

Duplex

By

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First Draft

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(CONTINUED)

**Ext. Prospect Park
- Park Slope, Brooklyn - Afternoon**

It's a blustery Sunday in October. Bundled-up children GIGGLE and SQUEAL in a small enclosed playground. Across a stone chess board, a old Jewish man CACKLES at a black teen contemplating his next move. Dogs WRESTLE HAPPILY as their owners flirt shamelessly.

We follow a woman with a baby carriage across the street, finally settling on:

Ext. Building - 120 Prospect Park West - Continuous

A magnificent, if weathered, Victorian brownstone rowhouse.

Int. Apartment - Kitchen - Continuous

It's smallish, but Good Lord: Viking stove, Subzero refrigerator, cabinets everywhere, and..

REAL ESTATE AGENT

You've got a little butler's pantry here.

WOMAN

(tiny squeal)

A butler's pantry!

MAN

Jeeves will be delighted.

The agent is BERNARD, 40ish, a big guy in a bigger sweater. It's not obvious that he's gay.

The woman is NANCY, a bubbling fount of enthusiasms, whose dream is apparently coming true right now.

She giddily clutches the arm of STUART, a man whose energies are more of the inwardly directed, churning variety. House hunting was not his idea, but he seems the have accepted that much of his life from here on out won't be his idea.

Int. Apartment - Parlor - Continuous

One wall is filled with a Victorian hutch; on another is a oak fireplace with antique mirror above the mantle. There is ornate, carved wood everywhere. It's real estate porn.

Bernard is low-key, letting the place sell itself.

BERNARD
(gesturing around vaguely)
Built-ins, built-ins, built-ins... all the original moldings.

NANCY
(huskily, to Stuart)
Original moldings.

STUART
How old is this place anyway?

BERNARD
I'd have to check. 1881 sounds right.

STUART
(not a good thing)
Old.

BERNARD
It was carved up into separate units in the early eighties.

STUART
(bad and worse things)
Carved up. In the eighties.

NANCY
(twirling around slowly)
This entire house is an antique!

Stuart shoots her a "remember what we discussed" look. Nancy assumes her "buyer's face."

NANCY
Of course, this is the first place we've looked at.

BERNARD
This probably isn't for you, then. I'm sure it's going to be sold by Monday.

Nancy digs her nails very deeply into Stuart's arm, only half for theatrical effect.

B
 ERNARD
(pointing down)
 Peg and groove floors...
(with a wave)
 ...original pressed tin in the hearth of
 the fireplaces.

NANCY
(buyer's face vanishes)
 Fireplace-es?

BERNARD
 There's also one in the bedroom.

NANCY
(cozying up to Stuart)
 Fireplace in the bedroom.

She waggles her eyebrows at him lasciviously. He half-smirks in return. She playfully slaps his shoulder.

Int. Apartment – Library – Continuous

Bernard has moved on.

BERNARD
 Now, this used to be the library...

NANCY
 Stuart's a writer.

BERNARD
(doesn't give a shit)
 Really? What do you write?

STUART
 Captions, mostly.

This was as Bernard expected.

NANCY
 Stuart's writing a novel. Which would
 look great
*(she indicates a wall of
 bookcases with an outsized
 spokesmodel flourish)*
 in these magnificent, built-in antique
 bookcases!

S

TUART

(to Bernard)

I'm really just tossing around ideas at this point.

BERNARD

(ignoring that, he slides the doors of the bookshelf)

Leaded glass doors.

NANCY

(still in spokesmodel mode)

Your books. Behind leaded glass.

STUART

(explaining again)

Mostly it's just paperbacks. Trade paperbacks.

BERNARD

(pointing up)

Curved canvas ceilings... the sellers used this as a formal dining room.

NANCY

(dreamily)

A formal dining room.

STUART

(sighs)

Yeah. It's too bad it's out of our price range.

NANCY

(gesturing)

It is at the top of our price range.

STUART

(gesturing above her)

Over the top.

NANCY

(clasping his hand lovingly)

At the tippy top.

Bernard surreptitiously checks his watch.

BERNARD

Would you like to see the bedroom?

N
ANCY
Of course.

She squeezes Stuart's hand tightly.

Int. Apartment – Hallway – Continuous

Bernard leads them past a strange, ornate, spiral planter and down a narrow, fairly dark hallway. The right wall of the hallway ends three feet from the ceiling; the remainder is filled out with glass bricks (which let in some light from the foyer).

BERNARD
New construction, obviously.

STUART
From the eighties.

BERNARD
I'd knock out the glass bricks and replace it with some period stained glass.

NANCY
Oh, that would be pretty!

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

They walk into the light.

BERNARD
This is the bedroom.

Nancy actually GASPS. Even Stuart looks impressed. Seeing their faces, Bernard steps up his sales pitch.

BERNARD
This was originally the front parlor. Fireplace is tiger-eye maple; if you look closely you'll see that it's actually hundreds of hand-carved pieces fitted perfectly together.

NANCY
(looking closely)
Wow. And they didn't even have Mexicans back then. Hispanics.

B
ERNARD

(annoying chuckle)

It was mostly Irish craftsmen, I believe.

STUART

Irish craftsmen? Huh.

BERNARD

And over here you've got a little alcove, if that's the word, a round outcropping facing the park.

NANCY

A nook!

(turning excitedly to Stuart)

A writer's nook.

Stuart looks at the nook, and out the windows at the park. He smiles genuinely for the first time.

STUART

I could see the writing the novel there.

NANCY

Or it could be a nursery!

Stuart resumes his previous attitude.

Int. Apartment – Library – Moments Later

The three emerge from hallway.

BERNARD

Well, you've got my card if you want to make an offer..

Stuart stops at the spiral planter, and looks at it quizzically.

NANCY (O.C.)

Can you call us if anybody else makes one?

BERNARD (O.C.)

I'm really not supposed to do that, but...

Over the proceeding, we follow Stuart's gaze up the planter. The plants still have price tags on them. The planter spirals up to the top, where there is a rather obvious circular piece of wood that has been painted white to match the ceiling.

STUART

Excuse me, is this a stairway?

Now that he mentions it, it very clearly is a spiral staircase. Bernard doesn't miss a beat.

BERNARD

Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you realized. This is a duplex.

STUART

There's another floor?

BERNARD

It's on the listing sheet I gave you.

NANCY

(looking at listing sheet)

Two floors, for this price? You'd have to mentally ill not to buy two floors for that price!

Nancy, standing right next to Bernard, turns to Stuart with an almost accusatory look. Bernard smiles patronizingly.

STUART

You two make a persuasive sales pitch, but

(pointing up)

why's it sealed off? Were there a slew of murders up there? You have to tell us if there were.

BERNARD

(chuckles)

Oh, no, it's just, there's a sweet old lady who lives up there..

STUART

(there's the rub)

A tenant.

B
ERNARD

Yes, and it is rent-controlled, so... but
she's so sweet and so,
(annoying chuckle)
she's got to be a hundred years old.

STUART
(good-natured sigh)
Well, that's really too bad, because--

NANCY
Can we meet her?

BERNARD
(annoying chuckle)

Int. Building – Foyer – Moments Later

They climb the stairs to the second landing. Nancy is caressing the ornate wood banister.

STUART
Rent-controlled means we can't kick her
out, right?

NANCY
Stuart!

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Continuous

Bernard stops at a door a couple of feet past the end of the stairs.

BERNARD
(that annoying chuckle again)
It's a legitimate question. No, you
can't evict her. She has to decide to
leave, or...

Bernard lets that hang out there.

BERNARD (CONT.)
(as if changing the subject)
Poor thing hasn't been feeling well.

He KNOCKS, loudly.

BERNARD (CONT.)
She's hard of hearing.

The three stand
there for a long beat.

BERNARD (CONT.)

It may take a little while for her to
get to the door.

They all smile at each other. After another longish beat,
we hear a lock being LABORIOUSLY OPENED on the other side.
There is another beat.

BERNARD (CONT.)

(mouthing, low volume)

Arthritis.

We hear a second lock being opened with a LONG GRINDING
CREAK. A moment later, the door opens slowly, JERKING to a
halt at the end of the security chain.

Nancy's eyes widen in expectation; Stuart is curious. Their
expressions flash to shock, then polite suppression of
shock.

Inside the door

Peering behind the chain is MRS. CONNELLY. She's a tiny,
frail lady, in a housecoat that may be as old as she is.
She stares unblinkingly; this, combined with her total lack
of make-up, makes her look more than a little like a
corpse. After a moment, her face flashes in recognition;
she smiles sweetly and speaks with a slight Irish brogue.

MRS. CONNELLY

Bernard!

BERNARD

Good afternoon, Mrs. Connelly! How are
you feeling today?

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, don't let me burden you with my
troubles...

(then)

I don't feel good, Bernard.

On Bernard

As he speaks, we see Nancy peeking over his shoulder,
trying to see into the apartment.

B
ERNARD

I'm sorry to hear that, Mrs. Connelly.
I've brought by a young couple, who
might want to buy the apartment.

Bernard steps back to reveal Nancy on tip-toe; she drops
down quickly and interlocks arms with Stuart.

NANCY

Good afternoon, Mrs. Connelly! I'm
Nancy, and this is my husband, Stuart.

STUART

Hello.

MRS. CONNELLY

I liked the boy who lived downstairs
before. He brought me my medicines
sometimes.

NANCY

Well, if you ever need anything like
that, you just give us a call.

STUART

(smiling thinly)

If we buy the apartment.

NANCY

Do you mind if we look around?

Nancy's POV

As Mrs. Connelly speaks, the camera moves off her face and
above her head. Nancy sees only a sliver of the apartment:
another magnificent fireplace, an alcove matching their
bedroom. The place is also filled with dozens of Irish
Catholic tchotchkes: matching ceramic bleeding-heart Jesus
and Mary above the mantel, a framed print of Norman
Rockwell's portrait of JFK, with a black velvet shroud
draped around the top, etc.

MRS. CONNELLY (OVER PRECEDING)

Oh, it's in a horrible state. Haven't
had the energy to clean up in ages. I
should be ashamed of myself. I can only
imagine what it must smell like.

N
ANCY

*(looking above Mrs.
Connelly's head)*

We'll be in and out in no time.

MRS. CONNELLY

I'm sorry, dear. I'm not feeling up to it.

The door CLOSES on Nancy's a face. We hear the door slowly being LOCKED again. Then, from behind the door:

MRS. CONNELLY (O.C.)

*(long, pathetic coughing,
followed by tiny squeak of
sickly despair.)*

Nancy and Stuart are thinking the same thing. Bernard puts his hands on their shoulders.

BERNARD

Poor thing.

Bernard starts down the stairs; as they follow, Nancy grabs Stuart's hand and squeezes it.

BERNARD

Despite all that she's going through, I understand she's never missed a rent payment.

NANCY

(intrigued)

Rent?

BERNARD

As I said, it's rent-controlled, so it's below market.

STUART

How much below market?

BERNARD

Considerably.

Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous

Bernard leads them toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

N
ANCY

How many are rooms are there up there?

BERNARD

The drawing room, you saw, two bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, and there's a room in the back which I think originally was a children's playroom.

NANCY

(barely contained excitement)

And that's for the price we discussed.

Ext. Building – Stoop – Continuous

Bernard turns to face them on the steps.

BERNARD

That's the asking price. But there may be other bidders. Especially if you wait.

Nancy looks across the street and sees the children playing in the park.

NANCY

We'll take it.

STUART

We'll think about it.

Bernard CHUCKLES ANNOYINGLY.

Ext. Tompkin Square Park in Manhattan – Night

The couple scurry across a busy Manhattan street and into the park. They cradle grande Starbucks cups.

NANCY

I know it's a lot of money. But we make enough.

STUART

Barely.

NANCY

We're only going to make more money. Then we'll have extra to fix some..

(
crinkles nose)
Oooh. Like those glass bricks...

STUART
You know, if we move to Brooklyn, we
won't be able to walk to our favorite
Indian restaurant and pick up extra-
hot-no-foam-lattes on the way home...

They pass a scruffy gentleman in a long coat.

SCRUFFY GENTLEMAN
(not so sotto)
Smoke. Smoke.

STUART
And what if we want to buy drugs?

NANCY
This is our chance to grow up, Stuart.
To make a home. In a nice place.

STUART
I like our apartment.

NANCY
It's a studio! Successful couples don't
live in studio apartments. And you and
I are almost successful. We're on the
cusp. We should start living like it.

STUART
I've never lived on the cusp.

She SMACKS him on the shoulder.

NANCY
If we live in a successful apartment,
we'll grow into it. You are where you
live.

STUART
Brooklyn?

NANCY
Park Slope, Brooklyn.

S
TUART

Do you really want to leave Manhattan?
There's an... energy here you can't get
anywhere else.

CRAZY WOMAN
You're killing the frogs!

The woman swings at Stuart, deliberately KNOCKING his extra hot latte all over the front of his pants.

CRAZY WOMAN (O.C.)
Asshole!

Steam rises from Stuart's crotch.

STUART
Oh, fuck me! Hot Hot!

Stuart pulls anxiously at the pants, trying to air them out. He SIGHS, relieved, then:

STUART
Now cold.

He starts walking.

STUART
Really cold.

He walks briskly off-screen, leaving Nancy standing there.

Int. East Village Apartment – Night

It is one large room, with various "areas" designated by the placement of mismatched pieces of furniture. The "bedroom" sits behind a Chinese scrim.

The couple lies in bed. Stuart is on his back, staring at the ceiling. Nancy peeks under the covers, tentatively.

NANCY
Does it still hurt?

STUART
Uh, yes.

NANCY
Maybe we should go to emergency room.

S
TUART
I'd rather not.

NANCY
Okay.
(a beat)
Can we talk about the house?

STUART
Sure.

NANCY
I want to buy it.

STUART
You know what? We've had a big day. Why
don't we sleep on it?

Stuart turns the lamp off next to him. Streetlight through the barred windows casts a classic prison shadow across the couple. In the distance we hear a SIREN. Then closer:

WOMAN (O.C.)
(BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM)

Then right below their window:

MAN (O.C.)
I'm gonna fuck you up!

The two stare up to the ceiling. He realizes the jig is up. She smiles and cuddles up to him.

Int. nyny Magazine – Art Department – Morning

We PAN across several, large framed nyny magazine covers: A Central Park vista with the coverline, "ROOMS WITH THE VIEW" and subhead, "Lovely to look at – and out of!" ; Sarah Jessica Parker, apparently naked, inside a pile of shoes with the coverline, "SHOE SLUTS" and subhead, "The Imeldas of Manhattan"; Jerry Seinfeld in a nursery, rocking a baby, with the coverline, "ROCK-A-BYE, STAR BABY!" and subhead, "22 Celebrity Nurseries."

We PULL OUT from this cover to reveal Nancy seated below it, at a drafting table primarily occupied by a large portrait monitor. Nancy is on the phone.

N
 ANCY

(practically squealing)

Mom, we bought a house! It's two stories in this 1880 brownstone... Yes, technically it is a condo, but it's huge, and it's right on the park... No, Prospect Park... It's not regular Brooklyn, though, Mom. It's Park Slope. A lot of up-and-coming people live there... Well, no we can't afford it on Stuart's salary, but we do have my salary, too...

(the Mom sigh)

If I have a baby, I'll freelance... I'll get a nanny...

Nancy puts her hand over the receiver to compose herself.

NANCY (CONT.)

It is too late to back out, Mom. We're closing tonight... See, this, right here, is exactly why I didn't tell you earlier...

Something catches Nancy's eye and she looks up. It's MIKEY, her boss. He's tall and fit-looking in his tight-fitting, short-sleeved black turtleneck; his head is completely shaved bald and has been decorated with a henna tattoo that simulates a 50's style Big Boy hair-do. He looks annoyed.

NANCY

Gotta go, Mom.
(hangs up, smiles)
 Yes, Mikey?

MIKEY

Chairs?

Nancy points to the monitor. On it is a layout of fancy dining room chairs, each with a small inset of some New York celebrity next to it. The headline is, "HOT SEATS."

NANCY

Almost done.

MIKEY

Thank you.

Nancy scrunches her face at him as he walks away. After a beat, she clicks something on her screen. The chair layout disappears and a DVD-ROM program boots up.

On screen, a CGI house spins around; the walls fall away so we can see how everything is arranged inside. The opening title flies up: DECORATOR 3D. Nancy CLICKS again and the screen changes to a digital rendition of their parlor.

Nancy holds a snapshot up next to the screen and smiles.

On screen, a FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN walks into the room.

FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN
Let's decorate!

NANCY
Let's.

Int. Balls Magazine – Hallway – Morning

Stuart walks with his friend and co-worker KEVIN past several BALLS covers. Each features a heavily cleavaged babe with a piece of sports equipment, and headlines like "RACK 'EM UP!" (she holds the pool rack over her crotch) "SHE SHOOTS, HE SCORES!" (She got a big rifle, and wears only a orange hunter's vest.) Stuart (who now carries a stainless steel, no spill coffee cup) is in full churn; it's clear Kevin takes life considerably less seriously.

STUART
The bank just gave us the money. I wouldn't trust me with that much money. A cursor look at our financials would have revealed we can't afford this..

KEVIN
Why don't you just ask Brownie for a raise? Charlie says all you have to do is go down on her.

STUART
Charlie's gay.

KEVIN
So how hard can it be?

The two walk into:

**Int. Brownie's
Office - Continuous**

It's a huge wood-paneled office, very boyish. There's a moose head on the wall with a cigar sticking out of its mouth. Several fairly scared looking men sit in a semi-circle of chairs facing a huge oak desk bearing BROWNIE, the magazine's British editrix. She's somewhere north of forty and plenty imperious. (She would be pretty but for an enormous mole above her left eye) Seated next to her, slightly behind her desk with her, is CHARLIE, a tiny prematurely balding man.

Stuart and Kevin take the final two seats. There's a long beat of silence before Brownie chooses to speak.

BROWNIE

It's 10:12, time for our ten o' clock story meeting. All right, boys, in my face.

The "boys" stare at her, terrified. A DESPERATE MIDDLE-AGED JUNIOR EDITOR sorts anxiously through a manila folder of clippings from papers and other magazine.

DESPERATE MIDDLE-AGED JUNIOR EDITOR

Drew Barrymore's got a new --

BROWNIE

(dismissive wave)

Five minutes ago.

The desperate middle-aged editor shrinks with a shudder. Kevin turns to Stuart, *entre nous*.

KEVIN

Five minutes ago is a little five minutes ago.

CHARLIE

Kevin, you had a pitch?

KEVIN

Yeah, I thought we could send me on a Thai sex vacation.

CHARLIE

We already have Shawn Wayans doing that.

K
EVIN

Sorry. I don't pay attention.

STUART

Um, this is the fortieth anniversary of Ernest Hemingway's death and I thought—

Brownie's look of perplexed boredom stops him cold.

STUART (CONT.)

I know we don't do writers, but, Hemingway, he's, he was a big game hunter, bullfighter, fishing. Real
(can hardly say it)

"Ball-sy" stuff. He beat up people a lot.

CHARLIE

(finger to lips)

If I recall, Papa did blow his brains out. Maybe we could tie it into that "So you wanna blow your brains out" photo spread we talked about.

BROWNIE

Do that. All right? What's this month's sex tip?

The boys look even more terrified.

BROWNIE

(must-I-do-everything sigh)

Have we done finger up the ass?

CHARLIE

We did guy puts his finger up the girl's ass in May.

BROWNIE

All right, then. Let's do girl's finger up the gentleman's ass. Why don't you take that, Stewey?

STUART

That's not really my wheelhouse...

B
ROWNIE

You're married, aren't you? I assume you have sex. It's not like I'm asking Kevvy there go out and find a woman who's willing to fuck him. Three hundred words, first person, Monday morning.

Stuart forces a shit-eating smile.

Ext. Seventh Avenue street – Park Slope – Evening

It's early November, and cold. A cab pulls up in front of a turn-of-the-century office building, and Nancy and Stuart exit. Stuart gestures to the cab.

STUART
Eighteen dollars!

Nancy smiles at Stuart and grabs his hand, leading him up the steps.

Int. Lawyer's Office – A Little Later

Nancy, excited, and Stuart, anxious, sit on one side of a conference table flanked by Bernard and an ESCROW AGENT. The SELLERS sit across from them, beaming, with their LAWYER. Nancy and Stuart are signing thousands of documents, and Stuart is writing several checks.

STUART
Two-hundred and sixty-six dollars and sixty seven cents? What's this for?

ESCROW AGENT
That's the interest for the last three days of the month. Your mortgage starts on the first.

STUART
They don't miss a thing. Wait, there's only two more days before the first.

BERNARD
There's today and the weekend.

STUART
Today's almost over.

N

ANCY

(apologizing for Stuart)

We've never bought anything big before.

BERNARD

Okay, and nine-hundred for first month's maintenance...

STUART

Nine-hundred? I thought it was six.

SELLING WIFE

The building voted to raise it last week. Just until heating oil prices go down.

STUART

Meaning never. And why wasn't I told-

NANCY

They told me, honey. I'm sorry, I forgot to tell you, you know, with all the other details.

STUART

Nine-hundred dollars.

SELLING WIFE

(jumping in)

We'll pay the first month.

THEIR LAWYER

You don't have to do that.

SELLING HUSBAND

(eager)

But we will if it's going to be a problem.

Nancy smiles at them, thinking "what a lovely gesture."
Stuart stares at them, thinking, "what's going on here?"

Obligatory Moving Montage**Ext. Building - 120 Prospect Park - Sunday Morning**

A "NICE JEWISH BOYS" moving van is double-parked in the street. Stuart, with coffee and bagel, "supervises" the African-American movers.

(CONTINUED)

**Int. Apartment –
Parlor – Continuous**

A mover places a large, heavy box on the floor. Nancy examines it and calls him back. She shows him that the box is labeled not just PARLOR but also "N.E. CORNER." He picks it up and starts for one corner; she redirects him to another.

Ext. Building – Continuous

Stuart is reading the New York Times Book Review (It features a caricature of Hemingway with the headline, "The Hemingway-Plath Letters."). Two movers pass him with a large TV. After a moment, Stuart looks up from the Book Review and sees the two "movers" and making off down the sidewalk with the TV. Before he can do anything, two of the real movers run after the would-be thieves.

End of Obligatory Moving Montage

Int. Building – Foyer – Late Afternoon

Stuart and Nancy stand outside the ornate double doors; Nancy stops Stuart from opening the doors and pulls a small object out of her pocket.

NANCY
I got you this.

STUART
Oh, it's one of those, uh...

NANCY
(practiced)
Meh-ZOOZ-ah. "And thou shall write the word of the Lord upon the door posts of thine house, that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children." Look, it's got a Velcro™ backing.

Nancy sticks the mezuzah next to the doorframe. She smiles at Stuart suggestively.

NANCY
Now we have a threshold.

Stuart gets the hint and puts out his arms. She GIGGLES and jumps into them. He awkwardly fiddles with the door, and half-staggers into

Int. Apartment – Library – Continuous

He walks two steps and lets her down. She surveys the apartment, thoughtfully. There are boxes everywhere, of course, but what really sticks out is the furniture: a mixture of Ikea and kitschy fifties and sixties stuff.

NANCY

That's what I thought. This furniture has all got to go.

STUART

Yeah, well, it's sort of shame we just spent a thousand dollars moving it here, then.

Nancy cuddles up to him.

NANCY

You can get me a couch for Christmas.

Before he can respond, she grabs his hand and pulls him past the spiral staircase and into the interior hallway.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Moments Later

She leads him in. Golden afternoon light pours into the room. Nancy's eyes tear up. She grabs Stuart and pulls him onto the bed on top of her. He's interested. They kiss.

NANCY

(huskily)

Let's make a baby.

He rolls off her with a small EEP. They both stare at the ceiling for a LONG BEAT.

STUART

Is that a crack in the ceiling?

NANCY

We agreed we would have a baby in two years. It could take me a year to get pregnant.

S
TUART

We agreed we would start trying to have a baby in two years.

NANCY

So you don't want to have sex for the next two years?

STUART

Not baby sex. Besides, we don't have room in this apartment for a baby.

NANCY

(points upward)

We will, though. I mean, God forbid.

(a beat)

How old do you think Mrs. Connelly is?

(another beat)

We should go say hello.

STUART

Yeah, okay.

Stuart rolls off the bed and heads for the hallway. Nancy calls to him from the bed.

NANCY

Not dressed like that!

Int. Apartment – Parlor – About an Hour Later

Stuart, in slacks, pullover sweater and tie, looks as uncomfortable as a twelve-year-old going to visit his grandmother. Nancy, in a conservative sweater set and wool skirt, licks her fingers and smoothes down Stuart hair.

NANCY

We should bring something.

STUART

We're the ones moving in.

NANCY

To be nice.

Stuart turns to the mantle, which has several gift bottles of wine on it. He considers and decides.

S
TUART

Merlot.

He reaches for a bottle. Nancy reaches past him and takes a different one.

NANCY
This one's got a pretty ribbon.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Moments Later

Nancy KNOCKS LOUDLY on the Mrs. Connelly's door. Stuart examines the bottle of wine.

STUART
This is expensive.

After a couple of seconds, Nancy knocks EVEN MORE LOUDLY.

STUART
This is a really nice bottle of wine.
Maybe I should—

Stuart turns to go downstairs; Nancy grabs him. We hear the locks all OPEN, as laboriously as before. The door CREAKS open to the end of the chain, and we again see Mrs. Connelly's suspicious eye. Only now it's surrounded by bright blue eye shadow.

NANCY
(a little loudly)
Mrs. Connelly? It's Nancy and Stuart,
we just moved downstairs?

MRS. CONNELLY'S EYE (MOUTH O.C.)
Ohhhh. Oh!

She SLAMS the door. We hear the chain being UNHOOKED. She opens the door again. Mrs. Connelly, wearing make-up usually reserved for the wake, stands there in a red satin cheongsam (the mandarin slip dress that was briefly popular 40 years ago) covered with a tiny, pink sweater jacket.

MRS. CONNELLY
Come in! Come in!

Mrs. Connelly patters in. Nancy follows eagerly, and quickly scans the apartment. The magnificent parlor is somewhat overwhelmed by old lady clutter: praying hands sculpture close to the door; assorted Lladro figurines, mostly from the angel series. The parlor is dominated by a huge brass-plated birdcage containing a giant macaw. Abutting it is a ratty easy chair next to an even rattier couch, all oriented toward an old TV (with knobs) on a brass-plated rolling cart.

NANCY

You have a lovely apartment, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, please call me Josie.

STUART

(Offering wine)

We got you this, Josie. Ah. Housewarming.

MRS. CONNELLY

(accepting bottle)

Oh, I don't drink, dear. It's a sin.

STUART

(that's an interesting fact)

Irish Catholics don't drink.

Nancy elbows him.

MRS. CONNELLY

Sit down, sit down.

Mrs. Connelly gently pushes Nancy and Stuart over to the sitting area. She directs Stuart to the easy chair.

MRS. CONNELLY

You sit in my chair.

Stuart looks down in the seat of the chair. It has a very distinct, slightly greasy, impression in it.

MRS. CONNELLY

(re: wine)

Let me open this for you.

Mrs. Connelly patters away. We notice for the first time that the back of her dress is completely worn away, revealing saggy gray old lady underpants.

Mrs. Connelly walks to a kitchenette (created circa 1980) and picks up a bartender's corkscrew off the counter. With one swift motion, she UNCORKS the bottle. She takes a small glass off a shelf and returns. She hands Stuart the glass, which we now see is an old Peter Potamous jelly jar, and pours him approximately an inch of wine. She puts the bottle down without offering any to Nancy.

MRS. CONNELLY

(remembering something)

Oh.

She patters away, and starts RUMMAGING around the kitchen. Nancy, on the couch, moves to the far edge and tries to peek down the hallway. Stuart turns toward the macaw.

It's a pretty sad specimen: hunched over, lots of feathers missing. Suddenly it LUNGES toward camera. It's beak comes through the bars on the cage, missing Stuart's eyeball by a 32nd of an inch. Stuart lurches back, and settle himself with a swallow of wine. He eases back into the chair. He feels something funny. He lifts up his arm adjacent to the cage and sees the armrest is speckled with white and green clumps.

MRS. CONNELLY

Here we go.

Mrs. Connelly places a black lacquer tray on the brass-plated glass coffee table. The tray features a Polynesian dancer, whose toplessness has been strategically covered by a plastic bowl full of Bugles™. Next to the corn snacks is a container of French Onion Dip, half empty with numerous Bugle strafings through it.

STUART

Wow, Bugles™. I thought they stopped making those.

Mrs. Connelly holds a Bugle™ up to the cage. The bird gently takes it by the tip, and rears its head back.

BIRD

(BUGLE-LIKE TOOTLE)

S
TUART

That's a great parrot you have there.

MRS. CONNELLY
He's a macaw, dear. I've had Mr. Fawkes
for sixty years now. I couldn't live
without him.

Nancy, whose eye has been wandering around the apartment,
snaps to attention.

NANCY
How are you feeling, Josie?

MRS. CONNELLY
Why do you ask, dear?

NANCY
Because the last time we were here, you
were quite ill.

MRS. CONNELLY
(dismissive laugh)
Oh, I had a bit of a cold. I'm in fine
fettle now, please God. But tell me all
about yourselves. Stuart, where do you
work?

STUART
For now, I'm an editor at a men's
magazine..

MRS. CONNELLY
Oh, Mr. Connelly hid his magazines
everywhere.
(To Nancy)
Behind the toilet tank! He was a dirty
man.

NANCY
Stuart's hoping to be novelist. He's
going to be a novelist.

MRS. CONNELLY
I never thought of that as a job, but I
suppose it is, isn't it?

(
noticing Stuart's glass is
almost empty)
Oh, let me fill that for you.
(mostly to Nancy)
Mr. Connelly had the taste, too. The
drink took him from me in 1952. We had
been married thirty years.

Nancy and Stuart are doing the math in their heads. Mrs.
Connelly sits down on the couch, between Stuart and Nancy.

NANCY
You must have seen such amazing things,
I mean going all the way back to...

MRS. CONNELLY
Oh, I've mostly been sitting in my
apartment, dear.

NANCY
So what brought you here, to the
states, was it the famine?

MRS. CONNELLY
(chuckles good-naturedly)
I'm not that old. That was a hundred
and fifty years ago, dear.

STUART
(lamely jocular)
A whole lot of potatoes under the
bridge since then.

MRS. CONNELLY
More than a million people died. My
grandfather among them.

NANCY
Oh, I'm sorry.

MRS. CONNELLY
I know, dear.

Stuart reaches for his wine glass. We hear a WATERY PLOP.
Stuart looks over and sees Mr. Fawkes' tail feathers
hanging over his glass. He pulls his hand away uneasily.

M

RS. CONNELLY

In a way he was lucky. He wasn't around
for the Great Consumption...

Stuart glances at a clock built into a Pietà reproduction.
It reads 7:15 p.m. The face MATCH DISSOLVES to 8:37.

MRS. CONNELLY (O.C.)

We lost Uncle Dennis and little Nula in
the influenza outbreak of 1918...

The clockface MATCH DISSOLVES to 10:24.

Mrs. Connelly sits between a stupefied Stuart and Nancy.

MRS. CONNELLY

I did have one sister, Katie. But she
died horribly.

NANCY

I am so sorry.

MRS. CONNELLY

Ah, well, it's the Irish way.

(noticing)

Look, I've kept you up. I'm sorry; I
didn't notice the time. Let me show you
out.

Mrs. Connelly stands to lead them out. As Stuart rises, Mr.
Fawke's dives at him, tearing a hunk out of his sweater.

NANCY

You know, Josie, I would love a tour of
your apartment, if it's not too much
trouble.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, it's much too late for that.

She opens the door for them. Stuart exits quickly. Nancy
lingers.

NANCY

If you need anything, anything at all,
don't hesitate to call.

MRS. CONNELLY

Thank you, dear. So kind of you.

She says this as
she closes the door in Nancy's face.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Night

Nancy sits in bed with a pad and pencil. Stuart, in t-shirt and underpants, walks up to his side of the bed reading a dictionary.

STUART

A macaw is a parrot.

Stuart SLAPS the book closed with satisfaction and gets into bed. Nancy is figuring something on her pad.

NANCY

She's between 95 and 105 years old.

(looks around, gets idea)

Ooo. Turn out your light!

A little puzzled, Stuart turns out his light. So does Nancy. Their faces are bathed in a flickering glow.

Their POV

A tiny blaze burns in the fireplace. Soft street light filters in; the quiet, black outline of Prospect Park beyond makes it feel like the country. The room seems even more majestic than in broad daylight.

NANCY

(hushed squeal)

We're millionaires!

Stuart smiles, and kisses Nancy. They lie down, kissing.

Close on Stuart and Nancy

As they kiss, Stuart opens his eyes and pulls away slightly.

NANCY

(eyes closed, a bit annoyed)

Diaphragm's in.

STUART

(awkward)

No, ah, but that's good. But. Can I ask you a favor? It's for work.

Stuart bends over
and WHISPERS something in Nancy's ear.

NANCY
(giggles)
Well, if it's for work...

They resume kissing. SUDDENLY and QUITE LOUDLY, we hear:

Ambient Music: "Hawaii 5-0" theme.

Startled, the two roll onto their backs.

STUART
She is deaf.

Dissolve to later

Nancy and Stuart roll around, placing pillows on their heads, etc., trying to sleep.

VERY LOUD TV MAN (O.C.)
Simply put the beef...

VERY LOUD TV WOMAN (O.C.)
Or chicken?

VERY LOUD TV MAN (O.C.)
Or chicken. Or fish. Into the chamber,
snap the SureSeal™, and pull back the
Infuser™.

VERY LOUD TV WOMAN (O.C.)
And then we wait, what, an hour?

VERY LOUD TV MAN (O.C.)
It's done.

VERY LOUD TV WOMAN (O.C.)
It's done?!

VERY LOUD TV MAN (O.C.)
It's marinated! Throw it on the grill!

Ambient SFX: Huge audience applause.

Nancy and Stuart stare at the ceiling.

**Int. Building –
Second Floor Landing – Even Later**

Stuart BANGS on the door. From inside we hear:

Ambient Music: "Underdog" theme.

STUART
(*between bangs*)
Mrs. Connelly? Josie?!

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Early Morning

Sunlight comes through the window. Nancy and Stuart lie face up, bleary eyed.

Ambient Music: The Theme from "The Bill Cosby Show." (The one in which he played gym teacher Chet Kincaid.)

The music stops abruptly. Nancy and Stuart close their eyes. A beat.

Sfx: Alarm clock buzz

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Morning

A bedraggled Nancy stands there. The last LOCK disengages. The door CREAKS open. Mrs. Connelly (dressed as she was the night before) peers out across the chain.

MRS. CONNELLY
Please forgive me, dear. I must look awful. You woke me.

NANCY
I apologize for that, but Josie–

Mrs. Connelly furrows her brow as if insulted.

NANCY
Mrs. Connelly, we had some trouble sleeping last night; your TV was on, uh, quite loud.

MRS. CONNELLY
(*merrily*)
Oh, was it? I'm stone deaf! Getting old is terrible thing.

N

ANCY

Well, if you could..

MRS. CONNELLY

It's just that it gets so quiet at night, and I get frightened. The television helps me fall asleep.

NANCY

(a little impatient, but polite)

Could you turn the TV down, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY

(put out)

Yes, Mrs. Rosenstein.

NANCY

Rosenbaum is my husband's name. I'm Nancy Payne.

MRS. CONNELLY

Payne. That's an Irish name, isn't it?

NANCY

I don't know. It could be.

MRS. CONNELLY

Wives not taking their husband's names. It's a new world, isn't it? Now the children, will they be Greenbaums or Paynes?

NANCY

(still trying to be nice)

That's a discussion we haven't had. Well, I have to go, Mrs. Connelly; I'm going to be late to work.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, dear, before you go, could you take a look at my shower. The pipes in there are making a bangety-bang sound.

NANCY

Well, it's an old boiler; they make sounds sometimes. It's nothing.

M

RS. CONNELLY

It's a new sound. It goes bangety-bang
(one count)
 Bang-bang.

NANCY

I do have to go. But I tell you what:
 right after work, Stuart and I will
 take a look at your shower and see what
 we can do.

MRS. CONNELLY

That would be wonderful.

NANCY

Have a good day, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

(sweetly)

And you have a nice time at work, Nancy
 Payne.

She SLAMS the door, and starts RELOCKING.

Int. Balls Magazine – Stuart's Cubicle – Late Morning

An exhausted Stuart sits in his cubicle, thumbing through
 the index of "The Joy of Gay Sex."

STUART

Finger... finger... ass comma finger...

Charlie leans against the wall of the cubicle.

CHARLIE

How's our little sex tipster?

STUART

Can I help you, Charlie?

CHARLIE

No, but I can help you. I had some time
 of my hands this weekend,
(hands Stuart a Zip disc)
 so I knocked out three hundred words on
 a topic near and dear to your
 sphincter. Feel free to put your own
 name it.

Charlie exits.

Kevin pops up on the other side the cubicle as Stuart inserts the Zip drive..

KEVIN

That Charlie is such a nice guy.

Stuart opens the document and starts to read.

STUART

Ew.

Close on computer monitor

We "walk" through a remarkably well-rendered CGI version of Nancy and Stuart's apartment.

FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)

Jesus. How long did it take you to input all this?

Int. nyny Magazine – Art Department

Nancy sits at her terminal, as SYN, also in her late 20s but much more downtown, watches over her shoulder.

NANCY

Just a few hours. Oh, Syn, you have to see this place. The fireplaces are ten times more intricate than this...

SYN

This is a pretty amazing program.

NANCY

It better be for \$400. Don't tell Stuart.

SYN

(shocked, simply shocked)
Stuart's worried about money?

NANCY

He doesn't understand the whole investing in success concept. Ooh, watch this.

On Screen

The cursor clicks on a couch (which looks like the one in the real apartment), and drags it to tiny Dumpster in the corner.

NANCY (O.C.)
Bye-bye, Ikea!

Back to scene

Syn raps Nancy on the back; she immediately clicks on the screen so a large magazine spread pops up. Mikey walks up wearing a Mets cap that has been altered so that it reads, "The Met."

NANCY
(all business)
This looks great Syn, but maybe vary the point sizes on the quotes, and, oh, hello, Mikey.

MIKEY
Ladies. Shall we close conversation pieces before you go home tonight?

SYN
No worries.

As Mikey walks away, we see he is wearing leather pants that lace up the back.

SYD
(dubious)
He has a wife and kids.

NANCY
Three. And they live in White Plains.
(seeing something)
Ooh.

On Screen

Nancy COPIES one of the objects from the conversation pieces spread (The headline reads "HELLO!") and PASTES it into the her CGI parlor. The FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN pops onto screen.

FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN
Feng shui alert!

Back to scene

NANCY

Oh, shut up.

Ext. Park Slope F Stop – Early Evening

It's sleeting. Several commuters with umbrellas exit, followed by Stuart, holding a Balls magazine over his head.

Ext. 120 Prospect Park West – A Minute Later

Stuart runs up the steps.

Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous

Stuart enters, soaking. He approaches his door, then remembers the Wiz bag he is holding. He turns around.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – A Minute Later

Stuart stands impatiently, as the door OPENS to the end of the chain. Stuart grins idiotically. The door SLAMS, and opens again a moment later.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Parlor – Continuous

Mrs. Connelly is still wearing the Oriental dress. Stuart talks to her, still standing in the outside hall.

STUART

(reaching into bag)

Hi, evening, Mrs. Connelly. I bought you these headphones, for your TV.

(glances at old TV, unsure)

I'm sure it has an ear jack, somewhere..

MRS. CONNELLY

That is so sweet, dear, but I could never wear those. I don't pay thirty dollars a week for this hairdo just to muss it up.

STUART

You get your hair done every week?

Nancy, also soaking, appears behind Stuart.

N
ANCY
(overly solicitous)
Good evening, Mrs. Connelly!

We hear VERY LOUD BANGING. Stuart and Nancy are startled.

MRS. CONNELLY
Oh, let me introduce you to Mr.
Dzerzhinsky.

Mrs. Connelly patters off and the couple follows her down the hall. As they pass an open door.

NANCY
(hushed, to Stuart)
Look at that bedroom.

Her thrill is short-lived, as Mrs. Connelly leads them to:

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Bathroom – Continuous

MR. DZERZHINSKY, a very large Russian man, stands in the tub, using a huge pipe wrench to fasten some new copper piping in the shower. The entire wall has been torn open.

MRS. CONNELLY
This is Mr. Dzerzhinsky, the plumber.

MR. DZERZHINSKY
Hey.

Nancy points to a pile of broken ceramic on the ground.

NANCY
Those were the original tiles.

MR. DZERZHINSKY
(climbing out of tub)
Yeah, you're gonna need a tile guy.

Mr. Dzerzhinsky stares down at Stuart.

MR. DZERZHINSKY
You the landlord?

STUART
Yes, but I didn't order any work.

Mr. Dzerzhinsky
hands a bill to Stuart anyway, and goes about packing up
his tools.

NANCY

Mrs. Connelly, I told you I would take
a look at this when I got home.

MRS. CONNELLY

I know, dear, but it started going
bang-bang-bang-bang-BANG and I thought
it was going to explode.

MR. DZERZHINSKY

(shrugs)

It coulda.

STUART

(re: bill)

You were here for four hours?

MR. DZERZHINSKY

Pretty much.

STUART

I'm not going pay for something I
didn't auth-

Mr. Dzerzhinsky belly-bumps Stuart.

MR. DZERZHINSKY

Look, my friend, I already did the
work. Or I can rip the pipes outta the
wall.

STUART

(giving up)

No, no.

Mr. Dzerzhinsky exits. Stuart and Nancy walk with Mrs.
Connelly back toward the door.

NANCY

This is my card at work, Mrs. Connelly.
In the future, could you please call me
before, you know...

(remembering)

Oh, and I got you a present.

Nancy pulls a device out of a Lechner's bag. Mrs. Connelly looks at it dubiously.

NANCY

It's one of those clap-on, clap-off things. We can attach it to your TV and then, when you're falling asleep, you can clap to turn off the TV.

MRS. CONNELLY

It sounds so complicated.

NANCY

No, all you have to do is clap. We just plug it into the wall.

MRS. CONNELLY

It might start a fire. Thank you anyway. Oh, Stuart, before I forget, it's the first of the month.

She patters over to a counter and retrieves a small stack of money and coins. She counts it out slowly into Stuart's palm.

MRS. CONNELLY

Twenty... forty... fifty... fifty-five... sixty... sixty-five... seventy... Seventy-five... seventy-six, seventy-seven, seventy-eight, seventy-nine, eighty-one, eighty-two, eighty-three, eighty-four, eighty-five, eighty-six, eighty-seven, eighty-eight, eight-eight twenty-five, fifty, seventy-five, eighty-nine dollars and twenty-five, fifty cents.

NANCY

Thank you, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

Would you like to count it?

STUART

No, I trust you.

**Int. Apartment –
Bedroom – Night**

Nancy and Stuart stare at the ceiling. From above we hear SOME KIND OF JAPANESE GAME SHOW.

Ext. Midtown Manhattan – Outside a Starbucks – Morning

A dead-tired Stuart exits the Starbucks, slurping coffee from his stainless steel cup as he dodges oncoming sidewalk traffic. He continues half way down the block, realizes his cup is empty, and turns back for more.

Int. nyny Magazine – Nancy's Workstation – Afternoon

Nancy sits at her computer, but appears to be fast asleep. Mikey enters (wearing a tiny fez), scowls and puts his face within two inches of Nancy's. He BLOWS in her face. Her eyes flutter open. Startled, she falls off her chair (and out of frame). She pops back up a moment later and hops onto her stool, smiling gamely at Mikey.

NANCY

What can I do for you, Mikey?

Ext. Prospect Park – Morning

It's very cold, but bright. Heavily bundled couples walk strollers and dogs toward the park.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

Nancy and Stuart lay on the bed, on top of the sheets, still in their work clothes from the day before. Nancy awakes, and shakes Stuart.

NANCY

Wake-up, c'mon, we're going shopping today.

STUART

No, Saturday. Sleeping.

Stuart rolls over onto his face. Nancy sits up in bed, grabs Stuart's arm and starts to get up, dragging him.

NANCY

Shopping.

She doesn't have the energy. She falls back on the bed, across Stuart. A moment of peace.

We hear LOUD CACKLING and BANGING. Nancy opens her eyes.

Int. Building – Foyer – A Few Moments Later

Nancy peeks out her door. Three OLD BIDDIES lug cases for a tuba, trombone and French horn up the stairs.

FIRST OLD BIDDY
It's a cold one.

SECOND OLD BIDDY
Cold for November.

THIRD OLD BIDDY
Winter's coming.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – A Moment After That

Nancy trudges back in and collapses on the bed. From above, we hear INDISTINCT CACKLES OF GREETING and CHAIRS SCOOTCHING. Then BRASS INSTRUMENTS warming up. Then agonizing silence. Then a "SONG" starts.

STUART
ohgod.

NANCY
What song is that?

STUART
"On the Street Where You Live?"

NANCY
It sounds like it might be "Every Breath you Take."

Stuart sits up.

STUART
Let's go shopping.

Ext. Manhattan – 25th Street Flea Market – Day

Nancy haggles with an ANTIQUES MERCHANT.

N

ANCY

I'm sorry, but I can't go over one-sixty.

ANTIQUES MERCHANT

Then I'm sorry, too.

NANCY

Okay then.

Nancy start to walk away, but then turns back.

NANCY

(laughing)

You win that one.

Nancy writes a check. Stewart walks up excitedly, holding a manual typewriter.

STUART

A Remington Royal! Twenty dollars.

NANCY

What were they asking?

STUART

Twenty dollars.

Nancy shakes her head in disappointment.

Ext. The Strand Bookstore – Afternoon

Int. The Strand – Information Desk – Continuous

Stuart addresses a typically laid-back STRAND WORKER.

STUART

Where do you keep the good books?

STRAND WORKER

We don't make those kind of judgments.

STUART

I mean, you know, the good-looking books.

STRAND WORKER

Good looking books?

S
TUART

Good books, but also, nice-looking.

STRAND WORKER

Third floor. We sell them by the yard.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Late Afternoon

Stuart lovingly places his Remington Royal on a small stand in the alcove. He sits down, rolls in a piece of paper, looks out the window for inspiration, and HITS a key. It sticks. He unsticks it, and HITS another key. It sticks. He notices something out the window.

His POV

A cab has pulled up in front of the building. The trunk, overloaded with antiques, is tied down with rope. Nancy opens the passenger door, revealing the inside is also crammed with bags and furniture. Even the cabbie's front passenger seat is crammed with stuff. Nancy sees Stuart in the window, and waves at him, smiling giddily.

Ext. Building – Night

There are Christmas lights and a Menorah in the window.

MUSIC: "Baby, It's Cold Outside" by Dean Martin

Int. Apartment – Parlor – Continuous

A mini-stereo is on the mantle, with a CD cover leaning against it which reads, "A Pottery Barn Holidays."

Nancy is happily rearranging several small pieces of furniture around the parlor. We see that she has shoved their old couch against the wall and stacked much of their old crap on top of it.

Int. Apartment – Library – Continuous

Stuart stands on a chair, placing nice leather-bound books into his leaded glass bookcases. He bears a look of self-satisfaction. Nancy enters, carrying a small end table. She puts it down, walks up behind Stuart and hugs him around the waist.

N
ANCY
(romantic)
We're making a home.

STUART
It's kind of hot in here, isn't it?

NANCY
(releasing him)
It's steam heat. We're on the first floor so we get the full blast. It'll go off in a couple hours.

STUART
Welcome to "This Old, Old House."

NANCY
You were the one who voted against a new heater.

STUART
Well, ten-thousand dollars.

Nancy picks up a book off Stuart's unshelved pile.

NANCY
"Ivanhoe"?

STUART
It's a good book. Robert Louis Stevenson.

NANCY
It says it's by Walter Scott.

STUART
There were two versions.

NANCY
(picking up another book)
"Geographical Survey of N.E. New York State, 1945."

STUART
It's research. For the novel.

N
ANCY

I thought the novel was about a young writer forced to work at an awful men's magazine.

STUART

I'm hoping to write more than one novel.

NANCY

I didn't know you spoke German.

STUART

What?

NANCY

(re: third book)

This one's in German.

Stuart steps down from the chair.

STUART

(defensive)

Books aren't completely for reading. It's not like all the furniture you're buying is completely practical.

NANCY

It all serves a purpose.

Stuart points to two end tables sitting side by side.

STUART

So that end table, it serves as an end table to that end table.

NANCY

Well, first of all, that's not an end table, it's an antique telephone stand, and second of all, it's not going there, it's going upstairs in the hallway.

STUART

We don't live upstairs.

NANCY

But we will. Eventually.

S
TUART

How about that? What purpose does that serve?

Stuart points to what looks like a two-foot tall wooden pyramid.

NANCY
That serves a design purpose.

STUART
What is it?

NANCY
Obviously, it's a pyramid.

Stuart is about to go off on that, but then notices a small antique rocking crib.

STUART
What's this?

NANCY
It's a conversation piece.

STUART
And what conversation would that be?
(looks around)
How much shit did you buy anyway?

NANCY
It won't look so crowded once we get the old stuff out.

Before Stuart can respond, there is knock on the door. Nancy is quick to answer it. It's Mrs. Connelly, wearing her Church dress.

MRS. CONNELLY
I hate to bother you two on a Sunday evening like this, but I'm cold.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Doorway – A Minute Later

Mrs. Connelly leads the two in. Stuart holds his hand out, incredulous.

N
ANCY

It doesn't seem that cold in here, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY
I'm cold. Mr. Fawkes is cold.

She gestures to Mr. Fawkes, who just sits there.

STUART
Well, that's because Mr. Fawkes is supposed to be in a South American rain forest, not New York City in November.

Nancy shoots Stuart a look, and puts her hand on Mrs. Connelly's shoulder, gently. She leads her to her chair.

NANCY
The heat just started up, Mrs. Connelly. I think if you just wait, it'll be fine in just a few minutes. If you want, I have a sweater you could borrow. Or a caftan.

MRS. CONNELLY
No, that's all right, dear. I understand.

Int. Apartment — Moments Later

As they re-enter:

STUART
It was at least seventy degrees up there.

NANCY
Oh, she's just lonely.

STUART
I don't think her eight-nine-fifty covers paid companionship.
(surveys apartment, worriedly)
Nancy, I don't want to be a spoilsport, but we need to make a budget for all this furniture you're buying.

N

NANCY

Let's not forget your "books."

STUART

My books only cost \$40 a yard.

Nancy, trying to make up, hugs Stuart.

NANCY

Why don't we just think of them as early Christmas presents? And Hanukkah!

STUART

You know, for Hanukkah, I usually got underpants, not -

He lightly KICKS the wooden pyramid.

NANCY

Don't kick that! It cost - enough that you shouldn't be kicking it.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

Int. Building - Stuart and Nancy's door - Continuous

The door opens, revealing an exasperated Stuart.

STUART

Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

His POV

He is staring at two police uniforms. He adjusts his gaze upwards into the large, sober faces of OFFICER DAN and OFFICER SANDRA.

OFFICER SANDRA

We have the report of a heat emergency.

STUART

(annoyed)

She called you?

OFFICER DAN

Come with us upstairs, please?

**Int. Building –
Second Floor Landing – Moments Later**

Officer Dan KNOCKS. Stuart rolls his eyes.

STUART

You'll see. She's old, and, you know,
likes to complain.

We hear the recognizable sound of WINDOWS SLIDING SHUT. The door opens (without the usual rigmarole). Mrs. Connelly stands there, wrapped in several shawls, tiny and weak.

MRS. CONNELLY

I'm terribly cold.

The officers walk into the apartment. We can see their breath. It's like "The Exorcist."

OFFICER DAN

Good Christ.

MR. FAWKES

So cold. So cold.

Ext. Building – Street – A Few Minutes Later

The squad car is parked in front, lights flashing. Stuart and Nancy stands on the sidewalk, shivering without coats. Officer Dan is writing a citation.

OFFICER DAN

That poor, dear sweet woman.

STUART

Look, I think it's pretty obvious she
opened all the windows to –

OFFICER DAN

(pointing aggressively)

Shut up, you little fuck. What I should
be doing is throwing your naked ass in
a cell and hosing you down for the
night, but there's been a lot of bad
publicity lately, so all I can do is
fine you.

He hands the citation to Stuart.

S

TUART

A thousand dollars?!

OFFICER DAN

Are you complaining, fuck?

NANCY

No, we're not.

OFFICER DAN

Next time I enter to Mrs. Connelly's apartment – and I will be checking in – I want to break out in a sweat, I want to be on the goddam beach at Hedonism II, do you understand?

STUART/NANCY

Yes, officer.

They shiver for a long beat.

STUART

Is that all?

OFFICER DAN

No, it's such a lovely night, I thought we would stand out here for a while.

We pull out slowly as they continue to shiver.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Later that Night

The two sit in bed, wearing little but still drenched in sweat. They are examining several bills and fines laid

STUART

(wiping brow)

I sure hope she's comfortable up there.

NANCY

It says the fine isn't due for another 45 days.

STUART

Oh, well, everything will be different then.

N

NANCY

It will be. We'll get our year-end bonuses, our raises...

STUART

(re: credit receipt)

Couch? What couch?

NANCY

It's being delivered Tuesday. It's really more of a love seat, but it's a George Smith and -

STUART

Let's cancel it.

NANCY

(hurt)

It's my Christmas present.

STUART

Your Christmas present is

(pointing to ceiling)

granny's trip to Hedonism II up there; mine is all that lovely exposed copper piping in her bathroom.

NANCY

(suggesting solution)

Let's throw a party!

STUART

Excuse me? Is my face registering incredulity, because all my, circuits, just went crackle-fizz. Party?

NANCY

A party.

STUART

You mean, like a rent party? Because that might not be a bad idea.

NANCY

Like a rent party, but for adults. We've been putting a lot of money into this house. It's time it started paying us back.

S
TUART

*(overpronouncing, as to a
foreigner)*

Do you speak English?

NANCY

Trust me.

She kisses him sexily. What's he going to do?

Ext. 120 Prospect Park West – Evening – A Few Days Later

A series of town cars pull up, disgorging media swells.

Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous

A coat check has been set up; Nancy greets some guests at her door.

NANCY

Welcome to our home.

With a sweeping gesture, she introduces the apartment. All traces their old furniture are gone; however, guests can't seem to move without bumping into some antique (there are many more than before). A few tiny pumpkins and ears of baby Indian corn suggest a Thanksgiving theme.

The apartment is filled with New York media types. We TRACK through the crowd, hearing snippets of conversation.

TINA BROWN

They could not have gotten this for less than a million.

KURT ANDERSEN

Look at the gadrooning on this sideboard.

JANE PRATT

(re: couch)

Oh my god, is that a George Smith?

Int. Apartment – Kitchen – Continuous

Stuart is at the door to the kitchen, talking to a server.

(CONTINUED)

S
TUART

Let's try to spread the shrimp out over
the evening, okay?

A hand reaches in and grabs a handful of shrimp. It's Kevin.

KEVIN
(eating shrimp)
Looks like somebody got a raise.

Kevin sticks his tongue out and wiggles it suggestively.

STUART
(laughing)
Oh, fuck you.

KEVIN
(surveying crowd)
Lots of graphic designers. I like that.

Kevin makes a diving-into-water gesture and exits. Nancy enters with LAUREN, a plump, chatty woman of about 40.

NANCY
Stuart, this is Lauren, remember, from
the third floor.

LAUREN
I invited myself, I hope that's all
right. It's all right, right?

She takes a shrimp off the server's tray, and eats it.

STUART
(half-kidding)
Okay, but no shrimp for you.

LAUREN
(horse-like snort)
You... writer. So how are you guys
settling in?
(taking another shrimp)
It's a different life, huh? I used to
live on West 86th, and I had creepy guys
on the street following me home all the
time, so I said no more of that!
*(horse-like snort; takes
another shrimp)*
That Mrs. Connelly is such a sweetie.

N
ANCY

The TV at night, it doesn't bother you?

LAUREN

My bedroom's in the back, and with all the medications I have to take – don't ask – I'm out cold for 14 hours a day.

The server with the shrimp tries to leave; Lauren grabs her, and takes the last two shrimp. The server turns back into kitchen for more.

LAUREN (CONT.)

I swear, that Mrs. Connelly is going to outlive us all.

STUART

What do you mean by that?

LAUREN

Did you know she's never been in the hospital, not even the day she was born?

STUART

No, I didn't know that.

LAUREN

She's practically immortal. In the twelve years I've been here, she's outlasted nine landlords.

NANCY

Nine people have moved out of here in the last dozen years?

LAUREN

Not all people, most were couples, like you – not that couples aren't people!

(horsey snort; turns suddenly serious)

And they didn't all move out. Mr. Myer took his own life.

(off their horrified looks)

Oh, it wasn't messy or anything. Just an overdose. He had money problems.

The shrimp server walks past. Lauren smiles sheepishly and follows the server off camera. Stuart and Nancy appear stricken for a moment. Nancy snaps out of it first, and slaps Stuart heartily on the back.

NANCY

Go on. Go out there and mingle. That's what this is for.

Nancy pushes Stuart into the crowd.

STUART

We who are about to die..

Nancy assumes a huge party smile, and enters the fray herself. She passes Kevin, who has Syn cornered.

KEVIN

They wanted to send me on this Thai sex vacation, but I'm not really into that anymore. I mean, sex, yeah. But
(gestures to himself and her)
one on one.

Syn doesn't seem to be falling for this.

At the Entrance – A Little Later.

Nancy is talking to her PARENTS, real UPPER EAST SIDE TYPES.

NANCY'S MOTHER

Despite you're having not consulted me first, I do have to admit this is a lovely condo, dear.

NANCY

Thanks, Mom. That means a lot to –

NANCY'S MOTHER

(looks around, wrinkles nose)
But you have to give me a call before you start decorating.

Nancy gives her party smile a little boost.

**In the Library –
Later**

Stuart, posed in front of his handsome books, talks with PETER KAPLAN, editor of the New York Observer.

PETER KAPLAN

"We're millionaires!" You really said that?

STUART

Well, I mean, yeah.

PETER KAPLAN

That would make a great New York Diarist for us. I could only pay you a thousand dollars, but if it worked out, we could maybe talk about a contract.

We PAN OVER to Nancy, who is talking to Little, Brown publisher Sarah Crichton.

SARAH CRICHTON

We're always looking for people to do book covers on a freelance basis, if you're not too busy.

We PAN BACK to Stuart, smiling more smugly. Writer GUY MARTIN has pulled a book off the shelf, and addresses him.

GUY MARTIN

(speaking in German)

You read "Mein Kampf" in the original German? Any additional insights?

Stuart just smiles back.

In the Hallway – A Little later

Nancy leads Mikey (wearing a pilgrim hat) and Syn to the bedroom. The glass bricks have been replaced, as Nancy is describing.

NANCY

We got the stained glass from an old Catholic Church that went out of business.

(Mostly to Syn)

Stuart would shit if he knew what it cost.

**In the Bedroom –
Continuous**

They enter; Mikey is truly impressed.

NANCY
The bedroom.

MIKEY
Well, I can see why you've been
spending most of your workday on E-bay.

SYN
We should do a spread on this place.
"The New Old" or something.

MIKEY
Maybe.

Mikey looks down at an orphaned bedside table against a wall.

NANCY
That's going in the upstairs front
bedroom. We also own the upstairs,
would you like to see it?

MIKEY
I'm intrigued.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Moments Later

The three stands outside Mrs. Connelly's door as Nancy
knocks loudly.

NANCY
She's as deaf as a post, poor thing.

Lauren passes, with Kevin in tow. Mikey smiles at Nancy,
impatiently. Nancy reaches into a pocket.

NANCY
I've got a key – Nancy the Landlady –
we'll just peek in.

Nancy quickly UNLOCKS three locks.

NANCY
Right now it's a bit old person-y, but,
I think you'll see the potential.

Nancy opens the door a crack, and ushers Mikey over. Mikey sticks his head in the door opening. Nancy also peeks in.

Their POV

Mrs. Connelly, wielding a can of mace, baring her teeth.

Back to Scene

Mikey receives a FULL BLAST of mace, which also catches Nancy in the face. Nancy SCREAMS. Mikey, GAGGING and SCREAMING, staggers backward, and down the stairs, out of frame.

Ext. Building – A Half hour later

An ambulance pulls out. A squad car is parked in front, its lights flashing. Guests are streaming out, shaking their heads.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Continuous

Officer Dan has his arm around Mrs. Connelly, considerably more timid than she was a half hour ago. Stuart sits on the landing, pressing a cold cloth to Nancy's face.

OFFICER SANDRA

(lecturing them)

Being a landlord doesn't give you the right to enter your tenant's premises any time you feel like it.

NANCY

(Teary, upset)

I wasn't. I knocked!

STUART

She used pepper spray! That's illegal, right?

OFFICER DAN

I gave it to her. Do you have a problem with that?

STUART

I'm just saying, it's illegal.

O

OFFICER DAN

Your wife is the one who broke and entered, buddy. And your creepy bald-headed friend could have just as easily been some kind of sick gramma rapist. In fact, I'm not sure he's not.

(to Officer Sandra)

Call the hospital and make sure they hold him until we can question him.

NANCY

Oh, God.

OFFICER DAN

Mrs. Connelly, would you like to press charges?

STUART

Her press charges?

Officer Dan KICKS Stuart hard in the side. He doubles over in PAIN.

OFFICER DAN

Quiet now.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, I couldn't press charges. They're such a nice young couple.

OFFICER DAN

That's your decision. If you change your mind, give me a call. Is it warm enough for you in there?

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, yes, it's quite nice.

Officer Dan leads Mrs. Connelly back into her apartment, as Nancy SNIFFLES and Stuart MOANS.

Int. nyny Magazine – Nancy's Workstation – Morning

Nancy enters. Her left eye is swollen shut from the pepper spray. There is a yellow sticky on her computer. It reads, "See me - M."

**Int. nyny Magazine
- Mikey's Office - Morning**

Nancy enters, smiling weakly. Mikey is at his desk (an old top-loading Coke machine), head down, going over a layout. His face is further hidden by a huge foam novelty cowboy hat.) His arm is in a sling.

NANCY

Mikey?

Mikey looks up. His face is bright red. He is not smiling

Ext. Lower East Side - Sixth Street - Night

Stuart and Nancy sit in the window of "NY Dehli", framed by Christmas lights.

Int. NY Dehli - Continuous

A cheesy combo of traditional Indian kitsch and faux hip. A sitar-lead combo is playing an Indian-inflected "Autumn in New York."

STUART

So the art department calls me and says they were told I knew where they could get some Hemingway autopsy photos!

NANCY

(Sharing his outrage)

That's horrible!

STUART

What's going on? My favorite restaurant, sharing my outrage. I'd assume you crashed the car, only we don't have one.

NANCY

(tentative)

I got fired today.

STUART

(rueful laugh)

Of course!

NANCY

Obviously, this affects our financial situations...

(CONTINUED)

S
TUART

Ha!

NANCY
And so, I was thinking...

STUART
We're not taking money from your
parents.

NANCY
My parents won't give us any money.
They don't like you, remember?

STUART
Even if they would, we won't.

NANCY
(fearing his reaction)
I think maybe we should dip into the
(under her breath)
Fuck You Money.

STUART
(reacting poorly)
Not the Fuck You Money! I need that in
order to be able to say, "fuck you!"

NANCY
(lowering her own voice)
It's there for emergencies.

STUART
(Louder and louder)
Without the Fuck You Money, I have to
just say, "O-kay." Oh, Brownie, you
want me to eat that big plate of shit?
Right away, ma'am. Please, ma'am, can I
eat some more shit, ma'am? Please,
could you make it a big steaming bowl
of raw, chunky shit?

INDIAN RESTAURANT OWNER
I am asking you to leave now.

Many of the restaurant's patrons are no longer hungry.

**Int. Building –
Foyer – The Next Morning**

Nancy, dressed in a nice business suit and carrying a portfolio, checks her make-up. Despite several layers of base, we can still see the pepper spray rash. She forces a smile, and starts to walk out.

MRS. CONNELLY (O.C.)
Miss Payne?

Nancy looks up to see Mrs. Connelly on the landing.

NANCY
Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY
Could you come up here a moment?

NANCY
I have an important appointment, Mrs. Connelly. Can it wait until this afternoon?

MRS. CONNELLY
I suppose.

Nancy SIGHS, and trudges up the stairs.

NANCY
Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY
One of my lights is buzzing.

NANCY
I'm sure it's nothing, Mrs. Connelly. Could you just turn off the light, just for a few hours, and I'll look at just as soon as I get back?

MRS. CONNELLY
I'm afraid it might start a fire.

Nancy DROPS her portfolio and trudges into Mrs. Connelly's apartment.

Int. Balls Magazine – Hallway – Morning

Stuart, tired and unshaven, walks along with Kevin.

K
EVIN

Couldn't you dip into retirement and
keep the F-U funds intact?

STUART

It's the same money.

They turn into:

Int. Balls Magazine – Brownie's Office – Continuous

And are somewhat surprised to see Brownie, sitting behind her desk completely naked. Charlie sits in his chair, also naked, his legs demurely crossed. Most of the other editors stand uncomfortably rather than sit.

BROWNIE

Charlie's had a wonderful idea. The
Naked and Drunk issue. We're going to
write and edit the February Balls
completely denuded and totally
besotted.

KEVIN

I think the New Republic already did
one of those.

BROWNIE

Off with your togs, gentlemen!

The editors look to each other with terror in their eyes.

BROWNIE

(all business)

Participation is not voluntary.

Stuart unzips his fly.

STUART

(shit-eating grin)

Right away, ma'am.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Living Room – Day

Nancy stands tip toe on a chair, unscrewing a buzzing light bulb. She gets BADLY SHOCKED and falls out of frame.

**Int. Ball's
Magazine – Stuart's Cubicle – Continuous**

Stuart sits naked at his desk, typing glumly. We hear the TINKLE of a bell. Charlie appears wearing a barmaid's serving tray, on which are shot glasses and a bottle.

CHARLIE
(a la the song, "Tequila")
Tah-Keee-la!

Charlie pours two shots; Kevin pops up over his cubicle and grabs one. He dutifully swallows.

STUART
Pass.

CHARLIE
Participation is not voluntary.

KEVIN
Take your meds, Rosenbaum.

Stuart picks up the shot glass.

STUART
There's gotta be some sort of OSHA
regulation about this.

He throws back the shot.

CHARLIE
Swallow!

Stuart SWALLOWS. Charlie exits; we hear a bell TINKLE.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
Tah-keeeeeee-lah!

Int. Building – Mrs. Connelly's Doorway – Continuous

Nancy, her hair frizzed out, is about to exit.

MRS. CONNELLY
Oh, one more thing, dear.

Nancy closes her eyes and WHIMPERS.

**Ext. 120 Prospect
Park West – Night**

Stuart, a little tipsy, clownishly takes the stairs three at a time.

Int. Apartment – Entranceway – Moments Later

Stuart opens the door, grandly.

STUART
(*Desi Arnaz voice*)
Honey, I'm home!

Stuart doesn't see Nancy. He hears:

NANCY (O.C.)
(*Quiet sobbing*)

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – A Moment Later

Stuart enters to find Nancy sitting on the bed in sweats and a t-shirt. Her face is red and puffy, both from crying and from the pepper spray. Stuart sits down next to her and puts his hand on her shoulder.

STUART
What did she do this time?

NANCY
It's what I did.

Nancy's Flashback

Nancy kneels on the stairs, tapping with a hammer.

NANCY (V.O.)
I was fixing the stairs...

STUART (V.O.)
What the hell's wrong with the stairs?

Mrs. Connelly stands above Nancy, supervising her work.

MRS. CONNELLY
I hope you're tacking that carpeting
down good.

N
ANCY

(carpet tacks in mouth)
That's what I'm doing, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY
It's very loose. I could slip and fall
down those stairs and break my neck.

Close on

Nancy's face, fantasizing.

Her fantasy

Mrs. Connelly, in her Oriental dress, takes one step down the stairs when the carpet-runner practically flies out from under her. She FLOPS CARTOONISHLY down the steps, end-over-end and cart-wheeling, as we hear over-the-top sounds of BONES SNAPPING.

Mrs. Connelly lies at the bottom of the steps, face down but with the rest of her body perfectly right side up.

Close on

Nancy's face as she smiles, causing the carpet tacks in her mouth to tilt up at a devilish angle.

Out of Flashback

Nancy's eyes are rimmed with tears.

NANCY
I can't believe I did that!

STUART
(confused)
What did you do? Did you push her down the stairs?

NANCY
No, but I imagined it! And I liked it!

She sobs on Stuart's shoulder.

NANCY (CONT.)
What's wrong with me? I'm evil!

Stuart hugs her reassuringly.

S
TUART

Nancy, Nancy. After all that woman has done to us, there'd be something wrong with you if you didn't want her dead.

NANCY

You?

STUART

(Has given this some thought)

Look, I'm not saying she deserves to die, but she should be dead. She's somewhere between 95 and 105 years old, at least 20 years more than she's allotted. She's living practically rent free, with two full-time servants – you and me truly – she's got free medical care, which we as taxpayers are also providing, and what has she done for anybody? She drove her husband to drink himself into an early grave, she drove poor Mr. Myer to kill himself, and now she's killing us with all these repairs and fines we can't afford. She got you fired, and you know, not being able to quit my job is going to shorten my life. That's life she's stealing from me. And she's just up there, you know, blithely living our future. You know, in, uh, Eskimoland, she'd be on an ice floe. Bye bye, Mrs. Connelly! You've outlived your usefulness! Bye-bye!

Nancy LAUGHS reflexively; she smacks Stuart playfully.

NANCY

You're awful, too.

STUART

There's nothing you can do about it, so you might as well dream.

Nancy cuddles into Stewart. He lies back on the bed, and reaches for the remote. He turns on the TV.

N
ANCY

I feel bad for her. She doesn't have any family, just those brass band biddies for friends, you know, maybe she's always calling us up there because she needs the company.

STUART

Maybe she's just a bitch.

Nancy slaps his chest, LAUGHING. Stuart sees something on the TV and turns up the volume with the remote.

On Screen

Behind the FEMALE NEWSCASTER is a mortise of a caduceus superimposed on a skull and crossbones. The mortise reads, "KILLER FLU?"

FEMALE NEWSCASTER

...accompanied by nausea and violent diarrhea. Health authorities are warning that this strain is particularly dangerous, and potentially deadly, to children under five and especially the elderly.

Back to Scene

In a wide shot, we see Nancy and Stuart watching this, silently. On the TV, the newscaster turns to the SPORTSCASTER.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER

Those Nets could have used a couple of last minute flu shots, eh, Hank?

SPORTSCASTER

(a little confused)

That's right, Pepper! Let's go to the-

Nancy takes the remote from Stuart and clicks off the TV. She rolls into him and kisses him. He reaches back and turns off the light with one hand as he goes to cradle her face with the other.

NANCY (IN DARK)

Ooh. Don't touch that side of the face.

S
TUART (IN DARK)

Sorry.

They KISS.

Ambient Music: "Hawaii 5-0" Theme

NANCY (IN DARK)
(giggling)
Book me, Danno.

STUART (IN DARK)
(After a beat)
That doesn't make sense.

NANCY
(commanding)
Do it.

STUART
Right away, ma'am.

Ext. Subway station - F stop - Morning

As he starts down the stairs, Stuart is jostled and drops his stainless steel coffee cup. He watches it bounce to the bottom. A businessman at the bottom quickly picks up the cup and continues on.

Int. Subway Platform - A Couple of Minutes Later

Stuart waits for the train next to a NEW YORK WOMAN and her small child. Suddenly, the small child PROJECTILE VOMITS onto the tracks. A HELPFUL IMMIGRANT MAN approaches the woman.

HELPFUL IMMIGRANT MAN
(broken English)
Is he sick?

NEW YORK WOMAN
What the fuck does it look like?

A train pulls into the station; Stuart maneuvers to get onto the packed car with everybody else.

**Int. Subway Car –
Moments Later**

The train pulls out. Stuart is really smashed in. He sees a businessman holding a stainless steel coffee cup. He is about to tap him on the shoulder when he sees another businessman with an identical cup.

Stuart shrugs and assumes the traditional subway stare. That's when he notices

The Other End of the Car

It's completely empty, save one very grubby homeless man. The man VOMITS into a Macy's bag (Product Placement Opportunity!) Watching this, Stuart makes a decision.

Stuart muscles and worms his way through the crowd. He breaks free, and marches purposefully to the empty end of the car. He sits down next to the homeless man. He draws a DEEP BREATH. His eyes water. He closes his eyes, tilts his head back, and BREATHES in and out.

Int. Apartment – Bathroom – 36 Hours Later

Stuart crouches on the toilet, bent over with cramps. The door suddenly OPENS and Nancy lunges in.

NANCY

Ohgod.

Nancy drops to her knees, pries Stuart's legs apart and VOMITS VIOLENTLY between them. After a beat, she pulls her head out and smiles at Stuart weakly.

NANCY

Happy Thanksgiving.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Hours Later

Nancy and Stuart lean on each other for support. Mrs. Connelly opens the door a crack. Nancy leans in close to talk to her.

NANCY

(a little breathy)

Hi, Mrs. Connelly. We were wondering if there was anything we could do for you.

S
TUART
(hitting the 'h')
Happy Thanksgiving.

MRS. CONNELLY
You two look awful. Did you catch that
horrible Chinese flu?

Stuart and Nancy don't know what she's talking about.

STUART
Oh, no, we're fine.

MRS. CONNELLY
That's good. But you should get a flu
shot. Officer Dan took me to get one
last week.

NANCY
We'll do that. Well, Happy
Thanksgiving.

MRS. CONNELLY
No, come in. I do have something for
you to do.

She SLAMS the door in their faces, UNHOOKS the chain, and
lets them in.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment - Parlor - Continuous

In front of her chair is a TV tray with the remains of a
huge Thanksgiving feast.

MRS. CONNELLY
This lovely black lady brought me a
whole turkey and a lovely dinner but
I'm afraid some of the turkey bones
didn't go down the disposal.

Nancy and Stuart follow her into the kitchenette.

NANCY
You don't have a disposal, Mrs.
Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY
Oh, I'm so silly. Where did I have a
disposal once?

N
ANCY
You never had a disposal, Mrs.
Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY
(indicating sink)
Well, it should be taken care of. It's
very unsanitary.

STUART
And it might start a fire.

MRS. CONNELLY
I was going to call a plumber.

NANCY
(mostly to herself)
Oh Christ. On Thanksgiving.

MRS. CONNELLY
Please don't take the Lord's name in
vain in my house, Miss Payne.

Nancy wants to say something vicious, but can't. Stuart is
staring down into the sink, not looking so hot.

His POV

It's a brown, greasy mess with skin floating on it and
glops of mashed potato and cranberry churning in it.

Dissolve to Later

Stuart's lies under the sink, inexpertly STRUGGLING to
loosen the elbow joint. The joint comes loose, and a sink
full of watery goo pours onto his face.

Nancy looks down into the sink; through the open pipe she
sees Stuart's gristle-covered face.

Stuart looks up in terror; through the open pipe he can see
his imminently upchucking wife.

Nancy's head dips into the sink as she VOMITS. We hear it
SPLASH out of the bottom of the pipe. Stuart MOANS weakly.

Mrs. Connelly watches all this matter-of-factly.

M

RS. CONNELLY

Let me get you some things so you can clean that up.

She patters away.

Ext. Prospect Park – Day

Bundled-up kids play happily in the park.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

Nancy and Stuart both lay on the bed at odd angles, near death. The phone RINGS. Stuart answers.

STUART

What day is it?

Intercut with:

Int. Balls Magazine – Cubicle – Morning

Kevin stands up at his cubicle. The Desperate Middle-Aged Junior Editor walks by, completely naked.

KEVIN

It's Wednesday. You gotta get in here, Rosenbaum. Brownie keeps asking where you are.

STUART

I'm at death's door. Knock knock. Oh, look, he's here. I'm dead.

KEVIN

She doesn't give a shit, man. She came back to work three hours after giving birth.

STUART

Giving birth to what?

KEVIN

I'd come in. She's really drunk, and she's a real mean drunk.

BROWNIE (O.C.)

Get that sorry excuse for a bum out of my sight!

Kevin looks down
the hall. We hear Brownie CACKLE as the Desperate Middle-
Aged Junior Editor scurries out just as a stapler hits him
in the backside.

KEVIN

Get in here, man. Your ass could save
your job.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

Stuart tries to hang up the phone, but more or less drops
it to the floor.

STUART

Gotta go into work.

He starts to stand, but falls woozily back on the bed. They
both stare up at the ceiling.

STUART (CONT.)

Kill me.

NANCY

I can't believe we tried to kill Mrs.
Connelly.

STUART

I don't know what you're talking about.

NANCY

You know full well. We thought, we,
when you got sick, on purpose, you knew
there was a chance..

STUART

You can't testify against me.

NANCY

I wouldn't do that, sweetie.

STUART

Well, if that's what we were trying to
do, we sure did a shitty job of it.

Nancy LAUGHS RUEFULLY. There is a very long beat.

S

TUART (CONT.)

You know, if a person was gonna do something like that, they should, you know...

(long beat)

Do it right.

Nancy clasps Stuart's hand tightly. They close their eyes and go limp on the bed.

Ext. Prospect Park – An Hour or So Later

Nancy and Stuart walk slowly in the park, arm in arm, like the two very sick people they are.

NANCY

Wow, murder.

STUART

It's probably best that you not say that out loud in public.

NANCY

I just never thought of myself as an "mmmmm"-er.

STUART

Look, statistically she's already dead. Nature has simply overlooked her. She's been moseying off this mortal coil, and we'd be encouraging her to shuffle, like all responsible citizens do.

NANCY

How much Nyquil have you had?

STUART

Not nearly enough.

(long beat)

We're going to lose the apartment.

NANCY

Our home.

STUART

She's already killed one of her landlords. And she's got her foot on our throats.

N
ANCY
Self-defense.

They walk in front of the playground. Nancy stops to watch.

STUART
We're putting her on an ice floe,
that's all. To make room for future
generations.

NANCY
(face lighting up)
For the children.

Nancy hugs Stuart, while watching the children play. He hugs her back. It's a very romantic tableau.

Int. Balls Magazine – Afternoon

A naked Stuart sits at his desk, typing energetically. He has never looked so engaged.

On his computer screen

A web page loads. It is very plain-looking site, called "HowToKill.com." Below the title flashing red text reads, "For Entertainment Purposes Only"

On Stuart

He takes a swig from a whisky bottle on his desk.

On his computer screen

Stuart's cursor scrolls quickly down a stacked, selectable list: co-workers, neighbors, neighbor's pets, public officials, relatives... The cursor stops on senior citizens and CLICKS (next on the list is spouses).

On Stuart

He reads with interest while taking another swig of whisky. He presses a couple of buttons, and some pages start spilling out of a printer next to his cubicle. He hovers over the printer, taking each page as it prints. He turns back to his computer.

**On his computer
screen**

The cursor CLICKS on the "special" column and selects "erase disk." A warning pops up. "Do you really want to erase Stu's Mac"?

On Stuart

Clicking "yes" with an almost sinister smile.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment - Kitchen - Simultaneous

Nancy (the redness on her face has subsided, but is still there) and Mrs. Connelly stare down at a small black object on the counter.

NANCY

That's not a mouse dropping, Mrs. Connelly. It's a raisin.

MRS. CONNELLY

(leaning in close)

It doesn't look like any raisin I've ever seen.

As Mrs. Connelly leans over, Nancy briefly eyes a heavy skillet on the stove. Mrs. Connelly stands up.

MRS. CONNELLY (CONT.)

It's the leavings of a mouse.

NANCY

(losing patience)

It's a raisin.

Nancy matter-of-factly picks up the object and pops it in her mouth. She gets a very strange look on her face.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, dear, I should have told you. I sprayed it with Lysol.

**Ext. East Village
- Late Afternoon**

A tiny storefront has been completely blacked out except for "ANARCHY" sloppily painted in red across the window. Stuart, acting about as suspicious as possible, exits the store with a paper bag full of books. He is wearing a pull-over sweatshirt and large sunglasses - the Unabomber Disguise.

Int. Apartment - Bedroom - Saturday Afternoon

Sun streams in the window. We PAN over to the bed, where we see the titles of several pamphlets and books with type-only covers: "Art of the Kill," "Amateur Assassination," "50 Ways to Off Your Lover," "Clean Kills," etc.

Nancy and Stuart lazily lying on the bed, their legs overlapping, flipping through the books and trading them as if they were reading the Sunday New York Times together.

Nancy picks up a book with the title "27 Simple Murders" printed in plain Helvetica and off-center.

NANCY

This publisher could use a good graphic designer.

STUART

Do you know any good ones that are available?

Nancy kicks him with faux petulance.

STUART

(laughing)

Ow!

(re: book he's reading)

How about this?

He hands her the book (The title is simply, "KILL!, Vol. 5"). Nancy scrunches up her face in disgust.

NANCY

Too messy.

(Been on her mind)

Stuart, what about Officer Dan?

S
TUART

(cocky)

I think we're smarter than Officer Dan.

We hear the BRASS ENSEMBLE from above. Nancy and Stuart smile at each other and cozy closer together.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – The Next Day

Nancy and Stuart sit on the stairs, in crouched half hidden positions. Wearing yellow rubber gloves, they rapidly twist banisters back and forth. They're both hopped up on adrenaline.

NANCY

She's gone to the pharmacy, so we've got two hours.

STUART

The pharmacy is two blocks away.

NANCY

She likes to recount the pills.

Stuart twists a banister and it moves easily.

STUART

These are loose.

NANCY

(diligently twisting)

I noticed it when I was tacking down the carpet. I'm surprised she hasn't noticed it.

STUART

It's her own fault then.

Nancy stands and backs up against Mrs. Connelly's door.

NANCY

(miming it as she speaks)

Okay, little Mrs. Complains pitter-pats out, holds the railing for support, ancient railing collapses, over she goes, Aaaaaahhh. Tragic. One paragraph in the New York Post.

Stuart stands and puts his arm around Nancy's waist.

(CONTINUED)

S
TUART

You're sexy when you're evil.

They kiss. As they do so, the handrail starts to move, not out, but parallel with the stairs. The couple looks just as the banisters start to collapse on one another like dominos, gathering speed as it rounds the corner. The final banisters bounce wildly on the wood flooring. Two bounce up and SMASH into Nancy's antique stain glass.

NANCY
(*Stifled scream*)

STUART
At least they weren't that expensive.

Ext. 120 Prospect Park West – A Couple Days Later

The street lamps are striped with red plastic for the holiday season.

Fish-eye Lens

We watch Mrs. Connelly, in a black wool coat and wearing a small black hat with a semi-veil, as she pitter-pats toward the front door. She stops, and turns around as if she's forgotten something.

NANCY (O.C.)
Jesus Christ!

Close on

Nancy on the other side of her door, staring through the peephole impatiently.

Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous

Mrs. Connelly walks a couple of steps back, then mentally satisfies herself that she hasn't forgotten anything, turns and pitter-pats out.

Another Angle

The apartment door and Nancy jumps out and reconns the area like a commando. She is dressed in a black sweatsuit and wears black gloves.

(CONTINUED)

N
ANCY
(gesturing anxiously)
Go go go!

Stuart runs out, in black jeans, turtleneck and gloves, and scurries up the stairs. (We see it has be rebuilt, probably at some expense, with lots of clamps still in place; also, cardboard covers the broken stained glass). Nancy does a quick recon, and runs up the stairs after him.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Continuous

Stuart is crouching down in front of the lock, even though he is using the key. When the door opens, he clenches his fist like he's accomplished something. Nancy pushes him inside.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Continuous

Nancy shuts the door, quickly locks it; she's all business.

NANCY
Okay, she's going to be at the funeral for at least an hour; but let's be out of here in thirty.

STUART
Who died, anyway?

NANCY
The tuba player.

STUART
God does answer prayers.

NANCY
(anxious)
Let's move.

The two "break" and scurry in different directions. We follow Stuart as he scampers about the parlor, looking for dangers he can create. He picks up the praying hands sculpture and stands it up in Mrs. Connelly's chair. Thinking better of that, he puts it back.

Int. Mrs.

Connelly's Apartment – Bathroom – Continuous

Nancy runs in and scans quickly. Seeing that the new tiles in the shower don't match the old ones, she gets briefly heartsick. Then, remembering her mission, she starts going through all the bottles around Mrs. Connelly's sink and on top of her toilet tank. It's mostly beauty products. Nancy picks up a large jar of face cream.

NANCY

Chanel? I can't even afford Chanel.

Nancy opens the medicine cabinet; there are dozens of prescription bottles inside.

NANCY

(hushed excitement)

Jackpot.

In the Parlor – Continuous

Stuart fiddles with the brackets holding a very large crucifix hanging from the wall. The crucifix drops down and BANGS him on the head.

In the Bathroom – Continuous

Nancy is swapping medications in bottles, as quickly as possible.

NANCY

Little white pills in with other little white pills, tragic mix-up.

She puts the bottles back in the cabinet, and closes it. She looks in the shower, grimaces at the tiles again, and grabs a bottle of shampoo. She starts squirting some on the bottom of the bathtub.

NANCY (CONT.)

(shaking head)

So many accidents occur in the shower...

In the Parlor – Continuous

Stuart is sliding the giant Pietà clock from earlier so that it teeters a bit on the mantle.

(CONTINUED)

N
NANCY (O.C.)
(whispered shout)
No!

The clock starts to fall and Stuart barely catches it.
Nancy walks up to mantle and slides the clock back.

NANCY
If that falls on her, the irony – the
media will be all over it.

STUART
Good point.

NANCY
Stuart, are you bleeding?

A trickle of blood runs down the middle of Stuart's
forehead.

STUART
Am I?

NANCY
Let's not leave any of that in this
apartment.

Nancy holds the sides of Stuart's face, bends his head
down, and licks the blood off his forehead.

NANCY
(all business)
Let's get out of here.

SFX: Police Siren

They practically jump out of clothes. Stuart calms down
first.

STUART
The bird.

The both turn to look at the bird, which segues into a
BUGLE CALL.

NANCY
(suddenly concerned)
Oh, who will take care of Mr. Fawkes?

(
suddenly okay about it)
I guess we will.

STUART
(thinking out loud)
You know, remember when she said she
couldn't live without Mr. Fawkes?

NANCY
(horrified, near tears)
You take that back!

STUART
(backpedaling furiously)
I was just kidding. Kiddingkidding.

NANCY
It's not funny.
(then all business again)
We'd better get out of here.

They scurry toward the door; Stuart peels away from her.

STUART
One more thing!

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – A Few Moments Later

Nancy peeks out of the door anxiously.

NANCY
(loud whisper)
Hurry up!

Int. Mrs. Connelly Apartment – Kitchen – Continuous

Stuart lies on the floor next to stove, with the broiler
door open. He BLOWS several times hard.

STUART
And out goes the pilot.

He hops quickly to his feet, and turns the oven on.

STUART
An hour at 375 should do it.

Nancy sticks her head in the door.

N
ANCY

Did you blow out the pilot for the
burners?

Just as Stuart turns back toward the stove, he is instantly enveloped in a HUGE FIREBALL. It burns off quickly, leaving his face sooty and his hair frazzled.

Ext. D'Agastino's on Seventh Avenue – Park Slope – Night

There are Christmas decorations in the window.

Close on

A grocery shelf containing various burn ointments. Nancy's hand reaches in and takes several tubes of each.

Int. D'Agastino's – Continuous

Nancy walks down the aisle with her shopping basket (which noticeably contains a cartoon of eggnog). Even in relaxed moment like this, she is a little jittery, as if somebody might be watching her.

She notices something, and grabs a bottle of cleanser off the shelf, reading the back.

Close on bottle

It reads, "Warning: May Irritate Skin."

Nancy makes a DISMISSIVE SOUND and puts the bottle back. She quickly picks up another one.

Close on bottle

It reads, "Harmful or fatal if swallowed."

Nancy throws that one in her basket, which we now see also has several boxes of rat poison in it.

Int. Apartment – Entranceway – A Half Hour Later

Nancy walks in WHISTLING that tune the brass band had played earlier.

NANCY
(calling)
Sweetie?!

S
TUART (O.C.)

In here!

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – A Moment Later

Nancy enters to find Stuart on a ladder, sawing a hole in the ceiling.

STUART
(slightly manic)
I feel like Sylvester up here.
(turns to Nancy, does not-great impression)
Sthufferin' Sthuccotash, I'm gonna get that granny if ith the lasth thing I do!

He LAUGHS oddly, his face crimson from first-and-second degree burns and shiny from various unguents. There are a few tiny blisters on his forehead; his eyebrows are partially missing. All this, combined with his chipper demeanor, create a somewhat frightening effect.

Nancy approaches and surveys the hole. In addition to the crude circle torn out of the ceiling, the support beams have been sawed through nearly to the point of breaking.

NANCY
(gentle criticism)
Sweetie, aren't the police going to know you sawed through the floor? I mean, they're going to see the
(gestures sawing, can't think of the right word)
Saw marks.

STUART
Not after our friends the termite are through with it.

Stuart produces a glass vial with bugs in it.

NANCY
Where'd you get termites?

STUART
Pet store.

N

ANCY

People keep termites as pets?

STUART

(shrugs)

New York. I don't know, maybe something eats them.

NANCY

(impressed)

Wow, that is really – that's like something out of a book.

STUART

(excited by the thought)

Oh, you think I should save it for the book?

(reconsiders)

No, no, priorities.

Stuart gently pushes the live termites into the cuts in the support beams.

STUART

Eat, my pretties.

Stuart sets off the ladder, and almost onto Nancy, who is crouched down, picking up pieces of fallen ceiling plaster.

STUART

(worried)

What are you doing?

NANCY

I'm picking up –

STUART

(insistent)

You can't pick up.

NANCY

But it's... dirty.

STUART

It's debris. We need debris!

Stuart takes the debris out of Nancy's hands and puts it back down. He musses it up for good measure. Nancy back off. She stands and surveys the room.

(CONTINUED)

N
NANCY

You know, as long as we're putting a hole in the ceiling, this might be a better place for a staircase. We could turn the two front rooms into a split level living-slash-entertainment area.

STUART
(*distracted*)

I thought this was supposed to be my office.

NANCY
It could be that, too.

Stuart exits. Nancy doesn't really notice.

NANCY
A den-slash-media room.

Stuart returns, lugging the wooden pyramid. He places it right under the ceiling hole.

STUART
A little insurance.

NANCY
(*upset*)
You can't — that cost \$600!

This is news to Stuart. But he just shakes his head, amused.

STUART
The best six hundred bucks we ever spent.

Nancy appraises the scene, unhappily.

NANCY
It just doesn't look right there.

STUART
Function over form.

NANCY
Shouldn't you at least clean the debris out from under it?

S
TUART
You're thinking!

Nancy kneels down; Stuart tips the pyramid up and she sweeps the debris from under it.

STUART
You are the evil genius.

NANCY
(laughs)
No, you are.

He tilts the pyramid back down. They kiss over the top, then look up. We follow their gaze to the hole, and then through the floor to:

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Parlor – Continuous

The "trap" lies a few feet between Mrs. Connelly's chair and her TV set. We watch from the trap's POV as Mrs. Connelly patters down the hall right at it. She stops inches from it and turns around.

Music from TV (Very Loud): "Quincy" Theme

The camera swings to follow Mrs. Connelly as she walks right by the trap, missing it by inches. She sits in her chair innocently.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

Stuart and Nancy sit on the bed. Stuart stares up at the hole; Nancy down at the pyramid.

STUART
Is that the theme from "Barnaby Jones"?

NANCY
(re:pyramid)
The police are going to know that piece doesn't belong there.

STUART
Not Barnaby Jones. This is going to drive me crazy.

N
ANCY

Stuart, I don't feel good about this.
Could we move it about five feet that
way?

STUART

If we move it five feet that way, it
won't be under the hole.

Nancy frowns. Stuart hugs her.

STUART

It's only for a little while, honey.
Then you can move it anywhere you
little heart desires.

Dissolve to much later

Stuart is dog-tired; Nancy has her arms around her knees
and is rocking nervously. From above we hear:

WOMAN ON TV (VERY LOUD)

I thought our lack of intimacy was my
husband's fault, but you made me
realize it was my hair. It was a ratty
mess.

NANCY

(through gritted teeth)

I. Hate. That. There.

From above, we hear a chair leg SQUEAK on the floor.

STUART

(urgent whisper)

She's getting up.

Stuart and Nancy watch the ceiling, listening as Mrs.
Connelly's PITTER-PATTING FOOTSTEPS seem to come right up
to the trap but then again miss it by inches.

NANCY

Shit.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment - Kitchenette - Continuous

She reaches behind an oatmeal box and pulls out a bottle of
cheap scotch. She fills a small Pebbles jelly jar to the
brim, and starts pattering back.

(CONTINUED)

Trap's POV

She stops at the precipice.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Parlor – Continuous

She places her jelly jar full of whisky on top of the TV, and starts changing the channels. From the TV, we hear a quite loud PING-PONG MATCH accompanied by with EXCITED JAPANESE COMMENTARY. The vibration caused by this causes the jelly jar to slide off and SHATTER on the ground.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, dear.

In Stuart and Nancy's Bedroom

As he hears Mrs. Connelly PATTERN back toward the kitchen, Stuart throws up his arms in EXASPERATION. Nancy stares at the pyramid.

NANCY

(miming this)

Maybe if I rotate it...

In Mrs. Connelly's Parlor

Mrs. Connelly patters back from the kitchen with a sponge, dustpan and brush. She looks down and sees a lot of the broken glass is under the TV's rolling cart.

In Stuart and Nancy's Bedroom

Nancy climbs off the bed and starts to fiddle with the pyramid. Stuart rolls his eyes.

In Mrs. Connelly's Parlor

Mrs. Connelly starts to push the TV cart away from the spill.

Trap's POV

The rolling cart barrels right at it. We hear the WOOD CRACKING. We quickly switch to:

TV's POV

The floors gives way, revealing Nancy, looking up in surprise. The camera plummets towards her.

**On the Gaping Hole
in the Ceiling**

Mrs. Connelly peers over the edge.

Her POV

Nancy's lower torso is pinned under the TV. She still has her hands on the pyramid.

On Mrs. Connelly

Looking down.

MRS. CONNELLY

Goodness. I could have fallen through there.

Ext. Building – The Next Morning

The police car is in front again.

Close on

Officer Sandra's face.

OFFICER SANDRA

("Let me get this straight")

The television set fell through the floor and landed directly on your wife.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

Stuart sits on the bed, trying to act casual. Officer Sandra is taking the report. Officer Dan is kicking through the broken wood on the floor.

STUART

Some kind of a freak accident, huh?

OFFICER DAN

What the hell happened to your face?

STUART

(practiced casual, too fast)

Oh, I had one of those chemical peels. They burn off the top layer of skin. It makes you look years younger.

O

OFFICER DAN

You should sue whoever did that to you.

(pointing up)

You're going to need to get that fixed right away. Mrs. Connelly said she nearly fell through there.

STUART

We're getting some estimates.

OFFICER DAN

Right away, Dr. Phibes. And you owe Mrs. Connelly a new TV.

(before Stuart can respond)

A nice one.

We here a METALLIC CLACKING O.C. Nancy enters, carrying a tray. The lower part of her leg is in a cast; the rest is wrapped in a bandage. A jointed steel armature surrounds her whole leg like a scaffolding; Metal pins go into her leg just above and below her knee and at hip level. Nancy CLACKS over to the Officer Dan with great difficulty.

NANCY

I have to apologize for all the debris.
Would you like a cookie?

Ext. Building – Evening – Establishing

On TV

A clip from "Tweety's S.O.S." (1951)

GRANNY

I'll teach you to molest helpless
little birdies.

Granny starts whacking SLYVESTER with an umbrella.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous

Where Stuart sits on the bed watching this, pen poised over a yellow legal pad. He grimaces and fast-forwards. We WIDEN to reveal Nancy is handing a check over to a SENIOR WORKMAN as his workers cart off their ladders and tools.

NANCY

I know it's late, but it would be great
if you could clean up now.

(CONTINUED)

(
 off his blank stare)
Or you could come back in the morning.

 SENIOR WORKMAN
We don't clean up.

He walks off.

On TV

A clip from "To Beep or Not to Beep," (1963) in which Wile E. Coyote is victimized by his own catapult three times in quick succession.

Back to Scene

Stuart throws his pen down onto his legal pad.

 STUART
This is a waste of time.

He clicks off the TV. Nancy is laboriously using her good leg to "sweep" all the debris into a pile.

 NANCY
That check's going to bounce.

Stuart gets up and starts to pace. Nancy awkwardly lowers herself to the floor to continue her clean-up.

 STUART
 (thinking out loud)
Okay, all right, after Mrs. Connelly,
"moves out," we'll have to sublet the
upstairs until we can get back on our
feet. We can probably get, what,
fifteen-hundred? More?

Nancy is lying on her side, sweeping with her hand.

 NANCY
If somebody dies in an apartment, don't
you have to tell?

 STUART
It's a great apartment; no one's going
to care about that.

N
ANCY
I would.

STUART
(sarcastic)
Oh, golly, I guess we'll just have to
lie then.

NANCY
(sitting up)
You know, Stuart, I think we're being
too smart for own good.

STUART
Smart?

NANCY
We're making everything overly
complicated. Maybe it should just be
something simple.

STUART
Push her down the stairs, you mean.

NANCY
That might not work.

STUART
If it doesn't, we carry her back up and
push her down again.

As Stuart says this, he casually puts one hand on the fireplace mantle. It CRUMBLES away, causing him to TOPPLE over. The rest of the mantle FALLS in pieces on top of him. As he emerges from the rubble, we see several termites crawling across his face.

Int. Apartment - Entranceway - Very Late That Night

Stuart and Nancy are again in their commando outfits. Nancy looks out the peephole, holding a pillow.

STUART
I still think this is going to look
suspicious.

N
ANCY

Old people die in their sleep all the time. Especially with all the excitement she's had lately.

STUART
(realizing)
Is that my pillow?

NANCY
Mine's too fluffy.

STUART
Why can't we use one of her pillows?

NANCY
I don't want to leave face prints.

Stuart CHUCKLES, and kisses the back of her neck. Nancy puts a finger to his lips, and opens the door.

Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous

The two begin to "scurry" up the steps, except of course, Nancy is limping wildly. As she goes up the steps, we hear a loud SQUEAK. They freeze. Nancy signals it's all right; She reaches into her pocket, pulls out a tiny can of oil and applies some to the joints of her leg brace. They continue up the stairs silently.

Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Doorway – Moments Later

It's completely dark. Two dark figures enter.

STUART
(whisper)
Which bedroom is she in?

NANCY
The cute one.
(after a long beat)
Second door down.

They creep toward the hallway when they hear the distinct sound of a MATCH BEING LIT. They turn quickly.

The flame hovers
in the air above Mrs. Connelly's chair. After a moment, the
red tip of a cigarette glows, illuminating Mrs. Connelly's
seemingly disembodied eyes, staring sternly.

STUART
(stifled scream)

NANCY
(thinking quickly)
Mrs. Connelly, we thought you might be
cold, so we brought you an extra
pillow.

They drop the pillow and run out.

Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous

They tear down the stairs as quickly as possible. Nancy
turns toward their door, but Stuart grabs her and pulls her
toward the door to the outside.

Ext. Building – Front Stoop – Continuous

Stuart and Nancy half stumble down the stairs. Nancy
resists being pulled any further.

NANCY
What are you—?

Stuart picks her up in his arms, and runs across the
street.

STUART
We are so fucked. We are so fucked. We
are so fucked.

He reaches the other side of Prospect Park West, runs
across the sidewalk, and DUMPS Nancy over the stone wall
leading into the park.

NANCY
*(surprised, then pained
noise)*

Stuart dives over the wall after her.

**Ext. Prospect Park
– Other Side of Fence – Continuous**

They lie on the ground. From their breaths, we can see it's well below freezing.

NANCY
What are you doing?

STUART
She's calling the police!

NANCY
You don't know—

STUART
She always calls the police!

NANCY
(realizing he's right)
Fucking Officer Dan!

STUART
(whiny, panicked)
We're going to have to go on the lam.
Where do you want to live? It can't be
Los Angeles. It's got to be someplace
like Idaho.

NANCY
(taking control)
I am not moving to Idaho. Now, calm
down. Let's just see if the police show
up. If they do, we'll hop the F to
Coney Island and hide out there.

STUART
(takes two deep breaths)
Okay. Good plan.

Ext. Prospect Park – Viewed from Street Side – Continuous

There is a beat of silence.

STUART (FROM BEHIND WALL)
(sarcastic, quoting her)
"We thought you might be cold, so we
brought you an extra pillow" ?

N
NANCY (FROM BEHIND WALL)
Better than you screaming.

They both CHUCKLE. A beat, then:

STUART
I'm freezing.

Dissolve to:

Ext. Prospect Park – Viewed from Street Side – Dawn

Ext. Prospect Park – Other Side of Fence – Continuous

Stuart and Nancy are curled up together on the ground, spooning. There is frost in their hair. Nancy awakes.

Ext. Prospect Park – Street Side – a Few Moments Later

Stuart climbs over the wall, and helps Nancy over. They start walking back toward their apartment, shivering. Nancy's leg apparatus is CREAKING LOUDLY.

STUART
I can't feel my toes. I guess they're gone.

NANCY
Well, at least she didn't call the cops.

STUART
Yet.

NANCY
(hardened)
Right. We can't waste any time. From now on, no more fooling around.

Int. Building – Foyer – Afternoon

Nancy, dressed to go outside, exits her apartment and closes the door. She checks a shopping list in her pocket. It reads, "Rope, Hammer, Nails (long), Small Ax." She puts it in her pocket, and starts to CREAK toward the door.

MRS. CONNELLY (O.C.)
Miss Payne?

(CONTINUED)

Nancy stops, but
does not turn to address Mrs. Connelly.

NANCY
Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY
Could you come up here a moment?

NANCY
(again without turning)
The second I get back from the hardware
store, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY
I'm afraid it can't wait.

Nancy pivots on her brace leg, and starts up the stairs. As she does, she surreptitiously slips her shopping list into mouth.

Int. Building – Second Floor Landing

Nancy walks up to Mrs. Connelly and smiles at her.

NANCY
(not opening mouth)
Hmmm?

MRS. CONNELLY
First of all, dear, thank you for the
pillow last night. That was very sweet
of you.

Nancy isn't quite sure what's up.

NANCY
(with wad of paper in mouth)
You're welcome.

MRS. CONNELLY
But the other thing, I hope you won't
be mad. Officer Dan told me to buy a
nice new TV and give you the bill, but
when I ordered it, I didn't realize it
would be so expensive.

Nancy peeks in Mrs. Connelly apartment. It's a flat screen,
cinema aspect-ratio HDTV monitor.

M

RS. CONNELLY (CONT.)

It gets a much better picture than my old TV. And it has a sleep timer, so if I fall asleep watching it, it'll turn itself off.

NANCY

(swallowing paper)

That's great.

Mrs. Connelly hands her the bill.

MRS. CONNELLY

They said they have easy financing.

NANCY

(big smile)

Enjoy your new TV, Mrs. Connelly.

Ext. Tompkins Square Park – Night

Stuart, looking very suspicious, walks through the park. A man approaches him.

DEALER

Smoke. Smoke.

STUART

(to dealer)

Gun. Gun. Need to buy a gun.

The dealer looks at him askance, and hurries off.

Ext. Brooklyn – Desolate Lot by the East River – Later

Stuart stands with a GUN DEALER behind an old beat-up car.

GUN DEALER

Is this for protection or are you taking proactive measures?

STUART

(very nervous)

What I need is a starter gun. I mean, I real gun, though, not a starter's pistol.

GUN DEALER

I gotcha.

(CONTINUED)

The dealer pops
the trunk; it's loaded with guns. Stuart eyes widen and he
makes emits a small EEP.

GUN DEALER

(suspicious)

You're not going to shoot up a
schoolyard, are you?

STUART

No, no, nothing like that.

(beat)

Do I look like the kind of person who
would shoot up a schoolyard?

GUN DEALER

You look a little crazy, yes.

STUART

I've been under a lot of stress.

GUN DEALER

(looking closer)

Did somebody throw acid in your face?

STUART

No, no. Cosmetic thing.

GUN DEALER

Acid in the face, you could probably
swing self-defense. Okay, here we go.

(displaying gun)

Black Widow, your basic 22-caliber
revolver. Five hundred dollars.

STUART

\$500? It cost half that on the Web!

GUN DEALER

I offer more personalized service than
on the Web. Now that comes fully
loaded, but if you're going on any kind
of spree, you're going to need more
bullets.

STUART

No, I'm sure whatever's in there's
fine.

(
 reaching into pocket)
Cash, right?

The dealer gives him a "what do you think, dumb fuck?" stare. Stuart counts out almost all of his money and hands it to the dealer.

GUN DEALER
Thank you. And, oh, one last thing: I'm
a cop.

Stuart face is filled with abject terror. He drops to his knees, losing it.

STUART
(wailing)
You don't understand, we've haven't
slept in months! She crippled my wife!
So many unauthorized repairs!

GUN DEALER
(laughs)
Lighten up, buddy. I'm just telling you
so you know you've got a clean piece
here. And also, so you know: if you do
end up in the legal system, and there's
even a suggestion I might have been
involved, you are dead, your wife is
dead, your children are dead.

Stuart stands up, SNIFFLING.

STUART
We don't have any children; we're
waiting a couple of years.
(Off his look, soberly)
But I understand.

GUN DEALER
Good. Don't shoot anybody I wouldn't
shoot.

The dealer gets in the car.

STUART
Listen, I know you're probably going
back to Manhattan, but if you could
swing by Park Slope...

G

GUN DEALER

I'm not a fucking cab. This is the end of the line.

STUART

But you drove me out here. And, as I'm sure you know, this is pretty dicey neighborhood.

GUN DEALER

What are you worried about? You've got a gun.

(points)

Did you piss yourself?

STUART

(looking down)

Yes, I guess I did.

Int. Apartment – Parlor – A Couple of Hours Later

The gun sits on a supercute coffee table. Stuart stands, staring down at it with great moment. Nancy, sitting, looks at it anxiously. After a long silence.

STUART

(sigh)

So it's come to this.

Nancy picks the gun off the table.

NANCY

I don't think I've ever even held a gu-

The gun GOES OFF. The bullet BLASTS through Stuart's crotch and SHATTERS a lamp behind him.

NANCY

The Tiffany! (ALT: The Gallé!)

Ext. Hospital Tk – Early Morning

Int. Hospital – Patient's Room – Continuous

Nancy sits by Stuart's side, tightly holding his hand, as his surgeon nonchalantly briefs him.

(CONTINUED)

D
DOCTOR

Okay. We can't find one testicle. It's, uh... gone. The other one, we're going to have to take a wait and see attitude.

NANCY

Will he still be able to have children?

DOCTOR

Stranger things have happened. As to the rest of the, apparatus, well, we did what we could, for now. Reconstructive surgery can do some amazing things; I mean, they can turn a woman into a man, so, well, there, that's where we are.

Nancy smiles bravely at Stuart.

Dissolve to later

Officer Sandra and Officer Dan are taking a report.

OFFICER SANDRA

It's been our experience that when a woman shoots her husband in the genitals, it's usually not an accident.

OFFICER DAN

(smiling)

I'm sorry for your loss.

Int. Ball's Magazine – Hallway – Several Nights Later

A jolly Christmas Party is in progress.

Music: "Santa, Baby" by Neko Case or somebody cool.

A model in a red fur-lined bikini and a Santa hat walks past with a tray of red and green Jello shots. Stuart enters frame, hobbling badly, accompanied by Kevin.

KEVIN

(a little drunk)

Shitty way to celebrate the holidays, man, with your balls blown off.

STUART

Yeah, it's not great.

(CONTINUED)

Kevin stops as
Stuart continues out of frame.

KEVIN
(calling)
The alcohol's free all night!

Int. Ball's Magazine – Brownie's Office – Moments Later

Stuart walks in; Brownie is perched on the front corner of her desk, in a tight, tiny elf's costume.

BROWNIE
Close the door, Stewey.

Stuart closes the door, and hobbles into the chair furthest from Brownie. She picks up her Cosmopolitan and moves close to him. She puts her hand on his shoulder.

BROWNIE
Bad news. You sacked.

STUART
(not quite clear)
Excuse me?

BROWNIE
You've had any number of unapproved absences.

STUART
I was in the hospital.

BROWNIE
And despite in what low regard you hold what we do here, that does not justify your passing off someone else's work as your own.

STUART
(gritted teeth)
Fucking Charlie.

BROWNIE
He didn't have to tell me. I knew you couldn't have written this.

She opens a magazine to a short article with the title, "Thank You, Ma'am!"

B
ROWNIE

It's the best feckin' thing we've had
in this magazine this year.

STUART
(really eating shit)
Look. Give me another chance.

BROWNIE
Frankly, Stewey, I don't feel you have
what it takes
(makes a clenched fist)
to work here at Balls magazine.

STUART
(resigned)
Yeah. Okay. Look, would it be possible
for give me an advance on my bonus?

BROWNIE
It's a year-end bonus. And you didn't
make it until the end of the year, now
did you?

Stuart looks really desperate.

STUART
Listen. Uh. Uh. If there's anything I
can do.
(last ditch)
You know, you look really hot tonight.
I, uh, I'd love to, uh, make you happy.

He pushes his head toward her crotch. She matter-of-factly
pushes it away.

BROWNIE
No thank you.

With nothing left to lose, Stuart stands up and starts
backing away from Brownie, angrily.

STUART
Fuck you. Fuck you. Fuh-uck you.
Fuckyoufuckyoufuckyou. Fuck you!

B
ROWNIE

(casual)

Then I take it you're not taking our severance package. But then, you've already had one.

From the darkness in the back of the office we hear:

CHARLIE (IN SHADOW)

Severance package. Oh, Brownie, you are delicious!

Ext. Times Square – Night

Stuart hobbles past a festive tableau, hunched over bracing himself from the cold, strongly evoking Ratso Rizzo.

Int. Nondescript Meeting Room – Midtown Somewhere

Stuart enters and takes a seat on a folding chair next to a BIG GUY.

At the front of the room is a podium, with a banner behind it which reads, "Men Accepting Non-Voluntary Genital Loss." TOM G is speaking.

TOM G

Well, Tom, a lot of you are probably asking, is what was I doing fixing my lawnmower in the middle of November while lying underneath it completely naked? All I can say is, hindsight is 20/20.

Back of the Room

The Big Guy, who we now see is wearing a MANGL button, turns to Stuart.

BIG GUY

You're new here.

STUART

(eyes forward)

Yeah.

BIG GUY

We're here to talk about it. I'm Frank.

S
TUART

I'm Ben.

FRANK
Share with me, Ben.

Stuart points to the front of the room, as if he's engrossed in Tom G's story.

Front of Room

TOM G

The doctors at Bellevue – who I can't say enough good things about – managed to retrieve the... severed member... from the grass bag. There was a lot of grass and dirt in the "area," so rather than risk infection, they've grafted the unit until my arm here, to keep it alive until they can transplant.

Tom G holds up his arm to reveal a small bandaged appendage on the forearm. The crowd MURMURS in interest.

TOM G
Wanna see me give it a boner?

Tom G flexes his muscle. The appendage rises slightly. The crowd APPLAUDS enthusiastically. One man in the front row has been brought to tears.

In the Back

Frank continues to chat up Stuart.

FRANK
I'll start. In the profession I have chosen, one does not sexually pleasure one's bosses' mistress.

STUART
(without looking at him)
My wife shot one of my balls off.

FRANK
(turns to look ahead as well)
At least you didn't have to eat yours.

Stuart puts it all together. He gets an idea.

S
TUART

Say, Frank, in this profession you have
chosen... do you freelance?

Ext. Thompson Street Near Houston – Day

It's a Italian restaurant with no name on front and a burly
Italian standing at the door.

Int. Restaurant – Continuous

It's old world Italian, all male middle-aged waiters. We
PAN across several booths, where serious gentlemen appear
to be discussing important businesses. Frank sits in a
booth between Stuart and Nancy. A graphite iBook special
edition sits between them.

On the Computer Screen

Using Nancy's CGI design program, we enter Mrs. Connelly's
apartment (which she has recreated fairly well from memory)
and turn toward the parlor.

NANCY (O.C.)

The door will be unlocked. Once you get
in, okay, I realize this is horribly
cluttered, but we're going to go for a
much cleaner look...

STUART (O.C.)

Nancy...

NANCY (O.C.)

(Back to business)

You might find her here.

The computer's camera swivels toward Mrs. Connelly chair,
which has a virtual little old lady sitting it.

Back to Scene

Nancy expertly maneuvers her finger around the touch pad.

NANCY

Or she might be in her bedroom, that's
down the hall, second door on the
right...

Frank nods his head.

F
RANK

When do you want this done?

STUART

As soon as possible.

NANCY

Tomorrow night?

FRANK

That's Christmas Eve. I like to spend
Christmas Eve with my family.

STUART

It's Christmas Eve?
(to Nancy, apologetic)
I didn't get you anything.

Nancy gives Stuart and good-natured "forget about it" wave.

FRANK

I could do it later, after the kids go
to bed.

Stuart and Nancy nod their heads. That sounds good.

Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Christmas Eve – Night

Stuart and Nancy lie in bed in the dark, staring at the
ceiling for a long beat.

STUART

I'm having second thoughts.

NANCY

It was your idea! Ice floe?

STUART

We both had the idea. I just said it
first.

A beat.

NANCY

I never thought of myself as the kind
of person who would hire an assassin to
kill a little old lady.

Another beat.

S
TUART

I feel bad about myself.

Suddenly, we hear a LOUD CRASHING O.C. Stuart and Nancy jump out of bed.

Int. Apartment – Library – A Moment Later

Stuart rushes in, and reaches for a light switch. As he turns on the light, a crowbar SMASHES his hand.

STUART
(severe discomfort sound)

In the light, we see Frank, whirling around with the crowbar, smashing everything.

FRANK
Ho, ho, ho, Merry Christmas.

Nancy looks around in horror. The leaded glass bookshelves, the hutches, all the antiques, smashed.

NANCY
(screams)
What the fuck are you doing?!!!

Frank stops. Seeing them, he looks sheepish.

FRANK
(drunk)
Making it look like a robbery.
(shields eyes with hand)
Wrong floor. Fucking shit.
(defensive)
I had a couple of drinks, okay? Have you ever killed anyone? Well, me neither.

STUART
(holding crushed hand)
Look, let's just forget--

FRANK
No, no. Deal's deal.

Frank pulls a gun out of his waistband and staggers out the door.

**Int. Building –
Foyer – Continuous**

Stuart and Nancy run after him, but Frank is already bounding up the stairs. He throws open Mrs. Connelly's door, RIPPING the door chain apart easily. He rushes in. Nancy and Stuart watch in horror as they hear:

MRS. CONNELLY
(Scream)

Frank staggers out of the door backwards. The praying hands sculpture has been plunged into his chest. A moment later, Mrs. Connelly runs out and LEAPS onto Frank's chest like a ATTACKING BABOON. He falls against the railing, which collapses. They plunge together onto the stairs, and down to the floor.

Nancy and Stuart rush up. Frank is clearly dead, the gun in his open palm. Mrs. Connelly is MOANING in pain. The couple stares down at them.

NANCY
(to Stuart, hysterical)
Finish her! Finish her!

STUART
What?

Nancy bends down, pulls her pajama sleeve over her hand, and picks up the gun.

NANCY
(a jumble of words)
He broke in. She stabbed him. He shot her. She stabbed him he shot her.
(Pressing gun on Stuart)
Do it! Do it! Do it!

Stuart, in a daze, takes the gun. He looks down at Mrs. Connelly. He sees she has a series of numbers written on her forearm in blue.

STUART
(hysterical)
Hitler couldn't kill her! What chance do we have?

Nancy looks down. She bends over, licks her finger and rubs it on the numbers. They smear off.

(CONTINUED)

N
ANCY

That's the number of the Park Slope
police department.

She stands up and takes the gun from Stuart. She takes
careful aim. She can't do it. Her arms go limp.

NANCY (CONT.)

We suck.

Stuart puts his arm around her shoulder.

STUART

Yep.

NANCY

We'll never be rich.

STUART

Don't have what it takes.

(kisses her on the head)

I'll go call an ambulance.

He exits. She bends down and puts her hand gently on Mrs.
Connelly.

NANCY

Mrs. Connelly, try not to move. Do you
want some water? Can I get you
anything?

Int. Apartment - Library - Some Time Later

Bernard leads another young couple through the apartment.
It battered (and a lot of glass is missing) but it's still
pretty impressive.

BERNARD

As you can see, it's a real handy man's
dream. The owners are asking for
considerably less than they paid, and
they're very motivated. They had to
move upstate suddenly.

Int. Building - Foyer - Moment Later

Bernard exits the apartment with the couple.

(CONTINUED)

B
ERNARD

Oh, and here's Mrs. Connelly!

Mrs. Connelly has been making her way toward the stairs, leaning on a three-footed cane. She turns to the young couple.

MRS. CONNELLY

Are you looking at the apartment? The young couple that was here before you, they were so nice. I wish they could have stayed.

Mrs. Connelly turns back toward the stairs, and stops.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, these stairs will be the death of me. If only I had one of those elevator chairs, that carry you up...

WIFE

That would be nice.

HUSBAND

But I imagine they're quite expensive.

MRS. CONNELLY

Yes, I suppose you are right.

With great effort, she makes it up the first step. . The couple share a knowing glance.

Close on

Mrs. Connelly's shopping bag. On the top we see a pamphlet that reads, "American People With Disabilities Act: Know Your Rights!"

Credits

Over Credits

Int. State Women's Prison - Nancy's Cell - Day

Nancy is walking around the cell, trying to demonstrate what she's talking about.

N
ANCY

I'm just saying the whole thing is a little boxy. But if we angle the bed a little, it'll make a kind of "conversation pit" with the toilet, which we should get some sort of pretty fabric to drape over it.

Nancy's cellmate, who has killed at least a couple of people, seems interested but not convinced.

NANCY'S CELLMATE
Guards won't let you move the beds.

NANCY
Have you asked them? Nice?

Int. State Men's Prison – Stuart's Cell – Day

Sitting on the floor, Stuart sets his portable typewriter on the toilet. He rolls in a piece of paper.

STUART
(to himself, confident)
I can write a novel in five to eight years...

Stuart thinks. He starts typing.

On the Typewriter

It reads:

"Untitled"

By Stuart Rosenbaum

Back to Scene

He puts in another piece of paper. He types.

On the Typewriter

For
Nancy

Back to Scene

He smiles, and puts in another piece of paper. He thinks. A very large hand is placed on his shoulder.

VOICE OF VERY BIG MAN (O.C.)

Excuse me, I need you over here for a second.

Cut to Black

The End