

"Drywall"

by
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BLACK.

Muffled voices FADE IN as we CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

PAUL (22), a skinny, handsome, unassuming young man with messy hair stares down at something OFF-CAMERA, deep pain in his eyes. He's dressed in a suit.

A REVERSE SHOT reveals he is staring at the body of FIONA, a once-pretty blonde, now ashen and creepy, dressed up nicely and with makeup, lying in an open casket.

Paul continues to stare, riveted, frozen in place. He looks on the verge of tears but none are shed.

ANGLE ON:

ASHER (22) and his girlfriend LAURA (22), also dressed up, leaning against the wall on the opposite end of the room. They sip WINE and chat quietly.

ASHER

I shouldn't have come here.

LAURA

What?

ASHER

I don't know what to say to him.

LAURA

Paul?

Asher nods slightly while sipping his drink.

ASHER'S POV:

Paul stares at Fiona's body, then raises his head and stares at the wall as if in a trance. He shakes his head slightly, snapping out of it, and walks away.

ASHER

I mean what are you supposed to say? What can you say?

LAURA

You could say "sorry."

ASHER

That'll just make it worse. It wouldn't mean anything and he'd know it.

ANGLE ON:

Paul, who approaches FIONA'S PARENTS. An elderly woman gives them her condolences and walks off.

PAUL

Mr. and Mrs. Connolly?

MRS. CONNOLLY

Paul?

PAUL

I'm- I'm so sorry.

He gives Mrs. Connolly an awkward hug. Mr. Connolly squeezes his shoulder.

MR. CONNOLLY

Thank you so much for coming.

PAUL

Of course.

MRS. CONNOLLY

It means a lot.

Paul nods. An uncomfortable silence follows.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - LATER

Asher and Laura spot Paul heading for the door. Asher makes no move to follow. Laura nudges him.

LAURA

Go to him!

Asher shakes his head then follows after Paul.

ASHER

Paul!

Paul turns around.

PAUL

Oh, Asher. Hey man, didn't know you were here.

ASHER
Yeah, Laura and I just figured we'd
stop by.
(motions to Laura)

Laura gives Paul a little wave, smiles weakly. An awkward
beat follows.

ASHER (CONT'D)
Hey man, listen- I'm really sorry
about what happened.

PAUL
Yeah, thanks. I am too.

ASHER
I'll call you later, okay?

PAUL
Yeah, sounds good. See you later.

He turns and walks off.

Asher walks back to Laura, shaking his head angrily at her.
His face is bright red with embarrassment.

CUT TO:

STARS.

EXT. PAUL'S ROOF - NIGHT

Paul lies on his back, staring up at the starry night sky.

INT. ASHER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Asher sits at the side of his bed in his hip apartment,
staring at his IPHONE.

After a beat he opens the phonebook and scrolls down to PAUL
PINE. He stares at the name, finally mustering up the courage
to press it and make the call.

I/E. PAUL'S ROOF / ASHER'S ROOM

Paul's PHONE rings and vibrates in his pocket. He glances at
the caller ID, then answers.

PAUL
Hey man.

ASHER
Paul, dude, what's up?

PAUL
Not much.

ASHER
I was just calling to see how you were doing. Wondering if maybe you felt like hanging out tonight.

PAUL
Aw, sorry man. I'm in Connecticut for the weekend. Visiting my parents.

ASHER
Oh cool, alright. Well maybe when you get back.

PAUL
Yeah, sure.

A beat.

ASHER
Hey I was just curious- why weren't you at graduation?

PAUL
I dunno. Just didn't feel like dealing with it I guess.

ASHER
Oh, okay.
(a beat)
Alright, well I guess hit me up when you get back into the city.

PAUL
Will do, man. Catch you later.

He hangs up, puts his PHONE back in his pocket. Returns his focus to the sky.

INT. ASHER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Asher hangs up, bites his lip.

ASHER
Fuck.

EXT. PAUL'S ROOF - CONTINUOUS

The stars reflect in Paul's eyes.

He smiles slightly. It doesn't last long.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Paul sits across from his PARENTS in a fancy Greenwich restaurant. The remains of expensive dinners sit on plates before them.

Paul stuffs the final piece of his steak into his mouth, almost in a stupor.

MRS. PINE

Paul. I found an apartment for you.

PAUL

(through a mouth of steak)
Oh yeah?

MRS. PINE

In the West Village. It's very nice and surprisingly affordable for the neighborhood.

MR. PINE

Your mother and I have been talking and we've decided to cover your first year's rent. Help you get started. You've been through a lot- you deserve it.

Paul wipes his mouth with a NAPKIN.

PAUL

Uh, thanks.

His parents smile at him. Their awkwardness comes through. Even they are made uncomfortable by being in Paul's presence.

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - LATER

Paul helps his mother into their Subaru sedan and closes the door behind her. He goes to open the passenger side door for himself when his father walks up and hugs him abruptly.

Paul spots tears running down his father's cheeks and stands there stunned for a moment, while his father sniffles. Slowly, he lifts his arms and places them on his father's back.

MR. PINE

Oh... life is hard, son. Life is so hard.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Paul lies on an undressed mattress in the middle of a medium-sized tenement room. Cardboard boxes litter the floor, none of them opened.

His PHONE RINGS. He looks at it- Caller ID shows it's ASHER. He ignores the call.

Paul stares at the ceiling blankly, as the sounds of the tenement building and the city outside swell around him.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

Paul lies sprawled out on his bed, his head at the foot, clad only in boxers. Little streaks of sunlight peak out through the Venetian blinds and cars HONK outside.

Paul rolls over, rubs his eyes.

MONTAGE:

-Paul pulls open the Venetian blinds on one of his windows and squints as he's blinded by the sun.

-Paul, now wearing a t-shirt that looks two sizes too big, opens up the top pocket of his BACKPACK and fishes out a pack of ROLLING TOBACCO.

-Paul searches through the pocket of his jeans and discovers a small BAGGIE OF MARIJUANA.

-Paul sits on the wooden floor, Indian style, and rolls a JOINT on top of one of the cardboard boxes.

EXT. PAUL'S FIRE ESCAPE - LATER

Paul opens his window and climbs out onto the fire escape, which is lined with FAKE GRASS. Paul takes note of this as the plastic blades tickle his feet.

He glances at his neighbor's window- it's OPEN. It's a beautiful summer day. Paul looks at his JOINT, trying to decide whether or not to smoke it.

He sits down, leans against the wall between the two apartments, and LIGHTS the JOINT.

He takes a couple long drags, lets smoke billow out of his nostrils.

Smoke wafts into the neighbor's window.

After a moment, JIMMY (45), a lanky, bespectacled man with slightly greying hair, pokes his head out of the window and spots Paul.

JIMMY

Is that weed?

PAUL

Yeah, sorry. Do you mind?

JIMMY

Hell no. I'm Jim. Jimmy if you like.

(extends hand)

Paul leans over and shakes his hand.

PAUL

Paul.

JIMMY

You just move in?

PAUL

(nods)

Yesterday.

(a beat)

Do you want some?

(re: JOINT)

JIMMY

Well if you're offering, fuck yeah.

He clambers out of his apartment and takes a seat beside Paul. Paul hands him the JOINT, which he takes a couple drags from before passing it back.

PAUL

I like the grass.

JIMMY

Pretty cool, right? I'm a party planner- you know, birthdays, company events, bar mitzvahs, shit like that.

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

One of the gigs I did they had this stuff all over the floor and I just thought, man, I've got to get me some of that shit.

PAUL

Gives the place a nice vibe.

JIMMY

You in school?

PAUL

Just graduated.

JIMMY

Yeah? Where?

PAUL

NYU.

JIMMY

(smiles)

And you just couldn't leave, huh?

PAUL

Nope.

JIMMY

So what are you doing now? You found a job yet?

PAUL

Market's a little thin right now.

JIMMY

Tell me about it.

PAUL

No, I'm just chilling for a while. My parents are covering my first year's rent.

JIMMY

Man, I wish my parents did that for me.

(takes a hit)

This place actually used to be my dad's.

PAUL

Oh yeah?

JIMMY

(nods)

Lived here from when he divorced my mom, to the day he died. When I moved back here I needed a place, so I took it.

PAUL

Keeping on the family legacy I guess.

JIMMY

Yeah... Guess I've kept up a lot of my dad's legacies. Divorced for one. With a kid too.

Paul says nothing; he's still in a trance. The silence and the weight of his last comment make Jimmy uncomfortable, and he hands the ROACH back to Paul.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Well, I better get back to work. Getting ready for some Wall Street dickhead's seventieth birthday. Thanks for the pot.

He climbs back into his apartment.

PAUL

Yeah, nice meeting you.

JIMMY

You too, man. Hey if you ever want to hang out just give me a knock.

Paul nods. Jimmy smiles, disappears back inside his apartment.

Paul takes one last hit of the ROACH, then stares at its burning ember. He FLICKS it over the fire escape and watches it blow away in the wind, breaking up into particles of ash.

EXT. OUTSIDE PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Paul exits his building and walks across the street to a coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Paul enters. The cashier, CAROL (20s) has just rung up an elderly woman, who takes her ICED COFFEE and heads for the exit. Paul steps out of her way.

CAROL
Thanks! Have a nice day!
(notices Paul)
Hello. May I help you?

PAUL
I'm looking for a job.

CAROL
(flustered)
Uh, I don't think we have any
positions currently available...

PAUL
Can I talk to the manager?

Carol turns to the back room.

CAROL
Lou!

LOU (late 40s), the gruff, slightly Italian manager, comes
tromping out of the back.

LOU
Yeah?

CAROL
(re: Paul)
This guy wants a job.

LOU
Sorry, we got nothing available
right now.

Paul glances at the floors behind the counter, which are
covered in a layer of dust.

PAUL
You sure? Floors look pretty dusty.

LOU
(smiles)
Oh, a smartass, huh?

PAUL
No. Just an observation.

LOU
Yeah? You know how to work a broom?

PAUL
I'm great with a broom.

LOU

(laughs)

"Great with a broom!" That's rich.
Alright, smart guy, when can you
start?

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Paul sits by the side of his bed, staring at a PHOTO of him and Fiona, smiling, in Paris. His room is mostly dressed-only a few boxes still sit on the floor and his bed now has sheets, pillows and blankets.

CU on Paul. Staring at the PHOTO is ruining him. Sadness seeps out of his pores, but his eyes are dry. It's like he wants to cry but just can't get the waterworks to start.

PAUL

God...

(a long beat)

You really fucked me up, Fi...

A THUMPING starts to emanate from the right wall. Paul glances at it. The thumping gets louder. Paul puts the PHOTO on his bedside table.

A sharp, womanly MOAN echoes across the room.

Paul gets up and walks over to the wall. As he does the SEX NOISES get louder and louder.

Paul stares at the wall, then slowly pushes his ear up against it.

Now the sounds can be heard clearly, albeit muffled. Jimmy is clearly having vigorous sex with a woman.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Harder!

JIMMY (O.S.)

Yeah, you like that?

WOMAN (O.S.)

Oh, fuck yeah! Just like that baby,
just like that!

Jimmy GRUNTS loudly.

Something has come over Paul. For the first time we see real, raw emotion in his face. He quickly undoes his pants.

CU on pants and boxers as they fall down around his ankles.

Paul starts to stroke himself, picking up in speed and intensity as he listens.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Oh yeah, give it to me! Don't
fucking stop!

JIMMY (O.S.)
Shit... Jesus- FUCK!

WOMAN (O.S.)
God, yes! I want it, I want you to
come!

JIMMY (O.S.)
Oh my god...

WOMAN (O.S.)
Will you do that baby? Will you
come for me?

JIMMY (O.S.)
Oh fuck yeah!

The woman SHRIEKS.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Yes, yes, yes! Give it to me!

There's a brief silence. Then Jimmy lets out a long, deep MOAN as he, the woman and Paul all climax in unison.

When Paul's finished, he collapses to his knees, panting.

CUT TO:

CU OF TRASH BEING THROWN IN DUMPSTER

EXT. BEHIND COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Paul, dressed in an apron adorned with the coffee shop's logo, takes out the trash.

Lou pops his head out of the exit.

LOU
Pine! Carol's out sick, some kind
of stomach thing, sounded
disgusting- you're gonna have to
man the front today.

PAUL
What? No, uh- I don't know how.

LOU
What? What the fuck are you talking about? It's fucking easy! Come inside I'll show you.

Paul passes by Lou, goes back into the shop.

LOU (CONT'D)
Goddamn rich boy...

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

Paul rings up a businessman, who exits. He's clearly got the hang of it now.

A woman, ALICE (37), an attractive cinnamon brunette enters, approaches the counter.

ALICE
Hi.

PAUL
Hello.

ALICE
What happened to Carol?

PAUL
She's sick.

ALICE
Aw, that's too bad. Are you new?

PAUL
Yeah, I'm Paul.

ALICE
Paul? Nice to meet you Paul. I'm Alice.

Paul nods. Alice smiles broadly, clearly flirting with him. She looks up at the menu, remembering she's here for coffee.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Uh, I'll have a Chai latte.

PAUL
A what?

Alice laughs.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Sorry... this isn't really my job.
 Normally I just sweep the floors
 and clean up, take the trash out.
 Stuff like that.

ALICE
 Um, isn't there usually two of you
 behind the counter? One making the
 coffee, one selling it?

Paul turns around, realizes he's alone.

PAUL
 (under his breath)
 Ah shit...
 (to Alice)
 Normally there's another guy, Ed,
 but he must be out back helping Lou
 for some reason...

He turns to the doorway leading to the back of the shop.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Ed! ED!!

There's no reply.

ALICE
 Hey, it's okay. Don't sweat it.
 Just give me a medium coffee. Milk
 and a little sugar.

Paul prepares the COFFEE, gives it to Alice, who pays for it.

ALICE (CONT'D)
 Thanks. Well, tell Carol I hope she
 gets better.

PAUL
 Sure.

ALICE
 Bye.

Alice gives him another smile and a cute little wave and
 exits. Paul waves back.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Paul lies on his bed in the dark, staring up at the ceiling
 once again.

He sits up.

Puts on his coat.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER PARK - LATER

Paul walks up to a bench and takes a seat. The park is empty, save for a pair of scurrying RATS.

A tugboat sounds its horn on the river. Paul watches it pass.

He takes out a BOTTLE of Jameson from his inside pocket and takes a swig.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

Paul lies sprawled out on his bed, the BOTTLE on his bedside table, EMPTY.

SEX NOISES emanate from Jimmy's apartment- the couple are clearly nearing orgasm.

Paul's eyes flutter open- he's heard the lovemaking.

He sits up, stares at the wall facing Jimmy's apartment.

Camera DOLLEYS to wall, then travels THROUGH it, passing through brick and wood and drywall and into...

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy takes Alice from behind.

After a moment he tenses up and comes.

JIMMY

Ah... FUCK!!!!

Alice cries out in ecstasy.

Jimmy collapses on top of her.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Paul turns from the wall, rubbing his head and wincing with pain. He picks up the Jameson BOTTLE and examines his handiwork.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy and Alice lie naked, spooning. Jimmy lets his hands run over Alice's body.

JIMMY
God, you're sexy.

ALICE
That was so good, baby.

She leans back and kisses him.

ALICE (CONT'D)
God, I should do this more often. I never get tense at work when you fuck me like this.

JIMMY
Told you. Morning sex's the best.

ALICE
Shit, what time is it?

She leans over, grabs her WATCH from Jimmy's bedside table.

INSERT:

Watch says 8:36 A.M.

Alice grabs it, puts it on as she jumps out of bed.

JIMMY
Aw, you're not gonna stay and cuddle?

Alice slips on a pair of panties and clasps her bra.

ALICE
Downside of morning sex, babe.

JIMMY
There's no downside to morning sex with my job, honey.

Alice puts on a black skirt and white button-down.

ALICE
Well, not all of us have your good fortune. Half your job is sleeping and the other half is going to cheesy parties and getting drunk off free liquor.

Still buttoning the last few buttons of her shirt, Alice grabs her MAKEUP CASE and heads to the mirror, attached to the door to the room.

JIMMY

Don't knock the player.

Alice laughs while applying makeup.

ALICE

That's cheesy. Where'd you hear that, fucking MTV?

JIMMY

I'm just saying maybe you should take my suggestion seriously.

ALICE

What, to quit the agency? Please.

JIMMY

You said you hate it there.

Alice tussles her hair, takes a last look at herself, and satisfied, heads over to a chair where her work jacket and PURSE lie.

ALICE

Jimmy, I can't have this discussion again right now. I'm late.

She throws her coat on and heads for the door.

Jimmy sits up.

JIMMY

Hey? Don't I get a kiss?

Alice smiles. She forgot. She walks to the bed and kisses Jimmy.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I love you.

Alice hesitates.

ALICE

I love you too.

(a beat)

Gotta go. I'll call you tonight.

JIMMY

See ya.

Alice exits.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Paul fills a GLASS with water from his kitchen faucet. He takes a sip- then hears Jimmy's door SLAM shut.

He rushes to his own door, peeks through the eyehole.

PAUL'S POV:

Through the eyehole Paul sees Alice walk by. Just a brief glimpse- he doesn't recognize it's her.

He rushes out of the kitchen.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul rushes up to his window, pulls the blinds open and looks down at the sidewalk.

PAUL'S POV:

Alice exits the building, walks down the steps and heads down the block. She looks up briefly, at Jimmy's window, her face now in plain sight.

CLOSE ON Paul's reaction.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DUSK

Paul ducks under the counter, dressed in his normal clothes.

PAUL
See ya later, Lou!

Lou pops his head out from the back of the store.

LOU
Later, rich boy!

Paul smiles, exits.

INT. ALICE'S AGENCY - DAY

Alice sits in her cubicle, on the phone with a client.

ALICE

Alright, so Wednesday at noon?
Sounds good. Alright, looking
forward to it. You too. Bye.

She hangs up. Not sure what to do next, she taps a PENCIL against her desk, then spots a framed PHOTO of her and Jimmy at Coney Island.

She picks up the PHONE, dials another number.

INT. JIMMY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy takes one hand off the steering wheel so he can answer his CELL PHONE.

JIMMY

Hey, nice to hear from you.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ALICE'S AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

ALICE

Hey. How's it going?

JIMMY

Pretty good. I thought you were too busy at work to ever drop me a line during the day.

ALICE

Yeah, well I hit a rare lull. So... I was just wondering if you had any plans for tonight. I'm feeling kinda lonely... maybe we could get dinner? Talk about...

(whispering)

you know, me quitting.

JIMMY

Aw, sorry, babe. I've got Sophie tonight. I'm picking her up from soccer practice as we speak. Didn't I tell you?

ALICE

Oh, I- I must have forgotten.

JIMMY

I'm sorry. You okay? You sound a little blue.

ALICE
No, no, I'm fine. Just missing you,
I guess.

Jimmy pulls up to a soccer field, double parks.

JIMMY
I miss you too. Maybe this weekend?

ALICE
Yeah. Yeah that sounds good.

JIMMY
Alright, well I'll give you a call
as soon as I'm free. I love you.

ALICE
You too. See you later.

She hangs up.

LORETTA (40s), Alice's large, African-American coworker,
comes up, having overheard the last bit of Alice's
conversation.

LORETTA
Hey, Al. How's it going with that
Broadway place?

ALICE
Oh, pretty good. I'm having an open
house next week. Should sell pretty
quickly- it's college season. Well,
the end of it I guess.

LORETTA
You want some advice? Don't even
make note of that train. Even when
it passes, just act like it doesn't
exist. Blame the noise on the
plumbing.

Alice laughs.

ALICE
I think people would catch on.

LORETTA
Believe me- if you don't talk about
it, they won't talk about it.

ALICE
Thanks for the advice.

Loretta smiles, turns to go- stops.

LORETTA

Was that your boyfriend on the phone?

ALICE

Yeah, Jimmy. I think you've met... he's stopped by the office a couple times.

LORETTA

He blow you off again?

ALICE

Yeah, well, he had to pick his daughter up from soccer practice.

LORETTA

Oh.

(beat)

You want some more advice? Don't date divorced men. Always gonna put his kid before you. Just the way it is. I should know, I dated a guy with two kids for eight goddamn months.

ALICE

Thanks, Loretta.

LORETTA

No problem. I gotta get back to work. Just holler if you want to go out for lunch.

ALICE

I will.

Loretta walks off.

Alice looks back at the picture of her and Jimmy. Sighs heavily.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy leans against his parked car and smiles as SOPHIE (10), his cute daughter, comes running up to him.

SOPHIE

(ecstatic)

Daddy!!

She jumps into his arms, and he hugs her tightly.

JIMMY
Hey there honeybear!

He puts her down, takes her BACKPACK, and opens the back door to his sedan for her.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
How was practice? You make any goals?

SOPHIE
No. It's so annoying, Coach Tremont just lets those big girls, Sally and Kayden do all the offense. It's not fair.

Jimmy straps her in, puts her BACKPACK beside her.

JIMMY
Aw, well I'm sure you'll make a goal next time. Let's get some ice cream to make up for it, okay?

Sophie brightens.

SOPHIE
Okay!

Jimmy smiles, closes the door.

EXT. OUTSIDE PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Paul crosses the street to his building to find Alice sitting on the stoop smoking a CIGARETTE.

PAUL
Hey.

Alice looks up at him.

ALICE
Hi.
(a beat)
Um, have we met?

PAUL
I'm Paul. I work at the coffee shop.

ALICE
Oh yeah, Paul! How's it going?

PAUL
Fine. I live here.

ALICE
Oh yeah?

PAUL
Are you waiting for someone?

Alice stubs out her CIGARETTE.

ALICE
Not exactly. My deadbeat boyfriend
told me to meet him here, but he's
not home. Son of a bitch can be
flaky.

PAUL
Who's your boyfriend?

ALICE
Jimmy. Lives in 5C. You know him?

PAUL
Yeah. He's my neighbor. I live in
5D.

ALICE
No shit, really?

PAUL
Yup. Coincidence, I guess. Do you
want to come inside? You could wait
in my place till he gets back.

ALICE
Oh thanks, but I don't want to
impose-

Paul looks at the sky.

PAUL
Looks like it's going to rain.

Alice glances up. Sure enough, thick storm clouds are moving
in quickly.

ALICE
Alright, sure, why not.

She gets up.

Paul smiles, goes to unlock the front door.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Paul opens the door to his apartment and he and Alice enter.
Alice looks around.

ALICE
Hey, just like Jimmy's... only you
know, the doppelganger.

Paul hangs his jacket up on a coat hook on the door.

Alice takes her jacket off and Paul takes it, puts it on the
coat hook.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Oh, thanks.

PAUL
Would you like some coffee?

ALICE
Um, sure.

PAUL
There' a table in the other room.
I'll be in there in a sec.

ALICE
Okay.

She heads for the dining room.

MONTAGE:

-Paul dumps COFFEE into a filter.

-Coffee drips out of the coffee maker and into a pair of
MUGS.

-Paul picks up the MUGS, now filled with coffee and heads for
the other room.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alice sits at Paul's dining room table, and smiles when he
enters with the COFFEES.

ALICE
(awkwardly)
I'd think you'd be sick of this
stuff by the end of the day.

Paul smiles, hands her a MUG, then takes a seat across from her.

Alice sips her coffee.

PAUL
You know I never got your name.

ALICE
Oh shit, really? I'm sorry. It's Alice.

PAUL
Nice to meet you, Alice.

He outstretches his hand for a handshake.

ALICE
Uh...

Alice hesitantly shakes Paul's hand. His hand feels nice in hers and she melts a little.

ALICE (CONT'D)
So how long have you been working at the coffee shop?

PAUL
About two weeks. What do you do?

ALICE
I'm um, in real estate.

PAUL
Do you like it?

ALICE
Well... to tell you the truth, not really.

PAUL
Why?

ALICE
(laughs)
Well, mostly because people don't like real estate agents. And living in New York... sometimes I do feel like an asshole, renting these shitty, rundown apartments in Bushwick at more than twice what they actually cost... it's just not fun. Like this apartment- how much are you paying for it?

PAUL
Sixteen hundred.

ALICE
Sixteen hundred? That's ridiculous,
look at this place- I mean no
offense- but it's a tenement.
Entire families of immigrants used
to occupy this entire space
together, and the acoustics are
terrible. Walls are paper thin.

Paul smiles.

Alice gets it, blushes.

PAUL
If you hate it so much why do you
do it?

ALICE
You're asking a lot of questions.

A beat.

PAUL
I'm sorry... I'm just interested in
you.

Another beat.

ALICE
I'm going to ask you a question:
how old are you?

One more.

PAUL
Why does it matter?

ALICE
You just seem a little young to be
able to afford a sixteen hundred
dollar apartment.

PAUL
My parents are paying for it. Just
for a year, while I get settled.

ALICE
So you just graduated from college?

Paul nods.

ALICE (CONT'D)
So you're what- twenty two?

Paul nods.

ALICE (CONT'D)
What college did you go to?

PAUL
NYU. Major in English, minor in
creative writing.

This seems to strike a chord with Alice.

ALICE
Uh-huh.

PAUL
I have a question- if I asked you
how old you were, would that be
rude?

ALICE
Why? Cause I'm old?

PAUL
Just older than me.

Alice smiles.

ALICE
(lying)
No, it's okay, I'm thirty five.

PAUL
You don't look it.

Alice blushes.

ALICE
Thanks...

Paul stares at her.

ALICE (CONT'D)
You're staring...

PAUL
You're really beautiful.

ALICE
Jesus... you're really intense, you
know that?

Paul gets up, walks over to her.

Alice seizes up, startled.

ALICE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?!

Paul goes in to kiss her.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Stop! Jimmy is your neighbor-
what's the matter with you, are you
high or something?

Paul kisses her anyway.

She resists, pushes him away.

ALICE (CONT'D)
No-

Paul keeps trying to kiss her, Alice gets up, grabs her
PURSE.

ALICE (CONT'D)
No, this is ridiculous, I don't
even know you-

She heads for the door. Paul stands in her way.

PAUL
Stop.

He kisses her again and this time she does not resist.

They kiss feverishly, gaining in intensity, groping each
other. Paul lifts Alice up, grabbing her ass, and she wraps
her legs around his waist.

They slam into the wall, still kissing. Paul bites Alice's
neck.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(whispers in her ear)
I want you.

ALICE
Okay.

Paul flips around, carries Alice and lays her on the table.

He slides her panties off, spreads her legs and buries his
face between them.

Alice writhes and moans.

Paul stops, undoes his pants quickly, drops them. Alice looks at him.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Yes...

Paul enters her and they make love, intense and passionate.

Alice starts to cry out, her moans getting louder and louder.

EXT. OUTSIDE PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy trots up the steps to the front door and unlocks it.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy enters the building, the door closing loudly behind him.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul hears the door slam shut, perks up.

ALICE

(moaning)

Oh my god!

Paul keeps thrusting while listening for more aural clues.

Alice grabs his neck.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Kiss me, kiss me!

She pulls him close, and kisses him deeply. Paul keeps his eyes open, still listening.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy walks up the stairs. He's wearing boots, clomping loudly on the creaky steps.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul stops kissing Alice- he can hear Jimmy coming up the steps.

Alice cries out.

Paul puts his hand over her mouth, but keeps fucking her.

PAUL
Shh, shh...

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 5TH FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy finally reaches the top floor, turns and walks down the hall to his door, which he unlocks.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alice climaxes, but her screams are stifled by Paul's hand.

We hear the CLICK of Jimmy's door as he unlocks it, and his footsteps as he walks along the length of the railroad apartment to his bedroom.

Paul has stopped thrusting. He takes his hand off Alice's mouth, and puts it to his mouth in a sign of silence.

ALICE
(whispers)
Oh my god...

Paul steps back.

Alice gets on her knees and goes down on him.

PAUL
Holy fuck...

He leans against the wall, overcome with ecstasy.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy scrolls through his CELL PHONE phonebook, finds Alice's number and dials it.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul holds the top of Alice's head and moans.

Alice's distinctive, and annoying CELL PHONE RINGS.

Alice jumps up, runs to her purse.

ALICE

Shit-

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy hears Alice's unique CELL PHONE RING through the walls, albeit muffled. His brow furrows, confused.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alice silences her PHONE.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy gets Alice's voicemail.

He shrugs.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul pants.

He and Alice listen for noises from Jimmy's, but there's nothing.

Alice grips her forehead as if she has a headache, overcome with the realization of what she's just done.

She grabs her panties, hastily puts them back on.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Alice checks her face and fixes her hair in a mirror beside the sink.

She then takes out a GLASS from the cupboard and drinks some WATER.

Paul enters.

ALICE

(whispering)

Do me a favor, okay?

PAUL

(whispering)

Okay.

ALICE
(whispering)
You have a Verizon phone?

PAUL
(whispering)
Yeah.

ALICE
(whispering)
Can you change your ring tone to
that one? Pretend like it was
yours?

PAUL
(whispering)
Um... okay.

ALICE
(whispering)
See you around.

She exits quietly.

Paul watches her go, confused, not sure how to handle the
situation.

He rushes into the bathroom.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul rummages through a collection of PILL BOTTLES until he
finds the one he wants- ANTI-DEPRESSANTS- and pops two in his
mouth.

THUNDER sounds as we CUT TO:

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jimmy, watching the news passively, takes out his PHONE and
calls Alice.

INT. WHITE HORSE TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Alice sits at the bar, drinking a BEER. An empty shot glass
sits beside it. RAIN pours down in torrents outside.

Her PHONE rings, and she answers it.

ALICE
There you are.

JIMMY

Hey, babe. Sorry I was late.

ALICE

You should be. I sat on that cold stoop for ten minutes.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

JIMMY

Aw, poor baby.

ALICE

Yeah, so I had to come to the White Horse to drown my sorrows away. Like, what's that poet's name? Dylan Thomas? Anyway, you want to join me?

JIMMY

To be honest I was hoping maybe you'd want to come here... have an intimate night alone.

ALICE

Oh, I don't know...
(whispers)
I'm on my period.

JIMMY

Really? Isn't it a little early?

ALICE

It doesn't run on an exact fucking schedule, Jim. Are you coming or not?

JIMMY

Yeah, yeah, just let me put something nice on.

ALICE

See you soon.

She hangs up. Sighs deeply. Chugs her BEER.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Paul mans the counter.

Alice enters. When she spots Paul she's taken aback.

ALICE
Oh...

PAUL
Hello.

ALICE
I forgot- don't you work in the
back?

PAUL
I got promoted. What can I get you?

Alice smiles weakly.

ALICE
Figure out how to make a Chai latte
yet?

Paul smirks.

PAUL
Don't need to.

He turns to EDWARD, another coffee shop employee, a chubby Chinese kid about Paul's age.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Hey, Ed. Chai latte for the lady.

Ed grumbles, but goes about preparing the beverage.

EDWARD
You know, I really only go by
Edward. No one calls me Ed.

PAUL
Oh, right. Sorry.

He smirks at Alice, rolls his eyes at Ed. Alice tries to smile back but can't really.

PAUL (CONT'D)
So about the other night...

ALICE
I don't really want to talk about
it.

Ed finishes the DRINK, passes it to Paul who presents it to Alice. She pays for it hastily.

PAUL
Okay, well... could we talk about
it another time?

ALICE
Can I have my change?

Paul counts out her CHANGE and hands it to her.

PAUL
Please? I just want to hang out...
get to know you better...

Alice heads for the door.

ALICE
Don't really see that happening.
Look, I have to get to work.

PAUL
Wait-

Alice exits.

Paul sighs.

EDWARD
What was that all about?

PAUL
None of your business, Ed.

EDWARD
Jeez, no need to be such an
asshole. Just sounded like you two
knew each other.

PAUL
Don't worry about it. I'm just
fuckin' with you, man. Do you know
her?

EDWARD
Who, Alice? Yeah, I guess... she
only comes in every once in a
while, and only in the mornings.
Friendly, that's how I got her
name. Chai latte seems to be her
favorite. But like, we never struck
up a real conversation if that's
what you're asking. Why?

Lou appears from the back of the store, carrying two BOXES of
coffee, which he plops beside Ed.

PAUL
Just curious. Hey Lou, you know an Alice?

LOU
Alice? Chai latte Alice?

PAUL
Yeah, that one.

LOU
Nothin' really, 'cept she's definitely the hottest milf I've ever seen come in here.

Ed chuckles.

LOU (CONT'D)
And I've seen a lot of milfs.

PAUL
She's not a milf. She doesn't have any kids.

Lou shakes his head.

LOU
That's a shame.

EXT. OUTSIDE PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Paul stands by his building's steps, smoking a CIGARETTE nervously.

Alice exits, in a rush, ready for work. She spots Paul when she reaches the foot of the stairs.

ALICE
(rolls her eyes)
Oh Christ...

PAUL
Hey.

Alice walks briskly down the sidewalk. Paul follows her.

ALICE
Listen, I already have a boyfriend. What happened that night was a... fluke. My life is just too complicated right now to fool around with some kid.

PAUL

Just hear me out- I've been waiting down here since seven AM.

ALICE

Waiting? You're fucking stalking me?

PAUL

I... I heard you and Jimmy last night.

Paul looks away, saddened.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I know you have work at nine. And I know he never goes anywhere in the morning.

Alice shakes her head.

ALICE

You learn all that just by eavesdropping on us?

PAUL

Look, can I take you out to dinner? Just one dinner? I'm dying to know more about you.

Alice stops walking, puts her hands on her hips and looks Paul in the eyes.

ALICE

You do this often? You know, ask older women with boyfriends out on dates?

PAUL

Why is it so important to you that you're old?

Alice opens her mouth to speak but can't think of a retort.

ALICE

(hurt)

I'm not old...

PAUL

I never said you were. Frankly I could care less what your age is. I just want to get to know you better.

Alice blushes.

She opens her PURSE, and fishes around for a BUSINESS CARD. Using a PEN, she scribbles something on the back.

ALICE

Meet me here tomorrow at eight.
Don't be late. Shit, that rhymed-
(laughs)
Okay, and wear something a little
less casual.

She hands Paul the business card. He looks at the address Alice has printed on it.

PAUL

Got it.

Alice nods, then walks off.

CLOSE UP ON CARD: ALICE OLIVIERI, REAL ESTATE AGENT.

Paul smiles.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Alice enters, dressed in a stunning black dress. She approaches the MAITRE D'.

MAITRE D'

Good evening, m'am.

ALICE

Hi, Olivieri, table for two.

The maitre d' consults his computer.

MAITRE D'

Ah yes. Your son has already
arrived, shall I have someone show
you to your table?

ALICE

He's-

She doesn't even bother finishing. Just grouchily follows a WAITER to...

ALICE AND PAUL'S TABLE

Paul is already seated, a half-empty WINE GLASS in front of him. He's dressed in a chic button-down, a hip blazer draped over the back of his seat.

Alice slumps down in her chair, grabs a MENU from the waiter.

WAITER

Our specials tonight are-

ALICE

Just a double gin and tonic,
please.

Annoyed, the waiter hurries off.

Paul is smiling broadly, very happy Alice actually showed up.

PAUL

Hi.
(a beat)
This place is nice.

ALICE

Yeah, I know.

She's tense. Paul picks up on it.

PAUL

Are you okay?

ALICE

No, no, I'm fine. It's just-
(laughs)
Feel like I'm going a little crazy
here... I mean, this is not what
normal people do. Normal people do
not go on dates with people almost
half their age- they don't- they
don't just do whatever they feel
like, whenever they feel like it.

PAUL

Why?

ALICE

Excuse me?

PAUL

Why can't you do that?

ALICE

Um, because it causes chaos.

PAUL
And what's wrong with that?

ALICE
(exasperated)
Why are you doing this, Paul?
Wasn't going back to your college
buddies and bragging about your one
night stand with the hot milf next
door enough?

PAUL
I don't have any friends.

This shuts Alice up.

The waiter comes back with the DRINK.

PAUL (CONT'D)
And technically, you're not a milf.

Upon hearing this, the waiter hurries off, not bothering to
take dinner orders.

ALICE
Is this like, some kind of fetish
thing? Are you only turned on by
older women?

PAUL
Why is it so hard to believe that
someone my age could be interested
in you? Do you really have that low
of an opinion of yourself?

Alice downs half her DRINK.

ALICE
It's hard being a woman my age.
Society is... very demanding. You
wouldn't understand.

PAUL
No, I wouldn't. So tell me more. I
want to understand.

A beat.

ALICE
Well, to be perfectly frank- I
don't think there's an industry out
there where your rise doesn't
correlate to your sex appeal.
Except maybe politics.

PAUL
Yeah, Hilary's not exactly Miss
Universe.

Alice laughs.

ALICE
Yeah... but that Michelle Obama's a
fox.

Paul actually chuckles. He opens his menu. Alice does the
same.

PAUL
So what's good here?

ALICE
Well this place is famous for their
suckling pig... think that's a
little excessive for right now. But
pork, pork is good here.
(a beat)
Shit, you're not a vegetarian are
you?

PAUL
No.
(a beat)
So even in real estate there's
sexism?

ALICE
Oh yeah. My boss is a total pig.
Real creep, buying me and some of
the other girls flowers and shit
like that. And you don't think I
have a better chance of selling a
place if I'm wearing a short skirt?

PAUL
Only if you're selling it to a pair
of lesbians.

Alice laughs again.

ALICE
Man, you're funny.

PAUL
People are always saying that. I
don't try to be.

ALICE

I've found that the funniest people
are the ones who don't realize
it... they always say the... the
driest things. Like you.

She glows at him. Stares at him for a moment while he surveys
the menu.

The waiter returns.

WAITER

Are you ready to order?

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A stylish bedroom with a king-sized bed. The lights are off,
but the room is illuminated from moonlight streaming through
the curtains.

Alice falls onto the bed, followed by Paul who kisses her
passionately.

Paul squeezes Alice's breast and she moans, arching her neck
so he can kiss and bite it.

Paul starts to unbutton Alice's blouse, still kissing her.
She pushes him away, breaks the kiss.

ALICE

Wait, wait-

PAUL

What's wrong?

ALICE

I just... I just need to know: does
any of this mean anything to you?

PAUL

What?

ALICE

You're not lying to me, right? This
isn't all just some ploy to have an
affair with someone who's older
than you... you- you like me,
right?

Paul looks her in the eyes.

PAUL

I like you a lot, Alice.

Alice is overwhelmed with emotion. She almost starts crying, before planting a huge kiss on Paul.

He unbuttons her blouse.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Early morning. Faint blue light comes from a sun mere moments away from rising.

Alice lies naked under her sheets, asleep and content. Paul lies beside her, on his side, wide awake.

He raises his hand to his face- notices it's shaking.

He slips out of bed and walks off camera.

EXT. ALICE'S APARTMENT- BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Paul slides the glass door open quietly and exits Alice's bedroom. Her balcony is breathtaking- an incredible view of Manhattan, and an ambiance you couldn't pay for.

Paul, now with a PACK OF CIGARETTES in his hand, leans against the railing, then tries to fish out a CIGARETTE. He messes up, ends up dropping it.

PAUL'S POV:

The CIGARETTE tumbles down to the sidewalk below.

PAUL

Shit.

He puts the pack down on a deck table.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing, man?
Huh? What the fuck do you think
you're doing?

A beat.

PAUL (CONT'D)

No, really, who the fuck are you
trying to fool? Hmm? What the fuck
are you doing?!

He slaps himself.

PAUL (CONT'D)
What the fuck are you doing?!!

Practically hits himself this time.

The sliding door is opened. Paul twirls around to see Alice, dressed in a bathrobe, exiting onto the balcony.

ALICE
(sleepily)
Paul? Is everything okay?

PAUL
Oh, hey, I didn't mean to wake you.
I- I just couldn't get my cigarette
to light.

ALICE
I can get it. If you'll bum me one,
that is.
(smirks)

PAUL
Yeah, sure, help yourself.

Alice picks up the PACK, fishes out two CIGARETTES.

ALICE
You smoke? Didn't take you as the
type...

PAUL
Yeah, I just started. It helped me
with the... the...

Alice looks at him. He's ashen.

ALICE
Paul? What is it?

Paul turns around quickly, looks back at the view.

PAUL
Nothing, nothing.

Alice goes to his side, puts an arm on his shoulder.

ALICE
Hey, it's okay. You can talk to me.

PAUL
I shouldn't.

ALICE

Why? I know we just met, but I- I trust you. You can trust me too.

PAUL

If I tell you you won't want to have anything to do with me anymore. Can't we just leave it at this? Can't this just be like, my one big secret?

Alice frowns.

ALICE

Paul? Paul! Look at me. Look at me.

She grabs his face, turns him so they are looking each other in the eyes. Silent tears are starting to trickle down Paul's face.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Every- every single relationship I've ever had has ended because either me or the guy kept secrets from each other. You think me and Jimmy are ever going to work? Fuck no, not after this. So if you want this to be something- if you want this to be more than just your cute little fling with some cougar, you better fess up and tell me why you're out here yelling at yourself-

PAUL

(weeping)

It's my girlfriend!

For the first time, Paul lets the weight of Fiona's death sink in. He weeps in earnest. Bawls.

PAUL (CONT'D)

She's dead! She's dead, okay? Last month... fucking dead...

ALICE

Oh my god, Paul... I'm so sorry- I didn't know...

PAUL

Fucking drunk driver... hit her in the Lower East Side... fucking... who the fuck drinks and drives in New York?!!

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

And here I am- here I am crying like a fucking baby and I know- I just know what you're thinking- you're just wishing you hadn't slept with me that one time, because now you're stuck- you're fucking stuck! With a fucking mess!!

ALICE

No, Paul, that's not how I feel-

Alice puts a hand on his shoulder, but Paul shrugs it off, and storms back towards the apartment.

PAUL

I'm going home.

ALICE

No, Paul- wait-

She starts to cry.

Paul throws the sliding door open.

CLOSE ON Alice.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Paul!!

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 5TH FLOOR LANDING - MORNING

Jimmy stands in his doorway, a hand on the shoulder Sophie. His ex-wife, KAREN (42) stands in front of them.

KAREN

Did she behave?

SOPHIE

(annoyed)

Mom...

JIMMY

Did all her homework. Even ate some vegetables. Right, honey?

Sophie nods.

KAREN

You made sure she studied for the math quiz, right?

She takes Sophie's hand, leads her out of the doorway.

JIMMY

Yes, Karen. I'm not incompetent,
you know.

KAREN

It's just that last time she staid
with you, she got a C- on an
English quiz.

ANGLE ON STAIRWELL

As Paul reaches the 5th floor.

JIMMY

Ah, give it a rest, Karen. Everyone
gets a C every once in a while.

KAREN

I didn't.

Jimmy spots Paul.

JIMMY

Oh, hey Paul! How's it going man?

PAUL

Good.

JIMMY

Um, Karen, Sophie- this is my
neighbor, Paul. Paul this is my
daughter, Sophie, and her mom,
Karen.

KAREN

How do you do.

Sophie waves shyly.

SOPHIE

Hi.

JIMMY

(re: Paul & Sophie)

You know, you two would get along
great. With all the video games and
comics this girl reads I'd swear
she's a twenty-something college
boy.

KAREN

You know, you really shouldn't let
her play those things...

JIMMY

Give it a rest. She's just blowing
up aliens. Right, honey?

Sophie looks at Paul, dead-serious.

SOPHIE

I love Halo.

Karen glances at her watch.

KAREN

Right, well, we have to go or we'll
be late for school. Jim- can you
pick her up from soccer practice on
Wednesday? I have a meeting.

JIMMY

Little short notice, don't you
think?

KAREN

Please, Jim...

A beat.

JIMMY

Yeah, sure, no problem.

Karen puts on a fake smile, shakes Paul's hand.

KAREN

It was nice meeting you.
(to Sophie)
Say goodbye, honey.

Sophie smiles at Paul and waves.

SOPHIE

Bye.

Karen leads her down the stairs. Jimmy calls after them.

JIMMY

Have a nice week, baby! Give me a
call!

SOPHIE

Okay, bye daddy!

She and Karen disappear down the stairwell.

Jimmy sighs, turns to Paul.

JIMMY

Sorry about that, man. Hey, you
wanna come inside?

PAUL

Oh no, I really-

JIMMY

Oh, cut the crap. Come have some
coffee. Maybe a little wake and
bake? I got some shit to pay you
back with. Come inside.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Jimmy leads a reluctant Paul into his bedroom. He picks up a
large BAGGIE of weed, and shakes it at Paul with a smile on
his face.

JIMMY

This is fresh. Just got it
yesterday.

Paul is clearly eager to leave.

PAUL

Oh. Great.

JIMMY

Yeah, I guess it must have been the
joint I smoked with you that
inspired me. I hadn't gotten high
in like, ten years, and one whiff-
and I'm back onboard the ganja
train.

(laughs)

Yeah... yeah, things have been
kinda rough with the ex-missus
lately, and I just figured you know-
what better way to take the edge
off, right?

PAUL

Right.

(a beat)

So that was her? Your ex?

JIMMY

Yeah, Karen.

Paul nods.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

So um... why don't you roll a J,
while I go put on some coffee. I
like my downers with my uppers.
(chuckles)

PAUL

Thanks, but I had a long night and
I think I really should just get
some sleep.

JIMMY

Oh, bull-shit. How old are you?
Fuckin' eighty?

PAUL

Twenty-two, actually.

JIMMY

Yeah, you want everyone to know you
were outdone by a guy in his
forties? Who's the real college
student here, huh?

PAUL

Look... it's just... I'm having
some- girl problems, and I just...
want to be alone for a little.

Jimmy's cheery nature evaporates.

JIMMY

Oh. Oh... I understand, man. No
hard feelings.

PAUL

I do want to hang out. Could I come
by tomorrow or something?

JIMMY

Yeah, anytime man, anytime.

PAUL

Alright. Cool.

His PHONE RINGS, now with Alice's distinctive tone. Jimmy
notices it.

JIMMY

Funny, my girlfriend has the exact
same ringtone.

PAUL

Oh yeah? Yeah, I just like to have the most annoying ringtone, you know? Piss people off in elevators and shit.

Jimmy laughs.

JIMMY

Yeah...

PAUL

It's my mom. I'll catch you later, man.

He heads for the door.

JIMMY

Yeah, later.

CAMERA TRACKS Paul as he exits the apartment.

PAUL

(on the phone)

Hi mom. Yeah, I know... No, I haven't been avoiding you. It's just been a rough couple of weeks, you know?

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jimmy and Alice make love- Jimmy climaxes right as the scene starts, collapsing on top of her.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jimmy and Alice lie in bed, post-coitus. Alice seems distant. Jimmy has his arm around her. Alice pulls a CIGARETTE out of a PACK. When she LIGHTS it, Jimmy shakes his head.

JIMMY

Tsk. Do you have to smoke those in bed?

ALICE

I like it. Reminds me of old movies.

JIMMY

People didn't fuck in old movies.

ALICE

Movies from the sixties. And people
always smoked.

Jimmy gets out of bed.

JIMMY

Yeah, well you know those things
will kill you. I can't believe you
still haven't quit.

ALICE

I read that a joint of weed is
equivalent to five cigarettes.

Jimmy ignores this, goes to the sliding door and opens it a
crack. He stands, looks outside, his back turned to Alice.

A beat.

JIMMY

Do you remember when we met?

ALICE

Yeah, of course. At Nina's fortieth
birthday party- you organized it.
Why?

JIMMY

I dunno. Don't you feel like...
clinging to memories as you get
older? I get nostalgic sometimes...
thinking about the past reminds me
to stay happy.

ALICE

I remember you were rolling up that
stupid fake grass.

INT. NINA'S PARTY- FLASHBACK - NIGHT

A large, beautiful Manhattan loft. Clearly no expense was
paid on this party- catering, decoration, everything top
notch- albeit a bit tacky. It's island-themed, with fake palm
trees and tiki lights. The party's mostly cleared out, just a
few stragglers, including Alice, who's kissing the host, Nina
on the cheek.

She heads for the door then spots Jimmy, rolling up the FAKE
GRASS and tying the rolls up with STRING before tossing them
in a PLASTIC BAG.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Yeah, well that's cause it was
island-themed. Remember? Nina was
moving to Hawaii.

ALICE (V.O.)
Oh yeah...

Alice walks up to Jimmy.

ALICE
Hey- need a hand?

Jimmy looks up.

JIMMY
Oh no, I'm good, thanks. Almost
finished, just need to put this
stuff in my car.

ALICE
You sure? I'm heading out now. I
could help you carry some stuff
down.

JIMMY
Oh. Okay, yeah. Just give me a sec.

INT. ELEVATOR - LATER

Jimmy and Alice, holding several PLASTIC BAGS filled with
party supplies, stand awkwardly in the elevator.

ALICE
So you're the party planner, right?

JIMMY
Yeah, Jimmy.

He juggles the BAGS to get a free hand, which he uses to
shake Alice's hand.

ALICE
Alice. Nice to meet you, Jimmy.
(a beat)
So when Nina asked you to do an
island theme, did you like, throw
up a little in your mouth?

Jimmy laughs.

JIMMY
Just a little.

EXT. OUTSIDE NINA'S BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Jimmy slams the trunk of his car closed, turns to Alice who's standing on the sidewalk.

JIMMY

Well, that's it. Thanks again. It was nice meeting you.

He heads for the driver's door.

ALICE

Yeah, you too. Hey- I know it's kinda late, but you want to get a drink?

JIMMY

Oh, I don't know... I got the car...

ALICE

It's three in the morning. There's parking everywhere. Just one drink?

Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY

Sure. One drink. Why not?

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jimmy stares out of Alice's window, lost in a daydream.

ALICE (O.S.)

Jimmy.

Jimmy snaps out of it, turns around-

Alice is fully dressed, heading out the door.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I've got an open house. Let yourself out?

She exits, leaving Jimmy to his thoughts.

EXT. BROADWAY, BROOKLYN - DAY

An L Train ROARS by on above ground tracks, which sit a mere fifty or so feet away from the top floors of rows upon rows of cheap apartment buildings.

INT. BROOKLYN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alice watches through a window as the train passes.

When it does she turns to the family viewing the apartment- a boy around Paul's age and his homely parents.

CU on Alice. Seeing this saddens her. The boy even looks a little like Paul.

ALICE

So yeah, the train is right there,
but the good news is the station is
just two blocks away. And residents
say you get used to it pretty fast.

The DAD puts an arm around his son and gives Alice a fake smile. He's clearly not convinced.

DAD

We'll consider it, thank you.

EXT. OUTSIDE BROOKLYN APARTMENT - LATER

Alice sits on the stoop, smoking a CIGARETTE dejectedly.

She takes out her PHONE, scrolls through the phonebook. Makes a call.

ALICE

Hey you. Long time no see.

(a beat)

I'm... good. You?

(a beat)

Yeah?

(a beat)

Hey listen- what are you doing for
lunch tomorrow?

(a beat)

You're kidding. You know, ever
since you started going out with
that guy you've been practically
unreachable. Can't you do that on
Thursday or something?

(a beat)

No, it is important. Trust me- you
won't believe what's been going on
with me lately.

INT. LUNCH SPOT - DAY

Alice's friend, MELANIE (35) sits across from her in a quaint restaurant, looking sympathetic. The remains of sandwiches/salads lie on plates before them.

MELANIE

Aww... that's so sad.

ALICE

Don't be a bitch, Melanie .

MELANIE

No, I mean it. Poor kid...

ALICE

Yeah, I know. Fucked up isn't it? I mean think if that had happened to you. If that guy you were dating senior year- what was his name- the Argentinian?

MELANIE

Raul.

ALICE

Right. Well what if Raul died right before you graduated?

MELANIE

I don't know. I guess I would have been devastated.

ALICE

Yeah, well so's Paul. You should see him. It's like there was nothing going on behind those eyes... and then when he told me about his girlfriend... god, I've never seen anyone look at me like that.

MELANIE

Like what?

ALICE

It was like... like he was pleading with me. I don't know...

(a beat)

I have to help him.

MELANIE

I don't know, Alice, this has bad news written all over it.

(MORE)

MELANIE (CONT'D)

He doesn't sound very stable. And you know how you are with men—things are never stable to begin with.

ALICE

He needs me.

MELANIE

What about Jimmy?

ALICE

Fuck Jimmy!

She said this a little too loud. A couple lunchers stare. She blushes, speaks a little quieter.

ALICE (CONT'D)

He's a loser, okay? I mean I already cheated on him twice. How are things ever going to work out?

MELANIE

You slept with Paul twice?!

ALICE

(sheepishly)

Yeah, well... I took him to my place and—

MELANIE

You brought him home? Oh, this just keeps getting better and better.

ALICE

I called you cause I wanted advice. No need to shit all over my already shitty love life.

MELANIE

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, it's just—you know this is never going to work. You're practically twice his age! You don't have anything in common. And you'll have to keep this secret. How will people look at you if they knew—

ALICE

I don't care what people think.

Melanie rolls her eyes, starts to play with a surviving piece of lettuce with her FORK.

MELANIE

Clearly.

Alice gets up, throws her blazer on.

ALICE

Look, thanks for having lunch with me. Sorry you had to blow off your plans with Dave. I just needed to talk to someone.

She takes a couple BILLS from her WALLET and throws them on the table.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'll see you soon, okay? Call me this weekend.

She turns to leave.

Melanie gets up, grabs her wrist.

MELANIE

Honey? I meant what I said. I wasn't trying to be catty or anything.

ALICE

I know, I know-

MELANIE

(dead serious)

You should take my advice. This thing is just going to spiral out of control. You should end it while things are only slightly fucked up.

Alice smiles weakly.

EXT. WEST VILLAGE - NIGHT

Paul walks down the street. His gait is wobbly- he's tipsy.

Up ahead, a group of four ghetto gay black teenagers loiter on the street, chatting and laughing. Their dress is more akin to that of Brooklyn hipsters, but some wear makeup and other effeminate attire.

Paul takes out a PACK of cigarettes, tries to get one out, then TRIPS on a raised piece of sidewalk, and stumbles. He drops the CIGARETTE in the process.

One of the kids, a SMALL GAY TEEN, points and laughs hysterically, clutching his sides.

SMALL GAY TEEN
(laughing)
Yo check it out!

GAY TEEN #1
What?

SMALL GAY TEEN
Motherfucker nearly fell on his
ass.

Paul fumes, staring at them. Decides what he's going to do—stuffs his hands in his pockets and walks with purpose towards the psuedo-gang.

PAUL
Oh, real fucking funny, right?

The small teen keeps laughing.

PAUL (CONT'D)
White kid trips and it's like, "Oh
hilarious, he must be clumsy cause
he's fucking white," right?

He gets in the small teen's face.

A beat. They stare at each other.

A huge grin spreads across the teen's face and he starts laughing again. His companions join him.

SMALL GAY TEEN
You got it!

PAUL
Yeah I did. So how about you get
fucking lost?

This does not sit well with the gang. They encircle Paul, edgy now.

GAY TEEN #2
White boy must be trippin'.

Paul turns to him.

PAUL

Oh, so you're all ghetto and shit?
You know, sounds fucking hilarious
with that high-pitched voice of
yours.

The LEADER, a tall, lanky kid, wearing the nicest hoodie and the tightest pants, pushes the small teen out of the way and puts his face a mere inch or so from Paul's.

GAY TEEN LEADER

What the fuck did you say, bitch?

PAUL

So like, what's the deal with you guys? I see you hanging around Christopher Street all the time. But you've got this whole ghetto thing going on- what's the problem? Were you so worried about getting the shit kicked out of you by real thugs in Harlem that you had to come here and pick on goofy white people?

The leader grins maliciously, looks at his cronies who chuckle.

GAY TEEN LEADER

You got a mouth on you, son.

With a flick of his wrist he's unsheathed a SWITCHBLADE and raised it to Paul's face.

GAY TEEN LEADER (CONT'D)

Maybe I should cut if off.

Paul smiles back, un-phased.

PAUL

Yeah, sure you could try that. But you see this?

He glances at the bulge in his right pocket, where his hand is still stuffed.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Beretta. You're a thug you should know- the gun Kellz uses. Dad gave it to me just in case I ran into a fucking prick like you. And I swear to fucking god I will end you if you don't get that god-damn knife out of my face.

The leader eyes Paul. Then the bulge in his pocket. Then Paul again.

GAY TEEN LEADER
You're lying.

PAUL
You really want to take that
chance?

The other teens grow nervous. Gay Teen #1 tugs at the leader's sleeve.

GAY TEEN #1
C'mon, Jamal, let's get out of
here.

SMALL GAY TEEN
It's not worth it, man. Leave it.

The leader takes a second- then backs away, following his posse down the street.

He points menacingly at Paul as he walks backwards.

GAY TEEN LEADER
You better watch yourself, foo'.

PAUL
Get a fucking LIFE!!

He turns around and walks briskly in the direction he came.

He reaches towards his inside pocket to get out his CIGARETTE PACK- then notices his hand is shaking. He grips his wrist, concerned.

His CELL PHONE rings. He takes it out of his pocket and answers it.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Yeah?

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alice sits on her bed, on the phone. She twiddles with bracelets on her wrists, nervous.

ALICE
Hey, Paul. It's um, Alice.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. WEST VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

Paul, still walking, brightens a little at the sound of Alice's voice.

PAUL

Oh, hey. Uh, how did you get my number?

ALICE

I got it from your super. We're friends. Jimmy introduced us when we first met. They've been friends for like, forever.

PAUL

Oh.

ALICE

Um, so, I'm uh, really sorry about the other night.

PAUL

No, don't be. It was my fault. I'm a freak, I flip out sometimes for no reason. Don't need to blame yourself.

ALICE

I don't, but- but I want to make it right with you, Paul.

Paul stops walking.

PAUL

You really don't want to get involved with me. You're just going to have to deal with more bullshit like that all the time.

ALICE

I don't care. Look- can we meet up some time? Just to talk?

PAUL

Yeah, that's cool I guess. Could I come over now actually?

Alice hesitates, glances at her bedside clock- it reads 1:38 A.M. Paul's drunkenness is aparant even over the phone.

ALICE

It's a little late, Paul.

PAUL

Yeah, I know, but please? I just want to get this all off my chest, get it over with. Then we can act like normal people, okay?

A beat.

ALICE

Okay.

INT. OUTSIDE ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Paul walks up to Alice's door.

PAUL (V.O.)

Her name was Fiona.

INT. NYU DORM - FLASHBACK

Silence. A college party, red cups and all. Students mill about, laughing, playing beer pong or taking shots.

Paul pushes through the throng, Asher beside him, clearly hammered.

PAUL (V.O.)

We met at a party freshman year.

The crowd seems to part, and Fiona, looking beautiful as she smiles, appears.

Asher brightens when he spots her, introduces her to Paul.

Paul and Fiona look in each others eyes and shake hands. Paul doesn't want to let go. They share a moment, all smiles.

PAUL (V.O.)

It wasn't love at first sight, or any cliche bullshit like that. I didn't really think much of her when we first met. She was pretty. Intelligent.

INT. OUTSIDE ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alice opens the door. Paul's stone-faced expression fades quickly when he lays eyes on her, and like that he's on the verge of tears again.

PAUL
Hey. I just, I-

He throws himself into her arms.

INT. PAUL'S DORM - FLASHBACK

Paul and Fiona make out in his bed in the dark. Very awkward-
two teenagers discovering each other's bodies.

PAUL (V.O.)
But a couple parties and a couple
shots of tequila later and we were
together, an item. You must know
how these kind of things go. You
start seeing someone, you don't
think anything's really going to
come of it and the next thing you
know you're in love.

INT. FIONA'S DORM - FLASHBACK

Paul and Fiona make love, Paul on top.

PAUL (V.O.)
And then one day she told me, she
told me she loved me, and then I
knew, I knew she was okay, that I
could be safe with her.

Fiona, overcome with ecstasy and emotion, takes Paul's face
in her hands, looks him in the eyes, and mouths the words, "I
love you."

CU on Paul, stunned and sweaty.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alice and Paul lie on her bed, clothed. Alice spoons him,
strokes his hair.

PAUL
And I was. I was safe with her.

ALICE
Were you there? When she...

PAUL
No. I found out the next morning.
She was out with some girlfriends.
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

If I had been there she wouldn't have been hit. I always look both ways. But if I had been there... If I had seen it happen...

ALICE

What?

PAUL

I would have killed him.

Alice sits up on one arm, gets a better look at Paul's face.

ALICE

What?

PAUL

The man who hit her. If he wasn't in jail right now, I would find him and I would take his life. For hers.

Alice sits up completely, shocked, not sure what to do or say.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I think that's the worst bit of the whole thing. Worse than this... hole that's in me. It's the rage... the insatiable rage, just eating away at the inside of my head...

Tears start to trickle down Alice's cheeks.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Paul has fallen asleep on the bed.

Alice enters the room with a GLASS of water. She spots Paul, goes up and pulls the covers over him. Gives him a peck on the forehead. Then turns to leave.

PAUL

(eyes still closed)

I think I'm in love with you.

Alice stops dead in her tracks.

ALICE

What?

PAUL

With her... it took a while. But I see things differently now. And I see... I see how I feel about you... *clearly*.

Alice sighs, puts down her drink, grabs a chair and pulls it up beside him. She brushes his hair out of his eyes.

ALICE

Paul- you're young and-

His eyes shoot open.

PAUL

Please don't do that.

ALICE

Do what?

PAUL

Don't treat me like a kid. I know- I know you don't mean it, so don't do it-

ALICE

But you are young, Paul. And I'm old-

PAUL

You're just thirty-five.

Alice winces.

ALICE

Actually... I lied. I'm thirty-seven.

A beat.

PAUL

So? Is it really so different, fifteen years from now?

ALICE

I've just been with more people. And I've learned... it's not wise to trust your feelings. They're not always telling the truth.

Paul grabs her hand, squeezes it.

PAUL

But don't you feel something?

Alice pats his hand.

ALICE

I do, I do, but lets' just take it slow, okay? After everything that's happened to you... I think you should just try to relax. Put this all behind you.

Paul nods, sullen.

PAUL

Okay.

Alice smiles, kisses him.

ALICE

Get some rest.

MR. PINE (V.O.)

(on the phone)

I don't want to be hard on you, son.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - MORNING

Paul wakes up to the blaring ring of his alarm clock, and groggily slaps it off, knocking over a whiskey BOTTLE in the process, which ROLLS across the slanted wooden floor. The bedside table is covered in more liquor BOTTLES, as are other surfaces in Paul's apartment.

MR. PINE (V.O.)

(on the phone)

I know you've been through a lot, and I understand that, and I understand the economy's on a bit of a downturn lately-

NOTE: The rest of the VOICEOVER will dominate the soundtrack, every scene will be silent except for it.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 1ST FLOOR LANDING - LATER

PAUL (V.O.)

(on the phone)

It's more than a downturn, it's a clusterfuck, dad.

Paul, now dressed but still looking like shit, reaches the bottom of the stairs.

He notices something on the community bulletin board- a NEWS CLIPPING.

He takes the CLIPPING, gets a closer look at it.

CLOSE UP ON NEWS CLIPPING:

The headline reads, "MYSTERIOUS MUGGER TERRORIZING WEST VILLAGE."

Paul shakes his head, throws the CLIPPING aside and walks off.

MR. PINE (V.O.)
(on the phone)
Nevertheless...

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

Paul enters, gives Lou a high five.

MR. PINE (V.O.)
(on the phone)
But I'm a little disappointed in
your current choice of profession.

He grabs his apron off a coathook and puts it on.

PAUL (V.O.)
(on the phone)
What, you don't like coffee?

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Paul, seated, rides the subway.

MR. PINE (V.O.)
(on the phone)
There's no need to get smart with
me-

PAUL (V.O.)
(on the phone)
No, no, this is stupid.

EXT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Paul walks up to Alice's front door, presses her buzzer.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alice hears the buzzer, springs up from her desk, where she was busy writing something, and sprints over to her intercom, elated.

PAUL (V.O.)
(on the phone)
I'm really, just too old to be
treated like this anymore.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Alice and Paul collapse onto the kitchen table, knocking over a candelabra. They're kissing furiously, their hands all over each other.

PAUL (V.O.)
(on the phone)
If you want to cut me off, stop
paying for my rent, fine.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT- BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alice and Paul shower together. Paul is behind her, cupping her breasts and kissing her neck. She smiles, truly, deeply happy.

PAUL (V.O.)
(on the phone)
I'll just move to fucking Brooklyn
like all the other losers my age
and keep my shitty coffee shop job,
thank you.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Paul, sits on the edge of his bed, a serious frown on his face, on the phone with his father.

MR. PINE (V.O.)
(on the phone)
Paul, I-

Paul slams the PHONE shut, tosses it aside.

A beat. He sighs.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Paul and Alice lie naked in each other's arms on her bed, coated in sweat.

Paul glances over at Alice's desk, notices the open NOTEBOOK she was writing in before he rang the bell.

PAUL
What's that you were writing?

ALICE
Oh... nothing.

PAUL
C'mon, tell me.

ALICE
Just... some poetry.

PAUL
Poetry?! You write poetry?

Alice blushes.

ALICE
I used to. In college. I- I wanted to be a writer, I guess. Poet. Just figured I'd give it a stab again.

Paul leaps out of bed, heads for the desk.

PAUL
Can I read it?

Alice runs after him, gets there first, slams the NOTEBOOK shut.

ALICE
No!

Paul is taken aback.

ALICE (CONT'D)
(regaining composure)
I'm shy.

Paul puts his hands on her hips.

PAUL
That's a good thing. Modesty is good. I'm never particularly modest about anything I write. People hate me for it.

He bites her neck- she gasps. Kisses his way up her throat...
Alice grips his head, runs her hands through his hair.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(whispering)

So is this it? Is this what I have
to look forward to?

ALICE

(in ecstasy)

What?

PAUL

A life full of missed
opportunities... things you could
have done... lost to time.

He starts to kiss his way downwards, along her chest-

ALICE

(gasps)

It's not so bad.

PAUL

That's the worst part of being my
age.

-to her breasts-

ALICE

Oh yeah?

-and belly-

PAUL

I've been brought up to make plans-
believe in things- believe that
what I want to happen can actually
happen.

Alice is pushing him down with her hands now.

Paul stops at her pubic hair, stares at it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

And this is it, this is the age
where you find out it's all total
bullshit. You can't change
anything.

Alice sits on the desk, spreads her legs.

ALICE

Then you might as well live for the moment, right?

She pushes Paul's head in between them and moans.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BATHROOM - EVENING

A BOTTLE of pills is opened forcefully, several spilling into a toilet bowl.

PAUL

Dammit.

Paul stares at the bottle of pills, indecisive about whether to dump the rest.

The DOORBELL rings.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 5TH FLOOR LANDING - MOMENTS LATER

When Paul opens the door he finds Jimmy, buttoning up a fancy black shirt.

JIMMY

Hey man, how's it going.

PAUL

Okay. What's up?

JIMMY

Listen, I've been in Seattle for the past week and I totally forgot that I had this dinner engagement tonight. Karen went and dumped Sophie on me- it's a huge mess- but I was wondering if maybe you'd be cool with looking after her until I get back?

PAUL

You mean- babysitting?

Jimmy finishes buttoning his shirt.

JIMMY

Yeah, babysitting. I have a sitter, but she couldn't come on such short notice.

PAUL

I don't know, man. I want to help,
but I'm not really all that good
with kids-

JIMMY

Sophie's a breeze, believe me. Just
make sure she finishes her homework
before she turns on that goddamned
Xbox.

PAUL

Okay.

Jimmy opens his door.

JIMMY

I left a twenty on the table, order
some Chinese or something. And I'll
give you another fifty when I get
back. I should be home around
eleven, maybe midnight. Sophie goes
to sleep at nine. I'll come knock
on your door when I'm ready to
leave, okay?

PAUL

Okay-

Jimmy's closes his door behind him.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Paul walks sheepishly into Jimmy's dining room, where Sophie
is busy doing homework at the table. She doesn't even look up
at Paul as he enters.

SOPHIE

Dad said I had to finish my
homework before we could do
anything fun.

A beat.

PAUL

I'm going to make a phone call.

He walks out of the room, into Jimmy's bedroom.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Paul exits onto the fire escape connecting his and Jimmy's apartment, his cell phone already out.

He dials a number, waits for the dial tone.

It's a beautiful night out, but summer is starting to turn into fall and Paul seems a little chilly in the evening wind.

ALICE (V.O.)
(on the phone)
Hello?

PAUL
Alice? Hey.

ALICE (V.O.)
Hey, Paul... what's up?

PAUL
Are you going out to dinner with Jimmy tonight?

INT. VERY FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Alice, looking sheepish, is sitting at a table for two with an empty place- Jimmy's late. The restaurant is very decadent, with romantic lighting and impeccable decor. Alice glows in a beautiful dress- she's gone all out, in make up and earrings and jewelry- the works.

ALICE
I- look, I set this up with him before he went to Seattle, I couldn't just blow him off-

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

PAUL
I thought you were going to try and make this work.

ALICE
And I thought we were just going to have some fun until we could figure this all out-

PAUL
(loses his temper)
I'm sick of fucking fooling
around!!

He checks his volume, glances through Jimmy's window. Sophie is still doing her homework, undisturbed.

PAUL (CONT'D)
You said you were going to dump
him.

ALICE
It's not that simple, Paul. Jimmy
and I have been going out for a
long time- almost a year now. I
can't just dump him.

PAUL
You're so full of shit you know
that? I trusted you, I believed you
were different, that you weren't
fake like everyone else. And once
again my faith goes unrewarded.

ALICE
Paul, you can't flip out all the
time like this-

PAUL
Just stop twisting me around, okay?

He hangs up.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Alice puts her phone away, rattled.

A waiter leads Jimmy to the table.

JIMMY
Hey, sorry I'm late.

He sits down. The waiter exits.

Alice looks completely displeased to see Jimmy. She can't even make eye contact.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Did you order any wine yet?

ALICE
No.

Jimmy grabs the WINE MENU.

JIMMY
Alright, let me take a look...

He scans the MENU, notices Alice's silence.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Hey, are you okay?

ALICE
No.
(a beat)
No, I'm not.
(a beat)
I've been cheating on you, Jimmy.

Jimmy puts the MENU down, looks up.

JIMMY
What?

ALICE
I've been cheating on you with
another man, for the past month
now.

A beat.

JIMMY
(laughs)
You're fucking kidding me, right?

Alice shakes her head.

ALICE
I know I should say sorry. But it
would be fucking pointless,
wouldn't it?

Jimmy can't believe what he's hearing.

JIMMY
Who is he?

ALICE
What?

JIMMY
I said, who is he?

Alice laughs.

ALICE

It doesn't matter. What matters is that I've been living your little fantasy for the past year, and I hear you say "I love you," but I don't actually hear you, you know?

JIMMY

Whoa, whoa, whoa don't you try and make this about me. You're the one who's fucking cheating!!

Jimmy's tone is too loud- other diners notice, gossip in hushed tones.

ALICE

I'm cheating, Jimmy, because this thing we have between us, it's all a farce. And I get it now, I get it that I'm this hot younger woman you picked up for the rebound after your divorce, and you know, I'm not offended, it's cool-

JIMMY

No, it's not like that-

ALICE

-but I just can't do this anymore, I just can't.

She gets up, tosses her napkin on the table. Jimmy jumps to his feet.

JIMMY

No, you can't just- can't just go like that-

He reaches for her.

ALICE

Don't! Don't touch me, please! I don't know what I'll do if you touch me-

Jimmy retracts his hand.

JIMMY

Okay, but Alice-

ALICE

Please, Jim, if I stay any longer I'm going to lose it.

She grabs her PURSE-

JIMMY
I really do love you.

-and walks off.

Jimmy stands stock still and watches her go, completely devastated.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

Paul sits on the fake grass, hugging his knees, crying softly.

Sophie sticks her head tentatively out the window, showing genuine concern.

SOPHIE
Paul- are you okay?

Paul's head pops up- he quickly wipes tears from his bloodshot eyes and snot from his nose.

PAUL
Yeah, yeah I'm fine. Sorry.

SOPHIE
You wanna play some Halo?

Paul laughs, turns around and looks at her, smiling.

PAUL
Yeah. Yeah, that would be great.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Paul and Sophie sit on the floor in front of the TV, legs crossed Indian-style. Their fingers flick across Xbox 360 controllers, their eyes riveted on the screen.

ON THE TV:

Sophie's "Master Chief," whose armor is completely hot pink, BLOWS UP a vehicle with a rocket launcher, killing the two other Master Chiefs inside.

HALO VOICE
DOUBLE KILL!!

PAUL

You know, it's kind of disturbing
me how good you are at this.

Sophie's too busy gunning opponents down, she doesn't really
pay attention.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I mean, if I were one of the kids
playing this right now, and I knew
I was getting pwned by a ten year-
old girl, I'd be a little
embarrassed.

(a beat)

You know we could mess with these
guys. Put the headset on, let them
know who's tooling them-

SOPHIE

My dad won't let me. Says the
internet's full of pervs.

This shuts Paul up.

PAUL

Oh.

(a beat)

You know, when I was your age my
babysitter and I played with toys.

SOPHIE

I have toys. They're just all at my
mom's. Dad said he got the Xbox to
keep me entertained when I come
over, but I think he really got it
for himself. If he'd gotten it for
me it would have been a Wii.

PAUL

You're dad's an interesting guy.

SOPHIE

My mom says they broke up because
he thought he could be twenty five
years old forever.

Paul looks at her. She doesn't take her eyes off the screen.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

She says he couldn't grow up, and
that's why he lives in this tiny
apartment and bought an Xbox.

Sophie's pink Master Chief is KILLED by a Covenant Elite with a laser sword.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Aw. That was lame.

She puts down her controller, turns to Paul, smiling.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Oh well. Wanna do something else?

PAUL

Don't listen to your mom.

SOPHIE

What?

PAUL

My parents do the same thing. Complain about each other behind each other's backs. It's not the truth. They just want someone to unload on, and we're always there. Your dad's a great guy.

Sophie gets up, walks over to a bookshelf which also has some DVDs displayed on it.

SOPHIE

Yeah, I know. He's just a little weird. Hey! Wanna watch *The Little Mermaid*?

She holds out a DVD copy for Paul, who smiles.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Alice, still dressed in her nice dress as well as a fancy coat, walks briskly down the street, her high heels clacking. She's crying a little- her makeup is smeared by tears.

A group of Hispanic teens loitering outside a Duane Reade spot her, and start catcalling and commenting on her body.

HISPANIC TEEN

Aw, why so sad, mamacita?

Alice reels, furious.

ALICE

FUCK OFF!!!

HISPANIC TEENS

Oooohhhhh....

They feign fear.

Alice keeps walking, turns the corner, already pulling her CELL PHONE out of her purse. She dials a number.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Melanie's got a leg propped up on a desk, PAINTING her toenails. Her PHONE starts to vibrate towards the edge of the desk. She GRABS it, checks the caller ID and puts it to her ear, pressing it against her shoulder while finishing her nails.

MELANIE

Hey, babe. Just doing my nails- do you think purple is too much?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Alice keeps walking.

ALICE

Melanie , I-

MELANIE

Hey, aren't you supposed to be having dinner with Jimmy?

ALICE

(losing it)
We broke up, Melanie !!

A beat.

MELANIE

(shocked)
What?

ALICE

Jimmy, I, we, we fucking broke up!!!

MELANIE

Oh, baby I'm so sorry, I- where are you?

ALICE

I don't know, somewhere in
Tibacca... oh god, I'm sorry, I'm
such a mess-

Melanie finishes her pinky toenail, puts the nail polish
BRUSH back in its CONTAINER.

MELANIE

Honey, there's only one thing you
can do at a time like this- get
fucking wasted. Meet me at B Flat.
I'll be there in thirty minutes.

INT. B FLAT BAR - NIGHT

In a red-tinted Japanese-themed bar, Alice and Melanie DROP
SHOTS OF SAKE INTO PINTS OF BEER, then CHUG them.

Alice finishes hers first- slams the GLASS down and throws
her arms up in the air.

ALICE

Whoo!!!!

Melanie doesn't quite manage to swallow all of hers-
laughing, she coughs up a little, which causes Alice to crack
up.

ALICE (CONT'D)

(laughing)

Wow, this shit makes me feel like
I'm in college again. We haven't
done one of these in years!

MELANIE

God, those things are way worse
than Irish car bombs.

The bartender comes over, slightly disgruntled, and hands her
a napkin.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

She wipes her mouth and a spot on her dress where she spilled
some beer, then the wet spot on the counter. Then she turns
to Alice. They are very drunk.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

You know, I fucking told you
something like this was gonna
happen.

ALICE

Oh, don't start with this. I thought you were supposed to be cheering me up, I thought that's why you were getting me so fucking hammered.

MELANIE

I did cheer you up. When you cried on my shoulder for five minutes. Now that I've got you all nice and liquored up I want some details.

ALICE

I already told you what happened-

MELANIE

No, I want to know why you didn't take my advice and dump that Paul kid.

ALICE

I- I tried. Well... kind of. I told him I didn't want a relationship.

MELANIE

But you kept fucking him, right?

ALICE

Look, it's just- you don't know what he's like. I- without me, I don't know what'll happen to him-

MELANIE

I dunno, Al, this is sounding more and more like some weird, Freudian-Oedipal bullshit.

ALICE

What? No- Oedipus killed his father then married his mother, it has nothing to do with- whatever, I know what you're thinking: I'm pushing forty, so I'm getting the baby terror thing and Paul's my excuse. But it's not. I- I want to help him because- because he's a good person, and good people deserve to be happy. He's in a really dark place right now, and he needs someone to help guide him out of it.

Melanie stares at her, smirks slightly.

MELANIE
You're in love with him.

ALICE
What?

MELANIE
Paul. You love him.

ALICE
No, I-

MELANIE
It's all over your face, Al. You're so easy to read.

ALICE
I'm not in love with-

MELANIE
Yeah, ya are. I'm not even going to give you a chance to deny this. But how in the hell do you plan to work this all out? He lives next to your ex, for Christ's sake! You- you didn't tell Jimmy, you were cheating on him with Paul, right?

Alice rolls her eyes.

ALICE
No, I'm not an idiot. Well... I don't know. I just don't know what to do. I feel for Paul, but... it would never work out, would it?

Melanie shakes her head.

Alice shakes hers too, starts to tear up, laughs.

ALICE (CONT'D)
God, you're going to make me cry again...

Melanie rubs her shoulder.

MELANIE
No, no, no, can't have that.
(motions to bartender)
Hey, can we get some tequila shots down here?

JUMP CUT TO:

Melanie and Alice down SHOTS.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

A sweaty, dark, incredibly loud and expensive-looking club. The dancefloor is completely PACKED, people of varying ages (teenagers to 40-somethings) shake it to a club remix of a popular rap song.

Alice and Melanie , utterly wasted now, dance wildly amongst the throng.

Melanie starts dancing with a cute, younger guy, so Alice turns to the person next to her- a stock broker-looking type, and dances nonchalantly with him.

The stock broker type is clearly more into it than she is- he's getting too close, grinding too heavy.

His hand slides down Alice's exposed back and grabs her ass roughly.

Alice, shocked, pushes him away.

ALICE
(barely audible)
Jesus fucking Christ!!

The stock broker throws his arms up in defense, gives Alice a "what's the big deal?" look.

Alice gives him a "what the fuck's wrong with you?" look and turns back to Melanie , who she taps on the shoulder.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I'm going home!!

Melanie , still dancing with the cute guy, turns around.

MELANIE
WHAT?!

ALICE
I'M GOING HOME!!!

Before Melanie can respond, Alice turns and heads for the exit, pushing her way uncomfortably through the thick crowd.

CUT TO:

MELANIE AND YOUNGER GUY

Still dancing, getting hotter now, more sensual.

The young guy cups Melanie's ass and pulls her close-

Very close, Melanie's body is pressed against his, their mouths mere inches apart.

She goes in to kiss him, but at the last second her eyes SHOOT OPEN.

She clutches her mouth-

The young guy looks confused-

-and runs off.

INT. CLUB- BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Melanie VOMITS violently into a toilet. She didn't have time to close the stall door behind her, and we can see a CLUB GIRL walking by. The club girl spots Melanie, shakes her head, disgusted.

CLUB GIRL

Damn girl...

She walks off.

Melanie raises her head, her wretching subsided. She wipes her mouth.

MELANIE

God fucking dammit...

CUT TO:

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT- SOPHIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sophie sleeps peacefully on her bed, her arm around a TEDDY BEAR.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul sleeps on the couch.

ANGLE ON KITCHEN/FOYER:

Jimmy unlocks the door and enters- loudly. Slams the door behind him, staggers and knocks over a pot from the kitchen counter, which CRASHES to the floor, waking up Paul.

Paul rubs his eyes, spots Jimmy.

PAUL
Jesus Christ, Jimmy...

He gets off the couch, walks over to Jimmy, who walks right past him-

JIMMY
Hey, man.

-and throws himself on the couch.

Paul glances at the DIGITAL CLOCK on the cable box.

PAUL
Man, it's four in the morning.

JIMMY
Sorry dude, I had a really long night. I'm really fucking wasted. Is Sophie asleep?

PAUL
Well she was when I tucked her in, but you just knocked over a pot-

JIMMY
God I love her so much. It's cool man, I'm just going to sleep on the couch. I don't want to wake her.

He pulls his shoes off with his toes and throws his JACKET on the floor.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Just go through my jacket and find my wallet. I think the rest of your money should be in there.

PAUL
Are you okay, man?

Jimmy takes off his GLASSES, rubs his eyes.

JIMMY

No. Not really. Shit really hit the fan for me today. My girlfriend broke up with me tonight.

Paul perks up at this.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

And I fucked this Sophie thing up, just totally forgot I was supposed to look after her tonight. Imagine that- just forgetting your daughter was coming over? Shows how much I love her, huh?

Paul sits down beside him.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Karen was fucking right to divorce me.

PAUL

You really shouldn't be so hard on yourself.

He hands Jimmy a BLANKET, which Jimmy throws over himself.

JIMMY

Thanks man, that's nice and all, but you really don't know what the fuck you're talking about. I've never really been there for Sophie, and I just know Karen's going to remarry and the son of a bitch is going to end up raising her.

PAUL

You gotta keep your voice down, you're going to wake her-

JIMMY

And this girl, this girl, man, I loved her, I mean I fucking loved her. But it didn't fucking matter. Because I'm such a fucking asshole, I didn't even realize how I was treating her.

PAUL

Yeah, how was that?

JIMMY

Like fucking arm candy. Like she was a goddamn escort or something I used to make people think I'm younger. God, she was beautiful... do you know how amazed I was to be with someone like that? I mean, look at me, I ain't exactly George Clooney, and this ain't no Playboy Mansion.

Paul pats him on the shoulder and gets up.

PAUL

Jimmy- you're drunk. Really drunk. You're not thinking straight. Just don't worry about this shit man- everything's going to be fine. Women suck. They're completely fucking nuts, no matter the age. Aren't you old enough to know that by now?

Jimmy laughs. Paul heads for the door.

JIMMY

You're a funny guy, Paul. Shit- for some reason I wanted to call you Pete. Pete's a better name, don't you think?

Paul opens the door.

PAUL

Okay man, I'll see you later. Just knock on my door if you need anything.

He starts to leave-

JIMMY

Hey Paul!

-then sticks his head back in.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

What you said- it's totally right. Women- you can't fucking trust them. Just remember that and maybe you won't make the same mistakes I did.

Paul ponders this, nods solemnly, then exits and closes the door behind him quietly.

EXT. WEST VILLAGE SKYLINE - DAWN

The SUN RISES over the Hudson River, Julian Schnabel's tower in the foreground.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - MORNING

Paul sleeps, curled up under his covers. The DOORBELL rings, stirring him awake. Slowly but surely he crawls out of bed.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Paul opens his door to find Sophie standing in front of Jimmy's open door, her Spongebob Squarepants BACKPACK on. The sounds of Jimmy and Karen fighting can be heard in the background.

PAUL
(groggily)
Sophie?

SOPHIE
Hey. Thanks for looking after me
last night.

PAUL
Oh. No problem.

She hands him a CARD. It's homemade, made out of construction paper. Sophie's drawn a picture of her as a mermaid and Paul as Master Chief, holding hands.

SOPHIE
I made this for you.

PAUL
Aw... thanks, Sophie.

A beat.

SOPHIE
I heard you and my dad talking last
night.

Paul pales. The fighting sounds cease.

PAUL
Sophie, I-

SOPHIE
It's okay. Just don't say anything
to my mom, okay?

Paul nods.

Karen exits Jimmy's apartment, closes the door behind her.

She spots Paul.

KAREN

Oh. Hello.

PAUL

Hi, I'm Paul. We met before.

KAREN

Oh yes, you're the nice young man
who looked after Sophie last night.
Sorry about the short notice. Jim's
always been a bit of a flake.
(laughs awkwardly)

PAUL

No problem at all. Jimmy's a very
nice guy, least I could do. He's a
good neighbor.

A beat.

KAREN

Yes, well, we had better head out.
Don't want to be late for school.
Come along, Sophie.

She leads Sophie towards the stairs. Sophie turns around and waves at Paul.

SOPHIE

Bye Paul!

Paul smiles, waves back, watches them go.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy looks out his bedroom window, looking stoic despite the single tear running down his cheek. He hastily wipes it away, then takes out his CELL PHONE and dials a number.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alice lies sprawled out on her bed, clad only in underwear. Her hair is a mess.

Her CELL PHONE starts to VIBRATE on the bedside table, waking her.

She moans sleepily, grabs it, flips over on her back and takes a look.

It's JIMMY CALLING.

ALICE
(grouchy)
Oh, what the fuck?!

She picks up anyway.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Jim?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy softens a little at the sound of her voice, steadies himself against the wall.

JIMMY
Alice?

ALICE
Jim, it's seven thirty in the morning! What the fuck are you calling me for?

JIMMY
I- I just need to talk to you, Al-

ALICE
I really don't want to drag this out any longer, it's fucking over okay?

JIMMY
(breaking down)
I got so drunk last night I couldn't even remember what I did after you left me there. Black out drunk...
(laughs)
When's the last time you were black out drunk, huh?

ALICE
This isn't fucking funny, Jim. If you have something to say, say it, otherwise I'm hanging up the phone.

JIMMY

No, no, no, wait!! Just- just come over here? Come to my place, please?

Alice clutches her head- she can't believe what she's hearing and she has the worst hangover ever.

ALICE

I don't think that's a good idea-

JIMMY

Please? I promise I won't do anything, it's just- what I have to say I have to say in person. Karen's already taken Sophie to school. I'm all alone here. Just come over, okay?

A beat.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Okay?

ALICE

Okay, yes, fine! Jesus. But nothing you say's going to change anything, okay? So don't even think about asking me to take you back.

JIMMY

Okay, whatever, I just need to see you.

ALICE

I'm gonna be awhile. I just got out of bed.

JIMMY

Take your time.

ALICE

I'll be over as soon as I can.

She hangs up, sighs, shakes her head.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - MORNING

Paul, sitting on his bed, stares at his open CELL PHONE. The phonebook's open and Alice's name has been selected.

He stares at it, trying to decide whether or not to call.

PAUL

Shit...

There's a muffled BUZZING sound from next door, as someone rings Jimmy's doorbell. Paul looks at the source of the sound, intrigued.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 1ST FLOOR LANDING - MOMENTS LATER

Alice is about to climb the stairs to Jimmy's apartment when she notices another newspaper warning about the mugger. She looks at it, frowns.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Jimmy opens his door to find Alice, who looks tired and haggard and none too happy to be there.

JIMMY

Hey.

ALICE

Hey. So what's this all about?

JIMMY

Come inside.

Alice walks past him, and Jimmy shuts the door behind her.

ALICE

You know there's a mugger loose in the neighborhood. Probably not safe to let me walk around alone.

JIMMY

It's broad daylight outside.

ALICE

Whatever. Just say what you have to say.

Jimmy takes a deep breath.

JIMMY

I want you to give me a second chance.

Alice scoffs, walks towards the bedroom. Jimmy follows her.

ALICE
 (frustrated)
 Jesus, Jimmy what did I say?
 Didn't I specifically tell
 you not to say that?

JIMMY
 Now, just wait a second-

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul sits on his bed, hears muffled voices and footsteps walking into Jimmy's bedroom. He stares at the wall, grows tenser by the second.

He gets up.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alice and Jimmy argue.

ALICE
 Jimmy, I've heard the same fucking
 speech a million times before.
 We're too old for this kind of
 shit. Can't you just get over it?

JIMMY
 No, I can't just "get over it!!" I
 fucking love you, Alice!!

Alice throws her arms up in the air, gesticulates wildly.

ALICE
 Love, love, love, that's all I ever
 hear- love- well that's not a
 goddamn excuse anymore!

JIMMY
 (chuckles)
 Oh, so you don't believe it, huh?
 Thirty-seven years old, you've seen
 all now, right? And love doesn't
 exist, does it? You don't believe
 in it.

Alice gets in his face.

ALICE
 It doesn't matter if it exists or
 not! What matters is that you don't
 love me! You love Karen!

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul presses his ear against the wall, hears:

ALICE (O.S.)
(muffled, through wall)
And I'm just a fucking excuse, a
veil, to cover your eyes and make
you think you're still happy!

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

ALICE
(hysterical now, crying)
Well, I'm sick of living my
boyfriends' lives! I WANT MY OWN
FUCKING LIFE!!!

She shoves Jimmy slightly, staggers back, sobbing. Jimmy
stares at her, dumbfounded.

A long beat.

JIMMY
Tell me who he is.

This causes a new spring of tears to well up in Alice's eyes.
She turns around, can't even look at Jimmy anymore.

ALICE
Jimmy, please-

Jimmy walks up to her.

JIMMY
I'm not going to do anything. I
just want to know why you love him
and not me.

ALICE
I don't love him!!!

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul hears this, dies a little inside.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy's uncomfortably close to Alice now, pushing her up
against the wall.

JIMMY

So what is it, huh? He have a bigger cock than me?

ALICE

God, you're like a walking cliché!!

JIMMY

He fuck you better than me?

ALICE

I'm leaving now-

She tries to walk away, but Jimmy pins her arm against the wall.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Ow! Jimmy-

JIMMY

FUCKING TELL ME!!!!

Alice loses it, starts slapping Jimmy over and over again.

ALICE

(frantic)

Get your hands off of me, get your fucking hands off of me!!!!

Jimmy grabs her free hand, pins it against the wall as well.

ALICE (CONT'D)

No, Jimmy-

Jimmy kisses her, but she resists, turning her head to the side.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Please, I'll scream-

Jimmy keeps kissing her, and finally she gives in and kisses him back. It's almost a release, as if she's just too tired to resist his advances any longer.

It gets more intense- hands groping, Alice wrapping her legs around Jimmy's waist.

Jimmy slides her panties off, caresses her inner thighs-

Alice sighs, bites her lip-

Jimmy pushes his hand in between Alice's legs, caresses-

She arches her back and moans- LOUDLY.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Too loudly. Paul hears it, and recoils from the wall, disgusted.

His eyes teary, he STOMPS out of the room.

INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy starts to unbuckle his pants, but Alice hears Paul STOMPING away and her sexiness immediately evaporates.

Paul's door SLAMS shut.

ALICE

Shit...

She tries to push Jimmy away, but he's mad with lust, trying desperately to enter her.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Jimmy, get off-

JIMMY

Just relax-

ALICE

I SAID FUCKING GET OFF!!!!

She uses all her strength and SHOVES him- hard. He staggers back, almost loses his balance.

Alice pulls her panties up and rushes out of the apartment.

Jimmy struggles to zip up his pants and chase after her.

JIMMY

Alice!!

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 5TH FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Alice bursts out of Jimmy's apartment and catches Paul just as he starts to descend the stairs.

ALICE

Paul, wait-

Paul reels at her.

PAUL

Just stay the fuck away from me, okay?!! Don't come near me!!!

ALICE
Okay, okay, let's just talk.

She walks slowly towards him.

Jimmy exits his apartment, sees what's happening and realization immediately dawns on him.

JIMMY
(laughs)
Oh, you have to be kidding me.

ALICE
Just leave us alone, okay Jimmy?

JIMMY
This?! This, is who you've been screwing behind my back?

ALICE
Just stay out of this!!!

Jimmy snarls, shoves her aside.

JIMMY
Fuck that.

ALICE
Jimmy!!

Jimmy strides towards Paul.

JIMMY
You little shit...

He gives him a powerful PUNCH to the face, sending Paul sprawling onto the stairwell.

ALICE
JIMMY!!!!

She runs over, SHOVES him aside.

One punch seemed to be enough- Jimmy's in shock. He backs away as Alice kneels beside Paul. She checks his wound- a nasty gash above his left eye that's BLEEDING profusely.

Alice turns to Jimmy.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Just leave us alone!!

Jimmy backs away, towards his front door.

Paul, fury in his eyes, points his finger at him.

PAUL
I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU, JIMMY!!! YOU
HEAR ME?! I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU!!!

Jimmy ignores him, goes inside his apartment and closes the door behind him.

ALICE
Christ, this doesn't look good...
you're going to need to go to the
emergency room.

PAUL
(starting to cry)
No... no I just want to go. Just
let me go.

Alice takes his face in her hands, makes him look her in the eyes.

ALICE
Paul- I'm sorry, okay? I'm really
sorry. But you're hurt and I need
to take care of you. We'll talk
about this once you're fixed up,
okay?

Paul nods.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I'm going to get you some ice. Can
I have the keys?

Paul nods again, hands them to her.

Alice smiles weakly and gets up.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I'll be right back.

INT. ST VINCENT'S ER- WAITING AREA - DAY

Alice and Paul sit next to each other in a mostly empty waiting room, Paul clutching a ZIPLOCK BAG filled with ICE to his bloody head.

Alice glances at him, then takes his hand and SQUEEZES it.

Paul looks at her, but she seems to have trouble looking him in the eyes.

PAUL

Alice.

She doesn't respond- she's looking at the entrance to triage.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Alice. I need to talk to you.

ALICE

Not right now, Paul, let's just wait till you get fixed up-

PAUL

I- I know you don't love me-

ALICE

Paul-

PAUL

But, but I don't care, because, because I need you, Alice. I need you to love me. Don't you see? I look at the world and I just feel fear taking over my body, you know? It's almost uncontrollable. Everyday is a struggle, a struggle to find a reason to keep on living and you, Alice, you are that reason for me. So I'm begging, I'm fucking begging you to love me. Because I just don't know what I'll do without you.

The door to the triage opens and a NURSE comes out with a clipboard.

NURSE #1

Paul Pine?

Alice's hand shoots up.

ALICE

Right here!

She turns to Paul.

ALICE (CONT'D)

We'll talk once you're fixed up, okay?

Paul doesn't say anything, just gets up.

INT. ST. VINCENT'S- EXAM ROOM - LATER

A pretty NURSE (mid-20s) stitches up Paul's wound. He winces.
She looks at him, empathetic.

NURSE #2

You want to tell me what happened?

Paul gives her the silent treatment.

INT. ST. VINCENT'S ER- WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Alice talks to one of the ATTENDANTS behind the front desk.
She looks over paperwork, and slides a HEALTH INSURANCE CARD
under the plexiglass.

ALICE

That's my insurance card. I'm not
sure if they're going to cover it,
but-

ATTENDANT

Is the patient on the same plan as
you?

ALICE

Uh, no, I-
(chuckles)
I don't even know if he has
insurance.

The attendant shakes her head, slides the CARD back.

ATTENDANT

That's not gonna work.

ALICE

Whatever, I'll cover all his
expenses, okay?

ATTENDANT

Alright, just fill out that form.
(types at computer)
What's your relationship to the
patient?

Alice looks up, caught off guard. She gives a fake smile.

ALICE

We're friends.

The attendant gives her a weird look, keeps typing.

INT. ST. VINCENT'S- TRIAGE - LATER

Alice is led by a nurse through the triage to a bed where Paul sits, his head now bandaged. Alice goes up to him.

ALICE
Hey, how are you feeling?

PAUL
Like I got hit in the head.

Alice laughs, sits down next to him.

ALICE
Always know how to make me laugh...
(a beat)
You have a headache?

PAUL
Like you wouldn't believe.

Alice nods, takes his hand.

ALICE
I'm sorry about Jimmy. He can be a
little headstrong sometimes.

PAUL
Nice pun.

Alice realizes, laughs.

ALICE
(giggling)
Oops, sorry.

A beat.

PAUL
I know. I don't blame him.

A beat.

ALICE
I'm glad you're okay.

A beat.

PAUL
I meant what I said back there, you
know.

ALICE

I know, Paul, I-

(a beat, she looks at him)

I believe you. And I- I care- a lot, about you. But I think... I think maybe it'd be best if we didn't see each other for awhile.

A beat.

PAUL

Why?

ALICE

This is all very confusing to me, and I think I just need a little time alone... to reflect.

PAUL

Please... please don't treat me like this.

ALICE

Like what?

PAUL

Like you always do. Like I'm a child. I get- I get that you don't want to see me anymore. Can't you just be honest with me, just once?

ALICE

I do want to see you... just not... romantically.

PAUL

You're pulling a "let's just be friends" on me?

ALICE

Well, I'm sorry if I like being in your company, but- c'mon, Paul. You know this is never going to work. Our age- it's just too far apart.

PAUL

Do you actually believe that? Or are you just using it as an excuse to abandon me?

ALICE

Paul, don't act like a baby-

PAUL

Just leave me alone. Get out of here. I don't need another fucking mom. The one I have already ignores me enough.

He turns around.

Alice, shocked, gets up.

ALICE

(awkwardly)

I'll- I'll call you.

Paul keeps his back to her, doesn't say a word.

Alice sighs, turns around and walks for the exit. Before she reaches it she looks back one last time, then pushes through the doors into the waiting room.

CLOSE ON:

Paul, his head hung, the same blank expression he wore at the film's start now returned.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - DUSK

Paul returns home, swaggering drunkenly. He plops a PAPER BAG down on his bedside table, a LIQUOR BOTTLE cap peeking out of the top.

He fishes a PACK OF CIGARETTES out of his jacket pocket then heads for the fire escape.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Paul climbs out of his window. When he stands up he notices Jimmy is already out there, watching the sun set.

Paul zips up his coat- its windy and cold. Jimmy's wearing a long winter coat as well.

PAUL

Um... hey.

Jimmy turns.

JIMMY

Oh. Hey.

(a beat)

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)
(re: wound)
How's your head?

PAUL
Fine. Just needed a few stiches.

JIMMY
How many?

PAUL
Four.

JIMMY
Damn.

Paul opens the cigarette PACK, pulls one out. He offers one to Jimmy, who shakes his hand "no".

JIMMY (CONT'D)
No thanks.

Paul lights up, joins Jimmy in watching the sun set.

A long beat.

PAUL
So. Alice broke up with me.

A beat.

JIMMY
Coulda told you.

PAUL
I just thought she was different,
you know? I thought she got it.

JIMMY
Nope. She's just like the rest of
them. Fuck-ing ca-raze-ee. Our best
scientists could spend their entire
careers picking apart the female
brain and they'd never fucking
figure it out.

A beat.

PAUL
I'm sorry for what I did.

JIMMY
Nah, nah, nah, man, it's cool. It's
me. I shouldn't have hit you. I'm
sorry.

PAUL
I deserved it.

JIMMY
No you didn't. You were in love
with her. She fucked us both, man.

PAUL
Yeah, but- you're my neighbor.

JIMMY
It's fine, man. Just stay the fuck
away from my daughter.

He gives Paul a cold stare, then climbs back into his own
apartment.

Paul flicks his CIGARETTE into the abyss.

EXT. WAVERLY & W 11 ST - NIGHT

Paul, wearing gloves and breathing steam, stumbles down a
dark intersection of the West Village, a BOTTLE of Jameson in
his hand. He sings the Smashing Pumpkins' "Tonight, Tonight."

PAUL
*Tonight, tonight! We'll crucify the
insincere, tonight, toooonight!
We'll make things right, we'll find
it all- no wait, that's not right.*

The MUGGER, an ugly, shady-looking white guy in a hoodie
emerges from the shadows and steps right in front of Paul's
path. He pulls out a KNIFE and points it at Paul.

MUGGER
Wallet, now, asshole.

Paul stares at him for a moment, completely amazed, then
breaks into laughter.

PAUL
(laughing)
Oh you have got to be fucking
kidding...

MUGGER
Shut the fuck up!! Give me the
fucking money, now!!

PAUL
You're real?!!
(laughs)
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh, this is great, this is fucking perfect! It all makes sense-

MUGGER

I'm not fooling around, man...

PAUL

This is some real fucking karma right here... no wait, irony?

The mugger pushes his blade against Paul's neck, his face a rictus of fury now. Paul drops his BOTTLE, grabs the mugger's arms, tries to hold him back.

MUGGER

(re: knife)

Do you fucking see this?! I will fucking cut you!!

Paul's no longer laughing. His eyes are dark now... frightening.

PAUL

You really shouldn't have done that.

He KNEES THE MUGGER IN THE BALLS, doubling the man over.

Then PUNCHES him fiercely across the face; the mugger staggers back.

Paul goes in for another punch, but the mugger SLASHES OUT WITH HIS KNIFE, barely missing Paul's chest!

Paul backs up, the mugger snarls and comes at him with the KNIFE!

Paul grabs the mugger's arm just as the KNIFE'S about to pierce his neck.

The mugger loses his balance, TRIPS over Paul's legs-

The two come crashing down and-

THUNK!! The KNIFE goes right into the mugger's HEART.

Paul, his hands around the mugger's which is around the KNIFE, stares in utter shock as, within seconds, the mugger slips away and DIES, GURGLING UP BLOOD.

Paul pales, stares at the dead man.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh shit.
(a beat)
Oh shit.

He sits up, still staring. Snaps out of it a little, looks around-

There's no one else on the sidewalk.

Paul gets up.

He looks at his gloved hands- they're covered in blood.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Okay... Okay...

He remembers something.

PAUL (CONT'D)

The knife! Take the knife!

He kneels back down beside the mugger's corpse, puts both hands around the KNIFE's hilt. He shuts his eyes, and with one forceful pull, wrenches the knife free.

He winces at the SCLRCH!! sound it makes, but misses the BLOOD that SQUIRTS out of the KNIFE wound.

Finally, he opens his eyes, looks at the KNIFE, then pockets it, gets up, and walks quickly down W 11 St.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER PARK - DAWN

Paul takes one last look at the KNIFE, then chucks it far into the Hudson River where it disappears with a resounding PLOP!

He looks around to see if there are any witnesses- there's someone walking their dog, but very far away down the sidewalk, going the opposite direction.

Paul notices the blood on his gloves, and hastily takes them off. He shoves them in his jacket pocket and takes out another BOTTLE of Jameson, which he takes a long, hard swig from, before walking off.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - DAWN

Alice lies awake on her side in her bed. She's dressed in a nice, silk nightgown, but looks like she hasn't slept a wink.

In fact, from the redness in her eyes and the streaks on her cheeks it looks as if she's been up all night crying.

Her phone RINGS.

She leans over and picks it up.

ALICE

Hello?

DOORMAN (V.O.)

(on the phone)

Miss Olivieri? There's a young man
down here to see you- Paul Pine?

Alice glances at her bedside clock- it's 6:05 A.M.

ALICE

Um... yeah. Yeah you can send him
up, thanks.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Alice opens her door to find a very intense-looking Paul.

ALICE

Paul? Oh my god, are you okay? You
look awful. Come inside.

Paul enters, Alice shuts the door, sniffs him as he passes
her.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Have you been drinking?

PAUL

No.

ALICE

Look, I'm... I'm really sorry about
yesterday. It's been eating me up
all night. That wasn't the right
way to leave things, not after what
happened with Jimmy. You didn't
deserve that and-

Paul's not listening. He's just staring.

PAUL

Say it.

ALICE
 (caught off-guard)
 What?

PAUL
 I want to hear you say it.

ALICE
 Say what?

PAUL
 You know what.

ALICE
 Paul, I-

He advances, getting in her space- she's frightened by this new Paul, backs away.

PAUL
 Why are you so afraid?

ALICE
 I'm not afraid.

But she's backing up- up against the wall. This makes her panicky- she remembers what happened the day before with Jimmy.

PAUL
 Then why won't you say it?

ALICE
 Say what?!! I don't know what you want me to say!

PAUL
 You know!!! You know! Just say it.

Alice tries to get away-

ALICE
 Okay, you know what, this was a bad idea-

But Paul SLAMS his hand into the wall beside her head.

PAUL
 SAY IT!!!!

Alice almost shrieks, recoils, terrified.

ALICE
 I...

She looks up at Paul with watery eyes.

ALICE (CONT'D)
 (whisper)
 I love you.

She hears her own words- believes them.

ALICE (CONT'D)
 I love you.

Paul kisses her- hard. And Alice doesn't resist.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Paul and Alice fall on her bed kissing, half-naked, tearing each other's clothes off.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - LATER

Alice and Paul lie on their backs, side by side, naked. Both stare at the ceiling with similar, blank expressions. Alice seems to be in shock. Paul smokes a CIGARETTE haphazardly.

PAUL
 You know...
 (takes a drag)
 You should write a story about all
 of this.

ALICE
 About what?

PAUL
 About me. And Jimmy. About your
 life.

He looks at her, smiles. She doesn't look back.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 I'd read it.

ALICE
 That's a good idea, but... I don't
 know... I'm not good enough. If I
 was good enough I would be a writer
 right now, and not a fucking real
 estate agent. No... if I tried to
 write that I bet it'd just turn out
 like some second-rate romance
 novel.

Paul keeps staring at her.

PAUL
You should believe in yourself
more.

Alice smiles at him, takes the CIGARETTE. Takes a drag.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I believe in you.

Alice gives him a peck on the lips.

ALICE
That's sweet.

A beat.

PAUL
So what do we do now?

Alice stubs the CIGARETTE out in a bedside ash tray.

ALICE
I don't know.
(a beat)
We'll figure something out.

She kisses him.

CUT TO:

MUSICAL MONTAGE:

EXT. WAVERLY & W 11 ST - DAY

Paramedics lift a black BODY BAG off the pavement and load it onto a gurney. They leave behind a chalked outline of the mugger's body, a sizeable pool of mostly-dry blood surrounding it.

The area's a full crime scene- several squad cars are parked nearby, their lights flashing.

The paramedics hoist the gurney into the ambulance as plainclothes detectives question a small gaggle of witnesses, who of course, will have no useful information to give them.

Across the street, behind a crowd gate protected by several officers, is Paul, watching the scene with cold eyes. He's just another face in the crowd of onlookers- no one notices him, and after a moment he turns, and walks off.

I/E. JIMMY'S CAR / PLAYGROUND - DAY

Jimmy, dressed in dark sunglasses and looking very shady, sits behind the wheel of his car, sipping coffee.

JIMMY'S POV:

Across the street, Karen pushes Sophie in a swing. Both are smiling broadly and laughing- pure happiness.

Jimmy continues to stare, sips more coffee.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Paul and Lou, buddies now, unload boxes from a truck and stack them by the back entrance to the coffee shop. As they work they pass a CIGARETTE back and forth. When the work is done, Lou laughs and gives Paul a hearty slap on the back.

INT. ALICE'S AGENCY - DAY

Alice sits in front of her oily-looking BOSS, a frown across her face. They're in his office, which is tacky to say the least. The boss has just finished a sentence when Alice gets up, grabs her PURSE.

ALICE

You know what? I fucking quit.

She storms out of the office.

EXT. OUTSIDE PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Paul exits his building, carrying two cardboard BOXES, which he puts in the trunk of his parents' car. His mom gives him a big hug, and Paul can't help but smile a little.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING- 5TH FLOOR LANDING - LATER

Paul knocks on Jimmy's door.

Jimmy answers, is a little surprised to see Paul.

Mr. Pine walks out of Paul's with a BOX in tow, gives Jimmy a little wave, then heads off for the stairs.

Jimmy looks down- Paul's outstretched his hand.

After a beat Jimmy takes it and gives it a firm handshake. The two men smile at each other weakly. Paul turns and heads back in his apartment to grab another BOX.

MONTAGE ENDS

EXT. GREENWOOD CEMETERY - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT

CUT TO:

Paul climbs up a hill lined with tombstones.

He stops at one and lays a handful of ROSES in front of it.

CLOSE-UP ON TOMBSTONE:

FIONA CONNOLLY, MAY 22, 1987 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

Paul takes a seat beside it on the grass.

He sits in silence for awhile, staring at the ground.

PAUL

I don't really know why I'm doing this. I know if you could see me, you'd tell me I was being cheesy.

(chuckles)

I guess most people do this because they believe in god, and heaven, and they think their loved ones are looking down on them, protecting them. But I don't. I'm doing this... because it's cathartic. Because I have no one to talk to about all this. Not even Alice.

(beat)

I killed someone. Still can't really believe it. All my life I imagined what it would be like to do that... to take another life... how it would feel. I thought I would feel different... hollow or something. But I don't. I don't feel any different. Because I know. I know you can't hear any of this. You're not here. You're dead. There is nothing out there. All there is, is survival.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

I loved you, I loved you so much,
and a part of me will always love
you, but I can't, I can't cling to
it, Fi, I just can't do it. I don't
know what you'd want; looking back
on it I don't know if I ever really
knew what you wanted to begin with.
But I know what I want. I want to
live.

He gets up.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I'll miss you Fiona. I love you.

WS of graveyard as Paul walks off.

ASHER (V.O.)

No. No, really man, it's cool, I
totally understand.

INT. ASHER'S ROOM - EVENING

Asher, sits on his bed, packing a BONG with MARIJUANA. The TV
is on, MUTED.

Asher's got a CELL PHONE pressed between his shoulder and
ear.

PAUL (V.O.)

(on the phone)

I just don't want you to think I
was ignoring you or anything.

ASHER

I know you weren't-

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. PAUL'S NEW APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Paul's new apartment- a smaller, yet sleeker Brooklyn boxed
style. He's sitting in the living room, on the couch, phone
in hand. The apartment's already dressed- posters on the
walls, furniture, everything. Much neater and nicer than the
West Village spot.

PAUL

I was just in a really bad place
last month. I just needed some time
to reflect, you know?

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

But I'm good now, I'm over it-
moving on.

(chuckles)

ASHER

That's great, man, really. I was
pretty worried about you for awhile
there.

PAUL

And my new apartment's so much
better than the West Village one.
Those places- they're just
tenements, you know? Like ten
smelly eastern Europeans used to
live in one a hundred years ago.

Asher laughs, finishes packing his BONG.

PAUL (CONT'D)

So you're really just paying for
the neighborhood. Which isn't how I
like to roll, I want to pay for
what I'm actually getting. And the
West Village is... a little much
for me, I think.

Asher lights the BONG with a LIGHTER, takes a hit.

ASHER

(exhaling)

Well I should stop by sometime,
check it out.

(coughs)

What are you doing today?

PAUL

Oh, sorry, man. I already made
plans with my girlfriend.

ASHER

Oh yeah, what's her name?

PAUL

Alice.

ASHER

Yeah, you're going to have let me
meet her sometime.

PAUL

Yeah...

A beat.

ASHER

Well, that's cool. But we should hang out soon. *Crank 2* came out this week. We should get high and see it or something, I don't know.

Paul looks up as Alice enters the apartment. He smiles, gives her a little wave.

She sits down beside him on the couch and gives him a peck on the cheek.

PAUL

Yeah, that'd be great. I gotta go, man- but I'll call you later.

ASHER

Alright, man, sounds good. Catch you later.

Paul hangs up. Alice is taking off her coat and sweater, throwing them beside her on the couch.

ALICE

Who was that?

PAUL

Hm? Oh, just my friend Asher.

ALICE

I ever going to meet him?

PAUL

I dunno. He might shit his pants if he saw you.

Alice laughs.

ALICE

So I came all the way from the city to your dingy little outer borough, jus to spend the night. You got big plans?

PAUL

I was actually thinking small tonight.

ALICE

Oh yeah?

PAUL

Yeah. A little TV, a little
takeout, a little wine. Then
fucking all night.

ALICE

I like the way you think.
(a beat)
Hey, do you have any cigarettes?

Paul picks up a REMOTE, turns on the TV. "Jeopardy" is on.

PAUL

Yeah, I bought a carton a while
back. There should be one pack
left, it's in my dresser.

Alice kisses him on the forehead, goes into the bedroom.

INT. PAUL'S NEW APARTMENT- BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alice goes over to Paul's dresser, opens the top drawer. It's
a mess, random clothes and such strewn about.

She frowns, pushes them aside. Finds the carton and next to
it- THE BLOODY GLOVES.

Curious, she picks them up, takes a closer look.

CU OF GLOVES IN ALICE'S HANDS:

There's clear blood stains on the brown leather surface.

Alice pales. The sounds of "Jeopardy" echo into the bedroom.

Alice looks into the bedroom- Paul's laugh can be heard.

She looks back at the GLOVES, then hastily stuffs them back
into the drawer. She grabs the last PACK of cigarettes and
hurries out of the room.

INT. PAUL'S APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul watches "Jeopardy."

Alice reenters, stands in the doorway watching him, afraid.

PAUL

Who is Robespierre.

JEOPARDY CONTESTANT (O.S.)
(on TV)
Who is Danton?

Alice takes a seat beside Paul, her body stiff.

ALEX TREBEK
I'm afraid the correct answer was,
"Who is Robespierre."

PAUL
Man, this is like, the weakest
Jeopardy crowd ever. French
Revolution is mad easy.

He leans back, lies down, his head resting in Alice's head.

As "Jeopardy" begins to dominate the soundtrack, Alice
methodically strokes Paul's hair, staring forward blankly,
completely numb.

CUT TO:

BLACK.

THE END