a
building-size mural of Nicole Kimberly.

JAKE

June, Ward, Lombardi, and nobody
else-- in one room--Are you
sure?...Man, this is major. How
long's June been in there...all
right, all right--I'll be doing the
Big-Apt.-thing. Over.

Snapping his phone, Jake 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)

Ooh, Cover Girl.

An EXTREMELY TOUGH DOORMAN opens the highly-secured, almost
vault-like front door for Jake.

EXTREMELY TOUGH DOORMAN

Hey, Jake.

INT. APARTMENT GROUND FLOOR--DAY

Like a casino pit boss, Jake works his way through a hallway of borderline-absurd male fantasy. YOUNG MODELETTES are tinkerbell-buzzing about in pajamas, sweats, and barely held-up towels. All acknowledge Jake, who scans to a pizza box in mock-fury.

JAKE

What's this? This had better belong to the Lear girls! Next time I see a pizza box in here, I'm dusting for prints.

A LATINA MODEL puts down a laundry basket and exaggeratedly holds out her bare arms to the passing, never-stopping Jake.

JAKE

Okay, okay, you don't do heroin!
You're not going to let me live that one down, are you?
(mischievous)
You could be snorting it...

LATINA MODEL

I can't afford to snort it.

Jake laughs, then effortlessly stabilizes a HOPPING MODEL, helping her tug on a heel before floating toward a dinging, opening elevator (Graffitied upon the door is PIERCE GIRLS EAT SHIT). An OVERDRESSED MODELETTE comes out of a nearby room.

JAKE

What are you, the assistant D.A.?

OVERDRESSED MODELETTE

I want to look nice for my shoot.
What's so...

JAKE

Approach the bench, counselor.

Jake tugs the Overdressed Modelette into the closing elevator.

INT. ANOTHER FLOOR OF THE APARTMENT--MORNING

The elevator opens on another floor (Graffitied upon the door is LEAR GIRLS EAT EVERYTHING). The Overdressed Modelette is no longer-- jacket has been torn off, shirt pulled out, hair messed up, wild belt action.

(THE FORMERLY) OVERDRESSED MODEL

Thanks, Jake.

Jake emerges forward, downright post-coital. A TOOTH-BRUSHING NYMPH gloms beside him.

TOOTH-BRUSHING NYMPH
Did you get my message...

JAKE
Yes, he just wants to fuck you.

TOOTH-BRUSHING NYMPH
Aww man, Jake, you say that about every guy I go out with...

Not stopping, Jake extends his hands for some playfully sarcastic "You're learning" applause. TABITHA, a still-young but more mature, African-American member of the profession, in a jean-blazer ensemble bobs from an apartment door, scribbling in a Filofax.

TABITHA
Thanks for coming.

JAKE
Hey Tabitha, so what's the emergency?

INT. LOMBARDI'S OFFICE--MORNING

June and Ward are pacing about the room. Lombardi is amused.

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-- "I have conquered the fashion world. With the Lombardi, I conquer the World world." You can't leave a statement like that just hanging in air...

LOMBARDI
I can not afford any leaks with a product of such poignant magnitude and potential controversy. 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. Discussion.

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

LOMBARDI

No "supermodels," please. They have 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 rubs his temples, getting serious. June and Ward stop pacing.

LOMBARDI

Everyone is beautiful in their own special way. Few are beautiful in my special way. The company that finds me my muse--and do not flatter yourself, the offer was put out an hour ago 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 have done innovative work. But it has got to be a struggle. It is not the eighties. I know you are both still paying off serious start-up debts. More than anybody, Pierce and Lear can not afford to lose me. It is simple.

(more)

LOMBARDI (Cont'd)

If one of you gets me and the other does not, that means one of you is at the top and one of you is on the street. You have 24 hours to find me the Lombardi Girl. About the time of tomorrow's show. This lifeboat seats one. Get Ugly. For me.

Lombardi enigmatically twists back out onto the terrace. A SPOOKY FEMALE ANDROGYNE ASSISTANT in a light blue jumper steps before the dazed June and Ward.

SPOOKY ASSISTANT

Over. Leave.

INT. THE YOUNG MODELS' APARTMENT--DAY

Tabitha wades Jake into a sweetly trashy utopia one would expect from three teenage girls living together without direct adult supervision. Dirty clothes and Chinese take-out strewn 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--Her plane got in at four this morning, she's been crying ever since...

JAKE

Not good.

An array of loud, screeching, whining thuds is heard from above. California Blonde SABRINA, crashed on the couch in a flannel nightgown with a horrifying pink facial mask on, pulls a retainer from her mouth and puts in a cigarette.

SABRINA

Ja-ake, will you tell that wackaroni super-ex-girlfriend of yours to cut it out! I'm not even joking, Nikki Kim moves furniture 24-7-365.

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.

(more)

TABITHA (Cont'd)

She gets back here and she's going through Go-See hell, right--40 Go-Sees without a nibble of a real booking...

SABRINA

..if you don't count some showroom work in Queens, and believe me, no one does. 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. He has his own limo...

TABITHA

(sneezing the word)

Slut...slut...

SABRINA

Please, 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. From Brenda to Chip. 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 insane, 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 yet. I never want to be ready--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 will take care of you. We would never...

The phone in Jake's chest rings. He backs from the bunk bed and answers it.

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE--DAY

Shedding her coat and tugging on a head-set, June strides into her magazine cover-covered office.

JUNE

Jacob, stop wiping sniffly noses and get the hell over here. Lombardi has issued a threat to all agencies and we have 24 hours to come up with the ransom--What do you think I mean? He wants a girl. The girl. The girl of the century, or at least the last ten minutes of it. I have two itty and bitty words for you: "Dangerous" and "Innocence."

EXT. OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT--MORNING

Jake retreats from the apartment, back through the traffic and into a cool trot upon the opposing sidewalk.

JAKE

A wee blue pill?--That's all you're going to tell me--What do you mean, that's all he told you--Got it, got it, "Dangerous Innocence."

Jake Ends the call and Sends another. H, in rag-tag wardrobe (including the previously seen tiara), grins, pushing up her glasses, bounding surreptitiously behind Jake (A Versace tie blows evocatively over his shoulder).

Jake pockets his phone and blinks his concentration 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 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

Okay, 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. Why do you care so much for that tribe of women? They're so stupid and I don't mean Dope-Fresh.

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
(squinting to 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. She latches onto his watch.

H
Oh my god, a watch with just a ticking second hand. What an awesome comment on the meaninglessness of time itself.

JAKE
(warmly)
Finally. I knew you would be the one to understand.

Jake touches out to her scary bangs, gliding them back with his hand. H softens. She, is for a moment, rather-somewhat-exquisite.

H
What?

JAKE
Nothing.

Grinning, 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.

INT. JUNE PIERCE'S OFFICE--DAY

June sighs to a monitor on her desk displaying the rude H image.

INT. THE BOOKER ROOM--DAY

Behind computers, 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!

ASSISTANT ANNETTE

Jake, your mother called.

JAKE

Oh man, she's actually coming to visit me soon...

ASSISTANT ANNETTE

Yesterday.

JAKE

Define yesterday--Don't--I can't deal right now. What's the worst new play in town?

ASSISTANT ANNETTE

Probably Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Celestine Prophecy--It's a big musical version of...

JAKE

Perfect. My mother will love it. I need tickets for her and my little brother. Thanks...

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE--DAY

Jake comfortably swings into June's pristine lair.

JAKE

H says Hello.

JUNE

I noticed--What is she doing..?

June watches through another monitor H doing an airplane-armed-run down another corridor.

JAKE

Leave her be. By the way, I have two itty and bitty words for you-- "Dawn" and "Webster."

JUNE

Dawn Webster as the Lombardi girl, Mr. Vice-President? I ask for a brainstorm and I get partly cloudy. Last week I told Dawn to do some tests in Lingerie and she went Farmer's Daughter on me: "I just Ca-an't."

JAKE

Tests schmests. Her book is already filling up with tear sheets. Dawn's dazzling 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. "Dangerous"-- Where?

JAKE

Let's find out. I just sent a car for her. She'll be here in less than an hour.

JUNE

Christ, I hate when designers inflict deadlines--So what's going on at the Big Apt.?

Jake sidles upon June's desk to help her toss photos and comp cards into two boxes labeled NO. 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. And send her home. Coach.
(to intercom)
Annette, we're starting the meeting. Interrupt when "Dawn Webster" arrives...

INT. THE CONFERENCE ROOM--LATER

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.

MALE EXEC LYLE

My Ex works over there and he says the Lombardi pill is a designer drug that makes Ecstasy look like a barbiturate...

OBESE MALE EXEC

I heard it was the other way around...

HOTSHOT FEMALE EXEC

On a good authority--The Lombardi pill is a diet pill that sheds two pounds a day.

JUNE

Children. Stop worrying "What?" Keep worrying "Who?"

OLDER MOTHERLY EXEC

Chloe Jetson is in Hell over at Click. She is absolutely dying to be poached. Lombardi will love her. She's such a sweetheart...

JAKE

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

OBESE MALE EXEC

(devouring pastrami)

Chloe is a big fat pig.

JUNE

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

HOTSHOT FEMALE EXEC

Rebecca's zeitgeisty on the inside, cute on the outside--She's Hanson without the three little penises. There's no one like her.

MALE EXEC LYLE

Thank God. I think we should send her 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

Nobody told me we're stamping the Virgin Julie's passport. 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 strange 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

Jacob here seems to think the little Dairy Queen is the perfect Lombardi Pill Girl.

OLDER MOTHERLY EXEC

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

JAKE

Lombardi wants unestablished. He wants Dewy. He wants Quivering.

JUNE

And he wants it tomorrow morning. I have to say I'm warming quite globally to this Dawn idea...

Jake looks out the window as June continues.

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 tonight and strike up a conversation about this year's crops...

OBESE EXEC
then just whip out your magic wand
and spread fairy dust all...

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? We...

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 '91,
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 (KIND OF O.S.)
 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 look on as an entering Jake effortlessly snaps the phone from the booker and takes control.

He peers around a corner to watch Dawn watching Jake.

JAKE
 Diandra, calm. It's okay. Everybody
 gets lost in the subway. Just not
 everyday--Read me a sign, girl.
 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 has always said 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
 yourself.

DAWN
 I know, 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? It'll just
 take a minute." Store stays closed.
 You do it. The doors magically
 open.

DAWN
 (relaxing)
 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 comp card...

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

JUNE
 It takes time, but Dawn's time is
 now. "Actually Pretty" is making
 a comeback in modeling. Shirley,
 I can tell you're worried. I'd be
 worried if you weren't worried. Your
 daughter's foot fits the glass
 slipper. She is entering a world
 beyond comprehension, so don't try
 to comprehend it. That's my advice
 not only as the head of a modeling
 agency, but as a mother...

The tiara-ed H vampirically rears up at the office window behind
 Mrs. Webster. She is intentionally/graphically picking her nose,
 pretending that the finger is completely stuck in there. June
 notices, gulping and gritting her teeth.

MRS. WEBSTER
 Oh Ms. Pierce, I had no idea you
 had children of your own...

JUNE
 Yes. I do. It's..special.

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.
 (more)

JAKE (Cont'd)

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 darn 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 dropped a bomb on our little world this morning. Every agency is in a frenzy over a single, secret project. I'm not going to get into it now, but it involves basically one letter-- (Yo)U.

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.

A GROUP OF MODELS

are waiting outside another agency office. H sternly approaches them, pulling forth an ink pad and a big stamp.

H

Excuse me, have you been branded?

WAITING MODEL ONE
Uh, no. What do you...

H
Oh, I am so sorry. We've been backed
up all morning. Raise your skirt,
please.

Very weirded-out, Waiting Model One raises her skirt. H stamps
the Pierce Agency Insignia on her thigh and moves to the next
girl.

JUNE'S OFFICE

June watches H "brand" another of the models in the distance.
She shudders, trying to focus on Mrs. Webster before her.

JUNE
As I was saying, that's why this
Lombardi project is so important--
which brings up the problem of
Dawn's bashfulness...

MRS. WEBSTER
Problem?

JUNE
Other agencies will give you a load
of malarkey of how they will protect
your child from all the unsavory
characters of this industry. At
Pierce, we say bull. We teach the
girls to protect themselves--to
build up a hard spiritual fiber
without extinguishing their inner
light.

MRS. WEBSTER
Oh, that's...good. And just what
is this Lombardi product again?

JUNE
Oh I'm sure it's something--what's
your daughter's word--"nifty."
(grimacing toward H)
Will you excuse me for an eensy
second?

H

aims the Pierce Agency stamp at a Quivering Model's forehead.
She pushes forward until she is wrenched away by her mother.

INT. AGENCY EXECUTIVE BATHROOM--DAY

June tears H into a shiny executive bathroom filled with
mirrors. Spooky Muzak pipes in from above.

JUNE
You're not funny.

H
I'm a little funny.

JUNE
Oh, I get it now. I treat my girls
like cattle, so...That is clever!

June swallows her mock-amusement into a stone expression. She plucks off H's tiara and flings it into a trashcan. H does not dare show concern or fear.

JUNE
Why aren't you in school?

H
I came here first, because I needed
help on my essay, Mommy. The topic's
"Unconditional Love."

JUNE
I'm not going to get into this. I
don't negotiate with terrorists.
You burrow around like a mole, being
all anti-everything. When you're
anti-everything, you're nothing.
And stop bothering Jake, we're under
deadline...

H
Don't you ever tell me how to behave
around Jake-Jake. He's the only one
who-- Man, you're too lame to
hate...

June claws out to H's shoulder and straight-arms her back
against a mirror.

JUNE
Here's what's going to happen.
You're going back to school. Then
you're going to your father's where
you will pack and be picked up to
be taken to me for the commencement
of my custody week. Like it or not,
this is your existence. I love you.
Goodbye.

June spins out the bathroom door. With a shiver, H turns her
cheek against the mirror.

H
Mirror, mirror, on the wall....

H's narration and the bizarrely affecting bathroom Muzak float beneath the following images...

INT. H'S SCHOOL--DAY

Still trembling a little, H gives a lost stare out a window. She is revealed to be sitting at the back of a classroom, surrounded by astronomically less mature peers.

H (V.O.)
My feelings of superiority no longer
make me feel superior.

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 plunks it into a wastebasket as if it were a dead rat.

INT. H'S BEDROOM (WARD'S PLACE)--DAY

H blows out a candle against which rests a happy snapshot of her and Jake. H closes up the candle and picture in what looks to be an altar.

H (V.O.)
I have performed strange rituals.
Made great sacrifices. My deepest
thoughts are brief condensation on
the occasional mirror. Yet where
is my reward...

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

INT. DAD'S PLACE--LATE AFTERNOON

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

INT. MOM'S PLACE--LATE AFTERNOON

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 BUSINESSMEN situated on chairs and couches.

INT. H'S BEDROOM AT MOM'S PLACE--LATE AFTERNOON

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.

H
I've kept my desires simple. Red
Honda Scooter. Some understanding
from my parents--how painful is that
to say out loud? And Jake-Jake. I
want everything from Jake-Jake. He
can have everything from me. Mirror,
mirror, on the wall, tell me the
next step...

H collapses upon her bed. She turns and unlocks Altar II
revealing a different photo of Jake and herself. She lights a
candle above the picture.

INT. SOHO LOFT--AFTERNOON

Jake's picture beneath the candle becomes the sight of Jake-in-
the-flesh beneath a ferociously beaming studio floodlight. He
is pleasantly smoldering at the vision of Dawn Webster vibrating
in disturbingly stunning lingerie, battered by a powerful fan.
A HE-MAN PHOTOGRAPHER crosses between them.

HE-MAN PHOTOGRAPHER
That's it--that's it--chin up--Go
further, Dawn--stop modeling! More
soul, less smile. That's it--

A little guilty about Dawn's bend from grace, 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 sorry, I'm so fucking
hungry.

LOFT MODEL ONE
(holding up raisin)
Raisin?

LOFT MODEL TWO
(eating it)
Danke--I'm so fucking 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
Birth certificate says Dawn Webster.

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

WARD
Could this be the same girl you
secretly pulled before that contest
in Wisconsin and unethically signed
behind everyone's back?

JAKE
Good memory.

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 Rachel Owlglass. You can
imagine how fun that phone call was.

JAKE
Why not scratch your almighty
superstar Nicole Kimberly instead?
She told me she's quitting the
business.

WARD
(yawning)
Why this time?

JAKE

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

WARD

Everyone wants to be Nikki Kim or do Nikki Kim. 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

And it seems to me she led her life like a candle in the wind--What do you want me to do about it, stud. You know more than anyone Nikki just needs to keep busy. So Jacobs, come to D.C. tonight. I'm throwing a soiree 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 phillies...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.)

What's this, what's this--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?
(more)

JUNE (Cont'd)

Yeah, yeah, another fucking Romanian--
snazzy, nothing revolutionary--
Galliano has a thing for her...What?
He got her into the Lombardi show!
That's unfair-- 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.
Ask Annette if she got those
Celestine tix for my Mom...

DAWN

Jake, when can we go visit Nicole
Kimberly?

Another painful squealing scraping sound is heard from above.

JAKE

Later. Much.

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 now blue-faciated Sabrina sternly cross their
arms. Dawn fakes a non-frown at the non-welcome. Sabrina scans
a red I.U. decal on the side of Dawn's duffel.

SABRINA

What's the I.U. sticker for?

TABITHA

Sabrin-a--Silent treatment?

DAWN

Oh, I got accepted to Indiana
University for next semester, but
I decided to come out here instead.

SABRINA

Oh my God, you're kidding, that's the exact same college I'm-not-going-to...What was going to be your Major?

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.

TABITHA

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 black Barbie...

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 D.C. tonight-- and well, that sure is a purty dress you got hanging...

TABITHA

Oh no. No fucking way, Skipper...

JAKE

Gil-li-gan...

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CLUB--NIGHT

Dawn wondrously sprouts out of a cab wearing the white dress. Jake, nicely dressed himself, follows Dawn out.

DAWN

My oh my, Decadence Candy, the hottest club in New York.

JAKE

You mean the only one still left...

Jake and Dawn are revealed to be gaping at what looks to be a harshly lit Korean grocery (outdoor fruit, cruddy green foam doorway, etc.). Only a CLAMORING CROWD behind red velvet ropes gives away its true status.

AMBUSHING 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 grocery.

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

Ah, as long as you're not naive.

A GIGANTIC DOORMAN comfortably sneers to the legion of begging wanna-bees before nodding Jake and Dawn through a sliding automatic door.

INT. GROCERY AREA--NIGHT

Jake and Dawn enter into an interior that is again, um, basically a very Manhattan Korean grocery--canned goods, chips, refrigerators, old Korean behind counter. Unfazed, Jake tugs Dawn forward. A VERY RECOGNIZABLE MODEL saunters by.

JAKE

Leaving so soon?

VERY RECOGNIZABLE MODEL

Some of us work for a living...

Jake and Dawn bang through a set of very typical-store-looking, flapping silver double doors in the back.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Pounding through the other side of the swinging doors, Jake and Dawn finally find themselves amid the vast vista of Decadence Candy, a purposefully nightmarish exaggeration of every club that came before it. It looks like 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-englissing Harmon Killibrew.

WARD

Don't get me wrong, like any man, I worship the concept of two unbelievably attractive lesbians going at it, but I'm telling you, I've been here before, one of them is going to end up bringing the other one to their agency and...

HARMON

Wa-ard, I am bored without senses. When I meet Lombardi? You promise-- Where's V.I.P.P. room? Take me to V.I.P.P....

DOMINIQUE

The Very Important "P.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 to anyone outside his creepy entourage. It's so annoying...

DOMINIQUE

(making fun)

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

HARMON

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

Harmon's pout ignites in a nasty 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

H...H...I admire non-conformity just as much as everyone else, kid, 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 Mah-dels....

WARD

Oh lighten up, H, who said anything about "discipline"--I just want you to stop being such a--wait a minute, aren't we in June-time now--Hold on...

Ward's attention panthers to a passing Club Model. H sighs.

WARD

Cristal, 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 scopes model-to-model, his breath eerily condensing against the glass. He scans 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
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 I hear Lombardi's hungry for fresh meat. Word on the street is that he's got a little blue pill that can keep a man's cock hard after climaxing...

JAKE
Ya-hoo. My personal favorite rumor so far is that...

A fiercely familiar flash splashes Jake's face. H snaps his picture and scampers away. Jake impulsively dashes after her, through the thick crowd. Suddenly, he is gleefully pulled down by H, onto the dance floor steps. After exchanging fake punches, they have to rather comically shout their conversation.

JAKE
H! What are you doing here? You should be home doing something better than this...What happened to that short story you were...

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

JAKE
Yeah, 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 a litter of MALE CLUBHOUNDS woo-ing Dawn.

H
Trying to protect this week's mah-del, 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 such thing. Some are caring, some are cruel, some are smart, some think Somalia is a moisturizer--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?

JAKE

Hey, 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, are you?

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.

JAKE
Sorry June, I was...

JUNE
Whatever. 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 True Value Hardware at the mall...I'm not ready...

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

JAKE
(undetectably 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 a one-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
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 less.

UNPLEASANT VOICE FROM THE BACK
Ask Charlie the question.

A TRULY DISTURBING CREW OF MEN-WOMEN-BOTH are crashed on and around a couch in the back of the room, puffing vast smoke in almost complete darkness.

LOMBARDI
Excellent idea. Approach the glass, Charlie. Do you scope anything female that could be of vague interest?

CHARLIE

Oh, lot of lovely ladies out there tonight. You always have lovely ladies at your club, Mr. Lombardi.

LOMBARDI

But is there one, and answer honestly, that if you were to accidentally hit her with your car, you would get out of the vehicle and attempt to make passionate love to her, despite her need for immediate medical attention. Charlie, is there a girl that special out there?

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.

Lombardi puts the familiar robin-egg-blue pill in his mouth. His entourage can be discerned performing the same gesture. Lombardi scans to Jake and Dawn slamming out the double doors.

INT. THE KOREAN GROCERY "LOBBY" OF THE CLUB--NIGHT

The backs of Jake and Dawn head through the grocery/lobby's sliding automatic doors. H hustles out from behind.

H

Jake-Jake...wait...

The glass doors whir shut. June firmly turns out of an aisle before her.

JUNE

You thought I didn't see you sneak out...Well, I did. What are you doing here..in a club? I hate clubs. Damn Lombardi for resurrecting New York nightlife.

H

Okay, you caught me. Points for you.

H restlessly twists down an aisle. She reaches out to a potato chip bag, but it is made of tin. She grabs out to other items, but everything in the store is fake. Mother and Daughter can't help but laugh together.

JUNE

Listen, I'm sorry about the play. And about trashing your tiara.

H
All the shit between us and that's
what you choose to apologize for?
Exterminating my dorky headgear.

JUNE
(exhaling)
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
(only-half-joking)
I don't know what you need more--
a good haircut or a good lobotomy.
Come on, let's...

H sets off her camera's flash. June is blinded. H flees.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE THE CLUB

Jake and a gently drunken Dawn waltz into a stopping taxi.

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

As the pair glide into the cab, behind them a team of WELL-
DRESSED SECURITY MEN can be observed violently tackling the
earlier-seen Street Person to the ground. H bolts from the store
and dejectedly pants toward the departing vehicle.

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

I'm not a virgin. Did you know that?

JAKE

(lulling)

Dawn. The show. The contract for a strange mystery product. The city formerly known as New Amsterdam. It's all just a dream--a good dream--now go back to sleep.

DAWN

Whatever you say, Jake...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 mistletoed 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 lone apartment.

A familiar voice wafts out from the pitch dark open doorway.

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 we
tried...

JAKE
I don't recall.

NICOLE
That supershoot 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 and
Dominique think 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 in a big tangle. Artwork is on the ground upside down. A glass table has been tipped vertically on its side.

Nicole (in a kimono) pops her contacts. She meanders before a framed Public Service Ad which shows a perkier version of herself bending a cigarette with caption: SUPERMODEL NICOLE KIMBERLY SAYS "SMOKING IS NOT PRETTY." In-the-flesh Nicole lights up.

NICOLE
I was moving in new furniture. But
now I like the old furniture that
I never liked before.
(more)

NICOLE (Cont'd)
Everytime I'm about to make a
decision, I gotta get on a
plane...So 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
I had to fire another architect.
He was an Aries that smoked a pipe.

JAKE
How difficult for you.

NICOLE
Go to Hell. You're always so...

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 through her detritus.

JAKE
Stop it--I never enjoyed your
pathetic every-five-minute need to
have a lover's quarrel even when
we were lovers...

NICOLE
Don't talk to me about me as if I'm
a studio audience. Like you're
narrating a documentary. I hate it!

The raised voices cause an off-screen barking. A sly beauty of
a German Sheperd, TWIGGY, scampers into the room. She growls
toward Jake. Nicole holds her back and gives her a vigorous
rubdown.

NICOLE
We woke up Twiggy.

JAKE
That bitch never liked me. What did
she think of the arms dealer?

NICOLE

Got along with the Arms Dealer.
Adored the would-be Harlem Drug
Lord. Worshipped sleazy Italian
financier guy.

(love-dovey to dog)

Didn't-you, Didn't-you, we like the
nasty ones, don't we girl? Ye-es,
we have bad-bad-bad taste in men...

Nicole pushes Twiggy on her way, then 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..? I wish
I could do something to make you
relax, that's it, just relax.

NICOLE

I always gag when I see a beautiful
woman complain about her life...I
guess that's what I like about my
recent line of beaus--They make me
feel nice-and-ugly--and Pain's got
this way of making a gal like me
feel half-human...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 sexual-bliss participant.

Jake glances to his all-seconds watch. He raises his finger to the elevator button--but the elevator dings open by itself. He is waylaid by a brutal flash.

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 other 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 blubbing escape from H's head. She grasps back some composure, gritting her 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

I need--I need so much more. 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 biting comments and then you pout when the world doesn't treat you right. You're not even in the world--You're farsighted, aren't you?

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 lifelessly 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 colossal 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 logo) 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 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.

H's hands self-scissor her wet hair in brilliant, Fugitive-style. The hands next slam together two powderpuffs.

Piece by piece, H's ratty and sweaty old wardrobe flutters disembodied into a trashcan--Tugging on a princess-like dress, H pushes forth a large wheeled cart.

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, briefly revealing the dressing room and the door-opener H. The moody backstage lighting prevents the viewer from seeing just how much she's been transformed.

She situates the 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. Distractingly, 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 says fuck 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 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

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.

(answering ringing cellular)
Hey, Mom. What's it like out there... 'Better seats than Sting,' huh? That's super... Mom... Mom..

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, in a darling dress.

DAWN

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

CLIVE

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

JUNE

(wistful)
I hear ya, 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 tink I know my hair bit better than you do...

HAIRDRESSER

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

HARMON

Wa-ard, she's talking-backing 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 barely even 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 kitchen knife if you have to and--

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 ANDROGYNE ASSISTANT IN A LIGHT BLUE JUMPER who looks a lot like the female S.A.A.

LOMBARDI

When they arrive, have them put in the front row, between the Dalai Llama and that Medusa 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

AIDS? That's playing with people's emotions.

LOMBARDI

That's what I like about it. How long have you worked here? Pretend to be talking on a phone near a group of the females. 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 swallowing 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 right to the worm.

JEALOUS MODEL

That sounds amazing. Can you hook me up with a specialist 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.

BENEATH THE MONITOR

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, it would not hurt to 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

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

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 Suesslike chapeaus. June and Ward look on with identical 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"--Why does...

JAKE

Ward--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 Nikki Kim. 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

Come on, Jacobs, since when do blow jobs count...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...

Jake and Ward bound to the sound of a crash. "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 SARAJEVO 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

Sure, kid.

NICOLE

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

WARD

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

NICOLE

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

Jake thrusts in like an overconfident bomb squad leader.

JAKE

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

NICOLE

Oh, what, just because I'm pretty, I'm not allowed to dislike genocide? This isn't an act!

JAKE

What are you on?

NICOLE

What am I not on? Aw poor Jake, he thought a nice chat and a hall-of-fame pity-fuck would make me feel all-better-- You're sa-ad!

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 boxed-set. "Don't confuse your image with yourself"--well, which one did you "hit it" with, Jake? We didn't get funky until I got my first cover, did we?

JAKE

It was a mistake to be with you sexually last night. I was an asshole...

NICOLE

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

(mock-Jewish)

A household name, she is.

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
absolutely no business sense and
I'm damn 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! Good-
night!

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

SPOOKY ASSISTANT

Position Zed!

JUNE AND WARD

button Dawn and Harmon into identical wedding dresses. The girls
clack up to wrap arms around the elbows of Lombardi. The trio
royally disappear through the tunnel to applause.

BY THE EXIT

Jake is still staring at the blinding light into which Nicole
departed. The Obese Pierce Agency Exec thuds beside him.

OBESE EXEC

Wow, what a cunt, eh?

JAKE

(deadpan)

You're a big fat pig.

Jake blusters off, banging into the buffet table. Beneath the wobbling table, H stirs awake with a gentle cough and a pained squint.

She agonizingly 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? Harmon has that certain "JeSais 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.

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

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.

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

Neiman-Marcus will probably try to get some sort of exclusive on the charcoal blazers...And Bergdorf...

(looking up)

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

WARD

All of New York let you down. Give us a clean slate. One more day...

Jake eases up behind June.

JAKE

There's something you should know about H--I'm a little 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

Flicking water onto her face, H floats up from the sink, 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 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. You people simply failed and now I'll have to call in Europe. 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...likes Scrabble and...Reese's Peanut Butter Cups! H and I have an enormously complex primary group relationship!

June and Ward bustle over to plead 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...

Lombardi slowly turns down to the viewer and Jake.

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

JAKE
(post-speechless)
I--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. Oh,
what a fool I am...

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
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 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--Tora, Tora, Tora...

Ward pops off the runway. Jake spins his view to Lombardi and his 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. He wobbles, then lies completely flat on his back.

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, "THE LOMBARDI IS COMING." He then looks out to a hanging team of painters "whiting out" the Nicole Kimberly mural.

INT. BOOKER ROOM--THE NEXT DAY

Jake launches the carousel of clipboards into a superviolent spin without a spec of fun 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!

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

JUNE

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

OBESE 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 personally 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-fashionably dressed H. She gleans an abundance of lingering looks from passers-by.

H
What's everybody's problem?

JAKE
You're good looking. H, are 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 want to
be treated any different.

JAKE
Tough.

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.

JAKE
You attempted suicide, H.
(distracted)
Oh, hi Mom...Mom? Andy?

Jake and H brake for JAKE'S MOM, a large, very Midwestern mother
in terrifying tourist gear along with Jake's Beavisesque little
brother, ANDY.

JAKE'S MOM
Jakey! Look at you, all busy taking
an aspiring model to a big fashion
shoot. If your father was alive...

JAKE
he'd be very confused about what
I do for a living. How you two
doing?

H
Hello, Mrs. Jacobs...

JAKE
(re Mom's "?")
It's H, Mom.

JAKE'S MOM
Oh my Lord--H! You've just blossomed,
haven't you? Andy, can you believe
this is H?

ANDY
She's hot.

JAKE
Okay, we're actually late for a...

MOM
Oh, I just can't get over--Squeeze
together, I want a picture...

Mom awkwardly shoves Jake and H together. They cringe their lips
upward. Mom raises a cheesy Instamatic and snaps.

JAKE
Mom, Andy, I'll call you...

ANDY
H is hot.

As the two pairs head in different directions, Little Bro Andy
gives a thumbs-up sign which Jake returns by reflex. He looks
down to his erected digit, then reels it in with nausea. Not
daring to face each other, Jake and H drift forward in silence.
H breaks it, sadly and slowly.

H
I didn't attempt suicide. 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. I'm
awake.

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

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
even talking about this?
(more)

H (Cont'd)
 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!

JAKE
 I'm not saying I don't want to make the deal with you. It's just, reading that note--H, you're not yourself.

H
 So what? Maybe I don't want to be.

The buzzer buzzes. H thrusts into the door.

INT. SET DEPICTING THE ULTIMATE GIRL BEDROOM

Accompanied by the off-screen flashes of an unseen camera, a luminously prepared H bounces up and down upon a delightfully frilly bed within a luscious pink mock-up of the ultimate Girl bedroom (The complete opposite of Old H's rebellious pit).

INT. WARD'S PLACE--NIGHT

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 divine, H. Simply fucking divine. You will not regret giving me this chance...

DOMINIQUE
 What? Tell me.

Ward hangs up the phone with a giddy grin. An UNEXPLAINED MODEL IN YET ANOTHER ONE OF WARD'S DRESS SHIRTS 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

I had Mandela and Versace at her last intervention--how am I going to top that? No getting around it--It's Rehab time. Laughing all the way to the tank...I sent a car over.

DOMINIQUE

It's for the best--You didn't call the press, did you?

WARD

"Um..."

DOMINIQUE

Oh Ward...

WARD

Sure, sure, go ahead and pick on the evil paparazzi, but face it, the more coverage Nikki gets going into the clinic, the more coverage she'll get coming out of it. Trust me, it'll be fine...

INT. NIKKI KIM'S APARTMENT (BUT YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW

A television screen (CNN in corner) displays a mad pack of reporters, bystanders, and yes, those damn paparazzi swarmed around a limousine outside the familiar big Apartment entrance.

TV NEWSCASTER (T.V.)

The President has decided to send more troops, but more on that later. What you are seeing are live images--Nicole Kimberly is about to begin her sad trek to a rehabilitation clinic. The renowned supermodel, known to insiders as "Nikki Kim," had a nervous breakdown during a fashion show of the designer...

The channel changes to images of a robin-egg blue pill.

ANOTHER NEWSCASTER (T.V.)

The designer Lombardi has the nation 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...Now let's go back to our correspondent live outside "The Big Apt," where Nicole...

Just as another angle on the Apartment pandemonium comes on, the TV goes off. Nicole Kimberly herself is revealed, lowering a remote. She is crashed on the floor, against a couch, next to her German Sheperd, Twiggy, who lets out a couple barks.

NICOLE

I know what you mean, Twiggy.
There's never anything good on.

Nicole leans over and snorts the smile off a Happy Face made of cocaine. She then rises up and calmly sashays to a stove upon which rests a lobster pot of boiling water. Nicole picks it up and non-chalantly hefts the pot to an open window. She then flings out the scalding contents.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BIG APT.--DAY

The Media Vultures below squeal and scatter away from the homemade acid rain.

INT. NICOLE'S APARTMENT--DAY

Nicole feebly snickers. She then spins with a jolt to Jake, who stands dramatically in the doorway.

JAKE

Hi. The Lear limo is infested. I
got a car stationed in the alley.
I'll keep look out here while you
climb in the trunk...

NICOLE

Jake, don't do this...stop it..

Not stopping, Jake intently paces the Apartement pushing together her packed bags. Twiggy growls.

JAKE

I'll thump twice on the trunk so
you'll know it's me. And I've booked
a clinic that's much better than
the Starfucker Palace that Ward...

NICOLE

Stop it! Stop it! I will not let you
be my hero, goddamnit! You think
everything is...is logistics!

JAKE

Hey, this wasn't even my idea!

NICOLE

Wha--well, whose was it?

JAKE

(Gumpian idiot voice)
Captain Cous-CousHead.

Nicole cackles in beautiful glee at their secret gag. She catches herself, then laughs again.

NICOLE
I haven't heard from the Captain
in a while...The alley, you said?

JAKE
(Capt. Cous-CousHead)
Uh-huh, I-sthed-dat.

Nicole giggles again. She throws on a fur coat and plucks a single brown grocery bag from atop her mountain of luggage.

NICOLE
All I'll need...I'm going to drop
off Twiggy with someone in the
building, then I'll meet you down
there...

JAKE
I'll just make sure the Vultures
stay distracted. Remember, two
thumps on the trunk.

NICOLE
Thanks, Jake.

Nicole glides out the door with Twiggy wagging behind. Jake turns to a big plant and gives it a squirt with a water bottle. He pauses, then picks up the plant and hurls it out the window. He smiles down to the sound of the resulting yelps.

EXT. ALLEY--DAY

Jake swaggers out into an alley where a black town car is parked. He jauntily bangs twice upon the trunk. Two barking noises are heard. Jake stops dead, then whips open the trunk. Twiggy growls up at him. Jake closes his eyes in anger then opens them in sadness.

JAKE
Oh Nicole...
(to Twiggy)
Come on, girl...Hey, I don't like
this either...Move it.

EXT. WAY OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT--DAY

A scraggly FEMALE STREET PERSON stares uncomprehendingly into the distance to the ruckus outside the Apt. Nicole Kimberly cuts into her view.

NICOLE
Trade?

The Female Street Person sheds her ratty coat as Nicole shakes off her deliciously unfake fur.

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:NO ENVIRONMENT:YES. She is accompanied by an absurd squadron of maniacally grinning MALE MODEL BEEFCAKES, also in jogging gear.

INT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY--NIGHT

June Pierce sits incongruously in the middle of a very long table at the back of the tomblike New York Public Library. Jake suddenly sits beside her, Last Supper-style.

JAKE

Sorry, I'm late, June, I had to...

JUNE

Sit down and Sh-h-h. I chose a place that would suppress my desire to lose it.

(angry shudder)

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 involuntarily slams her fist into the table attracting the Sh-h-hs of nearby patrons. She grimaces a fake grin.

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. On what planet is beauty and fame 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. That said, let's not blow this one on some emotional tift.

June pleausurably clings forth a plastic enclosed magazine with Nicole on the cover while Jake uncomfortably on and offs a table lamp.

JUNE

Speaking of Nikki, did you hear she skipped out on her Rehab. Gave everyone the slip. Nobody knows where the loony...

JAKE

Yes. I heard. June, you can be pointlessly cruel.

JUNE

And you can be cruelly pointless. Jacob, shit or get off the glass coffee table. You have to decide what your stake in all this is. Focus. All that Lombardi money could finally put the agency in the clear. We need H bad.

Jake simmers from the table in half-controlled fury. He shakes himself into some sort of sanity.

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 or so.

JUNE

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

EXT. CENTRAL PARK--DAY

Ward and H rumble slowly across Central Park atop rented horses. Neither is an expert in the equestrian realm.

WARD

I didn't think this was your kind of thing...

H

Don't all girls like horses. I think I read it somewhere...

WARD

Ah H, it's a golden time to be a young woman...Society used to only desire women with super hair, super teeth, and super tits. Now society desires women who are intelligent, motivated, and responsible

H

--with super hair, super teeth, and super tits.

WARD

(smile of admiration)

God, you're good. Sign with me, H. We'll have a blast. 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 longing. Modeling can get 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. SPA--DAY

June and H, in towells, are laid back on luxurious spa chairs, getting simultaneous manicure and pedicures. June fluidly continues Ward's train of thought.

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
Ah, he 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--Wait,
you're being ironic. You see, I know
when you're being ironic. You should
really be signing with me.

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 takes back the book and gulps at her drill instructor.
Assistant Annette comes in, holding up a glass of cola with ice.

H
Annette, I don't want to sound
flakey, but I am not a lover of ice.

ANNETTE
Oh Jesus, H, I'm sorry. I'll be
right back. I'm sorry.

H
Pas de probleme.

H rebalances the book and begins a perfect walk. Jake blinks.

INT. MUSEUM--DAY

Ward and H sophisticatedly roam a museum corridor. Dad is a tad
restless. H speaks toward a painting.

H
Do you see what she's doing here?

WARD
(looking off)
Now this, this is a superb piece.
Formal, unpretentious....

Ward is seen to be looking at the Janitor's mop in a bucket.
H lets out a laughing moan.

H
Da-ad...

WARD
Wha-at, I get dragged to a museum
and I'm not allowed to have some
fun?

H
It's not...It's just--I need you
to be serious once in a while. 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

H finishes her train of thought amid the swirling hot-and-happeningness of Decadence Candy. She sits at a special table across from her uncomfortable Mom.

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 one of my girls unless she's very
important to me...

H
"One of my..."

H's scowls until a waiter sets down two massive banana splits.

JUNE
Uh, this is a mistake...

H
No, it's not.

JUNE
Banana splits? H, you're not going
to tell me you actually like these
things...

H
I don't remember ever being allowed
to order one.

June and H match challenging stares. June breaks the tension, delicately devouring her split's cherry. H is definitely lulled by her hypnotic words.

JUNE
You're having fun. Making Ward go
to museums, making me go to clubs.
You should have fun.
(more)

JUNE (Cont'd)

We underestimated you and deserve a little punishment. But it's time to move on. You can stop fighting it. I've read of Grand Opera singers who did not speak when they were children. Great Matadors who began as playground crybabys. Something inside them knew their destiny and they were intimidated. Terrified. But they overcame. Just like you have. H, you were meant to be lovely...and lovely you are.

Punctuating her words, June slides forth a dazzling and sexy photograph from the Breakfast at Tiffany's shoot. H can't help but smiling.

JUNE

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

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

Oh Charlie, you are such a janitor...I wonder what this "kid" will be like when she comes out the other side of what I have planned for her. Such joy. Such pain. I am so jealous.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET--NIGHT

The viewer drifts up a spread-out newspaper, past a headline reading H LEAR--AS MYSTERIOUS--AND AS HOT AS PRODUCT SHE PROMOTES, then over to another headline reading LEAR AGENCY FILES MISSING PERSON REPORT ON NIKKI KIM.

The newspaper is revealed to be a makeshift blanket being used by a haggard Nicole Kimberly. She lies upon a bus bench beneath an ad displaying her Vietnam Execution Fashion Shot (with the caption HELP THE CAUSE. BUY THE CALENDAR.)

Nicole awakes with a start, allowing the newspaper to breeze off her. Nicole then shuffles up toward a department store window.

Inside the display case, beneath a sign reading THE MANY SIDES OF YOU are three mannequins that look exactly like Nicole Kimberly-- one is dressed for the office by a desk, One is dressed casually by a barbecue, and the other is dressed for night-life beneath a disco ball. The real Nicole breathes against the glass.

INT. STUDIO--DAY

Wearing playful pajamas, H's body rolls in and out of frame across a polar bear carpet. H's body then rolls back the other way, now only wearing the big pajama top. H's body then rolls back into frame again across the carpet--this time in lingerie.

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

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-slash-product launch party to be held next week. At Decadence Candy." Is that okay for you, H?

H

Uh, yeah...yes, Jacob. It sounds excellent.

JAKE

Lombardi?

LOMBARDI

Excellent.

JAKE

Excellent. 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. THE SOHO LOFT--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 earlier-seen He-man photographer claps his hand. An assistant uncuffs the panting H. H rubs her wounded wrist as she trots behind a dressing room curtain.

The viewer floats over to see H undress. A minuscule camera is revealed to be set-up above, pointing downward.

INT. LOMBARDI'S EARLIER-SEEN EMPTY OFFICE--DAY

Lombardi's unsettlingly perverse entourage are huddled on the floor of Lombardi's empty office space (from the earlier ultimatum scene). The Spooky Male Androgyne assistant of Lombardi is drilling an H tatoo on the shaved head of the Spooky Female Androgyne Assistant. All are watching a screen showing black and white closed circuit images of H undressing.

INT. SOHO LOFT--day

In the background, H huffs out from behind the dressing room curtain in street clothes. In the foreground, Jake, Ward, and Dominique sit atop a triangle of stools.

JAKE

Mr. Lear, are you trying to seduce me?

WARD

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

DOMINIQUE

Bottom line. We know we can't sign H without signing you. We're prepared to, as much as it kills me, make you "president," with Ward as Chairman. 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

Of course she has, but 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 Men. More than men. We are the men who have actual sex with the women normal guys 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
Cut it out, Dom...Let's make this
work, Jacobs. You the man.

JAKE
I'll think about it.

Jake huffs a flattered smile and gets up. Dawn Webster slinks into his path, managing to simultaneously sip a water bottle, smoke a cigarette, and shake out of her top. She pecks Jake's cheek.

JAKE
Hey, Dawn. I didn't know you were
scheduled with Sven, today.

DAWN
Yeah, I'm glad some photographers
are still willing to work with us
older models.

JAKE
'Older'? Honey, just because H...

DAWN
Oh, Jake. What movies has Richard
Harbor directed? Did you know he has
his own limo...

Jake loses his smile. He looks over to see H being led out an exit by her father. Not smiling herself, she waves to Jake.

INT. ANOTHER STUDIO--NIGHT

Lombardi and the earlier-seen flamboyant Meiselesque Photographer study a drawing, on an easel, that depicts H on a steel dentist/torture chair. The realistically drawn H has her blouse completely open and has blue liquid strategically splashed upon her face and chest.

LOMBARDI
As you can see, I want the blue
dribbling off her face, over her
breasts, into her belly button...

FLAMBOYANT PHOTOGRAPHER
Lombardi-I'm-loving-this--It's an
extraterrestrial cum shot. The liquid
is going to cause a major "Hello,
nipples" effect.

With a marker, the Photographer scribbles black dots on the drawn H's breasts. Pulling away, it is revealed to the viewer that H herself, in the flesh, sits a mere ten feet away, on an industrial chair with her blouse open. The Photographer's Main Assistant stands nearby, holding a pail of the blue liquid. H tries to gulp some composure.

LOMBARDI

Naturally the photograph is pointless without nipples. Let's try a roll with one nip, then another tout les deux.

(turning to H)

H, I do not want you to do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. I think you are ready for this, but if this is too much for you, tell me right now. If you can not handle it, I will completely understand.

Of course the trembling H (pulling shut her blouse) is uncomfortable. Traumatically so. But a trying-to-be-cool teenager is no match for Lombardi's time-tested, casually intimidating patter.

H

I'm--I trust you, Lombardi, that, that you'll do something artistic.

Lombardi smiles a small victory. A FEMALE SET ASSISTANT holds before H a tray upon which is a Coke--with ice. Letting out her pent-up frustrations, H slaps the glass into a violent shatter.

H

I said no fucking ice, you stupid bitch!

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

In a sudden series of severe close-up cuts, the face of a naked shouldered H goes from 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, pill-in-mouth H have been placed upon a subway wall above a TOURIST GETTING KICKED BY A MUGGER. The caption is "ARE WE READY FOR THE LOMBARDI?"

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE--DAY

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

INT. MANHATTAN STREET CORNER--DAY

The last of a striking line of H/Lombardi posters is slapped up on the side of a Manhattan edifice. Jake is revealed to be staring at them, holding Twiggy, Nicole's German Sheperd, by a leash.

Suddenly, breaking Jake's attention (and possible narration), a Lear Insignia-ed limousine squeaks to a stop. In baseball cap and biker jacket, H herself pops out to race toward another car--an opening-up Pierce Insignia-ed limo at the edge of another corner. She awkwardly brakes at the sight of Jake.

H
hey.

JAKE
hey.

H tentatively walks over and bends to rub down the dog.

H
This Twiggy? Hey-girl-you-hanging-
in-there--Did they ever track down
Nicole?

JAKE
No...You look nice.

H
(rising)
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...

H lights a cigarette. Jake non-chalantly flings it. H smiles.

H
Dick. God, when's the last time we
talked? It seems like...

JAKE
How's it going with June and Ward.
How do they like having the daughter
they never had?

H
 What's that supposed to...
 (letting it pass)
 It's fine. Things are fine...

INT. FLASHBACK--JUNE'S KITCHEN--NIGHT

In a deliriously messy kitchen, June and H cook up a storm of healthy eats, laughing-pushing-arguing over a cookbook.

H (V.O.)
 I know what you're thinking, Jake-Jake. Is all this for real? Well, what's real, really? I've spent my whole life turning over the rock and looking at the worms. What's wrong with the rock? I mean, really...

INT. FLASHBACK--WARD'S PLACE--NIGHT

Ward is flopped on his couch, taking a nap on H's lap. She serenely looks down at him.

H (V.O.)
 My parents treat me with something like love and respect. Forgive me if don't want to break out the microscope and question all their motives.

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 same window H earlier looked out of in sad solitude.

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

JAKE (V.O.)
 Lot of similarities between most popular and least popular.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET--DAY

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

H
 Yeah, but if you get to choose...Anyway, after next week, school is going to be irrelevant.
 (more)

H (Cont'd)
 I'll be getting an incredible
 education, traveling around the
 world on the Lombardi jet with
 Lombardi. He is so cultured...

JAKE
 Trip around the world?
 Lombardi...nobody told me this...

H
 Just came up today...
 (touching nose)
 Should I have somebody take a look
 at this before I leave. You know
 how I've always hated my nose...

JAKE
 No. I don't. I do remember you
 writing a short story about how in
 the future plastic surgery will be
 as mandatory for school children
 as vaccinations.

H
 I'm not really going to do anything--
 Jesus! I was just asking--And don't
 bring up those shitty stories. Man,
 I'm running so late...

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

H
 Why are you being such an asshole!
 Everything's awesome. Why can't you
 just support me...why can't--stop
 treating me like a chi-ild...

Overwhelmed with confused concern for his distraught friend,
 Jake makes sh-hing sound, tugging H toward him, and kissing her
 forehead. H clasps the back of his neck and pulls him into a
 kiss that awkwardly becomes a little more than Jake bargained
 for. He pulls away. H backs up with a sheepish smile.

H
 I'm sorry about going off just now,
 Jake-Jake. It's not you, it's me.
 I've been a real brat, I mean,
 bitch. I've been a bitch lately.
 I know you want me to succeed.
 (more)

H (Cont'd)
 Geez, I gotta--I'm beyond late--Oh
 you know, 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-- Let's have dinner later
 in the week but hey, drop by!

H bounces off into the limousine.

INT. INSIDE THE LIMOUSINE--DAY

H plops into the back of the limo. Catching her breath as the car pulls away, she flaps down a small mirror from the ceiling.

H
 Mirror, mirror, on the wall...

Just as the viewer thinks H is about to go into one of her poetic rhapsodies, she clicks her tongue and narrows her eyes. She performs a quick mascara touch-up, then lifelessly flaps back up the mirror. And lights up a cigarette.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET--DAY

Still solemnly standing in the same position, Jake watches the limo disappear in the distance. He and Twiggy move off the other way. They pass the Department Store Display Case featuring the three Nicole Kimberly mannequins. Twiggy frantically barks up at them, but Jake tugs her away.

The viewer stays with the display case. The Office Nicole, between Casual Homey Nicole and Temptress Nicole, looks the most real.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE DISPLAY CASE--DAY

That is because the mannequin in the middle is indeed the real Nicole Kimberly. She stands sweating in dress-for-success garb, trapped in unblinking, self-enforced catatonia, breathing disturbingly loudly through her nose. There is a puddle on the carpet beneath her high-heeled shoes.

INT. THE STUDIO OF THE GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHER--DAY

From one mannequin to another--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's blouse from behind to make a snugger fit.

STYLIST THREE callously thrusts up H's breasts into a severe Push mode. Stylist One yanks H's feet out of her moccasins and proceeds to nail the shoes 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, stiffer-than-Nicole, 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.

WARD
Luminous.

JUNE
Absolutely...Did you take a look
at the itinerary for this..this trip
Lombardi is taking H on...

WARD
Got it right here. Fantastic...

Ward opens up a beautiful leather, Lombardi-logo-ed binder. Each page has a heading such as H IN LONDON with vivid pictures of diverse locales, such as the Pyramids and the Kremlin.

WARD
Three months. Paris. Moscow.
Bangkok. Stonehenge...

JUNE
Stonehenge...So long, so many
places, without either of
us...You've been in that private
plane of Lombardi's. It can get a
little...

WARD
Oh, I knew I should have worn a
wire. This is the perfect example
of why H should be signing with me.
You simply do not possess that "Let
go" gene that allows your child to
have a good time. This is the time
in H's life when...

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

WARD
Like she was winking at you. She
was...

JUNE
We'll find out soon enough who she
was winking at, Ward. Two more days
until the biggest sweet fifteen
party this town has ever seen. Most
of us will have a good time.

WARD

Cocky. I like that in a loser.

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.

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 do not even know what it is. It is all so delightfully millennial.

(focusing ahead)

Look at her, Jake. Beneath the shell of a ratty little scamp was a more significant person than ever thought possible...

JAKE

Is it a better person?

LOMBARDI

"Better Person." I am unfamiliar with the concept. 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...

JAKE

(moving off)

You know, Lombardi, I read somewhere that scientists have discovered the line between "being bored" and "being boring" is thinner than any of us ever thought possible...

LOMBARDI

I am not finished talking to you, Jake...Jake. Do not walk away from...

H
(noticing mini-commotion)
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?

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

LOMBARDI
You heard her. Our little H is fine. Now unbutton her slacks and bring out the snorkel...

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. 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 disheveled 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

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

DAWN

Okay, okay, but push it back until after Belgium...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 down a multi-page contract.

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's website is getting...?

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 needing elaboration, Jake mechanically twists his chair
 around to the side of June's desk. As DAISY-FRESH MODEL HOPEFULS
 parade in and out of the room in every possible costume and lack
 thereof, Jake and 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...

A LOVELY LASS enters breathlessly enters the room. Her smile
 reveals a pretty shocking set of buck teeth.

JAKE

(making neighing sound)
Check out Secretariat. Hide the apples... Maybe it's the acoustics, but golly, it sounded like you just offered up your daughter's virginity a second ago. It's not like it's the first time you've played pimp, but...

JAKE AND JUNE TOGETHER

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

JUNE

Finally. That's one in a row...
(simmering beat)
I'm going to forget what you just said or else I'd have to...

JAKE

Don't forget it. You've gone over the line, June. Until this week I never even knew there was a line...
(toward pale girl)
Nice sleeves. "I read that models do a lot of that 'heroin' stuff so..."

JUNE

"Be a model or just shoot up like one."
(back to bickering)
When did you get so damn sensitive? Your Huckleberry Finn in a river of Pussy act was charming when you got off the bus seven years ago, but christ, do not act like you don't know this is a brutal business--
- Ooh, now she's potentially...
(a beat, then wince)
Ah, too bad. That is one colossal ass.

JAKE

(Carsonesque)
I don't want to say her butt is big, but "Seinfeld" comes on the air on one cheek an hour earlier than on the other.
(post-mutual-chuckle)
Yes June, I "know" it is a brutal business. I "know" we bring girls to the top of a mountain than push them off when we are done with them. "Knowing" has nothing to do with anything. When are we going to start "doing" something, June.

JUNE

Doing what? We at Pierce have always been upfront that the carriage turns into a pumpkin at midnight...

Bullshit-smiling to the incoming felines, Jake swiftly rises, sliding his chair right next to June, launching into a lethally modulated murmur.

JAKE

Sure June, they all know the carriage turns back into a pumpkin at midnight. Except we fuck with their watches so they think it's 2 o'clock in the afternoon when it's really 11:53 at night--hey, that's just good business sense--What do you tell the girls at 12:01, June? What do you tell your daughter?

JUNE

Shut up, Jake. I am warning you...

JAKE

Ooh, when did you get so damn sensitive? You know I would never disparage your mothering skills. Remind me, what time does Lombardi's private jet take off?

JUNE

Shut up! Just shut...!
(to entering girls)
Get out of here! Out!

Thundering forward, arms extended, June rodeos a pack of incoming girls out the door. She sneers to the smallest one.

JUNE

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

June slams the door and burns back around. She wisely grits her teeth back into Dr. Jekyll mode.

JUNE

Jacob. I don't know what's come over you lately--The way you talked to Lombardi yesterday, the way you-- I only know this: Whether you intended it or not, somehow something you said or did got H to admit she is physically desirable. 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
(also cooling down)
I don't know whether you're being
Concerned Mom or Shrewd Agent...

JUNE
(human)
For what it's worth, neither do I.
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.

Annette eases through a creaking door, holding a post-it.

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

JAKE
(snaring post-it)
You know, June, maybe I just need
a nice, long vacation. See ya
round...

INT. OUTSIDE THE OFFICE--DAY

Jake bullets from the office. June blasts out after him,
freaking out her staff and a line of terrified Finalists
shivering outside her office door.

JUNE
Vacation? "See ya round?" Tomorrow
is the most important night in the
agency's history. What are you--
where are you--Jake, don't do
this...

Jake disappears around a corner. June boils in place, then turns
to the first finalist in line.

JUNE
What are you looking at? Come on...

Sucking composure, June spins back into her office. The Young
Beauties rhythmically drip in after her.

INT. JUNE'S OFFICE--DAY

Like a deposed Queen having her last day on the throne, June
wobbles down back behind her desk, watching the incoming girls
with a glassy zombie stare. And a tear.

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 Marcie glumly 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 don't know, I was hoping you could hurt me back in some special way. Like order a milkshake and smack the glass over my head.

MARCIE

That sounds good...But you were just doing your job.

(more)

MARCIE (Cont'd)

"It's a tough business..."

(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 tonight the night of that big party at D.C.? 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, superagent.
I'm not sure what it is you actually
do for a living, but I know you do
it really well. You can't just not
do it. You need to be around women--
you're good with them--you love them--
you end up ruining some of their
lives, but hey...

(sad laugh)

"You don't choose your life. Your
life chooses you."

JAKE

Ouch.

MARCIE

Sorry. It's on a plaque in the
kitchen.

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 attracting the Counterguys' attention.

MARCIE

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

JAKE

(warmly)

Why wouldn't they?

Just as it did the last time these two got together, the phone
in Jake's chest erupts. Marcie flinches. Jake reaches in...

EXT. OUTSIDE THE KOREAN GROCERY (DECADENCE CANDY)--DAY

Ward Lear is on a cell phone of his own outside the fake Korean
grocery front of Decadence Candy. Dominique loiters off to the
side. The Korean Grocer is sweeping his broom. As Ward barks,
in the background, a GROUP OF MOVERS are carrying large glass
pills (with a bizarre, multi-colored-but-mostly-blue, swirling
gel inside) through the sliding automatic doors.

WARD

What a Bitch, huh? I heard about your
little Armageddon with June.

(more)

WARD (Cont'd)
You can probably guess I'm pretty
broken up about it...Yeah, I know,
you're doing the whole
"disillusioned" thing. Well, Jacobs,
get ready to be "re-illusioned!"
Have you got the package.

INT. MICHIGAN DINER--DAY

Jake furrows his brow, just as a UPS man approaches the table
with a monster envelope and a pen.

JAKE
Ward...what package?

UPS MAN
Are you Jacob Jacobs? Sign here.

Spooked and intrigued, Jake scribbles the clipboard and rips
open the majestic envelope. He dumps the contents on the table--
they most notably include impressively professional drawings
of a building-front with a suave sign reading JAKE'S, as well
as chic interiors. Jake exclaims with mild amusement.

JAKE
Oh my.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE STORE (CLUB)--DAY

Ward idly takes an apple from the bins outside and bites into
it. It's fake. He tosses it, not wavering his phone enthusiasm.

WARD
Your own agency, babe. I've already
lined up an army of Thai investors
to pony up the start-up funds. Just
think, you as the head of Lear's
sister agency. H and her revenues
will of course go to the main
office, but as you'll see in the
materials, you play a big part in
her management. This was never just
about H, it was about you, pal.
Let's go to work. Tora, Tora,
Tora...

INT. MICHIGAN DINER--DAY

Jake widens his eyes at the information overload.

JAKE
This is pretty...It's pretty Pretty.
Yes, Ward...Lot to think
about...Goodbye, Ward...H's best
interest, yes...Goodbye.

Jake hangs up and trades exhales with Marcie.

MARCIE
What are you going to do now?

JAKE
I feel like going to a party.

MARCIE
What are you going to do when you get there?

JAKE
(enigmatic smile)
Have fun.

Jake looks down to the solitary ticking second hand.

INT. MANHATTAN STREET--NIGHT

The viewer dramatically lightnings, through New York nightfall, toward the sight of the building-size mural of H. It is completely finished except for the eyes.

INT. CLOSE-UP OF H IN THE MIRROR

H wipes a post-shower patch of condensation off a bathroom mirror-- revealing only her eyes.

H
Mirror, mirror, on the wall, I stand
at the verge of a threshold of a
Dawn of a new something. Is this
a good dream or a bad coma? Please
let Jake-Jake forgive me and me
forgive he. Mom or Dad, Mom or Dad--
please let the loser still love me.
Shit, the limo's waiting. Happy
birthday, young lady.

INT. OUTSIDE ENTRANCE OF DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

From H's POV, the viewer emerges out of an opening limousine...then charges past exploding paparazzi and the clawing-the-air crowd behind the velvet ropes...through the automatic sliding doors.

DOORMAN
Happy Birthday, H.

INT. THE KOREAN GROCERY LOBBY--H'S POV--NIGHT

H's viewpoint glides into the empty fluorescent-lit Korean grocery "lobby." The grocer behind the counter nods.

KOREAN GROCER
Happy birthday, H.

H scopes Dominique hidden in one of the aisles.

DOMINIQUE
Happy Birthday, H.
(into head-set)
She's here.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

H's POV smashes through the swinging silver doors and into Decadence Candy, done up in a "If Fellini threw a sweet sixteen party" vibe. The earlier-seen PILLS with the moving, psychedelic gel inside, have been turned into Mobiles, hanging precariously from ceiling wires. One of the pills is noticeably more monumental than the others.

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
How's my birthday girl? I'm sure
whatever decision you make will be
the right one. Unless it's the wrong
one. You know you can always count
on me to steer you in the clear.
Come to Lear, H, come to Lear. I
love you.

The POV briefly swooshes up to a DJ in a booth.

DJ
The birthday girl is. in. the.
House!

WARD
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 going down an ice cream runway.

JUNE
Happy birthday, honey.

MALE HEAD BOBBING IN
You look very lovely...

JUNE

Out! H, I just want to say whatever decision you make tonight, I'll be completely...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.)

(worried)

Where is Jake-Jake? I heard you two had a fight and that he might've even left New York. Is that true, Mom? Is it? I can't remember a birthday without Jake-Jake...

Annette bends down to whisper in June's ear.

ANNETTE

We've been calling his place every five minutes. Still no sign.

JUNE

(beaming out)

Honey, don't worry. He just called from his cell-phone. A water main broke and apparently Sixth is completely backed up...

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 swarming 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.

INT. STORE WINDOW--NIGHT

A cluster of stacked TV screens blare out from a store window. They display footage from inside the party.

TV NEWSCASTER (T.V.)

H is expected to make her choice just before midnight after which Lombardi will tell the world the secret of his pill. This is thrilling stuff! Let's go out to our correspondent...

The viewer floats to the next window over. The display case of the Nicole Kimberly mannequins.

INT. INSIDE THE NICOLE KIMBERLY DISPLAY CASE--NIGHT

Stiff, sweating, and saucer-eyed, Nicole has now taken the place of the casual by-the-BBQ mannequin. The voices from the TVs next door seep into her unconscious in dreamlike spurts.

VOICE ON THE TV
models everywhere...everyone who
is everyone...what fashion is all
about...the party to end all
parties...Decadence Candy...a night
no one will forget...

NICOLE
All-right already!

With an energetic howl, Nicole vividly breaks from her catatonia and spastically shakes life into her stiffened limbs. She then stomps over toward the Night Life mannequin of herself.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE--NIGHT

Heels scraping the department store floor, the Night-life Nicole mannequin is being dragged by its hair by Nicole herself. Panting, Nicole halts before a case of lipsticks and powders. She smashes the glass.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--LOMBARDI'S TABLE

The Androgyne Assistants lead June and Ward into chairs on each side of a seated Lombardi. Not even acknowledging them, Lombardi stares mesmerized into the bedlam--the reporters, the cameras, and the hungry for attention crowd, to say nothing of the wavelike movements of the glorious goo within the most massive of the Pill mobile decorations.

LOMBARDI
Isn't it astonishing?

JUNE
(a beat)
And what exactly is the "It" that
is so astonishing?

WARD
Whoa, before June's Philosophy class starts, I'd like to brush up on Current Events--What's "The Lombardi," Lombardi? I know the "all-media unveiling" is not until after midnight, but come on, we've been good...

LOMBARDI

You are right, Ward. It is 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've pretty much 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 electrifying.

June and Ward plant the pill in their mouth. Expressions of confusion and freaked familiarity pass across their faces-- followed by the sight of each of them blowing a blue 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 masses.

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.

JUNE

Gum, Lombardi? Gum? All this drama, all this energy for something so...so meaningless?

LOMBARDI

Oh June, I am disappointed in you.
The meaninglessness is the meaning.
Fashion is about bringing the entire
world to that five seconds before
you come and leaving it there. Don't
get all tangible on me. Now where
did H go off to?

Lombardi whisks himself away, leaving June blown away and Ward
just blowing. Rising, June spits out hers. She and Ward wander
together through the revelry.

JUNE

Can you believe--all this...for
this?

WARD

For the money Lombardi's shelling
out, I be-lieve. What's wrong with
gum? I like gum.

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?

(rueful 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)

Would this be the same Jacob that's
been brooding around with a barely
socially acceptable growth on his
face? The same guy who engaged you
in a shouting match that one could
hear all the way to Queens? The very
same Jacob Jacobs who I made an
offer to this morning--an offer that
no heterosexual male on this planet
at the close of the 20th century
could possibly refuse?

JUNE

What are you--I don't want to know.
Jacob would never betray me--at
least not for you and what you stand
for. Jacob just going through a
phase...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 H on the strength of
your own "extraordinarily complex
primary group relationship." What
you don't understand is that Jacobs
and I have a bond that you could
never...

JUNE

(looking off)

You can stop talking now, you silly
son-of-a-bitch...He's here. And he's
holding one of our contracts.

WARD

Please Zeus, let it be mine...

Through the ex-couple's POV, an impeccably groomed Jake makes
a traditionally magnificent entrance into the club, papers
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...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 ravishing abandon.
She swerves for some dramatic eye contract.

They immediately float toward each other. H is glowing. Jake
half-nervously half-smiles, a little pixilated by the undeniable
magnetism of it all. Then suddenly, Lombardi is seen cutting
off H. As Ward blockades Jake.

WARD

Jacobs, talk to me. There are like
no seconds on the shot clock.

(more)

WARD (Cont'd)
I've passed the ball to you,
comrade. Tell me we're on the same
team...Tell me.

JAKE
Ward, everything is going to be
really clear, really soon...

LOMBARDI

lifts an ornate key before H's widening eyes, like the Pope
offering communion.

LOMBARDI
A key. To my heart. To my soul. And
most importantly, to my VIP room.
An honor bestowed to no one--except
my very closest friends...and my
janitor. And now, dear H, you.
Rendezvous in 17 minutes.

Lombardi presses the key into H's palm then breezes away,
revealing, behind him in the distance, Jake eluding Ward. H
watches Jake approach.

JAKE

charges closer to the glistening H. Much less boorishly than
Ward, June coolly panthers into Jake's path.

JUNE
Jacob. I don't know what to say.
I'm sure Ward gave you some groovy
sports metaphors. I just want the
best for H. You can't believe how
much I'm not lying.

JAKE
I hope that's the way you feel at
the end of the evening, June. I
really do.

JUNE
What do you mean? What are you...

Jake defly clasps June by her hands and waltzes her around out
of his way. He then releases her and turns...face-to-face with
his own Mom, who is downright poignantly made-up and dressed
up.

JAKE
Mom? Mom...Wow. Listen, I have to
get H, it's kind of important...

MOM

Oh gosh, she has a lot to think about tonight, doesn't she? Well, I'll get out of your hair. I just wanted to thank you for the tickets-- Oh, just look how pretty those pills are--Oh, you go on, Jakey...

Jake nods and moves off. He then stops himself and steps back to his Mom and gives her a grand, warmly received hug.

JAKE

You look gorgeous, Mother. Next month, you're getting a real vacation. Some place warm. Some place with me.

Jake breaks from his beaming Mom. H has vanished. Jake zig-zags his POV in suave panic. H magically emerges from the crowd to stand right beside him.

H

Come here often...

JAKE

H. Happy Birthday.

H

(raising up the key)
I hope so. Come on...

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

The fortresslike door of the VIP room sesames open. A coolly deep-agenda Jake and a girlishly giddy H bound into the unsettling quiet of this den of stylishly sterile iniquity.

H

The VIP room of Decadence Candy, can you believe it? This so rocks. Wasn't it instantly unforgettable-- the way we looked over at each other. The way we were separated by people and then...

JAKE

Anytime anything happened we used to talk. Now everything's happened and we...

H

I know, Jake-Jake, I know. I've missed you so much. These past weeks, they've been pretty incredible--but without my best friend to share them with...

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

H...H, you look very enchanting
tonight, but why would I want to
hurt a friendship that's practically
as old as you are just because you
slapped on some paint and brought
yourself up to code...

H

Oh Jake-Jake, I've evolved...why
can't you? Did you ever consider that
not being intimate is what is
hurting the friendship? Who would
rather be stranded on a desert
island with? New me or Old me--wait,
don't answer, at least not until
I can strap on a good lie detector.
I'm sure you have some painful
nostalgic answer involving some
melodramatic poem I wrote when I
was ten.

JAKE

I'd like to think old H is in there
somewhere underneath all that...

H

(keeping everything upbeat)
Whatever you say, my man. So is that
a big contract in your hand or are
you just glad to see me?

Jake wings the contract into a perfect swirl that lands the document face down on a strangely shaped table before the couch. H twists up to tenderly touch it.

H

The great, almighty, Holy,
Sacred,...and thick contract. Guess
we better put this baby to bed
before the evening gets too out of
hand...

Attempting to be "sexy" and more-than-somewhat succeeding, not breaking eye contact with Jake, H tugs up her dress...and pulls out from a garter a radiant silver pen. She slowly clicks it.

H

So which agency did we end up choosing? Dad told me about his offer. Your own agency--pretty swell--something to Hmmm about. But you and Mom go way back...All this time, everyone's been looking at me for a decision when they should have been looking at you. Here we go, baby...Drumroll, please.

H's hand claws the edge of the face-down contract. She takes a deep breath and then flips it---

INT. THE CLUB--NIGHT

Completely drained, June and Ward sit like Segal statues amid the surrounding merriment. They heave sighs into the grand mirror of the VIP room.

WARD

Are you sure...

JUNE

Yes, Ward. They ran into the VIP room.

WARD

It's just so unfair. Why does H get automatically get a key...

JUNE

Poor baby. I didn't get a look at the contract in Jake's hand. Did you?

WARD

No. It could be anybody's contract...I can't take this. How long are they going to be in there?

June glances down to the birthday cake before them. The candy model is doing a deadman's float in the melted ice cream runway.

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 quite 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.

A somewhat familiar crashing noise is heard. June and Ward and everyone else pivot around to see Nicole Kimberly tripping up a photographer into a painful bellyflop.

Nicole hurls a mannequin-head of herself onto the dance floor, then triumphantly pauses to smile. On Nicole's body is the mannequin's groovy Night-life dress. On her face is a brilliant, homemade, shocking, tribal design. Warpaint.

JUNE

Hell-o. Client of yours?

WARD

You want her? Man, is there anything more terrifying than a girl who's been told all her life that she's cute when she's drunk?

Nicole slinks past the couple, lazily chased by paparazzi and security. 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 VIP ROOM--NIGHT

Oblivious to the commotion soundlessly ensuing through the glass behind her, H is frantically sifting through a sea of completely blank sheets of paper. Jake is curled in a corner away from the one-way mirror.

H
No, no, no! All these pages are--
You're doing a thing on me, aren't
you? You're doing something
interventiony, I can feel it...

JAKE
You're in way under your head, H.
Modeling diminishes you--not every
girl-- but definitely you.

H
Oh shit, here we go. I knew it was
too sweet, you and I dashing in
here...

JAKE
You're not in modeling for shrewd
reasons--make money, invest, and
get out. And you're sure as hell
not in it just for fun. You want
things from your new life that it
can not give you. Instead, you'll
get some ugly surprises. Two months
flying around in Lombardi's jet,
you'll get more than peanuts.

H
Don't talk about Lombardi. He's a
genius! A genius!

JAKE
You're thinking "He'd better be."

H
Oh, you're so annoying! You have no
right to preach to me. 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 smolders out from the dark corner of the VIP room,
eventually taking an intimidating position on the couch.

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-- "Oh my God, that's your picture. You're the girl in that ad?" You're more than that, H. You have a mind that's meant to do things never done before. You're too extraordinary for...

H

I don't want to be extraordinary! Extraordinary is...is weird, and it's lonely...just stop talking...

JAKE

H, you're a gimmick model, underneath the height limit and irrevocably associated with one product. You're not the cash calf everyone seems to think. Things will be very hard for you...

H

What if I told the "horrors" of modeling were not unknown to me. What if I told you they were not unappealing. You think I'm scared of being hurt--"traumatized"--it's all better than being alone in your mind and nobody noticing. If being touched is better than not being touched, then being jolted is the best.

JAKE

I know you...deep down, you think you can control the situation. You can't control the situation.

(compassionate sigh)

H, I don't want to make you feel bad...

H

Good.

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

Dawn Webster batters through the swinging silver doors. Hard to believe it is the same wide-eyed girl who had soft-shoed through the same doors 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.

DAWN

Oh, Nicole...

Nicole savagely unwinds from the grip of two security guards. She tears forth her omnipotent weapon and fires into the air. All the shiny, happy people of the party roar in terror, some cowering to the ground, some bolting to the exit.

With the help of pinpoint laser-sighting, Nicole elegantly fires to the DJ's turntable, completely killing the music. Uncool shrieking is now the only sound filling the air. A CLUBGOER huffs toward the swinging doors. Nicole clips him in the leg.

She then twists her sights up to one of the smaller hanging pills and fires upon the wire. The Small Pill snaps from its mooring and spectacularly shatters to the ground. The vivid Day-glo liquid, so pretty to look at, now acidically burns a steaming indentation into the dance floor.

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

Breathlessly unaware of the inaudible fireworks going on outside, H fires a shot of her own. She blazes 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. 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.

(more)

JAKE (Cont'd)

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. Attention and attraction are not love. I love you. I want to protect you.

H bolts up from the couch to seethe in Jake's face. They stand parallel to the silent madness outside the one-way mirror.

H

Protect me? I can hire people to do that shit! I don't want to be protec-ted! I want to be fucked. I'm beautiful. Ask anyone! Lombardi, Woman's Wear Daily, the Mayor--they all say I'm gorgeous. You have to fuck me. That's the way it works. Without the Fuck, my feelings don't count. They're a crush. They're an infatuation.

JAKE

H, don't talk like this...

H

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, goddamnit, I'm not a chi-ild!

JAKE

I know, H, you're not a child. And you're not an adult. June, Ward, Me-- we're not adults, either. Everybody's everybody and we're all shit.

H

"Everybody's shit?"--I have to hear this on my birthday...

H's corrosive exterior crumbles into a sob. She lunges out and starts pounding Jake with her small fists. Their earlier-seen playful roughhousing has turned ugly. The coffee table is knocked over.

Jake and H fall back on the couch, jabbing and rending into each other. H on offense, Jake on defense.

INT. KOREAN GROCERY LOBBY--NIGHT

A distraught smattering of Clubgoers go wailing down the main aisle of the Korean grocery and out the violently hiccupping automatic door.

As the club denizens exit, an armed SWAT TEAM OF FIVE MEN stream into the store. They come to a calm huddle back by the double silver doors. The Leader counts off five with his fingers--The team crouches and thrusts through the doors.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

With swift, calm precision, the Swat team spiders low against one of the club walls. In the foreground, literally, are a line of familiar Partygoers, flattened on their stomachs beneath tables-- Jake's Mom, Tabitha, Sabrina, Dawn, June, Ward, and Dominique, who bobs her head up to shout...

DOMINIQUE

Nikki...what do you want?

Gun-arm completely extended, Nicole does a 360 revolve, taking in the full circle of helpless, whimpering representatives of fashion, Media, and everything else. The trembling Trendy. She halts her spin to answer Dominique's question with a smile.

NICOLE

This.

Now strategically spread out at different points in the club, the five SWAT team members simultaneously spring up and aim their rifles. A rising Team Leader seems almost bored as he dryly crackles into a megaphone.

TEAM LEADER

Okay honey, drop your big, shiny weapon...

INT. THE VIP ROOM--NIGHT

Completely spent, Jake and H sit side-by-side on the couch, staring forward, rhythmically trading exhausted breaths for air. The chaos of Nicole defying law enforcement officials occurs right behind them, but far from their consciousness. Taking a slipcover off an arm of the couch, Jake wipes a bloody nose.

JAKE

I'm just saying, H, you're not a model, you're the real thing.

H
Oh Jake, you're not trying to have
a genuine conversation in Lombardi's
VIP room, are you?

JAKE
(rising)
Yes, I am. If you get on that plane
with Lombardi, a part of you is
never coming off. A good part.

H
(emotion re-rumbling)
You don't think I can handle it...

JAKE
It's not about handling it...

Jake cuts off. He finally has looked past H to take in the
insane sight of the Swat team leveling their artillery toward
his tribal warrior ex-girlfriend.

JAKE
H. Gotta go.

H
What are you--Jake-Jake, don't go!
Not yet! Please...

As Jake storms out of the room, H curls back into the couch with
a return to weeping.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

The Swat Team Leader is losing his cool.

TEAM LEADER
Miss! Miss! I'm not going to ask you
again! We will shoot you with real
bullets and kill you dead. Now for
the last time, put down...

DAWN (O.S.)
Wait....

All eyes, including the viewer's, swerve to Dawn Webster.
Shivering onto her feet, Dawn wobbles toward Nicole. Nicole
immediately speeds her laser-sight trajectory to the middle of
Dawn's pristine forehead.

TEAM LEADER
Hold your fire...

DAWN
Please, Nicole Kimberly, Nikki,
ma'am..You shouldn't be doing this..

NICOLE

Whee-hee. You must be "the new me."
Hi me, how am I doing?

DAWN

I care about you so much. Back home,
you were like the Sun to me...every
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...

Slightly melting, Nicole lowers the beam away from Dawn's skull.
June and Ward exchange "Is this for real?" glances.

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-Jake...

The viewer's viewpoint inhales to expose that H is not being
comforted by Jake, but by Lombardi's Female Androgyne Assistant
(H tatoo on her shaved head). They twist for a mouth kiss.

H's eyes open. She springs up from the couch with a gasp.
Lombardi and his disturbing Entourage are revealed to be
lethargically situated around the VIP room. The serenely seated
Lombardi leads some polite applause. H tries to grasp onto the
last of her bearings.

H

Uh...you scared...I'm um, all for
sexual expression and--but I'm, uh,
not a lesbian...

FEMALE ANDROGYNE ASSISTANT.

"Uh." Neither am I.

Everybody titters. Crawling across the ground, a shirtless
BLONDE GNOME picks up the bloody couch-arm slipcover.

BLONDE GNOME

Oh Lombardi...I smell a lost
virginity. Somebody's been bad.

H

Um, that's Jake's blood...

FEMALE ANDROGYNE ASSISTANT

Ooh, you are bad...

The crew ripples with glee. H contorts her face to fake some mutual merriment. Her attention swerves to the bizarre goings-on through the one-way mirror.

H
Wha...what's going on?

LOMBARDI
Oh, one of the ubermodels went native. Industry seems to get off on these occasional hits of violence. Look away my dear, tonight is your night...

Lombardi rises from his throne.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Dawn wobbles closer to her gun-wavering heroine.

DAWN
When you were hurt, so was I. When you broke up with that bassist-- Jared, from Dead Prostitutes--I cried...

NICOLE
I sure as hell didn't...You're cute. It's Dawn, right? You're cute, Dawn. Lot of potential--I'm going to do you a favor...

Nicole malevolently teeters the red laser back up to Dawn's forehead. One feels a trigger about to be squeezed, when suddenly Jake Jacobs steps in before Dawn, right into the gun's visual trajectory.

JAKE
You always had to be the death of the party, didn't you, Nicole?

TEAM LEADER
Hold your fire! Sir, you're not helping...

Bolstering up confidence, the photographers in the house unhatch from their positions of cowering fear--They all simultaneously retrieve their soul-taking weaponry, and load in new film, slap on new bulbs and lenses.

But it is, of all people, Jake's Mom, who is first on the draw. She wearys up from the ground lifting her cheesy instamatic with its stack of mini-flashbulbs. She presses her red button, then frowns to the lack of flash.

NICOLE
You feeding Twiggy? You know she
can't stand any of that "healthy"
crap.

JAKE
I know. Bitch still hates me.

NICOLE
She'll come around. She'll have to.

JAKE
(moving forward)
It doesn't have to be like this?

NICOLE
(smiling)
Could you put that in the form of
an answer?

INT. THE VIP ROOM

Lombardi's and his band of creeps reverberate a ream of laughter--
no doubt at H's expense.

H
We should get back to the party...

MALE ANDROGYNE ASSISTANT
There's an old expression: "When
the Swat team arrives, the party's
over."

The Male Androgyne Assistant clings out from the wall a sleek
and seemingly endless drawer filled with rows and rows of small,
pink-tinted tubes. Each one is labeled with a name. The
assistant tosses one marked H LEAR to Lombardi.

H
Lombardi, you said you wouldn't want
me to do anything that makes me feel
uncomfortable...

LOMBARDI
Oh H, I want you to do everything
that makes you feel uncomfortable.
I want you to walk to the very edge
of everything you are....then jump.

A stylishly dressed PETER LORRE-TYPE opens a box revealing a
diamond pair of scissors. He offers the scissors up to the
passing deity Lombardi who clasps onto them with his free hand.
H anxiously looks to the items in Lombardi's hands and swallows
hard. Fighting her fear, tears begin to sneak out of her eyes.

H
What does that mean exactly...

LOMBARDI

I like to get a lock of hair from
all my girls and boys. Some people
collect stamps...

Lombardi's crew hee-hees. H bites her lip and extends out a
fingerful of hair. The Lombardites laugh louder.

LOMBARDI

Not that hair, my dear.

Lombardi descends to his knees. The entourage leans forward in
a hush.

LOMBARDI

This is a very important moment in
your life. You have to ask yourself,
H: Do you want to travel the world
with me as a tourist...or as a
goddess. Superior, impervious,
indestructible...

H closes her eyes, trying to heroically deaden every cell in
her body. She re-opens her eyes, her face now made of stone.
Her fingernails begin to ever-so-slowly talon up her dress. The
entourage exhales murmurs of excitement.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Jake's Mom shakes her camera and snaps again. This time the
flash goes off.

Nicole winces at this first shot. Jake launches forward and
claws onto Nicole's gun hand. They spin together, locked in a
perverse tango.

The gun goes off--some bottles at the bar explode. The gun goes
off again--a bullethole sears into the vast mirror of the VIP
room. The gun goes off a third time--yet another of the smaller
pill mobiles snaps from the ceiling, shattering and sizzling
its toxic contents into the floor.

IN A MORE SPECIFIC AREA OF THE CLUB

June drawbridges down her jaw and moves toward the VIP mirror.
Confused, Ward follows.

The glass around the VIP mirror's bullethole crackles. The
entire mirror then detonates into falling shards.

A primal image of horror is revealed, perfectly framed like a
painting: Distressed Damsel H stands clinging up her dress--
Lombardi, still demonically kneeling before her, is stoically
clutching his bleeding, bullet-perforated arm--His Boschian
entourage surround the pair in gaping mouth shock.

H breaks the tableau, turning to make eye-contact with her blinded-by-trauma mother. They rush and slam into each other's arms. Ward is now even more confused.

BACK TO THE MAIN AREA OF THE CLUB

The club's attention remains riveted to the couple on the dance floor. Fearful concerns of safety completely evaporated, the paparazzi begin snapping away. Jake and Nicole grapple and swirl amid this hellish discotheque of camera flashes.

Like siblings tired of playing, Jake and Nicole break from each other to bend over and pant. Jake steps forward again. Nicole rockets up the gun-beam to Jake's between-the-eyes area.

TEAM LEADER

Hold your fire! God damnit, will you people stop taking pictures! Jesus! Stop the insanity, you big weirdos!

Jake and Nicole choke out a burst of laughter at this outburst.

TEAM LEADER

Men. On ten. Did you hear that, honey? Ten seconds to drop your gun or we will open fire and you will die. One! Two!

Jake and Nicole guffaw again.

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, giggling away at the loss of her innocence.

INT. DECADENCE CANDY--NIGHT

Back in the present, Jake and Nicole continue to rumble in joviality. Nicole abruptly cuts off, not unamused.

NICOLE

Did he just say ten?

The Swat team members spread out through the club simultaneously ejaculate their artillery. A disturbing ballad (along the lines of the Velvet Underground's "All Tomorrow's Parties" insinuates onto the soundtrack).

Barely having time to recoil from his previous mirth, an ashen Jake dives to the ground.

Violently flinching, H buries her head deeper into her mother's chest.

Bullets fulminate into the remaining bottles in the bar. Presents and birthday cake burst up in vibrating fury. A cable snaps on one the two cables holding up the mother of all the pill mobiles, the colossal one hovering over the dance floor.

The Swat Team leaders casually and professionally withdraw their weaponry.

The viewer is given the briefest of glimpses of Nicole. She is still standing wearing an elegant design of subtle off-red bulletholes symmetrically spread out over her evening dress. Her body crumples.

As Nicole falls, Jake rises to block the viewer from seeing her hit the ground. Dawn tearfully hastens toward her. The photographers bound up next and charge past Jake to get to the body. Dawn is effortlessly trampled by the onslaught.

The paparazzians circle the body and engage in shutterclick slaughter. Jake turns away in revulsion. Even Jake's Mom snaps out another shot from nearby.

Grazing across his club, feeling dazed but pleasant, Lombardi holds the gunshot wound on his arm as if it were a bee sting. As he takes in the frenzy around him, a beatific smile grows on his face. He passes a quaking Jake, who still has his back turned to the madness.

Breaking point breaking, Jake wields around and thunders toward the paparazzi potpurri, careening into Lombardi's shot shoulder on the way there. Jake yanks back the hair of two of the photographers. He punches his fist into another one's lens.

As he pushes and slaps back the others, the view of the viewer arcs upward to the vast, vibrant and venomous pill dangling by a single cord.

At her mother's bosom, H stares out to the ferocious puddle one of the smashed pill decorations caused, as it eats into the ground. Leaning back from her mother, in growing trepidation, she scans above to the the incredibly precarious position of the mightiest pill mobile.

She tilts her POV downward to see Jake helping up Dawn, two shutterbugs still remaining feisty over Nicole's corpse, and Lombardi pacing a circle around them all. Whatever music that's rumbling on the soundtrack instantly stops for H to shriek...

H

Jake!

The characters beneath the pill all swerve to H. Then look up. The wire holding the titanic pill mobile breaks with a ping. The pill's POV floats down toward the two photographers, Lombardi, Dawn, and Jake, who can't help but snort a smile.

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.

JAKE (V.O.)
That crazy psychedelic goo inside the pill was a mixture of some rare African apoxys, hydrochloric acid, dioxin, play-doh, and some other unpronounceable chemicals, all encased in a special glass. It was the perfect Lombardi creation--beautiful to look at, painful to touch...

A glimpse is given of Jake's All Seconds watch. It has stopped, its face completely crushed.

JAKE (V.O.)
The two paparazzi guys took the most direct hit--they died instantly. Before you start applauding, you should know one of them was a father of three...I'm just kidding, they were both childless scumbags who deserved to die. Lombardi got a little of the acid, Dawn got a little of the glass, and I got a little of both...in my eyes.

The viewer's viewpoint inhales a bit to reveal that Jake is being tugged by a harnessed Twiggy, who chugs forward in solemn seeing-eye dog mode. Not without charisma, Jake Jacobs is without sight.

JAKE (V.O.)
It took a lot of strangeness and harshness, but I think I have finally lost my Cool. I so wish Nicole was alive to witness it. She went into Decadence Candy that night to die, but of course, she came out immortal. That's pure Nicole for you. I'll miss her. So will her dog. That is, my dog.

Jake drifts past AN IDLE CABBIE leaning against his vehicle. The driver is reading THE PARTY'S OVER: THE NIKKI KIM STORY, while blowing a familiar blue bubble from his mouth.

JAKE (V.O.)

Did I tell you I started an agency?
Not the one Ward Lear planned for
me. Not one anyone would have
planned for me.

Smiling, he turns into a building with a sign reading JAKE'S.

INT. JAKE'S OFFICE

Still in his now-very-purposeful sunglasses, Jake comfortably paces an unpretentious office. A LARGE, HIGHLY UNMODELESQUE, 34 YEAR OLD WOMAN. with a very friendly but not unfascinating look to her, sits before his desk. Jake approaches her and carefully places his hand upon her face.

JAKE (V.O.)

My agency has no height
requirements, no weight
requirements, no requirements
period. I sign my clients by talking
to them, touching them, not by
looking at them...

MONTAGE OF IMAGES

The viewer is given a thundering montage-collage of advertisements for prestigious products involving a cascade of delightfully unfashionable MEN AND WOMAN instead of the stereotypically perfect specimens one would expect.

JAKE (V.O.)

I know, I know, what a bunch of
wonderfully touching horseshit. But
man, for a glorified character actor
agency, we've received a lot of
publicity and a lot of good vibes.

INT. BACK TO THE OFFICE--DAY

Jake carefully sits behind his desk and slides the Highly Unmodelesque Woman a contract. Her image 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 nifty one. The agency is doing
phenomenal business. Whatever
happens, 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 quirky actual-self.

H

If it's between that and the Clark's macaroni and cheese commercial-- forget about 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 dickin' 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!

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. But you see, I've talked to her mother...

JUNE

(high irony)

Yeah, I know. She seems to think her child should have a childhood. Dumb bitch.

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 parent as it did to be a good one. And then there's Ward Lear...

WARD
..and I can't get that night at D.C. out of my head. It's just...it's just...I don't understand why everything can't be...I don't know..sexy...
(wistful look)
Nicole Kimberly...I never fucked her. You think you're going to have time to give your love to everyone...

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, teardrop.

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, holding a notepad. 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." Led by Twiggy, 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. I guess you could say Dawn Webster was at the right face at the right time. Read something about a sales record. I try not to think too much about it.

EXT. BENEATH THE MURAL--DAY

Lombardi's Spooky Male and Female Androgyne 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 scorched in a way that is painful to behold. Resting 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.

H

See ya later, Jacob.

JAKE

Rub it in.

H

(with a laugh)

Jerk.

H gives Jake a melancholy stare, then blows him an exquisite kiss, which Jake can neither see nor feel. H gulps, then revs her scooter. As she motors away, Jake and Twiggy turn and reweave into the colorful Manhattan pedestrian traffic.

JAKE (V.O.,)

We're told that we should take more seriously what fashion and modeling and the media are doing to our young people. What about taking it less seriously? I mean, come on, when it comes to things like "ex-ploi-tation," modeling agencies are nothing--absolutely nothing next to parents, friends, and lovers...

As Jake and Twiggy continue their promenade, beneath the former's narration, more and more passersby, to an almost surreal degree, can be observed blowing Lombardi's blue bubble-gum bubble.

JAKE (V.O.)

Go to any expecting parent, strap a good lie detector on them, then ask if them if they would rather have their daughter be beautiful or brilliant? What about "both," you say? Man, "both" would come in second. "Just beautiful" would kick "both"'s ass. One has to wonder if that will ever change. One has to wonder if the pressure to be lovely, simply lovely, will ever fade. I wonder a lot lately. Will H become the world-changing superwoman I've idealized her to be or will she just settle down and marry a really cute guy? Will my absurd agency honestly last another month? Another week? What would I do if I had to get a real job? Anyway, that's not this story. That's the story after this story. I'd like to think it'll have an even happier ending...But then, maybe I'm just blind--

Jake's narration cuts off as the sightless Jake bumps into THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LITTLE GIRL IN THE WORLD. Jake crunches to his knees. Twiggy fruitlessly barks at the passing Sunny girl, who is holding the hand of HER MOTHER. The viewer abandons our 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.....