

IF YOU COULD SAY IT IN WORDS
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1 EXT. STREET #1 - DAY (1) 1

SAD MAN #1 sits on the curb, suspended in grief, tears in his eyes. A short ways down the street, NELSON (30s, scrawny, black, unkempt, a private intensity) stares at SAD MAN #1.

FADE TO:

2 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - DAY (1) 2

From the exam area come a PATIENT and nurse, MARIA (Hispanic, 30s). Maria picks up a clipboard, calls the next name.

MARIA

Evan Lancaster.

Patient approaches the receptionist, SADIE (late 20s, captivating).

MARIA (CONT' D)

Evan Lancaster?

PATIENT

I need to schedule my follow-up, for a week.

SADIE

Sure. Morning or afternoon?

MARIA

Is one of you Evan?

PATIENT

Uh. Like now. Lunch time.

SADIE

I'm sorry, Dr. Gibson is all booked up until after 2:30 next Wednesday.

MARIA

No Evan Lancaster? Sally Stoop?

PATIENT

Could it be Thursday then?

EWAN

HEY! I'm, uh, Ewan Lancaster. Is it me?

MARIA

(leading Ewan back to exam area)
Probably. Mr. Lancaster if you'll follow me.

SADIE

Thursday he's over at the hospital all day. Wednesday or Friday?

PATIENT

Ummm, Friday then, i guess.

A doctor, MARK (40s, salt & pepper handsome), adding some final notes to a chart, has joined them.

MARK

You're gonna get awfully itchy if you leave the stitches in that long. It's ten seconds once you're here. Just go ahead and show up at lunchtime Wednesday, we'll work you in.

PATIENT

(shakes his hand)

Thank you Dr. Gibson.

MARK

It's Mark, please. Sadie will just write you in as being at the end of the day, for billing purposes. Sadie?

SADIE nods up at MARK. She admires him.

PATIENT

Next week then.

MARK

Messages?

SADIE

Your wife called.

MARK

Who?

SADIE

Your wife.

MARK

(hands her the chart, his eyes search the room)

Oh. Yes. Did she say what she wanted?

SADIE

Just that she called.

MARK

(nods, distracted)

I'm sure it's just about the party Friday.

SADIE searches the room too. She's not sure why.

MARK (cont'd)

You're staying, yes, you don't have a final or..?

SADIE

Tuesday, Thursday til fall.

MARK

When's fall?

SADIE

About two weeks.

MARK nods, still distracted, exits to the exam area.

3 INT. HALLWAY EXAMINING AREA - SAME (1)

3

MARIA

(coming out of exam room)

Meyers referred this one, didn't he?

MARK

I have no idea. Your fr--

MARIA

Only freaks go to that quack.

MARK

Would you keep your voice down?

MARIA

Well they are.

MARK

Isn't your friend supposed to be here now?

MARIA

Nelson?

MARK

The painter.

MARIA

That's Nelson.

MARK

He's late.

MARIA

That's Nelson.

(a look from Mark)

Alright. Soon as i eat. All these people not scheduled til five just decided they'd show up now.

MARK

Maria.

MARIA

Right now?

MARK

He's late now.

MARK goes in to see EWAN. MARIA grumbles as she walks.

MARIA

He'll be late in twenty minutes too.

MARK (O.C.)
Mr. Lancaster. --Nnn-Hnn... Where are your pants?

4 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - SAME (1)

4

MARIA
(scribbles post-it for Sadie)
Could you call this number for me?

SADIE
Sure.

MARIA
Thanks.

SADIE
Wait. What do i...

MARIA
You tell the man who answers, Maria said to get his
narrow butt down here, or he can just hang his work up
at home again.

SADIE
I--

MARIA is gone. SADIE shrugs, dials.

5 EXT. DOG RUN - SAME (1)

5

NELSON ignores his ringing phone. He is fixated on SAD MAN #2
who sits alone at a dog run and clearly does not have a dog.
NELSON sketches, patiently getting every detail. Eventually,
never breaking his gaze, Nelson brings it to his ear.

SADIE
(pause, confused)
Hello?

NELSON
Yeah?

At the sound of Nelson's voice, SAD MAN #2 turns and notices
for the first time that he's being studied.

SADIE
Um. Maria said to tell you to, uh, that if you don't
get your skinny butt down here then-- no. That... To
get your narrow ass down here or hang it up at home.

NELSON watches as SAD MAN #2 leaves.

SADIE (CONT'D)
By here she means Dr. Gibson's office.

NELSON
Okay.

SADIE

Okay.

He hangs up. She hangs up.

CUT TO:

6 I/E. NELSON'S VAN - SAME (1) 6

He studies his new sketch, delicately puts it in a folder along with a sketch of SAD MAN #1, drives away. In the back of the van are several canvases. The one on top shows a waterfall, trees, chairs and a great loneliness.

FADE TO:

8 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - EVENING (2) 8

A wine & cheese gathering. Most are dressed business casual, but SADIE has put on a head-turning gown. Some admire the paintings, all admire SADIE. She joins a small crowd gathered near the lonely painting where Mark's wife, JULIA (40s, compensates for signs of aging with jewelry) plays hostess.

DR. RADISON

And they're all by the same artist?

JULIA

A friend of Maria's.

MARIA

We've known each other for years and years.

DR. MEYERS

You bought them all?

MARK

Oh no, no. Julia kept saying that the walls were bare--

JULIA

And they were, hon.

MARK

Well, yes. But i'm not much of a, of a connoisseur, an art connoisseur. So--

JULIA

Maria said she had this friend and of course, i said, we should make the office into a miniature gallery and give him a show!

MARK

And voila. He brought them over Wednesday.

DR. MEYERS

Is he here?

MARK

The artist? No, we invited him, but...

DR. RADISON
So i can speak freely? I have to say--

MARIA
I need some more wine, anyone else?

JULIA
(hands MARIA her glass)
Just a drop, dear. The pinot.

SADIE
(shakes head no)
I'm already two past my limit.

DR. RADISON
This pinot is exquisite.
(swirls & inhales deeply from glass)

MARIA leaves the group to pour wine.

JULIA
If i told you what it cost..? It's the cheapest thing
i've ever served to guests! Little winery in the
Fingerlakes we discovered by accident at a wedding.

DR. RADISON
Now i always thought that was a white region.

JULIA
So did i, but a bouquet like that? We're getting cases
of it for the Labor Day soiree.

MARIA
...see one damn movie, all a sudden evvvvrybody's an
expert.

NELSON (O. C.)
What movie?

MARIA turns, sees NELSON, throws her arms around him,
spilling some wine on his shirt (which is already covered
with stains).

MARIA
How are you, sweets?

NELSON
I think you're lookin at it.

MARIA
Oh, i'm sorry. Here.
(starts to sponge off his shirt)

NELSON
Like it matters. Just point me towards a sink.

MARIA leads him toward the examination hallway.

JULIA
Because Sidney, it's art!

DR. MEYERS
Well fine, i mean yes. Fine. It's art, fine. But what
the hell are these??

(indicates windows in painting)
They don't even point the same way. You'd have to be a
wall-eyed flounder to see through both these windows at
once. Is that what the "artist" is trying to tell me,
that i'm supposed to be a flounder? Where does he get
the ba--

MARK
You're not driving tonight are you, Sid?

DR. MEYERS
I'm just saying you can't use trees as a parachute. It
won't work. They'll crush you. And splinter your
little chair legs all over the landing zone.
(drinks, he is through speaking)

DR. RADISON
Well i just hope you're not obligated to buy one since
you gave him a show.

Half the crowd snickers in agreement.

SADIE
I like them.

All turn. Her opinion is not expected.

MARK
Do you?

SADIE
Especially this one. It's so lonely.

JULIA
You know art?

SADIE
I mean i didn't study or anything.
(all: a silent "ah, well then")
No one feels the need to go to culinary school before
they eat out. You shouldn't have to study anywhere to
appreciate beauty. It's not like going to school
teaches you how to feel anyway.

DR. RADISON
As long as someone gets it, i suppose.
(all laugh along)

SADIE
(not quite polite)
It's not a riddle.

JULIA

Well, now, dear--

SADIE

When i first moved to New York i was so poor after the broker's fee and deposit and first month and last month, i couldn't go out. Not to eat, see plays, anything. I'm still in debt from that first year. But they have suggested donation at the Met.

JULIA

You never told me you lived in New York.

SADIE

Yup. So week after week i would go to this building crammed with art and crammed with people, me not knowing any of it or any of them. Each visit i would pick a place to sit on the tile, and stare, and be fascinated by it all. But none of them ever noticed me. This has been hanging in front of my desk for two days now. Even though i keep watching it, it keeps sitting there waiting to be noticed.

Silence. SADIE has shut them up and won them over. MARIA returns with wine. The silence freaks her out. A beeper goes off, all the doctors check their hips. MEYERS raises his hand. The tension is broken.

DR. MEYERS

Can i...?

MARK

Sure Jim. Use the one back in my office. Sadie, can you bring out some more shrimp?

9 INT. HALLWAY EXAMINING AREA - CONTINUOUS (2) 9

MARK leads DR. MEYERS to his private office.

MARK

Right in here. Nine gets you an outside line.

He shuts the door and scurries to where SADIE is.

MARK (cont'd)

Sadie. Sadie.

SADIE

What?

MARK

Put the shrimp down, there's plenty of shrimp.

He takes her hand and pulls her into an examining room.

10 INT. EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS (2) 10

MARK kisses SADIE passionately. It's clearly not the first time.

MARK
You.

SADIE
Me?

MARK
You, in that dress, putting a lot of people with a lot of letters after their names where they belonged. You are magnificent.

SADIE
(blushing)
Your wife is right out there.

MARK
I know. I just had to.
He kisses her again, takes out a sanitary wipe and removes any lipstick she may have gotten on him.

MARK (cont'd)
Okay, i'm going back out. You get the shrimp.

SADIE
I thought there was plenty of shrimp.

MARK
There is, but what would Julia think if you come back with no shrimp?
(exits)

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY EXAMINING AREA - CONTINUOUS (2)

MARK heads back to the lobby. NELSON emerges from the bathroom, drying his hands on his pants. SADIE emerges from the store room with shrimp. They nearly collide.

NELSON
I beg your pardon.

SADIE
Oh. No, i-- Don't.. No. Thanks though.

She heads back to the lobby, still grinning ear to ear. NELSON stands still, watching after her, studying her. MEYERS scoots past him, careful not to touch. He eyes Nelson suspiciously. NELSON is still studying Sadie.

CUT TO:

13 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (2)

13

Before taking his leave, MEYERS informs MARK of the suspicious person he just saw in the hall.

MARIA and JULIA freshen their drinks.

MARIA
Would you look at little miss Sadie.

JULIA
She's garnered plenty of eyes this evening.
Still grinning, SADIE joins them and pours herself a wine.

MARIA
I thought you were two past your limit.

SADIE
Yeah...
(drinks)

JULIA's curiosity is piqued. MARIA flags Nelson over.

MARIA
Allow me to present Nelson Hodge, whose work we proudly display.

MARK
He was busy putting a scare into Meyers.

MARIA
If Dr. Meyers can't start lookin above my neck when he talks to me, i'monna put more'n a scare into him.

JULIA
There are worse crosses to bear than admiration.

MARIA
Nelson, this is Julia Gibson. This whole shebang was her idea, so you owe her big.

NELSON bows slightly toward Julia.

MARIA (CONT' D)
And this is Sadie, she works here in the office.

NELSON nods sheepishly to her, smiles. JULIA's eyebrows raise a shade as she adds her own personal two and two.

JULIA
Well, everyone just loves your work.

SADIE
Especially me.

DR. RADISON
All of us do.

Nelson winces a bit as Radison pats him on the back. Maria shoots Radisson a disapproving look. Mark shoots Maria a disapproving look. Julia watches as Nelson blushes when Sadie smile sup at him. The party continues.

FADE TO:

14 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - LATER (2)

14

The party has drizzled out. MARIA has gotten stuck with cleaning duties. NELSON is helping her a bit. SADIE sits.

SADIE

I'll get that you guys.
(continues to sit)
Seriously, just leave it.

MARK

We should put her in a taxi. Or i could drive her and be home right behind you.

JULIA

(finishing off a glass of wine)
Don't be silly Mark. I'm certainly not driving. We'll have Nelson take her home.

MARK

Nelson?

JULIA

Nelson, dear. Sadie can't drive herself this evening, obviously. So we were thinking, you might serve as a bit of a chauffeur.

NELSON

Alright.

SADIE

Maria, for real. Leave it til Monday.

MARIA is holding the leftover shrimp.

JULIA

(prepping to go)
Maria? You can lock up and see that everyone gets where they're going?

Before Maria can answer, they are gone.

CUT TO:

15 I/E. MARK'S CAR - NIGHT(2)

15

MARK and JULIA drive up the Schuylkill River.

JULIA

I thought it went well.

MARK

Mm-hmm.

JULIA

We don't have to do another one.

MARK

No. No. It went very well. You outdo yourself--
(leans over and kisses her)
--every time. This was a great idea.

JULIA

(brightens)
I do my best.

She takes his hand. He gives it a squeeze. A brief moment of satisfaction. Then silence. The moment's over. They drive on.

MARK

I hope Sadie gets home alright.

CUT TO:

16 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (2)

16

Mark and Julia arrive home, head directly to the kitchen.
MARK pours a nightcap, JULIA rummages for a snack.

MARK

What does that mean?

JULIA

That kind of glow on a lady does not just "happen".

MARK

Meaning?

JULIA

She looked as if she'd been kissed by Bogart himself.

MARK

I did notice that.

JULIA

(gives him a peck)
I just love a scan-dahl.
(exits with her snack)

MARK

Do you now? I had no idea.

JULIA (O.S.)

Don't be an ass.

He drinks, ponders, imagines.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

17 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - MORNING (3)

17

NELSON enters as quietly as possible carrying a small brown bag from a deli. A cat runs to greet him. A gasp! SADIE is covering herself with a sheet.

SADIE
Turn around.
(he is confused)
Turn around, don't look.

NELSON
Okay.
(does so, waits)
When can i... How long do i stay this way?

SADIE
Is that coffee?

NELSON
Mm-hm.

SADIE
Could i have a sip?

NELSON
I got you your own.

SADIE
You did?

NELSON
Yes.

SADIE
Can i have it?

NELSON
May i turn around?

SADIE
(pause)
Hold on. Yes.

He turns. She has on only his shirt. He hands her a coffee, offers her sugar, artificial sweeteners, creamers. She shakes her head "no", drinks it. He sits beside her, takes a package of sticky buns from the deli bag, offers her one. She hesitates, takes it, eats.

NELSON
Nice shirt.

SADIE
I don't know where my dress went.

He glances around the space, which is little more than one large room with a bed and some industrial shelving. The walls are bare concrete, the ceiling water-stained, the floor in disrepair. It is littered with paints, supplies, clothes, etc. He spots her dress by the door, goes to fetch it.

SADIE (CONT' D)
By the door. Of course it is. Barely get in here and i just... whooh!...

He brings her the dress, offers it to her, turns around.

SADIE (cont' d)
(after she changes)
Thank you.

He sits beside her again. Pause. Coffee and cinnamon buns.

SADIE (cont' d)
I'm sorry. I can't think of another way to-- Did we...?

NELSON
I'm a little insulted.

SADIE
I was very drunk.

He nods. She waits for an answer. He nods.

SADIE (cont' d)
And... were we... safe?

NELSON
Yes.

SADIE
Well, that's good at least. I mean--! Oh. No. I...
(pause, regroup)
Y'know what? The morning is always the awkward part,
isn't it? I'm just going to-- Yeah.
(starts to go, sits immediately)
--Oh! Not that i mean i-- y'know, a lot. When i say,
"always the awkward part" i don't want you to think
i'm...
(her eyes water)
Oh god.

The cat comes to comfort her. NELSON fetches tissue off the shelves, next to a coffee can.

SADIE (cont' d)
Thank you.
(he sits beside her)
You have coffee.

NELSON
Hmm?

SADIE
Right up there. That's coffee?
(he nods)
And you have a coffee-maker.

NELSON
Oh. I thought you might want some food on your stomach
this morning. And i don't really cook--

SADIE
So you went out for sticky buns?

NELSON

Well. This is my food money til Tuesday. So i hope you like' em.

SADIE

I do actually. They're my guilty favorite.

NELSON

Well, good then.

SADIE

(pause, eats, then)

Wouldn't it have been cheaper to make the coffee here, if you have no money?

NELSON

I didn't want the smell to wake you.

SADIE

(nods, pause, eats, then)

When i woke up, in this-- in here, and i was alone? I thought you'd just crept out and left me here, and--

NELSON

From my own apartment?

SADIE

Well, nobody ever brought me breakfast in bed before.

NELSON

Never?

SADIE

For real.

NELSON

That's a shame.

SADIE

And i'm so sorry, you went, you spent your last... however much...

NELSON

Don't worry about it. I've never been anybody's first anything before.

SADIE

And see, that's what i'm saying.

NELSON

What is?

SADIE

You're being all sweet, for real, very sweet, and i'm... I was drunk.

NELSON

...yeah.

SADIE

I mean, you knew i was drunk. You said so.

NELSON

I knew you were drunk.

SADIE

I mean, I'm sure i would-- You seem very nice.

He kisses her. When it stops...

SADIE (cont'd)

You're a good kisser.

NELSON

No one's a good kisser.

He kisses her again. She gives in and kisses him. The cat scurries from between them.

FADE OUT.

18 EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY (3)

18

JULIA taps on Mark's window. He rolls it down.

MARK

Yes dear?

JULIA

What time should i expect you?

MARK

It's rounds.

JULIA

Yes but sometimes rounds is an hour, sometimes it's half a day, and we do need to at least make an appearance tonight at the Kicklitters'--

MARK

(sees Sadie's car, checks his watch)

Oh right, right. This should be a quick one.

JULIA heads to her car. MARK drives off, still looking at the SADIE's car.

CUT TO:

20 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - LATER (3)

20

The empty sadness canvas with sketches of sadness: SAD MEN #1 & #2, Kurt Cobain, a baby crying, Edward Scissorhands. NELSON and SADIE with coffee. She wears only his shirt. Pause.

NELSON

I got attacked, back in June.

SADIE

Attacked? Why?
(pause, he does not need to say "for
being black")
For real? Like, attacked attacked?
(he does not need to say "yes")
My god.

He shows her his "rage" painting.

NELSON

The man, he had this look. Not just in his eyes, but
around him. Hate seeped out of him. Tinted the air. It
bent light like gravity. Until he was just this
instrument of rage.

SADIE

That's so scary. Don't even tell me that.

NELSON

...no no... It was like nothing i'd ever seen before.
That man gave himself over to God.

SADIE

And God said, "Sic' em!"

NELSON

It's like in church when somebody gets the Spirit and
has to testify.

SADIE

Doesn't happen in white church.

NELSON

No, i guess not.
(SADIE shrugs)
I never got the Spirit.

SADIE

Well, me neither.

NELSON

I've never hit a man.

SADIE

For real?

NELSON

Never.

SADIE

Wow. And so the new one is... "Sad"?

NELSON

For lack of a better word. It's going to be a triptych.

SADIE

And the third one?

NELSON
"Happy"?

SADIE
Where are those pictures?

NELSON
I don't know. I've never seen anyone be happy like that man was pissed.

SADIE
What about hungry?
(he wraps his arms around her)
You ever see someone so hungry you had to paint them?

NELSON
I really don't have anything--

SADIE
Me belly need full. Growl.

CUT TO:

21 INT. PUB - AFTERNOON (3)

21

SADIE and NELSON sit at the bar with half-empty pints; their food is just arriving. They dig in instantly. It is great.

SADIE
What'd i tell you?

NELSON
I'll pay you back Tuesday. I--

SADIE
Told you, don't sweat it. It's only a--

NELSON
I know, but i--

SADIE
You can work it off in trade.

The whole bar cheers!

SADIE (cont'd)
Damnit! His knee's still not healthy. He gets no push off his back leg. Last year that's out by ten rows.

(NELSON is clueless.)
Okay, the guy up to bat now is--

NELSON
Shh.

SADIE
What?
(NELSON glances around)
No one cares if you don't know any--

NELSON
Shh!

SADIE
You're being silly.
(to TV)
Run you sonofabitch! Run. RUN! Oh bullshit!

The rest of the bar is clearly rooting for the other team.

NELSON
Oh my god.

SADIE
He was safe!

NELSON
You're going to get us killed, you know that don't you?

SADIE
What?

PATRON (O. C.)
The Yankees suck my nuts!

Nelson indicates this should be explanation enough.

SADIE
That's my team.

YANKEE HATER
How can you live here and be a Yankee fan?

SADIE
I didn't always live here.

YANKEE HATER
Well ya do now.

SADIE
Phils are National League anyway, what do you care?

YANKEE HATER
I hate the Yankees.

SADIE
Okay, you're against the Yankees, who is your A. L. team?

YANKEE HATER
Whoever's playing the Yankees.

SADIE
Everyone who's not sure what they're for picks out someone to be against. But don't worry. Eventually, as you learn more about the game, you'll know who you like.

YANKEE HATER gives a threatening stare.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. STREET #2 - MOMENTS LATER (3)

22

SADIE
Why?

NELSON
Because.

SADIE
Tell me why?

NELSON
Because.

SADIE
That's not a reason.

NELSON
Because Everyone Hates The Yankees.

PASSERBY
Goddamn right.

NELSON
Even i know that.

SADIE
Tell me why.

NELSON
They win every year.

SADIE
That's crap. Most of them have never won. Half of'em were on other teams last year. Play this game since 8 years old, now they're 38 with bad knees and they want one shot before they go. You think anything about this is routine for any of them?

CUT TO:

23 INT. SADIE'S APT - LATER (3)

23

They watch the game on TV.

SADIE
This guy up now? He cried the day he was traded to New York. They got him when Mendez had wrist surgery and missed all of June. He was crying at his press conference saying he didn't want to be sitting on a bench. Said he'd rather be on the field for a losing team than on the bench of a winning one.

That's what he thought of himself. Those were his only options. Then there was this big fight against Seattle where he just took down this total asshole, and his first game back from suspension he pops a homer in the tenth to beat the Sox and put us up half a game. I mean, he's a sub again. But now every time he steps up

(MORE)

SADIE (cont' d)

55,000 people go nuts. Look at his face.

The things people wish for when they blow on birthday candles or eyelashes, New York is where you go to make it come true. I still believe in that. So how can i not root for the Yankees.

The crack of a bat. SADIE sits bolt upright. On TV, the Yankees mob their teammate as he crosses home plate. He wears a smile that barely fits on his face. SADIE celebrates like she won the game herself. NELSON is delighted just to watch. He grabs a scrap of paper and a pen from off the counter and starts to sketch her. She grabs his face and kisses him.

LUCY (O. C.)

Ooh girl. Lookie what you brought me!

They turn. In the door is Sadie's roommate, LUCY (20s, black, curvy).

LUCY (cont' d)

Oh, he not for me? Well then you should take him on back to your room and do your messin round back there, where i aint gotta see it.

SADIE

(clearing up and clearing out)

Fine. We'll move.

She leads NELSON back down a hallway toward the bathroom. On one side of the hall is a giant curtain.

LUCY (O. C.)

I don't wanna be lookin at no smoochins goin on in my apartment, and me not havin none o' the smoochins. Aint right. Tease a girl like that. Get my 'rousals all up and an left me with nothin but my own self for myself.

SADIE pulls back the curtain, reveals a mattress on the floor, barely room around it for a few shelves. The light comes from a bare bulb with a pull-string.

24 INT. SADIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS (3)

24

SADIE ushers NELSON into the area and pulls the curtain closed behind them, as if it could keep out the noise.

LUCY (O. C.)

You coulda at least brought back a nice skinny white boy for me. I like them skinny white boys. They all enthusiastic. Lil Strom Thurmonds, gettin they freak on, freak on!

SADIE

Okay! We're in here now!

LUCY (O. C.)

I'm just sayin...

A pause. Lucy is through.

SADIE

(climbs to change light bulb)

That's the rule we have. If i'm in my room with the door shut i can't hear her. It sounds immature, but it works.

(the bulb is now green, she climbs down)

Ta-da! Chez moi.

Pause. He studies it the way he studies the Sad Men, takes it all in. He points to the bobblehead dolls.

NELSON

What happened to this one?

SADIE

That's Giambi.

NELSON

What'd he do?

SADIE

(a beat, then wistful)

Broke my heart.

(pause, he studies the room)

Well anyway, just wanted to show you. Y'know, with the proper light. And all.

NELSON

It's like an enchanted little cave back here.

SADIE

You think so?

NELSON

Yeah.

SADIE

It's not a turn-off, all cramped this way?

NELSON

(kisses her)

Oh, huge turn-off.

SADIE

Two more years and i won't be living this--

NELSON

Colossal turn-off.

(kiss)

Epic.

(kiss)

Of biblical proportions.

(kiss)

It's disgusting. I may vomit.

She breaks away, pushing him. His head hits a shelf.

NELSON (cont'd)
Ow. Damn.

SADIE
That's right. You watch yourself.

NELSON
I'm sorry Ike, i'll never do it again.

SADIE
Oh no you didn't just...!

NELSON
I did.

SADIE
"That's mah name. Aint her name. 's mah name, was mah daddy's name. She cain't have it."

NELSON
(feeling his head)
Man...

SADIE
Does it for real hurt?
(he nods)
I could probably kick your butt, huh.

NELSON
Yeah, probably.

SADIE
Wimp.

NELSON
So?
(pause)
I'm an "artist", that makes it okay. Means i'm sensitive or some kind of crap.

SADIE
You're still a wimp, wimp.

NELSON
What do you do anyway, those abs? Is this that "Pilates" or yoga, what? Just sit-ups? You're like Dennis Quaid.

SADIE
I, it... I used to, when i was little i started-- i would hit myself in the stomach.
(pause)
I would. I would uh, punch myself, like this--

NELSON
No, don't. Don't show me.

SADIE

Not so it hurt. It wasn't like, a, an Act of Self-Violence or anything weird like that.

NELSON

Okay.

SADIE

It wasn't. It's not. I'm not like a freak or anything. Alright?

NELSON

I believe you.

SADIE

I wanted to be tough. Tough is very big in my family. So i would practice, in case... In case, y' know--

NELSON

In case someone were ever to, to hit--

SADIE

Were ever to hit me in the stomach, yeah. Yeah, exactly, i'd be all set then.

NELSON

Okay.

SADIE

I dunno. Nowadays i'd probably let people punch me in the stomach if it meant i didn't have to be poor anymore. It's embarrassing. To be my age, living like this.

NELSON

You saw my place.

SADIE

Yeah, but you're lucky, you--

NELSON

--Don't...

SADIE

You are. Not everyone has their--

NELSON

"Artistic integrity"? Listen, i hope every day for the chance to sell out. If it's being bought, it's being sold.

SADIE

Well you shouldn't have to starve just to--

NELSON

I just hung my work in a doctor's lobby.

SADIE

Yeah, butchaknow, "y' gotta suffer for your art."

NELSON

Well, it might be art but it's not changing the world.
It's just changing hands.

SADIE

I like your paintings.

NELSON

Thanks.

SADIE

What does that make me?

NELSON kisses her. They collapse to mattress.

CUT TO:

25 INT. SADIE'S APT - CONTINUOUS (3)

25

LUCY is eating leftovers from Sadie and Nelson's dinner. She hears naughty laughter and something knocked over.

LUCY

Put on some damned music or sunth'n!

Some less-than-romantic music comes on, immediately stops. Sounds of rummaging. New, more appropriate, music is heard.

LUCY (cont'd)

...i swear...

FADE TO:

26 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - MORNING (4)

26

Nelson is greeted by the cat as soon as he comes in. Nelson scoops him up and carries him around as he heads to the CD player and puts in a new CD from his bag (the music from last night). He puts out some cat food, scans the cabinets for something for himself. He nibbles a cracker as he lays out his paints. His eyes go from sketch to sketch. The music plays. He becomes lost in thought.

CUT TO:

26.5 INT. OFFICE LOBBY - MORNING (4)

26.5

SADIE

No, i can't, i'll feel weird.

SADIE (CONT'D)

I'm not ungrateful or anything, i--

MARK

Are you sure?

SADIE

These must have been almost like \$400.

MARK

Almost like.

Sadie has a stack of textbooks piled on her desk.

SADIE

I'm not even taking this one til spring.

MARK

Okay, i think i guessed pretty damn good. To get more accurate than this i'd have to move way past rummaging around your desk into really invading your privacy.

SADIE

It's not... I can't let you spend \$400 on me like that.

MARK

It was \$531, thank you. And i didn't feel the least bit "weird" about it until this second.

SADIE

It's too much.

MARK

You're right. You don't really deserve this.

SADIE

Hey...

MARK

No. You deserve your squalor. That's who you are inside.
(pause, Sadie looks like she's been stabbed)

Yeah, i don't believe it any more when i say it than when you say it.

(Sadie is listening now)

If you can't accept a gift, you either don't want it, or you don't deserve it. I know you want a better life. You wouldn't be wasting your summer evenings on Conceptual Physics.

SADIE

I need a science credit.

MARK

It's a decision to invest in yourself. You're twenty-five years old.

SADIE

Shh. I tell people i'm twenty-four.

MARK

Be that as it may, --Really??-- Sadie, you can dance around this all you want to, pretending you don't understand my point, you're very clever.

SADIE

(glib)
Thank you.

MARK

(annoyed, ignoring her interruption)

You need to own up to your own ambition. People with no aspirations are afraid to be great. And they will never make a difference in the world. I don't want that for you.

(pause)

Take the books.

SADIE

(deliberate and sincere)

Thank you.

MARK

(nods)

Better.

He checks quickly to see that no one is looking, kisses her gently, leaves. Close-up on Sadie's face. She looks into the distance, happy but puzzled, sighs.

27 INT. WELLNESS CENTER - AFTERNOON (4)

27

A match cut to Sadie exhaling during a workout. Maria comes into view; she is near hyperventilation. The camera pulls back to reveal they are taking capoeira. A banner hangs on the wall proclaiming Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

MARIA

(between pants)

Free class, my ass!

They are supposed to do a cartwheel now. Maria's hand slips and she falls to the floor.

MARIA (cont' d)

That's it. I didn't get a lunch. I'm getting a lunch

Sadie chases after her to the changing room.

MARIA (CONT' D)

I don't know who they are kidding! Brazilian Dance. My husband beats me, i'm supposed to do the macarena.

MARIA plops onto the changing bench, catches her breath. SADIE glances around and decides to do push-ups with her feet on the bench by Maria.

MARIA (CONT' D)

Piss me off. I have to get a man first, before i can beat his ass.

SADIE has finished her pushups, does not answer. Maria waits for an answer. Sadie gets a drink of water. Maria waits for an answer. Sadie notices. Maria waits.

MARIA (CONT' D)
You got some luvins this weekend.
(no response)
Look at you, you are blushing!

SADIE
I just worked out.

MARIA
You keep getting redder!

SADIE
Yeah? So? I get luvins.

MARIA
Yeah, but this time you got some good luvins.
(Sadie heads for the shower)
Oh, like that, is it?
(Maria grabs a towel, follows)
You know, if we hurry, we can still get a sit-down lunch
and you can tell me all abo-- Oooh! With margaritas! We
need margaritas, Sadie. I want my full hour at least
once this week or i will go El Mariachi on his ass.
Bust out some Havana Nights cartwheels! And i tell you
something else. If his wife doesn't stop callin every
hour to talk about stupid shit...

FADE TO:

28 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - AFTERNOON (4) 28

NELSON stares at the "sad" canvas, his brow furrowed. His
paints are mixed, brush in hand. Nothing. He stays this way
for some time.

MARK (V. O.)
You alright there?

CUT TO:

29 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - DAY (4) 29

MARK watches SADIE stare blankly at the lonely painting.

MARK
Maria? Help me with this?

Maria and Mark head for the lonely painting. Sadie snaps out
of it.

SADIE
What? No! Why?

MARK
Because you keep zoning out to this thing. If i showed
you the queen of diamonds you'd assassinate the
president.

SADIE

No, please... Please?

Mark looks to Maria for her opinion.

MARIA

Annh, leave it. She's just thinkin bout her hot date she had this weekend.

Mark shows open interest in this information, as do a couple of patients. Maria looks amused with herself.

SADIE

Shut up!

MARK

Oh yeah?

SADIE

It's not-- I, i didn't say-- This...
(composes herself)

...is not appropriate conversation for the workplace.

She focuses her attention, deliberately and exclusively, on the computer screen. Maria leads a reluctant patient back to the exam area.

MARIA

C' mon, loverboy, get a move on.

Mark approaches Sadie's desk; she will not look at him.

MARK

Sadie? Sadie, could i get my messages.

SADIE

I'm sorry. Oh. Here.
(nervous, knocks over a cup of pens)
Your wife called: How many pounds of foie gras should she order for the party. Dr. Radison called about a consult. And your wife again, something about the credit limit and authorization.

MARK

See me in my office after the last patient?

MARK leaves. SADIE bites her lip, looks to the lonely painting for answers.

CUT TO:

30 SCENE DELETED 30

31 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (4) 31

Sadie knocks on the door. Mark waves her in. Signals for her to wait one second.

MARK

(on phone)

But that's exactly why they put a limit on the card.
...I know, i know. I want it to be-- Now, listen.
Julia? Listen to me one sec? I do too. But maybe,
listen, maybe "bigger than last year" isn't better,
maybe "more exclusive" is. Hmm?

(suddenly sarcastic)

Yes, that sounds logical, go pawn your jewelry.
...Because how am i supposed to take that comment
seriously? It's ludicrous.

(moves around his desk to Sadie)

Look it's up to you. But whatever you go over on this
one comes out of the Christmas Eve budget. You pick.
I've gottagonow, loveyou, bye.

(hangs up, pause)

So, hot date, eh?

SADIE

Maria has no right discussing* my personal-- and she
doesn't even know what--

MARK

(overlapping at *)

You're off the clock now, we can* talk like adults.

The phone rings.

SADIE

That's not the point, * i don't feel--

MARK

And by the way, when, exactly...

(yanks the cords out of the phone,
crosses to Sadie)

...did you become so concerned with what is, and what
isn't appropriate in the office.

(Sadie stops talking, bites her lip)

Your car was here all weekend.

SADIE

It seemed silly to make a special trip when Monday--

MARK

Last time i saw you, you were with the painter kid. I
didn't know if you'd made it home at all. He's a little
(leaves this unspoken, beat)

If i'd i known you had a date, i wouldn't have been so
worried about you.

(Sadie searches his eyes)

I'm not stupid. There are going to be men, plenty of
younger men, who will spot you

SADIE

You're not--

MARK
(uninterrupted)
and say "wow". I'm too old to get caught up in--

SADIE
Stop it. Stop talking like you're old. You're not.

MARK
Maybe not old, but i'm also not twenty-five anymore--

SADIE
Shh! It makes it icky.

MARK
(pause, acknowledges this fact)
I just would prefer if we're honest with each other
about what's going on. I don't enjoy wasting my
weekends worrying.

SADIE
I'm just fine.

Pause. Mark kisses her gently.

MARK (CONT'D)
Mark?

MARK
Mm-hmm?

SADIE
I have class tonight.

MARK
(stops)
Of course you do.

SADIE
...yeah.

They part. She exits.

32 SCENE DELETED 32

33 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - MOMENTS LATER (4) 33

SADIE is almost out the door. Mark hurries out after her,
with something in his hand.

MARK
Sadie! I'm leaving you a note. Tomorrow i need you to
get me a new phone cord.

She nods, exits. He loiters by her desk, stares at the lonely
painting from where she usually looks at it.

FADE TO:

34 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - DAY (5) 34

NELSON, sips coffee, stares at the "sad" canvas. Still nothing. He absentmindedly pets the cat, smiles.

CUT TO:

35 INT. BARNES & NOBLE - AFTERNOON (5) 35

NELSON reads at the cafe. Two FANS sit down with newspapers and coffee.

FAN 1

You believe he aint been shitcanned?

FAN 2

Fastball, fastball, fastball, fastball, fastball. Gee, you think they might know what's coming next?

NELSON hides the copy of Baseball for Dummies he's reading inside another book and surreptitiously eavesdrops.

FAN 1

Nine million a year and he's slobbin beach balls in the ninth.

FAN 2

What he needs, he needs a change up.

FAN 1

Right!

FAN 2

One of those eephus jobbies. Those reeeeeeaaal... Sloooooooooow--

FAN 1

Eephus, you call it?

FAN 2

I saw that big Cuban on the White Sox throw one once, i thought my TiVo had paused.

FAN 2 makes a gesture of the ball freezing in mid air. Both of them stare at it, waiting. A pause. They look at each other. FAN 2 nods to FAN 1.

FAN 1

You know the worst part is?

FAN 2

The losing.

FAN 1

The guy hit it, aint even a real ball player. He's a scrub they got when Mendez screwed up his wrist.

FAN 2

I hate interleague play.

FAN 1
Mm-hm. Exactly. Atlanta gets Tampa and we get the
Yanks.

FAN 2
You know who's behind it? That Steinbrenner. I hate
that Steinbrenner.

FAN 1
Me too.

NELSON
Excuse me, there's a game on today?

FAN 1
Yeah.

NELSON
The Yankees and uh, our team?

FAN 1
(disgusted by the ignorance)
No! Phils-Mets.

FAN 2
Yankees are playin Boston. Duh!

NELSON
What time?

FAN 2
Hey guy. It started like 1:05. Way back.

FAN 1
Probably the 7th inning by now.

Pause. NELSON leaves.

FAN 2
What a friggin retard.

FAN 1
Probably a Yankee fan.

FAN 2
I hate the Yankees.

FAN 1
Me too.

CUT TO:

36 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (5)

36

MARK has on the Phillies game on a small TV set. JULIA is on
the other side of the desk.

MARK
I hate the Mets.

JULIA

I thought it was the Yankees you hated.

MARK

I always and forever hate the Yankees! But right now i hate the Mets. Keep reading.

JULIA

Yes dear, so, Lewis and Aileen yes, Liz and Darrin of course, Steve and Jennifer RSVPed no the last three times. Last chance for them.

MARK

We get the Yankees, Atlanta gets Tampa and now we're going to be 4 games back again!

JULIA

We can do this another--

MARK

If it doesn't get done this week, it won't get done at all. Jules. Jules? Just, let's do the names. C' mon.

JULIA

Susan and Bobby.
(no response)
Susan and Bobby?

MARK

Are you asking me? Are you serious? Of course Sue and Bobby, of cour-- That's one, c' mon, that's one! Attaboy!

JULIA

Mac and Jeaniiiiine... --Are we putting them up again? I've half a mind to just not invite them.

The phone starts ringing.

MARK

They'll be devastated. --I hate the Mets, i hate them.

JULIA

We should get you in classes.

MARK

I hate their manager, i hate their owner, i hate their stupid giant baseball head mascot, i hate--

CUT TO:

37 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - SAME (5)

37

SADIE

(answering phone)
Dr. Gibson's office.

NELSON (V. O.)

So, the Yankees are winning again.

SADIE

Hi.

NELSON (V. O.)

They are. They're up 4-1.

SADIE

I know, i'm watching it on the internet. Hey! I thought you didn't have TV.

CUT TO:

38 INT. BEST BUY - CONTINUOUS (5)

38

NELSON is at the TV display, watching the game.

NELSON

I'm magic.

He nods "thanks" to the kid at the counter, who returns a complex hand sign that confuses NELSON. TV crowd cheers.

NELSON (cont'd)

Ope! Look at that.

SADIE

You are magic. Yaaay.

BACK TO:

36 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - SAME (5)

36

JULIA

And what about Gerald?

MARK

Mm-hm?

JULIA

Well, i mean, of course Gerald is invited, but that insipid wife of his, i mean really!

MARK

Mmmnn.

JULIA

But i don't suppose there's a way to invite him and not her.

MARK

What do you pay a guy nine million for if he's going to just throw it across the middle of the plate like that!

JULIA

Is there?

MARK

Um. Uhhh, no, honey, Gerald and Ashley are separated.

JULIA
Nooo!

MARK
Yeah, since May, i think. Shit!

JULIA
Oh the poor dears.

MARK
Yeah, don't invite her if you invite him.

JULIA
Of course he's invited. He's on the board.

MARK
You don't have to tell me he's on the board. I know he's on the board. Do you know what they're trying to do now? They want to start transitioning nurses through the ICU, regular floor nurses that--

JULIA
But we still have to invite him.

MARK
Yes we do.

SADIE
He probably won't show with all this going on.

MARK
No. He'll be here with... oh hell, what's her name... Shirley, Shelby something like that. He's nowhere that she isn't.

JULIA
ooh. Scan-dahl.

MARK
I think he takes her to the john with him.

JULIA
I'll bet she's a little golddigger.

MARK
(considers this)
Actually they look very happy.

JULIA
I'll bet she's young. And i'll bet she's not from money. Am i wrong?

MARK
Probably not, no.

BACK TO:

37 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - SAME (5) 37

NELSON (V. O.)

7-1.

(SADIE gives a naughty giggle.)
Can i see you tonight?

SADIE

What did you want to do? Dinner?

BACK TO:

38 INT. BEST BUY - CONTINUOUS (5) 38

MANAGER

No no! Not in my store. Who did this?
(changes channel)

NELSON

I don't have... money.

MANAGER

No. Yankees. I hate the Yankees.

BACK TO:

37 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (5) 37

SADIE

I hope you didn't just bootie call me at work!

JULIA and MARK come into the lobby.

JULIA

I'm not putting her name on the invitation.

MARK

Fine. But we do have to get these invitations out.

SADIE

Call me tomorrow.

JULIA

And we should invite Ashley or else it will look as--

MARK

You hate Ashley.

JULIA

--People will think we've taken sides! I do not!

MARK

Two minutes ago, you asked if we had to invite her.

JULIA

Can you imagine how she must feel right now?

They exit. A few seconds later MARK returns.

MARK

New rule, standing order: if she calls for me on a day when i might be in surgery, tell her that's where i am.

Mark stalks off. MARIA has arrived for the last of this.

MARIA

Don't look at me. At least you got some sweet luvins.

(SADIE starts to protest)

You are not gonna complain to me about gettin the sweet luvins. To me?

(Sadie's eyes say she is.)

All i'm sayin is, the story better be worth it.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. RESTAURANT #2 - LATER (5)

39

SADIE and MARIA sit at their favorite work-area restaurant.

MARIA

Hmmm.

(Sadie starts to speak)

Mmm- nnn.

(Maria sips her drink, thinks)

Mmm- hmm.

(a long pause)

Anything else i should know? Names?

SADIE

No.

MARIA

What'm i supposed to call'em?

(SADIE shrugs, pause)

Alright. Alright. When i was in high school, i had this big ol' crush on one boy, he was all artsy.

SADIE

Exactly.

MARIA

But this other boy, rich white boy, always hittin on me.

SADIE

Exactly. And?

MARIA

Can't buy a date holdin a rose between my teeth for half a high school, and now i'm gettin the lions share?

SADIE

You know my pain.

MARIA

Then i told the rich one my heart was taken.

(pause, Sadie waits)

He took up with some hoochie, knocked her up. She got a big settlement to stay quiet. I would be so rich now.

SADIE
mmmm. What about the other one?

MARIA
Oh Nelson is how he is, cause of, you know, How He Is.
He's not turnin out no different now, that's how he is.

SADIE
I'm not su--

MARIA
Boy's practically a eunuch.

SADIE
(laughs too loud, covers her mouth)
He so is not!

MARIA
(pause, loud)
Nelson's who gave you the silly luvin!? ...i knew it!...

SADIE
How could y--

MARIA
So, Bachelor One is Nelson. And Bachelor Two is rich.

SADIE
See, that's just it. He's not.

MARIA
He's not rich?

SADIE
He's not a bachelor.

MARIA
Oh. Oh! Oh, you have been up to no good. He tell you
he was gonna leave his wife?

SADIE
No, in fact i--

MARIA
Of course not. You know why?

SADIE
--I never ask--

MARIA
Cause he's not gonna leave his wife!

SADIE
Well not because of me, but are you don't reeaally think
they'll stay...

Sadie trails off, bites her lip. Maria's eyes grow wide. Sadie winces. Maria takes the straw from her drink, chugs straight from the glass.

CUT TO:

40 EXT. STREET #2 - LATER (5) 40

SADIE gets her front door open, waves to Maria's car.

SADIE

See you... tomorrow.

Two seconds after the car pulls away, she dials her phone.

CUT TO:

41 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS (5) 41

NELSON paints with music on, picks up the phone absently.

NELSON

Yeah?

SADIE (V.O.)

Maria got me drunk.

NELSON

Oh?

SADIE (V.O.)

And now she drove me home, and i might, need a ride to work tomorrow.

NELSON

Oh yeah?

SADIE (V.O.)

And the Yankees did win.

NELSON

Give me ten minutes.

SADIE (V.O.)

Five.

NELSON

Done.

He hangs up, put his paints down. He has not been working on the sad painting, but the new happy one, which is of baseball players celebrating a win. The door shutting wakes the cat.

CUT TO:

42 INT. SADIE'S APT - NIGHT 42

A knock at the door. No answer. Another knock. LUCY is making out with a skinny white boy.

LUCY
No no no, don't you move.

"JUSTIN"
Someone's at the door.

LUCY
Sadie! The damn door, so Justin don't move!

"JUSTIN"
Actually my name--

LUCY
Shh. You my little Justin Timmalake. Sadie!

SADIE plods to the door, opens it. NELSON enters, nods "hi".

LUCY (cont'd)
G'wan back yonder to your curtain-ous area. I'm too busy to be deal wit'ch'all now.

SADIE leads NELSON back.

43 INT. SADIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS (5)

43

NELSON
What does she do, for a living?

SADIE
Lucy? Actress.

NELSON
With that grammar?

SADIE
She doesn't write the lines.

NELSON
I guess that's true.

SADIE
Besides, i didn't say she was a good actress.

NELSON
(pause)
Oh.

SADIE
It's awful. I have to go see her in all these terrible -
-And she always asks me how it was. I've had to tell
her so many times how interesting the lighting was or
how great the costumes were--

(he laughs)
I do! It's awful. And i got so used to saying it, last
year when she tried to cut a demo tape that--

NELSON
Oh no!

SADIE
Oh yeah. "The costumes..."

NELSON
... oh no...

SADIE
I had to backpedal and explain how i meant the different personas she took on in the songs.

NELSON
How'd that play?

SADIE
I think mostly she just didn't want to believe i was that thoughtless. But yeah, she fell for it.

NELSON
Actresses believe anything as long as it's about them and you smile when you say it. That's why i even have actor friends. They're boring as a dog's ass to talk to, but they do have actress friends.

SADIE
I was an actress.

NELSON
"Was"? Who made the bootie call tonight?
(she play slaps him)
You gonna hit me every time i come over?

SADIE
All the actresses are marrying cameramen these days.

NELSON
Are they?

SADIE
First it was rock stars.

NELSON
Yeah, but they kept getting smacked around.

SADIE
Right.

NELSON
Right.

SADIE
Then they all became single mothers. Now everyone just has to have a cameraman. They're this year's minority orphan. I don't believe a heart should be a fashion accessory.

NELSON
But then, you're not an actress anymore.

SADIE

I don't know what i am anymore. I'm getting this stupid degree that only qualifies me to get another degree. I don't know what i'm supposed to do with it. I just figured... Honestly if i had the option to just marry rich...

(he laughs)

I don't even have to love him. I could take a lover, be all 19th century about it. Hey. If i find a sugar daddy, wanna be my piece on the side?

NELSON

No. But i am flattered.

SADIE

I'm kidding you know. I don't even know i want anymore.

NELSON

Knowing wouldn't make it any easier.

(pause, she seems offended)

In olden times want was a noun, not a verb. In its etymology it turned--

SADIE

Entomology??

NELSON

No, entomology is bugs.

SADIE

But i was trying to talk to you about--

NELSON

Etymology is words.

SADIE

To talk about something missing from my life.

NELSON

(pause)

Want was a noun, because-- It meant a void, a lack. Something missing. So how could you know what your want is? The only way to know is to find it, and that's when you know what it was.

SADIE

I'm sorry i yelled at you.

NELSON

You didn't yell.

SADIE

Most people i know talk and it's just noise comes out.

(pause)

Shame. My sugar daddy's supposed to be the talker. You're just supposed to be the eye candy.

NELSON

Aren't you the clever one.

SADIE
So i'm told.

NELSON
That, i believe.

SADIE
And you're not even an actress.
(pause)
Do you ever get told you're beautiful?

NELSON
That's you.

SADIE
I don't want to be clever right now.
She holds his gaze. A long pause.

NELSON
No. That's not a word i've ever heard applied to me
before.

SADIE
You are. Beautiful.

Pause.

FADE TO:

44 INT. SADIE'S APT - DAY (6)

44

NELSON sits at the table, very sleepy. SADIE, dressed for work, waits impatiently by the coffeemaker. She takes two mugs out of the dishwasher.

NELSON
Are those clean?

SADIE
Yes. Why?

NELSON
I didn't see you check if the...

SADIE
Oh. This. This doesn't work. Please.

LUCY
(emerging from her room)
G'wan baby. Aint no time f' that.

"JUSTIN"
I have to brush my teeth. I have to!
(LUCY follows him into the bathroom)

SADIE
No. My plates and her plates don't share teh same
cabinet. This is where my stuff lives.
(MORE)

SADIE (cont' d)

(NELSON laughs.)
It's really not funny.

NELSON

No, not that. I have--

"JUSTIN" and LUCY emerge from the bathroom.

LUCY

You gonna be late,
(kisses him)
you gonna get fired,
(kisses him)
you gonna not have enough money to take me down to
Lannic City like we talked.

LUCY lets "JUSTIN" out the front door, swats his ass as he leaves.

LUCY (CONT' D)

You aint call me by tomorrow, i'ma whup it f'real.

"JUSTIN"

Don't you worry.

LUCY

(shuts door)
I wasn't.

NELSON

Just remind me to show you inside my stove sometime.

LUCY

(comes to the kitchen, takes some of
their coffee)
So, you the new boy or what?

SADIE

Don't start with him.

LUCY

I aint bother'im. I jus ax if he'as the new boy or
what? This twice in three nights.

SADIE

Don't call him a boy. Makes me feel like Michael
Jackson.

LUCY

Oh my bad, my bad.
(beat)
You not the new boy.

SADIE

Stop it.

LUCY

Oooh grrl. He the new man?

SADIE
He's a guy. Can we leave it at that?

LUCY
I don' evm know' at that is.

SADIE
A guy? Y' know. A guy?

LUCY
Mm-nnn. Which one is he? I aint never been so sick a nuthin as all these thirty year olds pretendin they aint adults just cuz they aint call theyselves a adult. If y' aint a man, you a boy, plain n simple. Sowha's the deal sugahlump, whatchoo?

SADIE
If he wants to be called a guy--

LUCY
He can call hissself the king o Siam if he want to, but that necessarily make it so, do it?

SADIE
What is your problem?

NELSON
Actually, calling a someone "guy" is meant to be an insult.

SADIE
(pours herself a coffee)
Mm-hm. Mm-hm-mm-HMM

NELSON
In the 17th century a man named Guy Fawkes tried to blow up Parliament. He was caught beneath the House of Lords with 36 barrels of gunpowder, for which crime Guy Fawkes was subsequently drawn and quartered in public.

SADIE
Eww!

NELSON
They made such a mess of Guy that his very name came to mean grotesque. If you saw someone filthy, or hideously ugly, deformed, who was beneath human... he was a Guy.

LUCY
Ooh, an he a smart one too!
(exits, laughing)

SADIE
How do you know all that?

NELSON
(shrugs)
That's just what it means.

SADIE

Well, yeah, but not, i mean, not anymore.

NELSON

A word means what it means.

SADIE

Well i hope you donn't think that's how i meant it. I was just--

NELSON

I know.

SADIE

(pours two travel mugs of coffee)
That's just how everybody means it now. I mean for real.

NELSON

I know.

SADIE

(pause)
You take milk, right?

She hands him a mug as they head out the door.

CUT TO:

45 SCENE DELETED 45

46 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - DAY (6) 46

EXT. OFFICE EXTERIOR - SAME

INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - SAME

NELSON arrives home, is greeted by the cat, notices the message light on the phone, presses play. A montage of snatches from everyone's mornings appear as he listens.

Nelson's truck pulls in, SADIE gets out, he pulls out. MARIA, smoking a cigarette, watches, greets Sadie with a big wave and a fake smile as she comes into work.

Inside, Julia shows Mark pictures of hors d'oeuvres platters and buffet dishes. He nods. She laps up his approval like a puppy. They are just wrapping up, and the warmth between them fades. Sadie walks in. A gentleness comes to his face, even as he hands her a stack of invitations to mail.

Nelson pulls a chair in front of his canvases, sits with the cat, looks back and forth at them.

We see each of their faces, as they embark on their day.

MACHINE

Message. One. Tuesday 8:49 PM

VOICE #1 (V. 0.)

This is Allan from Citi-Loan. We've reviewed your request and it looks like we can in fact help you consolidate your outstanding debts and save you almost four thousand dollars. Give us a call at [800 number].

MACHINE

Message. Two. Monday 9:18 PM

MARIA (V. 0.)

Nelson, honey, it's Maria. I just dropped off Sadie at home. We had a nice long chat about all the... new developments in her life. I think you and i should talk. Or just chat. I can't believe she told me and you didn't. Call me. Bye.

MACHINE

Message Three. Tuesday. 9:24 AM

VOICE #2 (V. 0.)

Hi Nelson Hodge. It's Sarah from Citi-Loan. I can't believe you haven't called yet. Are you aware that you could save almost four thousand dollars? Call us right away to take advantage of this opportunity to be Debt Free. Our number once again is [800 number].

MACHINE

Message Four. Monday. 9:28 AM

MARIA (V. 0.)

Nelson, it's Maria. I just tried your cell. Anyway. Call me when you can. I'm at work.

MACHINE

(beeps loudly)

End of messages.

FADE TO:

47 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - DAY (7)

47

Two weeks later. NELSON is a little scruffier than usual. The "sad" painting remains untouched; Nelson puts the final touches on the baseball painting. It is a swirl of players jumping into each other's arms, running in circles, falling to praise God. And the stands are filled with tiny Sadies celebrating. It is an exuberant piece. The phone rings.

NELSON

Yeah?

SADIE (V. 0.)

You said 72 hours; it's been 72 hours.

NELSON

Hey.

SADIE (V. 0.)
Hey yourself.

CUT TO:

48 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (7) 48

SADIE
Two weeks all i hear is "i have to work, i have to work." I gave you the three days you wanted, it's time to pay the piper. So can you go or not?

NELSON (V. 0.)
I don't know.

SADIE
Rrrrrrgghh. Is it finished yet?

BACK TO:

47 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS (7) 47

NELSON sits with the cat, evaluates his work.

NELSON
There's still one part i can't--

SADIE (V. 0.)
Boo! Hiss!

NELSON
(holds phone away from his ear)
I just don't know what goes there yet. I need a day or two before i'm sure.

BACK TO:

48 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (7) 48

SADIE
But you can't paint on it during those two days, am i right?

NELSON (V. 0.)
True.

MARIA
(overhears, approaches)
Is that Nelson?

SADIE
(nods dismissively to Maria)
So you can go tonight!

BACK TO:

47 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS (7) 47

NELSON
Yeah. I think i can go.

BACK TO:

48 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (7) 48

MARIA
You tell him i am pissed at him. I called him two weeks
ago and he hasn't--

SADIE
YAY! They're my favorite band.

NELSON (V. O.)
Ever?

MARIA gives Sadie the stink-eye. She doesn't notice.

SADIE
It's the only mailing list i've ever been on.

BACK TO:

47 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS (7) 47

NELSON
Well that sounds pretty serious.

SADIE (V. O.)
Will you be all smoothy-faced again when i see you?

NELSON
I'll shave.

CUT TO:

49 INT. HALLWAY EXAMINING AREA - CONTINUOUS (7) 49

MARIA stalks down the hall.

SADIE (O. C.)
I like you all smoothy-faced.

NELSON (V. O.)
I know.

SADIE (O. C.)
Plus, Lucy and her boy went to Atlantic City for the
night.

As MARIA passes Mark's door.

JULIA (O. C.)
If, if, if you, if you expect me to be able to make all
this happen, for me to produce --out of nothing mind
you, out of nothing-- to produce this whole--

MARK (O.C.)

I can read a calendar Julia!

MARIA exits the rear of the office to the street.

50 EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (7)

50

MARIA lights a cigarette. No sooner has she had a moment of peace than JULIA bursts out the door. Two seconds later, MARK bursts out after her. JULIA's car speeds past with MARK waving his arms. She's gone. MARK takes a seat next to MARIA. She hands him a cigarette, lights it. A pause. He has not had a cigarette in years, and savors this one.

MARK

I should get back to the hospital.

(pause)

Remind Sadie, if Julia calls when i could be in surgery, even if i am here, not--

MARIA

I'm not tellin her shit.

MARK

Please don't do this to me. Only one half the office can be insubordinate at a time.

MARIA shoots him a dirty look.

MARK (cont' d)

(as way of explaining Sadie)

It's uh... Sadie's birthday next week.

MARIA

I know.

MARK

You get her anything yet?

MARIA

Gift certificate to Victoria's Secret.

MARK

I don't think maybe i oughtta get her that.

MARIA

(studies Mark's face)

I wonder what Nelson's getting her.

(MARK's curiosity is piqued)

Hard to know what to get a girl after only three weeks. Especially on his budget.

MARK

Nelson, our painter friend?

MARIA

Mm-hm.

MARK
(taking a long drag)
Well well. I do love a scan-dahl.

MARIA
Mm-hm.

MARK
I should get back to the hospital.
MARK crushes out his cigarette, leaves. MARIA still sits.

MARIA
Mm hm.

CUT TO:

51 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - LATER (7)

51

The clock reads close to 6:00. SADIE is gathering her things to leave. MARK comes into the office.

SADIE
Oh, hi. I left all your messages on your desk for you.
And Blue Cross came in today.

MARK
Good. Can i talk to you for a second?

SADIE
I really have to get going. I'm going to see some music tonight and i have to change my--

MARK
What kind of music?

SADIE
Just a band.

MARK
Rock band?

SADIE
Yeah...?

MARK
Nelson struck me as more of a hip-hop guy.
(pause)
Can we talk?

SADIE
I'd rather not.

MARK
Is this why i've barely seen--

SADIE
I don't feel comfortable discussing this with you.

MARK
All i ever asked is that we be honest.

SADIE
It's not like you've been sleeping alone.

SADIE (CONT' D)
I really have to get going.

MARK
You have a point.

SADIE
And you don't.

MARK
Honest with each other, with ourselves.

SADIE
Was this before or after you called him a nutjob?

MARK
I never said "nutjob". All i--

SADIE
Not in so many words.

MARK
He is touched. A little. No one who paints that isn't touched.

SADIE
(taken aback, realizes)
That's all you see.

MARK
I don't care about him. I care about you, he seems an odd choice, but that's not important to me. I just don't want--

SADIE
I really have to get going.

MARK
If half-truths left unsaid were what i wanted from life, i already have Julia.

SADIE
Yes. You do.
(leaves)

52 INT. OFFICE BUILDING HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER (7)

52

SADIE
Oh!! You scared me.

MARIA
Anything get cleared up?
(pause)
What do you think you're doing?

SADIE
That's my business, not yours.

MARIA
You are not prepared for what it means to be serious
with someone who is the way he is.

SADIE
He's not retarded! ... Why does--

MARIA
You don't know what he is. You don't know inside him.
Nobody his whole life does.
(Sadie has no answer, she knows
Maria is at least partially right)
I have known that boy since i was barely tall as a fire
hydrant. You break his heart, i'll have to kill you.
Slow.

SADIE
Got it.

SADIE walks away visibly shaken. The sound of Stargazer Lily
playing "Stay True" ('I am a crush of light/ And i am a
revolving door').

CUT TO:

53 INT. ROCK CLUB - LATER (7)

53

Near the back are NELSON and SADIE. She sings along. He
quietly observes everything, as always.

SADIE
You don't like?

NELSON
They're really good. Very loud.

SADIE
We're as far back as we can get.

NELSON
I kno--

The song finishes to great applause, which makes Nelson
flinch. The GUITARIST sheds her electric guitar and picks up
an acoustic, begins re-tuning.

SINGER
So hi. We're Stargazer Lily.
(crowd cheers)
Thanks. It's good to be home.

GUITARIST
Yeah. We played New York last night, and they're just
not as cool as Philly fans.
(more cheering)

SINGER
They try.

GUITARIST
Whatever, the beer costs too much there.

SINGER
So, one of our New York fans was there last night. And
he keeps ask--

GUITARIST
Yeah. He always asks if he can sit in with us for a
song some time.

SINGER
Because he plays a little guitar.

GUITARIST
A little.

SINGER
And we don't know how to tell him that...

GUITARIST
That he sucks.

SINGER
Stop...

GUITARIST
And there's no way he can sit in. Ever.

DRUMMER
I told him.
(the girls turn to face him)
I told him last night.

SINGER
No!

GUITARIST
Did you?
(bassist nods)
What'd you say?

DRUMMER
I don't remember exactly. I was drunk.

SINGER
There's a shocker.

GUITARIST
Really. I'm floored.

BASSIST

Scot goes, "Why, did you get some lessons since the last time you asked?"

SINGER

Oh no...

GUITARIST

Now we're gonna have to give him a free T-shirt or something. Shit.

SINGER

Anyway, he's headed out to L.A., he told us. So this one is for him, for luck.

GUITARIST plays opening chords to "Hollywood". Crowd, especially SADIE, cheers! Song stops playing.

GUITARIST

No one tell him what we said here.

SINGER

No, we can't afford to give him two T-shirts.

Crowd and band laugh. Song starts for real. NELSON studies everyone listening. SADIE sings along. They exchange glances.

SADIE

This is an old one.

NELSON

They're good.

SADIE

They're not you're thing though.

NELSON

What do you know about my thing?

SADIE

Well...

The band plays. Pause. NELSON makes a decision, takes her in his arms. They dance.

NELSON

My favorite music in the world...

SADIE

Yes?

NELSON

I brought it with me to play for you.

SADIE

Tonight?

NELSON

Brought it special.

SADIE
I wanna hear it.

NELSON
Good.

SADIE
Good.

The song end. NELSON and SADIE do not break eye contact long enough to applaud. Band begins "Train Song".

GUITARIST
Enough of this slow crap.

SINGER
Yeah. We're a rock band.

NELSON and SADIE keep dancing to this new song. The room swirls and pulses around them. They go out of focus, become indistinct sweaty blurs.

CUT TO:

54 MONTAGE: IN AND OUT OF FOCUS, IN AND OUT OF BLACKNESS. 54
EXTREME CLOSE-UPS OF HANDS GRIPPING PILLOWS, SOMETHING
KNOCKED OVER, ET CETERA. THE REST OF "TRAIN SONG" PLAYS,
ENDING WITH A HIGH PIERCING NOTE.

55 INT. SADIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (7) 55

SADIE lights some incense and waves it around the room. A toilet flushes. NELSON returns, closing the curtain.

NELSON
Aww. I like the musky scent.

SADIE
That's because you don't have to live here tomorrow when it smells like a gym.

NELSON
Like a gym?

SADIE
Or a mildewy basement.

NELSON
Really?

SADIE
For real.

NELSON
I like it.

SADIE
Leave the curtain open, get some air tonight?

NELSON
It's a curtain, it's--

SADIE
Lucy won't be tromping by to get to the bathroom or anything!

NELSON
It's not exactly airtight to begin with.

SADIE
(opens the curtain)
There.

NELSON is clearly displeased. She notices.

SADIE (CONT' D)
Did you put it in?

NELSON
Yeah.

SADIE
You have to hit the button that--

NELSON
No, it's on pause.

SADIE
Okay.
(beat)
Unpause it now.

NELSON
No.

SADIE
No?

NELSON
No, you have to listen to it.

SADIE
I'm listening.

NELSON
I mean with...

SADIE
I gotcha.

NELSON
Listening. I brought this over special.

SADIE
I'm ready. Unpause it.
(pause)
What.

NELSON
Can we close the curtain?

SADIE
You just like it all stinky.

NELSON
No, i--

SADIE
Stinky.

NELSON
(pause)
Well...

SADIE
Ah hah!

NELSON
I confess, i have a...

SADIE
Stinky.

NELSON
A soft spot for the smell. ...of...

SADIE
For real?

He nods. She shuts the curtain.

NELSON
Sometimes i like to not shower the next morning, if it's been... something i'd, a, a memorable... What am i trying to say here?

SADIE
(cuddles close)
I think i understand.

NELSON
It's like having eaten a really great meal, then finding a piece of it between your teeth later.

SADIE
(uncuddles herself)
Uh huh.

NELSON
The next day, you go-- I go to the bathroom, to pee, i'm standing there, and i smell last night, and for just a minute...

SADIE
Well, see? That's the beauty of standing urination i guess.
(beat)

(MORE)

SADIE (cont' d)

Crap. Now i have to go.
(exits, leaves curtain open)

NELSON

Aren't we going to listen to--

SADIE (O.S.)

I can hear from here.

NELSON

But you have to listen to it.

SADIE (O.S.)

Seriously? Play it.

(pause)

Or you can listen to me pee.

He presses the button. Old pre-war blues plays. SADIE returns, kisses him. Pause. She rolls her eyes and shuts the curtain. All is made well.

NELSON

See? It's a magic, secret place now.

SADIE

I thought we were supposed to be listening.

(pause)

Is this it?

NELSON

That's why we're listening.

SADIE

I mean, there are no other musicians or--

NELSON

Just him.

They listen. Something special is being shared.

SADIE

I like it.

NELSON

Yeah, he's good, isn't he?

SADIE

I like him a lot.

NELSON

Me too.

Pause. They look at each other. No one says anything. He gives her a kiss. She puts her head on his chest, and closes her eyes. He stays awake.

FADE OUT.

56 INT. SADIE'S APT - MORNING (8)

56

SADIE listens to the CD while making breakfast. NELSON, still more-than-half asleep, comes into the kitchen.

SADIE
He's so...

NELSON
Yeah. I know.

SADIE
I love this song.

NELSON
Yeah, 's a good one.

SADIE
Love it.

NELSON
(gets some coffee)
I like the next track myself.

SADIE
I love this one right here.
(beat)
Don't you?

NELSON
(amused)
It's a good song.
I tell ya though, next one is better.

SADIE
I'm going to love this whole record, aren't i?

NELSON
(gets milk from fridge)
It's a CD.

SADIE
It's still a record.

NELSON
It's digital.

SADIE
A digital recording? Record, recording...?

NELSON
You giving me an etymology lecture?

SADIE
You do it to me.

NELSON
I know.

SADIE
Then i am.

NELSON
Fair enough.

Puts milk back, lets conversation drop.

SADIE
What, no concession speech?
(no response)
You always get to be right. C' mon--

NELSON
I do not.

SADIE
Always. I want to hear you say it.
(beat)
You can't, can you?
(beat)
Say it, i was right.

NELSON
You were wrong.

SADIE
(pause)
How?!?

NELSON
This is digital. He didn't record digital. It didn't
exist. This...
(takes CD out of the player)
happened later. Besides it's only an approximation of
the actual "recording".
(pause)
I mean, it's what, 40,000 samples per second, but still
it's--

SADIE
You just had to be right, didn't you?

NELSON
No. I happened to be. I don't want...

SADIE
What?

NELSON
I hate feeling like i'm some...
(pause)
If i told you you were wrong, maybe you'd never do it
again.

SADIE
(kisses him)
You want me to tell you about all the times you've been
wrong?

NELSON

No. Thank you.

She hands him a plate of breakfast.

NELSON (cont'd)

I am much obliged to you.

SADIE

De nada.

NELSON

You know, i do have a record of this.

SADIE

An LP?

(he nods 'yes', eats)

I didn't know you had any records.

NELSON

A few. Ones like this. Where the sound quality is irreplaceable.

SADIE

Is it?

NELSON

There isn't a big enough market for these old artists anymore. Proper remastering takes time. It's not worth the label's money, so they half-ass it.

SADIE

And you can really hear the difference?

NELSON

I think so.

(she is skeptical)

Could just be i know already.

(pause, resumes with a vigor)

But i feel cheated! You know? People start to think that this is all there is because they've never heard it to miss it! As if sweeping enough crumbs together were the same as a cake. It's not. And i refuse to settle.

SADIE

Don't settle, never settle.

NELSON

But people do! A sound wave is this round, smooth, living thing. And for the sake of durability, people just take their 40,000 bits per second and call it a day! I don't care how dug out and worn down my copy gets. It's real at least. Mine is a real sound wave!

LUCY staggers out of her room, pushes past them!

LUCY

Be startin no shit up in my kitchen!

LUCY picks up a knife, holds it groggily in front of her.

SADIE

Ohmygod!

LUCY

I aint havin no domestical violences!

SADIE

There's no domestic violence--

LUCY

I heard you! All the shoutin done woke m' ass up.

NELSON

I just got a little excited.

LUCY

Well shit then, keep it down! People sleepin.

SADIE

We thought you were out of--

LUCY

We got neighbors an shit too bitch! Sa'days in the A.M people got to nurse they hangovers.

NELSON

You're right.

LUCY

Nigga, i know i'm right. I don't need you to tell me when i'm right, i know when i'm right. Gimme somma that.

SADIE pours Lucy some coffee. NELSON seethes.

LUCY (cont' d)

...goddamn roulette wheel jumpin up zero three times in a row... Aint barely have enough money left for the tolls! Get home at four, and y'all got to be shoutin at nine goddamn o'clock in the mornin. The least you could is pologize.

NELSON

I beg your pardon.

LUCY

I said a-polo-gize nigga, you don't understand English?

NELSON

I again beg your pardon.

LUCY

You aint beggin nuthin. If you was beggin you'd be on one knee.

NELSON

Two knees.

LUCY

What?

NELSON

When addressing the master of a house to be on one knee means deference. To be on two knees means begging. If i were begging i'd be on two knees.

(goes for his things)

SADIE

Nelson, wait.

LUCY

All you had to do was apologize, dummy.

NELSON

"I beg your pardon" does not mean "i didn't hear you"; it means "i ask for your forgiven--"

LUCY

Then how come people always say it that way then?

NELSON

Because if you're going to force someone to repeat himself, "the least you could do is apologize". If you don't even know what the words mean, it's no wonder you can't act.

(leaves)

LUCY

Oh, it's on now! It's ON! Bring yo Uncle Tom, honky-lovin ass--

SADIE

Hey!

LUCY

Oh, i beg your pardon.
(yells after him)
I'll whup your ass like Kunta Kintay.

NEIGHBOR

Hey, it's Saturday! People are hungover?

SADIE is out the door after him

57 EXT. STREET #2 - MOMENTS LATER (8)

57

NELSON sits on the hood of his truck, fuming. SADIE arrives.

NELSON

People shouldn't use words they don't understand. "Oh we're reclaiming it." We're not re-claiming shit! That word was never ours. It was never anything, but the laziness of slave owners who couldn't even be bothered to properly pronounce the word negro.

SADIE

I don't care for it eith--

NELSON
And i will not disrespect the suffering my forefathers
endured by--

SADIE
Should i come back later?

NELSON
(pause)
I'm sorry. I am. I'm sorry.

SADIE
Now see? Was that so hard to say?
(pause, he smiles)
C' mon.

NELSON
Where?

SADIE
(leading him to his truck)
I'm not telling.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. PLAYGROUND - LATER (8)

58

NELSON's truck pulls up to a schoolyard playground. They get
out. SADIE leads him to the swings.

NELSON
(in mid-sentence)
but they reduce it to these little stair-steps of ones
and zeros, and a sound wave is so intricate.
Arithmetically you can't map it. Points on the curve
are irrational numbers. It barely even represents the
sound, forget about the music.

SADIE
If i can dance to it, how's it not music?

NELSON
I mean in the Greek sense of the word. Musikae comes
from the same root as--

SADIE
(laughing)
Ohmygod! You are such a geek!

NELSON
(his mood darkens)
Yeah, i know.

SADIE
It's cute.

NELSON
I'm glad you think so.

SADIE
I love it.

NELSON
You didn't have to grow up with it.
(pause)
You would never have gone out with me in high school.

SADIE
Probably true.

NELSON
See?

SADIE
What does that--?

NELSON
Where are we?

SADIE
After the divorce my mom lived
(points)
about a mile. This was my thoughtful spot.
(he nods)
Stinks like ass up here when the cedar chips are wet
though. Like a mulch pile.

NELSON
I didn't know anyplace still used those.

SADIE
Something you didn't know??

NELSON
(pause)
I only have a few, y' know.

SADIE
A few records?

NELSON
(nods)
I only have a few because they're special. I keep them
locked up in a fireproof...

SADIE
You do not!
(he does)
In one of those--?

NELSON
Yes.
(SADIE laughs)
I know. I know.

SADIE
What, are they going to melt?

NELSON
They are made of wax.

SADIE
Okay, yeah, but...

NELSON
And they do wear out.

SADIE
The records?

NELSON
They grow old, lose their grooves.

SADIE
They lose... their groove...

NELSON
They're like living things. They slowly grow scratchy and flat and dull. The beauty gets muted, until you have to try to remember what it sounded like that first time.

SADIE
So why buy them at all?

NELSON
For that first time.

SADIE
(pause)
Could i hear it sometime, the record?

NELSON
The one from last night?
(SADIE nods)
Yeah!

SADIE
Really?

NELSON
No, i'd like that.

SADIE
I would too.

NELSON
That makes me happy.
(a big kiss, a pause)
They really do smell like ass, don't they?

SADIE nods. A quick kiss and they head to the truck.

CUT TO:

59 INT. EXAM ROOM - DAY (9)

59

MARK removes a pair of used surgical gloves and throws them away. MARIA starts cleaning the cart, and labels the jar.

MARK

Alright then. I'll send a tissue sample to the lab, as a precautionary measure. But it looks to be just a little fatty tissue deposit.

RUSHED PATIENT

I'm done already?

MARK

Mm-hmp. As i said, it looks like just a fatty deposit, but i'll send it to the lab to be sure. Keep it dry for 24 hours, keep it clean until your stitches are out. For pain you can take some Extra Strength Tylenol, don't take ibuprofin or aspirin or naproxen for at least a few days. And we'll see you back here in about a week and a half. Maria will get you cleaned up and set your follow-up appointment.

Mark exits before Maria or patient can speak.

60 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (9)

60

MARK

Who's next?

SADIE

No one. We're way ahead of schedule.

MARK

You don't need to be at any concerts for the next fifteen minutes do you?

CUT TO:

61 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER (9)

61

SADIE sits across from MARK.

MARK

Am i being asked to bow out gracefully?

SADIE

I'm not asking you anything.

MARK

What you're not doing, is answering anything.

SADIE

Okay, then i'm telling you now, i don't think i can see you anymore.

MARK

Because things have "gotten serious" with Nelson the Painter. I'm sorry, I don't see it.

SADIE

What does that mean?

MARK

You dream bigger than, than him. And before long you'll find yourself actually craving the night so you can be somewhere else and someone else.

SADIE

But i'll sleep easy at night knowing you like your mistress better than your wife.

MARK

This isn't about me. It's--

SADIE

No?

MARK

No. No!

This was too loud and they both know it.

SADIE

I'll go get your next patient.

MARK

Can he even afford a present for you Thursday?

SADIE

Whatever he gets me, at least he can give it to me in public.

MARK

That's not fair--

SADIE

(opens door to go)

I'll get the next patient.

MARK

How much do you even know about him? Except how he is in the sack?

SADIE

Don't you ever talk to me like that again!
(leaves)

MARK

Do you even know his favorite color? He's a painter, i'm sure he has one.

CUT TO:

62 INT. EXAM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

62

Sadie brushes past Maria, grabs her stuff and leaves.

BACK TO:

61 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 61

Something inside MARK comes loose.

CUT TO:

63 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT (9) 63

JULIA is engulfed by papers. MARK comes home, fixes a drink.

JULIA

We have a problem.

MARK

I had Sadie reserve the room today.

JULIA

We have a new problem. The forecast calls for rain and cold Monday. Everyone will be in here, the whole house will need to be cleaned. Not just Roberta, a whole team. I know you said no more money, but we have to have it, and if necessary i will pay for it myself.

MARK

That's the same as me paying for it.

JULIA

Yes, i know dear.

He gives a weak chuckle. She notices him for the first time.

MARK

That's fine.

JULIA

And we'll need some sort of tarp for the grill, just in case. Are you all right?

MARK

Long day.

She goes to him, rubs his head.

JULIA

Anything i can do for you?

MARK

No. No. This is nice.

JULIA

I try.

MARK

Thursday is Sadie's birthday.

JULIA

Yes?

MARK

I'm never sure what's appropriate for employees' birthdays. I was thinking maybe we could take her and Nelson out to Chez Vina.

JULIA

Painter Nelson?

MARK

He can't afford to take her anyplace like that, so...

JULIA

Not Le-Bec?

MARK

Le-Bec is passe. It's for old people.

JULIA

(takes this in, then)

I think it's a lovely idea.

MARK

(kisses her hand)

Thank you.

JULIA

Of course dear.

(beat)

I do hope he can meet the dress code.

CUT TO:

64 INT. SALVATION ARMY - DAY (10)

64

NELSON tries on several suits as SADIE watches. He checks for her feedback after each one. Eventually winding up with shoes, a tie, and a button down shirt as well, he empties his wallet to pay for it. SADIE has to loan him some money.

NELSON

Thanks.

SADIE

Make sure to have it dry cleaned.

NELSON

But isn't it on..?

SADIE

They can do it next-day for a charge.

NELSON

This is an expensive free meal.

SADIE hands him twenty bucks. While he puts it away she arranges the shirt inside the suit with the tie on top.

FADE TO:

65 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (11)

65

The place is deserted except for NELSON wearing his new suit.
SADIE is in a stunning dress, but holds a beat-up backpack.

NELSON
What's in the bag?

SADIE
Work clothes.

NELSON
Well get rid of those. It's your birthday.
(she flings it under a desk)
So do you like your present?

SADIE
Well the packaging is awful nice, if i do say so myself.

NELSON
No, that's-- Thank you-- but that's not... Do You Like
Your Present.
(she is confused)
You don't see it?

She prowls around the lobby.

SADIE
I don't see anything...

NELSON
You don't see anything?

SADIE
Tell me, tell me.

NELSON
Lookie lookie.

SADIE
I see nothing here i don't see every day.

NELSON
Which would lead you to conclude?

SADIE
That it's not here.

NELSON
Or that you...

SADIE
See it every day?

She notices he's facing the lonely painting.

REALLY?!?
(he nods)
For me!?

NELSON

Yes.

She pounces on him. They fall over in a flurry of kisses.

SADIE

For real?

NELSON

Happy Birthday.

CUT TO:

66 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - LATER (11)

66

Both couples arrive. Mark is laughing hysterically.

JULIA

All right now.

MARK

"Put it in--"
(erupts with fresh laughter)

JULIA

That's a lovely suit, Nelson.

NELSON

Thank you.

MARK

"...in a good spot!"
(laughs harder)

MAITRE D'

May i help you?

MARK

(still laughing)
Gibson, party of four. We called about ten minutes ago
to tell you we were running late.

MAITRE D'

Of course, sir. This way.

MARK

How much did you tip him?

NELSON

Two dollars?

MARK laughs even harder.

CUT TO:

67 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER (11)

67

At the table. NELSON, SADIE, MARK and JULIA hold menus.
NELSON has sticker shock.

MARK

Whatever you want, and i mean that. Indulge yourselves.
All of us.

JULIA

Ah. Spectacular. Are we all ready?

Two waiters have arrived. MARK orders wine and appetizers for the table; immediately, one waiter disappears. They order their meals one by one. SADIE orders with the casual air of a regular. JULIA gives an approving nod. NELSON's is halting and unsure. By the time he finishes, the wine has arrived.

MARK

Sadie, on her birthday...
(looks to NELSON to begin)

NELSON

Happy birthday.

JULIA

(pause, to help Nelson)
When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;
Yeats.

(looks to MARK)

MARK

If youth but knew; if age but could. Estienne.

All drink as bread and the first course arrive.

FADE TO:

68 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - LATER (11)

68

Salads arrive; soup bowls and appetizer plates are taken.

SADIE

Of course he's rookie of the year. It's his first year
in Major League Baseball.

MARK

But it's not his first year in professional baseball.

(to Waiter)

Fantastic. Bring us another bottle of what we just had.
Then with our entrees, we'll have a bottle of _____
and a bottle of _____.

SADIE

All i'm saying is the Japanese leagues are clearly at a less developed level. Are you going to count Venezuelan Winter ball too?

MARK

No, but Japan is comparable to the old Negro Leagues, i think. Comparing Jackie Robinson to the other rookies when he came up is hardly fair.

SADIE

His average dropped 90 points from the Monarchs to the Dodgers! It clearly wasn't the same level of--

MARK

You don't think a lot of that might be dealing with new pitchers, new town, new teammates, hostile crowds at every stadium, including Ebbets?

SADIE

He still won Rookie of the Year.

MARK

And by '49 he won the batting title. I don't think that's what's meant by 'rookie'.

SADIE

Nelson. What's the root of the word rookie?

NELSON

Um. It's from an Old German word for "crow". The superstition is that crows are tricksters. To rook means to deceive. Military recruits became known as rookies because someone had rooked them into risking their lives. From new soldiers to new teammates.

MARK

Well, that certainly clears it up.

JULIA

My god. How do you...?

NELSON

I just do.

SADIE

He's know them all. For everything.

NELSON

I don't.

MARK

"Rainman. Let's play some cards."

SADIE

I'm going to teach him how to read a box score and rule my fantasy league!

NELSON is hurt, SADIE does not notice.

FADE TO:

69 INT. TABLES OF FANCY RESTAURANT - LATER (11)

69

Salads leave, entrees arrive with more wine.

NELSON

(mid-sentence)

...of course it is. In any serious discussion of--

MARK

That's ridiculous!

NELSON

--of the real music of black America. Blues is born out of a suffering that white America doesn't share.

SADIE

But at some point everyone has felt--

NELSON

I'm not saying white people don't get sad. I'm just saying that's why god made country music. Blues is black music.

JULIA

What about the hip-hop?

NELSON

Not anymore. Truthfully, it never was.

MARK

So only blues. Not, say, gospel?

NELSON

None of us was Christian when we got shoved down into the bottom of some boat.

JULIA

Oooh! I've got it! Motown?

NELSON

Motown is blues. R, and, B: Rhythm, and, Blues.

JULIA

Oh.

MARK

Well, shit. I'm convinced. I guess i'll throw out all my old records tomorrow. Will that do?

JULIA

I'll bet those are worth something now.

MARK

Not as much as they've been played.

NELSON

You have a blues collection on LP?

MARK

Yes sir, i do. And i hate to be the one to break it to you, but when i go to see live blues, it's mostly a bunch of white folks there.

SADIE

I'd like to see some live--

NELSON

Well we've been shuckin and jivin for white folks for centuries. But the shucks and the jives, those are still ours. Just because you bought a ticket doesn't mean you bought the music.

MARK eats rather than belabor the point. SADIE is hurt, NELSON does not notice.

FADE TO:

70 INT. TABLES OF FANCY RESTAURANT - LATER (11)

70

Plates are empty, bellies are full, eyelids are heavy. MARK, JULIA, SADIE and NELSON sip the last of their wine as wait staff clear the place settings.

SADIE

What there should be is a farm system for actors. You play some hand-maiden, it doesn't prepare you for real parts. You should play Medea, for the Double-A squad down in Carolina somewhere.

JULIA

Far be it from me, but maybe not everyone is meant to be the center of attention. Eventually, in any field, the cream does rise to the top.

MARK

Julia, must you?

SADIE

It may rise to the top. But it still curdles, if it sits unnoticed on the counter.

JULIA

Maybe they were meant for something else. Everyone has a special and unique path. All the books say so.

SADIE

I didn't quit because i was bad, i quit because it's... unjnust! It's horrible. You don't have any idea.

JULIA

Well come now, dear, it's not as if you were building houses out in the jungle heat after a mudslide wrecked the village.

SADIE

And you were in the Peace Corps.

JULIA

Me? Heavens no. But i send them a check every six months, because i had friends in college who were. I heard their stories. And i listened--

SADIE

Friends in college?

JULIA

--to those stories. Yes dear. Mark was in the Peace Corps.

NELSON

You were?

MARK

Long ago, for two years.

JULIA

And now we send them a check every six months. So forgive me if i am not overwhelmed by your woe.

SADIE

(pause)

I wanted this one part, i mean i knew it would go to someone who'd been on TV or the movies, but i thought maybe i could be the understudy. So i called everyone, cashed in every one of my favors of helping someone move or letting them live on my couch. An entire year's worth of good karma just so i could get "two. two minutes." in the room with an associate producer who had once directed a play in a festival i was in and who might have seen my work and might remember me.

ZOOM IN FOR TIGHT CLOSE-UP ON SADIE

SADIE (cont'd)

So when i got in there, i just BLAAAAH! "You may not remember me, but i really really hope you do, from this one show way back when?"

PULL BACK TO REVEAL SADIE IN FLASHBACK...

71 INT. PRODUCER'S OFFICE - DAY (12 FLASHBACK)

71

SADIE

"and i would be so perfect for the show you're doing now, it's one of my favorite books ever and i have a vision of what i would do with the part. Plus i already play guitar a little, and i know all the director's work and please, please give me a chance. I promise i won't ruin your good name if you let me in the room."

BACK TO:

70 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS (11) 70

SADIE

I felt like Tom Cruise in Days Of Thunder.

BACK TO:

71 INT. PRODUCER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (12 FLASHBACK) 71

SADIE

(checks her watch)

Two minutes thirteen seconds.

(turns to leave)

And he goes "I remember your face, but not your name."
I totally forgot to even say it.

"Sadie Mitchell." And he has this shelf full of like a million playbills. And sure enough, he digs up that show! Inside it, he has little notes scribbled by every name. The thought, the idea that his true, secret, opinion of me was in ink!...right there!... Because you can't lie to yourself "oh they wanted someone older" or "someone with perfect teeth" or "someone ethnic" or anything anymore! This is what he thinks of me, just me.

All i wanted was my hands to stop shaking, so i could walk out with a hangnail's worth of my dignity intact. But they just wouldn't stop, and it made me mad and i hadn't eaten anything for like three days because i'd been retaining water and i had to look good for this meeting, and i could feel the tears starting, those angry tears that tickle because your face is all hot. Those. And i just remember thinking over and over "please don't cry, please don't cry, not here, please."

BACK TO:

70 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS (11) 70

SADIE

(stops, drinks a gulp of wine)

He picks up his phone. Like that this man who won't even open my mail is on the line. "Stuart, i have someone here you should bring in for B-Side. Now she's an unknown, but my personal notes on her are underlined twice." Then he held up the program and showed me.

BACK TO:

71 INT. PRODUCER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (12 FLASHBACK) 71

INSERT: PROGRAM WITH UNDERLINED "WILL BE A STAR".

SADIE

They were. And i just went ahead and started crying. I didn't care.

BACK TO:

70 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS (11)

70

SADIE

But then they called. They asked who my agent was so they could fax the sides. And when i said i didn't have one, he said, "Oh. Ohhh."

"But I have a fax machine" i say.

"No."

"Or i could come by and pick up a copy."

"No. No. What you're going to do is show up an hour early, or however much time you'll need. Kay?"

So i did.

CUT TO:

72 INT. CASTING LOBBY - DAY (13 FLASHBACK)

72

SADIE signs the sheet. Two names are above hers. Two other people wait behind her to sign in. The MONITOR opens the door, reads off the sheet.

MONITOR

Katie?

A young man stands up and disappears into the audition room with MONITOR. SADIE waits on a bench. This is repeated with every name Sadie mentions.

SADIE

So i started my warm-up. And they called Ilene.
(pause)

Then they called Jessie. Then they called Luciana- i still remember all the names - then Lauren, then Caetlin, then Geri, and finally this girl Carolyn who Still Had Her Coat On she just walked in the door!

MONITOR hugs Carolyn, air kisses her.

Carolyn wasn't ready yet.

MONITOR

We'll just take a quick bathroom break and be with you in about ten minutes then, if that's alright?

SADIE

So i grabbed her, "Excuse me?" and pointed at my name and asked her what was up.

MONITOR

I am so sorry Carolyn. It'll be more like 15 minutes, if you can wait?

Sadie's face falls as she's led into the casting room.

CUT TO:

73 INT. BATHROOM STALL - DAY (13 FLASHBACK)

73

SADIE is drying her eyes with cheap toilet paper.

SADIE

During my audition two people in the room talked to each other, and the third one read over someone else's resume.

I was still drying my eyes when they took their bathroom break.

She hears voices, climbs her feet up on the bowl so as not to be seen, peers through the crack in the stall door.

AUDITION READER

And what about the producer's little girlie?

MONITOR

Oh, we just had to audition this one, not cast her.

AUDITION READER

Oh, so he hasn't slept with her yet.

MONITOR

Or if he did she wasn't very good.

SADIE

And they laughed and laughed.

SADIE steps out of the stall, gives them a look that lets them know she heard every word.

SADIE (cont'd)

I wished one of them would laugh so hard she'd suck that overpriced lipstick down her throat and choke.

AUDITION READER inhales her lipstick and chokes. SADIE stares down at her without pity, leaves

We jump back to the real flashback, where Sadie sits with her knees pulled up to her chin, choking back sobs, and waiting for them to leave.

BACK TO:

70 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS (11)

70

SADIE

And this was maybe the most prestigious casting office in New York.

(pause)

Some washed-up child star played my part. A girl who's sitcom had just been canceled was the understudy.

All are silent.

WAITER

Desert?

MARK

Yes. God, yes. Bring us a sampler tray. And i need a sambuca with three beans.

JULIA

Do you really think you ought to?

MARK

Scratch that. Scotch, 30 year, two fingers, neat.

JULIA

(rolls her eyes)

I'll take a sambuca, two beans please.

SADIE

Same.

NELSON

Could i maybe get some coffee?

MARK

Oh for god's sake. Bring him the same as i'm having.

NELSON

I don't drink whiskey.

MARK

Listen to me. This is not "whiskey". That rot gut i'm sure you tried, nobody likes that. The only reason any of us suffer through it is because we've tasted this. It's on my dime. You still want coffee?

(no response)

Two. And here.

(hands waiter a credit card)

Bring it with the drinks, i hate waiting once i'm through. Put 20% on there for yourself. Don't leave it for me to do, i'm bad at math, i just want to sign the paper, got it?

(waiter leaves)

You'll enjoy this. Beyond your unwavering principles, you are a man of impeccable taste. I like you Nelson. I wish i had what you have.

(beat)

How much longer is your work in my office?

NELSON looks to JULIA for an answer.

JULIA

Until the end of the month.

MARK

Sadie. With your permission, i would like to keep one up longer.

JULIA
Why with her permission?

MARK
Well the one i'm buying her as a birthday present.

SADIE
I thought...!

MARK
Consider it my present to the two of you. I expect you to take care of her with more than just your principles and good taste.

NELSON
Which one?

MARK
The weird one. ...the, the chairs and the trees and the...
(makes unintelligible hand gestures)

NELSON
I'm sorry that one--

MARK
Don't be ridiculous. You've made a sale.
(brandishes a checkbook)
It's what, five hundred?

NELSON
I can't sell you that one, it--

MARK
Six hundred.

JULIA
You're making a spectacle of yourself.

MARK
Seven.
(pause)
A thousand.

NELSON
Okay.

MARK
Okay!
(writes check)

JULIA
Go ahead.

MARK
Two words: foie, gras.

NELSON
I don't know what to say.

The waiter arrives with drinks and the bill.

MARK

Of course not. "If you could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint." Edward Hopper.

(hands over the check)

I wish i had what you have. I do. But all i got is money. You want some?

MARK laughs hysterically. As he reaches for his drink he spills the tray all over himself.

MARK (cont'd)

Shit! Shit shit!

JULIA

(scribbles a signature on the bill)

We'll be going now.

All gather their things and quickly go.

CUT TO:

74 EXT. STREET #3 - CONTINUOUS (11)

74

They hand their tickets to the valet.

MARK

I'm going to send you a bottle of that scotch. You need to try it.

SADIE

Seriously, Mark, stop.

(to Julia)

I know he was not-of-sound-mind when he wrote that check, so if you--

JULIA

No no. I don't know who either of us are kidding, the man is made of money. Keep it.

NELSON stops to give a dollar to a hobo.

MARK

I thought you didn't have any money.

SADIE

He doesn't.

NELSON

There but for the grace of God, go i.

JULIA

But for the grace of God we go to far worse places.

MARK goes back, pulls out his wallet and gives the hobo some bills, rejoins the group. The Gibsons' car arrives.

JULIA (CONT' D)
How much did you just give that man?

MARK
Sixty dollars.

JULIA
Mark!

She looks at Sadie ("See?") and pours Mark into the car.

MARK
I mean it, i'm sending you a bottle tomorrow.

JULIA gets in and drives off. Nelson's truck arrives.

NELSON
I'll give you the new one instead.

SADIE gets in the truck without responding.

CUT TO:

75 I/E. NELSON'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER (11)

75

NELSON drives. Silence. Finally...

SADIE
How's your cat?

NELSON
He's fine, why?

SADIE
Did you see him at all this week?

NELSON
Yeah, i saw him this afternoon.

SADIE
When did you have time?

NELSON
I made time. Ran home before i met you for dinner.

SADIE
Awww, you love your kitty.

NELSON
He's a pretty cool cat.

SADIE
Do you love your cat?

NELSON
He might-- no, he probably is my best friend.
(parks the truck)
That's kind of sad.

SADIE

It's not sad that you love your cat.

Both get out, NELSON first.

76 EXT. STREET #4 - CONTINUOUS (11)

76

NELSON

I just wanted to see him. He's here all alone. He's used to me being here, so i ran home to talk to him, scratch his belly.

SADIE

You talk to him?

NELSON

Yeah.

77 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

77

He leads her toward the baseball painting.

SADIE

Does he answer you?

NELSON

Yup.

SADIE

Oh, stop.

NELSON

No, he mews at me, we go back and forth like that. He loves it.

NELSON reveals the painting. An enormous pause. SADIE is overwhelmed, forgets where she was in conversation. She wants this to have made everything better.

SADIE

(still studying the painting)

How do you know?

NELSON

Huh?

SADIE

How do you know he loves it?

NELSON

I don't actually.

SADIE

Uh huh.

NELSON

He might be saying "shut the hell up, i don't understand your tongue". I don't know.

SADIE
(finally turns to him)
You don't speak cat?

NELSON
(nose to nose)
Mew, meow, meow, mew mew. Purrrrrr.

SADIE
And what did you just say then?

NELSON
I don't know, i don't speak cat.

NELSON heads to the bed, is met by the cat, whom he indulges in affection.

SADIE
(comes to join him)
And he actually let's you scratch his belly?

NELSON
He lets me.

SADIE
Do you like kids?
(NELSON cringes)
No, i just meant, i just bet you'd be a good dad.

NELSON
I'd be a good uncle.

SADIE
Don't you need a brother or sister for that?

NELSON
I have a brother and a sister.

SADIE
You do?!?
(scares away the cat)

NELSON
Yeah.

SADIE
Shut up!

NELSON
Is that so odd?

SADIE
You're very secretive.

NELSON
No, i'm not.

SADIE
You never told me you had a sister.

NELSON
And a brother.

SADIE
Him either. I don't know how i can be laying in your bed-

NELSON
...lying in my bed...

SADIE
--and i never-- Did you just correct me?

NELSON
I beg your pardon.

SADIE
Lying.

NELSON
No, sincerely, i should have kept that to myself. My
grandfather--

SADIE
Lying in your bed.

NELSON
Uh, yes, lying.

SADIE
Not laying.

NELSON
To lay is a transitive verb.
(pause)
Requiring a direct object of the action which--

SADIE
I'm familiar with it.

NELSON
People confuse them because the intransitive, to lie, is
conjugated "lay" in past tense.
(beat)
"Lain" is the past participle, which further--

SADIE
Such a geek.

NELSON
We've done that already.

SADIE
I just meant--

NELSON
I know what you meant. I've heard it all before.
You're not the first to say i was a geek, you're not the
first to say i'm still a geek.

SADIE
I didn't say that.

NELSON
No? May i quote? "Such a geek."
(pause)
Looking for a leg to stand on?

SADIE
Yes.

NELSON
It's not there. You said it. Deal with it.

SADIE
I'm sorry.

NELSON
(unforgiving)
Okay.

SADIE
I didn't know that.

NELSON
Didn't know what?

SADIE
That you still had issues there.

NELSON
I don't have issues.

SADIE
You obviously--

NELSON
Magazines have issues. People have problems.

SADIE
Then what is your problem?

NELSON
I don't have a problem.

SADIE
Do you want to impress me with your verbal acumen, or do
you want to talk to me!

NELSON
(pause)
Good use of acumen in a sentence.

SADIE
I'm not stupid.

NELSON
I know.

SADIE
Your grandfather.

NELSON
What about him?

SADIE
You were correcting my grammar and started to say, about your grandfather.

NELSON
Oh. He was one of those... of those old-school teachers-
- You know, "He who spareth the rod, spoilst the child!"-
- One of those. English teacher. My brother and sister and i used to correct each other for days before we'd go visit him. My mother still does it under her breath. Used to drive me bonkers. It's just an automatic response in my head now.

SADIE
Were you close to him?

NELSON
Now that i think about it, i don't guess we really saw him that much. It's just one of the things that got stuck in there. Sometimes i feel like my entire life is spent trying to sneak past all that junk so i can remember the things that actually matter to me.

SADIE
That why you forgot to mention you have a sister? And a brother.

NELSON
(shrugs "probably")
But you know what i will never forget?

SADIE
What's that?

NELSON
That you always mention the sister and not the brother.

SADIE
Do they have names?

NELSON
Sam and James.

SADIE
Sam and James?
(pause)
Sam for Samantha.
(he nods)
She a tomboy?

NELSON
Was.

What happened? SADIE

Puberty. NELSON

Ah. SADIE

NELSON
One minute she's in overhauls, skinning her knee climbing trees. The next, everything had ruffles. I don't remember boys for a few years still. Just all of a sudden my big sister didn't want to be one of us. She belonged to this other club with lace and no tree climbing.

SADIE
But you and James are close to the same--

Twins. NELSON

You have a twin?!? SADIE

Yes, and i have neighbors too. NELSON

Did you do all the twin things where-- SADIE

Fraternal. NELSON

Oh, you don't look like each other. SADIE

Not at all. NELSON

Not even a little? SADIE

NELSON
He's a good five inches taller than i am. Five shades darker too.

Really? SADIE

Muscled. NELSON

Really?? SADIE

NELSON

He sucked all the good genes out of the womb. He's a stock broker now. For the company did that Russian... mess.

SADIE

Ohmygod. Are they investigating him?

NELSON

(shrugs)
Haven't seen his name in the papers yet.

SADIE

Oh... Was he class president?

NELSON

Vice president.

SADIE

I was close.

NELSON

Came in second. That's how my school did it. Blamed me. My geek factor cost him the election.

SADIE

Aww.

NELSON

But he was Prom King. And Sam is in Europe, Paris i think.

SADIE

You don't know where she is either?

NELSON

I have a number for her, but... Fashion stuff. Milan, Paris, this, that.

SADIE

So they're both rich.

NELSON

I get that impression.

SADIE

What happened to you?
(he doesn't laugh)
Do you miss them?

NELSON

Occasionally. You want to get some sleep?

SADIE

No.

NELSON

I do.
(rolls over to sleep)

SADIE
Please, you never opened up this much before.

NELSON
What does-- Yes, i'm stonewalling you.

SADIE
No i didn't mean--

NELSON
Because that's the kind of secretive weirdo loner i am.

SADIE
I didn't know about your family.

NELSON
We did that already.

SADIE
I'd tell you about mine. But i don't have a family to tell you about.

NELSON
How Dickens of you.

SADIE
I mean i have a family. Just no...

NELSON
No siblings.

SADIE
Yes.
(pause)
Would you ask me about my family! oh my god...

NELSON
(beat)
What do you want?

SADIE
I don't know...

NELSON
Wake me when you do know.

SADIE
Something's missing.

NELSON
A good night's sleep?
(pause)
Tell me about your family.

SADIE
Well. We never lived in one spot for very long. Daddy was in the Navy.

NELSON
You still call him Daddy?

SADIE
What do you call yours?

NELSON
Michael.

SADIE
You call him Michael? Your daddy?
(he shrugs)

I was sixteen when he resigned his commission. But then we moved to Santa Fe. And i was so excited! All those years by the ocean and we went to the most landlocked place imaginable. There was no water, just mountains and desert forever as far as you could see. It was so bizarre to me. And i loved...

(Beat.)
But we weren't there long. He wasn't as good at taking orders as he was-- anyway, three towns in two years, so by the time i should have graduated high school, with all the moving, i was almost twenty! That made me, of course, in charge of buying beer for all my friends. But then i totally couldn't drink any of it. I would have been "in the brig" for a month. My mom wouldn't have cared so much. Of course, by then she was on step nine and apologizing to everyone, running our phone bill up calling bases in Tokyo and things. And you know... I swear she was drinking Scope. I went through mouthwash like nothing you ever saw, and i wasn't using more than a little cap once a day.

Pause. He is asleep.

SADIE (CONT'D)
I think i know... what my want is...

FADE TO BLACK.

78 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - THE NEXT DAY (14) 78

NELSON wakes. The cat is curled up with him, but no SADIE. Her stuff is gone. He dials the phone.

79 INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA - SAME 79

Sadie's cell phone rings at her unattended desk. Down the hall, she is knocking on Mark's door. She goes in. It stops ringing.

78 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - SAME 78

Nelson meanders to his paintings, ponders.

CUT TO:

80 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON (14) 80

JULIA is running down a checklist. MARK comes home, a spring in his step.

JULIA
You're home early.

MARK
Lot of prep to do. Cold 'n rain comin y' know.

JULIA
And those boxes upstairs cannot stay there. If the room's not finished, it's not finished, they'll just have to live in your office.

MARK
Fine, fine. Oh, and Sadie will not be bringing Nelson on Monday.

CUT TO:

81 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - NIGHT (15) 81

He sits by the canvas, cat in his lap, phone at his side.

CUT TO:

82 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - DAY (15) 82

Nelson is looking through his cabinets. There is a single remaining can of tuna. A knock on the door. A messenger with a package. Nelson signs for it. He opens the tuna, pours some juice in a bowl for the cat and eats the rest straight out of the can as he opens his package. It is a bottle of scotch.

CUT TO:

83 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - LATER 83

NELSON dials the phone. At the sound of Sadie's voicemail, he hangs up.

CUT TO:

84 INT. BEST BUY - NIGHT (14) 84

NELSON watches the baseball game.

CUT TO:

85 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - DAY (16) 85

He fills the cat's food dish. He watches the cat eat. He sticks his hand in the bag and pulls out a little, tastes it. It is awful and he puts it back.

CUT TO:

86 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - NIGHT (16) 86

NELSON sits and stares at the canvas with the cat in his lap and a glass of scotch in his hand.

CUT TO:

87 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - MORNING (17) 87

NELSON feeds the cat. This time he takes some cat food and does eat it. The phone rings. He stares at it. Moves to pick it up. As he does the machine picks up:

VOICE #3 (V.O.)

Nelson Hodge, this is Ericka from Citi-Loan. While the banks take Labor Day off, you can take the first step toward a better life. We've reviewed your application and did you know that consolidating your debt with us could save you almost four thousand dollars? Give us a call back today, yes, we're open Labor Day too, at [800 number] to find out how.

NELSON eats his cat food.

CUT TO:

88 INT. SADIE'S APT - AFTERNOON (17) 88

A knock on the door. LUCY opens it with chain, peeks. When she opens it she hands Nelson a brown grocery bag.

LUCY

Your stuff is in that bag there.

NELSON

Could i talk to her?

LUCY

You think i'ma open a door f'you if she here?

NELSON

Was someone going to tell me?

LUCY

Yo shit in a brown paper bag. What else you want i should say?

NELSON

May i wait here for her?

LUCY

She b' gone to a party all day.

NELSON

Al right.

He starts in, she pushes him right back out.

LUCY

No. Nunh-unh. That meant no.

She shuts the door in his face.

LUCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

N if i see you still out there when i go to leave i will cut you. You know i will, so don't try me.

CUT TO:

89 I/E. NELSON'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER 89

He puts the bag in the car, drinks from the bottle of scotch. As he puts the top back on he realizes what party she's gone to. He drives off.

CUT TO:

90 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT (17) 90

The party is underway. The doorbell! Julia is upstairs.

JULIA

Can someone-- Mark! Mark. Damnit.

(muttering)

Hold on, hold on, hold on.

(to guests)

Have you seen Mark?

(at door - Dr. Meyers)

Come in, come in, Sidney. This way, you can drop your coat, i know the forecast, but so far, knock wood, we've been blessed. Of course...

As she passes, NELSON is revealed at the window. He is disheveled and drunk, fit to be called a Guy.

91 INT. UNFINISHED ROOM UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS (17) 91

JULIA opens the door and ushers in the guests, only to discover SADIE pacing, talking to herself.

JULIA

(continuous)

...sometimes the heavens just crack wide and unload on us all.

SADIE

(simultaneous with Julia)

Because i'm not a toy! I'm not a chi--

JULIA

(pause)

We're just dropping a few things.

90 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (17) 90

Guests are upset, some discuss whether they should leave. MARIA moves against the flow of guests and discovers NELSON

gorging himself in the kitchen. He smears guacamole all over his shirt. Off to one side, MARK and JULIA confer. They reach a decision, just as Sadie sneaks past and into the office. Mark follows Sadie, Julia heads for Nelson, Maria tries to get there first, but is intercepted by DR. MEYERS who blatantly stares at her breasts.

DR. MEYERS

So Miss Ramirez! At what point do you begin gracing us with your presence in the ICU?

CUT TO:

92 INT. MARK'S HOME OFFICE - SAME (17) 92

SADIE

Oh Good God no!

MARK

Well?

SADIE

He wants to talk. Now he wants to talk.

MARK

So go talk to the boy.

SADIE

He wants to know why. Why should he care why?

MARK

Do you hear the irony? It's going drip, drip, drip...

CUT TO:

93 SCENE CUT 93

94 EXT. MARK AND JULIA'S YARD - SAME (17) 94

NELSON staggers out to the grill.

BACK TO:

92 INT. MARK'S HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 92

SADIE

I am not a child, Mark, I--

MARK

What did you tell him?

SADIE

What did you tell Julia?

MARK

Sadie.

SADIE

Mark, I'm not a toy

MARK
And no one is playing with you!

BACK TO:

90 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (17) 90
MARIA hears the shouting.

BACK TO:

92 INT. COAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS (17) 92
SADIE
He's just stupid.

MARK
Everyone is stupid about ... this.

SADIE
Oh Shut--

BACK TO:

90 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 90
Sadie exits into the party. Maria approaches.

SADIE
-- Up!

MARK
Very well.

Mark storms past Sadie, Maria and the approaching Julia toward the back door.

MARIA
(to Sadie)
What'd i tell you before?

SADIE
(pushes past Maria)
Well. Yeah.

JULIA
(to Sadie, not a request)
I would appreciate it if--

Sadie blows past her and heads upstairs.

JULIA (CONT' D)
What is going on?

MARIA
It's not your business.

JULIA
I asked you a question. If you know--

MARIA
It's none of your business.

JULIA
(loud enough that guests notice)
What is going on In My House?

MARIA
In your house? You have no idea.

They glare at each other. Julia speaks through gritted teeth.

JULIA
If I were to wallop you right on the end of your nose,
would you have any idea?

A pause. Maria makes a decision to walk away. Julia tries to maintain her composure long enough to escape the stares of her guests. She does not wholly succeed.

95 SCENE CUT 95

96 SCENE CUT 96

BACK TO:

94 EXT. MARK AND JULIA'S BACK YARD - SAME (17) 94

NELSON frustration has turned physical. Mark watches with concern as Nelson's uncoordinated flailing causes him to smash his hand into the fence post. Nelson screams in pain.

MARK
Nelson. Nelson...?

NELSON
I think i maybe i broke my hand.

MARK
C'mere... let me see it.

NELSON holds it in the air. Mark kneels down beside him.

MARK (CONT' D)
Wiggle this for me? Good. And this? Good. If I push here does--

NELSON
OW!

MARK
I see. Here?

NELSON
No.

MARK
Good.

NELSON
(forces a smile)
At least it's not my painting hand.

MARK
(pause, forces a reciprocal smile)
We weren't expecting you tonight.

NELSON
Well, excuse the livin piss out of me, if--

MARK
This! This is my house. And you will not, as a guest here, address me in that manner.
(he has made himself clear)
Now, whatever happened in the last-- in whatever. I don't need to know exactly--

NELSON
You're damn right you don't.

MARK
Just here, huh?

NELSON
YES!

MARK
I don't feel a break, you'll be fine.

NELSON
Thank you.

MARK
Now go home.

MARK goes inside, MARIA slips out the door. She hugs Nelson close, his head practically between her breasts. He rocks back and forth.

MARIA
I know papi, i know.

97 INT. BATH ROOM - SAME (17)

97

SADIE
You know i care for you, you know th-- "care for you"?
What is wrong wi--

MARK
(pokes his head in)
You can come out now.

She reaches to Mark for a hug (an embrace?). He turns and leaves.

MARIA
But you should just let him keep her, she aint worth all this.

Nelson practically knocks her over getting to the door.

CUT TO:

98 INT. MARK AND JULIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

98

As Nelson crosses the door, conversation screeches to a halt. Sadie has just reaches at the bottom of the stairs. She arrives to a shocking quiet. She turns, there is Nelson. The entire house is held captive as Nelson and Sadie look into each other from across the room. Silence. She leaves.

Nelson's gaze drifts and catches Mark. Guests cower as NELSON punches MARK in the mouth. It is an awkward effort and not very effective.

MARK

Stop it!

NELSON punches him again, better. And again, hard, knocking Mark down. The crowd recoils. NELSON clutches his hands in pain.

MARK (cont' d)

Okay, fair enough.

NELSON

I... It's not the sound of screaming, it's when the sound of screaming stops.

(MARK is clueless)

When you hear screaming, in a movie or something. Someone is suffering. Screams mean suffering.

MARK

Okay.

NELSON

But when the screaming stops? Then no one will make it in time to save that person.

MARK

(stands)

Do you know why we dream of dueling over women?

NELSON

I never dreamed of it. It's just what happens. I want to beat you.

MARK

I understand.

NELSON

Savagely.

MARK

Get a grip.

NELSON
You are a married man. I mean, are your intentions honorable?

MARK
Beating me up won't make her walk back in that door. She's not a trophy that go--

NELSON
(lunges for Mark)
...tell me I treat her like a trophy... I love her!

MARK
So do i!
(NELSON releases MARK)
It ain't, kid, that it's me, it's that it's not you. The reason we dream of fighting over women is we need a rival, a face, to pin our own shortcomings on.

NELSON
(mumbles)
On which to pin our own shortcomings.
(pause)
I'd like to hit you again.

MARK
There are other things you'd like to do again.

NELSON
Yes.

Nelson starts to rock back and forth as Mark walks him to the door. Nelson shoves his hands in his pockets.

99 SCENE CUT 99

100 EXT. MARK AND JULIA'S FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS 100

As the door shuts behind him and he's alone on the porch, Nelson discovers something in his pocket. He pulls out the check. The rocking stops and the tears start. In the glass of the window by the door, NELSON studies his own reflection.

FADE TO:

101 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - DAY (18) 101

MARK
You can't quit. I can't lose both of you the same day.

MARIA
It's not my life's work, y'know.

MARK
Patients wouldn't get care.

MARIA
Just the best job i was good at.

MARK
There will of course be a raise.

MARIA
How much?

MARK
Maria.

MARIA
Nun-unh. I am not dealin with her during the divorce.

MARK
There's not going to be any divorce.

MARIA
There's not?

MARK
No.

CUT TO:

102 INT. RESTAURANT #3 - DAY

102

JULIA and SADIE sit in silence across a table from each other. SADIE inspects her coat for tears.

SADIE
I'm surprised.

JULIA
I'm not that petty.

SADIE
I would be.

JULIA
You do smell horrid.

SADIE
Wet cedar chips.

JULIA
My husband said he loved you, last night.

SADIE
Of course he did...

JULIA
He hasn't said that to me in years.

SADIE
Don't be melodramatic. I've heard him.

JULIA
As a greeting, yes. But... not in years.
(pause)
Nelson said he loved you as well.

This one got SADIE's attention. After a pause.

SADIE

Coward.

103 INT. NELSON'S STUDIO - DAY (18)

103

The cabinets are still bare. NELSON still appears not to have eaten. He paints on the "sad" canvas. He paints from memory only; the cat is napping on a stack of the discarded sketches and photos. On the canvas, he has glued the still un-cashed check and now paints himself holding it.

END CREDITS.