

**Duplex**

By

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Second 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 chessboard, an old Jewish man CACKLES at a black teen contemplating his next move. Dogs WRESTLE HAPPILY as their owners flirt shamelessly.

**Music: "Sunny Side of the Street," by Rickie Lee Jones**

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, Sub-zero refrigerator, cabinets everywhere, and...

REAL ESTATE AGENT

You've got a butler's pantry here.

WOMAN

A butler's pantry!

MAN

Jeeves will be delighted.

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

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

She giddily clutches the arm of WILLIAM, who does not seem entirely pleased to be here.

MATTHEW

*(exiting, with a wave)*

Dumb waiter...

William stops to look at the dumb waiter, but is lovingly yanked by Alex into:

**Int. Apartment –  
Parlor – Continuous**

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

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

MATTHEW

*(gesturing around vaguely)*

Built-ins, built-ins, built-ins... all the original moldings.

ALEX

*(huskily, to William)*

Original moldings.

WILLIAM

How old is this place anyway?

MATTHEW

I'd have to check. 1881 sounds right.

WILLIAM

*(not a good thing)*

Old.

MATTHEW

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

WILLIAM

*(bad and worse things)*

Carved up. In the eighties.

ALEX

*(twirling around slowly)*

This entire house is an antique!

William shoots her a "remember what we discussed" look. Alex assumes her "buyer's face."

ALEX

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

M  
ATTHEW

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

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

MATTHEW  
*(pointing down)*  
Inlaid parquet floors...  
*(with a wave)*  
...original pressed tin in the hearth of the fireplaces.

ALEX  
*(buyer's face vanishes)*  
Fireplace-es?

MATTHEW  
There's also one in the bedroom.

ALEX  
*(cozying up to William)*  
Fireplace in the bedroom.

She waggles her eyebrows saucily. He half-smirks in return.

**Int. Apartment – Library – Continuous**

Matthew has moved on.

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

ALEX  
William's a writer.

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

WILLIAM  
Captions, mostly.

This was as Matthew expected.

ALEX  
William wrote a novel. Which would look great

(  
*she indicates a wall of  
bookcases with an outsized  
spokesmodel flourish*)  
in these magnificent, built-in antique  
bookcases!

WILLIAM  
*(to Matthew, quasi-humble)*  
It was a small book. Literary, kind of.  
You probably never, it was called "A  
Coming of Age."

MATTHEW  
I'm sorry. I don't read books.  
*(slides bookshelf doors)*  
Leaded glass doors.

ALEX  
*(still in spokesmodel mode)*  
All your books. Behind leaded glass.

WILLIAM  
*(explaining again)*  
Mostly I just own paperbacks. Trade  
paperbacks.

MATTHEW  
*(pointing up)*  
Curved canvas ceilings... the sellers  
used this as a formal dining room.

ALEX  
*(dreamily)*  
A formal dining room.

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

ALEX  
*(gesturing)*  
It is at the top of our price range.

WILLIAM  
*(gesturing above her)*  
Over the top.

A  
LEX  
*(clasping his hand lovingly)*  
At the tippy top.

MATTHEW  
Would you like to see the bedroom?

ALEX  
Of course.

She squeezes William's hand tightly.

**Int. Apartment – Hallway – Continuous**

Matthew leads them past an 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).

MATTHEW  
New construction, obviously.

WILLIAM  
From the eighties.

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

ALEX  
Oh, that would be pretty!

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous**

They walk into the light.

MATTHEW  
This is the bedroom.

Alex actually GASPS. Even William looks impressed. Seeing their faces, Matthew steps up his sales pitch.

M  
ATTHEW

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.

ALEX  
*(caressing fireplace)*  
Wow. Who could have done this?

MATTHEW  
Craftsmen.

ALEX  
I miss craftsman.

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

ALEX  
A nook!  
*(turning excitedly to  
William)*  
A writer's nook.

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

WILLIAM  
I could do some writing there.

ALEX  
Or it could be a nursery!

William resumes his previous attitude.

**Int. Apartment – Library – Moments Later**

The three emerge from the hallway.

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

William stops at the spiral planter, looks at it.

A

LEX (O.C.)

Can you call us if anybody else makes one?

MATTHEW (O.C.)

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

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

WILLIAM

Excuse me, is this a stairway?

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

MATTHEW

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

WILLIAM

There's another floor?

MATTHEW

It's on the listing sheet I gave you.

ALEX

*(looking at listing sheet)*

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

Alex, standing right next to Matthew, turns to William with an almost accusatory look. Matthew smiles patronizingly.



W  
ILLIAM

You two make a persuasive sales pitch,  
*(pointing up)*  
but why's it sealed off? Were there a  
slew of murders up there? You have to  
tell us if there were.

MATTHEW  
*(smarmy chuckle)*

Well, actually I don't have to tell you  
— we got that law overturned — but it's  
nothing like that. It's just, there's a  
sweet old lady who lives up there...

WILLIAM  
*(there's the rub)*

A tenant.

MATTHEW  
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.

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

ALEX  
Can we meet her?

Matthew CHUCKLES, in a chortling sort of way.

**Int. Building — Foyer — Moments Later**

As they climb the stairs, Alex caresses the wood banisters.

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

ALEX  
William!

**Int. Building — Second Floor Landing — Continuous**

Matthew stops at a door in mid-landing.

M  
MATTHEW

*(that chuckle again)*

It's a legitimate question. No, you can't evict her. She has to decide to leave, or...

Matthew lets that hang out there.

MATTHEW (CONT.)

*(as if changing the subject)*

Poor thing hasn't been feeling well.

He KNOCKS, loudly.

MATTHEW (CONT.)

She's hard of hearing.

The three stand there for a long beat.

MATTHEW (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.

MATTHEW (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.

Alex's eyes widen in expectation; William 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.

M  
RS. CONNELLY

Matthew!

MATTHEW  
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, Matthew.

**On Matthew**

Alex peeks over his shoulder into the apartment.

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

Matthew steps back to reveal Alex on tip-toe; she drops  
down quickly and interlocks arms with William.

ALEX  
Good afternoon, Mrs. Connelly! I'm  
Alex, and this is my husband, William.

WILLIAM  
Hello.

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

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

WILLIAM  
If we buy the apartment.

ALEX  
Do you mind if we look around?

**Alex's POV**

As Mrs. Connelly speaks, Alex's gaze drifts above her head. She sees only a sliver: another magnificent fireplace, an alcove matching the bedroom. The place is crammed with Irish Catholic tchotchkes: matching ceramic bleeding-heart Jesus and Mary, 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.

ALEX

*(practically salivating)*

We'll be in and out in no time.

MRS. CONNELLY

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

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

MRS. CONNELLY (O.C.)

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

Alex and William are thinking the same thing. Matthew puts his hands on their shoulders.

MATTHEW

Poor thing.

Matthew starts down the stairs; as they follow, Alex grabs William's hand and squeezes it.

MATTHEW

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

ALEX

*(intrigued)*

Rent?

M

ATTHEW

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

WILLIAM

How much below market?

MATTHEW

Considerably.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

Matthew leads them toward the door.

ALEX

How many rooms are there up there?

MATTHEW

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.

ALEX

*(barely contained excitement)*

And that's for the price we discussed.

**Ext. Building – Stoop – Continuous**

Matthew turns to face them on the steps.

MATTHEW

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

Alex looks across the street and sees the children playing.

ALEX

We'll take it.

WILLIAM

We'll think about it.

Matthew CHUCKLES.

**Ext. Tompkin  
Square Park in Manhattan – Night**

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

ALEX

It'll be a stretch. But we make enough.

WILLIAM

Barely.

ALEX

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

*(crinkles nose)*

Oooh. Like those glass bricks...

WILLIAM

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.

WILLIAM

And what if we want to buy drugs?

ALEX

This is our chance to grow up, William.

WILLIAM

A lot of grown-ups live in Manhattan.  
Woody Allen, Donald Trump...

*(realizes he's not making his  
point)*

George Plimpton...

ALEX

*(growing impatient)*

It's time for us to make a home.

WILLIAM

I like our apartment.

A  
LEX

It's a studio! Successful couples don't live in studio apartments. And you and I are almost successful. If we live in a successful apartment, we'll grow into it.

WILLIAM

Let me diagram that argument and get back to you.

*(he gestures around them)*

How can you leave Manhattan? There's an energy here you can't get anywhere else.

CRAZY LADY

You're killing the frogs!

The woman swings at William, KNOCKING his latte all over him. Steam rises off his jacket. He turns to Alex.

WILLIAM

*(re: her latte, nonchalant)*

You gonna drink all that?

**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. BARELY MUFFLED STREET NOISES invade the space.

The couple lies in bed. William is on his back, eyes closed. Alex lies facing William, staring at him.

ALEX

You awake?

WILLIAM

*(eyes remaining closed)*

Let me check. Yes.

ALEX

Can we talk about the house?

WILLIAM

What house?

(CONTINUED)

A  
LEX  
Let's buy the house.

WILLIAM  
Can I sleep on it?

ALEX  
Of course, sweetie. Sleep away.  
(*afterthought*)  
My sweet.

She kisses his cheek, then rolls away from him to turn off her bedside table. Streetlight through the barred windows casts a classic prison shadow across the couple. In the distance we hear a SIREN. William EXHALES in annoyance, leans over to his side of bed and turns on a noise machine. We hear the sound of OCEAN WAVES.

**ON WILLIAM**

He closes his eyes, concentrated on the waves. Just as one of waves gently crashes:

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

Then even closer, right below their window:

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

ANOTHER MAN  
I'm fucking you up!

William opens his eyes. From below we hear the two men FUCKING EACH OTHER UP, smashing GARBAGE CANS and setting off CAR ALARMS in the process. Alex appears over William's shoulder and cuddles up to him. She smiles and closes her eyes. His eyes remain open, staring into his future.

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Art Department – Morning**

We PAN across several, large framed magazine covers (which, instead of a name, bears the logo "♂".)

A naked babe in a catcher's mitt squats behind home plate, side cleavage escaping her chest protector, mitt barely concealing muff. "PUT IT THERE!" the main coverline reads.



A naked babe in a scuba mask emerges from the water just far enough to reveal her remarkable buoyancy. The coverline reads, "MAN THE PONTOONS!"

"RACK 'EM UP!" A babe spills out of her evening gown as she bends over a pool table toward camera, her mouth curiously open as she attempts a shot. We pan down her impossibly long cleavage to reveal Alex, talking on the phone.

ALEX  
*(practically squealing)*  
Mom, we bought a house!

Alex sits at drafting table primarily occupied by a large portrait computer monitor. (On it is a stylish layout of high tech guy toys: PDAs, MP3s, ETCs.)

ALEX (CONT.)  
A duplex! It's two stories in this 1880 brownstone... Two stories is a duplex... Well, it is these days... Okay, technically it's 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 William's salary, but we do have my salary, too...  
*(the Mom sigh)*  
When I have a baby, I'll freelance...  
I'll get a nanny...

Alex puts her hand over the receiver to compose herself.

ALEX (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 Alex's eye. It's MIKEY, her boss. He's a big, ramshackle guy with a boyish face; he's given up on being handsome and instead has decided to be a character. Today he's wearing an orange prison jumpsuit with "MIKEY" stenciled over the chest pocket.

A  
LEX  
Gotta go, Mom.  
*(hangs up, smiles)*  
Yes, Mike?

Mikey unfurls a color proof of a photo spread, featuring some pop nymphet trying to shed her bubblegum image.

MIKEY  
*(wandering British accent)*  
Sexy Lexie. I was going over these  
Dulcinea pages, very pretty layout, but  
here's the rub: where's her nippules?

ALEX  
*(flatly)*  
We can't show her "nippules." She's  
only fifteen.

MIKEY  
Ah, yes, the whole child pornography  
hoo-hah. Well, you did the best with  
what you had then.

Alex scrunches her face at Mikey as he wanders off. After a beat, she clicks something on her screen. The PDA 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. Alex CLICKS again and the screen changes to a digital rendition of their parlor.

Alex holds a snapshot of the real parlor up next to the screen and smiles.

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

FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN  
Let's decorate!

ALEX  
Let's.

**Int. nyny Magazine – Hallway – Morning**

William (carrying a stainless steel, no-spill coffee cup) walks with taller, handsomer COOP past several nyny covers.

A Central Park  
vista with the coverline, "ROOMS WITH THE VIEW" and  
subhead, "Lovely to look at – and out of!"

Sarah Jessica Parker under a pile of shoes with the head,  
"SHOE SLUTS" and subhead, "The Imeldas of Manhattan"

WILLIAM

*(as they walk)*

The bank just gave us the money. A  
 cursory look at our financials would  
have revealed we can't afford this...

He pauses beneath a cover of Jerry Seinfeld in a nursery  
with the coverline, "ROCK-A-BYE, STAR BABY!" and subhead,  
"22 Celebrity Nurseries."

WILLIAM

Do I look like a homeowner?

Coop puts a reassuring hand on William's shoulder.

COOP

Not in those pants.

They continue walking. William looks down, wondering what's  
wrong with his pants, as the pair stroll into:

**Int. Office – Continuous**

Very modern. The white walls are lined with huge blow-ups  
of b&w paparazzi photos featuring assorted New Yorkers  
posing with a woman perky beyond her years. This is CAMMY,  
the nyny's editrix, the same woman currently sitting cross-  
legged on her solid glass desk in a supercute outfit she is  
easily twice too old for.

A motley pack of editors sit on fashionably uncomfortable  
chairs facing her. William and Coop take the last two.

CAMMY

*(chirpy hostility)*

All right, okay, I guess we can get  
started.

Cammy picks up the only other thing on desk: a hardcover  
book with the easy-to-read title, "BLOOD IS THICK."

C

AMMY

All right. Let us begin by offering congrats to Frank Cooper, our very own crime scribe *especial*, on his new "tome," which a little bird tells me was on the N-Y-T Bestsellers list last week.

Cammy puts the book down and claps like a cheerleader.

CAMMY

Yeah, Coop!

The other editors turn to Coop and APPLAUD. Coop accepts their accolades aw-shucks-ily, as William sits next to him, clapping awkwardly.

CAMMY

All right. Story ideas! I hope you have some, because I sure don't!  
*(laughs to indicate she isn't quite the idiot she seems)*  
 Seriously, we need ideas.

A DESPERATE MIDDLE-AGED EDITOR sorts anxiously through a manila folder of clippings from papers and other magazines.

DESPERATE MIDDLE-AGED EDITOR

Drew Barrymore's got a new --

CAMMY

*(dismissive wave)*  
 Five minutes ago.

The desperate middle-aged heavysset editor shrinks with a shudder. William turns to Coop, *entre nous*.

WILLIAM

Five minutes ago is a little five minutes ago.

CAMMY

I'm sorry, Will-yam, I didn't realize you were talking. You have an idea?

WILLIAM

I do, actually. This is the fortieth anniversary of Hemingway's death--

Cammy's look of  
perplexed boredom throws William.

WILLIAM (CONT.)

Ernest Hemingway. Uh, he wasn't a New Yorker per se, but I thought we, I could do a piece on how publishing has changed since the days of great editors like Max Perkins – he edited F. Scott Fitzgerald, too; of course you know that – it'd be a think piece, but, but with quotes from celebrities and their editors, maybe some nice pictures of Michael Korda's country house...

C

AMMY

*(with happy head tilt)*

You know what? No.

*(faux gasp)*But that does give me an idea!*(takes object from her wrist)*

All the Brearly girls are wearing these; they're woven by blind or deaf Native Americans or something. They're called Braidlets, which I think is very clever. I'd like a page on them.

WILLIAM

*(Disingenuous confusion  
masking dread certainty)*

You want... me?

CAMMY

Pictures with captions.

*(squeezing forefinger to  
thumb; chiding)*Captions, William.

All the other editors glance at William, CHUCKLING KNOWINGLY. William forces a shit-eating smile.

**Ext. Seventh Avenue – Park Slope – Evening**

It's early November, and cold. A cab pulls up in front of a turn-of-the-century office building, and Alex and William exit. William leans into the cab.

WILLIAM

Can you swing back here in an hour;  
we're going to need a ride ba-

The cab PEELS out.

WILLIAM (CONT.)

Great. How are we going to find a cab  
in Brooklyn?

Alex smiles and grabs his hand, leading him up the steps. Behind them, available cabs pass in both directions.

(CONTINUED)

**Int. Lawyer's  
Office - A Little Later**

Alex, excited, and William, pissy, sit on one side of a conference table flanked by Matthew and THEIR LAWYER. The SELLERS sit across from them, beaming, with the SELLERS' LAWYER. Alex and William are signing thousands of documents, and William is writing several checks.

WILLIAM

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

WILLIAM AND ALEX'S LAWYER

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

WILLIAM

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

MATTHEW

There's today and the weekend.

WILLIAM

Today's almost over.

ALEX

*(apologizing for William)*

We've never bought anything big before.

MATTHEW

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

WILLIAM

Nine-hundred? I thought it was six.

SELLING WIFE

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

WILLIAM

Meaning never. And why wasn't I told-

A  
LEX

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

WILLIAM  
But this changes the whole equation...

SELLING WIFE  
*(jumping in)*  
We'll pay the first month.

SELLERS' LAWYER  
You don't have to do that.

SELLING HUSBAND  
*(eager)*  
But we will if it's going to be a problem.

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

### **Obligatory Moving Montage**

**Music: "Happy Days Are Here Again," by Squirrel Nut Zippers**

**Ext. Building – 120 Prospect Park – Sunday Morning**

A "NICE JEWISH BOYS" moving van is double-parked in the street. William, holding his no-spill coffee mug, "supervises" the African-American movers.

**Int. Apartment – Parlor – Continuous**

A mover places a large, heavy box on the floor. Alex 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**

William reads the New York Times Book Review (The cover is a caricature of Hemingway with the head, "The Hemingway-Plath Letters."). Two movers pass him with a large TV. After a moment, William looks up and sees the two "movers" make 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**

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

ALEX

Wait. I got us this.

WILLIAM

*(puzzled)*

Isn't that one of those, uh...

ALEX

*(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.

WILLIAM

Uh, honey. Neither one of us is Jewish.

ALEX

*(matter-of-fact)*

Everybody's Jewish, under the Christianity.

Alex affixes the mezuzah next to the doorframe. She smiles at William suggestively.

ALEX (CONT.)

Now we have a threshold.

(CONTINUED)

William 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.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

A shame we just spent all that time and money moving it here, then.

Alex cuddles up to him.

ALEX

You can get me a couch for Christmas.

She hugs him. He softens.

WILLIAM

Well, why don't we just move this stuff back to the apartment? We can sublet it furnished.

ALEX

*(knows he's going to angry)*  
I gave up the apartment.

WILLIAM

How could you give up the apartment? It was my apartment.

ALEX

*(shrugs)*  
I signed something.

WILLIAM

I loved that apartment! I lost my New York virginity in that apartment!

A

LEX

I thought that was your second apartment.

WILLIAM

Your point?

ALEX

*(turning it on him)*

Did you really expect to keep your bachelor apartment, William? You're not a bachelor anymore. You do know that, don't you?

She stalks past him and down the hallway to the bedroom. He stands, determined not to follow her, then follows her.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Moments Later**

When he walks in, William encounters not the angry spouse he expected but his beatific wife, glowing.

Golden afternoon light pours into the room. It's like the bedrooms in heaven. Alex turns to William, her eyes welling up in sublime joy. She takes him by the hand and walks him to the bed. She sits on the bed, and then yanks him roughly on top of her. He looks not displeased.

ALEX

*(sexy growl)*

Let's make a baby.

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

WILLIAM

Nice ceiling.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

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

A

LEX

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

WILLIAM

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

ALEX

*(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.

WILLIAM

Yeah, okay.

William rolls off the bed and heads for the hallway.

ALEX

Not dressed like that!

**Int. Apartment – Parlor – About an Hour Later**

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

ALEX

We should bring something.

WILLIAM

We're the ones moving in.

ALEX

To be nice.

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

WILLIAM

Merlot.

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

A  
LEX

This one's got a pretty ribbon.

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

Alex KNOCKS LOUDLY on Mrs. Connelly's door. William examines the bottle of wine.

WILLIAM

This is a really nice bottle of wine.

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

WILLIAM

Maybe I should—

William turns to go downstairs; Alex 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.

ALEX

*(a little loudly)*

Mrs. Connelly? It's Alex and William,  
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 (that 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. Alex 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.

ALEX

You have a lovely apartment, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, please call me Katie.

WILLIAM

*(offering wine)*

We got you this, Katie. Ah. Housewarming.

MRS. CONNELLY

*(accepting bottle)*

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

WILLIAM

*(that's an interesting fact)*

Irish Catholics don't drink.

Alex elbows him.

MRS. CONNELLY

Sit down, sit down.

Mrs. Connelly gently pushes Alex and William over to the sitting area. She directs William to the easy chair.

MRS. CONNELLY

You sit in my chair.

William 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 that happens to be sitting on the counter. With one swift motion, she UNCORKS the bottle. She takes a small glass off a shelf and returns. She hands William 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 Alex.

MRS. CONNELLY

*(remembering something)*

Oh.

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

It's a pretty sad specimen: hunched over, lots of feathers missing. Suddenly it LUNGES toward camera. Its beak comes through the bars on the cage, missing William's eyeball by a 32<sup>nd</sup> of an inch.

William lurches back, and settles 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™ and a container of French Onion Dip, half empty with numerous Bugle™ strafings in it.

WILLIAM

Wow, they still make Bugles™.

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)

WILLIAM

That's a great parrot you have there.

M

RS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

*(reminded)*

How are you feeling, Katie?

MRS. CONNELLY

Why do you ask, dear?

ALEX

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. What do you do, Bill?

WILLIAM

Nothing.

ALEX

William wrote a novel. He's really a novelist.

MRS. CONNELLY

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

*(noticing William's glass is almost empty)*

Oh, let me fill that for you.

*(mostly to Alex)*

Mr. Connelly had the taste, too. The drink took him from me in 1959. We had been married forty years.

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

ALEX

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



M

RS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

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.

WILLIAM

*(lamely jocular)*

A lot of potatoes under the bridge since then.

MRS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

Oh, I'm sorry.

MRS. CONNELLY

I know, dear.

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

MRS. CONNELLY

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

William 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 Nuala in the influenza outbreak of 1918...

The clock face MATCH DISSOLVES to 10:24.

Mrs. Connelly sits between a stupefied William and Alex.

M

RS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

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 William rises, Mr. Fawkes dives at him, tearing a hunk out of his sweater.

ALEX

You know, Katie, I'd 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. William exits quickly. Alex lingers.

ALEX

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 Alex's face.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Night**

Alex sits in bed with a pad and pencil. William, in T-shirt and underpants, walks up reading a dictionary.

WILLIAM

A macaw is a parrot.

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

ALEX

She's between 95 and 105 years old.

(  
looks around, gets idea)  
Ooo. Turn out your light!

A little puzzled, William turns out his light. So does Alex. 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. Alex suppresses a squeal.

ALEX  
We're millionaires!

William smiles, and KISSES Alex on the cheek. She KISSES him back on the mouth. They lie down, KISSING.

### **Close on William and Alex**

They make out, in a procedural manner. Under the sheets, Alex slips down her own pajama bottoms, then starts to push up William's T-shirt. As she reaches his armpits, he seems to resist. She realizes:

ALEX  
(flatly)  
Would you like me to put in my  
diaphragm?

WILLIAM  
If that's okay.

Alex sits up abruptly. She attempts to hop out of bed while simultaneously pulling up her pajama bottoms; she TUMBLES to the floor.

ALEX  
Shit.

Alex kicks off the pajama bottoms, and gets up.

ALEX (CONT.)  
(answering unasked question)  
I'm okay.

Alex walks over to several unopened moving boxes by the bathroom, and bends over to read them in the firelight.

WILLIAM

You packed your diaphragm?

ALEX

It's not like I've had to whip it out of my purse any time recently.

WILLIAM

Look, maybe we can just, take turns on each other.

ALEX

No, that's okay.

Alex SMASHES a box with her fist, popping it open. She reaches deep inside, feeling around, and pulls out the diaphragm (and, of course, a tube of Gynol™ spermicide)

ALEX

Sorry for the delay.

Alex FIDDLES under the sheets, putting the diaphragm in. As a conciliatory gesture, William KISSES her neck. She SCREWS UP HER FACE as the diaphragm lodges in place.

Alex KISSES William on the forehead, and NUDGES him onto his back. She pushes up his T-shirt, exactly as before; he simultaneously WIGGLES out off his underpants. That stage completed, they KISS. He remembers something. He leans over and turns off his noise machine. She rolls her eyes. They KISS again. Just as one of waves GENTLY CRASHES:

**Music (Loud): "Hawaii 5-0" theme.**

Startled, the two roll onto their backs.

WILLIAM

Wow. She is fucking deaf.

ALEX

*(excuse to be mad at him)*

She's a sweet old lady.

William moves in for a conciliatory kiss.

A  
LEX (CONT.)  
I'm kind of tired.

Alex rolls away slightly, fiddles under the covers, removes her diaphragm and tosses it away blithely. She gives William a perfunctory kiss and rolls away from him. After a beat:

**Music (Much Louder): "Hawaii 5-0" theme.**

Alex rolls back and they both stare at the ceiling.

**Dissolve to Later**

Alex and William 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!

**SFX: Huge audience applause.**

Alex and William stare at the ceiling.

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

William BANGS on the door.

**Music (from inside): "Underdog" theme.**

WILLIAM  
(*between bangs*)  
Mrs. Connelly? Katie?!

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Early Morning**

Sunlight comes through the window. Alex and William lie face up, bleary eyed.

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

The music stops. Alex and William close their eyes.

**SFX: Alarm clock buzz**

**Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Morning**

A bedraggled Alex 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.

ALEX  
I apologize for that, but Katie—

Mrs. Connelly furrows her brow as if insulted.

ALEX (CONT.)  
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 a terrible thing.

ALEX  
Well, if you could..

M

RS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

*(impatient, but polite)*

Could you turn the TV down, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY

*(put out)*

Yes, Mrs. Rose.

ALEX

Rose is my husband's name. I'm Alex Kendricks.

MRS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

It could be. I'm on my way to work--

MRS. CONNELLY

Wives not taking their husband's names. It's a new world. Now the children, will they be Roses or Kendrickses?

ALEX

That's a discussion we haven't had. But I really--

MRS. CONNELLY

You should talk to your priest. What parish are you from?

ALEX

I do have to go, Mrs. Connelly; I'm going to be late for 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.

A

LEX

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

MRS. CONNELLY

It's a new sound. It goes bangety-bang, then... bang-bang.

ALEX

I do have to go. But I tell you what: right after work, William or I'll look at your shower and see what we can do.

MRS. CONNELLY

That would be wonderful.

ALEX

Have a good day, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

*(sweetly)*

You have a nice time at work, Miss Kendricks.

She SLAMS the door, and starts RELOCKING.

**Int. nyny Magazine – William's Cubicle – Late Morning**

An exhausted William sits in his cubicle sorting through a huge pile of "braidlets." He picks one up and stares at it, waiting for inspiration. (On the cubicle wall behind him is a blown-up Publisher's Weekly review of "A Coming of Age." The headline is, "A respectable debut.")

COOP (O.C.)

Rosie!

Coop enters with a SMALL, STRANGE-LOOKING MAN.

WILLIAM

*(re: Braidlet)*

What color would you say this is?

COOP

Cerulean. Listen, I want you to meet Ronald Hauge. He's the guy who's been killing all those prostitutes.



W  
ILLIAM  
"The Dollmaker"?

The Dollmaker bows in acknowledgement.

COOP  
You know that number he was carving  
into their heels? I figured it out: It  
was his Social Security number!  
*(musses Dollmaker's hair)*  
Criminal genius here!

THE DOLLMAKER  
We're writing the movie together!

COOP  
First we turn you in. Then the book.  
Then the movie.

Coop starts to escort the Dollmaker off.

THE DOLLMAKER  
And I reserve all toy rights.

COOP  
*(laughing)*  
There aren't going to be any toys, you  
sick fuck.

William watches for several moments, then returns to his  
"Braidlets," even more demoralized.

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Art Department**

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

On screen, we "walk" through a remarkably well-rendered CGI  
version of Alex and William's apartment. Syn compares this  
to some old blue blueprints Alex has laid out next to the  
computer.

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

**Back to Scene**

ALEX

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

**On Screen**

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

ALEX (O.C.)

Bye-bye, Ikea!

The FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN suddenly pops onto screen.

FLAMBOYANT CARTOON MAN

Feng shui alert!

**Back to Scene**

ALEX

Oh, shut up.

Syn taps Alex on the back; she immediately clicks on the screen so a magazine spread pops up. Mikey walks up wearing an old Nazi uniform.

ALEX

*(all business)*

This looks great Syn, but maybe vary the point sizes on the quotes, and, oh, hello, Mike.

MIKEY

Lexual healing, Occasion of Syndie! Lex, we were wondering if you could do us a favor and test out this month's sex tip.

Mikey hands Alex a galley; she and Syn read it together.

ALEX

Ew.

M  
IKEY

I only ask because I know you're married, and I think you'll agree it's not the sort of thing you'd want to spring on an unsuspecting date.

SYN  
*(suggestively)*  
Oh, I don't know.

Before Alex can object, William turns to leave.

MIKEY  
No need for the whorey details; a simple thumbs up/thumbs down will suffice – no pun intended.

As Mikey goosesteps off, Alex sadly regards the galley: it's more than icky; it's as an indictment of her marriage. Syn plucks it away.

SYN  
I'll do it.

ALEX  
You don't have to --

SYN  
No worries.

**Int. nyny Magazine – William's Cubicle – Late Morning**

William stares balefully at his computer. There are Braidlets everywhere.

CAMMY (O.C.)  
Will-yam!

Cammy struts up, wielding a galley.

CAMMY  
"Cerulean"? I had to look it up. I don't like to look things up.  
*(handing him the galley)*  
And cut twelve lines.

WILLIAM  
It's only sixteen lines.

C

AMMY

*(happy head tilt)*

Cut twelve of them.

She struts off, making an LOUD EXASPERATED SOUND.

**Ext. Park Slope F Stop – Early Evening**

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

**Ext. 120 Prospect Park West – A Minute Later**

William runs up the steps.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

William 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**

William waits impatiently as the door OPENS to the end of the chain. William grins. The door SLAMS, and reopens again.

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

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

W  
ILLIAM

*(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.

WILLIAM

You get your hair done every week?

Alex, also soaking, appears behind William.

ALEX

*(overly solicitous)*

Good evening, Mrs. Connelly!

We hear VERY LOUD BANGING. William and Alex are startled.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, let me introduce you to Mr.  
Dzerzhinsky.

Mrs. Connelly patters off and the couple follows her 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

*(grunt)*

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

ALEX

Those were the original tiles.

M

R. DZERZHINKSY

*(climbing out of tub)*

Yeah, you're gonna need a tile guy.

*(looks down at William)*

You the landlord?

WILLIAM

Yes, but I didn't order any work.

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

ALEX

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. DZERZHINKSY

*(shrugs)*

It coulda.

WILLIAM

*(re: bill)*

You were here for four hours?

MR. DZERZHINKSY

More or less.

WILLIAM

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

Mr. Dzerzhinsky belly-bumps William.

MR. DZERZHINKSY

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

WILLIAM

*(giving up)*

No, no.

Mr. Dzerzhinsky exits. William and Alex walk with Mrs. Connelly back toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

A  
LEX

This is my card at work, Mrs. Connelly.  
In the future, please call me before...  
*(remembering)*  
Oh, and I got you a present.

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

ALEX

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.

ALEX

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, Billy, before I forget, it's the first of the month.

She patters over to a counter and retrieves a small stack of money. She counts it out into William'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...

She goes back to the counter and returns with a coin purse. She opens it and dispenses one coin at a time.

MRS. CONNELLY (CONT.)

Eight-eight twenty-five... fifty...  
seventy-five... eighty-nine dollars... and  
twenty-five, thirty-five, forty-five,  
fifty cents.

A

LEX

Thank you, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

Would you like to count it?

WILLIAM

You look like an honest person.

**Int. Apartment – Foyer – Moments Later**

William and Alex enter and hang their wet things on the spiral-staircase-cum-coat-rack.

WILLIAM

I'm gonna put a stop on that check.

ALEX

You can't do that.

WILLIAM

So he sues me.

ALEX

He'll beat you with a wrench.

Alex disappears down the hall into the bedroom. William silently reenacts his confrontation with Mr. Dzerzhinsky, with him winning this time.

ALEX (O.C.)

(Horrorified Shriek)

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous**

Alex stands, looking up in abject terror. William trots in. Unable to speak, Alex points to the ceiling.

**On the ceiling**

A fairly large water stain has started in the corner, apparently caused by Mr. Dzerzhinsky's plumbing.

WILLIAM

*(not that upset)*

We'll just patch it.



A

LEX

*(near tears)*

It's a canvas ceiling! You can't patch it; you have to replace the whole thing.

WILLIAM

*(sardonic laugh)*

Well, we're not doing that.

Alex CHOKES on a SOB.

WILLIAM

Okay, look: I'll fix the leak, so at least it doesn't get any worse.

ALEX

You'll fix the leak.

WILLIAM

*(gesturing to stain)*

Or, by all means, call a professional.

ALEX

*(sniffles)*

I'm going to bed.

She exits frame. He looks at his watch.

WILLIAM

It's only eight-o'clock.

William then realizes he's exhausted and starts to button his shirt as he exits frame.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Night**

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

**Ext. Midtown Manhattan – Outside a Starbucks – Morning**

**Music: "Let's Have Another Cup of Coffee" by Lyle Lovett**

A dog-tired William slurps coffee from his stainless steel cup as he dodges sidewalk traffic. He continues half way down the block, realizes his cup is empty, and turns back for more.

**Int. ♂ Magazine –  
Alex's Workstation – Afternoon**

Alex sits at her computer, but appears to be fast asleep. Mikey enters (wearing a tiny fez), smiles and leans in close to Alex's. He licks her lips. 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.

**Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Bathroom – Night**

As Mrs. Connelly looks on from the door, an exhausted William reads a home fix-it book. He asks Alex for something; she wearily rummages in a shopping bag and pulls out a brand new wrench. William takes the wrench, consults the book again, and gives one pipe a quarter turn. Water sprays out of five different locations.

**Ext. Prospect Park – Morning**

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

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous**

Alex and William lay on the bed, on top of the sheets, still in their work clothes. (The water stain now extends onto the wall.) Alex awakes, and shakes William.

ALEX

Up, up! We're going shopping today.

WILLIAM

No, Saturday. Sleeping.

William rolls over onto his face.

ALEX

Shopping.

But she doesn't move. She closes her eyes. A moment of peace.

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

**Int. Building – Foyer – A Few Moments Later**

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

F  
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**

Alex 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.

WILLIAM  
ohgod.

ALEX  
What song is that?

WILLIAM  
"On the Street Where You Live?"

ALEX  
It sounds like "Every Breath you Take."

William sits up, wearily.

WILLIAM  
Let's go shopping.

**Ext. Manhattan – 25<sup>th</sup> Street Flea Market – Day**

Alex haggles with an ANTIQUES MERCHANT.

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

ANTIQUES MERCHANT  
Then I'm sorry, too.

ALEX  
Okay then.

Alex start to walk away, but then turns back.

A  
 LEX (CONT.)  
*(laughing)*  
 You win that one.

Alex writes a check. William walks up excitedly, holding a manual typewriter.

WILLIAM  
 A Remington Royal! Twenty dollars.

ALEX  
 What were they asking?

WILLIAM  
 Twenty dollars.

Alex shakes her head in disappointment.

**Ext. The Strand Bookstore – Afternoon**

**Int. The Strand – Basement – Continuous**

William walks down the "Q-R" aisle, knowing exactly where he's going. He looks up at a shelf, where we see the slender spines of "A Coming of Age W.S. Rose" He counts the copies, and frowns.

WILLIAM  
*(hasn't changed)*  
 Thirteen.

William pulls a copy down and lovingly opens it. There's a big red sticker on the first page.

WILLIAM  
 A dollar!?

**Ext. Grand Street – Outside SOHO Antique Fair – Continuous**

Alex supervises a cabbie as he finished tying down a trunk crammed with antiques. Satisfied, Alex opens the passenger door, revealing the inside is also crammed with bags and furniture. Even the cabbie's front passenger seat is packed with stuff. Alex wedges herself into the cab strategically.

**Int. The Strand – Information Desk – Continuous**

William, thirteen copies of "Coming of Age" under one arm, addresses a typically laid-back STRAND WORKER.

W  
ILLIAM

Where do you keep the good books?

STRAND WORKER

We don't make those kind of judgments.

WILLIAM

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

STRAND WORKER

Good looking books?

WILLIAM

Good books, but also, nice-looking.

STRAND WORKER

Third floor. We sell them by the yard.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Late Afternoon**

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

**His POV**

Alex is across the street, watching children play in the park. She has the sad, yearning smile of a man by himself at a strip club. She looks up, sees William in the window, and waves at him, smiling giddily.

**Ext. Building – Night**

There are Christmas lights in the window.

**Music: "Baby, It's Cold Outside" by Dean Martin and Jill Scott (Scott mixed into Martin original)**

**Int. Apartment – Parlor – Continuous**

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

Alex happily rearranges several small pieces of furniture around the parlor. She has shoved their old couch against the wall and stacked much of their old crap on top of it.

(CONTINUED)

**Int. Apartment –  
Library – Continuous**

William stands on a chair, placing nice leather-bound books into his leaded glass bookcases. He exudes self-satisfaction.

Alex enters, carrying a small end table. She puts it down, walks up behind William and hugs him around the waist.

ALEX  
*(romantic)*  
We're making a home.

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

ALEX  
*(the mood is ruined; she releases 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.

WILLIAM  
Welcome to "This Old, Old House."

Alex picks up a book off William's unshelved pile.

ALEX  
"Ivanhoe"?

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

ALEX  
It says it's by Walter Scott.

WILLIAM  
There were two versions.

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

WILLIAM  
It's research. For the new novel.

A

LEX

I thought the new novel was about a novelist forced to work at a city magazine.

WILLIAM

I'm tossing around a couple of ideas.

ALEX

I didn't know you spoke German.

WILLIAM

What?

ALEX

*(re: third book)*

This one's in German.

William steps down from the chair.

WILLIAM

*(defensive)*

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

ALEX

It all serves a purpose.

William points to two end tables sitting side by side.

WILLIAM

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

ALEX

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.

WILLIAM

We don't live upstairs.

ALEX

But we will. Eventually.

W  
ILLIAM

How about that? What purpose does that serve?

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

ALEX

That serves a design purpose.

WILLIAM

What is it?

ALEX

Obviously, it's a pyramid.

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

WILLIAM

What's this?

ALEX

It's a conversation piece.

WILLIAM

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

ALEX

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

Before William can respond, there's a knock on the door. Alex jumps to answer it. It's Mrs. Connelly, in Church clothes.

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. William rolls his eyes.

ALEX

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



M  
RS. CONNELLY  
I'm cold. Mr. Fawkes is cold.

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

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

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

ALEX  
The heat just started up, Mrs.  
Connelly. I think if you 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:

WILLIAM  
It was at least seventy degrees up  
there.

ALEX  
Oh, she's just lonely.

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

ALEX  
Let's not forget your "books."

WILLIAM  
My books only cost \$40 a yard.

Alex, trying to  
make up, hugs William.

ALEX  
You're such a good shopper.

WILLIAM  
*(surveying the room)*  
I don't know; it just feels like we're  
putting all our eggs in one basket.

ALEX  
*(about to cry again)*  
It's not a basket. It's our home.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

**Int. Building – William and Alex's door – Continuous**

The door opens, revealing an exasperated William.

WILLIAM  
Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

**His POV**

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.

WILLIAM  
She called you?

OFFICER DAN  
Come with us upstairs, please?

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

Officer Dan KNOCKS. William rolls his eyes.

WILLIAM  
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.

M  
RS. 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. William and Alex stands on the sidewalk, shivering without coats. Officer Dan is writing a citation.

OFFICER DAN  
That poor, dear sweet woman.

WILLIAM  
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 William.

WILLIAM  
A thousand dollars?!

OFFICER DAN  
Are you complaining, fuck?

ALEX  
No, we're not.

O

OFFICER DAN

Next time I enter 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?

WILLIAM/ALEX

Yes, officer.

They shiver for a long beat.

WILLIAM

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. Several bills and fines are laid out before them.

WILLIAM

*(wiping brow)*

I sure hope she's comfortable up there.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

Oh, well, everything will be different then.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

*(re: credit receipt)*

Couch? What couch?

A

LEX

*(excited about this)*

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

WILLIAM

Let's cancel it.

ALEX

*(hurt)*

It's my Christmas present.

WILLIAM

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.

ALEX

*(broaching)*

Well, you know what we could do...

WILLIAM

We're not taking money from your parents.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

Even if they would, we won't.

ALEX

*(fearing his reaction)*

I think maybe we should dip into the  
*(under her breath)*  
Fuck You Money.

WILLIAM

*(reacting poorly)*

Not the Fuck You Money! I need that in order to be able to say, "fuck you!"

ALEX

It's there for emergencies.

W  
ILLIAM

*(you just don't understand)*  
Without the Fuck You Money, I have to just say, "O-kay." If you take away my Fuck You power...

ALEX

*(switching tactics)*  
You know what? Forget I said it. You're right. We've invested a lot of money into this house, and it's time it started paying us back.

WILLIAM

*(thrown)*  
Um. And how, by what mechanism...

ALEX

You'll find out at the party.

WILLIAM

What party?

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

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

**Music: "I Got the World on a String" by Jerry Lewis (or, if this proves distracting, the Sarah Vaughn version)**

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

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

ALEX

Welcome to our home.

With a sweeping gesture, she introduces the apartment. All traces of their old furniture are gone; it's perfectly done. The spiral staircase is covered with hay; 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.

(CONTINUED)

T

INA 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**

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

WILLIAM

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

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

COOP

*(mouth full of shrimp)*

Good shrimp.

WILLIAM

Who invited you?

COOP

Your saucy wife.

*(surveying crowd)*

Lots of graphic designers. I like that.

Coop makes a diving-into-water gesture and exits. William stands there smiling uncomfortably. Alex slips in next to him. She beams.

WILLIAM

So when do we ask them to chip in rent money?

ALEX

You just watch. This party is going to completely change our social – and professional – positions.

W  
ILLIAM  
*(seeing something)*  
Oh, Christ.

**In Library**

Mrs. Connelly is at the party (in her cheongsam), talking to a middle-aged Indian gentleman cradling a glass of wine.

**On William and Alex**

WILLIAM  
And she's talking to Bakshi! Well, that's six imprints I'll never be published on.

ALEX  
Oh, this is the perfect opportunity to meet him!  
*(nudges William)*  
Go on. Get over there. Suck some butt. That's what this is for.

She pushes William into the crowd. Forcing a smile, he sidles up next to Mrs. Connelly and BAKSHI.

MRS. CONNELLY  
I couldn't pray to a cow. Not with a straight face.  
*(Seeing William)*  
Oh, Billy! What a lovely party?

WILLIAM  
Do you need something, Mrs. Connelly?

BAKSHI  
Mrs. Connelly was just telling me what a wonderful novelist you are.

MRS. CONNELLY  
Mr. Bakshi publishes novels. You two should talk.

Mrs. Connelly patters away, leaving William and Bakshi to smile at one another.

**At the Entrance – A Little Later**

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



A

LEX'S MOTHER

I still wish you had consulted me first, but I do have to admit this is a lovely condo, dear.

ALEX

Thanks, Mom. That means a lot to —

ALEX'S MOTHER

*(looks around, wrinkles nose)*

Please call me before you start decorating.

Alex gives her party smile a boost.

**In the Library — Later**

William is still talking to Bakshi (now drinking bourbon).

BAKSHI

You must let us publish your next novel.

WILLIAM

*(laughs)*

Okay.

BAKSHI

Promise you'll call me before you start anything.

WILLIAM

Yeah, sure.

BAKSHI

"I promise."

WILLIAM

I promise.

Mrs. Connelly patters up with an open copy of William's book. She points to the page.

MRS. CONNELLY

Dear, I hate to criticize, but you misspelled this word. It's C-O-M-I-N-G.

She hands the book to William and patters off.

W  
ILLIAM  
*(sharing joke, man to man)*  
It's a slightly different word.

BAKSHI  
*(looking at page)*  
Then it should have two "m"s.

**In the Parlor**

Alex is talking to Cammy, who is wearing a very little black dress.

CAMMY  
Alex, this place is supercute.

ALEX  
That's what we were going for.

CAMMY  
I never knew old could be so yummy.

ALEX  
Would you like the tour, Cammy?

CAMMY  
Of course!

Cammy hooks her arm into Alex's and they proceed. Alex is about to point out a detail when Cammy suddenly lets go and presses up against an unsuspecting CHARLIE ROSE. She smiles as a CAMERA FLASH goes off, then returns to Alex.

CAMMY (CONT.)  
I invited our photographer; I hope you don't mind.

ALEX  
*(excited)*  
Our party's going to be in "Cammy-Cam"?

CAMMY  
May-be.

Alex and Cammy exit frame, revealing Coop and Syn.

COOP  
You work with Alex? What do you do?

S  
YN  
I test the sex tricks.

COOP  
Great job!

**In the Library – Continue**

Bakshi, his hand raised, and is leading William in an oath.

BAKSHI  
"I swear I will not accept any advance  
before giving Bakshi a chance to match  
it."

WILLIAM  
*(embarrassed, but doing it  
anyway)*  
I swear...

Cammy grabs William by the elbow as she and Alex sweep  
through.

CAMMY  
Come, Will-yam.

William is yanked o.s. Bemused, Bakshi sips his drink.

**In the Hallway – A Little Later**

Alex and Cammy and William hold hands like kids on a field  
trip. The glass bricks have been replaced with beautiful  
antique stained glass.

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

CAMMY  
Pretty.

**In the Bedroom – Continuous**

Cammy is entranced. William stands, hands in pockets.

CAMMY  
Super yummy.

(  
To Alex)  
I assume you did all this.

ALEX  
(squeezes William's arm)  
In consultation with William. You know,  
if you ever wanted to do a spread on  
this place. "The New Old" or something..

CAMMY  
(nice bitch)  
We usually only do the homes of more,  
celebrated, New Yorkers.

ALEX  
Oh, I know. I was just, William said  
that sometimes you shoot celebrities in  
other people's nicer apartments and  
pretend...

She trails off. Cammy stabs William with an icy smile.

WILLIAM  
I guess that was a trade secret..

An awkward silence. Broken by:

**Music (very loud): Theme from "Alfred Hitchcock Presents"**

ALEX  
Did I tell you this is a duplex? Would  
you like to see the second floor?

CAMMY  
(magnanimous, for her)  
Of course.

A LOW CREAKING is heard. They all turn to the corner of the  
room where the water stain is. A huge section of the  
ceiling PEELS down and dangles there.

ALEX  
We're getting that fixed.

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

They're outside Mrs. Connelly's door. Alex KNOCKS loudly.

A  
LEX

Right now we have this sweet old  
tenant...

WILLIAM  
She's deaf as a post.

ALEX  
Poor thing.

Cammy smiles at Alex, impatiently. Alex reaches into her  
pocket.

ALEX  
I've got a key – Alex the Landlady –  
we'll just peek in.

Alex quickly UNLOCKS three locks.

ALEX  
Now, it's a bit elderly person-y, but,  
I think you'll see the potential.

Alex opens the door a crack, and ushers Cammy over. Cammy  
sticks her head in the door opening. Alex also peeks in.

#### **Their POV**

Mrs. Connelly, wielding a can of Mace™, baring her teeth.

#### **Back to Scene**

Cammy receives a FULL BLAST of Mace™, which also catches  
Alex in the face. Alex SCREAMS. Cammy, GAGGING and  
SCREAMING, staggers backward, and down the stairs.

#### **Ext. Building – A Half Hour Later**

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

#### **Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Continuous**

Officer Dan has his arm around Mrs. Connelly, who looks  
very much the victim. William sits on the landing, pressing  
a cold cloth to Alex's face.

O

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.

ALEX

*(teary, upset)*

I wasn't. I knocked!

WILLIAM

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

OFFICER DAN

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

WILLIAM

I'm just saying, it's illegal.

OFFICER DAN

Your wife is the one who broke and entered, buddy. Mrs. Connelly, would you like to press charges?

WILLIAM

Her press charges?

Officer Dan nonchalantly kicks backward, HITTING William in the gut with his heel. William doubles over in PAIN.

OFFICER DAN

*(matter-of-fact)*

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 Alex SNIFFLES and William MOANS.

**Close on**

The front page of the New York Post. There is a huge picture of Cammy trying to shield her face from a photographer. The headline reads, 'BOY IS HER FACE RED' The subhed reads, "Cammy Whammied by Pepper Granny"

**Int. nyny Magazine – William's Cubicle – Morning**

William drops the paper on his desk with a SIGH. There is a yellow sticky on his computer. It reads, "See me - C ☹"

**Int. nyny Magazine – Cammy's Office – A little later**

William enters. Cammy wears sunglasses and a trowel of make-up, but we can still see that her face is in bad shape. Her arm is in a sling. William sits, and smiles weakly.

CAMMY

Do you know how much this face cost?

WILLIAM

Whatever it was, it was worth it.

CAMMY

You are fired.

WILLIAM

Cammy, if I may, I think you're overreacting..

Cammy removes her sunglasses; her eyes are swollen shut.

CAMMY

It's not just this. You  
*(searching for right word)*  
 suck. Your captions are too long and nobody understands them and, oh, I know, you're a novelist. Well, I read that, I tried to read that "novel" of yours and  
*(searching)*  
Suck.

This is William's moment of truth. He says nothing.

CAMMY  
*(casual flick of the wrist)*  
Out. Out damn spot.

Shell-shocked, William rises and walks away from Cammy. When he's safely out of earshot:

WILLIAM  
Fuck you.

Cammy, already on the phone, clearly does not hear him.

CAMMY  
*(whatever)*  
You, too.

**Ext. Lower East Side – Sixth Street – Night**

William and Alex sit in the window framed by Christmas lights. A neon sign above them reads, "NY Dehli."

**Int. NY Dehli – Continuous**

A cheesy combo of traditional Indian kitsch and faux hip. A sitar-lead combo is playing an Indian-inflected "Mood Indigo."

WILLIAM  
*(past happy into manic)*  
"Fuck you," I said. "Fuck You!"

Other diners turn to look. (Alex self-consciously shields the half of face that was hit with the mace.)

ALEX  
*(deliberately lower level)*  
I'm not sure this was the best time to deploy your f-u.

WILLIAM  
You don't pick the time; the time picks you!

Alex can't quite make sense of that remark.



W

ILLIAM (CONT.)

Don't worry, look: I'll bang out the first two chapters and by the time my severance runs out we'll have the advance money.

ALEX

You quit and they gave you severance?

WILLIAM

Just two weeks. The point is, we're both living our dreams now: I'm a novelist and you live in really nice apartment!

William's eyes seek affirmation. Alex bites her lip.

ALEX

I think you should ask for your job back.

WILLIAM

*(reacting poorly)*

I can't do that! I've already said Fuck You! If I go back now I'll be an indentured servant, an employee. I'll have no free will!

ALEX

*(almost a whisper)*

It won't be that bad.

WILLIAM

*(he stands, acting it out)*

Oh, boss lady, 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.

**Ext. Building –  
Morning – Establishing**

**Close on William and Alex**

William cradles Alex's face affectionately. (She is wearing a lot of make-up in an attempt to mask the mace injury.)

WILLIAM  
Everything will be fine. Everything  
will be great.

**Int. Apartment – Library – Continuous**

William and Alex stand by the door. Alex is dressed for work; William is wearing an old T-shirt and underpants.

WILLIAM  
Have a good day at work.

ALEX  
*(brave smile)*  
Write a good novel.

WILLIAM  
I will.

They kiss. She exits. He adjusts his underpants.

**Int. Apartment – Writer's Nook – A Little Later**

William (still in underwear) is talking on the phone.

WILLIAM  
He might know me as "Billy."

**Intercut with:**

**Int. Fancy Publishing House – Continuous**

Bakshi's assistant is on the phone.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT  
Mr. Bakshi says he's never heard of  
you.

W  
ILLIAM

He said he wanted my second novel. He made me promise...

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Did he say this at a party?

WILLIAM

He came to a housewarming. At our house.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

I'm sorry to tell you this, but Mr. Bakshi is a terrible alcoholic. He won't remember you. You didn't have sex with him, did you?

WILLIAM

No.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Good. No harm done then.

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Mikey's Office – Continuous**

It's a huge wood-paneled office. There's: a moose head on the wall with huge meerschaum sticking out of its mouth; an expensively framed John Wayne Gacy clown painting; a Madame Tussaud's wax figure of Jane Fonda in her "Barbarella" outfit; and the like.

The staff awaits Mikey's arrival. Alex and Syn seem to be the only female attendees. They chit-chat.

ALEX

It's a bad time for us, financially, but I feel like I need to encourage William to pursue his dream so he can grow out of it before we have children.

MIKEY (O.C.)

Sorry I'm late, troops.

Mikey walks Alex and Syn, completely naked. He sits down at his large oak desk (a replica of JFK's desk, with a ♂ replacing the presidential seal.)

(CONTINUED)

M  
IKEY

I was masturbating in the shower this morning when I had this genius idea. The Naked and Drunk ish. We're going to write and edit the next Man mag completely denuded and totally besotted.

REALLY FAT GUY  
In theory, that's intriguing--

MIKEY  
It's not up for a vote. Off with your togs, gentlemen!  
*(to Alex and Syn)*  
And ladies.

The male editors start to self-consciously undress.

**Close on Alex**

She can't believe this is happening. She can't afford to quit but she's not about to..

**Wider shot**

Syn stands next to her, totally nude.

SYN  
C'mon, it'll be fun!

All the half-naked men stare at Alex.

**Int. Apartment - Writer's Nook - A Little Later**

William (still in underwear) rolls a piece of paper into the typewriter. It comes out a little uneven. He pulls the paper out and puts in a fresh sheet. He smiles.

**Sfx: Roaring vacuum cleaner**

William frowns.

**Int. Mrs. Connelly's apartment - Front Parlor - Continuous**

Mrs. Connelly is randomly vacuuming with an old Hoover, which is spewing out more dust than it could possibly take in.

**Int. Apartment –  
Writer's Nook – Continuous**

William stares at the ceiling as the VACUUMING SOUND seems to get louder and louder.

**Int. Mrs. Connelly's apartment – Living Room – Continuous**

Mrs. Connelly maneuvers the vacuum into the alcove above William's writer's nook. Satisfied, she patters away, leaving the vacuum RUNNING.

**Int. Apartment – Writer's Nook – Continuous**

William sits, fuming, at the AIRPLANE ENGINE ROAR above him.

**Int. Mrs. Connelly's apartment – Living Room – Continuous**

Mrs. Connelly sits in her chair, reading a copy of the Irish Times, oblivious to the noise.

**Int. ♂ Magazine– Alex's Workstation – Day**

Alex works hunched over her drafting table, naked. (We can't really see anything) We hear the TINKLE of a bell. Mikey appears wearing a barmaid's serving tray, on which are shot glasses and a bottle.

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

Mikey pours two shots; Syn walks over and grabs one, dutifully downing it. Alex waves Mikey off, keeping her arms close to her body.

MIKEY (CONT.)  
(*jovially threatening*)  
Bottoms up, employee!

SYN  
Take your meds, Kendricks.

Alex picks up the glass. She throws back the shot, but does not:

MIKEY  
Swallow!

Alex SWALLOWS.

MIKEY

I love when they swallow.

Mikey exits; we hear a bell TINKLE.

MIKEY (O.C.)

Tah-keeeeeee-lah!

**Int. Apartment – Writer’s Nook – Afternoon**

William sits, staring at a blank page, as above him:

**Music: Scratchy record of John McCormick singing “She Moved Through the Fair.”**

He can’t take it anymore. He gets up and stalks out of the room, returning moments later with a broom. Standing in the center of the room, he BANGS on the ceiling viciously with the broom. A big hunk of plaster HITS him in the face.

As William turns to wipe the plaster from his eye, he sees:

**Out the Window**

Mrs. Connelly sits on bench across the street, feeding the birds.

Then he notices:

JOHN MCCORMICK RECORD

*(skipping)*

Till our wedding day... till our wedding  
day... till our wedding day

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Alex’s Workstation – Afternoon**

Naked Alex is surrounded by several fleshy, flaccid male colleagues with urgent business.

NAKED MALE EDITOR

*(handing her a slip of paper)*

Here’s the head for that snake-eating  
story.

ALEX

*(flatly)*

Wow. Nobody’s e-mail seems to be  
working.

(CONTINUED)

A  
SSORTED NAKED MALE EDITORS  
Yeah/ I don't know what's going on/  
Totally crashed/ Etc.

**Int. Apartment – Writer's Nook – Afternoon**

It is blissfully silent. William swigs a beer and focuses his creative forces on the blank page in the typewriter. He stares in absolute silence for a full eighteen minutes.

At first he's considering and rejecting ideas; then he starts to hit his thighs with his fists, as if to spur himself on; then he hits his temples with his fists; then it begins to dawn on him that he really doesn't have any ideas; he slips into depression and finally into the expression of a dog begging to be shot.

**SFX: A cascading cacophony of falling objects.**

William's face momentarily breaks out in relief, quickly converted into indignation about being interrupted.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Moments Later**

William bursts out the door (wearing a ratty robe over his underwear). He immediately steps on something sharp and YELPS. He looks down and sees garbage on the ground. His eyes follow the trail of greasy cans and bottles and bones up the stairs, ending in the image of Mrs. Connelly at the top of the stairs standing behind a tipped over kitchen trash can.

MRS. CONNELLY  
Oh dear, I've spilt it. I'm so sorry; I shouldn't even be trying to do this at my age. The last boy used to take out the garbage for me.

Mrs. Connelly turns and goes back into her apartment, systematically LOCKING her door. William is stupefied.

**Ext. Building – Front Steps – Early Evening**

Alex trudges up with steps. She's had a bad day.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

Alex is starting to remove her coat when she notices all the garbage on the stairs. She looks as if she might cry.

**On T.V.**

A scene from "Double Indemnity."

FRED MACMURRAY

*(to Barbara Stanwick)*

This has got to be perfect, do you understand? Straight down the line.

**Int. Apartment – Entranceway – Continuous**

Alex walks in. She is about to mention the garbage on the stairs when she notices William, still in his underwear, sitting in the parlor, watching T.V.

**Int. Parlor – Continuous**

William is sullenly nursing a beer. (There are a few empties at his side.) Alex appears behind him.

ALEX

*(evenly)*

How's the novel going?

William doesn't turn to acknowledge her.

WILLIAM

*(points at ceiling)*

I can't write here.

ALEX

So you're just going to watch T.V.

WILLIAM

*(glum rationalization)*

This is research. Nobody's buying literary novels these days, so I'm gonna knock out a quick thriller for the cash. Hemingway did it; it's not dishonorable.

ALEX

*(worried)*

How much cash, do you think?



**Sfx: Loud knocking  
at the door.**

WILLIAM  
*(eyes fixed to T.V.)*  
If that's grandmama, tell her to clean  
her shit off the stairs.

**Int. Apartment – Entranceway – a Moment Later**

The LOUD KNOCKING continues until Alex opens the door. It's  
Officers Dan and Sandra.

OFFICER DAN  
Have you no decency?

William strolls up with a tipsy swagger.

WILLIAM  
Good thing you're here, Officer Dan...

Officer Dan grabs William by the collar of his T-shirt and  
yanks him out the door.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

Officer Dan drags William to the garbage-strewn stairs and  
pushes into it, much as one would drag a dog to rub his  
nose in his own shit.

OFFICER DAN  
Pick it up.

William and Alex scurry to pick up the garbage.

OFFICER SANDRA  
The Health Department will be by later  
to levy fines for this and whatever  
else they can find.

Alex looks up with an armful of garbage.

ALEX  
Can I go get a trash bag?

OFFICER DAN  
You're lucky I don't make you eat it.

William, half  
crawling on the stairs, glances up and sees Mrs. Connelly  
on the landing, kindly smiling down at him.

**Ext. Building – Morning – Establishing**

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

William and Alex exit the apartment together. (He lugs his  
manual typewriter under his arm.) They are not talking.

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

Mrs. Connelly is on the landing.

MRS. CONNELLY  
Could you come up here a moment?

WILLIAM  
(*this is his cue*)  
See you tonight, sweetie.

He kisses her cheek and darts out.

ALEX  
I have to get to work, Mrs. Connelly.  
Can it wait until this evening?

MRS. CONNELLY  
(*ominously*)  
I suppose.

Alex SIGHS, and trudges up the stairs.

ALEX  
Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY  
One of my lights is buzzing.

ALEX  
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 home?

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

Alex DROPS her portfolio and trudges into the apartment.

**Ext. Brooklyn Public Library – Day**

**Int. Brooklyn Public Library – Reading Room – Continuous**

William sits at a reading table, setting up his typewriter. He's getting some strange looks. He ROLLS some paper in, and starts TYPING. The sound ECHOES throughout the room. A key sticks. He pulls it out the key and starts TYPING again. A LIBRARIAN approaches him.

LIBRARIAN  
*(not hushed at all)*  
What is your damage?

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

Alex stands tiptoe on a chair, removing an ornate light globe. Mrs. Connelly looks on.

MRS. CONNELLY  
Please don't drop that. It's glass.

ALEX  
I'm being careful, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY  
I know you are, dear. It's just that so many of the others weren't very conscientious. Or very nice, for that matter.

ALEX  
*(preoccupied)*  
Oh, were there many others?

Alex removes the globe and tucks it under one arm. Over the following, she fiddles with the lightbulb, which is a stuck.

MRS. CONNELLY  
Oh, oodles, over the years. Would you believe I've had ten landlords in just the last eight years?

A

LEX

*(realization sinking in)*

Ten people have moved out of here in the last eight years?

MRS. CONNELLY

Well, they didn't all move out. Mr. Myer took his own life. Poor dear had money problems.

Alex looks shocked, and then, somewhat synchronistically, she gets BADLY SHOCKED by the lightbulb she is holding. She falls out of frame and we hear a CRASH of glass.

MRS. CONNELLY

Oh, you broke it.

**Ext. Prospect Park – Afternoon**

It's a chilly but sunny day. William has settled himself into a nice spot on a hilly slope of the park. (In the distance we see people walking dogs, etc.) He places the typewriter on his lap, rubs his hands together vigorously, and starts to TYPE. After a moment, a tennis ball flies over his head. He turns to follow the ball and is blindsided by a huge Labrador retriever.

GIGGLY FEMALE (O.C .)

Sorry!

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

Alex, her hair frizzed out, is about to leave.

MRS. CONNELLY

One more thing, dear.

Alex closes her eyes and WHIMPERS.

**Close on William**

Typing industriously, like a real writer.

**Int. Corner Bar –  
Continuous**

William sits at a bar with not a few lowlifes. He slugs back a whiskey and signals to the barkeep for more.

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

A tipsy William clownishly takes the stairs three at a time.

**Int. Apartment – Entranceway – Moments Later**

William opens the door, grandly.

WILLIAM  
(*Desi Arnaz voice*)  
Alex, I'm home!

William doesn't see Alex. But he hears her QUIETLY SOBBING.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – A Moment Later**

William finds Alex sitting on the bed in sweats and a T-shirt. Her face his red and puffy, both from crying and from the pepper spray. William sits down next to her.

WILLIAM  
What did she do this time?

ALEX  
It's what I did.

**Alex's Flashback**

Alex kneels on the stairs, tapping with a hammer.

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

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

Mrs. Connelly stands above Alex, supervising her work.

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

A

LEX

*(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**

Alex'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, 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 right side up.

**Close on**

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

**Out of Flashback**

Alex's eyes are rimmed with tears.

ALEX

I can't believe I did that!

WILLIAM

*(confused)*

What did you do? Did you push her down the stairs?

ALEX

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

She sobs on William's shoulder.

ALEX (CONT.)

What's wrong with me? I'm evil!

William hugs her reassuringly.

W  
ILLIAM

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

ALEX

You?

A chunk of plaster FALLS from the hole William made earlier.

WILLIAM

*(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..

ALEX

She killed Mr. Myer, too.

WILLIAM

*(registers slight confusion  
but not shock)*

...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, 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!

Alex LAUGHS reflexively; she SMACKS William playfully.

ALEX

You're awful, too.

W  
ILLIAM

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

Alex cuddles into William. They lie back on the bed  
together; he turns on the TV with the remote.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

Maybe she's just a bitch.

Alex slaps his chest, LAUGHING. William 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 particular strain is  
particularly dangerous, and potentially  
deadly, to children under five and  
especially the elderly.

### **Back to Scene**

In a wide shot, we see Alex and William 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—



Alex takes the remote from William and clicks off the TV. She rolls into him and kisses him. He reaches and turns off the light with one hand as he cradles her face with the other.

ALEX (IN DARK)  
Ooh. Don't touch that side of the face.

WILLIAM (IN DARK)  
Sorry.

**Music (from above): "Hawaii 5-0" Theme**

ALEX (IN DARK)  
*(giggling)*  
Book me, Danno.

WILLIAM (IN DARK)  
*(after a beat)*  
That doesn't make sense.

ALEX (IN DARK)  
*(commanding)*  
Do it.

WILLIAM (IN DARK)  
*(loving)*  
Right away, ma'am.

**Ext. Subway station - F stop - Morning**

Alex has a jaunt to her step as she tries to merge with the others trying to get down the steps. She shove her around.

**Int. Subway Platform - A Couple of Minutes Later**

Alex waits for the train. Next to her NEW YORK WOMAN and her small child. Suddenly, the child PROJECTILE VOMITS onto the tracks. Alex turns to the mother, concerned.

ALEX  
Oh, does he have that awful flu?

NEW YORK WOMAN  
What the fuck does it look like?

**Int. Tribeca Grill**  
**- Afternoon**

William and Coop have lunched and Coop is now reading through a sheaf of wrinkled, smudged typed pages. William examines Coop's face seeking to divine his moment-by-moment reaction. (In the background, Harvey Weinstein sits at another table, amateurishly waving at the camera and mouthing, "This is my movie.") At long last, Coop finishes. He takes an annoyingly long sip of cappuccino before speaking.

COOP  
(*re: sheaf*)  
Type this yourself?

WILLIAM  
(*nervous*)  
I was going for something, you know,  
hardboiled but stylish, like Hemingway  
in Nick Adams mode.

COOP  
It's more like something Snoopy would  
write.

William sits back in his chair, wounded. Coop shuffles through the pages.

COOP  
I'm your friend so I have to be honest.  
It's bad. But more than that, the real  
problem is, it's "Double Indemnity." I  
mean, instead of the husband, they kill  
an old lady, but other than that, it's  
the same thing.

WILLIAM  
It's an homage.

COOP  
I don't think James Cain's executors  
would see it that way.

WILLIAM  
(*a little pissy*)  
Look, I respect your opinion, but could  
you show it to your agent anyway?

C  
OOP

I'd only be doing you a disservice;  
this is the kind of thing that gets  
faxed around.

A waiter places the check on the table, much closer to William than Coop. William pretends not to see it for a long awkward second. Coop smiles and picks up the check.

COOP  
*(magnanimous)*  
Let's split this.

**Int. Subway platform – F stop – Late Afternoon**

William waits glumly for the train. One pulls up. He is dragged into the car with the crowd.

**Int. Subway Car – Moments Later**

The train PULLS out. William is smashed in; he notices that the businessman behind him is rhythmically bumping into him. Then he sees:

**The Other End of the Car**

It's completely empty, save one very sick-looking businessman. The man leans over and VOMITS on the floor of the subway. He looks down, apparently annoyed that he got some on his shoe. Watching this, William makes a decision.

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

**Match Dissolve to:**

William's face, gulping air in pain.

**Int. Apartment – Bathroom – 36 Hours Later**

William CROUCHES on the toilet, bent over with cramps. The door suddenly OPENS and Alex lunges in.

ALEX  
Ohgod.

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

ALEX  
Happy Thanksgiving.

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

Alex and William lean on each other for support. Mrs. Connelly opens the door a crack. Alex leans in close.

ALEX  
*(a little breathy)*  
Hi, Mrs. Connelly. We were wondering if there was anything we could do for you.

WILLIAM  
*(hitting the 'h')*  
Happy Thanksgiving.

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

William and Alex act unconvincingly innocent.

WILLIAM  
Oh, no, we're fine.

MRS. CONNELLY  
Good. But you should get a flu shot. Officer Dan took me to get one last week.

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

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

She SLAMS the door, 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.

Alex and William follow her into the kitchenette.

ALEX

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

MRS. CONNELLY

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

ALEX

You never had a disposal, Mrs. Connelly.

MRS. CONNELLY

*(indicating sink)*

Well, it should be taken care of. It's very unsanitary.

WILLIAM

And it might start a fire.

MRS. CONNELLY

I was going to call a plumber.

ALEX

*(mostly to herself)*

Oh Christ. On Thanksgiving.

MRS. CONNELLY

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

Alex holds her tongue. William stares down into the sink, looking queasy.

**His POV**

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

(CONTINUED)

**Dissolve to Later**

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

Alex looks down into the sink. Through the open pipe she sees her husband's gristle-covered face.

William looks up in terror. Through the open pipe he can see his imminently upchucking wife.

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

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

MRS. CONNELLY

Let me get you some rags 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**

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

ALEX

What day is it?

**Intercut with:****Int. ♂ Magazine – Alex's Workstation– Morning**

Syn sits at Alex's computer, naked. The really fat guy, also nude, walks sadly by.

SYN

It's Wednesday. You gotta get in here, Lex. Mikey keeps asking where that sweet ass of yours is.

ALEX

Tell him my "sweet ass" is spewing hot diarrhea.

S  
YN

I'd come in. He's really drunk, and  
he's a real mean drunk.

MIKEY (O.C.)

Run, fatty!

Syn looks down the hall. We hear Mikey CACKLE as the Really Fat Guy scurries out just as a stapler hits him in the butt.

SYN

Get in here, woman. Your ass could save  
your ass.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous**

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

ALEX

Gotta go to work.

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

WILLIAM

Kill me.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

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

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

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

Alex LAUGHS RUEFULLY. There is a very long beat.

W

WILLIAM (CONT.)

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

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

**Ext. Prospect Park – An Hour or So Later**

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

ALEX

Wow, murder.

WILLIAM

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

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

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.

ALEX

How much Nyquil have you had?

WILLIAM

Not nearly enough.

*(long beat)*

She's going to bankrupt us. We're going to lose the apartment.

ALEX

Our home.

WILLIAM

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



A  
LEX  
Self-defense.

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

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

ALEX  
*(face lighting up)*  
For the children.

Alex hugs William. He hugs her back, and kisses her forehead. They watch the children play.

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Alex's Workstation – Afternoon**

A naked but inspired Alex sits at her desk, typing.

**On her 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"

Alex'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 Alex**

She takes a swig from a whisky bottle on her drafting table, and reads with interest.

**Int. Mrs. Connelly's Apartment – Kitchen – Simultaneous**

William and Mrs. Connelly stare down at a small black object on the counter.

WILLIAM,  
That's not a mouse dropping. It's a  
raisin.

M

RS. CONNELLY

*(leaning in close)*

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

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

MRS. CONNELLY (CONT.)

It's the leavings of a mouse.

WILLIAM

*(losing patience)*

It's a raisin.

William matter-of-factly picks up the object and pops it in his mouth. He gets a very strange look on his face.

MRS. CONNELLY

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

**Ext. East Village – Late Afternoon**

A tiny blacked-out storefront with "ANARCHY" sloppily painted in red across the window. Alex, acting as suspicious as possible, exits with a bag full of books.

**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.

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

**Music: "I'll be Glad When You're Dead (You Rascal You)" By Louis Armstrong**

WILLIAM

*(re: book he's reading)*

How about this?

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

(CONTINUED)

A  
LEX

Too messy.

*(been on her mind)*

William, what about Officer Dan?

WILLIAM

*(cocky)*

I think we're smarter than Officer Dan.

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

**Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – The Next Day**

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

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

The pharmacy is two blocks away.

ALEX

She likes to recount the pills.

William twists a banister and it moves easily.

WILLIAM

These are loose.

ALEX

*(diligently twisting)*

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

WILLIAM

It's her own fault then.

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

A

LEX

*(miming it as she speaks)*

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

William stands and puts his arm around Alex's waist.

WILLIAM

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 over 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 Alex's antique stain glass.

ALEX

*(stifled scream)*

WILLIAM

At least they weren't that expensive.

*(Beat)*

Right?

**Ext. 120 Prospect Park West – A Couple Days Later**

The street lamps are striped with red for the holidays.

**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.

WILLIAM (O.C.)

Jesus Christ!

**Close on**

William 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.

**Int. Apartment – Entranceway – Continuous**

William, in black jeans, turtleneck and gloves, turns and scurries back through the apartment, dodging furniture, until he gets to:

**Int. Kitchen – Continuous**

Alex, dressed black sweatsuit and wearing black gloves, is curled up inside the dumb waiter.

WILLIAM

She's gone!

ALEX

Let's do it!

William grabs the rope pulley and begins hauling Alex up. It's a lot harder than he thought it would be. He GRUNTS as she is jerked up and out of view. William pulls one more time, and loses his grip.

Alex PLUMMETS past him, looking quite surprised. We hear a LOUD CRASH.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Moments Later**

William runs out and opens the door leading to the basement. Alex staggers out, roughed up but not seriously injured.

WILLIAM

You okay?

ALEX

Yeah, yeah.

*(reassessing plan)*

We'll let ourselves in with the key.

WILLIAM

No. We're exposed! Abort!

A  
LEX  
*(pushing him)*  
Go go go!

William hesitates momentarily, then scurries up the stairs, commando style. (We see it has been rebuilt, probably at some expense, with lots of clamps still in place; also, cardboard covers the broken stained glass). Alex does a quick recon, and runs up after him.

**Int. Building – Second Floor Landing – Continuous**

William 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. Alex pushes him inside.

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

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

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

WILLIAM  
Who died, anyway?

ALEX  
The tuba player.

WILLIAM  
God does answer prayers.

ALEX  
*(anxious)*  
Let's move.

The two "break" and scurry in different directions. We follow William as he scampers about the parlor, looking for dangers he can create. He hops around commando-style.

**Int. Mrs.**

**Connelly's Apartment – Bathroom – Continuous**

Alex 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. Alex picks up a large jar of face cream.

ALEX

Chanel? I can't even afford Chanel.

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

ALEX

*(grim)*

Jackpot.

**In the Parlor – Continuous**

William fiddles with the brackets holding a very large, heavy bronze crucifix hanging from the wall. The crucifix drops down and BANGS him on the head, very, very hard.

**In the Bathroom – Continuous**

Alex swaps medications in bottles, as quickly as possible.

ALEX

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

She puts the medicine back in the cabinet. 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 tub.

ALEX (CONT.)

*(shaking head)*

So many accidents occur in the shower...

**In the Parlor – Continuous**

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

(CONTINUED)

A  
LEX (O.C.)  
*(whispered shout)*  
No!

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

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

WILLIAM  
Good point.

ALEX  
William, are you bleeding?

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

WILLIAM  
Am I?

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

Holding the sides of his face, Alex bends William's head down and licks the blood off his forehead.

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

**SFX: Police Siren**

Alex SHRIEKS. William jumps up and spins around. He sees:

WILLIAM  
The bird.

It segues into a BUGLE CALL.

ALEX  
*(suddenly concerned)*  
Oh, who will take care of Mr. Fawkes?  
*(suddenly okay about it)*  
I guess we will.



W  
ILLIAM

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

ALEX  
*(hushed horror)*  
You monster.

WILLIAM  
*(backpedaling furiously)*  
I was just kidding. Kiddingkidding.

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

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

WILLIAM  
One more thing!

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

Alex peeks out of the door anxiously.

ALEX  
*(loud whisper)*  
Hurry up!

**Int. Mrs. Connelly Apartment – Kitchen – Continuous**

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

WILLIAM  
And out goes the pilot.

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

WILLIAM  
An hour at 375 should do it.

Alex sticks her head in the door.

ALEX  
Did you blow out the pilot for the  
burners?

(CONTINUED)

Just as he turns back toward the stove, William is instantly enveloped in a HUGE FIREBALL. It burns off in a flash, 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. Alex's hand reaches in and takes several tubes of each.

**Int. D'Agastino's – Continuous**

Alex walks down the aisle with her shopping basket (which noticeably contains a carton 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."

Alex 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."

Alex 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**

Alex walks in WHISTLING.

ALEX  
(calling)  
Sweetie?

WILLIAM (O.C.)  
In here!

**Int. Apartment -  
Bedroom - A Moment Later**

Alex finds William on a ladder in the middle of the room (where he earlier broke the plaster). He's got his handyman book up there, and is diligently sawing away.

WILLIAM

I feel like Sylvester here.

*(does not-great impression)*

Sthufferin' Sthuccotash, I'm gonna get that granny if ith the lasth thing I do!

He turns to Alex (and camera), LAUGHING oddly. His face looks badly sunburned and shiny from various unguents. There are tiny blisters on his forehead; his eyebrows are partially missing. All this, combined with his chipper demeanor, creates a fairly frightening effect.

Alex approaches and surveys the hole. In addition to the crude circle torn out of the ceiling, the support beams have been severed and the floorboards sawn into in several places.

ALEX

*(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.

William holds up a big plastic bottle, spokesmodel-style.

WILLIAM

"Professional Strength Drano™,  
dissolves hair, bones and most organic materials."

He pours some onto his fingers and starts slathering it over the "saw marks."

WILLIAM (CONT.)

In a couple hours this is going to look like 30 years of dry rot.

(CONTINUED)

A

LEX

*(impressed)*

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

WILLIAM

*(excited by the thought)*

You think I should save it for a book?

*(reconsiders)*

No, no, priorities.

William pours more onto his fingers, and starts to slather.

WILLIAM (CONT.)

Eat, my pretties.

A large glob of Drano lands in his eye.

WILLIAM (CONT.)

Jesus fuck!

VOICE (O.C.)

Hello?

William and Alex freeze. Coop walks into the bedroom.

COOP

The door was open...

William and Alex look as guilty as possible, particularly with William trying to madly blink out the Drano. Coop looks at the hole in the ceiling and LAUGHS.

COOP

That's why I don't own property.

ALEX

*(catching on, laughs)*

It's just one repair after another.

WILLIAM

*(blinking madly)*

One repair after another.

COOP

Look, I stopped by to, well, see how you're doing, but also I hear Esquire is looking for a good captions guy; I could—

A  
LEX

William doesn't write captions anymore.

William is surprised to hear her say that; he smiles.

COOP  
That's fine; I just—

Something catches Coop's eye. On the bed are books and pamphlets with titles such as, "27 Simple Kills," "How to Ice Anyone," and "Don't get Mad; Get Them Dead."

William and Alex stare at Coop staring at the bed. Coop appears uncomfortable. After a beat, he turns to William.

COOP  
Still trying to write that thriller,  
huh? Well, uh, good luck with that.

WILLIAM  
Let me walk you out.

William stumbles off the ladder.

**Int. Apartment — Entranceway — Continuous**

William hustles Coop out.

WILLIAM  
Coop, thanks for coming by. It really  
means a lot to me, and to Alex...

COOP  
*(looking at William's face)*  
You know, they're serious about that  
fifteen-minute limit under the sun  
lamp.

WILLIAM  
*(forced good-natured laugh)*  
"Vanity, thy name is Man."

COOP  
"Woman," actually.

William opens the door and practically pushes Coop out.

WILLIAM  
Right.

He slams the door,  
and double-locks it.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Later**

William and Alex sit on the bed. William stares straight ahead; Alex is looking up at the hole in the ceiling.

ALEX

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.

WILLIAM

*(more distracted than angry)*

I thought this was supposed to be my office.

ALEX

It could be that, too.

William exits. Alex doesn't really notice.

ALEX

A den-slash-media room.

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

WILLIAM

A little insurance.

ALEX

*(upset)*

You can't – that cost \$600!

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

WILLIAM

The best six hundred bucks we ever spent.

Alex appraises the scene, unhappily.

ALEX

It doesn't look right there.

W  
ILLIAM  
Function over form.

ALEX  
Shouldn't you maybe clean the ceiling  
debris out from under it?

WILLIAM  
You're thinking!

Alex kneels down; William tips the pyramid up and she sweeps the debris from under it.

WILLIAM  
You are the evil genius.

ALEX  
*(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 the trap 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 down, oblivious.

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous**

William and Alex sit on the bed. William stares up at the hole, Alex down at the pyramid.

WILLIAM  
Is that the theme from "Barnaby Jones"?

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

W  
ILLIAM

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

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

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

Alex frowns. William hugs her.

WILLIAM

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

**Dissolve to Much Later**

William is nodding off; Alex 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.

ALEX

*(through gritted teeth)*

I. Hate. That. There.

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

WILLIAM

*(jarred awake)*

She's getting up!

William and Alex 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.

ALEX

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 Magilla Gorilla jelly jar to the brim, and starts pattering back.

**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 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 William and Alex's Bedroom**

As he hears Mrs. Connelly PATTER away, William throws up his arms in EXASPERATION. Alex stares at the pyramid.

ALEX

Maybe if I just 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 William and Alex's Bedroom**

Alex gets off the bed and starts to fiddle with the pyramid.

**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 Alex, looking up in surprise. The camera plummets towards her.

**On the Gaping Hole in the Ceiling**

Mrs. Connelly peers over the edge.

**Her POV**

Alex's lower torso is pinned under the TV. She MOANS, dazed.

**On Mrs. Connelly**

Looking down.

MRS. CONNELLY

Goodness. I could've fallen through!

**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**

William sits on the bed, trying to act casual. Officer Sandra is taking the report. Officer Dan stares at William.

WILLIAM

Some kind of a freak accident, huh?

OFFICER DAN

What the hell happened to your face?

WILLIAM

*(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.

WILLIAM

We're getting some estimates.

OFFICER DAN

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

*(before William can respond)*

A nice one.

We here a METALLIC CLACKING O.C. Alex enters, carrying a tray. 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. Alex CLACKS over to the Officer Dan with great difficulty.

ALEX

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

**Ext. Building – Evening – Establishing**

**Music: Vince Guaraldi's "Christmas Time is Here," sung by Kasey Chambers**

**Int. Apartment – Parlor – Continuous**

Alex hands a SENIOR WORKMAN a check as a parade of workers tromp out with ladders and big tools.

ALEX

I know it's getting late, but it would be great if you could clean up a little in there.

*(off his blank stare)*

Or you could come back in the morning.

SENIOR WORKMAN

We don't clean up.

(CONTINUED)

He exits. Alex joins William, who is decorating a Christmas tree. (It is next to spiral staircase, which is strung with lights and tinsel; the steps are being used to display dozens of Christmas cards.)

ALEX

Joke's on him. Check's going to bounce.

Alex removes an ornament William has just hung and repositions it.

WILLIAM

*(thinking out loud)*

So 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?

ALEX

More. If we can get the smell out.

They both CHUCKLE, a little evilly. After a beat:

ALEX

You know, William, I think we're being too smart for own good.

WILLIAM

Smart?

Alex reaches into a box and takes out a beautiful angel.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

Push her down the stairs, you mean.

William lifts Alex up, so she can place the angel at the top of the tree.

ALEX

That might not work.

WILLIAM

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

Alex turns off a lamp. The Christmas tree glows. The couple wrap their arms around each other, admiring it. They kiss.

**Int. Apartment – Entranceway – Very Late That Night**

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

WILLIAM

I still think this is going to look suspicious.

ALEX

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

WILLIAM

*(realizing)*

Is that my pillow?

ALEX

Mine's too fluffy.

WILLIAM

Why can't we use one of her pillows?

ALEX

I don't want to leave face prints.

William CHUCKLES, and kisses the back of her neck. Alex 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, Alex is limping wildly. As she goes up the steps, we hear a loud SQUEAK. They freeze. Alex 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.

WILLIAM

*(whisper)*

Which bedroom is she in?

(CONTINUED)

A

LEX

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 two seemingly disembodied eyes, staring sternly.

WILLIAM

*(stifled scream)*

ALEX

*(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. Alex turns toward the apartment, but William grabs her and pulls her toward the outside door.

**Ext. Building – Front Stoop – Continuous**

William and Alex half stumble down the stairs. Alex resists being pulled any further.

ALEX

What are you—?

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

WILLIAM

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

He reaches the other side, runs across the sidewalk, and DUMPS Alex over the stone wall leading into the park.

(CONTINUED)

A  
LEX  
*(surprised, then pained  
noise)*

William dives over the wall after her.

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

They lie on the ground. We can see their breaths.

ALEX  
What are you doing?

WILLIAM  
She's calling the police!

ALEX  
You don't know—

WILLIAM  
She always calls the police!

ALEX  
*(realizing he's right)*  
Fucking Officer Dan!

WILLIAM  
*(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 Bumblefuck, Idaho.

ALEX  
*(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.

WILLIAM  
*(takes two deep breaths)*  
Okay. Good plan.

**Ext. Prospect Park – Viewed from Street Side – Continuous**

There is a beat of silence.

W  
ILLIAM (FROM BEHIND WALL)  
*(joshingly quoting her)*  
"We thought you might be cold, so we  
brought you an extra pillow"?

ALEX (FROM BEHIND WALL)  
Better than you screaming.

They both CHUCKLE. A beat, then:

WILLIAM (FROM BEHIND WALL)  
I'm freezing.

ALEX (FROM BEHIND WALL)  
*(suggestive)*  
Come here then.

**Dissolve to:**

**Ext. Prospect Park – Viewed from Street Side – Dawn**

**Music: "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm," by Beth Orton**

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

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

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

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

WILLIAM  
I can't feel my toes. They're gone.

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

WILLIAM  
Yet.

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

(CONTINUED)



**Int. Building –  
Foyer – Afternoon**

Alex, 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 Kendricks?

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

ALEX  
Yes, Mrs. Connelly?

MRS. CONNELLY  
Could you come up here a moment?

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

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

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

**Int. Building – Second Floor Landing**

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

ALEX  
*(not opening mouth)*  
Hmmm?

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

Alex isn't quite sure what's up.

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

M

RS. 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.

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

MRS. 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.

ALEX

*(swallowing paper)*

That's great.

Mrs. Connelly hands her the bill.

MRS. CONNELLY

They said they have easy financing.

ALEX

*(big smile)*

Enjoy your new TV, Mrs. Connelly.

**Ext. Tompkins Square Park – Night**

William skulks through the park in a long, down-filled coat. A man approaches him.

DEALER

Smoke. Smoke.

WILLIAM

*(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**

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

(CONTINUED)

G

GUN DEALER

Is this for protection or are you taking proactive measures?

WILLIAM

*(very nervous)*

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

GUN DEALER

I gotcha.

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

GUN DEALER

*(suspicious)*

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

WILLIAM

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.

WILLIAM

I've been under a lot of stress.

GUN DEALER

*(looking closer)*

Did somebody throw acid in your face?

WILLIAM

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.

WILLIAM

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

(CONTINUED)

G

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.

WILLIAM

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

*(reaching into pocket)*

Cash, right?

The dealer gives him a "what do you think," stare. William counts out almost all of his money and hands it over.

GUN DEALER

Thank you. Oh, one last thing: I'm a cop.

William drops to his knees, losing it.

WILLIAM

*(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.

William stands up, SNIFFLING.

WILLIAM

We don't have any children; we're talking about it.

*(off his look, soberly)*

But I understand.

GUN DEALER

Don't shoot anybody I wouldn't shoot.

(CONTINUED)

The dealer gets in  
the car.

WILLIAM

Listen, I know you're going back to the  
city, but if you wouldn't mind swinging  
by Park Slope...

GUN DEALER

I'm not a cab. End of the line.

WILLIAM

But you drove me out here! And, let's  
face it, this is dicey neighborhood.

GUN DEALER

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

*(points)*

Did you piss yourself?

WILLIAM

*(looking down)*

Yes, I guess I did.

**Ext. Pretty Dicey Neighborhood – A While Later**

William walks, constantly turning to face some unseen  
threat, pointing his gun from inside his jacket pocket. The  
locals are amused by him.

**Music: "Dancing in the Dark (1931)" by Morcheeba**

**Int. Apartment – Parlor – A Couple of Hours Later**

Alex is smoking a cigarette. The PHONE rings. Alex  
twitches, and quickly answers the phone.

ALEX

*(almost a whisper)*

Hello?

**Intercut with:**

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Mikey's Office – Continuous**

Mikey sits behind his desk in Santa Claus costume drinking  
a lime green martini.

(CONTINUED)

**Music (in background): "Santa, Baby" by Neko Case**

MIKEY

Sexy Lexie! You're missing the XXX-mas party!

ALEX

Oh, sorry. I forgot.

Something's going on under Mikey's desk. Are those... antlers?

MIKEY

Bad news, love. You're sacked.

ALEX

*(not surprised or upset)*

Oh?

Those are definitely antlers, bobbing up and down.

MIKEY

I'd've told you in person, but you know, you just haven't been around. And we've decided to go in a different direction, graphically.

Back in the apartment, a huddled William enters.

ALEX

*(quickly hanging up)*

Great. Merry Christmas!

**Int. ♂ Magazine – Mikey's Office – Continuous**

Mikey looks at the phone, a little shocked. SYN appears from below his desk, wearing antlers and a little black nose.

SYN

How'd she take it?

MIKEY

Disappointingly well.  
*(nodding head down)*  
On Dasher!

Syn smiles and dips back below the desk.

(CONTINUED)

**Int. Apartment –  
Parlor – Continuous**

William takes the gun from his down coat and places it on the coffee table. They both stare down at it, with great moment. After a long silence, Alex picks the gun off the table.

ALEX

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

The gun GOES OFF. A huge explosion of fluffy down erupts from William's crotch. A lamp SHATTERS behind him.

ALEX

The Tiffany!

**Ext. Park Slope Hospital – Early Morning**

**Int. Hospital – Patient's Room – Continuous**

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

DOCTOR

Okay. It's kind of mess down there.

ALEX

Will he still be able to have children?

WILLIAM

*(to Alex, quite annoyed)*

That's your first question?

DOCTOR

Well, we won't be able to really determine the damage until we can sort out what's what. But even in the worst case scenario, I imagine we'd still be able to extract some sperm.

ALEX

Oh, thank God.

WILLIAM

What's the worst case scenario?

D  
DOCTOR

Let's not focus on that just yet. And keep in mind that 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.

Alex smiles bravely at William. This annoys him even more.

DOCTOR

Now, there's two officers here who would like to talk to you.

Officer Sandra and Officer Dan stand behind the doctor.

OFFICER SANDRA

Ms. Payne, could I talk to you outside?

A little dazed, Alex exits with Officer Sandra.

OFFICER DAN

*(to William, rote)*

I'm sorry for your loss.

**Int. Hospital – Hallway – Continuous**

Officer Sandra and Alex sit on plastic chairs.

OFFICER SANDRA

*(gently)*

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

*(before Alex can protest)*

I know, I know, we've all been there.

*(meaningfully)*

Believe me.

**Int. Hospital – Patient's Room – Continuous**

Officer Dan is being less gentle with William.

OFFICER DAN

We know what's going on here.

Panic flashes across William's face.



W  
ILLIAM  
*(not very chalant)*  
What's going on here?

OFFICER DAN  
The falling TV... the gun... Do you think  
I'm a fucking moron or something?

WILLIAM  
No, I don't think you're a fucking  
moron.

William looks plenty worried.

**Int. Hospital – Hallway – Continuous**

Alex fends off Officer Sandra.

OFFICER SANDRA  
A man finds a new cow, suddenly the old  
cow's milk tastes a little sour.

ALEX  
William hasn't found a new cow.

OFFICER SANDRA  
Just working late at the office then.

ALEX  
He doesn't work late. He doesn't work.

OFFICER SANDRA  
Do you know where he goes at night?

ALEX  
He doesn't go anywhere.

OFFICER SANDRA  
Sounds like quite a prize.

**Int. Hospital – Patient's Room – Continuous**

Officer Dan pumps William.

OFFICER DAN  
Why don't you tell me what going on  
here.

W  
ILLIAM  
You said you knew what was going on  
here.

OFFICER DAN  
*(Overly nice)*  
Yes, but if you tell me before she  
tells her, maybe we can prevent you  
from being fucked up the butt every day  
for the next five to eight years.

William recognizes the gravity of the situation.

**Int. Hospital – Hallway – Continuous**

Alex is venting a little.

ALEX  
Look, William's not... perfect. He's  
immature, self-involved, broods a lot...  
You know, he's a guy.

OFFICER SANDRA  
Do you have a life insurance policy?

ALEX  
You don't honestly think my husband's  
trying to kill me? I shot him,  
remember? By accident.

OFFICER SANDRA  
TVs don't just fall out of the sky,  
honey. We see this all the time: Couple  
gets married, they start to hate each,  
choose your weapons.

ALEX  
*(uneasy laugh)*  
My husband is not trying to kill me. Or  
anyone.

**Int. Hospital – Patient's Room – Continuous**

Officer Dan plays good cop/bad cop by himself.

OFFICER DAN  
You know she's out there spilling her  
guts. Women always spill their guts.

William thinks  
about this: maybe she is.

OFFICER DAN (CONT.)  
I understand. You love your wife. But  
she's ratting you out.

William seizes upon the first part of that speech. His  
heart grows three times that day.

WILLIAM  
I trust my wife.  
*(then quickly)*  
Could I see my wife, please?

**Int. Hospital – Patient's Room – A Few Moments Later**

A disgruntled Officer Dan exits as Alex reenters. William  
looks at her warmly, and opens his arms to her. She sits on  
the bed, and lays her head on his chest.

WILLIAM  
I didn't rat you out, honey.

ALEX  
Me neither.

It's a heartwarming moment.

ALEX (CONT.)  
*(voice cracking)*  
I'm sorry I shot you in the penis.

WILLIAM  
*(patting her head)*  
I know. I know.

**Ext. Times Square – Several Nights Later**

William, a little hunched over, and Alex, limping to keep  
up, walk through bright, sanitized Times Square. And yet  
the tableau is strongly reminiscent of "Midnight Cowboy."

**Music: "Silver Bells" by Tom Waits**

They hobble up to the Howard Johnson's, and enter.

**Int. Howard  
Johnson's - Booth - Soon Thereafter**

A desperate-looking William and Alex sit across from Coop, who is wolfing down fried clams.

COOP  
Rosie, I was damn sorry to hear about your "accident."

ALEX  
It was an accident!

COOP  
And a tragic one. But look on the bright side...

William and Alex don't know what that would be.

COOP (CONT.)  
It's pretty Hemingwayesque.  
*(Off their looks)*  
Jake Barnes? Sun also Rises?

WILLIAM  
Oh, yeah, right. That's great.

COOP  
*(getting to the point)*  
Hey you guys, look, I'm happy to see you and all, but if this is about money, it's just, I'd like to stay friends.

ALEX  
We need to have somebody killed.

Coop isn't sure he heard that.

WILLIAM  
We thought you could recommend a hit man.

COOP  
*(excited, like a kid)*  
Really, no shit?  
*(leans over, hushed)*  
Who you gonna kill?

A

LEX

We'd like to keep that confidential.

COOP

Hey, c'mon, this is Coop, your best friend! Is it a celebrity?

*(half joking)*

Tell me right now or I'm calling the police.

Coop glances over at two cops having coffee a couple of a booth away. He raises his hand to wave at them. William yanks Coop's hand down. The two cops wave back.

WILLIAM

*(low tones)*

It's Mrs. Connelly.

COOP

*(getting giddy)*

That sweet old lady? Ooh, that's cold. Why do you need a hit man? Why don't you just push her down the stairs?

ALEX

She's not that easy to kill.

COOP

Hey, can I write about this?

WILLIAM AND ALEX

No!

COOP

I won't use your names.

ALEX

No. Are you going to help us or not?

COOP

Yeah, of course. Well, see, most of the pros I know are in prison. Maybe Henry Hill. But you'd have to fly him in from New Mexico, and he'd be expensive..

WILLIAM

We have \$950.

C  
OOP

Oooh. Well, there is this one guy, Bob...

**Ext. East Village Avenue D – Seedy Bar – Day**

A neon sign above the bar reads, "Seedy Bar."

**Int. Seedy Bar – Continuous**

It's an old dark seedy bar that has been converted into an ironically seedy bar.

**Music: "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" by Frank Sinatra**

We PAN across several booths, where hipsters read and type on their laptops. BOB, a large but slightly older gentleman, sits in a booth between William and Alex. An iBook sits between them. Coop watches from the side, fascinated.

**On the Computer Screen**

Using Alex's CGI design program, we enter Mrs. Connelly's apartment (which she has recreated fairly well from memory) and turn toward the parlor.

ALEX (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, brighter look. For starters, those drapes won't be there...

WILLIAM (O.C.)

Alex...

ALEX (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**

Alex expertly maneuvers her finger around the touch pad.

A  
LEX

Or she might be in her bedroom, that's  
down the hall, second door on the  
right...

Bob nods his head.

BOB  
When do you want this done?

WILLIAM  
As soon as possible.

ALEX  
Tomorrow night?

BOB  
That's Christmas Eve. I like to spend  
Christmas Eve with my family.

WILLIAM  
It's Christmas Eve?  
*(to Alex, apologetic)*  
I didn't get you anything.

Alex gives William and good-natured "forget about it" wave.

BOB  
I could do it later, after the kids go  
to bed.

William and Alex nod their heads. That sounds good. Coop  
also nods his head, excitedly.

**Ext. Building – Christmas Eve – Establishing**

**Music: "Oh, Holy Night" by Mazzy Star**

**Int. Apartment – Bedroom – Continuous**

(In the middle of the room, a huge hydraulic contraption  
has been erected, apparently to keep the ceiling up.)  
William and Alex lie in bed in the dark, staring at the  
ceiling for a long beat.

WILLIAM  
I'm having second thoughts.

A

LEX

It was your idea! Ice floe?

WILLIAM

We both had the idea. I just said it first.

A beat.

ALEX

I never thought of myself as the kind of person who would hire an assassin to kill a little old lady.

Another beat.

WILLIAM

I feel bad about myself.

They lie there, contemplating what they've become. Suddenly, we hear a LOUD CRASHING O.C. William and Alex leap out of bed.

**Int. Apartment – Library – A Moment Later**

William rushes in, and reaches for a light switch. As he turns on the light, a crowbar SMASHES his hand. He SCREAMS.

In the light, we see Bob, whirling around with the crowbar, SMASHING everything. He sends the Christmas tree crashing to the ground in a sea of electrical sparks.

BOB

Ho, ho, ho, Merry Christmas!

Alex gawks in horror. The leaded glass bookshelves, the hutches, all the antiques, smashed.

ALEX

*(screams)*

What the fuck are you doing?!!!

Bob stops. Seeing them, he looks sheepish.

BOB

*(drunk)*

Making it look like a robbery.

*(shields eyes with hand)*

Wrong floor. Stupid Bob!

(CONTINUED)



(  
*defensive*)  
I had a couple of drinks, okay? Have  
you ever killed anyone? It's hard.

WILLIAM  
*(holding crushed hand)*  
Bob, let's just call this thing off...

BOB  
No, no. Deal's deal.

Bob pulls a gun out of his waistband and staggers toward the door. William dives to tackle Bob, but ends up just clinging to the back of his legs. Bob drags William a few feet, then turns and SHOTS him in the arm. William drops off.

**Int. Building – Foyer – Continuous**

Alex runs out, followed by William (holding his shoulder). Bob is already bounding up the stairs. He throws open Mrs. Connelly's door, RIPPING the door chain off easily. He rushes in. Alex and William watch in horror as they hear:

MRS. CONNELLY  
*(Scream)*

Bob 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 Bob like an ATTACKING BABOON. He falls against the railing, which collapses. They plunge together onto the stairs, and down to the floor.

Alex and William rush up. Bob is clearly dead, the gun in his open hand. Mrs. Connelly is MOANING in pain. The couple stares down at them.

WILLIAM  
Oh, man, we're screwed.

ALEX  
*(hysterical)*  
Finish her! Finish her!

WILLIAM  
What!?

Alex bends down, pulls her pajama sleeve over her hand, and picks up the gun.

A

LEX

*(a jumble of words)*

He broke in. She stabbed him. He shot her. She stabbed him he shot her.

She presses the gun on William.

ALEX

Do it! Do it! Do it!

William looks down at Mrs. Connelly. On her forearm, written in blue, are a series of numbers.

WILLIAM

Hitler couldn't kill her! What chance do we have!?

Alex looks down. She bends over, licks a finger and rubs it on the numbers. They smear off.

ALEX

That's the number of the Park Slope police department.

She stands up and grabs the gun from William. She takes careful aim. She can't do it, either. Her arms go limp.

ALEX (CONT.)

We suck.

William puts his arm around her shoulder.

ALEX (CONT.)

*(sadly)*

We'll never be rich.

They hug. William's face is to camera.

WILLIAM

I'll go call an ambulance for Mrs. Connelly.

*(winces)*

And me, I guess.

**Reverse angle:**

A glow lights Alex's face. She looks in horror at:

(CONTINUED)

**Through their  
apartment door**

The Christmas tree is on fire. The fire catches the tinsel on the staircase, then zips up the railing in a pretty spiral effect. The whole staircase goes up in a ZVWOOP.

**On William and Alex**

The both watch, in fear and wonder. And then, terror.

**In the doorway**

A dark figure rises in front of the flames. It's Mrs. Connelly. A SCREECH is heard. Mr. Fawkes swoops down and lands on Mrs. Connelly shoulder. Seen only in silhouette, she looks like some kind of sea hag pirate.

**On William and Alex**

Their moment of truth.

**Ext. Building – A moment later**

Alex holds open the door. William carries Mrs. Connelly out in his arms. He accidentally WHACKS her head on the door frame.

WILLIAM

Sorry, Mrs. Connelly.

We PULL OUT and UP as they hobble down the stairs. Once they get to the sidewalk:

WILLIAM

Where do we go now?

As we continue pulling out, Alex points in one direction and they start going that way. After a few steps, William stops and points in the opposite direction. They go that way.

**Music: "Welcome Christmas" (The Whoville Song) By Love Spirals Downward**

It begins to snow.

**Dissolve to:**

**Ext. Building –  
Spring – Day**

**Int. Apartment – Library – Continuous**

Matthew leads another young couple through the apartment. It's battered (and a lot of glass is missing) but it's still pretty impressive.

MATTHEW

There's a little fire damage, but under that you'll find all the original wood. It's a real handy man's dream. But the bank is taking a loss on the property, so it's going to go fast.

**Int. Building – Foyer – A Moment Later**

Matthew exits the apartment with the couple.

MATTHEW

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 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, but...

HUSBAND

*(patronizing)*

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!"

In an OLD FASHIONED SPECIAL EFFECT, a hand closes a book  
cover over this image. The book cover reads, "The Duplex: A  
True Novel."

**Int. East Village Barnes and Noble – Evening**

A standing-room-only-audience, a mix of college students  
and older readers. As we pan across them, we see the young  
people are applauding much more enthusiastically. Finally  
we reach the celebrated author. It is Coop.

COOP

*(as applause dies down)*

I've got time for a couple questions.

**Coop's POV**

A few angry-looking older people raise their hands. So do a  
couple of smug hipsters, obviously with questions designed  
to illuminate their critical faculties. And one cute coed  
in a red top.

**On Coop**

COOP

*(pointing)*

In the red top.

C

UTE COED

*(flushed)*

I loved your book, Mr. Cooper. I mean, really loved it. I can't believe it's true. It seemed so real.

*(self-conscious laugh)*

But my question: whatever happened to couple who owned the apartment?

COOP

*(smiles, shrugs)*

I dunno.

**Cut to Black****Credits****Over Credits****Music: "I Found A Million Dollar Baby (At The Five And Ten Cents Store)" by Lucinda Williams****After about a minute:****Open on****Ext. Small Town in Idaho – Day**

The town, a single block of a street, seems dwarfed by mountains in the background.

**Super: Bumbulfuc, Idaho****Ext. Main Street – Continuous**

We pan across several locally owned quaint establishments until we reach the middle of the street, which is occupied by an old fashioned "Five and Dime."

**Int. Five and Dime – Continuous**

An OLD MAN is telling a story.

OLD MAN

And that bear looked me straight in eye, with something approaching respect. And I pulled the trigger.

(CONTINUED)

The old man is telling the story to William (sporting a mountain man style-beard), who stands on the other side of the counter, bagging merchandise. The old man has one arm.

WILLIAM

*(genuine)*

Wow. That is reat story, Mr. Klimpert.  
Can I use it?

OLD MAN/MR. KLIMPERT

Use it for what?

ALEX (O.C.)

That'll be \$18.75, Mrs. Klimpert.

Alex is running the register. Her hair is much longer and dyed black. She is also clearly pregnant.

MRS. KLIMPERT

Honey, that can't be right.

Alex smiles patiently at the little old lady.

ALEX

Let's just ring it up again, okay?

William, more amused than annoyed, hands Alex back the bag of merchandise. Alex takes a bar of soap and runs it over the scanner, as Mrs. Klimpert leans over to make sure the scanner isn't pulling any tricks.

ALEX

Okay. That's \$1.19.

MRS. KLIMPERT

A dollar-nineteen for a bar of soap?  
Who ever heard of such a thing?

ALEX

*(actually enjoying this)*

I know, it's awful.

As Alex methodically re-scans all the merchandise and William listens to another of the old man's stories, we:

**Fade to Black**

**Over remaining credits**

**Music: A duet of Cole Porter's "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," by Drew Barrymore and Ben Stiller.**

DREW  
WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

BEN  
I DON'T.

DREW  
WITH FLASHY FLUNKIES EVERYWHERE...

BEN  
I DON'T.

DREW  
WHO WANTS THE BOTHER OF A COUNTRY  
ESTATE?

BEN  
A COUNTRY ESTATE IS SOMETHING I'D HATE.

DREW  
WHO WANTS FANCY FOREIGN CAR?

BEN  
I DON'T.

DREW  
WHO WANTS TO TIRE OF CAVIAR?

BEN  
I DON'T.

DREW  
WHO WANTS A MARBLE SWIMMING POOL, TOO?

BEN  
I DON'T.

DREW  
AND I DON'T, 'CAUSE ALL I WANT IS YOU.

BEN  
'CAUSE ALL I WANT IS YOU...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

145.

Etc, until...

**The End**

(CONTINUED)