

THE STEPFORD WIVES

by

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The Stepford Wives

FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - MORNING

CREDITS BEGIN.

As a pulsating, hip-hop version of "I AM WOMAN" is heard, we see a MONTAGE of terrific American women, on their way to work. The city looks glossy and great, and seems entirely populated by confident, successful, determined women of all ages, races and sizes. Every glass ceiling has been shattered: women rule.

ANGLE on three sophisticated female executives, dressed in Michael Kors and Donna Karan, with slim, calfskin attaché cases, striding through Times Square, carrying cups of Starbucks coffee.

ANGLE on a fire engine, driving by: all of the uniformed firefighters are women. They wave. A group of female police officers wave back.

ANGLE on a recruiting billboard, with a photo of proud women in military uniforms. The billboard reads "A FEW GOOD WOMEN."

ANGLE on a huge video screen, showing the all-female New York Liberty basketball team, racing down the court. A star

player makes a slam dunk, as the crowd cheers.

ANGLE on a courtroom: the Judge, bailiffs, all of the attorneys and all of the spectators are women. The lone male defendant looks very nervous.

ANGLE on an operating room: all of the doctors and nurses are women. The male patient on the table looks very nervous.

ANGLE on a gang of 12-year-old girls, happily skateboarding and roller-blading through Central Park. After they pass, we see one 12-year-old boy on roller blades, left in the dust, struggling to catch up.

ANGLE on a scene from a "Tomb Raider" video game, as Lara

ANGLE on the Powerpuff Girls, soaring into the stratosphere, fists raised.

ANGLE on a busy midtown street corner: a huge crowd, all female, waits for the light to change, or for a female traffic cop to gesture to them. At the signal, the women surge towards the camera.

ANGLE on Times Square, where all of the billboards and video screens feature images of successful, even legendary women. The faces include Diane Sawyer, Barbara Walters, Sandra Day O'Connor, Condoleezza Rice, J.K. Rowling, Oprah Winfrey, Sally Ride, Ruth Ginsberg, Katie Couric, Hillary Clinton, Rosie O'Donnell, Venus and Serena Williams and, finally, the Statue Of Liberty.

HELEN (OS)

Ladies and gentlemen, I would now like to introduce a legend in our industry.

INT. MEETING HALL - DAY

The place is packed, with representatives from the network's affiliates from all across the country.

ANGLE on HELEN DEVLIN, a distinguished, powerful, silver-haired woman in her sixties, standing behind a podium onstage. Behind her is a large projection screen, which is currently filled with the logo for the United Broadcasting Network.

HELEN

She's the first woman to become a network President in history. And for the past five years, she's kept us at the very top of the ratings. And she's here today, to present our most extraordinary season ever. Please welcome a giant, a genius, and the hardest working...person in television - Joanna Eberhart!

As the crowd ROARS, leaping to its feet and applauding, the projection screen is filled with a glossy photo of Joanna, as Joanna herself strides onstage.

JOANNA EBERHART looks fantastic - she's gorgeous, magnetically confident, and she works unbelievably hard. She tends to wear almost only beautifully cut black silk suits, and she's got a perfect, sleek hairstyle. Joanna is a brilliant success story and she's prepared for a great day. She loves what she does, and she's at the very top of her game - she's glorious.

Joanna and Helen share an air-kiss, and Helen takes a seat. Joanna stands at the podium, basking in the applause, beaming.

JOANNA

Thank you, thank you all so much - whoa! That feels good! Especially coming from such a fantastic group of people, from all across this great country, our network affiliates! Give yourselves a great big hand!

(as the crowd cheers and applauds)

Let's hear it! You deserve it! And I want a raise! I'm kidding! But not really!

(as she quiets the applause)

Because I am so excited, I am so on fire, I am so guts-and-glory passionate about what I'm about to show you. This is programming so addictive, so beyond mind blowing, so 100% unmissable, that I'm calling this season - Can't Pee TV. Yes.

(the crowd BUZZES)

So get ready, because on Monday nights, the whole world will be watching - "Balance Of Power." An incredible new show where hot young couples will compete to see just who's the alpha partner.

On the video screen, we see the futuristic set of a "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?"-style game show. A MAN and a WOMAN sit atop separate columns; the columns will move up and down, as each contestant scores or loses. A sleazy HOST fires questions at the couple, and each contestant holds a buzzer. The woman is sleek and aggressive, and the man is nerdy.

HOST

Who makes more money?

WOMAN

(slamming her buzzer)

I do.

HOST

Who enters Ironman events every year, and wins?

WOMAN

(slamming her buzzer)

I do.

HOST
Who has the larger penis?

MAN
(slamming his buzzer)
She does.

HOST
That's right, for fifty points!

WOMAN
(frustrated)
I knew that!

ANGLE on Joanna, as the screen returns to the network logo.

JOANNA
And on Wednesday, the sizzle turns into skyrockets, with something bold, provocative and yet also deeply emotional. It's about parents, it's about kids, it's about all of us, and it's called "Who Loves You?" It's our new edge-of-the-edge show where divorced couples will go head to head and heartache to heartache, when they battle it out for, that's right - the custody of their children.

ANGLE on the video screen, where we see another game show set, based on a stylized courtroom. A MOM and a DAD stand in witness boxes at opposite ends of the set. Three young CHILDREN are seated midway between their parents. The HOST is dressed like a cartoon judge. A clock and various neon signs track the fate of the children. The Host bangs his gavel.

JUDGE
Housing!

DAD
I have a penthouse loft.

MOM
I have a place at the beach.

JUDGE
Food!

DAD
Gourmet ice cream.

MOM
Pizza.

JUDGE
Outright bribes!

DAD
Your own Amex cards.

MOM
A cocker spaniel puppy.

JUDGE
Family values!

DAD
I will love you and cherish you,
and make our relationship the most
important thing in my life.

MOM
You never have to tell me where
you're going, or who your friends
are. I don't care, because I'm
usually drunk.

The kids all look at each other and nod in agreement. They
buzz their buzzers.

JUDGE
Kids?

KID #1
(acting as the
spokesperson)
Mom.

As the studio audience applauds wildly:

JUDGE
(banging his gavel)
It's Mom!

ANGLE on Joanna, as the network logo reappears.

JOANNA
And as for Thursdays, well, there's
a little something which I like to
call the end of "Friends."

(she gets very
emotional)
No, this is not just a TV show.
This is a breakthrough, a breakout,
a break-all-the-rules-and-bring-on-
the-Emmys mega-smash. This show
power-blasts right into the
throbbing, bleeding, life-giving
heart of what really goes on
between a man and a woman.

(MORE)

JOANNA (CONT'D)

May I humbly but proudly but ecstatically - can you tell that I like this show? May I present the planet's ultimate reality phenomenon "I Can Do Better."

(as we see the show's title graphics, and the camera begins to zoom in on a gorgeous tropical island)

We'll all be right there, as happily married couples are flown First Class to a tropical island paradise, for a moonlit, sun-kissed, star-crossed glands-in-the-sand week. Because those lucky couples will be completely surrounded by steamy, sensual, heat-seeking singles. And at the end of the week, well, let's take a peek:

The set of the show has been constructed over a lagoon. It's Polynesian-inspired, with a towering Tiki god statue, blazing torches and lots of bamboo. The two contestants, HANK and BARBARA, stand on separate rope bridges. They both wear grass skirts, Hawaiian shirts and leis. The show's HOST wears safari attire.

HOST

It's been a week. And Hank, our personnel manager from Omaha, has spent the entire seven days with Kelly, our flight attendant and centerfold. So Hank, it's time.

KELLY, a knockout babe in a bikini, enters.

HANK

Well, it's been quite a week. I mean, in real life, I could never even talk to a girl like Kelly. And okay, I'll admit it, we've been having a great time, in the hot tub and all. But you know something? All we've done is talk. About just how much I love my wife. Because that's the only place I really want to be - back in Omaha, with my Barbara.

AUDIENCE ON THE SHOW

Awww...

HOST

And Barbara, you spent Monday with Rocky, our extreme sports/bodybuilder/male escort.

ROCKY, a shirtless hunk, appears.

BARBARA
I sure did!

ANGLE on Hank, looking nervous.

HOST
And you spent Tuesday through
Thursday with the Brazilian Mens
Water Polo Team! Did you spend much
time in the pool?

TWELVE BRAZILIAN HUNKS, all in Speedos and tank tops, enter
and surround Barbara. They rub up against her and nuzzle her
neck, and she moans ecstatically.

BARBARA
I went for the gold!

The crowd ROARS its approval.

ANGLE on Hank, looking even more nervous.

HOST
And you spent the whole weekend
with Tonkiro.

TONKIRO, an impossibly tall, rangy island guy, with waist-
length dreadlocks, and a smile of absolute confidence,
enters.

BARBARA
(so turned on she
can barely speak)
"Tonkiro" is an island word.

HANK
What does it mean?

BARBARA
"Tongue."

CROWD
WHOA!!!

HOST
So, Barbara, what's it gonna be? Or
to be more specific, who's it gonna
be? Omaha? Or Oh-my-hunks?

BARBARA
Well, before I came on this show, I
only had sex with one man, and that
was usually Hank.

ANGLE on Hank, looking stunned by this information.

BARBARA

But you know, Hank and I have been married for 18 years. We have two great kids, and Hank's always been there for me. He put me through school, and he paid for all of my Mom's operations. He's an amazing guy.

ANGLE on Hank, looking grateful.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I love Hank deeply and forever, with all my heart, and I would never do anything to hurt him.

Tonkiro makes a sensual movement with his tongue.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

But I can do better!

The Host hands Barbara an axe, and she slams it into the rope bridge holding Hank's platform above the water. Hank falls into the ocean, as Barbara and Tonkiro start making out passionately. The crowd goes crazy.

CROWD

YAY!!!

ANGLE on Joanna, as the network logo freezes on the screen.

JOANNA

The battle of the sexes - as old as time, as current as an e-mail from your ex-wife's attorney. And we're gonna get there first!

HANK (OS)

Why?

JOANNA

(looking around to see who's talking)

Excuse me?

HANK (OS)

Why did you do it?

As everyone in the room buzzes and looks around:

JOANNA

(who still can't see who's talking)

Do what? Who's there?

ANGLE on Hank, the luckless husband from "I Can Do Better." He's standing in the center aisle. His hair is a frizzy mess, and he looks wild-eyed and out of control. SECURITY GUARDS are grabbing him.

JOANNA

No, no! Let him speak!

HANK

You're the devil!

JOANNA

Hank? Look everyone, it's Hank! From "I Can Do Better"! Let's hear it!

HANK

(as the crowd APPLAUDS)

No! Stop it! I loved Barbara! I had a family! I had a life!

JOANNA

And now you're on a great new show!

HANK

But she's gone!

JOANNA

(very compassionate)

Hank. Hank. I know it hurts. Love isn't easy. Relationships aren't easy. Not for anyone.

(to the room)

Am I right?

ANGLE on the crowd, as everyone nods ruefully, agreeing with Joanna.

CROWD

No...

JOANNA

(to Hank)

You see? We've all been there. We're on your side.

HANK

But she told everyone I was a loser! And that our marriage meant nothing!

JOANNA

But you mean something. To me. And to all of us. Because we care about you.

(MORE)

JOANNA (CONT'D)

And because you do still have a family, right here. The UEN family.

HANK

I do?

JOANNA

And because now you know the truth, about Barbara. And you can move on with your life. Because you're gonna meet someone wonderful. And America is gonna love you. And do you know why?

HANK

Why?

JOANNA

(to the crowd)

Why? Because...

JOANNA AND THE ENTIRE ROOM

You can do better!

HANK

And I've got a great idea, for another new, hot show!

JOANNA

Well, let's hear it!

HANK

It's called, "Let's Kill All The Women"!

Hank pulls out a GUN and FIRES at Joanna, who ducks, hitting the floor, as everyone in the room SCREAMS, and then SECURITY GUARDS grab Hank and disarm him.

INT. HELEN'S OFFICE

We are in a large, mahogany-panelled corner office. Helen sits behind her massive, spotless desk. Several BOARD MEMBERS stand or sit nearby. They are all talking to each other heatedly, as the door opens.

ANGLE on the office door. Joanna enters, frazzled, but still holding it together.

HELEN

Joanna! Are you alright?

JOANNA

I'm fine.

The Board Members all quickly file out, keeping their heads down, unable to look Joanna in the eye.

JOANNA

(to the Board Members, as they exit)

Frank...Katharine...Bill...Amy...

The Board Members are gone.

HELEN

Are you sure you're okay?

JOANNA

The police have taken care of everything, and I'm completely unharmed. And actually, I've been thinking about Hank's idea. It could fly, but let's think paintballs.

HELEN

You haven't heard?

JOANNA

About what?

HELEN

That man, Hank, before he tried to kill you, he went to see his ex-wife. And five of her new boyfriends.

JOANNA

He did?

HELEN

He shot all of them. The wife is in critical condition, and four of the guys are on life support.

JOANNA

(stunned)

Tonkiro?

HELEN

He's fine.

JOANNA

(as it all sinks in)

Oh my God. Oh my God.

HELEN

So you know what this means?

JOANNA

Of course. We pay for all of their medical treatment. Every penny. We get them the very best therapists, childcare, rehab, whatever they need. And then we fly all of them to New York, First Class, for a primetime special - "Hank And Barbara: Let The Healing Begin."

HELEN

You're not listening. The lawsuits alone may bankrupt the network. And all of your new shows, the whole lineup--the affiliates won't touch them. Haven't you seen the news?

Helen points a remote at a wall of video monitors; each monitor shows ongoing news footage.

ANGLE on the first monitor, as Helen brings up the sound. We see a composite photo of Joanna's face and footage of five ambulances pulling up at a hospital.

NEWSCASTER (VO)

Earlier today, a reality show became all too real...

ANGLE on the second monitor. We see a network REPORTER, seated in front of a huge graphic collage of Joanna, Jerry Springer and Geraldo Rivera.

REPORTER

All over this land, people are asking: Joanna Eberhart - has she gone too far?

ANGLE on the third monitor. We see an ANCHORMAN, in front of a splitscreen graphic of Joanna and Hank, with his gun.

ANCHORMAN

...and the question the nation can't stop asking is this: why did he miss?

HELEN

I love you, Joanna, you're like my daughter, but according to the polls, at this very moment you're the most hated woman in America.

JOANNA

So we bring back Kathie Lee!

HELEN

I'm sorry, but we have to make a sacrifice. But I wish you only the best. You know that.

ANGLE on Joanna. She smiles, graciously.

JOANNA

Of course. And I only want what's best for the network. And Helen, really, thank you, for five terrific years.

HELEN

Thank you. Especially for being so classy, and for taking this so well.

JOANNA

Onwards.

Joanna exits.

EXT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE HELEN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

All of the network secretaries, assistants and junior executives clearly know what's been going on. As Joanna leaves the office, they all pretend to be very busy.

ANGLE on Joanna, taking this in. She smiles and nods, and begins walking through the office, past all of the many desks and employees. Everyone pretends to be working, but they're all obviously watching Joanna.

ANGLE on HEATHER KIMBLE, Joanna's assistant. Heather is young and blonde, a Joanna wannabe. She approaches Joanna, carrying Joanna's briefcase.

HEATHER

Joanna? I just wanted to say, it's so not fair.

JOANNA

(taking the briefcase)

Thank you, Heather. And could you do me a favor? Could you please call my children's school, and tell them I'm coming to pick them up? They go to St. Andrew's.

HEATHER

Um, not for the past six months. Now they go to Dalton.

JOANNA

Both of them?

HEATHER

Um, yes.

JOANNA

I knew that.

HEATHER

And your husband called. He should
be here any second.

ANGLE on the elevator doors, which open, revealing Joanna's husband, WALTER KRESBY. Walter is attractive, but also ruffled and dweeby. He's spent his whole life trying to be accommodating, and there's a reservoir of rage bubbling beneath his techno-geek exterior. He opens his arms to Joanna.

WALTER

Baby.

JOANNA AND HEATHER

(at the same time)

Walter.

Joanna turns; she looks at Heather, and then at Walter. They both look stricken and guilty.

JOANNA

Walter?

HEATHER

Oh my God...

WALTER

I'm sorry, I...I...it's not what it
looks like...

HEATHER

Joanna, it's over, I swear, as of
right now...

JOANNA

(still completely calm and
upbeat)

No, it's fine. Walter, we have a
lot to talk about. But right now,
I've got things to do.

(very cheerful, to the
whole room)

Bye, everybody! All the best!

Joanna steps into the elevator. As the elevator doors begin to close, Joanna crumbles and begins SCREAMING UNCONTROLLABLY.

INT. SECURITY GUARD STATION - SAME TIME

We're behind the front desk of the office building. A uniformed GUARD is watching the video monitors which cover various checkpoints throughout the building. One of the monitors shows Joanna, in the elevator, screaming.

INT. BELLEVUE - THE NEXT DAY

We're in the patients' lounge at this midtown psychiatric hospital. The room is large and depressing, and both the walls and the furniture are institutional green. Various patients sit or stand, accompanied by family members or uniformed attendants. Car horns and construction noise are heard from outside.

ANGLE on Joanna and Walter, standing near a window. Joanna is a complete wreck, in a limp hospital gown and slippers. Her hair is a scraggly mess. She's like a broken mustang, unsure and bereft. Walter tries to be supportive.

JOANNA

What...what happened?

WALTER

Well, you've had a complete nervous collapse.

JOANNA

(staring at her scraggly hair)

No, I mean to my hair.

WALTER

It's only been a day, and the doctors say there's lots of work to do. But you're going to be fine.

JOANNA

Walter...Walter...

WALTER

Jo?

JOANNA

How could you? With Heather?

WALTER

I told you, I was so lonely. I never get to see you...

JOANNA

No, I mean, how could you sleep with my assistant? She doesn't even have an MBA.

WALTER

Joanna?

JOANNA

What did you talk about?

WALTER

It doesn't matter, it didn't mean anything. And I just want you to get better.

JOANNA

How are the kids?

WALTER

They're fine, but they miss you. And Pete made this for you.

ANGLE on a drawing that Walter takes out of a folder. It's a crude, very cheerful, brightly colored kindergarten drawing of a stick figure shooting Joanna.

JOANNA

(holding the picture, very touched)

That's so sweet...

WALTER

And I just want you to know that, the minute I heard the news, I called Helen, and I quit.

JOANNA

You did that? For me?

WALTER

Of course. I know I was only a Vice-President...

JOANNA

A Junior Vice-President...

WALTER

In charge of marketing...

JOANNA

Only on the web...

WALTER

But I could never work with those people, not after the way they treated you.

JOANNA

(very moved)

That's so...beautiful. I mean, it's not like you were in line for anything, but that's so...so...

WALTER

And do you remember what today is? It's our anniversary.

JOANNA

Really? Of what?

WALTER

Our wedding day.

JOANNA

Oh, Walter. Oh my God. Maybe this whole thing, this whole mess, maybe it's a wake-up call.

WALTER

What do you mean?

JOANNA

Maybe that man, who tried to shoot me, maybe he was right. Maybe I've become the wrong kind of woman. Maybe all of my decisions, about my life and my shows and my marriage...

WALTER

Our marriage...

JOANNA

Right, and about my kids...

WALTER AND JOANNA

Our kids...

JOANNA

I've been so wrong. And so neglectful. And so selfish.

WALTER

No, no, it's okay, it's my fault too, I was weak...

JOANNA

And I was strong...

WALTER

Jo?

JOANNA

And all I really want, more than anything is to make it right. To fix things. To fix me. For you. And for our children.

A NURSE appears, pushing an empty wheelchair.

NURSE

(to Walter)

Mr. Eberhart?

WALTER

I'm Mr. Kresby.

JOANNA

(sincerely, to the nurse)

He kept his name.

NURSE

(to Joanna)

It's time for your first treatment.

WALTER

(helping Joanna into the wheelchair)

I'll be right here.

JOANNA

(to the nurse, as she's being wheeled away)

Wait, please.

(to Walter)

Do you think, could I, could we start all over again? And get it right?

WALTER

I'd like that. I'd love that.

NURSE

(wheeling Joanna out)

Time to go.

JOANNA

(to Walter, over her shoulder)

But where?

EXT. TURNPIKE - DAY, TWO WEEKS LATER

We see an aerial view of a car moving along the Connecticut Turnpike.

PETE (OS)

But why are we moving?

KIMBERLY (OS)

To Connecticut?

INT. SUV - SAME TIME

Walter is driving; Joanna huddles, leaning her face against the window. She's still completely shell-shocked. PETE, their six-year-old son and KIMBERLY, their five-year-old daughter, sit in the back seat. Pete has scraggly blue hair and wears baggy, skateboarding attire. Kimberly is an extremely bright clone of her mother; she wears an all-black outfit and has a shiny, no-nonsense haircut.

WALTER

We're moving to give all of us a better life. In a wonderful new town, where we can have trees and sunlight and fresh air. We're moving so that we can be the happiest family in the world.

KIMBERLY

(not worried)

Did they give Mommy electroshock?

WALTER

Of course not. She's just a little tired.

Joanna has been chewing on a battered Styrofoam Big Gulp cup. Walter grabs the cup out of her mouth.

WALTER

No, honey. Not food.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

ANGLE on a beautifully handcrafted wooden sign, anchored in a blooming garden. The sign reads, "WELCOME TO STEPFORD." Just beyond the sign is a gatehouse, beside an imposing double-gate which secures the entrance to the town. The gatehouse and gates are designed in a charming, colonial style, but they clearly mean business. A uniformed SECURITY GUARD leans out of the gatehouse.

GUARD
Name?

WALTER
Kresby.

GUARD
(checking his clipboard)
Welcome to Stepford.

The gates OPEN, and Walter drives through.

EXT. MCMANSION - DAY

The SUV pulls up in front of a particularly grand McMansion, which will be the family's new home. The house is both gorgeous and architecturally appalling; it's a brand new, overscaled, Federal-style dream home, combining lots of brick, white woodwork, classical detailing and landscaping, so lush and ideal that it was obviously installed within the week. There is a towering, colonnaded front porch and a three-car garage.

CLAIRE WELLINGTON stands in front of the house. She's an elegant yet gracious Connecticut matron, a combination of patrician hostess and tennis gal. She's tan and blonde, in great shape, with a cashmere cardigan tossed over the shoulders of her trim-fitting LaCoste shirtwaist. She's the soul of Stepford - perky, chummy, ultra-capable and a little scary. She's the woman Martha Stewart longs to be. She waves merrily, and flashes her vibrant smile.

CLAIRE
(calling out)
Hello, everyone! I'm Mrs.
Wellington. Welcome to Stepford!

As the family climbs out of the SUV:

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
I'm with Stepford Realty, we spoke
on the phone. You must be Walter.

WALTER
So nice to meet you, in person.

CLAIRE
And the little ones. I'll bet that
you're Pete.

PETE
Tough call.

CLAIRE
And Kimberly. Aren't you just the
cutest little bug?

KIMBERLY
No.

CLAIRE
Isn't she sassy? And a little sad-
And this must be Joanna.

Claire goes to hug Joanna, who's been holding back, still in
a fog.

CLAIRE
(sympathetically, to Walter)
Electroshock?

WALTER
But she's doing great.

CLAIRE
(to Joanna)
Hello, little energizer. Come on
in!

INT. GREAT ROOM - DAY

ANGLE on Claire, standing in the middle of the room.

CLAIRE
The minute Walter called me, I knew
this house was perfect for you.
It's the top of the line, here at
Stepfordshire Estates. And it's got
everything an American family will
ever need.

ANGLE on Joanna, Walter and the kids, in a huddled group,
looking around, awestruck.

CLAIRE
May I present the Great Room. I
call it cozy.

The camera PANS around the immense, absurdly high-ceilinged
family room - there's a soaring fireplace, endless windows
and several conversational clusters of huge couches and
armchairs. The decorating style combines elements of
traditional Americana with ultramodern comfort; it's all
very inviting and expensive, if somewhat impersonal. The
house looks like a magazine layout, or a computer-generated
fantasy. If there are bookshelves, they're filled with
plants and collectibles, not books.

ANGLE on an entertainment center - the various screens, speakers and control panels are either built in, or are revealed from behind oil paintings of country inns and horses. Claire holds a major remote.

CLAIRE

And it's a smart house. Your entertainment center receives over 2,000 channels and includes a full DVD library, along with remotes for the entire home. Including mood...

(easy listening music is heard)

climate control...

(a fire springs up in the fireplace)

and lighting...

(the lights adjust themselves appealingly)

and look - here's the puppy!

ANGLE on a Japanese-made robot DOG, which approaches Joanna. The dog stands on its hind legs and makes whimpering noises.

CLAIRE

He likes you!

JOANNA

(petting the dog)

Hi, there.

(realizing she's petting a robot)

What am I doing?

CLAIRE

Oh, but I've just been jabbering away, I can be such a chatterbox, as my husband will tell you.

(she beams and touches her heart)

Just wait until you meet him.

JOANNA

Is he...like you?

CLAIRE

Oh, no. Mike is...he's...

(she's almost tearful with adoration)

...he's a genius, I'm married to the most wonderful man in the world. Just like you are, Joanna. Isn't that right?

ANGLE on Joanna, staring around the room, still overwhelmed.

CLAIRE
Joanna?

WALTER
Jo?

JOANNA
What?

CLAIRE
(putting her arm comfortingly
around Joanna)
How many volts?

INT. BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

As lush, romantic music plays, the camera PANS around this deluxe master suite, taking in the window seat, the fireplace, the matching chaises and the elaborate cabinetry. Finally we reach the enormous bed. The bedding is ridiculously lavish; there's a billowing duvet, high-end sheets and zillions of unnecessary pillows. Walter is all but buried beneath all of this excessive linen, but he looks happy, like a little prince.

WALTER
(calling out, gently)
How're you doin'?

Joanna enters, from the bathroom. She's just had a long hot bath. She's wearing her robe, and drying her hair. She looks better, and more pulled together, but she's still very fragile.

JOANNA
Better. A little better.

WALTER
You look good. Very good. Stepford agrees with you.

Walter tries to kiss her. She turns away.

WALTER
Is this about - Heather?

JOANNA
I know it didn't mean anything, I know she was just - available, but it's just that I always used to whip her ass at racquetball. I mean, every time. And now she probably thinks we're even.

WALTER

Do you know why I came to work for you, at the network?

JOANNA

Well, because I helped you with your resumé and because I told everyone that your little goatee thing was just a phase...

WALTER

No. I took the job because I thought we'd be together. That we could share a cab to the office, and have lunch everyday...

JOANNA

I was busy, I was running a network...

WALTER

Exactly. And you were so busy that we haven't made love in over a year.

JOANNA

Oh my God...

WALTER

That's right.

JOANNA

And I told Heather to put it on my schedule. Have sex with Walter.

WALTER

So she did.

JOANNA

She thought I was delegating.

WALTER

Maybe.

JOANNA

(sincerely)
She's good.

WALTER

And I thought that you wouldn't even notice. And I missed you so much.

JOANNA

But I've always loved you, don't you know that?

WALTER

Why?

JOANNA

Because you're goofy and handsome and because, when you beat yourself at computer chess, you do that little victory dance...

WALTER

And why else?

JOANNA

Because you're my husband. And from the very first time I saw you, back in college, I wanted you, so much. I chose you. I hired you.

WALTER

I know. And I'm so sorry, about Heather. And now that we're here, I'll never have to do that again.

JOANNA

Was she - good sex?

WALTER

Well...

JOANNA

Look who I'm asking.

INT. GREAT ROOM - DAY

The room is empty and very quiet. Joanna enters; she's still shaky but she's pulled her hair back and wears a robe or sweats. She carries a cup of coffee and looks around the room. She's very wary, completely out of her element. She moves to a window, and peeks out.

EXT. STREET - DAY

ANGLE on a woman at a nearby house. She's on her knees, happily working in her flowerbed. She wears a straw sunhat and a crisp gardening apron, with daisies on it. She looks up and smiles.

ANGLE on another woman, at the open window of another nearby house. She's holding a freshly-baked pie. She inhales the aroma, her eyes shut, beaming. She puts the pie on the windowsill to cool. She waves.

ANGLE on another woman, across the street. She's beautifully groomed and dressed; she's also almost done washing her family's SUV. There's a hose and bucket nearby. The woman is waxing and buffing the vehicle with a chamois cloth. The woman's husband emerges from the house, and comes up behind her. He presses himself to her, his hands cupping her breasts. Her eyes close, her head tilts back and she moans, happily.

INT. GREAT ROOM - SAME TIME

Joanna jerks away from the window, stunned by what she's just seen.

She backs into the room. She hears a whimpering NOISE. She jumps, startled.

ANGLE on the robot dog, staring at Joanna, wagging its mechanical tail, perhaps with a ball in its mouth. The dog tilts its head quizzically.

JOANNA

Oh my God...

From outside we hear a car horn HONK. Joanna jumps again.

CLAIRE (OS)

Joanna!

INT. CLAIRE'S SUV - DAY

Claire is driving, with Joanna beside her. While Claire is in sunny sportswear, and perhaps a kerchief, Joanna still wears urban black, a shirt and sweats.

CLAIRE

The town is over 200 years old. It was founded by George Washington, and Martha just loved it.

As Claire continues, we tour Stepford, as Joanna looks out her window.

EXT. STEPFORD - DAY

CLAIRE (OS)

But we've stayed right up to date. We've got the finest schools, water and air quality in the state.

ANGLE on Stepford, the ultimate modern, extremely upscale suburb.

The whole town seems like some enchanted Disney creation, a Beverly Hills theme park of small-town serenity. Every building is either some professionally and expensively restored marvel of New England quaintness, or an architect's zillion-dollar re-imagining of colonial splendor. All of the homes are costly, extravagantly landscaped, soaring McMansions. These homes are designed to showcase the very newest money, in the most ostentatious manner possible. Each house is a Versailles, or an English manor, or a shingle-style palace. While absurd, these monstrosities are also extremely appealing: Stepford is a paradise of family luxury and high-security ease.

JOANNA (OS)

But why are all the houses so huge?

CLAIRE (OS)

Because they're bursting with families, and love. And the profits from all of our wonderful local businesses.

INT. SUV - DAY

JOANNA

What businesses?

CLAIRE

Oh, just man stuff. Isn't Walter doing some consulting?

JOANNA

Man stuff?

CLAIRE

(smiling)

And our local teams are tops in baseball, football and soccer.

EXT. STEPFORD - DAY

ANGLE on a group of tousled, sweaty Stepford BOYS, very Abercrombie & Fitch, playing soccer. They pause to cheer and wave.

CLAIRE (OS)

And we've also produced the last three Miss Connecticut!

ANGLE on a group of blonde, beaming Stepford girl CHEERLEADERS, all in immaculate uniforms, like a Covergirl ad. They jump up and down and wave their pompoms.

CLAIRE (OS)
 Stepford is Connecticut's family
 paradise. There's no crime, no
 poverty and no pushing.

INT. SUV - DAY

Joanna is peering out her window.

JOANNA
 And what's that up on the hill?

EXT. STEPFORD - DAY

Joanna's POV. Up a high hill sits a Victorian mansion which houses the Stepford Men's Association. It's the only building in Stepford which doesn't seem quite wholesome. It's got a wide porch, and plenty of gingerbread and turrets. It seems shadowy and eerie, with a Stephen King aura - it's like a perfectly restored version of the house in "Psycho."

CLAIRE (OS)
 Why, that's our Stepford Men's
 Association. It's where all of our
 wonderful guys can get together,
 and stay out of our hair - am I
 right?

INT. SUV - SAME TIME

Joanna is staring out at the Men's Association building - she's disturbed by it, but she's not sure why.

JOANNA
 But where do the women go?

CLAIRE
 We go right here - to the Simply
 Stepford Day Spa.

EXT. SPA - DAY

As Claire's SUV pulls into the parking lot, Joanna looks in wonder at the exterior of the Simply Stepford Day Spa, a glamorous, modern building - it's a showplace, a blend of futuristic laboratory and glossy salon, like the Ponds Institute or the Vidal Sassoon Academy. The parking lot is filled with brand new SUV'S, and beautiful local women are entering the facility.

INT. SPA LOBBY - DAY

The lobby is lush and soothing, carpeted in white or blush pink, and lined with mirrors and shelving displaying beauty products. The lighting is pink and flattering. Claire and Joanna approach the front desk, where a lovely young RECEPTIONIST, in a pink and white uniform, greets them.

RECEPTIONIST

Joanna?

JOANNA

How did you know?

RECEPTIONIST

We've been expecting you. Your husband has bought you a full membership.

(handing her a brochure)

With gift coupons for our seaweed wrap, serenity scrub, full manicure, pedicure, fruit acid peel and miracle massage. Plus complimentary consultations with our hair stylist, makeup artist and plastic surgeon. You'll have a busy week.

JOANNA

Do I really need all that?

RECEPTIONIST

(smiling graciously)

Yes.

Claire points Joanna towards a mirror.

ANGLE on Joanna's reflection she nods in agreement; she's a wreck.

INT. YOGA ROOM - DAY

We are now in a spacious, beautifully lit, open studio, lined with mirrors. The camera moves among a group of STEPFORD WIVES. They are all lovely, in perfect shape and blissfully cheerful. They wear coordinated, pastel leotards or yoga outfits, and each woman has her own yoga mat. The women are stretching, and they are amazingly limber. The atmosphere is again not sweaty, but pristine, and gentle. Vaguely oriental music is heard. Claire stands at the front of the group, now wearing her own flattering, expensive workout gear, maybe with a floaty chiffon overskirt. Joanna, in her Manhattan sweats, sits on a mat.

CLAIRE

Good morning, ladies. And let's welcome our newest citizen of Stepford.

ALL THE LADIES

Hello, Joanna, hi there, hey, Joanna, etc.

ANGLE on Joanna, unnerved by this group greeting. She waves.

JOANNA

Hi.

CLAIRE

Now, ladies, I'd like to begin our session by having each of us select a mantra. I'd like everyone to choose something or someone very dear to you, someone you worship, someone you can dedicate your soul's journey to. Your husband's first name would be perfect. As I point to you, feel the power of that love, and chant your joy from the very center of your being. Alright, one, two...

As Claire points to various women, they yearningly and reverently chant their husbands' names.

CLAIRE

Carol...

CAROL VAN SANT

Ted...

CLAIRE

Sarah...

SARAH SUNDERSON

Herb...

CLAIRE

Charmaine...

CHARMAINE WAINWRIGHT

Ed...

CLAIRE

Mary Ann...

MARY ANN STEVENS

Victor...

CLAIRE

Joanna...

JOANNA

(flustered)

Um, right, uh, uh...

ALL THE WOMEN

Joanna?

JOANNA

Walter.

CLAIRE

(thrilled)

Walter.

ALL THE WOMEN

(having a massive group orgasm
in response to the name
"Walter")

OOOOHHHH!!!

ANGLE on Joanna, looking at the women - what has she gotten herself into?

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - DAY

ANGLE on the burnished bronze plaque, mounted on a brick gatepost. The plaque reads "STEPFORD MEN'S ASSOCIATION." A breeze rustles the trees.

We watch as Walter's SUV drives up the winding road to the building which houses the Men's Association.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Walter is now standing outside the building. He looks around, admiring the landscape; he's never been here before. He's in a good mood, almost whistling; he's happy to be in such a welcoming community. He rings the doorbell. The door opens, and we hear jovial men's voices.

MEN'S VOICES (OS)

Walt! Hey, it's Walt! Come in! etc.

Walter smiles, pleased by the happy greeting. He steps inside, and the door shuts behind him.

EXT. SPA PARKING LOT - DAY

Joanna is leaving the spa, accompanied by SARAH SUNDERSON, a sunny, gorgeous Stepford wife, in her leotard and sarong.

Sarah carries her yoga mat in a woven tote bag. Other wives are also heading towards their SUV'S, in the parking lot.

SARAH

It was so nice to have you with us.
Isn't Claire inspiring?

JOANNA

(making an effort to be nice)
She's really into it.

SARAH

Will we be seeing you tomorrow, at the town picnic? It's the Fourth of July.

JOANNA

Oh, right.

SARAH

And now I have to get home, because this afternoon I'm into weed-whacking my herbaceous borders, sanding and sealing my deck, and re-grouting my backsplash.

JOANNA

Really?

Sarah is now standing beside her gleaming new SUV; she's searching through her tote bag.

SARAH

Oh, darn. I've locked my keys in the car.

JOANNA

Should I call someone? Do you need a lift?

SARAH

Oh, no bother.

Sarah faces the car. She swiftly reaches up and lightly, through her leotard, tweaks one of her nipples. We hear the bright SQUEAK of the car unlocking, as if Sarah had used a keyring remote control. Sarah opens her car's front door. She realizes that Joanna is staring at her.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(graciously)
It's a smart bra.

CLAIRE (OS)

Joanna?

Joanna turns; suddenly, Claire is right beside her, guiding her away.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

My car is over here, dear. Bye, Sarah!

ANGLE on Joanna, looking over her shoulder at Sarah, as Claire leads her off.

EXT. STEPFORD TOWN SQUARE - DAY

ANGLE on a colorful banner, which reads "HAPPY STEPFORD FOURTH OF JULY!" Robust marching band music is heard. The camera PANS down to take in the picnic, which is in full swing, filling the town square.

All of the town's residents, men, women and children, are happily milling about, greeting each other. There might be a separate children's play area.

Walter, Joanna and their kids arrive. Walter looks increasingly suburban, in khakis and a red and blue rugby shirt. Joanna still looks more Manhattan, in darker, more sophisticated clothes. Claire runs over to greet them; she is especially resplendent in a star-spangled shirtwaist with country-western accessories, including a miniature red cowboy hat.

CLAIRE

How-dee! And happy Fourth! Don't you all look festive! Except Joanna!

JOANNA

Hi.

CLAIRE

(air-kissing Joanna)
Don't be afraid of color.

MIKE

(entering)
Walt - you made it.

WALTER

Mike!

MIKE WELLINGTON, Claire's husband, has appeared. He is an assured, charming, even seductive man in his fifties, silver-haired and suave. He has the aura of a tycoon, comfortable with his power and influence. He wears Western-style clothing, maybe a cowboy shirt and jeans, but he doesn't look foolish. As he and Walter shakes hands:

MIKE

And this must be Joanna.

CLAIRE

This is such a special moment. Joanna, I would like you to meet a man, well, he's not just a man. He's the heart and soul of Stepford. He has made this town everything it is today. And he's made me the happiest woman on earth. May I introduce my better half, my lord and master, my soulmate, my hero, my husband - even after all these years, I still tingle - may I proudly present, Mr. Mike Wellington.

JOANNA

So nice to meet you.

MIKE

(appraising Joanna, gazing at her intently)
Your photos don't do you justice. You are even lovelier than I imagined.

JOANNA

Thank you. But I'm a wreck.

MIKE

Don't ever say that.

JOANNA

(surprised and flattered)
Thank you.

CLAIRE

(taking Mike's arm)
Isn't he wonderful? And polite?

WALTER

Mike's also the head of the Men's Association.

JOANNA

How did you know that?

BOBBIE (OS)

Excuse me!

CLAIRE

(not pleased)
Oh, no.

BOBBIE MARKOWITZ stalks over. Bobbie in no way resembles the other Stepford women; she's a cranky, hostile, paranoid Manhattan mess. She's out of shape, she enjoys eating and drinking, and she's very big on sarcasm. She's wearing a Charles Manson t-shirt and sweatpants, and she's very irate.

BOBBIE

Am I the only person here who finds all of this more than a little disturbing? We're celebrating our nation's birthday, right, but there are almost no people of color, no poor people, and no Native Americans.

DAVE (OS)

Woo woo woo!

DAVE MARKOWITZ, Bobbie's husband, appears. Dave is an overbearing, jovial, frat house kind of guy. He is wearing a red, white and blue polo shirt, khakis and a red, white and blue feathered Indian headdress. He carries a large foam rubber tomahawk.

BOBBIE

(disgusted and embarrassed)
Except him. My husband.

DAVE

How, palefaces! Callum me Big Chief Dave Markowitz!

BOBBIE

Running Sore.

JOANNA

Wait - are you Bobbie Markowitz?

BOBBIE

Why?

JOANNA

Did you write that incredible book, about your relationship with your mother? What was it called?

BOBBIE

Justifiable Homicide.

JOANNA

I loved that book!

ROGER (OS)

Oh my God! It's too fabulous!

ANGLE on an elaborate, homespun bake sale. Several tables have been set up, draped in bunting and holding an assortment of home-baked muffins, cookies, pies, cakes and other goodies. Several smiling Stepford wives run the table, wearing gingham aprons which match the tablecloth.

Utterly captivated, ROGER BANNISTER is standing by the bake sale. Roger is a stylishly dressed, very urban gay man, a successful, cutting edge architect with a flamboyant personality. Standing near Roger is his lover, JERRY HARMON, a far more conservative man, wearing khakis and a polo shirt; Jerry is an investment banker, and an avid golfer.

ROGER (CONT'D)

It's a bake sale! An actual bake sale! It's like some sort of heavenly diorama at the Smithsonian, in the Hall Of Homemakers - no. No! Don't say it! That is not cobbler! And wait, stop, this is the absolute all-American peak of my entire existence, I am dying, I am dreaming, I am being reborn in a Pillsbury Pre-come Poppin' Fresh Fantasia - it's brown, it's Betty, it's Apple Brown Betty! Yes!

Joanna and Bobbie are now investigating the bake sale.

JERRY

Roger, could we reel it in? Just a few hundred yards?

ROGER

(to Joanna and Bobbie)

Hi, Roger Bannister and Jerry Harmon, we're new. And we're stunned. And we're thrilled. And we are going to get so fat.

(to the women running the bake sale)

How do you ladies keep your figures? Is there just a huge vat of cobbler vomit somewhere? But worth it?

JERRY

Roger...

ROGER

I'm sorry, Jerry thinks that I overdo, you know, everything.

(to Joanna)

Is that Prada? Last year's, but still a classic?

(MORE)

ROGER (CONT'D)

And, oh my God, are you Bobbie Markowitz? Who killed her mother?

BOBBIE

I wish!

ROGER

Jerry, look, how did this happen, where did you come from, I mean, right here in Stepford - people!

ROGER, JOANNA AND BOBBIE

(thrilled to have found each other)

AHHH!!!

CLAIRE (OS)

(on the PA system)

Attention, Fourth of July Funsters! Grab your partners, because it's time for some sizzlin' Stepford square dancin'. Yee-ha!

JOANNA

A square dance?

BOBBIE

Oh my God...

ROGER

Isn't that redundant?

ANGLE on a sizeable plywood dance floor set up nearby. The floor is filled with local couples, hooting and hollering and having a terrific time as they square dance.

The music is supplied by a fiddler, and Claire stands on a raised platform, holding a microphone. She now wears a full-skirted, petticoated, embroidered Daisy Mae square dance dress, as she enthusiastically calls the dances.

CLAIRE

Alamen left and prance awhile!
Swing your partners, Stepford style!

ANGLE on Joanna, Bobbie and Roger, standing on the sidelines, staring at the dancers.

JOANNA

This is bizarre.

ROGER

I think it's heaven. I mean, rich white people moving. Maybe they're wearing metal shoes, and there are magnets under the floor.

CLAIRE

Bow to your Partner, two by four!
Come on, new kids, take the floor!

Walter and Dave, now both wearing cowboy hats, have appeared, and offer their arms to their wives.

WALTER

Ladies?

BOBBIE

Dave, we can't square dance. We're from Brooklyn.

WALTER

Jo?

JOANNA

I don't think so.

WALTER

Are you chicken?

JOANNA

Excuse me? I have eight years of ballet, plus gymnastics and figure skating. This is really very basic.

WALTER

Unless you're rusty.
(to the others, regarding
Joanna)
Desk job.

Joanna grabs Walter, and they head onto the dance floor.
Dave grabs Bobbie.

DAVE

Come on, cowgirl.

BOBBIE

What did you call me?

DAVE

It's farm talk. You little heifer.

BOBBIE

I love that. You disgusting pig.

Dave drags Bobbie onto the dance floor. Roger turns to Jerry.

ROGER

Shall we?

JERRY

We don't have to make a spectacle
of ourselves.

ROGER

But you keep saying that we should
try to fit in.

JERRY

(as Roger drags him onto the
dance floor)
Just don't be too gay.

ROGER

Of course not. Should we take our
shirts off?

ANGLE on the dance floor. Joanna has committed herself to
the activity, and she and Walter are doing very well,
although Joanna tends to lead. Bobbie and Dave are
improvising.

CLAIRE

Swing your sweethearts, Jack and
Jill!

BOBBIE

Then work it out on Dr. Phil!

As Roger and Jerry execute a complicated square dance move:

ROGER

(impressed)
You go, Miss Thing!

JERRY

Roger!

ROGER

Fine, Mister Thing!

ANGLE on Pete and Kimberly, on the sidelines, watching the
dancers, aghast.

CLAIRE

Stepford stallions, swing your
mares!
End those worries, lose your cares!

ANGLE on the dance floor. As the music begins to go even
faster, all of the couples join in a high-stepping circle,
swirling around the floor. As the music kicks up even
faster, Sarah Sunderson and HERB SUNDERSON, her prissy,
dweeby husband, start to break away from the circle,
spinning across the floor, out of control.

PETE

Whoa!

JOANNA

(as Herb and Sarah slam into her)

Excuse me!

ROGER

Too much cobbler!

ANGLE on Sarah, who now breaks away from Herb and begins spinning by herself, almost at warp speed - smoke starts to appear.

CLAIRE

Sarah! Herb, is Sarah alright?

HERB

Sarah? Sweetheart?

After levitating almost a foot off the dance floor, Sarah suddenly goes slack, and her body collapses onto the dance floor. She lies on her side, twitching, with tiny sparks sputtering from her ears. Her head is tilted at an unnatural angle. The crowd gathers around Sarah as Herb tends to her. Joanna immediately steps forward.

JOANNA

(trying to take charge)

Okay everybody, don't try to move her, just loosen her clothing, elevate her head and make sure her windpipe is clear.

WALTER

(to Joanna)

You're not a doctor.

JOANNA

I know Clooney.

HERB

This has never happened before...

SARAH

(babbling mechanically)

Dosie doe, dosie doe, dosie doe...

ROGER

Are those sparks? Does she have a pacemaker? Or an icemaker?

JOANNA

(pulling out her cellphone)
I'm calling 911, I'll get an ambulance. Everyone just stay back, where's the nearest hospital?

MIKE

No need.

WALTER

(to Joanna)
Let Mike handle it.

JOANNA

Why?

The crowd parts, as Mike calmly walks over to Sarah and confidently handles the situation, and Joanna gets pushed aside.

SARAH

Dosie doe, dosie doe, dosie doe...

Mike kneels beside Sarah, takes her head in his hands, and gives her head a quick, sharp yank, correcting the angle. Sarah immediately stops babbling.

JOANNA

(aghast, to Mike)
What did you do?

MIKE

Just making her comfortable. Herb, Walt, Dave, give me a hand, and we'll just get Sarah right into my Navigator.

JOANNA

Your Navigator?

DAVE

It's a great machine.

ROGER

It's roomy.

JOANNA

But what about an ambulance?

WALTER

(to Joanna)
Calm down.

Walter and Dave are now carrying Sarah from the dance floor, as Herb follows.

MIKE

(to everyone)

She'll be fine. It's just a little too much sun, she's just dehydrated.

JOANNA

Dehydrated? Are you crazy?

MIKE

Joanna, you're in Stepford.

JOANNA

What does that mean?

MIKE

We do things our way.

JOANNA

But that woman is very sick.

MIKE

And she'll get all the help she needs. Trust me. Little lady.

ANGLE on Joanna, still very upset.

SARAH

(her head bobbing happily)

Yee-ha, yee-ha, yippie kayay...

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Walter is sitting on the bed, while Joanna paces, very agitated. This fight has been going on since they left the square dance.

JOANNA

She wasn't dehydrated! That woman had a seizure, she was practically levitating...

WALTER

And I have told you, five million times, by the time we got her home, she was fine. She just needed fluids, just like Mike said...

JOANNA

But she was sparking!

WALTER

She was dancing!

Walter leaves the bedroom, and Joanna follows him.

INT. GREAT ROOM

Walter comes down the stairs, as Joanna follows him.

JOANNA

But why wasn't there a doctor
anywhere, and why did everyone just
automatically listen to Mike, why
was everyone just standing there,
waiting for the word from on high,
why are the people in this town
such pathetic, passive suburban
sheep?

WALTER

You mean, why wasn't everyone
listening to you?

JOANNA

That's not what I'm saying! I'm
just asking, what the hell are we
doing here, with bake sales and
square dancing and Claire
Wellington? And if I'm a little
lady, then are you a little man?

Walter finally explodes; he becomes much tougher and very
commanding.

WALTER

Jesus Christ, Joanna!

JOANNA

What?

WALTER

You were fired, your kids barely
know you, and our marriage is
falling apart! And you produce TV
shows which make people want to
kill you, which make people try to
kill you! That's what we're doing
here! And you said you were going
to change! And if you're not going
to take that seriously, if you're
going to keep blaming every problem
on everyone else, if you're going
to keep being you, then I can't
take it anymore! And I'm leaving!

He starts to move towards the front door.

JOANNA

No!

WALTER
(stopping, but not coming back
into the room)
No what?

JOANNA
Please don't go.

WALTER
(still challenging her)
Why not?

JOANNA
Because - you're right.

WALTER
Wait, I'm sorry, I don't think I
heard that. What did you say?

JOANNA
I said that you're right.

WALTER
About...?

JOANNA
About everything. About me.

WALTER
Wait, just so I'm clear on this,
just so it's really out there, just
for the record - who's right? Which
one of us?

JOANNA
You.

WALTER
Me being?

JOANNA
Walter.

WALTER
Well. My oh my. So for the very
first time ever, in the history of
the world, according to Joanna
Eberhart, Walter Kresby, her Vice-
President, her Junior Vice-
President, her husband, he's -
wait, oh no, how could this happen,
it can't be, yet it is, in a
shocking development - he's right.

JOANNA
Yes.

WALTER

So then tell me, for you, and me,
and for our kids, and our future -
just what do you want?

JOANNA

I want a corner office, I want a
corporate jet, I want a call sheet,
I want a triple latte mochachino
and I want a cigarette!

WALTER

Excuse me? You had all those things
and look what happened. You crashed
and you burned. So, what do you
want?

JOANNA

I want to change.

WALTER

Really. Okay. Good answer. So I
tell you what, let's start with
baby steps. We're in the country,
and there are no cabs, and there's
no construction, or smog or grime.
There's sunshine, every day. So
from now on - no more black.

JOANNA

What?

WALTER

You heard me. Only high-powered,
neurotic, castrating Manhattan
career bitches wear black. Is that
what you want to be?

JOANNA

Ever since I was a little girl...

WALTER

So grow up!

JOANNA

But I need black, it's powerful,
it's practical, it's a uniform...

WALTER

Well, you're outta the army! So
tomorrow, we are taking all of your
clothes, and we're burning them.

JOANNA

So they'll look just the same.

WALTER
They'll be gone! And you are going to wear yellow.

JOANNA
I can't, I'll get hives, I'll break out...

WALTER
And powder blue...

JOANNA
But I'm not an infant, or a cheerleader, or some needy middle-aged man's bimbo...

WALTER
And pink. You are going to wear pink.

JOANNA
Never.

WALTER
This is not a discussion! You had a breakdown, and I'm not going to let that happen again. We are going to start by making you happy and cheerful on the outside, and maybe it will start to seep in. This is your last chance, Joanna. You are my wife, and the mother of my children. And you are going to change. Completely.

JOANNA
Brown. Rust. Okay, orange.

WALTER
Pink.

INT. JOANNA'S KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING

Bobbie and Roger are sitting at the kitchen island, sipping coffee. Joanna is hidden behind the open door of the huge refrigerator.

BOBBIE
Jo, it's not that bad, really. I like it.

Joanna steps out from behind the refrigerator door, holding a carton of juice. She's wearing a happy pink t-shirt, with a bouquet of daisies embroidered on it, or a kitten.

JOANNA

You do?

ROGER

It's great.

Bobbie and Roger burst out laughing.

BOBBIE

Did you make the squad?

ROGER

Hello, kitty!

JOANNA

I'm trying to make an effort, to change. I mean, last night, Walter was like - a different person. He was strong, and commanding, and forceful.

ROGER

No, that was you.

JOANNA

But he made sense, in a way - don't you think?

Pete and Kimberly enter, with their backpacks.

PETE

(to Kimberly)

No way!

KIMBERLY

It's true!

PETE

Mom, tell her she's wrong. She says that you made us lunches, for school.

JOANNA

Yes, I did.

(she hands each of them a paper bag lunch)

You each have a sandwich, a juice box and an apple.

KIMBERLY

(to Pete)

Told you.

PETE

(confused, to Joanna)

Wait, who are you, like, imitating?

JOANNA

I'm imitating a good mother. A
Stepford mother.

KIMBERLY

(to Joanna)

Are you okay?

JOANNA

Oh sweetie, I'm fine.

(as she hugs the kids)

Now get to school, and have fun.

As the kids exit:

BOBBIE

That was good.

ROGER

I bought it.

JOANNA

Look, I'm not saying it's going to
be easy. Being a homemaker, and a
good parent is the hardest job on
earth, right? But I've decided -
from now on, I'm on the Mommy
track. And the loving wife track.

BOBBIE

And the train track.

ROGER

And the square dancing track. Oh my
God, yesterday, that poor woman.
Sarah Sunderson.

JOANNA

Walter says she's fine.

BOBBIE

But she was shooting off sparks,
from her ears.

ROGER

That's the first sign.

JOANNA

Of what?

ROGER

Cheap jewelry.

JOANNA

She might have some sort of
disorder.

(MORE)

JOANNA (CONT'D)

A few days ago, at the spa, I could swear she unlocked her car, using one of her breasts.

ROGER

What did she do with the other one?

BOBBIE

Garage door.

JOANNA

We should go to see her.

BOBBIE

Why?

ROGER

I do have this stubborn jar of peanut butter...

JOANNA

To be supportive. To show her that we're her neighbors. Because that's how people behave, in the real world. They care about each other. I mean, if we were in New York, and one of our neighbors got sick, what would we do?

ROGER

We'd call her.

BOBBIE

To see if she was going to die.

ROGER

So we could get the apartment.

EXT. SUNDERSON HOME - DAY

The Sunderson home is typically Stepford - a huge, expertly landscaped neo-Colonial, with a cast-iron lawn jockey and a painted cast-iron sign reading, "THE SUNDERSONS." Joanna, Bobbie and Roger approach the house via a slate walkway.

BOBBIE

Alright, Roger, as an architect, what would you call this house?

ROGER

Well, it's too big, it's brand new but it's pretending to be ye olde, and it screams, "Hi, we've made just oodles too much filthy money from insider trading and we want to prove it."

JOANNA

So what would you call it?

ROGER

"Martha."

JOANNA

Well, I think it's sweet. It's American. It's a real family home.

BOBBIE

(to the lawn jockey)

Look - it's Herb.

JOANNA

No it isn't.

BOBBIE

Why not?

JOANNA

Too tall.

ROGER

That's the spirit!

JOANNA

(using the door knocker,
calling out)

Yoo-hoo!

ROGER

(regarding Joanna's 'Yoo-hoo')
I love that.

JOANNA

It's us, your warm and caring
friends and neighbors! Hi there!
(still no answer; she pounds on
the door)
We're here!

ROGER

Maybe they're out back, on the
patio. Oh my God, can you believe
that - I said "patio"!

EXT. BACK OF THE SUNDERSON HOUSE - DAY

The rear of the house includes a gorgeous pool and an extensive patio with wicker furniture. The back door is open, and Joanna, Roger and Bobbie are peering inside.

JOANNA
It's open. Isn't that amazing?
Hello!

BOBBIE
We're from New York! We're going to
rob you!

ROGER
100 bucks says that they've got a
kitchen island with a marble
countertop and a white ceramic bowl
filled with green apples.

JOANNA
No - a white wicker basket used as
a planter to hold ivy.

ROGER
You're on.

As Roger steps inside, the women get nervous.

JOANNA AND BOBBIE
Roger!

Joanna and Bobbie quickly follow Roger inside.

INT. SUNDERSON KITCHEN

ANGLE on the marble countertop of the Sunderson kitchen island. There is a white ceramic bowl holding green apples, and a white wicker basket holding ivy.

JOANNA, ROGER AND BOBBIE
~~Both!~~

ROGER
They've gone too far. They're
design terrorists. There is a
nuclear device in that basket.

JOANNA
Listen.

They all move towards a staircase. From a bedroom on an upper floor, we hear the sounds of passionate lovemaking.

SARAH (OS)
Oh, Herb...yes, yes...Oh my God,
it's big, it's so big, it's too
big...I'm so lucky...

BOBBIE
Oh my God...

ROGER
Is that a video?

JOANNA
No, it's them.

SARAH (OS)
Don't stop...Oh my God, you're the
king, you're the emperor, you're my
gladiator...

JOANNA, BOBBIE AND ROGER
Herb?

SARAH (OS)
Yes, yes, I'm on fire, I'm
exploding, Herb, Herbini,
Herbasaurus, you're my master
blaster, my raw sirloin, my love
rhino...

BOBBIE
Love rhino?

Joanna makes a horn gesture.

ROGER
I'm going up there.

JOANNA
Why?

ROGER
I want some.

As the women hold Roger back, Sarah has an orgasm.

SARAH (OS)
Yes, yes, yes, yes, make me beg,
make me pay, I don't deserve you,
do it, do it, Herb, Herb, HERB...

SARAH, JOANNA, BOBBIE AND ROGER
(the downstairs three chant
along with Sarah, in whispers)
HERB, HERB, HERB...

SARAH (OS)
(coming)
AHHH!!!

A beat, as Joanna, Bobbie and Roger look at each other.

ROGER
(noticing something)
What's this?

ANGLE on a remote control, lying on the countertop. It has the name "SARAH" written on it, in raised lettering.

BOBBIE

Why does it say "Sarah"?

JOANNA

Because it belongs to Sarah.

ANGLE on Sarah, around the corner, wearing something sexy. She's coming down the stairs.

ANGLE on Roger.

ROGER

But what's it for? The TV?

Roger points the remote at the TV, and pushes a button.

ANGLE on Sarah, on the stairs. When Roger pushes the button, she immediately begins walking back up the stairs, backwards. Her glazed facial expression doesn't change.

ROGER

Or the sound system?

Roger points the remote at the sound system, and pushes a button.

ANGLE on Sarah; when Roger pushes the button, she immediately comes walking back down the stairs.

ROGER

Or the lights?

Roger points the remote at the chandelier, and pushes a button.

ANGLE on Sarah; when Roger pushes the button, she immediately begins walking back up the stairs, backwards.

ROGER

Maybe it's broken.

Roger begins pushing a lot of buttons.

From upstairs, we hear a CRASH. Joanna, Bobbie and Roger all hear it.

JOANNA

What was that?

ROGER

Move!

Roger drops the remote, and they all run out of the house.

INT. BOBBIE'S KITCHEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Joanna, Bobbie and Roger all burst into Bobbie's kitchen, laughing and out of breath - they've run all the way from the Sunderson's.

ROGER

Oh my God!

JOANNA

Well, I guess Sarah's feeling better!

BOBBIE

But with Herb? The master blaster?

JOANNA

(looking around the kitchen)
Bobbie?

BOBBIE

Yeah?

The camera PANS around the kitchen which, while deluxe and spacious, is currently an ungodly mess. Dirty dishes and pans are everywhere, and there's all sorts of food lying around in various stages of decay, along with broken toys, newspapers and mountains of takeout and fast food containers.

ROGER

Bobbie?

JOANNA

Are you making anthrax?

BOBBIE

Excuse me, I'm working on my new book, so I have to prioritize.

JOANNA

But you've only lived here for what, two months?

BOBBIE

This is the primer coat.

ROGER

But can't you hire someone to clean?

JOANNA

And now?

BOBBIE

Dave says I'm not allowed to. He says I should do it myself. And he says that I don't spend enough time with our kids, can you believe that?

ROGER

How many kids do you have?

BOBBIE

Two. Three. Yeah, three.

JOANNA

Bobbie, you can't live like this.

BOBBIE

I'm working. I need inspiration.

JOANNA

You need to get with the program. I mean, look at Sarah Sunderson - her home is spotless, and she's having great sex, with her husband, in the middle of the day. What does that tell you?

BOBBIE

I'm sorry, I was just trying to decide which would be more terrifying - cleaning my house, or having sex with Herb Sunderson?

ROGER

Maybe they combine the two. Maybe Herb was using Lemon Pledge.

JOANNA

And maybe the Sundersons have a life. I'm more convinced than ever. I mean, we all moved here, didn't we? I was obsessed with my career, and it almost killed me.

BOBBIE

(looking around)
And I guess I have let things get a little out of hand.

ROGER

And Jerry and I have been together for five years, but he says that I'm driving him away. And I know that I can get a little bold.

JOANNA AND BOBBIE

(reassuring him)

No, no, you're great, you're terrific, etc.

ROGER

No, no, Jerry is a wonderful guy. And we moved here to find a balance.

JOANNA

That's so great. You see? We can do it. We can reach out, all of us, to the people of Stepford, and learn their secrets. We can learn how to be happy. Wouldn't that be something? To actually be happy?

Even Bobbie and Roger have to agree it's not such a bad idea.

JOANNA

So we are all going to Claire Wellington's, tomorrow afternoon. To join up. Because she's invited us, to the weekly meeting of her Stepford book club.

ROGER

Why not?

BOBBIE

Wait - these people read?

EXT. CLAIRE AND MIKE'S HOUSE - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Claire and Mike live in the oldest house in Stepford, a rambling colonial with trellises and rosebushes, and maybe a wishing well on the front lawn. It's particularly fairy tale-ish, a combination of Howard's End and the Brady's. At the moment, the driveway and the curb are lined with shiny new SUV'S.

JOANNA (OS)

We are all so excited to be here, I can't tell you.

INT. CLAIRE'S LIVING ROOM

Claire's living room is a Martha Stewart fantasy of overstuffed, chintz slip covered couches and wingchairs, hooked rugs, elaborate window treatments and oil paintings of barns, horses and schooners. Claire is hosting her book club, which has the air of an elaborate tea party.

There are fussy, tiered caddies holding finger sandwiches and cookies, and coffee and tea are available from an heirloom silver tea service on a sideboard.

At least ten STEFFORD WIVES have gathered, all dressed in their brightly colored, pressed and spotless casual wear. Joanna, Bobbie and Roger are part of the group, with everyone seated around the room.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

I've just finished the second volume of Robert Caro's life of Lyndon Johnson, and I'm dying for the next installment.

ANGLE on some of the wives, smiling blankly.

BOBBIE

And I've just re-read all of Jane Austen, I mean, is she the best, or what?

ANGLE on more of the wives, smiling without any recognition.

ROGER

And I've just finished the new Danielle Steel, it's all about this stunning fashion model, who falls for this dashing billionaire, with a dark secret.

ANGLE on a few of the wives, interested in this.

ANGLE on Joanna and Bobbie, glancing at Roger.

ROGER

But I hated it.

Joanna and Bobbie smile approvingly.

ANGLE on Claire, seated in a central wingchair covered in toile du jovy, and perhaps Claire's quilted hostess skirt is made of the same fabric. She holds a book in her lap, but we can't see the title.

CLAIRE

Well, that's all marvelous, but today we are going to discuss, well - it's probably the most important book which any of us will ever read.

ANGLE on Joanna, nodding to Bobbie - you see?

CLAIRE

I think that this volume speaks to our souls, and our spirits, about just where this country, and this planet, are headed. Yes, it's provocative, but it's also inspiring.

JOANNA

Bravo. I can't wait.

CLAIRE

(holding up the book)
The Time-Life Golden Treasury Of
Christmas Keepsakes and
Collectibles!

All of the wives applaud vigorously, thrilled.

ANGLE on Roger, applauding, delighted - Bobbie shoots him a look, and he stops applauding.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - SAME TIME

Walter is standing outside the front door. He almost turns to leave. Then he takes a deep breath, and makes a decision. He knocks firmly.

INT. CLAIRE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The book club is continuing.

CLAIRE

I've read it cover to cover at least six times and all I can say is - wow. They've taken Christmas to a whole new level. This book said to me, let's celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ with yarn.

CAROL

I just loved the chapter on pinecones - they're not just for wreaths and centerpieces.

CLAIRE

Not anymore!

All the women in the room nod in empathetic, vocal agreement "Absolutely not, Oh no, I'll say", etc.

SARAH

I love the idea of creating a life-size Santa Claus, all out of pinecones, painting it with colorful enamel and then dusting it with clear glitter.

CHARMAINE

I'm going to antique hundreds of pinecones in heirloom gold, and then hot-glue them with tiny seed pearls, to use as ornaments on a tree with a Victorian pinecone theme.

MARY ANN

I'm going to use a pinecone in my Nativity, as the baby Jesus.

BOBBIE

I'm going to attach a pinecone to my vibrator, and have a really merry Christmas.

JOANNA

Bobbie.

BOBBIE

I'm sorry.

CLAIRE

Now Bobbie, we realize that you may be feeling a bit uncomfortable with this week's book, because you're, oh, what's the word I'm looking for?

BETH

New?

CHARMAINE

Scared?

SARAH

Kooky?

CLAIRE

Jewish.

BOBBIE

(graciously)
Same thing.

CLAIRE

But the Time-Life series is very inclusive. In fact, there's a whole chapter on Chanukah.

MARY ANN

You can use pinecones to create a very special yuletide menorah.

BETH

Your pinecone snowman could be Jewish - just add one of those little beanies.

BOBBIE

Or maybe I could just use hundreds of pinecones to spell out the words "Big Jew" in letters fifteen feet high, in the snow on my front lawn.

A beat. Then everyone chimes in, with complete agreement and approval "Good idea!" "I love that!" "That's using your noggin!", etc.

INT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - SAME TIME

The interior of the building is like an idealized Ralph Lauren environment, a combination of a university club, an English hunting lodge and an upscale frat house. There are large, comfortable leather couches and armchairs, wood panelling, a fireplace and an assortment of ancestral portraits and sports memorabilia, including trophies, oars, team photos and footballs, all inscribed with the dates of winning games.

Walter is seated in the building's main room. Mike Wellington is leading the meeting, and he's surrounded by at least twelve other STEPFORD HUSBANDS.

The guys are all moderately attractive, but they've got that wussy suburban look. The dress code is casual Friday, and just about everyone wears khakis. Dave and Jerry are both present.

MIKE

So you've thought about joining the Association. You've studied the prospectus.

WALTER

Yes I have. And I have to say, it all seems a little extreme. I mean, I don't know if I'm ready for this.

MIKE

Of course. We understand.
Completely.

DAVE

(pretending to cough, under his
breath)

Wuss.

WALTER

What?

JERRY

(also pretending to cough,
under his breath)

Homo.

WALTER

What did you say?

MIKE

Nothing. It's just a cold bug. It's
going around.

HERB

It attacks the testicles.

MIKE

(pretending to cough, under his
breath)

Wanda.

INT. CLAIRE'S LIVING ROOM

CLAIRE

And it's not too early to think
about Halloween decorations for the
town square. Who'd like to head up
the committee?

ANGLE on Joanna, immediately and eagerly raising her hand.

CLAIRE

Joanna?

BOBBIE

Joanna?

JOANNA

I'd love to help out. And at the
network, I was doing holiday
specials for years.

CLAIRE

Well, I'd like to decorate the bandstand with pumpkins and bales of hay.

JOANNA

And how about scarecrows and bats and maybe a headless horseman?

CLAIRE

And I've been thinking about arranging clusters of autumn leaves and Indian corn around the pillars of the town hall.

JOANNA

Why don't we turn the whole building into a haunted mansion, with actors dressed up as ghosts and killers, with recorded sound effects and skeletons jumping out of coffins?

CLAIRE

I really prefer a harvest theme...

JOANNA

But I can get the whole cast of "C.S.I." on my speed-dial. They could set up a completely authentic crime scene, with blood and weapons and body parts, and we could scare the hell out of our kids!

CLAIRE

You certainly are getting awfully competitive, Joanna.

JOANNA

(catching herself, very embarrassed)

I know, I'm sorry, I have to watch that. I'm so sorry, it won't happen again.

CLAIRE

After all, you've only just moved here.

JOANNA

I know, I know, you're right. And it's such a great town.

CLAIRE

And I've been doing Halloween in Stepford for years.

JOANNA
And I-bet it's terrific.

CLAIRE
Really?

JOANNA
Of course.

CLAIRE
(baiting Joanna)
Better than anything, oh, at the
network?

JOANNA
I'm sure.

CLAIRE
Newcomer.

JOANNA
(starting to take the bait,
under her breath)
Amateur.

CLAIRE
Lifetime.

JOANNA
Oxygen.

CLAIRE
Career gal.

ROGER
Joanna, don't!

JOANNA
(heedless, sniffing the air)
Mildew?

Claire tries to lunge at Joanna, but the other women hold
her back.

INT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - SAME TIME

The camera PANS slowly around the room.

HERB
You won't regret it.

ED
It's the best decision I ever made.

DAVE

You're gonna thank us.

ANGLE on Walter, who's now wearing a Men's Association baseball cap and warm-up jacket. He looks flustered and giddy, and holds a beer. Mike hands him a document, which he signs.

MIKE

Congratulations. Now you're one of us.

WALTER

You mean, a member of the Association?

MIKE

A man.

ANGLE on Walter, slowly starting to smile.

INT. KIMBERLY'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Joanna is putting Kimberly to bed. The room has been decorated like an overdone little girl's princess fantasy. Everything is pink and white, with pictures of Cinderella, Princess Jasmine, Belle, Ariel and Rapunzel on the walls. There are stuffed animals and dolls everywhere, and there's a little table set up for a tea party. The bed is a four-poster, with a ruffled canopy and bedskirt. Joanna is tucking Kimberly in.

JOANNA

Do you like your new bedroom?

KIMBERLY

(not sure)

It's girly.

JOANNA

It's pretty. And look, here's Barbie. Isn't she fancy?

Joanna picks up a Barbie doll, dressed in a chiffon evening gown.

KIMBERLY

Mommy, when I grow up, should I be like Barbie?

JOANNA

Gee. Well, Barbie is smart, and athletic, and she has lots of friends. So why not?

KIMBERLY
But she's so perfect and skinny.

JOANNA
(confidentially)
It's her metabolism.

KIMBERLY
Can Barbie be the President of a TV
network?

JOANNA
Sure. If she wants to be.

KIMBERLY
Does Barbie ever get fired?

JOANNA
Oh sweetie, is that what you're
worried about? Being fired isn't
so bad. It's just something that
happens.

KIMBERLY
Will you get a new job?

JOANNA
Maybe, but I don't have to. I love
just being your Mommy, and Pete's
Mommy. That's a great job.

KIMBERLY
Really?

JOANNA
It's the best.

KIMBERLY
But you don't have an assistant,
like Heather.

JOANNA
(sweetly)
That's the good part.

KIMBERLY
Is Barbie happy?

JOANNA
(thinking about it)
She will be.

From elsewhere in the house, we hear a phone RING.

Joanna kisses Kimberly on the forehead, and rises to get the
phone.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - LATER THAT NIGHT

We're moving past a series of windows, and we see men inside.

REVEAL Joanna and Bobbie, moving quietly alongside the building.

JOANNA

(whispering, to Bobbie)

I got a sitter, but tell me again, why are we doing this?

BOBBIE

Because I wanna know what's going on in there.

JOANNA

But it's just a men's association.

BOBBIE

Exactly.

As the women kneel and peer into a window:

INT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - SAME TIME

A meeting is in progress, in the front room. Mike is once again leading the proceedings. All of the Stepford husbands are seated around the room, including Jerry, Dave and Walter. Tonight's new addition is Roger.

MIKE

Fellas, I can't tell you how happy we are to welcome all of this new blood.

WALTER

It's great to be a part of this.

ROGER

Mais oui. Now, when Jerry first told me that we were going to some place called the Men's Association, I thought, Stepford has a gay sex club? Yay team!

JERRY

Roger.

(to the room)

Guys, I apologize. He gets carried away.

ROGER

(gesturing to the room)
But I love this. It's a fabulous space. It's sort of Ralph Lauren cruises Sherlock Holmes at a kegger. We've got Corinthian leather and miles of corduroy, just all sort of whooshed up together, into a yummy testosterone cocktail. To me it says, I have taste and a scrotum.

JERRY

Roger, you promised.

MIKE

No, no. Now Jerry, you're going to find that Stepford is very open-minded. And we welcome you and your partner, just like any other couple.

ROGER

(to Jerry)
You see? Ann Marie?

HERB

(still butch, but trying)
Girlfriend.

TED

(attempting gay syntax)
Uh-huh.

ROGER

Heaven!

ANGLE on the window, where we see Joanna and Bobbie, from just the eyes up, watching everything. As they watch, one of the guys shuts the curtains on them.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - SAME TIME

As the curtains shut:

BOBBIE

Damn it!

JOANNA

What?

BOBBIE

You see? They don't want anyone to catch them.

JOANNA
Catch them doing what?

BOBBIE
Come on.

Bobbie moves around the back of the building, and Joanna follows.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - NIGHT

Joanna and Bobbie creep around to a rear entrance. Bobbie tries a door - it's open.

BOBBIE
Add it up. All of the women in this town are perfect sex kitten bimbos and all of the men are drooling nerds. Doesn't that seem strange?

JOANNA
Not to me.

BOBBIE
But why not?

JOANNA
I work in television.

They slip inside the building.

INT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION

ROGER
You know, Walter, I think that Joanna's right. Stepford is the answer.

MIKE
She's a great gal.

DAVE
Or she will be.

ROGER
(just curious)
What do you mean?

We hear a floorboard CREAK from overhead - all the guys hear it.

WALTER
What was that?

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Joanna and Bobbie are moving slowly down a darkened hallway, as we hear the murmur of the men's voices from the main room.

JOANNA

Shhh...

Joanna switches on her flashlight, and she shines it on a series of framed oil paintings which hang along the hallway.

BOBBIE

Oh my God...

ANGLE on the paintings, as the beam from the flashlight illuminates them, one after the other. They are all idealized oil PORTRAITS: the first one is of Mike and Claire. Then come family groupings of Sarah, Herb and their kids, and Charmaine, Ed and their kids.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)

It's like some sort of alien freak show...

JOANNA

Why? They're just family portraits.

BOBBIE

That's what I said.

The flashlight beam reaches a final portrait, of Roger and Jerry. In the portrait, Roger looks very butch.

We hear the sound of FOOTSTEPS approaching.

BOBBIE

Shut it off!

The flashlight beam goes out.

JOANNA

Was that Roger, in the picture?

BOBBIE

Sort of.

The footsteps get closer.

JOANNA

Which way do we go?

BOBBIE

I don't know.

The footsteps get even closer.

JOANNA

Should we run?

BOBBIE

Shhh.

Joanna and Bobbie freeze. For a beat, there's no noise.

JOANNA

(whispering)

Maybe they left.

We hear a door at the end of the hallway CREAK open.

BOBBIE

(whispering)

Oh my God...

Another beat of silence. And then, from the darkness:

ROGER

(unseen, in a low voice)

Clarice?

Bobbie and Joanna gasp. A flashlight BEAM appears, and shines on them; they both look very scared.

JOANNA

Oh my God!

Roger shines the flashlight on his own face.

ROGER

Hi, girls.

BOBBIE

Shit!

JOANNA

You scared us!

ROGER

What are you doing here?

BOBBIE

What's going on? Do they have hookers or circle jerks or cable porn?

ROGER

Oh, please. They barely have throw pillows.

We hear more footsteps approaching, and the rumble of the other men's voices.

BOBBIE
They're coming!

JOANNA
Which way out?

ROGER
To your left. There's a stairway
and an exit. But be careful!

JOANNA
Why?

ROGER
(shuddering)
The wallpaper. Plaid.

JOANNA
We'll talk!

Bobbie and Joanna exit, just as Mike, Jerry, Walter, Dave and all of the other husbands approach.

MIKE (OS)
Rog?

The lights go on, and we see all of the other guys at the end of the hall.

MIKE
What was it? Did you see anyone?

ROGER
Not a soul. But what's back here,
anyway? In all of these rooms?
Because I've had a thought - what
about putting in a sauna? And we
could all sit around naked, and not
look?

MIKE
Not bad. Jerry?

JERRY
Roger, that door on your right.
Check it out.

ROGER
Really? You see, I'm going to be
such a valuable member.

Roger pushes open the door, and peers into the room.

ROGER
I can't see anything. It's dark.

JERRY
Use your flashlight.

ROGER
I feel like a Cub Scout. Well,
maybe after dinner.

Roger switches on the flashlight and aims the beam into the
room.

ROGER
It just looks like storage.

JERRY
Keep looking.

ANGLE on Roger's face, looking around. Suddenly, his
expression changes, to horror. He turns, to face Jerry.

ROGER
Jerry?

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

ANGLE on Joanna, sleeping peacefully in bed, alone.

ANGLE on Walter, sitting or standing nearby, in the shadows.
He's staring at Joanna. We can't quite read his expression -
he's trying to make up his mind.

EXT. PARK - THE NEXT MORNING

Joanna and Bobbie are walking through a leafy, sunlit
Stepford park.

JOANNA
You see? There was nothing going
on, it's just a boy's club. What
were you thinking?

BOBBIE
I don't know. But do you want to
hear something really weird?

JOANNA
Of course.

BOBBIE

Dave did something actually, I mean, for him, sort of, kind of, sweet. This morning, he gave me this gift certificate, for the spa, for a full makeover. It's like a two day thing, it's probably seaweed wraps and massages. I couldn't decide, should I be happy, or insulted?

JOANNA

No! That's so great! And so Stepford! I love this town! We have to tell Roger.

BOBBIE

But why did he say to meet him here?

In the distance, two teams of ten-year-olds are playing soccer, wearing school uniforms. A small crowd of parents and other kids are seated on bleachers, cheering.

JOANNA

Jerry keeps telling him to get more involved with the town.

BOBBIE

But soccer?

We hear a BLAST from the coach's whistle. We do not see the coach.

COACH (OS)

Time out!

One of the teams gathers around the coach - it's Roger. He now wears khakis, Nikes, a polo shirt, a baseball cap, a whistle on a cord around his neck, and a nylon warm-up jacket reading "Stepford Stallions." Roger's personality is now completely changed. He's macho, straightforward, gruff and competitive. He's still gay, but he's now like a tough-minded, no-nonsense, gung-ho suburban Dad.

ROGER

(to his team)

What the hell were you people doing out there? Jimmy?

ANGLE on JIMMY GARBEN, a small, spindly ten-year-old, in an oversize uniform and protective goggles which cover his eyeglasses. Jimmy doesn't like soccer, and he's not very good at it.

JIMMY

Yes, coach?

ROGER

When someone passes us the ball, what do we do with it? Do we just stand there?

JIMMY

No...

ROGER

Do we just flap our wrists, like a little girly-man?

JIMMY

No...

ROGER

Then what the hell do we do?

JIMMY

I don't know! I don't like soccer! I have a piano lesson!

ROGER

(incredulous)

A piano lesson? A piano lesson? You could be out here, getting sweaty and dirty, you could be on the field of honor, learning to be a man, kicking some serious second grade butt, and you want to be indoors, playing show tunes? Well, there's a name for someone like you. Team, what do we call a little whirly-girly boy who likes to kiss the piano?

ALL THE OTHER KIDS

(jeering at Jimmy)

SONDHEIM!

ROGER

Is that what you want to be? A Broadway composer-lyricist? What do you want to win, Jimmy? A soccer game? Or a Tony Award?

JIMMY

Sondheim has a Pulitzer!

ROGER

Jesus Christ, you're acting like a bunch of ten year-olds!

JIMMY

We are a bunch of ten year-olds.

JOANNA

Roger?

Roger turns to see Joanna and Bobbie, watching him.

ROGER

Babes! Lookin' good!

(to his team)

Team, what do we do? When we eyeball a coupla major hotties?

TEAM

(leering at Joanna and Bobbie)

YO!

JIMMY

(to Joanna)

I love your bag. Is that Kate Spade?

ROGER

(to the kids)

Twenty laps! Hustle!

As the kids run off, to do laps:

JOANNA

Roger, when did you start coaching soccer?

ROGER

(grabbing a beer out of a Styrofoam cooler)

This morning.

JOANNA

But you're an architect.

ROGER

Yo, just because a dude is gay, it don't mean he's gotta be no goddamn sissy.

(calling out)

Yo, Jimmy! Don't tap!

(he belches noisily)

'Scuse me, ladies.

BOBBIE

It's okay.

Roger takes a deep chug of beer and belches again, twice as loudly and grossly.

ROGER
There ya go!

BOBBIE
Roger, what happened last night? At
the Men's Association?

ROGER
It was amazing. Man, you wouldn't
believe it. It would rock your
mother effin' world.

JOANNA
What?

Roger leans forward, as if he's about to let the women in on
the big secret.

ROGER
Only I can't tell you.

JOANNA
Why not?

ROGER
You're chicks.

We hear a car horn HONK. Jerry drives up, in an SUV.

JERRY
(leaning out the car window)
Wagon train!

ROGER
(very macho)
My man!

Jerry gets out of the vehicle: he wears boxing gloves, and
carries a few more pairs.

JERRY
And I got headgear and cups.

BOBBIE
You're gonna teach those little
boys how to box?

ROGER
J-Dog!

Roger and Jerry high-five each other, and then they punch
each other, very jock-like and butch. Then they both pull
back, abruptly.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Yo.

JERRY

Dude.

ROGER

Don't mo me.

ANGLE on Joanna and Bobbie, looking at each other, very confused.

BOBBIE

Don't mo me?

Behind their backs:

ROGER

Yo, J-Man. I got somethin' for ya.

Roger faces Jerry. Suddenly Roger's pants BULGE about five feet forward, toward Jerry, as if he's got a huge robotic erection inside them.

ROGER AND JERRY

Whoa!

Joanna and Bobbie turn around, but Roger's crotch has already returned to normal.

JERRY

(looking around)

Where are the kids?

JOANNA

The kids?

ROGER

We adopted. This morning. We went to this agency, they showed us a picture.

JERRY

There were these two little guys, brothers, just sitting there, in the middle of their war-torn city.

ROGER

Man, I'm tellin' ya, it broke my friggin' heart.

JERRY

How could we say no?

JOANNA

That's so great.

BOBBIE

Good for you.

ROGER

Here they come. Our little dudes...

ANGLE on two strapping, blonde, 17-year-old BOYS, in t-shirts and cargo shorts, like something out of an Abercrombie & Fitch catalogue.

JERRY

Tad!

ROGER

Luke!

TAD

Dads!

JOANNA

Wait. These are your foster kids?
What war-torn city are you from?

TAD

Santa Barbara. It was gettin' dangerous. Preps.

LUKE

Versus the surfers.

TAD

Stepford is way more cool.

ROGER

Yo!

Roger, Jerry, Tad and Luke all begin shadowboxing and fake-slapping each other, like frat guys. Joanna and Bobbie, very disturbed, start to walk away.

INT. GREAT ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Walter is seated, while Joanna paces - she's very upset.

JOANNA

But it wasn't Roger. I mean, it was, but it just wasn't!

WALTER

I'm not following.

JOANNA

Before, Roger was witty and stylish and ironic.

WALTER

He was fabulous.

JOANNA

Yes! But now he's butch and tough
and loud, he's a soccer Dad.

WALTER

But Joanna, there are lots of ways
to be gay. Don't try to make him
into a stereotype.

JOANNA

He wasn't a stereotype, he was fun,
he was out there, he was warm, he
was Roger. And now he's someone
else.

WALTER

How does Jerry feel?

JOANNA

He's thrilled. They've adopted
these two guys from the Abercrombie
& Fitch catalogue.

WALTER

So what's the problem?

JOANNA

What happened? At the Men's
Association? Did they do something
to Roger?

WALTER

Like what? Hold him down and make
him wear a baseball cap and a fanny
pack?

JOANNA

I don't know. But maybe Bobbie's
right, maybe there's something
going on here, with this whole
town. Why can't you see that? Why
are you defending these people? How
did we end up here?

WALTER

(staring at her)
You'll never change, will you? Not
really.

JOANNA

What do you mean?

A beat, while Walter makes a decision. He suddenly changes
tactics, becoming far more understanding and agreeable.

WALTER

If you're that unhappy, we can move.

JOANNA

What?

WALTER

The only reason we came to Stepford was to help you get better. And if that's not happening, then we shouldn't be here.

JOANNA

You...you would do that? For me?

WALTER

Of course. I'm your husband. I'd do anything for you. Don't you know that?

JOANNA

But what about the kids? We'd be uprooting them again.

WALTER

They'll be fine. And we can take our time, look around, maybe Boston, or Philly. We can get it right.

JOANNA

Oh Walter, I'm so sorry.

WALTER

About what?

JOANNA

I just - I didn't think you'd understand.

WALTER

Why not?

JOANNA

Because I'm still that other person. The one who lived in Manhattan. Who didn't trust anyone. That person who forgot all about how wonderful you are.

WALTER

But you're not that person, not anymore. You've been doing so great. You're sweeter. And softer.

JOANNA
Maybe it's the spa...

WALTER
And you are so sexy.

JOANNA
(awkward and unsure)
No, I'm not...

WALTER
Of course you are...

Tentatively at first, they embrace. They can't even quite get their arms around each other - it's been a long time.

JOANNA
This...this would be our first time, since New York, and all the trouble.

WALTER
You are so beautiful...

JOANNA
I'm still a mess...

JOANNA
You are so luscious...

JOANNA
Me? The boss lady?

WALTER
(very tenderly)
You are so - unemployed...

JOANNA
(very touched, and turned on)
I should bake something...

They start to kiss, very passionately.

INT. SPA SALON - THE NEXT MORNING

CLOSE-UP on Claire's face, as she receives a Botox injection between her eyebrows. Her eyes are shut and she's glowing; she moans.

CLAIRE
Mmmmm...

NURSE
Open your eyes.

As Claire opens her eyes, the camera PULLS BACK, revealing that Claire is lying on a salon chaise, being tended to by a pink uniformed nurse. The nurse hands Claire a mirror, and she inspects her face.

CLAIRE

(a little disappointed)
Oh, but look - I can still express mild surprise. Next time, let's aim for no facial movement at all.

NURSE

Of course, Mrs. Wellington.

JOANNA (OS)

Claire?

Claire turns, and Joanna kneels beside her; Joanna is looking far less frantic than when we last saw her.

CLAIRE

Joanna. Would you like a touch-up?
We could share a needle.

JOANNA

Actually, I'm looking for Bobbie.
Have you seen her?

CLAIRE

Just this morning. She was starting her makeover. And then Dave picked her up.

JOANNA

He did?

CLAIRE

Second honeymoon!

JOANNA

Claire, tell me the truth - would you hate me?

CLAIRE

Hate you? Why?

JOANNA

Walter and I are thinking about - moving.

CLAIRE

So soon? From that perfect house?

JOANNA

Well, we're really just thinking about it.

CLAIRE
Of course. And you know, Stepford
isn't for everyone. And I have to
confess - I envy you.

JOANNA
You do? Why?

CLAIRE
Well, because Walter just phoned
me, not fifteen minutes ago.

JOANNA
About what?

CLAIRE
I'm not asking for details, but he
said that last night, he fell in
love with you, all over again.

JOANNA
(delighted)
He did? He said that?

CLAIRE
And as a surprise, he's bought you
your very own Whole New You
Makeover. It's a two-day package.

JOANNA
Oh, that's so sweet, but I don't
think I really have the time...

CLAIRE
After all that Walter's done for
you? You can't do this one little
thing for him?

JOANNA
Do you really think it's that
important?

CLAIRE
Maybe this is none of my business,
but has Walter ever strayed?

JOANNA
No, of course not, well, only that
once...

CLAIRE
Was she younger? Prettier? With
sleeker, shinier hair? That
bounces?

JOANNA
It was a mistake, I was so busy...

CLAIRE
Too busy for a makeover?

JOANNA
(seeing Claire's point)
Oh my God...

CLAIRE
Do you love him?

JOANNA
Of course!

CLAIRE
How much?

JOANNA
With all my heart!

CLAIRE
Then prove it. Or someone else
will.

Sarah, Charmaine, Mary Ann and several other Stepford wives
have now gathered around. They're supportive, but also
threatening.

SARAH
Congratulations, Joanna.

CHARMAINE
You're a very lucky woman.

MARY ANN
Walter's such a catch.

ALL OF THE WOMEN
(with regard to Walter)
Mmmm...

INT. EVALUATION ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

We are in a sterile, almost futuristic white room, with just
a few silver chairs and some large, framed, silver-printed
photos of perfect women's faces and body parts. At the
center of the room is a dazzling piece of machinery,
resembling an MRI unit, only in white, silver and pink.

Joanna, wearing a sleek pink smock, lies on an elevated,
cushioned platform, several feet off the ground. Claire and
a uniformed attendant stand to either side of Joanna.

CLAIRE

This is just part one - your full-body evaluation. Once you're inside, waves of light and sound will measure every square inch, creating a perfect virtual image. So you musn't move.

Claire nods, and the attendant pushes a few buttons on a control panel. Silver bands appear from the machine, clamping securely around Joann's wrists.

JOANNA

But I'm just a teeny bit claustrophobic.

CLAIRE

Not to worry. To completely relax you, we provide continual, soothing, visual and aural stimuli, through this headset.

The attendant slips a sleekly designed contraption over Joanna's head; this headgear combines high-tech earmuffs and oversize goggles.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Welcome to the beginning - of a whole new you.

Claire nods and the attendant activates the machinery, pushing more buttons on the control panel. The machine hums, the lights in the room dim, and Joanna's body glides deep into the machine, vanishing from view.

CUT TO:

INT. A WHOLE NEW YOU MACHINE - DAY

We are now seeing and hearing what Joanna experiences, through her headset. This sequence should resemble an ultimate commercial or video for satisfying motherhood, all-American romance and family bliss. It begins with classical music played over images of sunny blue skies, fields of tulips and daisies, and frolicking puppies and kittens. As the music begins to throb, we see images of handsome, smiling, strong-jawed men, gurgling toddlers and beaming, towheaded children - it's a combination of every Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein and Baby Gap ad campaign.

The images begin to cut even faster, for a subliminal effect, as glossy photos of cupcakes, balloons and seashores alternate with flashes of favorite moms like Florence Henderson, Donna Reed, Michael Learned from "The Waltons", Marge Simpson, Catherine Hicks on "Seventh Heaven", Cindy Crawford and her toddlers, the extended Bush family, the Virgin Mary, Betty Crocker and luscious catalogue shots of multi-slice toasters, espresso machines, outdoor barbecues, dishwashers, Subzero refrigerators, diamond wedding rings and catalogue covers from J. Crew, Pottery Barn, Chambers, Gardeners Eden, Williams-Sonoma, Martha By Mail and Frontgate. Finally, we see a series of smiling group portraits of Joanna, Walter, Pete and Kimberly, all in matching sportswear, posed as the ideal Stepford family. The final image includes a new baby.

Over this image we hear a car horn HONK, sharply.

INT. JOANNA'S CAR - A FEW HOURS LATER

CLOSE-UP on Joanna's face, as her eyes snap open; she's been reliving these final images on her drive home from the Spa. The brainwashing-like treatment has had its effect: Joanna is now dazed, softer and more open to suggestion. She's like someone beginning to fall under a spell.

EXT. STEPFORD - DUSK

Joanna's car is at a green light, but she's not moving, and several cars are behind her, honking.

ANGLE on Joanna, leaning out her window.

JOANNA

Sorry!

Joanna puts her car in gear and continues her ride home.

EXT. JOANNA AND WALTER'S HOUSE - DUSK

There is a group of SUV's parked on the street and in the driveway. Joanna is hurrying to the front door, finding her keys.

JOANNA

(opening the door)

I'm sorry I'm late, I got all caught up at the Spa...

INT. GREAT ROOM - SAME TIME

As Joanna enters:

WALTER (OS)

Out here, honey! Out back!

EXT. BACKYARD - DUSK

Walter and all of his buddies from the Men's Association are having a barbecue in the back yard. The group includes Mike, Dave, Herb, Ed, Vic, Roger and Jerry. Walter, in a chef's apron, is standing by the professional quality grill, flipping burgers. Joanna will now be more susceptible to the guys' flattery. She enters from the house.

WALTER

Hey, baby. Look at you.

ALL THE GUYS

(admiring Joanna)

Whoa...

JOANNA

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't realize you had company...

WALTER

No, it's okay, just a little BBQ.

MIKE

But doesn't she look terrific?

(to Joanna)

You are glowing.

ED

Hubba hubba.

ROGER

(appreciatively)

Damn.

JOANNA

(pleased)

Really?

MIKE

Like gangbusters.

VIC

Walt, you are one lucky sonofagun...

ROGER

Yo, if I wasn't into the man thing...

JOANNA

Um, thank you. I've been at the Spa.

MIKE

Joanna?

JOANNA

Mike.

MIKE

I just have to say it. I'm not just here for the burgers.

DAVE

And the ribs!

MIKE

I have an agenda.

JOANNA

Really? What?

MIKE

You.

ALL THE GUYS

Whoa!

MIKE

Walt - do you mind?

WALTER

Be my guest.

JOANNA

What is this?

MIKE

Guys, calm down. I should explain. You know, my real name isn't Mike. That's just a nickname, from where I used to work.

JOANNA

Where?

MIKE

Microsoft. I was in research and development. And I'm applying my stuff here, to keep Stepford safe. I've been working on a voice recognition program, for everything from your front door to the ATM. So I've been getting everyone's voices on tape.

TED
It's guy stuff. Techno-babble.

JOANNA
No, no. I get it.

MIKE
I've set up my equipment in the den.

JOANNA
Walter?

WALTER
We'll keep busy.

ROGER
Meat!

MIKE
(to Joanna)
Milady?

INT. DEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The curtains are drawn and the lighting is seductively low; maybe there's even a fire in the fireplace. Mike sits by a small stack of recording equipment. Joanna is seated across from him.

MIKE
I think you might want to come just a little bit closer.

JOANNA
Closer?

MIKE
So I can hear every word.

JOANNA
(moving closer)
Is this good?

Joanna is almost knee to knee with Mike.

MIKE
Much better.

JOANNA
(with a nervous giggle)
Okay.

MIKE

Now, I'm just going to read you a list of sample phrases, and I'd just like you to repeat them. Just use your normal, delightful speaking voice.

Joanna takes a deep breath.

MIKE

Joanna?

JOANNA

I'm sorry, I've had a sort of crazy day, and I'm not quite sure who I am anymore.

MIKE

You'll do just fine. I promise. Do you trust me?

JOANNA

Sure.

MIKE

Do you mean that?

JOANNA

Why not?

MIKE

(seductively)

"Hello."

JOANNA

"Hello."

MIKE

"You have reached Joanna Eberhart."

JOANNA

"You have reached Joanna Eberhart."

MIKE

"Interactive."

JOANNA

"Interactive."

As the scene progresses, the dialogue becomes more and more loaded with sexual undercurrent; every phrase has a double meaning. Mike is really good at this.

MIKE

Sweet. Now, these next few phrases
are for phone trees, information
lines, that sort of thing.

JOANNA

I'm ready.

MIKE

I like that.

JOANNA

"I like that."

MIKE

Not yet. "Press one for Joanna."

JOANNA

"Press one For Joanna."

MIKE

"Press two for Joanna and Walter."

JOANNA

"Press two for Joanna and Walter."

MIKE

"Press three for more options."

JOANNA

"Press three for more options."

MIKE

"Press four to speak to an
operator..."

JOANNA

"Press four to speak to...an
operator..." Is it warm in here?

MIKE

It's hot.

JOANNA

Is it too hot?

MIKE

Not yet. More?

JOANNA

More.

MIKE

This next batch is for something a
little more family oriented.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm working on a line of toys, just for Stepford kids. Do you like toys?

JOANNA

Who doesn't?

MIKE

(impressed)

Joanna.

JOANNA

But what will they say?

MIKE

"Hug me."

JOANNA

"Hug me."

MIKE

"Squeeze me."

JOANNA

"Squeeze me."

MIKE

"All over."

JOANNA

"All over."

MIKE

"Touch me."

JOANNA

"Touch me."

MIKE

"Rub my tummy."

JOANNA

"Rub my tummy."

MIKE

"Make me come."

JOANNA

"Make me come."

MIKE

"Elmo."

JOANNA

Make me come, Elmo?

MIKE

It's for next Christmas.

There's a knock on the door, and Walter sticks his head into the room.

WALTER

You doin' okay in here? What's going on?

MIKE

Joanna is doing so well.

(to Joanna)

Did you like that?

WALTER

Are you done?

Joanna glances at both men. She goes to Walter, choosing him over Mike.

JOANNA

(to Walter)

I'm all yours.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Joanna and Walter are lying in bed, in each other's arms, having just made love.

WALTER

So do you still want to move?

JOANNA

(almost asleep)

Yes...no...I don't know...

WALTER

We've got plenty of time to decide.
We've got plenty of time for everything...

JOANNA

Mmm...

INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Joanna and Walter are both asleep. We hear a small whirring noise. Only Joanna opens her eyes, sleepily.

ANGLE on the robot dog, standing beside the bed. He has something in his mouth. He drops it on the floor.

JOANNA

(groggy)

Whatcha got there?

ANGLE on a remote, in Joanna's hand. In raised lettering, the remote reads, "JOANNA." Off Joanna's shocked reaction, we go to:

INT. HOME OFFICE - 4 AM

Joanna is using the computer in the kitchen office area; she's wearing her robe, and she's working very intensely. She's only switched on a small work light.

ANGLE on the computer screen. Joanna has logged onto a Wall Street Journal website, and she's typing in the name "SARAH SUNDERSON." A photo of Sarah appears, in which she looks extremely professional, with a far more severe hairstyle. The headline beneath the photo reads, "SARAH GAULT-SUNDERSON NAMED CEO OF TRANS-GLOBAL AIRLINES."

ANGLE on Joanna's face, as she absorbs this information.

CUT TO:

ANGLE on the computer screen. Joanna is now typing in the name "CAROL VAN SANT." A photo of Carol in a business suit, accepting an award, appears. The headline reads "CAROL WOODSON-VAN SANT NAMED CARDIAC SURGEON OF THE YEAR."

ANGLE on Joanna, looking increasingly disturbed.

CUT TO:

ANGLE on the computer screen. We see an official-looking photo of Charmaine, wearing judicial robes. The headline reads, "JUSTICE CHARMAINE CALLOWAY APPOINTED TO FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION."

WALTER (OS)

Sweetcakes?

Joanna looks up, startled. She hurriedly types in something new as Walter enters, in his pajamas. He's suspicious, but covering it.

WALTER (CONT'D)

It's 4 AM. What are you up to?

JOANNA

(covering)

Just recipes for tomorrow. I like to get a head start.

WALTER
On what?

ANGLE on the computer screen. The photo of Charmaine vanishes just in time, and is replaced by a mouth-watering photo of an apple pie.

JOANNA
Apple pie. Bobbie recommended it.

WALTER
Really?

JOANNA
I'll be right in.

As Walter turns to go:

JOANNA
Walter?

WALTER
Babe?

JOANNA
If you could change something about me, just by, I don't know, pushing a button, would you do it?

WALTER
If I could change something?

JOANNA
Anything. Everything. Would you?

They look at each other. Both of them are trying to figure out what the other one knows. It's a tense moment.

WALTER
Of course not.

ANGLE on the computer screen, as Joanna stands up. The screensaver is a digital image of Kimberly's Barbie doll, in her chiffon gown.

EXT. BOBBIE'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

Joanna is opening the back door to Bobbie's house.

JOANNA
(calling out)
Bobbie?

Joanna is now inside.

JOANNA (OS)

(horrified)

Oh my God!

INT. BOBBIE'S KITCHEN - SAME TIME

ANGLE on the kitchen - it is now spotless. Every surface gleams; every appliance, countertop and cabinet looks brand new and sparkling. Nothing is out of place, and there's a camera-ready floral arrangement. The change is overwhelming.

JOANNA

Oh no.

ANGLE on a white ceramic bowl of green apples, and a white wicker basket with ivy.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

(calling out)

Bobbie, what happened? Did someone break in?

Bobbie enters: she, too, is now utterly transformed. She has become a perfect Stepford wife: her skin, hair and makeup are flawless, and her breasts are now cantilevered and perky. She wears a crisp, typically Stepford ensemble of apron, fitted, sexy dress, stockings, pumps and pearls. She has the Stepford glow. She will speak in newly gracious, sunny tones, as if she's a spokesmodel for suburban bliss.

BOBBIE

Good morning, Joanna. Coffee?

JOANNA

(staring at Bobbie,
incredulous)

Bobbie?

BOBBIE

Isn't it a lovely morning? Oh, but this kitchen. It's a disaster area.

JOANNA

Excuse me?

BOBBIE

I'd better get crackin'!

DAVE (OS)

Honeypie?

Dave has appeared, carrying his briefcase; Bobbie all but throbs with devotion and lust.

BOBBIE
Beastmaster?

Bobbie runs to him, and they kiss passionately, Dave bending Bobbie over backwards. Dave breaks the kiss.

DAVE
(to Bobbie)
Don't beg. Yet.
(to Joanna)
Hey, Jo. Good to see you.

BOBBIE
(to Joanna, regarding Dave)
But hands off!

JOANNA
I promise.

DAVE
(to Bobbie)
I'll be home for lunch. Twelve sharp.

BOBBIE
I'll be waiting. Upstairs.

DAVE
In just the apron?

BOBBIE
Do we have time? Right now? For a quickie?

DAVE
Sit tight. Let it build up. It's just a few hours.

BOBBIE
But I can't wait!

DAVE
Lunch.

He smolders, blowing Bobbie a final kiss, as she moans.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Bye, Jo. Later.

Dave exits.

BOBBIE
(turning on Joanna)
You bitch. But if he wants a threesome, I'm ready.

JOANNA

A threesome?

ADAM, JENNIFER AND MAX

Mom!

Bobbie's three kids, ADAM, JENNIFER and MAX, ages 7 to 12, run in.

BOBBIE

Good morning, my precious ones. And thank you for leaving your requests on my e-mail.

(she takes three perfect bag lunches or lunchboxes from the counter, and distributes them)

Adam, you wanted peanut butter and jelly, no crusts, Sunny Delight, a Snickers bar and a Rolex.

(the next lunch)

Jen, here's your whole wheat burrito, freshly-baked cornbread, a soy protein shake, and three pieces of German chocolate layer cake.

JENNIFER

From scratch?

BOBBIE

Of course!

(the third lunch)

And Max, you've got bacon, lettuce and tomato on a lightly toasted sesame seed bagel, Jello Rocky Road pudding with multi-color sprinkles, a box of mini-oreos, a box of mini-Ritz crackers and there's no such thing as mini-Mallomars, but I called Nabisco with a special order.

MAX

But what about my action figures?

BOBBIE

Boba Fett, Mace Windu, postpuberty Amidala, but I'm sorry, they haven't released anything from the third movie yet. They haven't filmed it.

MAX

(whining)

Mom...

BOBBIE

(very upset)

I'm garbage.

(handing him an envelope)

Here's five hundred dollars.

MAX

(grudgingly)

Alright...

BOBBIE

(perky again)

Have fun at school! I love you!

ALL THE KIDS

Bye! Bye, Joanna!

The kids run out, as Bobbie gazes after them.

BOBBIE

They grow up so fast. I think I'll have three more.

JOANNA

Bobbie, we have to talk.

BOBBIE

Of course. But only for a minute, and then I have to get to work on this pigsty. Coffee?

JOANNA

No, thanks. Bobbie, what's going on with you?

BOBBIE

I know. My hair is a rat's nest, and look at my apron. I'll get the spray starch and the iron. Coffee?

JOANNA

No. Last night, I went online, and I found out all of the women here, they used to be big deals. I mean, judges and CEO's - Sarah Sunderson ran an airline.

BOBBIE

With that perfect skin.

JOANNA

But she didn't used to look like that, none of the women did. They looked like executives and presidents of publishing houses, not sex kittens.

BOBBIE
Coffee?

JOANNA
Bobbie, listen to me. What happened, did they drug you, is it brainwashing? This isn't you.

BOBBIE
That's right, Joanna. It isn't me.

JOANNA
Bobbie?

BOBBIE
It's a whole new me. I'm happy. I'm healthy. Because I know what's important in life.

JOANNA
Krispy Kremes? Making wisecracks? What about your book?

BOBBIE
That's right. That is what's important. My new cookbook. And my husband, and my family. And making myself perfect, for their sake. And making a perfect home.

JOANNA
Bobbie?

Bobbie starts to get very steely, and she begins to stalk Joanna, backing her around the kitchen island. While Bobbie's tone remains gracious and hostess-y, she becomes extremely threatening.

BOBBIE
It's a lesson every gal needs to learn. Especially you. I'm your friend, Joanna. I'll help you.

JOANNA
Stay away from me.

BOBBIE
You're driven. You're ambitious. You don't care about anyone but yourself.

JOANNA
That's not true, not anymore.

BOBBIE

I can help you. I can fix you. We
can start with your hair.

Bobbie's arm suddenly reaches towards Joanna, and Joanna
jumps back.

JOANNA

Don't touch me! Bobbie, or whatever
you are, just stay back!

BOBBIE

But you're my friend. You need me.
I'm going to clean you.

Bobbie starts backing Joanna up against a wall.

JOANNA

I'm not dirty!

ANGLE on a butcher block cube which holds several sizes of
steak knives and cleavers. Joanna grabs one of the biggest,
sharpest knives and brandishes it.

BOBBIE

I've had my makeover - how about
yours?

As Bobbie comes at her, Joanna, in self-defense, stabs
Bobbie with the knife, just above her heart. Bobbie pauses,
still unfazed and smiling. The knife is still sticking out
of Bobbie's chest.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)

Coffee?

JOANNA

Oh my God, Oh my God...

Bobbie's head jerks a few times; she's experiencing a
mechanical malfunction.

BOBBIE

Decaf...decaf latte...Cafe
Vienna...shall we review my
functions?

JOANNA

Your functions?

BOBBIE

Souffle?

Bobbie's right hand retracts into her arm, and reappears as
a metal chef's wisk, which then rotates into a blur.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)

Dust bunny?

The whisk retracts. Bobbie's opposite hand retracts, and a twelve-foot long vacuum cleaner hose snakes out of her arm, rising to vacuum the very top of the kitchen cabinets.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)

And what about my windows? Oh my God - do I see streaks?

Bobbie squirts cleaning fluid out of her mouth, onto a window. Then her hand retracts, and her arm sprouts a squeegee, which expertly wipes the window clean.

JOANNA

(in horror)

What are you? And are you available Thursdays?

BOBBIE

And in the bedroom...

Bobbie's limbs return to normal, but now her blouse opens automatically, revealing her newly perky breasts in a frilly bra. A glowing red button is at the tip of each breast, as if on an elevator panel.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)

Foreplay...

(she pushes one of her nipple buttons and sexy music, maybe Ravel's "Bolero" comes from a speaker in her stomach)

Intercourse...

(she pushes the other nipple button, and she begins to moan)

Give it to me, harder, deeper, all four inches...

(she tugs on her nose)

Orgasm...

(steam shoots out of her ears, and her head rises three feet into the air, spins 360 degrees, into a blur, as she screams)

YES!!!

BOBBIE (CONT'D)

(as her head returns to normal)
And afterglow.

Bobbie's chest now swings open, revealing a small refrigerator compartment, holding a can of beer.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)
 Bud Lite?

JOANNA
 You're not human. You're not you!

BOBBIE
 I'd love to sit and chat, but that
 lawn won't mow itself!

ANGLE on Bobbie's legs, which now mold together to form a
 lawnmower.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)
 See you soon, I hope!

Bobbie zips out the door, leaving behind a stunned,
 speechless Joanna. One second later, still with her
 lawnmower legs, Bobbie zips partway back into the room.

BOBBIE (CONT'D)
 Coffee?

JOANNA
 No!

Joanna runs out of the house.

INT. JOANNA'S CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Joanna is very upset, but trying to stay calm. As she
 drives, she talks on her cell phone.

JOANNA
 (into phone)
 Hello, is this the middle school?
 This is Joanna Eberhart, and I need
 to speak to my children, Kimberly
 and Pete, I'm coming to get them,
 right now...What? They're already
 gone? My husband took them?
 (as she hangs up, she glances
 in the rearview mirror)
 Oh my God.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

ANGLE on Herb Sunderson, at the wheel of his mammoth SUV,
 getting very close to Joanna's car, from the rear. Herb
 smiles.

ANGLE on Ted Van Sant, at the wheel of his SUV, pulling up
 beside Joanna's car. He smiles and waves to her.

ANGLE on Dave Markowitz, at the wheel of his SUV, pulling up along the other side of Joanna's car. He gives Joanna the "Rock on!" gesture and grins.

INT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY

Joanna, almost completely boxed in by the other vehicles, puts her foot on the gas, pulling ahead. As she pulls ahead, she glances out the window again. From Joanna's POV, we see a group of Stepford office buildings.

ANGLE on an office building; the large sign out front reads, "DIGITEL TRANSFORMERS."

ANGLE on another building; the sign out front reads "MINICRON DATA SYSTEMS."

ANGLE on another building; the sign reads "STEPFORD ROBOTICS."

INT. LIVING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

JOANNA runs into the great room, frantic.

JOANNA

(calling out)

Walter, where are you? I know
you've got the kids! Pete!
Kimberly!

(there's no response; the house
is deserted)

Goddamn you, Walter! And goddamn
you, Stepford! Do you have any idea
who you're dealing with? I am
Joanna Eberhart!

EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY

The front door slams open, and Joanna appears. She is now once again the ferocious Joanna of her corporate triumphs - she wears all black, like a true Ninja warrior. She sprints across the lawn, with an avenging fury.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - DAY

We see the Victorian building from below, looming high on the hill, like the house in "Psycho." Joanna enters the frame. She pauses, and then strides up the hill.

ANGLE on the gates of the Association, clanging shut behind Joanna.

INT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION FRONT ROOM

The front door slams open, and Joanna steps into the room, which is deserted.

JOANNA

Where are you? You bunch of pussies!

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Joanna moves along the upper hallway, which we've seen before. She sees the portrait gallery. After the first portrait of Roger and Jerry, she now sees two new portraits: the first is a posed, formal grouping of Bobbie, Dave and their kids, in which Bobbie looks like a Stepford wife. The new, final portrait depicts Joanna, Walter and their kids, posed like a traditional, conservative family. In the portrait, Joanna looks glazed and perfect - she's become a Stepford wife.

Joanna moves on, reaching a final door, to the room where we last saw Roger before his transformation. She opens the door.

INT. ROTUNDA

Joanna steps into a large, impressive, round room, with classical architecture.

At the center of the room, there's a raised platform, like a bier. A woman's body, completely draped with a sheet, lies atop the bier. The room's lighting is dim and shadowy, except for a shaft of light, which makes the shrouded body glow.

JOANNA

(calling out)

Hello?

(choosing the insult deliberately)

Boys?

Joanna sees the bier. She moves closer, to inspect it. She pulls back the sheet, revealing the head and shoulders of the woman on the bier. Joanna gasps.

ANGLE on the woman: it's a Stepford-perfect version of Joanna, with her eyes shut.

The Robot Joanna opens her eyes revealing empty, black sockets.

MIKE (OS)

Welcome.

Joanna turns. Mike now stands opposite her, on the other side of the bier. She didn't hear him enter. Joanna turns, and looks around the room. All the members of the Men's Association, except for Walter, step out of the shadows.

INT. ROTUNDA - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Solid oak chairs are now arranged in a semicircle at the center of the room. The Men's Association members, at least twelve guys, all in khakis, are seated. Mike sits at the center of the group. Joanna sits alone, facing all of the men.

The room remains mostly in shadow, with overhead lights illuminating the men and Joanna. The atmosphere is hushed and charged, a combination of a secret trial and the interrogation scene from "Basic Instinct." Joanna, while very aware of the danger she's in, is remarkably calm: high-stakes situations bring out the best in her.

JOANNA

Where are my children?

MIKE

They're perfectly safe. But you've caused us quite a bit of trouble.

JOANNA

How?

MIKE

You became too curious. You saw the portraits. You wanted to leave town. So we've had to speed everything up. The whole process.

JOANNA

The welcome wagon. The makeover. The measuring. Taping my voice.

MIKE

But we're still in excellent shape. Much like yourself.

ANGLE on the guys, nodding at Joanna, approvingly.

JOANNA

But I'll improve, I assume. My hair will get shinier. My skin will become flawless. And my breasts will grow larger. Perkier. Indestructible.

MIKE

Ideal.

JOANNA

Where's Walter?

MIKE

Right here.

Mike turns and nods. Walter enters, from the darkness. He sits with the guys.

JOANNA

How could you?

WALTER

Ever since we met, you have beaten me at everything. You're better educated, you're stronger, you're faster, you're a better dancer, a better driver, a better tennis player. You've always made at least six figures more than I could ever dream of, you're a better speaker, a better executive and you're even better sex.

JOANNA

Walter...

WALTER

Don't deny it.

JOANNA

I wasn't going to.

WALTER

Don't I get anything?

JOANNA

You got me.

WALTER

No. I got to hold your purse, I got to tell the kids that you'd be late, again, I got to tell the press that you had no comment, I got to work for you.

JOANNA

With me.

WALTER

Under you. All of us, we married Wonder Women.

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)
Supergirls, Amazon queens. And do you know what that makes us?

JOANNA
Smart? Worthy? Lucky?

WALTER
Dennis Thatcher. Prince Charles. All of Julia Roberts' boyfriends. We're the wuss. The wind beneath your wings. Your support system. We're the girl.

HERB
And we don't like it

ALL THE GUYS
Yeah! That's right! Here, here!

JOANNA
So you shamed or coerced or sweet-talked all of your accomplished, driven, type triple-A wives into moving here. And you made them feel guilty, about everything. You made them feel like negligent mothers, and bad wives. And then you killed them.

MIKE
Oh no, nothing like that. We help them. We perfect them.

JOANNA
By turning them into robots? Does any fraction of them still exist?

MIKE
Of course. Almost everything.
(to the guys)
Should we show her?

JOANNA
Show me what?

MIKE
This is really just for new recruits, but I think you're gonna love it.

Mike points a remote control at a wall containing an antique map of Stepford. The map becomes a huge video screen.

ANGLE on the screen, as a short promotional film appears. In the film we see Mike, in a lab coat, seated behind a desk, or in a lab. His manner is cheerful, scientific, and helpful.

MIKE

(in the film)

Some guys ask, how do we do it?

It's really pretty simple. In
layman's terms...

Mike uses a laser pointer to call attention to a wall chart picturing a lumpy, dour-looking woman. As Mike narrates, the chart comes to life as a computer graphic.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We simply take the brain, and
remove it.

The top of the woman's head glides off gracefully, and is placed on a satin pillow.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We discard the unhappy flesh.
Safety first!

The woman's body is placed in an orange plastic bin, marked with medical symbols.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We insert a few microchips, for
improved behavioral patterns and
increased personal happiness...

Images of microchips appear, and the chips fly into the woman's disembodied brain, along with animated images of a smiley face with long eyelashes and lipstick, dancing cookbooks and perfume bottles labelled "Sugar", "Spice" and "Everything Nice."

MIKE (CONT'D)

And then we perform a transplant,
into an optimal new casing.

A perfect, gorgeous woman's body appears, without eyes. Her head opens up, and the brain glides in. Suddenly, the woman has eyes. She smiles radiantly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hello, darling!

(the woman blows Mike a kiss)

Welcome to the future.

JOANNA

But who developed all this?

MIKE

Well, Herb worked for Apple.

TED

(gesturing to himself)

NASA.

VIC

Disney.

ED

AOL.

JOANNA

Is that why the women are so slow?

MIKE

Joanna.

JOANNA

You're like the Taliban.

MIKE

No. The Taliban were evil, stupid, desperate men. And they didn't have the technology.

JOANNA

But is this really what you want? Women who behave like slaves? Women who are obsessed with cleaning their kitchens and doing their hair? Women who never read a book, who don't challenge you in any way, women who exist only to wait on you hand and foot, like mechanical cheerleaders with Playboy Channel boobs and spokesmodel smiles? Is that what you want?

ANGLE on the guys. After a beat, they all smile and nod yes, in complete and sincere agreement.

MIKE

Joanna, you were a legendary businesswoman. Surely you can appreciate, at the very least, the brilliance of the concept. Picture it, if you could perfect your spouse. If you could erase every annoying habit, every physical flaw, every moment of whining and nagging and farting in bed. Imagine if you could enjoy the person you loved, but only at their very best. And imagine if that person could adore you, with a total commitment and infinite purity. Imagine if that person lived only to make you happy. What would you have?

JOANNA
A Porsche you could fuck.

MIKE
Bravo.

ANGLE on Walter, looking at Joanna with awe.

MIKE (CONT'D)
And the only reason for your anger, your resentment, your rage, is really very simple. You're furious because we thought of it first. While you were trying to be men, we decided to become gods.

JOANNA
In Dockers.

HERB
I like the flat fronts.

ANGLE on Ed, gesturing to Herb, as if Herb is such a dork.

MIKE
But you will be our greatest creation.

JOANNA
Your Playstation Three.

MIKE
So simply surrender. Agree. And relax, into a lifetime of total bliss.

JOANNA
For who? Wait - will I be digital?

MIKE
With Dolby. And I feel vulgar even mentioning this, but you can't escape. You're just one woman.

JOANNA
And what are you? All of you?

WALTER
We're men, or we're trying to be.

JOANNA
But let me ask you something.
(she turns to Walter)
These robots, these mindless slut mummies, these Stepford wives, can they say, "I love you"?

WALTER

(unsure)

Mike?

MIKE

Of course. In 58 languages.

JOANNA

(still to Walter)

Do they mean it?

MIKE

Absolutely.

JOANNA

How can you tell?

HERB

Because after they say it, their necks open up and you get pizza.

All of the guys nod in vigorous agreement: "That's right, that's love, you said it", etc.

MIKE

(to Joanna)

Don't be afraid. Walter will be right beside you, every step of the way. He'll write your new program. It's like a second honeymoon.

Mike points his remote control at the bier

ANGLE on the Robot Joanna. She now sits up, and then stands. Her movements are somewhat mechanical. She will speak in a mechanized, robotic version of Joanna's voice.

ROBOT JOANNA

(to Joanna)

Come.

ANGLE on a door, sliding open with a hissing sound. Through the door we glimpse a brightly-lit, high-tech elevator.

MIKE

Walter?

Walter stands beside Joanna.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Will you remake this woman?

All of the men rise.

ANGLE on Joanna, staring at Walter; her expression is challenging.

ANGLE on Walter, looking back at Joanna. His expression is a combination of fear, love and uncertainty.

Joanna moves to take off her wedding ring, as if she were going to throw it away, or at Walter. Then she pauses, and looks at Walter. Very deliberately, she slips the ring back on her finger. She's trusting him, with her life.

MIKE

Walt?

ANGLE on Walter: his expression changes. He's made a decision.

WALTER

Let's go.

The Robot Joanna leads Joanna and Walter towards the elevator. Just as Joanna's about to enter the elevator, she turns and looks back at the group, appraisingly.

JOANNA

Men.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

EXT. STEPFORD SUPERSHOPPE ALLFOODS EMPORIUM - DAY

We see the facade of an enormous, upscale supermarket, almost like an architect's idealized rendering, with every manicured shrub and neat line of shopping carts in place. The parking lot is packed with SUV'S. We hear a single, perfect note of music, a trilling, bell-like tone, and then a gorgeous, sweepingly lyrical WALTZ begins.

INT. SUPERMARKET

The Stepford Supershoppe is an absolute capitalist wet dream, with luxuriously wide aisles, bright but not harsh lighting, and endless miles of every product imaginable, arrayed on immaculate shelves. As the intoxicating Stepford Waltz is heard, we watch as the wives appear, pushing their carts slowly and gracefully through the store, like dancers. They all wear floaty, sheer, ultra-feminine chiffon dresses, looking like a combination of Greek goddesses and Victoria's Secret models. As the ladies glide through the aisles, they acknowledge each other with charming smiles and slight nods of the head. Among the wives are: Sarah, Carol, Mary Ann, Beth, Charmaine and Claire.

As Claire and Sarah pass each other:

CLAIRESarah.

SARAH
Claire.

As Charmaine and Mary Ann pass each other:

CHARMAINE
Mary Ann.

MARY ANN
Charmaine.

ANGLE on Bobbie, appearing in her chiffon finery, pushing her cart.

ANGLE on Roger, in a boxy, white linen Brooks Brothers suit and hornrim glasses, pushing his cart.

BOBBIE
Roger.

ROGER
Roberta.

LONG SHOT of the wives, gliding in a choreographed formation down the aisles. As a note of the song is held, they all look up.

ANGLE on Joanna, making her grand entrance into the store. The camera starts at her feet, wearing the highest heels. We PAN up her body: she is now a Stepford vision in chiffon, with curves, cleavage, highlighted curls and a dazzling, sexy smile. She is absolutely stunning. She pushes her cart into the store.

CLAIRE
Joanna.

JOANNA
Claire.

ANGLE on Sarah, in another aisle, selecting a hand lotion. She applies a dab of lotion to her wrist. She smiles rapturously, and speaks with the sexy, all-consuming enthusiasm of a woman in a TV commercial.

SARAH
Rich and creamy!

ANGLE on Claire, in another aisle, selecting a dishwashing liquid. She opens a bottle, and delicately sniffs the fragrance - she's thrilled.

CLAIRE

Lemon fresh!

ANGLE on Bobbie, in another aisle. The camera pans across a display of air fresheners, with names like "Tropical Heaven" and "Lilac Symphony." Bobbie selects a can, spritzes the air and walks into the mist, as if it were perfume. She inhales deeply and beams, entranced with the fragrance.

BOBBIE

Gentile!

ANGLE on Mary Ann, in the chips and snacks aisle, making her selection.

MARY ANN

Vic likes Pringles.

ANGLE on Joanna, in another aisle, holding up a bag of frozen treats.

JOANNA

Walt likes waffles.

ANGLE on Roger, in another aisle, holding up a roll of Brawny Paper Towels; the wrapper features a picture of the trademark lumberjack.

ROGER

Brawny!

He licks the roll appreciatively.

As the music builds, we see all the wives gliding up and down the aisles, nodding and smiling.

AERIAL VIEW, as Claire, Joanna, Roger and Bobbie's carts all meet head to head, in a circular formation, like the Rockettes.

CLAIRE

Joanna?

JOANNA

Claire?

CLAIRE

Will we see you tonight, for the Labor Day Dinner Dance and fireworks?

JOANNA

(thrilled)

I wouldn't miss it.

ANNOUNCER

(on the PA system)

Attention, Stepford shoppers -
there's - a special on fabric
softener in Aisle 7!

Everyone looks at each other, thrilled and then, with grace
but urgency, Joanna leads everyone towards Aisle 7.

EXT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION - THAT NIGHT

The building is illuminated for the big party. Japanese
lanterns are hung in the trees, and there's a full moon -
it's a perfect late summer night, with a light breeze and
butterflies. Formally dressed couples approach the building,
arm in arm.

INT. MEN'S ASSOCIATION BALLROOM - NIGHT

The room has been decorated with round tables and gilded
chairs surrounding a dance floor. There's a Peter Duchin-
style band, playing suburban soft-rock tunes. Couples sit at
the tables, sipping cocktails, and fill the dance floor.

ANGLE on the various couples dancing, including Herb and
Sarah and Bobbie and Dave, all dancing traditionally except
for Roger and Jerry, who stand almost completely still and
do a stiff, manly twist.

CLAIRE (OS)

Everyone! Your attention, please!
Attention!

ANGLE on Claire and Mike, standing in front of the band. The
Lily Pulitzer print of Claire's gown matches the fabric of
Mike's dinner jacket - they make a handsome, colorful
couple. The music stops, and everyone focuses on the
Wellingtons.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

(deferring to her husband)

Mike?

MIKE

Good evening, everyone. And I'd
just like to say that, in my humble
opinion, tonight is the very finest
event in Stepford history.

ANGLE on the ballroom, as all of the wives turn to their
husbands for guidance. All of the husbands nod, and then
everyone applauds happily.

MIKE (CONT'D)

And it's time to announce our Stepford Couple Of The Year. And tonight's choice was unanimous - in just a few short months, these kids have really done this town proud.

ANGLE on various couples, each eager for the honor.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So, in their spotlight dance, let's hear it for Walter and Joanna Kresby!

A SPOTLIGHT hits Walter and Joanna, as the crowd applauds and the music plays. Walter leads Joanna onto the dance floor, and they waltz together, gazing into each other's eyes, as the crowd admires them. Joanna now wears the same glamorous gown as Kimberly's Barbie doll.

ANGLE on Bobbie and Dave, watching Joanna and Walter.

BOBBIE

(sighing, admiringly)
Will I ever be that pretty?

DAVE

(patting her hand)
I'm working on it.

ANGLE on Roger and Dave, watching the dance.

JERRY

They're so perfect.

ROGER

They're in love.

Roger solemnly punches Jerry on the shoulder, as a manly show of affection.

Walter and Joanna come to a graceful stop in the middle of the dance floor; Joanna curtsies to Walter.

WALTER

(to the room)
Thank you, thank you all so much, for making us feel so at home, here in this Connecticut Eden. Am I right, sweetcakes?

JOANNA

Of course, darling. As always.

From offscreen, we hear a dog BARKING.

WALTER
(jovially)

Uh-Oh!

JOANNA

I'm so sorry!

WALTER

Look who's here!

The crowd parts, as Joanna and Walter's robot dog glides onto the dance floor, yapping.

JOANNA

He followed us!

WALTER

It's our pooch, Steppy. Hiya, boy!

JOANNA

(to the crowd, as Walter pets the dog)

Walter's spent so much time with Steppy - he's even made a few modifications.

WALTER

All it took was love, patience, and a little more RAM. Hey, should we show the folks?

JOANNA

What do you say - would you like to see an old dog do some new tricks?

ANGLE on the crowd: everyone's smiling and amused, saying, "Sure? Why not? Let's see it!"

WALTER

I've reprogrammed Steppy to be completely interactive, with a voice command.

JOANNA

Just like me!
(to the dog)
Go, boy!

ANGLE on the dog. He stands on his hind legs, and his mouth becomes a circle, like an O.

MIKE

What's he doing?

WALTER

He's making a special sound.

JOANNA

A sound that only Stepford wives
can hear.

ANGLE on Bobbie, hearing the sound. Her head tilts to one side, listening. She begins to make a whirring, mechanical SOUND, as she begins to reprogram herself.

CLOSE-UP on Bobbie's eyes. Her eyes become video screens, projecting favorite images of the real Bobbie: in rapid cuts we see shots of Krispy Kreme doughnuts, the Manhattan skyline, Russell Crowe, Wonder Woman, Golda Meir, Mallomars, Joan of Arc, a sinkful of dirty dishes and the Statue of Liberty.

ANGLE on Roger, whose head tilts to one side. He's also making the whirring noise.

CLOSE-UP on Roger's eyes, which become video screens, featuring favorite images of the real Roger: in rapid cuts, we see shots of Cher, George Eads, an Olympic gymnast on the rings, a beautiful antique armoire, Oscar Wilde, Ethel Merman, Mike Piazza, a perfect souffle and Ben Affleck in "Daredevil."

ANGLE on the whole room, as all of the wives make the whirring noise, which becomes almost deafening. Then, abruptly, the sound stops.

Bobbie turns to Dave, and speaks in a threatening manner.

BOBBIE

Dave.

DAVE

(nervous)

What?

ANGLE on Roger, turning to Jerry.

ROGER

(to Jerry, sternly)

Darling.

JERRY

Oh my God.

ANGLE on Sarah Sunderson. She turns to her husband.

SARAH

(very tough)

Herb.

Herb, getting scared, starts to walk quickly out of the room.

As he nears a door, a ROBOT ARM telescopes into the frame and grabs him. The arm lifts him high off the ground and spins him around rapidly, over everyone's heads.

HERB

(howling)

Help me!

We see that the arm belongs to Sarah. She hurls Herb across the room and drops him. He lands in a heap, bruised and alarmed.

HERB

Honey?

With a purposeful CLANKING noise, all of the wives turn towards their husbands, who are in big trouble.

ANGLE on all of the wives, simultaneously dropping their evening bags onto the floor.

ANGLE on all of the wives, putting their hands on their hips - they mean business.

CLAIRE (OS)

Stop it! This instant!

Everyone in the room turns to face Claire and Mike. Claire has just spoken in her fiercest, most proper tones, like the outraged mistress of a boarding school. She is furious.

MIKE

(to Joanna and Walter)

What do you think you're doing?

JOANNA

It's called reprogramming.

WALTER

Deprogramming.

CLAIRE

But don't you know what these men have done for us? They've given us everything! Perfect bodies, perfect homes, and perfect lives!

MIKE

That's my girl!

JOANNA

(exchanging a glance with
Walter)

We knew she'd be tough. She's hard-wired.

CLAIRE

(to Joanna)

Mind your manners! You are a
Stepford wife!

JOANNA

Am I?

MIKE

(to Walter)

Isn't she?

JOANNA

Or maybe I escaped. Maybe I had
help.

MIKE

Walt, what have you done? Aren't
you a man?

JOANNA

He's a real man.

Walter, pleased with this tribute, holds up his hands -
"It's okay."

ANGLE on Joanna, looking at Walter with overwhelming love.

JOANNA

And he's incredible.

WALTER

(to Joanna, surprised and
pleased)

Really?

CLAIRE

(to Mike, confused)

Darling?

JOANNA

Claire.

CLAIRE

That's Mrs. Mike Wellington.

JOANNA

Really? Or is it - Claire Mallory.
Doctor Claire Mallory.

CLAIRE

What?

MIKE

(to Claire)
Honey, don't listen. They're babbling. They're New Yorkers.

JOANNA

And we went online. All the way back. We know who you really are. Who you really were. Twenty years ago. You were a pioneer. A genius. The most brilliant brain surgeon and genetic engineer in the world.

CLAIRE

I was a coed! Delta Delta Mu!

JOANNA

You were doing top-secret research, in Geneva. And you were about to be nominated for a Nobel Prize.

MIKE

(to Claire)
You were skiing!

WALTER

And Mike was your husband. And your assistant. Your second-in-command.

MIKE

Her colleague!

CLAIRE

My lord and master!

JOANNA

You were developing a revolutionary new procedure, to help accident victims. Through brain transplants.

MIKE

(to Claire)
You were helping me! Bringing me coffee!

JOANNA

Mike took all of your research, kidnapped you and left the country! And the next thing you knew, you were in Stepford!

CLAIRE

There is nothing wrong with pleasing a man! And making a home!

JOANNA

Of course not - unless you've been programmed to do it. By the man who stole your life.

MIKE

(to Claire)

Baby, don't listen to them! I love you!

JOANNA

But that's not love.

ANGLE on Claire, as her head starts to twitch, mechanically.

WALTER

Love is finding the perfect person.

ANGLE on Claire, her shoulders now jerking, mechanically.

JOANNA

Even if they're not perfect.

ANGLE on Dave and Jerry, looking at each other they think that what Joanna and Walter are describing is insane.

ANGLE on a group of Stepford wives, getting all misty and tearful over Joanna and Walter's devotion to each other.

MIKE

But we can make them perfect!

HERB

They're gonna ruin everything! The whole town!

JOANNA

(to Claire)

You were the best. You were the woman we all wanted to be. And somewhere, somehow, you still know that.

MIKE

No she doesn't!

JOANNA

(to Claire)

Come back! You can do it! Download Stepford! Dump it! Delete!

ROGER

(staring at Claire)

She's gonna blow!

ANGLE on Claire. Her eyes open very wide, as her body goes completely rigid. Steam hisses out of her ears. Explosively, as if she's erupting, at least twelve arms sprout from her body, one after the other. Each arm holds a different aspect of womanhood, including a frying pan, a briefcase, a rolling pin, a laptop, a baby, a gavel, a blowdryer, etc. As quickly as they've erupted, the arms all retract. Claire's head now spins around, incredibly fast, into a blur. Her head stops for a split-second, facing forward.

CLAIRE

The genetic recombination is
xl297yl153X28.

All of Claire's internal wiring now glows and throbs - we can see the entire network of cable and microchips through her skin and her gown. It's like watching a complicated machine begin to overheat. Her head spins again, and stops. Her gracious smile stretches to at least two feet across.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Hello, darling. How was your day?

Her head spins again, and stops. Her flesh now completely and rapidly melts away, revealing the gleaming core of polished steel beneath, for a "Terminator" effect.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

We can avoid rejection of the cerebral cortex by enzyme rinsing the spinal fluid.

Her head spins again and stops. Her neck is empty, but then the head of an inflatable love doll inflates, and her lips can move:

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Of course I'm in the mood - I'm always in the mood.

Her head spins again and stops. Her face is now Claire's, but executed in polished steel. Her voice now changes, become echoing and mechanical.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

We've reactivated complete motor response! We can do so much good! This will change medical neuroscience forever!

Her head spins again, and keeps spinning. Her body starts pulsating, and begins to resemble a giant percolator or espresso machine. Steam gushes from every seam in the mechanism. Flashing red lights pop out all over her body.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Coffee? Coffee? Coffee? COFFEE?

From all the pressures of modern womanhood, Claire EXPLODES, in a huge cloud of flame, dust and mechanical parts.

ANGLE on everyone in the room watching this, possibly covered with dust and debris from the explosion.

ANGLE on Mike, watching this.

ANGLE on Joanna and Walter, watching the explosion, holding each other.

ANGLE on the billowing cloud of dust and flame. Suddenly, Claire steps out of the cloud. Her body and gown are now completely intact, except that she's carrying her disembodied head in her hands. Her head is still completely functional.

CLAIRE'S HEAD
(to Mike)
Darling?

MIKE
(hopefully)
Yes, sweetheart? Babe? Claire bear?

Claire takes her head and puts it back on her neck. She reattaches her head by pushing down on it, and we hear a satisfying sound, a combination of suction and a loud mechanical click. Claire tugs on her head to make sure it's secure. She seems once again her normal, poised, gracious Stepford self.

CLAIRE
That's Dr. Mallory.

ANGLE on Joanna and Walter, delighted.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
(to all the wives)
Ladies?

All of the women begin moving implacably towards Mike.

ANGLE on Mike.

He smiles.

MIKE
Fine. Good for you. You got what you wanted.

JOANNA
That's right.

MIKE

Your careers. Your kids. Your relationships.

CLAIRE

We can do it.

MIKE

And what did it get you, the first time around? You were all so smart, and so dedicated, and so successful. And you were all exhausted, from working 18 hour days. You were worn to the bone, from then coming home and trying to be Mommy. And when you wanted some comfort, some caring, and maybe a little action, who did you marry? What's out there? Look around.

ANGLE on a group of hapless Stepford husbands.

JOANNA

You're insane.

MIKE

But I'm right. And you know it. So kill me, beat me to a pulp, do your damndest, but then ask yourselves - did I call the sitter? Did I finish the spread sheets for tomorrow? Did I remember to have sex? So, congratulations. No, you're not Stepford wives, not anymore. Do you know what you are? Do you know what you get to be, you lucky little ladies?

JOANNA

What?

MIKE

(with fiendish glee)

Women.

All of the women glance at each other, a bit unnerved by this. Then they all smile, not buying it.

CLAIRE

(shaking her head, amused)

Michael.

As the women continue to surround Mike:

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

INT. BEDROOM DAY

ANGLE on Joanna and Walter in bed, in each other's arms, after great sex.

JOANNA

So when? When exactly did you decide to help me?

WALTER

That night, at the Men's Association. You could have cried, or begged for your life, but you didn't. You were the strongest woman I'd ever seen.

JOANNA

But isn't that my problem?

WALTER

Sometimes. But I remembered the first time I ever saw you, at Harvard. You were playing lacrosse, and you were mopping up the field with all of these big jocks. And I thought - she's a challenge.

JOANNA

And probably a lesbian.

WALTER

I wish. And I thought - what if I was up to that challenge?

JOANNA

You'd be quite a man.

The bed starts to RISE. The camera PULLS BACK, revealing four MOVING MEN, lifting the bed. All of the other furniture in the bedroom is already gone.

WALTER

(to the moving men)
On the truck.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Joanna, Walter, Pete and Kimberly are watching as the last of their possessions gets loaded into a line of moving vans.

KIMBERLY

Mommy, are you going back to work?

JOANNA

Yes. But I'm going to start my own network, just for kids. I'm going to teach them to be smart and strong and independent.

PETE

You mean, it's going to be just for little girls?

JOANNA

No - for little boys.

ANGLE on Pete, looking concerned about this.

ANGLE on the Barbie doll in Kimberly's hand: the doll now wears ninja black.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

And I'm going to make sure that I have plenty of time for you guys. Because from now on, I'm going to have some real help. I'm going to have just what everyone in the whole world, male or female, really needs.

The Robot Joanna appears, from the house. She's wearing the same outfit as Joanna, with sunglasses to cover her empty eye sockets.

ROBOT JOANNA

I'm ready to go.

JOANNA

(to her family)

A wife.

KIMBERLY

She's going to live with us?

PETE

Where's she going to sleep?

WALTER

Well...

JOANNA

(to Walter)

Don't even think about it.

The whole family hugs. The Robot Joanna holds the robot dog, and pets him, as he moans with mechanical pleasure.

MARY ANN

Pay me.

Sarah Sunderson takes out an ATM card. She inserts the card into her mouth, dipping it quickly in and out. A second later, a neat stack of twenties glides out of her mouth, and she hands the money to Mary Ann.

ANGLE on Roger, flamboyantly dressed, dancing with Beth and Charmaine.

ROGER

Watch.

Without touching himself, Roger's hair restyles itself dramatically.

ANGLE on Claire, sitting in an armchair, chatting with a group of wives.

CLAIRE

Chinese?

ANGLE on Claire's hand, which now has a keypad she uses her palm as a cellphone, punching in the number for takeout.

BOBBIE

Yo.

ANGLE on Bobbie, who's relaxing on a couch, in comfortable sweats. She's holding a bag of peanut M&M's. Everyone gathers around.

EVERYONE

One, two, three...

Bobbie tosses the whole bag of M&M's into the air. Her head rises several feet, robotically, and her mouth opens and catches every last M&M.

EVERYONE

YO!

All of the women continue chatting, snacking and dancing. As the joyous party continues, we

FADE OUT.

THE END.