

"Soulmates"

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Vancouver, B.C.

Tenth Draft
May 3, 1996

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. SKYLINE - DAY

We see a panoramic skyline shot of Portland, Oregon. Very romantic MUSIC plays in the b.g.

CHERYL (V.O.)

Carl, we can't keep going on like this. We're fighting constantly.

The CAMERA PANS across the city to an older gentrified residential neighborhood.

CARL (V.O.)

Cheryl. For Christ's sakes. We love each other.

The CAMERA ZOOMS into a small bungalow on a beautiful tree-lined street.

CHERYL (V.O.)

(sarcastically)

What's love got to do with it?

2 INT. CARL & CHERYL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The sun streams in the window as CARL, 35, zips up the back of his lover's gown. He wears a tuxedo, his tie hanging undone around his neck. CHERYL, 30, turns to face him as he loses it.

CARL

(angry)

Love? I'll tell you what it's got to do with it. It means making your lover feel special. Three goddamn years and you never once told me you enjoyed making love with me.

CHERYL

(snidely)

Why? For your ego?

CARL

No, not for my ego. It's called communication. You never tell me what you want or what you're feeling.

CHERYL

You're the guy who's had a million women. You should be able to figure it out.

CARL

Bullshit. Nobody can read minds. Least of all yours. And why do you have to always throw my past back at me? God, I wish you'd change.

CHERYL

Why can't you just accept me the way I am?

CARL

Maybe I could if I fucking knew who that was. Talk to me, Cheryl.

CHERYL

Why? It never does any good.
(sighing deeply)
And here we go again, destroying each other. Listen I don't want to get into this. It's Frank and Celeste's wedding day. Okay?

Carl throws his arms in the air. She proceeds to tie his tie for him.

CARL

Fine. I give up. Does that make you happy?

(beat)

All I want is for us to work.

CHERYL

I don't know if we ever will, Carl. We're like fire and water.

She finishes his tie and stands back.

CARL

I'm sorry. Okay? My business is sucking the big one and I guess it's affecting me.

CHERYL

Well stop taking it out on me.

CARL

I said I'm sorry. Come on.
Let's try again.

He tries to hug her but she pulls back.

CHERYL
At least let's try today.

3 INT. BAR - NIGHT

We hear the SOUNDS of MUSIC and CONVERSATION in CARNEGIES, a hip, contemporary restaurant and jazz bar with a wedding reception in full swing.

CREDIT SEQUENCE - MONTAGE

- A. Shots of CHEFS cleaning up.
- B. Shots of WAITERS returning dinner dishes.
- C. Shots of a PRIEST holding a beer, chatting.
- D. Shots of the BAND playing in a corner.

4 NEW ANGLE We zero in on the beaming CHINESE BRIDE, CELESTE, 33, and the GROOM, FRANK, 35, standing arm in arm among her admiring bridesmaids including Cheryl, DANA, 31 and DARLENE, 33.

CHERYL
That was a really touching service.

CELESTE
Thanks, Cheryl. Frank and I wrote it ourselves.

DARLENE
You did?

FRANK
We did so.

DANA
Celeste, you look radiant.

CELESTE
Thanks, Dana. You look pretty nice yourself.

DANA
(grinning)
Yeah well, you chose the dresses.

FRANK
(to Celeste)

I'm going leave you ladies for a minute.

He leans over and kisses Celeste, turns and walks across the bar. Cheryl, Darlene and Dana toast Celeste. Cheryl holds the bride's bouquet.

CHERYL

To Celeste.

They all clink glasses and sip their drinks.

5 NEW ANGLE

On a table where, Carl, the best man and his friends, MICK, 34, in a black shirt and jacket and gray tie, looking like a gangster, and GEORGE, 36, a musician who is playing the reception. Frank joins them.

FRANK

What a bunch of reprobates.

CARL

Right. From a guy who's been married for two hours.

YANIS, the owner of Carnegies, appears.

FRANK

And here's the famous Greek restaurateur, Yanis Papadoupadapadopolis.

YANIS

(laughing)

Yiasou, Frank. Congratulations.

FRANK

Thanks, Yanis. Is it okay if I give you a check tomorrow?

YANIS

Already taken care of.

FRANK

(shocked)

What? Who?

Yanis looks at Carl who looks at Mick who looks at George. They all grin.

CARL

What are friends for?

FRANK
I don't know what to say. Thanks,
you guys.

MICK
No problem.

Yanis slaps Frank on the back.

YANIS
Have a good time.

Yanis slips off into the crowd.

6 NEW ANGLE

Celeste throws her bouquet over her shoulder to the group
of women. She turns around laughing to see Cheryl catch it.

CELESTE
You're next.

CHERYL
Don't count on it.

Cheryl quickly tosses the bouquet over her shoulder into
the crowd like its poisonous.

DANA
What did you do that for?

CHERYL
(pursing her lips)
Some other time.

7 NEW ANGLE

Carl is startled as he bouquet lands in his drink.

CARL
What?

FRANK
(laughing)
There you go Carl. That's got to
tell you something.

CARL
Not likely. It was enough getting
her to live with me and we've been
bumping into each other ever since.

FRANK

Yeah I know. We can hear you
fucking and fighting from
downstairs. You really need
better sound insulation.

Carl gulps as Mick talks with a toothpick in his mouth.

MICK

(sounding like Slip Mahoney
in the "Bowery Boys")

Dames is poison.

CARL

You've been watching too many old
movies, Mick.

GEORGE

Listen. It's no big deal with
women. You take them out, get'em
drunk, fuck'em, wipe it off on the
drapes and send'em home. Simple.

FRANK

What would you know, George? You
and Darlene have been together
since high school.

JACK the drummer walks up and sits down at the table.

MICK

Most of the time I'd just as soon
jerk off in the shower and save
all that time listening to how
their fathers treated them.

CARL

An astounding insight into
relationships.

JACK

Never take them seriously until
you hear your fly being unzipped.

CARL

I bet the women love you.

JACK

Head's the best. 'cept Suzanne
won't go down on me.

CARL

Maybe she's got an eating
disorder.

They all crack up.

JACK

No seriously. She said she had a low gag response so I said I did too and told her to split.
They all continue laughing.

CARL

Who brought this guy?

FRANK

Hey Mick, what's the line on the 'Blazers/Knicks game tonight?

MICK

Knicks by ten.

GEORGE

Del Stark is the best. Man, that guy can score. He's my fuckin' hero.

FRANK

George. You and Darlene going to Mexico soon?

GEORGE

I am. She doesn't want to come.

MICK

Hey, with you, who can blame her.

GEORGE

Time to play. Come on Jack.

FRANK

Yeah, I have to circulate. Thanks guys.

Frank drifts off glad-handing around the bar as George and Jack head to the stage.

8 NEW ANGLE

George picks up his bass as Jack gets behind the drums and the band begins a waltz sung by the female pianist.

Frank appears, taking a smiling Celeste in his arms for the first dance. Cheryl, Dana and Darlene watch.

DARLENE

Love is so beautiful.

DANA

You think so? The last guy I fell in love with kept telling me for two months how connected he felt to me. (more)

DANA (CONT'D)

We had so much in common, blah, blah, blah. So, me being a sucker for a good lay, I fall for him and tell him.

(exaggerating)

I love you, Ron.

She takes a drink of wine as the others laugh.

DANA

He keeps saying he feels exactly the same way about me. Another month goes by and then he dumps me. I ask him why and he says he doesn't love me. I go, what?

DARLENE

That's terrible.

CHERYL

That's ridiculous.

SUPER: DAYTIMER PAGE reading "SEPTEMBER" - Page turns

DISSOLVE TO:

9 EXT. BACK DECK - DAY

Upset, Cheryl prunes the flowers in her flower boxes with a vengeance, petals flying everywhere.

The kitchen window of the house behind slides open with a groan as Darlene, Cheryl's best friend, pushes herself half out the window.

DARLENE

Hey Cheryl. What's up?

Cheryl looks back into her house and then back at Darlene, saying nothing.

DARLENE

You look like you need to talk. Better than torturing your plants everytime you have a fight with Carl.

CHERYL

Yeah, you're right. Is George around?

DARLENE

No. Come on over. I have some fresh coffee on.

10 EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

We see Cheryl stomp down the back stairs, cross the back yard and open the gate to Darlene's yard.

11 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Darlene opens the back door for Cheryl.

DARLENE

What's going on?

CHERYL

Same old, same old.

DARLENE

Sit. I'll get the coffee.

Cheryl sits as Darlene grabs the coffee pot and cups and joins her at the kitchen table.

CHERYL

I'm tired of fighting all the time. I don't know what to do.

DARLENE

Hmmm.

Darlene pours them each a coffee and places her hand on Cheryl's shoulder.

DARLENE

Are you going to be alright?

CHERYL

Oh yeah. I just can't understand why he can't let me be me.

DARLENE

Do you still love him?

CHERYL

Sometimes.

DARLENE

That's not good.

CHERYL
 I'm afraid I'm going to end up
 giving up on the whole thing.
 (pause)
 Every time I trust a man I get
 let down.

DARLENE
 You've been a private eye too long.

Cheryl stares into her coffee cup, shaking her head.

CHERYL
 It's not that.

12 INT. HOUSE FRONT HALLWAY - DAY- FLASHBACK 25 YEARS

We see Cheryl, a cherubic five-year-old holding onto her father, Hank. She has one arm around his leg and the other around her teddy bear as he gets ready to leave.

CHERYL
 Daddy, I don't want you to leave.

HANK
 Honey, I have to go. Mommy will
 be home soon.

Cheryl starts to cry.

CHERYL
 But you promised to take me to
 the zoo.

Little Cheryl stands lost and alone.

DARLENE (V.O.)
 Cheryl?

13 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Cheryl returns to the present, looking sadly at Darlene.

CHERYL
 I haven't spoken to him in years.

DARLENE
 At least you know who your parents
 are.

CHERYL
 Yeah. It must be tough for you.
 Sometimes I wonder which is better.

Mom says my dad's pretty sick
these days.

Cheryl shakes her head clear.

CHERYL

Anyway, I want what you and
George have.

DARLENE

No, you don't. He hasn't made
love to me in almost a year.
He cares more about basketball
than sex.

CHERYL

You're kidding.
(sipping her coffee)
Well, you're going to Mexico.
Maybe he'll get amorous there.

DARLENE

I'm not going this year. Don't
have the money.

CHERYL

Shit. I didn't realize you two
went halves on vacation.

DARLENE

On everything. The mortgage, the
the food. Can't remember the last
time he took me out to dinner or
bought me flowers.

CHERYL

Cheap son of a bitch... uh, sorry.

DARLENE

That's okay. I love him. We're
like an old married couple.

CHERYL

When's he going?

DARLENE

Saturday.

CHERYL

Well, we'll just have to go out
and have some fun while he's gone.
That's why we're best friends.

There is a noise at the front door as George comes in.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Dar. You home?

DARLENE

In the kitchen.

George enters the kitchen wearing a Trailblazers sweatshirt. He sees Cheryl.

GEORGE

Hey Cheryl. Caught any bad guys lately?

CHERYL

(coldly)

Hello, George.

Cheryl gets up to leave.

CHERYL

(to Darlene)

We're having a yard sale on Saturday. Dana and Frank and Celeste are going to throw in their stuff, too.

DARLENE

Cool. I can get rid of all of George's crap while he's gone.

GEORGE

What! Like what?

14 EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Two tables are set up with all kinds of garage sale items on them. Frank and Celeste sit on chairs around an antique table, drinking coffee and kibbutzing with the customers.

Dana lounges on her old antique bed, set up complete with headboard and footboard. Darlene appears around the corner of the house carrying a real beatup stuffed sailfish.

FRANK

Hey, Darlene. Nice fish.

DARLENE

Finally I can get rid of this thing.

FRANK

And you can be certain, fair lady,

that I will make sure the price
is right.

CELESTE

Hi Darlene.

DANA

Hi Darlene.

DARLENE

Hi, hi, hi.

A couple are eyeing Dana's bed.

MAN 1

How much for the bed?

DANA

My sticker says two hundred. But
you can make an offer.

MAN 1

A hundred.

Frank explodes.

FRANK

A hundred! If this bed could
talk, do you know the stories
it could tell? Look at the
notches on the headboard.

Everyone laughs.

DANA

Shut up, Frank.

CELESTE

(to Frank)

How would you know what stories
it could tell?

FRANK

Hey, like we all don't know about
Dana's parade of boyfriends. This
bed has an illustrious history.

Dana laughs, turning to Frank so the customer won't see.

DANA

(grinning)

Fuck off, Frank.

MAN 1

(frowning)
Okay, a hundred and fifty.

DANA
Sold.

The customer hands over the money to a beaming Dana.

MAN 1
I'll bring a truck over later today.

DANA
That's cool. Thanks.

FRANK
See. Salesmanship.

Dana pats the bed beside her.

DANA
I'm going to miss this old bed.
I hate giving things up. It's
like losing a friend.

CELESTE
Sometimes we have to learn to let
go of things.

Carl and Cheryl come down the front stairs of the house. Cheryl puts some beer on the table while Carl sets up a sculpture of a naked torso.

FRANK
Ah ha. Beer.

DARLENE
Hi Cheryl. Carl.

CHERYL
Hi Dar.

Frank picks up the sculpture.

FRANK
Cool. Anyone we know?

CARL
An old girlfriend from my art
school days.

CHERYL
I hate that thing.

FRANK
She doesn't look that old to me.

Dana grabs the torso sculpture and admires it.

DANA

Hey, I want this. It'll look great on my fence in the back yard. Freak the shit out of the born-again's next door.

CARL

Mmmmm, make me an offer.

DANA

Five bucks.

CARL

Sold.

Frank hands the torso over to Dana.

FRANK

Carl. You'd make a piss-poor Arab.

DANA

Heh, heh, heh.

CHERYL

Did George take off this morning?

DARLENE

Yeah. Took a cab. Wouldn't let me drive him to the airport. He wants me to clean his van while he's gone.

CARL

You clean George's van? I've never had a woman iron my shirts let alone wash my car.

CHERYL

(bitterly)

Well, maybe the next one will.

CELESTE

Now, now. No bickering. Be like Frank and me. We never fight.

FRANK

(grinning)

Says who, bitch?

Celeste smacks Frank playfully.

CELESTE

Keep talking like that, Frank,
and you'll end up sleeping on the
couch.

FRANK

But then we'll never have a kid.

DARLENE

Are you guys having a kid?

CELESTE

We're trying. No luck so far.

CARL

Better put a little English on
it, Frank.

FRANK

I'm trying, I'm trying.

CELESTE

I think we should both get tested.

FRANK

I don't need to get tested.
Nothing wrong with me.

CELESTE

You don't know that for sure.

DARLENE

Well, good luck to you. I've
always wanted a baby.

CARL

Can I bum a smoke, Frank?

Frank reaches in his pocket and hands Carl a cigarette.

FRANK

I thought you quit?

CARL

Sorta, but not really.

Frank lights Carl's cigarette.

FRANK

I can see that.

CHERYL

He's always trying to quit.

FRANK

And you?

Dar.

Cheryl grabs a chair and pulls it over next to Darlene's and puts her arm around her. Darlene looks up and wails even more.

CHERYL

Hey Dar. It'll be alright.

Darlene looks up at Cheryl, handing her a piece of paper.

DARLENE

(sobbing)

Here's his travel itinerary. I found it in the van when I was vacuuming. He's got some woman named Arlice with him in Mexico.

CHERYL

Yikes.

DARLENE

How could he do this to me?

CHERYL

Men are weak.

DARLENE

Where did she come from?

CHERYL

Give me two days and I'll find out.

DARLENE

What am I gonna do?

CHERYL

You're going to live and be well. And you're going to start with a little of this.

Cheryl gives Darlene a kiss on the cheek and picks up the bottle of wine. She walks over to the counter and gets a bottle opener out of a drawer which she uses to open the wine.

CHERYL

See. It's even got a cork.

Darlene attempts to smile and dries her eyes with a kleenex. Cheryl pours two glasses and hands one to Darlene as she sits down.

CHERYL
Half a bottle of wine and you'll
feel much better.

They both drink deeply from their glasses.

DARLENE
Why? Why did he do it?

CHERYL
Who knows? He's a musician.

DARLENE
I'm a musician and I never
cheated on him.

CHERYL
Maybe he's having an early
mid-life crisis.

DARLENE
What did I do wrong? I cooked
and cleaned for him. I paid my
share. I never said no to him...
you know, sexually. Not that he
wanted it.

CHERYL
(laughs)
There's three mistakes right
there.

Darlene smiles weakly as she drains her glass. Cheryl
refills it.

DARLENE
I can't forgive this.

CHERYL
Forgive? What, are you nuts?

DARLENE
I'm sorry. I should be able to
deal with this.

Darlene starts to sob again. Cheryl puts her arm
around her.

CHERYL
Dar, don't be stupid. Get rid
of the asshole. Then we'll both
be single.

DARLENE

What? You're moving out?

Cheryl nods.

DARLENE

When?

CHERYL

Next Wednesday.

DARLENE

What did Carl say?

CHERYL

I haven't told him yet.

18 INT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Carl is working on his car in the driveway when Frank and Celeste zoom up in their car. Carl turns and smiles as Frank turns off his car motor.

CARL

Hey. You're home early.

Frank and Celeste get out of the car.

FRANK

Got any beer upstairs? I forgot to get some.

They all walk through the gate into the back yard.

CARL

Sure. Help yourself.

Frank heads up the stairs into the house as Carl and Celeste sit down on the back stairs.

CELESTE

So, how are things with you and Cheryl.

CARL

Not great. We're always at each other.

CELESTE

You two are too much alike.

CARL

Yeah?

CELESTE

You're both so intense. It's what Frank and I love about both of you. But together? I don't know.

CARL

I don't know how you two get along so well.

Frank comes down the stairs with a beer, overhearing the last remark.

FRANK

Easy. I ignore her.

CARL

Do you two scrap much?

FRANK

As often as we can.

CELESTE

But we made a commitment to tough it out. Maybe that's part of your problem.

Carl stares off into space, deep in thought.

19 INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 3 YEARS

Carl and Cheryl are all dressed up. They sit across from each other on the couch and loveseat, drinking wine. There are a dozen roses sitting in a vase on the coffee table.

CHERYL

That was a great dinner.

Carl pulls a small jewelery box out of his pocket.

CARL

Happy Valentine's day, Cheryl.

He tries to lean over to hand it to her and goes down on one knee. Her face goes white as she takes it. She nervously opens it and looks into the box.

20 INSERT - We see a pair of gold earrings in the shape of birds.

21 NEW ANGLE

Cheryl starts to cry.

CARL

What's the matter? Don't you like them.

CHERYL

You bastard. I thought you were about to propose to me.

Carl looks totally confused.

CARL

What?

CHERYL

You give me a ring box down on one knee. What did you expect me to think?

CARL

That was just so I could hand it to you.

CHERYL

It was a cruel joke.

CARL

It wasn't a joke.

(smiling)

Besides, I'd never propose to you. I'm not that brave. I have no idea if you'd say yes or not.

(pause)

Would you?

CHERYL

(coldly)

I'm not saying anything. You'll just have to take the chance, won't you?

CARL

(angrily)

Thanks for nothing.

He lights a cigarette and drains his drink glass.

CARL

Goddamn it. I can't seem to please you no matter what. You never fucking cut me any slack.

Carl snaps out of it.

CARL

Frank, did you know Celeste would say yes when you proposed to her?

Frank polishes off his beer.

FRANK

Damn rights. Wouldn't have asked otherwise. Plus, I was drunk at the time.

CELESTE

(to Carl)

Why do you love her, Carl?

CARL

Hell, Celeste. She's intelligent, gorgeous, cynical. Hell on heels.

(smiling)

We have a lot in common. She has a great sense of humor and she's honest.

CELESTE

I don't know about that. She's honest with everyone but herself.

FRANK

I don't mean to be insensitive buddy, but all this fun has to end sometime.

(smiling at Celeste)

Come on darlin', the sun's going down and if you're lucky so will I.

Frank and Celeste head to their basement suite door as Carl opens the gate to resume working on his car.

FRANK

Chin up, buddy. Be manly.

The gate slams shut as Celeste shuts the door behind her.

23 INT. CARL & CHERYL'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Cheryl is busy packing boxes. Carl stares at her from the doorway.

CARL

So no second chance?

CHERYL

We've had three years of second chances. I found a place over on Cornwall and put down the damage deposit.

CARL

We need to get professional help.

CHERYL

Maybe you do.

CARL

How else are we going to save our relationship?

CHERYL

The relationship is terminal. This is one thing you can't fix. I told you I'm leaving.

CARL

Forget the relationship. I'm talking about you. You're a fucking headcase.

Cheryl jumps up out of her chair and points her finger.

CHERYL

(shouting)

See, putting me down again. You're such an asshole.

Cheryl tightens her fists, attempting to suppress her tears. Cheryl stomps out of the room steaming mad.

CARL

Bitch.

24 EXT. STREET - CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Carl sits on the front steps looking lost. Frank and Celeste appear at the side of the house on their way for a walk. They see him.

CELESTE

Hi, Carl. Sorry about Cheryl.

CARL

Sort of took me by surprise.

FRANK

Shouldn't have. You just didn't see the signs. Once women make up their minds and split, it's a done deal.

CELESTE

Women are last in, first out.

CARL

God. You're both amateur psychologists.

CELESTE

It's probably all for the best. You two need a break from each other. Who knows what the future holds.

CARL

I'm going to feel lost without her. (beat)

CELESTE

Don't torture yourself, Carl.

FRANK

Sorry it's come to this, man.

CARL

(trying to smile)

Hey. It's the way of my people.

25 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

We see a sedate older apartment building across from the beach.

26 INT. CHERYL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Cheryl and Darlene drop the last two boxes and sit amid stacks of boxes and furniture in the bright, roomy but empty apartment.

DARLENE

Aren't we the pair.

CHERYL

Don't worry about me. How are

you feeling?

DARLENE

I don't know. I'm going to change the locks on the house and put all his stuff in the driveway.

CHERYL

Atta girl. When's he come home?

DARLENE

Two weeks. I'm afraid he's going to go ballistic on me.

CHERYL

I'll come over and stay with you in case he gets weird.

DARLENE

I'm so confused.

CHERYL

I know how you feel.

Darlene gets up, taking a deep breath.

DARLENE

I've got to get ready for my gig. If you want, come on down.

She heads to the door.

CHERYL

(looking around)

I better get this mess sorted out.

DARLENE

Okay. Seeya.

Darlene opens the door and leaves as Cheryl looks sadly around her. The impact of her breaking up hits her.

27 INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carl sits on the couch staring at a picture he holds.

28 INSERT - We see a photo of Carl and Cheryl standing in front of the Coliseum in Rome.

29 NEW ANGLE of a smile on his face as he reminisces.

30 FLASHBACK - INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - DAY

We see a half-empty bottle of wine sitting on the window ledge and HEAR the sounds of LOVEMAKING.

PULL BACK to reveal Carl stretched out across the opposing seats of an Italian train car which have been pulled together. Cheryl sits on top of him, her skirt hiked up as she makes love to him. Her blouse is open and his hands caress her bared breasts as she moves up and down on him.

CHERYL

Oh God, yes.

They both climax and she crumples over top of him.

CARL

(panting)

I love you, Cheryl.

CHERYL

I love you too.

There is a KNOCK on the compartment door followed by the voice of an Italian train CONDUCTOR.

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)

Biglietto.

Cheryl frantically jumps off Carl and does up her blouse as he zips up his pants.

The door opens and the conductor steps in.

CONDUCTOR

Scuzi. Biglietto per piacere.

CARL

Pardon me?

CONDUCTOR

Biglietto. Tickets, signore.

Carl rummages around in his pockets for the tickets which he hands the conductor.

Cheryl sees her panties on the floor and uses her foot to try to cover them. The conductor notices the panties under Cheryl's shoe, immediately understanding the situation. He smiles broadly.

CONDUCTOR

(sighing)
L'amore e bello.

The conductor punches the tickets and hands them back to Carl.

CARL
Thank you. I mean grazie.

CONDUCTOR
Prego.

The conductor shuts the door behind him as Carl and Cheryl break out into laughter.

31 INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The SOUND of FOOTSTEPS on the front steps brings Carl back to the present.

DANA (O.S.)
Hey, hey, hey.

Carl sits up and smiles looking towards the door as Dana enters in her aerobics outfit. The room looks odd as the coffee table is missing and there are two pictures missing from the walls.

CARL
Hi Dana.

DANA
Figured I'd drop over after my workout. See if you needed cheering up.

CARL
Thanks, you're a pal.

DANA
Place looks a little empty.

CARL
(sadly)
Yeah. The division of assets.

DANA
Looks like you got custody of the long face.

Dana plops down on the love seat.

CARL
Want a beer?

DANA

Nah, let's go for a run down at the park.

32 EXT. THE PARK - DAY

Carl and Dana jog along a park trail as the sun sets.

DANA

So, how you feeling?

CARL

Alright.

Dana pulls her sweatshirt over her head as they run.

CARL

It's so quiet around my place. I miss the sound of bickering.

DANA

It was hard to be around you two sometimes.

CARL

I guess we were each other's worst nightmare.

DANA

Yeah well, I love Cheryl but she isn't exactly the warm and fuzzy type. And you're no trip to the beach either. You gotta learn to deal with your anger.

CARL

Yeah, I decided I'm going to get some professional help and get myself together. Maybe then she'll come back.

(sighs)

Sixty-five bucks a week.

DANA

I should probably see someone, too.

CARL

Why? You get on well with men.

They stop running and lean against a tree.

DANA

Yeah, I amaze myself every time I drag some poor son-of-a-bitch home.

Dana drains her water bottle in one huge gulp.

CARL

I thought you were dating someone?

DANA

Past tense. First date he was thirty-five. Second date, he was thirty-seven and last night he tells me he's forty and married.

CARL

You sure know how to pick them.

DANA

Yeah, I know. I make bad choices.

(pause)

Oh, I almost forgot. Got you a present.

She reaches in her pocket and pulls out a box of condoms which she hands him. He looks at them and cracks up.

CARL

(laughing)

Condoms?

DANA

Don't laugh. You're gonna need these now that you're single again.

CARL

(grinning)

Better a safe than sorry.

33 EXT. CARL'S BACK YARD - DAY

Carl is raking the grass up in the yard. He looks up at Darlene's kitchen window to see Cheryl. She forces a smile and waves. He half-heartedly returns the wave.

34 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Cheryl turns from the window, coffee cup in hand.

CHERYL

I did a little sleuthing. George's holiday honey is a waitress at The Reef named Arlice. Been seeing her for about a year.

DARLENE

How old?

CHERYL

Twenty. Looks just like you.

DARLENE

How do you know that?

CHERYL

The manager showed me a picture.
I have high friends in low places.

Darlene laughs. We hear the SOUND of the PHONE ringing.
Darlene picks it up.

DARLENE

Hello. No, he's not here. Who's
speaking, please.

She looks at Cheryl quizzically.

DARLENE

Excuse me, Tracy, but what
business is that of yours?

She frowns.

DARLENE

What? Eight years? Just a second.

She covers the phone with her hand, in shock.

DARLENE

It's someone... ah Tracy. Wants
to know who George is with in
Mexico. Says she and George have
been lovers for eight years.

CHERYL

Pardon me? (pause) Who's Tracy?

DARLENE

Oh, there were rumours that she
and George were having an affair
...ah, eight years ago.

CHERYL

Well, I guess it wasn't just a
rumour then.

DARLENE

Yeah. (beat) What should I do?
She wants to talk.

Cheryl scrunches up her face, her private eye mind kicking in gear.

CHERYL

Invite her over.

DARLENE

What? Why?

CHERYL

We'll give her the third degree.
Find out exactly what Romeo
George has been up to.

DARLENE

I don't know if I can do that.

CHERYL

Trust me. Do it.

35 INT. DARLENE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

TRACY, 32 sits nervously across from Darlene and Cheryl on the couch. She looks exactly like Darlene. Cheryl opens a bottle of wine and pours three glasses.

TRACY

So, ah... who is George with in Mexico?

DARLENE

Whoa, Tracy. First let's talk about you and George. You said on the phone that you and George have been having an affair for eight years?

Tracy takes a sip of wine.

TRACY

Yes.

DARLENE

Bastard.

CHERYL

Where do you live?

TRACY

Over on Commercial. George co-signed for a condo with me.

DARLENE
(shocked)

What?

Cheryl lights up a cigarette and sips her wine.

TRACY
Yeah... two years ago.

CHERYL
And you knew he was living with
Darlene?

TRACY
Yeah. Of course I knew.

DARLENE
And that didn't bother you?

TRACY
Well yeah... but he said you two
were like old friends. You didn't
want to sleep with him anymore.

DARLENE
He lied, Tracy. Does that surprise
you?

Tracy doesn't want to hear this and points to the TV
smiling.

TRACY
I remember when George and I
bought that TV. We got two on
sale at Wal-Mart. One for you
guys and one for me.

CHERYL
(shaking her head)
How insensitive can you be?

Tracy doesn't hear this either and starts to cry.

TRACY
How could he do this to me?

CHERYL
Same way he did it to Darlene.
Figure it out.

TRACY
But who is she?

DARLENE
A cocktail waitress and as far as
I'm concerned, you're no better

than she is.

Tracy starts to sob again.

TRACY

I'm sorry.

CHERYL

Yeah, yeah. Sorry means nothing.

TRACY

What do you want me to do?

DARLENE

Whatever. He's not coming back here.

TRACY

I never want to see him again.

CHERYL

Right on. Do the right thing, Tracy. This is a self respect thing here.

TRACY

(sighing)

I guess I better be going.

She dries her eyes with a kleenex from her purse and gets up to leave. Darlene gets up and they both walk over to the door.

TRACY

I sorta feel like we're friends now. Please forgive me, Darlene.

Darlene opens the door.

DARLENE

Yeah. Seeya.

Tracy leaves and Darlene shuts the door.

CHERYL

(sarcastically)

Friends. Dumb twat.

DARLENE

You think she'll take him back?

CHERYL

In a New York minute.

36 INT. CARL'S OFFICE - DAY

Carl is in his ad agency office on the phone with a client. Large graphic posters adorn the walls.

CARL

Gord, I just don't understand.
You've been with me for ten
years. Your boss told me I'd
Have the account forever.

(pause)

Yeah, understand. Thanks for
all your help.

The intercom buzzes. Carl answers the intercom.

CARL

Yes.

VOICE (O.S.)

Cheryl's on line two.

CARL

Thanks, Sandy.

Carl switches over to line two.

CARL

Hi, how are you? (pause). Great,
well I brought your mail with me.
Thought I'd drop it off on the
way home. (pause) Okay. See you
in a while.

37 INT. CHERYL'S APARTMENT - DAY

The living room is largely settled with only a few boxes in evidence. Cheryl is quickly brushing her hair and putting on lipstick with a pocket mirror. There is a KNOCK at the door which Cheryl opens to reveal Carl standing in the hall.

CHERYL

Hi. Come on in.

Carl steps into the living room. Cheryl gives him a hug. They are both awkward about it.

CARL

Hope you don't mind me dropping by.
Here's your mail.

He hands her a handful of letters.

CHERYL
No, that's fine.
 (nervously laughing)
Like I need more bills.

 CARL
 (looking around)
Nice.

 CHERYL
Thanks. A two bedroom, so I have
a separate office. Coffee?

 CARL
Sure.

He sits down on the sofa while she goes into the kitchen.
He looks around the place and sighs.

 CHERYL (O.S.)
How's work going?

 CARL
Lost my biggest client today.
 (more)

 CARL (CONT'D)
The prez decided to give the
account to a friend of his.
Didn't even have the guts to
fire me himself.

 CHERYL
Clients. Can't work with them,
can't hang them.

Cheryl returns with two cups of coffee. The PHONE
RINGS.

 CHERYL
Excuse me.

Cheryl picks up the phone.

 CHERYL
Principle Investigations... oh
hi, Marco. I was about to call
you back. Yeah, how about eight?
Good one. See you then.

She replaces the phone noticing Carl frowning.

 CARL
Marco?

CHERYL
 New operator. Ex-soldier. Not too
 bright but he takes orders well.

Carl sips his coffee wondering about Marco.

CHERYL
 So much for my sense of humour.
 (sighs)
 Changing the subject. I gotta
 ask you something.

CARL
 Sure. What?

CHERYL
 Did you know George was screwing
 around on Dar?

CARL
 No. He never said anything to me.

CHERYL
 Hmm. She didn't have a clue.

CARL
 I feel for her. She's a sweetie.
 Well I'd better be going.

He stands up to leave. She puts her coffee down and
 stands.

CARL
 I miss you, Cheryl.

They walk to the door and he turns around to face her.
 They both look ambivalent about their feelings.

CHERYL
 (sadly)
 You know, Carl. All I ever wanted
 from you was your approval.

CARL
 That's ironic. That's all I ever
 wanted from you.

38 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Carl sits uncomfortably on a sofa chatting with NOREEN,
 a 40-year-old therapist and family counsellor.

CARL

So you see, Cheryl's inability to trust me was our biggest problem. Hell, she didn't even tell me she loved me for a year.

NOREEN

Some women feel very vulnerable when they admit their feelings. One thing you'll find is that whatever you accuse another of... is usually what you most dislike about yourself.

CARL

Hmmmm. Never thought of that. I just wish she'd agree to get help so we could get back on track.

NOREEN

That may never happen. You have get used to the idea and let go.

CARL

And you know, I don't understand the sex part either. I mean she liked it but she just didn't want to do it as often as I did.

NOREEN

As you become healthier you may find your desire for sex decrease somewhat, and if Cheryl does some work, hers may well increase.

CARL

(brightens)

Really? Then we could come together.

NOREEN

(laughing)

Please.

(pause)

Why don't we just forget about Cheryl. This is about you. Why are you here?

Carl looks puzzled and pauses to think.

CARL

I guess because her complaints about me were the same as those in my previous relationship.

NOREEN

Now we're getting somewhere.

Keep talking.

CARL

Ah... and... well, I don't have any answers. Every relationship I've had has turned to shit, and I suppose I have to take some responsibility for it.

NOREEN

Excellent. You can only take responsibility for yourself. You can't change anyone else. Here's a tip for when you face problems. What we believe creates how we feel and what we feel creates what we manifest in our lives. So if you don't like something... change your belief about it.

CARL

Yeah?

Noreen looks at her watch.

NOREEN

Our time is up so I'll see you next week?

CARL

(grimacing)

I don't know if I'm ready for this.

Noreen hands Carl a book.

NOREEN

Here's your first reading assignment.

CARL

(reading the cover)

"Intimacy: The Journey Begins".

(pause)

Terrific.

39 INT. DARLENE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The drapes are drawn. The music is on low. Darlene and Cheryl are drinking wine.

DARLENE

What time is it?

Cheryl looks at her watch.

CHERYL

Nine-thirty.

DARLENE

He'll be here any second. His plane got in a half-an-hour ago.

CHERYL

Are you going to be okay?

DARLENE

Yeah.

40 EXT. DARLENE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We see a pile of boxes and a few guitar cases and amps neatly stacked in the driveway.

A cab pulls up in front of the house. The interior light in the cab goes on as George pays the fare.

He gets out of the cab wearing an ornate sombrero and surveys his possessions as the cab drives away and shakes his head.

GEORGE

What the fuck?

He climbs the steps to the house and tries his key in the lock. It doesn't work.

GEORGE

Shit.

He knocks on the door.

GEORGE

(shouting)

Hey Dar? It's me.

DARLENE (V.O.)

Go away, George. I know all about your girlfriends. Arlice and Tracy.

George gulps.

GEORGE

Let me in sweetheart and we can talk.

41 INT. DARLENE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

DARLENE
 (sobbing)
 Forget it, George. Fourteen
 years and you do this to me.

GEORGE (V.O.)
 I can explain.

DARLENE
 (shouting)
 No, you bastard. Now I'll explain.
 I changed the locks. Your stuff
 is out there. Now hit the road.

GEORGE (V.O.)
 Ah come on, Dar. I'm sorry.
 Okay? It'll never happen again.

Darlene is standing by the inside of the door.

DARLENE
 I don't believe you.

42 EXT. DARLENE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

GEORGE
 Damn.

43 NEW ANGLE from the porch looking down at the front lawn
 and driveway.

George walks down the steps and unlocks the sliding side
 door on his van and throws his luggage in. He opens and closes
 a box and then looks up at the house.

GEORGE
 (shouting)
 Hey, Dar. What about my CDs?

He stands there waiting for a response. (beat) Suddenly,
 CD's start flying out at him like frisbees, landing on front lawn
 and driveway.

DARLENE (O.S.)
 (shouting)
 Here, George. Catch.

George frantically runs around trying to catch the
 flying CDs.

44 NEW ANGLE

Darlene stands on the porch with a handful of CD's flinging them out at George. Cheryl doubles over in laughter.

DARLENE
 (throwing a CD)
 Here's one for Tracy.
 (throwing another)
 And here's one for Arlice.
 (throwing another)
 And here's one for me.

Cheryl grabs one and sails it out over the lawn.

CHERYL
 And here's one for me.

GEORGE
 What'd I ever do to you?

CHERYL
 General principles.

45 NEW ANGLE - DARLENE'S POV

George stoops to pick up the ones on the lawn. One nails him on the head.

GEORGE
 Goddammit. This is my house.

46 INT. DARLENE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Darlene laughs as she shuts the door.

DARLENE
 (walking to the couch.)
 He's in for another surprise if
 he heads to Tracy's.

CHERYL
 Maybe.

Darlene and Cheryl sit down and resume drinking.

DARLENE
 (sadly)
 I had no idea that he was
 fooling around. I guess I'm
 pretty stupid.

CHERYL

No, you're not. Maybe you just
didn't want to see what was going on.

47 EXT. ASCOT HOTEL - DAY

Establishing shot of the hotel, a twenty-six-story,
sixties-era hotel in a working-class neighborhood.

48 INT. HOTEL MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

LARRY Kazanian, a 45-year-old silver fox, sits smoking
a cigar. He is very handsome and wears expensive
clothes and has a big pinky ring. Cheryl sits before him
with files of papers spread out in front of her on his desk.

CHERYL

So Larry, you're telling me
you're still losing five grand a
month out of the bar.

Larry nods in the affirmative.

CHERYL

Must be the new staff.

LARRY

I thought firing the last bunch
would solve the problem. Who do
you trust in this world?

CHERYL

(laughing)

I'm the wrong one to ask that.

LARRY

Hmmm. Okay. Now what I want you
to do is follow my wife. She's
stepping out on me.

CHERYL

Larry, you know I don't like to
do that kind of work.

LARRY

You've been working my rooms for
four years now, Cheryl, and I have
paid you well. When I ask you a
favor, I expect you to do it.

Cheryl looks resigned.

CHERYL

Alright, but you're going to have to accept what I find.

LARRY

I will. You are a professional investigator and a very fine looking one, too, I might add.

CHERYL

Right. I'll ignore that last bit.

SUPER: DAYTIMER PAGE reading "October" - Page turns

DISSOLVE TO:

49 EXT. CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Carl is cutting the lawn on Saturday. He looks up to see Dana approaching. He turns off the lawnmower.

CARL

Hi there.

DANA

Hey, hey. How's it going?

CARL

Fine, I guess.

DANA

Hang in there, buddy. As long as you're not the last person on earth, there's hope.

CARL

So where you off to?

DANA

Meeting Cheryl and Mick for coffee.

CARL

Mick? Since when are you three friends?

DANA

Ahh. Couple of months ago. You were out of town. Cheryl, Dar and I met down at Carnegies. Dragged Mick back here and got

pissed 'til the wee hours.

Carl jerks his thumb towards his house.

CARL
Cheryl had Mick over here? When
I was out of town?

DANA
No big deal. Just friends.

Carl frowns.

DANA
Gotta run.

Dana trots off down the street. She turns her head.

DANA
Seeya.

CARL
Seeya.

50 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - DAY

George and Darlene stand face to face. She is crying.

GEORGE
Ah come on Dar, don't cry. We
can make it work again.

He moves towards her. She steps back.

DARLENE
Don't touch me. You lied. You
cheated on me. It's over.

GEORGE
No more. I promise. Anything
you want.

Darlene wipes the tears out of her eyes with her hand.

DARLENE
I want half the house.

GEORGE
What?

DARLENE
I paid for half and I want it.

GEORGE

(angry)
It's not in your name.

Darlene screws up her courage.

DARLENE
(shouting)
That doesn't matter.

George slams his fist into the wall. Darlene jumps.

GEORGE
I'd have to get a new mortgage
and rent this out to pay for it.

DARLENE
Too bad. You can live with Tracy.

GEORGE
She wouldn't let me.

DARLENE
She wouldn't?

Darlene punches the air.

DARLENE
Yes!

GEORGE
Damn it. I'll fight you for it.

DARLENE
You're too cheap to get a lawyer.
It'd cost you a fortune.

GEORGE
(sighs)
What am I supposed to do?

DARLENE
Do what you do best.

51 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

George sits at the bar with Carl staring offscreen.

GEORGE
Yo, Portland.

PULL BACK to reveal George and Carl watching the TV

as the BUZZER SOUNDS, the Trailblazers winning the basketball game. The players maul each other in the excitement.

GEORGE

Hey, they're interviewing Del.

52 CLOSE UP OF TV

We see JOHN, the sportscaster, stick a mike in Trailblazer player, DEL STARK'S face. Del is covered in sweat with a towel around his neck.

JOHN

Del, great game. Twenty-two points, fourteen rebounds and eleven assists.

DEL

Did you catch Hakim. He was really hot tonight.

JOHN

I'll say. But you were sensational.

DEL

I was lucky. It's always a team effort.

Del wipes his face with his towel.

DEL

Listen, John. I'd like to remind everyone that this is National Homeless Week so get involved. Give to your local Food Bank and volunteer to help the homeless. Show that you care.

JOHN

That's great Del. So you looking forward to next week against the Sonics?

DEL

They're tough. We're gonna have to go the extra mile.

JOHN

I'm sure you will.

Congratulations, Del. All the best. And now back to you, Paul.

Del wipes sweat off his forehead.

DEL

Thanks, John.

53 NEW ANGLE

George shakes his head.

GEORGE

Damn, that guy's good. I'd give anything to meet him.

CARL

The guy's seven foot three. I wonder what kind of babes he goes out with?

GEORGE

Good looking ones, I bet.

CARL

What's happening with you and Dar?

GEORGE

I'm fucked. She's taking me to the cleaners.

CARL

No offence, but what did you expect? You live with a woman for fourteen years, she's going to get half. You knew that.

GEORGE

Didn't think she'd ever find out about Tracy and Arlice.

Carl shakes his head, amazed at George's stupidity. Mick walks up and grabs a stool beside them. Julie sees him sit down and goes over.

JULIE

Hi honey, the usual?

MICK

(to Julie)

Yeah. Please

(to Carl)

What's happenin'?

CARL

(coldly)

Not much.

George is still watching the TV. Julie places Mick's beer in front of him. He breaks a toothpick in half.

GEORGE

(defensively)

A man can't be expected to have only one woman.

CARL

Bullshit.

MICK

What's with you tonight?

Carl turns on Mick poking his finger in Mick's chest.

CARL

Did you try to hit on Cheryl?

MICK

What? Are you crazy? When?

CARL

When I was out of town you and the girls had a little piss-up at my place.

MICK

So?

CARL

Why the big secret? She said nothing. You said nothing.

GEORGE

Cheryl probably figured you'd think something was going on.

CARL

No shit.

MICK

Well, there ain't.

GEORGE

(to Carl)

Speaking of Cheryl. You know how she and Dar are so tight and all?

CARL

Uh huh.

GEORGE
Like is Cheryl bi or something?

CARL
What?

GEORGE
They sure spend a lot of time
together. I just thought....

Carl drains his drink and throws money on the bar.

CARL
George. If that wasn't so fucking
stupid, I'd deck you. I'm gone.

Carl turns and leaves.

MICK
Touchy tonight.

54 INT. CHERYL'S CAR - DAY

Cheryl listens to her cell phone ringing at the other end
while driving.

CARL (V.O.)
Hello?

CHERYL
Hi. It's me. Can I come over
and talk to you?

CARL (V.O.)
Sure. Where are you?

CHERYL
In my car. A couple of blocks
away. Be there in a minute.

CARL (V.O.)
Okay. See you.

We see her car turn onto Carl's street.

55 CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carl opens the front door and goes back over to the
stereo turning the sound down, and picking up a magazine.
We hear a CAR DOOR SHUTTING.

We hear Cheryl's FOOTSTEPS coming up the stairs. She KNOCKS and peeks around the door frame.

CHERYL

Hello?

Carl looks towards the door.

CARL

Come on in.

Cheryl comes into the living room.

CHERYL

Hi.

CARL

Have a seat. What's up?

Cheryl sits down on the far end of the couch.

CHERYL

Ah.. there's nothing between Mick and I. We're just friends.

CARL

Yeah, I know. I didn't realize you had gotten to know him.

CHERYL

I just didn't want you to get the wrong idea. He said you were really pissed off last night.

CARL

Yeah, so why all the secrecy?

CHERYL

'Cause you wouldn't have understood.

CARL

Yeah, that's what he said.

CHERYL

I'm sorry, Carl. I should've told you. I just didn't want you to go ballistic.

CARL

(pausing)

Yeah, I guess that was a fair assumption. But Mick?

CHERYL

He's fun. All the girls are

comfortable around him.

CARL

Yeah? He doesn't have much respect for women.

CHERYL

That's probably just when he's with the guys.

CARL

He thinks he's a gangster in the movies, for Christ's sake.

CHERYL

No he doesn't. He wants to be an actor.

Cheryl finishes her wine and stands up.

CHERYL

Listen, I'm sorry I deceived you. It was a mistake. Okay?

CARL

(sighing)

Yeah, okay.

Carl looks over and sees a book which he picks up and hands her.

CARL

Here. You might find this interesting.

Cheryl takes the book, and frowns reading the cover,

CHERYL

(reading)

Where'd you get this?

Carl gets up as she puts the book in her purse and walks her to the front door.

CARL

My counsellor. Its really a good book. Tell me what you think when you finish it.

CHERYL

Yeah, okay. Bye.

CARL

Take care.

She opens the door and leaves.

56 INT. HOTEL MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry Kazanian sits forward at his desk, eagerly awaiting Cheryl's report.

LARRY

So what did you find out?

CHERYL

Good news, better news and bad news.

LARRY

Tell me.

CHERYL

Your wife isn't having an affair. I followed her for a week and all she did was shop.

LARRY

Yeah. And the better news?

CHERYL

She's a bargain hunter. If I never have to go into another bargain basement or discount warehouse, I'll be happy.

LARRY

(laughing)

So what's the bad news?

CHERYL

(smiling)

You owe me a thousand dollars.

LARRY

That's fine.

CHERYL

Actually, I gave you a break. Should have been fifteen hundred.

LARRY

I appreciate it.

CHERYL

So now everything's cool with your wife?

LARRY

Hell no. We're heading for a

divorce. Separate bedrooms. I just hate to think she's cheating on me.

CHERYL

Hmmm. Hearing a lot of that lately.

LARRY

She doesn't understand me. I'm under a lot of pressure with business and she could care less. If I had a woman who would really understand me, I would give her the world. Someone like you, Cheryl.

CHERYL

You don't know me at all, Larry. Besides, I never mix business with pleasure.

LARRY

Okay, you're fired.

CHERYL

(laughing)

Nice try.

LARRY

Listen. I really thank you for doing this for me.

He reaches into his desk drawer and pulls out some tickets which he waves in the air.

LARRY

I have to go to Reno next weekend to a hotel convention. You interested in going?

CHERYL

With you? No way.

LARRY

Not with me. I mean yes, but separate rooms. I won't come on to you. Promise.

Cheryl looks suspicious.

CHERYL

No. It'll screw up our business.

LARRY

I owe you. A weekend in Reno.

CHERYL
 (sighing)
 God, I sure could use a weekend
 away.

Larry pulls out a checkbook and writes a check which he gives to Cheryl. She looks at it and frowns.

CHERYL
 This is for fifteen hundred.

LARRY
 You're worth it.

She again looks suspicious as she gets up to leave. He holds the airline tickets up again and smiles.

CHERYL
 I'll think about it.

57 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Carl sits on a sofa conversing with Noreen.

NOREEN
 What was your home life like
 when you were growing up?

58 INT. FLASHBACK - KITCHEN - DAY - 25 YEARS AGO

A frightened ten-year-old Carl stands before his irate MOTHER and FATHER who are giving him a lecture.

CARL (V.O.)
 My parents were always giving me
 shit about something.

Little Carl tries to defend himself to his parents.

CARL (V.O.)
 I really don't like talking about
 all this family stuff. I mean,
 so what?
 (beat)
 I was never good enough, I guess.
 They thought all my ideas were
 crazy. Didn't matter what I said
 or did.

Carl's father smacks him across the top of the head. Carl
shrinks back and glares at his father and then
runs from the room when his father slams his fist onto
the counter.

NOREEN (V.O.)
And how did they get along with
each other?

We see Carl's Mother screaming at his Father who stomps
out of the house.

CARL (V.O.)
They didn't. She threw dinner
plates and he dodged them.

We see a dinner plate smash on the door as it closes.

59 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

NOREEN
A lot of anger then?

CARL
Yeah.

NOREEN
And how did you react to that?
Have you ever resorted to physical
violence?

60 INT. FLASHBACK - CARL'S ROOM - DAY

Carl stands trembling on his bed in a typical boy's room.
The ceiling is covered in model airplanes that he's made. He
reaches up and rips one down, smashing it on the floor. One by one,
he furiously destroys all his models.

61 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

CARL
(shocked)
No, never. I've never hit anyone.
(smiling)
If you can't destroy someone with
mental cruelty, what good are you?

NOREEN

Do you always make jokes when you're uncomfortable?

CARL

I try to. (beat) Did you hear the one about the guy who goes into the bar and...

NOREEN

Stop.

CARL

(laughing)

So when does this process start to work?

NOREEN

(smiling)

You'll know when.

CARL

I understand, but how long does it take?

NOREEN

As long as it takes you. Sometimes three months, sometimes a year, sometimes never.

62 INT. CARNEGIES - DAY

Cheryl and Darlene arrive at the reservation desk and look about for Dana and Celeste. Cheryl reaches into her bag and pulls out Carl's book which she gives Darlene.

CHERYL

Here, Dar. Carl gave me this. There's some good stuff in here about co-dependency you could use.

Darlene takes the book and looks it over.

DARLENE

Intimacy, hmmm. Did you read it?

CHERYL

(looking around)

Some of it. Didn't really apply to me though. But I know it'll help you. (beat) There they are.

The two of them walk over to a back table.

63 NEW ANGLE on Dana and Celeste enjoying happy hour.

DARLENE

Hi, Dana. Hi Celeste.

DANA

We got a pitcher of Sangria.
Suit you two?

Cheryl and Darlene sit down as Dana pours the Sangria.

CHERYL

Fine by me.

DARLENE

(to Celeste)

How's the baby-making going?

CELESTE

Not so good. I went and got
tested and I'm fine. But Frank
refuses to go.

DARLENE

At least he's making love with you.
More than I got.

DANA

I go crazy if I don't get it
at least once a week. Sometimes
I lock guys in the bedroom for
the whole weekend.

CHERYL

But you're obsessed with sex.

DANA

I am not. I'm a perfectly well-
adjusted woman who'll do anyone,
anywhere, any time.

Everyone laughs.

CHERYL

And she takes all major credit
cards.

More laughter from all.

CHERYL

(to Dana)

You ought to think about dating

Mick. You told me you thought
he was cool.

DANA

Nah. He's too much fun. Wouldn't
want to ruin it with...

(making quotes with
her fingers)

... a relationship.

DARLENE

Well anyway, now I know why I
wasn't getting any. He was
giving it to the other two.

CHERYL

Men are...

DANA

Pigs. But ya gotta love them.
They think they're so complex
but they're not.

CHERYL

Carl and I were okay with the sex
itself but he wanted it every
night. And he always wanted to
make sure I got off.

DARLENE

Orgasms are good.

CHERYL

Oh, that's not a problem. I
usually have four or five.

DANA

Four or five! Wow, I'm happy
with one good one.

DARLENE

I'm hit and miss depending on the
mood I'm in.

CHERYL

Except that with me even a lousy
lover thinks he's great.

DANA

(laughing)

That's a scream. Did you ever
talk to Carl about sex?

CHERYL

Oh no. I couldn't do that. (beat)
He always wanted to.... you know,
go down on me.

DANA

That's a problem?

DARLENE

I love that.

CHERYL

I think he just wanted to make me
cum that way so he'd feel powerful.

DANA

That's crazy. What about you,
Celeste?

Dana turns to look for their waiter. She spots him,
waves.

64 ANGLE on WAITER smiling and acknowledging her.

65 NEW ANGLE

CELESTE

I'm staying out of this
discussion. What Frank and I do
is our business.

DANA

Come on, Celeste. It's us girls
here. Come across.

Celeste frowns.

CELESTE

Okay. I'll only tell you one story.

DANA

Yeah?

CELESTE

Well, we were playing golf last
month and whoever lost had to do
whatever the winner wanted that
didn't cost money. And I figured
that we'd come up with some sexy
stuff either way.

DARLENE

And?

CELESTE

He won by one stroke.

CHERYL

Apt choice of words.

CELESTE.

So I asked him what he wanted me
to do for him, and he said,
"Detail my car".

All the women break out into laughter as the waiter
arrives with the Sangria.

CHERYL

Most guys would've asked for a
blow job.

WAITER

(smiling)

You got that right.

CHERYL

(embarrassed laugh)

Who asked you? Get out of here.

The waiter laughs and leaves.

DANA

(to Cheryl)

I love that, 'specially when
they cum. I feel so smug.

CHERYL

See, that's what I mean.

DANA

This is not a crime, Cheryl.
This is called fun. Besides, how
can you know what he was feeling.
Maybe he just wanted to give you
pleasure.

CHERYL

Well anyway, it was hard to want
sex when he was always belittling
me.

DANA

He knows that now and he's
getting help.

Cheryl pulls a pack of cigarettes out and lights one.

DANA
Hey, thought you were quitting?

CHERYL
Yeah, yeah.

CELESTE
(to Darlene)
What's going on with you these days?

DARLENE
Just waiting for George to buy
my half of the house.

DANA
Right on.

CELESTE
Good for you, Darlene. You
deserve it. I wish Frank and I
could own a place. If I ever get
pregnant we'll have to leave
Carl's suite.

DARLENE
George and Carl were lucky. They
bought at the right time.

CELESTE
How's work going, Cheryl?

CHERYL
(rolling her eyes)
Same old, same old.

SUPER: DAYTIMER PAGE reading "November" - Page turns

DISSOLVE TO:

66 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cheryl and Darlene sit around drinking coffee.

DARLENE
So, how was Reno?

CHERYL
Oh, it was okay. I saw Dennis

Miller. He cracks me up. Larry, on the other hand, did come on to me the first night.

DARLENE

I think he's really handsome. 'course he's old enough to be your father.

CHERYL

Not quite. I told him I was suffering from my breakup with Carl so I was in no mood for an affair.

DARLENE

Well, that's true. But maybe it would have been good for you.

CHERYL

(frowning)

Maybe. (beat) I'm dying to see your new place. When do you move in?

DARLENE

December first. If George can get a mortgage.

She notices the self-help book on the counter which she hands to Cheryl.

DARLENE

Oh, here's that book back. I learned a lot about myself from it. Basically I was obsessively needy and co-dependent to George's love addiction.

CHERYL

That's enough issues to publish your own magazine.

DARLENE

(laughing)

It's a neat book.

CHERYL

Hmmm. Didn't do much for me.

Darlene smiles knowingly and benevolently at Cheryl.

CHERYL

I should drop it off at Carl's.

He'll probably have a conniption
if he doesn't get it back soon.

She picks up Darlene's phone and dials.

CHERYL

Hi, it's me. Just wanted to see
if you're home so I could drop
your book off. Okay, I'll just
be a minute.

She hangs up the phone.

CHERYL

I'll come over tomorrow night and
help you pack.

DARLENE

Great, thanks.

67 INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carl hangs up the phone and goes over to the fireplace
and lights a fire. Soft music is playing when he hears
a KNOCK at the front door.

He goes over to the front door and opens it to reveal
Cheryl clutching the book.

CHERYL

Hi. Hope I'm not disturbing you.

CARL

Nah. Come on in.

He shuts the door behind her as she enters.

CHERYL

Getting damn cold out there.

CARL

Yeah. I just put on a fire. Do
you have time for a drink?

CHERYL

Sure.

She takes her coat off and puts it on a chair, handing
him the book. She sits herself down on the sofa as he
goes into the kitchen.

CARL (O.S.)

You didn't need to make a special
trip for the book.

CHERYL

I didn't. I was over at Dar's.

CARL (O.S)

How did you like it?

CHERYL

I couldn't really get into it.

Carl comes back into the living room with an open bottle of wine and two glasses. He sets them down and pours them each one and then sits at his end of the sofa. She lifts her glass.

CARL

I've missed your face.

Carl smiles as they both sip their wine.

CHERYL

This is really cozy here tonight.
I was surprised to find you home.
(grinning)
Thought you may be out on a date.

CARL

After you ruined me for other women?

CHERYL

Yeah, right.

She takes another sip of wine.

CHERYL

You know, it's moments like these when I remember the good times you and I had. Just being here talking.

CARL

I know what you mean. Interspersed between catastrophic fights, of course.

CHERYL

(smiling)

Of course.

Cheryl relaxes back in her seat and kicks off her shoes.

CHERYL

Don't mind me, my feet are

killing me.

Carl slides over a little closer to her.

CARL
Are you doing alright these days?

CHERYL
Yeah. Work's a pain. Dealing
with my incompetent operators.
One of them blew his cover...

CARL
(interrupting)
No, I mean you.

CHERYL
Oh. A little lonely. My place
is pretty quiet.

CARL
(sadly)
So's this place since you left.

CHERYL
You looked like a little boy
when you said that.

CARL
I did?

She leans over and gives him a little peck on the
mouth.

CHERYL
I always felt really warm toward
you when you looked like that.
It turned me on.

CARL
I wish you'd told me that three
years ago.

He takes her by the shoulders and gives her a gentle kiss.
He pulls back.

CARL
You comfortable?

She curls into his arm as they lean back in the sofa.
She looks over at Carl's antique clock.

CHERYL

That clock I gave you still run
on time?

Carl looks over at an antique clock.

CARL
Yup. Eleven-fifty-five.

CHERYL
Why don't we watch Letterman
like we used to?

CARL
Sure.

Carl looks for the remote.

CHERYL
I wish Dennis Miller was a guest
tonight. He was great last week
in Reno.

Carl turns to face her.

CARL
Reno?

CHERYL
Oops.

CARL
You went to Reno last weekend?
Who with?

CHERYL
Uh...one of my clients.

Carl is stunned. His face reflects his conflicting
emotions. He takes a swig of wine.

CARL
You went away with a man?

CHERYL
I said a client. He had a hotel
convention there and wanted
company. Separate rooms. You know.

Carl continues to ponder this. Cheryl sits up, and
sighs.

CHERYL
Now I've gone and spoiled the
mood.

Carl silently sips his wine, thinking.

CHERYL
Carl, it wasn't like that. Reno
I mean.

CARL
Sorry. You don't have to explain.
It's none of my business.

CHERYL
Do you really mean that?

CARL
Yeah. You're not responsible
for my reactions.

CHERYL
(impressed)
Hmmm. I guess I better go.

She gets up and puts on her coat.

CHERYL
(smiling)
It's just as well. We might have
got ourselves all hot and bothered
and regretted it in the morning.

Carl gets up taking a big gulp of air.

CARL
(smiling)
Not me. Now I'll need to take a
cold shower.

She laughs as he walks her to the door and gives her a
hug. He opens the door for her and she descends the
stairs.

68 NEW ANGLE - CARL'S POV

Halfway down the stairs she turns to him.

CHERYL
I'm sorry it's over, Carl. I
guess it just wasn't meant to be.

CARL
I know. Take care, Cheryl.

He shuts the door looking sad and resigned.

69 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Mick sits at the bar talking to Carl.

CARL

Sorry I got on your case. Not in my right mind since Cheryl left.

MICK

I noticed.

CARL

I just can't stand the idea of her with another guy. Something I gotta work on, I guess.

MICK

That's cool. So did Dar move out of George's place?

CARL

Not yet. Boy, did he blow it.

MICK

(doing the Bowery Boys)

I'm surprised she didn't do a Fred Astaire on his yibber yabber. Ah well, guys is guys.

Mick looks away down the bar and back to Carl.

MICK

You know, that blonde down at the end hasn't taken her eyes off you, man.

Carl looks at the nice looking thirty-something woman dressed somewhat tackily at the end of the bar.

CARL

Yeah?

Yanis, the bar owner and Julie's brother sidles up.

YANIS

Yiasou fellé.

Carl and Mick turn to him.

CARL

Hey, Yanis. How's biz?

Yanis smiles and shrugs, eyes up, Greek fashion.

MICK

Yanis, I want to marry Julie.

Yanis fakes anger by grabbing Mick's shoulder.

YANIS

You leave my little sister alone
or I'll cut your balls off.

Carl lets out a howl of laughter as do Yanis and Mick.

MICK

Fuckin' Greeks.

Yannis pulls out a twenty and gives it to Mick.

YANIS

Next week I want the Celtics.

MICK

Now you're getting smart.

Carl turns back to the bar to see Julie standing in front
of him. She places a Black Russian in front of him.

JULIE

This is from the blonde at the end
of the bar . She wants to know if
she can buy you dinner.

Carl picks up his drink.

CARL

You're kidding.

Mick tosses a toothpick in the ashtray.

MICK

Hey, go for it. Get it wet.

CARL

I don't know.

MICK

It'll help you get over....

CARL

Yeah I know. Maybe you're right.
(brightening)
What the hell, it's only dinner.

70 INT. DAR'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cheryl and Darlene sit on two chairs eating pizza in a room full of half-packed boxes.

DARLENE

You know, that pizza delivery kid was kinda cute. Maybe we should have asked him in.

CHERYL

Right. And both of us jump him.
(shaking her head)
I'm not into young hardbodies. Hell, guys don't even know how to do it right until they're thirty.

DARLENE

I wouldn't know. There was only one guy before George.

CHERYL

You're kidding. We better call back for another pizza.

Darlene cracks up.

CHERYL

It's kinda sad that we're not going to be living next door anymore.

DARLENE

Yeah, I know, but we'll always be friends.

71 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Carl and the blonde are just finishing their meal.

CARL

So, Deborah, what would you like to do now?

DEBORAH

What would you like to do?

CARL

(smiling)

Not a fair question. You wouldn't want to know.

DEBORAH

If you're thinking that you'd like
to take me home and make love to
me all night long, then that's
what I'd like to do.

Carl is amazed at this woman.

72 EXT. CARL'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

We see Carl's car pull into the driveway. He and
Deborah get out.

73 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cheryl grabs the pizza box and gets up to put it in a green
garbage bag by the sink. She hears Carl's car doors shut as
she ties off the top.

DARLENE

I'm playing at the Ascot the rest
of this week. Why don't you come
on down?

CHERYL

Great. I have to do some work
there one of these nights. Maybe
Friday. Tomorrow night I'm meeting
Mick for drinks and Thursday I have
paperwork to do.

74 EXT. CARL'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Carl opens the gate for Deborah. It bangs shut.

75 INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cheryl hears the Carl's gate bang shut and looks out
through the kitchen window.

76 CHERYL'S POV

We see Carl usher Deborah up the back stairs to his
house. She is wearing a very short skirt and has a
spectacular body.

CARL

Watch the stairs. They might be

wet.

77 Carl has his arm around her as they enter the house.
INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cheryl turns around, stunned. Darlene looks at her.

DARLENE

What?

Cheryl grabs her coat.

CHERYL

Nothing. I gotta go.

She walks out leaving Darlene confused. Darlene gets up and looks out the window. She turns around, having seen nothing, and shrugs.

78 INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carl and Deborah's coats are thrown on a chair. He stands with his arms around her.

CARL

Would you like a drink?

Deborah kisses him on the lips and moves to kissing his neck.

DEBORAH

How about we just do it?

Deborah starts undoing the buttons on his shirt as she kisses him and runs her hand over his chest. Carl is both surprised and delighted at Deborah's boldness.

CARL

Okay.

Deborah starts to undo Carl's belt and sinks to her knees.

DEBORAH

Mmmmmm. And why don't I start?

Carl looks across the room to the antique clock and his face darkens.

CARL

Okay... uh no.

He lifts Deborah up to her feet.

DEBORAH
What's the matter, honey?

CARL
I'm sorry. I can't do this.

DEBORAH
You can't?

CARL
I mean I don't want to.

He zips up his pants and buckles his belt.

DEBORAH
Did I do something wrong?

CARL
Oh no, it's not you. It's me.
Sorry.

DEBORAH
Me too. And I bought dinner.

She looks totally confused as he gets her coat.

CARL
I'll give you a ride home.

DEBORAH
(angry)
That's okay. I'll call a cab.

79 EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Carl is painting the garage door. Frank leaves the basement suite and opens the gate.

FRANK
You drag some babe home with you
last night?

Carl turns to Frank.

CARL
Something like that.

FRANK
(grinning)
We heard you two come in but we
didn't hear you leave.

Carl smirks as Celeste appears, opening the gate.

CELESTE

Have fun last night, Carl?

CARL

Hi, Celeste.

CELESTE

You can tell my husband he won't be having any until he makes a doctor's appointment.

She storms off down the driveway.

FRANK

Ah...honey.

Carl watches as Frank starts after her. She stops in her tracks and swings around, mad as hell.

CELESTE

Frank. I've defied centuries of family tradition by marrying a round-eye. Now the least you can do is give me a baby.

She turns and takes off. Frank looks back at Carl in shock.

FRANK

I've never seen her like that.

80 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Cheryl and Mick sit at the bar having drinks, engrossed in conversation.

CHERYL

You know, Mick, you really ought to get yourself a woman.

MICK

What for? I got friends. I get laid when I want. What do I want with a relationship?

CHERYL

It's just nice to have someone there for you.

MICK

You can say that after breaking up with Carl?

CHERYL

I don't want to talk about Carl.
Okay?

MICK

Sure. Listen, I lived with
Danielle for five years. She
wouldn't let me go to the pool hall.
She hated it when guys called me
to place action, she...

CHERYL

Danielle was wrong for you.

MICK

Maybe. I mean, if I could find
someone who'd give me some slack.
That'd be cool.

CHERYL

What about Dana? You two are a
lot alike.

MICK

Nah. We're just friends.

Cheryl sips her drink.

CHERYL

By the way, did you know what
George was up to?

MICK

Yeah, sorta. I figured it out.

CHERYL

Why didn't you say anything?

MICK

(doing Humphrey Bogart)
Hey, dummy up, sweetheart. Dar's
a friend and George is one of the
guys. No way I'm gonna be a rat.

Carl walks in and spots them. Cheryl sees him.

CHERYL

Oh, hell.

Carl hesitates and then takes the empty stool next to
Cheryl.

CARL

Hi.

Cheryl and Mick look over.

CHERYL

(coldly)

Hi.

MICK

What's happenin'?

CARL

Not much.

Julie walks over smiling.

JULIE

Hi, Carl. The usual?

CARL

Yeah, Julie, thanks.

CHERYL

(to Carl)

So, did you have fun last night?

CARL

(bluffing)

What do you mean?

CHERYL

The slut in the short skirt you dragged home.

CARL

(pausing)

You were over at Dar's, right?

CHERYL

Yeah.

Julie hands Carl his Black Russian.

CARL

(to Julie)

Thanks.

(to Cheryl)

I didn't do anything.

Carl takes a deep sip of his drink.

CHERYL

Don't lie to me.

CARL

I didn't....

CHERYL

(angry)

You fucking hypocrite. You get upset about Mick and Reno and then you turn around and jump some bimbo.

Mick overhears his name and turns to talk to the person on his other side.

CARL

Cheryl. I couldn't go through with it. I sent her home in a cab.

CHERYL

I don't believe you.

CARL

I couldn't 'cause I still love you.

CHERYL

What would you know about love, you asshole. All you ever think about is sex. Half the time we did it, I was only trying to please you.

Carl is taken aback at Cheryl's intense anger.

CARL

What?

CHERYL

What did you care if I wanted to or not?

CARL

(stammering)

I didn't know. You never said anything.

CHERYL

Hell, sometimes I'd be crying and you didn't even notice, you bastard.

Carl cannot believe the hate that is coming out of Cheryl. Her eyes are on fire with loathing.

CARL

I'm sorry.

CHERYL

Sorry means nothing. And now you

lie to me. You'll never change.

Carl's face reflects an incredible sadness. His eyes start to water and he wipes them with a bar napkin.

CARL
(choking)
I better go.

He gets up off his stool and quietly leaves the bar.

81 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

NOREEN
So how was your week?

CARL
Terrible. Business is lousy and Cheryl ripped a strip off me yesterday.

NOREEN
Why?

CARL
Well, the other night I took a woman home from the bar and Cheryl happened to be next door and saw us.

NOREEN
It's good you're able to date again.

CARL
It wasn't a date. I got picked up. The thing is I couldn't go through with it. And Cheryl won't believe me. I'd never seen such hate in her eyes for me. I actually started to cry and I haven't done that since I was a kid.

NOREEN
And how did that feel?

CARL
Humiliating. And relief in a way, I guess.

NOREEN
Did you attack back?

CARL

No point in that. I realize that Cheryl keeps everything in until she explodes. Like me, come to think of it. That was in the book you gave me.

NOREEN

Carl, now you're getting somewhere.

CARL

I was sort of hoping I'd get hit by a lightning bolt and walk away a new, improved, enlightened being.

NOREEN

Don't we all.

82 INT. ASCOT BAR - NIGHT

Cheryl sits at a table drinking and watching the waitresses and bartender surreptitiously. Darlene finishes up her last song to a smattering of applause.

DARLENE

Thanks folks. I'll be back in twenty minutes.

Darlene leaves the stage, joining Cheryl.

DARLENE

Hi. What was with you the other night?

CHERYL

Oh, Carl dragged some bimbo home. I saw them through your kitchen window.

DARLENE

Really? I didn't see anything.

CHERYL

Trust me. Her skirt was so short you could see her pubes.

DARLENE

That jerk... after what he put you through. You should've had fun with Larry. Then at least you'd be even.

CHERYL

He says he didn't boink her but
I don't believe him. How can he
say he still loves me and be
fucking someone this soon?

DARLENE

How would I know? I didn't even
suspect that George was cheating
on me.

CHERYL

Well, I'm pissed.

A WAITRESS arrives at the table.

WAITRESS

Can I get you some drinks?

DARLENE

Hi Linda. This is my friend Cheryl.

WAITRESS

Hi Cheryl.

CHERYL

(uncomfortable)

Hi. Yes, you could get me
another double B & B.

DARLENE

I'm fine. Maybe we should all
get together later after work.

WAITRESS

Sounds like fun.

The waitress leaves to get the drink.

CHERYL

Dar, hello. I'm working here.
I don't want to become friends
with the staff I may be busting.
I don't want them to know me or
I'll never work this room again.

DARLENE

Oh yeah, sorry. Anyway, you
still care about Carl, don't you?

CHERYL

What is this, Jeopardy? I really
loved him. But now, to hell with
him. It's over.

The waitress brings back Cheryl's drink.

WAITRESS
That's five dollars, please.

Cheryl gives her the money and watches her as she goes back over to the cash.

CHERYL
What's the bartender's name?

DARLENE
Max. He's a cutie. Want to meet him?

CHERYL
Darlene!

DARLENE
Oh yeah, right.

83 NEW ANGLE

The waitress rings in a single drink and pockets the difference with a wink to the bartender.

84 NEW ANGLE

CHERYL
(sighing)
Too bad. God, I hate my job.

Darlene looks at her watch.

DARLENE
Well, I better start my next set.

Darlene gets up to leave.

CHERYL
Yeah, I should go. My work here is finished. See you, Dar.

DARLENE
Love you.

85 INT. ASCOT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

As Cheryl leaves the bar, Larry spots her as he leaves his office. He follows her out the front door.

86 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

LARRY
Hey, Cheryl. Wait up.

Cheryl looks over her shoulder at him and stops to wait for him to catch up.

CHERYL
Hi, Larry.

LARRY
How'd it go tonight?

CHERYL
Fine. I'll type up my report tomorrow and bring it in.

LARRY
Just tell me.

CHERYL
Larry, we're standing in your parking lot. If you want to talk, let's go somewhere else.

LARRY
Come on back to my place. We can have a drink and you can fill me in.

CHERYL
Your place? I don't want to meet your wife. I followed her, remember?

LARRY
Don't worry, she's gone. Million dollar suit to follow.

CHERYL
Yikes. Sorry to hear it.

LARRY
You know the address. I'll meet you there.

CHERYL
Oh, alright. See you in a while.

87 INT. LARRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

There is a roaring fire in the fireplace in an ultra-modern house overlooking the bay. The lights are low and soft music is playing. Cheryl and Larry sit beside each other on a couch, drinking wine.

CHERYL

So, I figure Linda is getting you for about a hundred or so a night. Same with Max. I'll have to see the register tapes tomorrow to confirm.

LARRY

Who can you trust?

CHERYL

You've had a helluva couple of months. Your staff. Your wife.

LARRY

Yeah. I feel like it's me against the world.

CHERYL

I can relate.

Larry reaches over and kisses Cheryl. She neither resists nor embraces him. He then pulls back.

LARRY

That's so nice.

CHERYL

This isn't a good idea, Larry. I still have to work with you.

LARRY

You don't find me attractive?

CHERYL

Yes, I do. That's not the point.

LARRY

So two lonely people can't make each other feel a little better?

CHERYL

(sighing)

I don't know.

Larry reaches over again and takes Cheryl in his arms. He kisses her passionately and slowly she responds, putting her arms around him. He pulls back to look at her.

LARRY
God, you're beautiful.

CHERYL
(hoarsely)
Take me to bed, Larry. Quickly.
Before I change my mind.

88 INT. LARRY'S HOUSE - DAY

The morning sun sparkles, reflecting off the bay as Cheryl awakes in Larry's bed. She rolls over to see him, guilt showing on her face.

She slips out of bed and bends down to pick up her underwear which she puts on. She looks over at him as he awakens.

CHERYL
Good morning.

LARRY
Hi. What are you doing?

CHERYL
I've got lots to do today so I'd better be going home.

LARRY
You sure? You're not feeling bad about last night are you?

CHERYL
Well, no. I just hope things remain the same between us. Business-wise I mean.

She starts to put on her skirt and blouse.

LARRY
(smiling)
Why don't you come back to bed.

CHERYL
Ah... I've never been much of a morning person, Larry.

He gets up unhappily, slipping on a robe. We HEAR the SOUND of a DOOR opening and closing.

LARRY
Oh shit.

CHERYL

What?

She is buttoning up her blouse when Larry's wife, MELISSA, a well-dressed woman of 42, enters the bedroom. She stops dead in her tracks. Both Larry and Cheryl look at her in shock. Melissa is as irate as any scorned wife would be.

MELISSA

(shouting)

What the hell is going on here?
I'm gone for three days and you
go and fuck someone in my own bed?

(pointing)

Who is this?

LARRY

Cheryl works for me, Melissa.
So just calm down.

MELISSA

I can see the kind of work she
does.

CHERYL

(angrily to Larry)

You said you were separated.
Getting a divorce.

MELISSA

He did, did he?

CHERYL

Why did you have me follow her?

Larry is tongue-tied.

MELISSA

He what?

CHERYL

Everything was bullshit. You did
all this just to get me in bed,
didn't you? The surveillance,
Reno, the million dollar suit.
All lies.

MELISSA

You had me followed? You took her
to Reno?

LARRY

Let's all just relax a bit here.

MELISSA

Fuck you, Larry. Do you have any
idea how much this is going to
cost you, you son-of-a-bitch.

CHERYL

(embarrassed)

I'd better be going.

(to Melissa)

I'm really sorry. I had no idea.

Cheryl slips by Melissa and heads out of the room as
Melissa decks Larry with her purse.

89 EXT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Carl walks towards Carnegies front door. A scruffy young
BEGGAR is leaning against the front of the restaurant.

BEGGAR

Got a buck? I'm working my way
through university.

Carl pulls out his wallet and hands the kid a bill.

CARL

(grinning)

All I got is a five. Go for your
masters.

BEGGAR

(shocked)

Gee thanks.

Carl enters the bar smiling.

90 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Carl looks around and not seeing anyone he knows, he grabs
a stool between a beautiful woman and the fellow sitting
next to her. He looks at Julie, the bartender.

CARL

Julie, could you fix me a Black
Russian?

JULIE

(smiling)

Sure, darling.

CARL

(to the woman)

Mind if I sit here?

WOMAN

No.

Carl notices that the woman is drinking a beer.

CARL

And another for the lady here.

The woman turns to Carl.

CARL

You like beer?

WOMAN

I like any drink as long as it
doesn't take long getting here.

Julie places their drinks on the bar.

CARL

Thanks Julie, put it on my tab.

JULIE

Sure, Carl.

WOMAN

Thanks.

CARL

I don't mean to pry but seeing
you sitting alone, I wondered why
a dazzling woman such as yourself
is not in the company of a man.

WOMAN

I don't even like to talk to men.
And I sure as hell don't fuck them.

Carl is taken aback at this but soldiers on.

CARL

Hmmm. You don't like men?

WOMAN

I don't like people. They're
disgusting.

CARL

Hmmm. So you don't date then?

WOMAN

Date? That's repulsive. Anyone
who would like me is crazy and I
won't have anything to do with
a crazy person.

CARL
I guess I should leave you alone.

WOMAN
That's okay. I'm drunk enough
to handle it.

CARL
You ever smile or laugh?

WOMAN
Only at TV commercials.

CARL
Cry?

WOMAN
I did once. It was like throwing
up and I've been throwing up
since I was fifteen.

CARL
So, what do you do for a living?

WOMAN
Customer service. American Express.

Carl pauses and then looks down the bar to Julie.

CARL
Julie. Have you got a pair of
scissors?

JULIE
Sure. Just a second.

Carl pulls out his wallet and removes his Amex card.
Julie arrives and hands him the scissors which he uses
to cut his card in half. He hands her back the scissors
and the two pieces.

CARL
Never did like paying the
membership fee.

Julie laughs and he smiles.

CARL
(to the woman)
Cheers.

Mick and Frank enter to see Carl turn and walk away. The
woman doesn't even notice him leave.

MICK
 (doing a Jimmy Cagney)
 Who's the tomato?

CARL
 (shaking his head)
 She was frightening. It's not
 safe out here in the single world.

Mick uses his hand to simulate masturbating.

MICK
 Choke the chicken. A lot less
 trouble.

CARL
 Nah, I bore myself.
 FRANK
 Seen Cheryl lately?

CARL
 Only through Darlene's kitchen
 window. It's fucking unnerving
 seeing her there all the time.

FRANK
 Yeah, that could be weird.

MICK
 Forget Cheryl. She ain't
 coming back. You ought to try
 one of those dating services.
 Get yourself a new woman.

CARL
 (sighing)
 Yeah? Maybe you're right.

91 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

ANGLE ON Carl sitting at a table interviewing various women
 from a dating service. We see only Carl's mystified face.

CARL
 They must have made a mistake. I
 thought they matched people up.

92 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

CARL'S POV - A 29 year-old, Gen X WOMAN 2 with two nose rings, white pancake makeup and dyed black hair dressed all in black sits across from Carl.

WOMAN 2

Yeah well. Life sucks. Death is the ultimate. I mean, what else is there?

JUMP CUT TO:

93 CARL'S POV - A 40 year-old earth mother, WOMAN 3 in tie-dyed blouse, long skirt and straw hat sits across from Carl smoking a cigarette.

WOMAN 3

Proper diet.

She drags on her cigarette.

WOMAN 3

Yup. A vegetarian diet. That's the key to a long life.

JUMP CUT TO:

94 CARL'S POV - A 32 year-old rounder bar tart stockbroker, WOMAN 4 in a too small business suit with her cleavage showing, sits across from Carl.

WOMAN 4

The secret of life is multi-level marketing. It's going to save the world.

JUMP CUT TO:

95 CARL'S POV - A 31 year-old, tattooed biker chick, WOMAN 5, sits across from Carl.

WOMAN 5

'course nobody at work knows I'm bi-sexual. But I'm telling you, it's the best way to fly.

JUMP CUT TO:

96 CARL'S POV - A 25 year-old fitness freak, WOMAN 6 with rosy cheeks dressed in an aerobics outfit sits across from Carl with three beers lined up in front of her. She swigs one.

WOMAN 6

Lot's of beer and lot's of exercise. It's where it's at.

JUMP CUT TO:

97 CARL'S POV - A very conservative, 35 year-old librarian
type in glasses, WOMAN 7 sits across from Carl.

WOMAN 7

Then I joined a swingers club.
Group sex. Now that's what I
call relationships.

98 NEW ANGLE

Carl looks stunned.

SUPER: DAYTIMER PAGE reading "December" - Page turns

DISSOLVE TO:

99 EXT. DARLENE'S CONDO - DAY

Cheryl and Darlene haul the last two boxes out of the
rent-a-truck.

CHERYL

This is so great, Dar. Your own
place.

DARLENE

(laughing)

You should have seen George's face
when he handed me the check.

They enter the building.

100 INT. DARLENE'S CONDO - DAY

The place is stacked high with boxes. They drop the two
boxes they are carrying and plop themselves down on them.

DARLENE

Have you seen Larry since....?

CHERYL

No, and I won't. Resigned the
account.

DARLENE

Hmmmm.

CHERYL

I've never been so humiliated in
all my life. How could I be so
stupid? I must be nuts.

DARLENE

Don't be so hard on yourself.

CHERYL

I knew he was a sleazebag all along. I never listen to my feelings.

DARLENE

You were vulnerable and he took advantage of you. Like the intimacy book says, you were just getting your needs met. You didn't know.

CHERYL

If Carl ever heard about it he'd never speak to me again.

DARLENE

He'll never know.

Cheryl puts her hands up covering her face so Darlene can't see her stifling her tears.

DARLENE

Is something else going on here?

CHERYL

(looking up)

Yeah, Dar. My Mom called. My father is really sick. He went into the hospital this week.

Darlene puts her hand on Cheryl's arm.

DARLENE

Ah gee, I'm sorry Cheryl. Are you going to see him?

CHERYL

I can't. Maybe in a few days. It hurts too much.

Cheryl shakes her hair, composing herself.

CHERYL

I hate feeling like I do about him. Maybe I should get some help.

Cheryl takes out a mirror and looks at her face.

DARLENE

Might be an idea for both of us.

101 EXT. CARL'S BACK YARD - DAY

Carl is trimming the Hydrangea bush as Frank leaves his basement suite.

FRANK

Hey, how's it going, Carl?

CARL

Fine, man.

(grinning)

So when are you going to see the doctor?

FRANK

Soon, I guess. It's been pretty frosty around here lately.

CARL

What's the problem? You want kids, don't you?

FRANK

Oh yeah. I'm just afraid I might be sterile.

Carl opens up a garbage bag and looks pointedly at him.

FRANK

Yeah, okay. Doctors scare the shit out of me.

CARL

Chin up buddy. Be manly.

FRANK

I hear Cheryl was pissed off about your little escapade.

CARL

Frank, for Christ's sakes. I didn't fuck her.

FRANK

No shit... Well you probably should have. Celeste will kill me but... she was talking to Cheryl.

CARL

What? (beat) Here hold the bag for me, will you.

Carl hands Frank a garbage bag which he begins to stuff with the plant refuse.

FRANK

You're not going to like it.
Cheryl had a little fling herself.

Carl stops stuffing the bag. His mouth drops open.

CARL

What? (beat) Who?

FRANK

One of her clients.

CARL

Goddamn. Really?

Carl picks up the bag and throws it against the garage.

FRANK

Don't get rattled.

CARL

She wouldn't believe me when I
told her I didn't...

FRANK

Hey, she's a free agent too now.

Carl walks over and picks the bag up.

CARL

(sighing deeply)

I feel like I've been sucker-
punched. After all we meant to
each other. How could she sleep
with another man? Let someone
else touch her like that? This
kills me.

FRANK

Had to happen sooner or later.
Were you planning to get back
with her?

CARL

I've always kept the door open.
But this changes everything.

Frank shrugs and opens the back gate.

FRANK

Gotta go. I just thought you
should know.

Carl says nothing as Frank heads off.

NEW ANGLE of Carl, hurting.

He turns white, starts to shake and leans over and vomits into the garbage bag.

102 INT. DARLENE'S CONDO - DAY

Cheryl and Darlene are drinking coffee among the boxes.

DARLENE
Hope you don't mind the instant
coffee.

CHERYL
I could use an instant martini.

DARLENE
(laughing)
Oh, I forgot to tell you. I met
this really neat guy. He and his
buddies were at my gig.

CHERYL
What's his name?

DARLENE
Not telling. But you'll really
like him. He's really different.

CHERYL
Dar. This is me you're talking to.

We hear the BEEPING of Cheryl's cell-phone. She reaches into her purse and answers it.

CHERYL
Hello. Oh hi, mom.

As Cheryl listens, her face turns white.

CHERYL
When? How?

Darlene looks at Cheryl curiously and then concerned.

CHERYL
Okay. Yes. I'll come over right
now.

She puts her cell-phone back in her purse.

DARLENE
What's going on?

CHERYL
My dad died.

DARLENE
Oh, no.

Darlene wraps her arms around Cheryl who collapses in tears.

103 INT. DOCTOR'S EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Frank sits uncomfortably on the examining table in an patient gown. He looks around the spare room, then picks up and flips through a dog-eared Reader's Digest. The door opens and a 35-year-old DOCTOR, in jeans and a golf shirt, walks in.

DOCTOR
Hi, Frank, I'm Steve.

FRANK
And I'm naked. Get out of here.

DOCTOR
(laughing)
No, I'm the doctor.

FRANK
Doctors wear white coats and ties and call themselves Doctor.

DOCTOR
We're a little more relaxed around here.

FRANK
Well, Doctor Steve. I'm not at all relaxed.

DOCTOR
I understand you're concerned about your fertility?

FRANK
Ah, yeah. I mean...everything works fine. My wife and I just can't seem to conceive.

DOCTOR
Any trouble peeing?

FRANK
Peeing? I do understand the word urinate.

DOCTOR
Right, any trouble urinating.

FRANK
No, but my sphincter is immobilized with fear.

DOCTOR
That's fine. Did you produce a fresh sperm sample?

Frank points to a plastic jar on the counter.

FRANK
10 c.c.'s of the finest.

DOCTOR
Excellent. I'll send it to the lab and call you in a few days.

FRANK
That's it?

DOCTOR
No, now lay on your side on the table, please.

The doctor slips on a rubber glove. Frank looks terrified.

104 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Carl sits at the bar getting very drunk. Julie looks warily at him as Mick wanders in and sits beside him.

MICK
Hey, Carl. What's happenin'

Carl looks at him through bleary eyes.

MICK
Speak up man. You look like shit.

CARL
Nothing to say.

He swigs from his glass.

MICK
Too bad about Cheryl's dad dying.

Carl stops for a moment, thinking and turns to look at Mick.

CARL
What?

MICK
Yeah. Coronary festival.
Funeral was today.

Carl awkwardly grabs his coat, throws money on the bar and walks out. Julie looks to Mick who shrugs, not understanding what was going on with Carl.

105 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Cheryl stands in front of her father's gravesite. There are a few wreaths at the foot of the headstone. Cheryl is holding a single rose and crying.

CHERYL
Oh, Dad. All I ever wanted you
to do was love me.

She wipes the tears from her eyes but they keep coming. We see a solitary figure off in the distance. Carl walks slowly towards Cheryl. She doesn't see him.

CHERYL
You were my hero ever since I was
little but you never had any time
for me.

She lays the rose down by the wreaths and crumples to her knees, sobbing aloud.

CHERYL
And now it's too late.

She looks up to see Carl, totally disheveled with a two-day growth of beard, who puts his hand on her shoulder.

CARL
Hi.

She stands up and allows him to fold his arms around her.

CHERYL
There was so much I wanted to say

to him.

CARL
Yeah. I'll bet.

CHERYL
I loved him so much but I
could never talk to him.

Carl continues to hug her as she cries.

106 INT. HOUSE FRONT HALLWAY - DAY- FLASHBACK 25 YEARS

Little Cheryl, crying, still has one arm around her Dad's leg and the other around her teddy bear as he gets ready to leave.

The doorbell rings. Her father looks up anxiously.

HANK
We'll go to the zoo some other
time. I promise. Okay? I have
to go now.

He grabs his coat and opens the door to reveal a WOMAN.
She looks uncomfortable and not happy seeing Cheryl.

WOMAN
You ready, Hank?

HANK
Yeah.

CHERYL
(crying)
Who's that lady, daddy?

HANK
(guiltily)
This is Janice. We work together.
Now you be good, sweetheart.

He shuts the door behind him as he leaves. Cheryl sits down, hugging her teddy bear and weeping.

107 EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Cheryl pulls back from Carl's embrace to look at him.

CHERYL
I wanted him to say he was sorry.
I wanted him to know I knew he

cheated on Mom.

CARL

Hmmmm.

CHERYL

And I wanted to tell him it didn't matter. I just wanted him to be my Dad.

Carl dries the tears from her eyes with his hand.

CARL

I'm sorry, Cheryl.

CHERYL

I don't know what I'm going to do.

CARL

If you need anything, call.

CHERYL

Thanks for being here for me.

108 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Carl sits talking to Noreen who looks at her watch.

NOREEN

You haven't mentioned Cheryl's name once today. I'm glad to see you've stopped obsessing.

CARL

Actually I saw her this week. Her dad died so I visited her at the cemetery.

NOREEN

That was good of you.

CARL

I guess. I also heard she slept with someone else. I know it's it's none of my business despite how I feel.

NOREEN

And how do you feel?

CARL

(resigned)

Devastated. I want her so much.
I just don't know if my ego
could take it.

NOREEN

If that's how you choose to look
at it.

CARL

(sighing)

Anyway, she obviously doesn't
feel the same way. Guess that's
what they mean by closure.

NOREEN

No. Closure means forgiving.
As for your ego. If the task of
changing what you believe seems
too great all you have to do is a
one percent shift in perception.
Just allow the possibility that
you could change your beliefs and
the door swings open.

CARL

(pondering)

Yeah? Hmmm.

109 INT. DANA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dana's place is all done up with a tree and decorations.
Christmas MUSIC plays on the stereo. She is serving Christmas
dinner to Carl, Frank and Celeste.

FRANK

This looks great, Dana.

CELESTE

I wasn't up to cooking turkey for
just the two of us.

DANA

Orphan's Christmas. Glad to do it.
I hate being alone now. Any luck
with the baby-making?

FRANK

We've been screwing our brains
out.

Celeste blushes as Carl looks down at the floor between
Frank and Celeste.

CARL

So that's what that puddle on the

floor is...brains.

Everyone laughs.

CELESTE

Actually, honey, I'm late.

FRANK

Really? Get out the home tester.

DANA

Not at my dinner table.

Frank leans over and gives Celeste a kiss.

CELESTE

(to Carl)

Frank was saying you got a job offer.

CARL

Yeah, creative director at a big agency in San Francisco. The pay is terrific and they have some national accounts.

DANA

You're moving?

CARL

I don't know. It's the best opportunity I've had in years but I haven't decided yet.

DANA

Hmmm. Don't like the idea of you leaving us.

(brightening)

So is everyone going to Carnegies for New Year's?

CELESTE

We are.

Dana picks up a Christmas cracker and hands one end to Carl. Celeste does the same with Frank.

CARL

Yeah I guess. Not much into celebrating this year. Is Cheryl going to be there?

DANA

I doubt it. She's at her Mom's. She's pretty messed up these days.

Carl looks confused about his feelings as they all snap their crackers.

110 INT. CARNEGIES - NEW YEAR'S EVE - NIGHT

The bar is decorated with a New Year's banner and the place is packed, everyone dressed to the nines. We see George and his band in the corner.

We arrive at a table where Frank and Celeste, Mick, Carl and Dana all sit together. Frank stands, raising his glass.

FRANK

Attention everyone. I'd like to make a toast to my dear wife Celeste, who has found it in her heart... (more)

FRANK (CONT'D)

... no, make that her ovaries, to deliver of herself, our first offspring.

Everyone looks at Celeste who beams.

CARL

Hey, Celeste, that's wonderful.

DANA

I knew you could do it.

FRANK

To Celeste.

Everyone raises their glasses and toasts.

ALL

To Celeste.

CELESTE

Thanks. I saw the doctor yesterday.

Frank sits down.

CARL

(to Frank)

So those sores on your dick healed then?

Everyone howls except Frank who grimaces.

MICK

(to Cheryl)

Where's Dar tonight?

CELESTE
She'll be down later.
(pause)
Guess Cheryl's not coming.

DANA
Doesn't look like it.
(brightening)
Anyone want to smoke a joint?

CARL
(absentmindedly)
Never touch the stuff.

MICK
(to Dana)
Sure.

DANA
Is your car parked downstairs?

MICK
Better idea. Come with me.

They both get up and leave the table.

FRANK
I would, but I'm pregnant.
Carl and Celeste laugh.

111 INT. CARNEGIES - NEW ANGLE - NIGHT

Mick and Dana locate Yanis who is holding court next to the band in the corner. They wave to a smiling George. Mick then turns to Yanis.

MICK
Yanis, my man. Happy New Year.

YANIS
Hey, same to you.

MICK
Need to ask you a favor.

YANIS
For you, anything.

MICK
Dana and I want to use your
office for a while.

Yanis gets a big grin on his face as he looks from Mick to Dana. He nods his assent, in the Greek manner.

DANA
No, not that, Yanis.

YANIS
I don't want to know. Go ahead.

MICK
Efharisto.

YANIS
Parakalo.

Mick puts his hand on Dana's back and shows her out of the room, into the back hallway. We follow them into Yanis' office.

112 NEW ANGLE

The band finishes a tune and George stands to speak into his mike.

GEORGE
Ladies and gentlemen. Five minutes to midnight.

Everyone cheers.

113 NEW ANGLE

Yanis goes over to Julie at the bar.

YANIS
I'm going home to Maria.

JULIE
Fine. We have enough booze for the night. I'll lock up.

Julie leans over and kisses her brother.

JULIE
Happy New Year's. Say hi to Maria.

Yanis smiles and makes his way out of the bar.

114 NEW ANGLE

GEORGE again announces the time.

GEORGE

Two minutes to midnight.

115 NEW ANGLE

Frank picks up a paper tiara and puts it on Celeste and then puts his hat on.

FRANK
Carl, Celeste. Hats on.

CARL
No way.

CELESTE
Not in this lifetime.

116 INT. BACK HALLWAY - NIGHT

Julie tries the door handle to Yanis' office and finding it turn, she uses her keys to lock it.

117 INT. YANIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Mick and Dana are smoking a joint. Hearing the key in the lock, they look up.

DANA
I think we just got locked in here.

MICK
No problemo. Yanis keeps his best wine in that cupboard there.

Mick gets up and opens the cupboard, removing a bottle of wine.

DANA
Excellent.

MICK
And I'll just bet he has a corkscrew in his desk.

Mick opens a top drawer, rummages around and pulls out a corkscrew. He opens the wine as we hear the SOUND of a New Year's countdown.

CROWD (O.S.)
Ten.

Mick pulls a toothpick out of his pocket and sticks it in his mouth.

DANA
Got another one of those?

CROWD (O.S.)
Nine.

Mick finds another toothpick and hands it to Dana.

118 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Carl, Frank and Celeste are on their feet as the whole crowd counts down. We see Cheryl enter the bar and look around for her friends

CROWD
Eight, seven, six, five,
four, three, two, one. Happy
New Year.

The crowd hoots and blows their whistles. Frank takes Celeste in his arms and gives her a big kiss.

Cheryl comes up behind Carl.

CHERYL
Happy New Year, Carl.

He turns to face her, his face lighting up. They both pause awkwardly.

CARL
I'm glad you came. Happy New
Year, Cheryl.

She takes his hands in hers and draws him to her, kissing him briefly.

CHERYL
Can't help but be better than
this one.

CARL
I'll say.

Cheryl turns to Frank and kisses him as Celeste smiles and kisses Carl.

119 INT. YANIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Dana clinks glasses with Mick.

DANA
Happy New Year, Mick.

MICK
You too.

They both drink their wine as we hear the band start
Auld Lang Syne.

DANA
This is yummy.

MICK
Yeah, I like it too.

DANA
What else do you like?

120 INT. CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Carl, Cheryl, Frank and Celeste hold hands and join in
singing the last of Auld Lang Syne. George and his band
then launch into a romantic ballad.

CARL
Want to dance?

CHERYL
Sure.

Carl takes her in his arms and they begin to dance.

CHERYL
Thanks for coming to the cemetery.
You seemed different. And you
looked like hell.

CARL
I had some stuff to think about.
Cheryl, I'm really sorry for the
way I treated you.

CHERYL
I know. I feel the same way, too.

She hugs him a little tighter and rests her head on his
shoulder as they dance slowly.

CHERYL
Would you be willing to take me
with you to see your counsellor?

Carl looks down at Cheryl's face.

CARL

Do you mean that?

Cheryl looks up at him.

CHERYL

Yup. It's about time I talked to someone about some things.

CARL

It's got to be for you. Not us.

CHERYL

I know that. I spent Christmas doing a lot of thinking myself.

CARL

I don't know what to say.

CHERYL

Don't say anything.

She puts her arms around his neck and kisses him with love. Frank and Celeste look up from their seats to see this and smile.

121 NEW ANGLE

FRANK

Do you see that?

CELESTE

Shut up, Frank.

122 NEW ANGLE

Cheryl wraps her arms around Carl's neck.

CARL

I love you, Cheryl. Everything about you.

A single tear of joy rolls down Cheryl's face.

CHERYL

I'm so glad. I never really stopped loving you.

Carl kisses her passionately. The song ends and they don't even notice for a minute. Pulling apart, they

see Frank and Celeste grinning at them.

123 NEW ANGLE

They go back to the table and sit down, arm in arm.

FRANK
Okay, who's made New Year's
resolutions?

CHERYL
(winking at Carl)
I never do.

CARL
I'm going to quit smoking.

The other three laugh.

CARL
I am. Going on the patches.

FRANK
Yeah, right.

George comes over to join them at the table.

GEORGE
Happy New Year, everyone.

CARL
Same to you, George.

FRANK
All the best, George.

CELESTE
Me too, George.

124 NEW ANGLE

We see Darlene enter the bar on the arm of Del Stark.

125 NEW ANGLE

Cheryl looks towards the entrance and breaks into a huge smile as she sees them work their way over to the table, coming up behind George.

GEORGE
I hope nobody has hard feelings

about me and Dar. You know how
it is.

CHERYL

Not at all, George. In fact,
here she is right now.

George turns around to see Darlene standing there with
Del.

DARLENE

Hi everyone. I want you all to
meet Del Stark.

George is speechless. Carl and Frank stand and Carl,
smiling at the irony, shakes hands with Del.

CARL

Nice to meet you, Del. I'm
Carl. This is Cheryl.

DEL

Hi, Carl. Cheryl.

CHERYL

Hi, Del.

DARLENE

And this is Celeste and her
husband Frank.

Frank shakes hands with Del as Celeste smiles.

DEL

Hi.

DARLENE

And this is George.

Del offers his hand to George who shakes it.

DEL

Nice to meet you George. Dar has
told me a lot about you.

GEORGE

(stammering)

She has? Oh man, you're the
greatest.

DEL

Well thanks. I happen to think
Darlene's the greatest, but then
you know that.

He smiles at Darlene who gives him a peck on the cheek.
George is dumbfounded.

CARL
(to George)
You said you'd give anything to
meet Del.

GEORGE
Yeah, right.

DARLENE
Where's Mick? I want him to meet
Del.

CHERYL
He and Dana are around here
somewhere.

Darlene and Del head off as people are putting on their coats and
leaving the restaurant.

CARL
(looking around)
Looks like everyone is starting to
leave.

FRANK
Feel like calling it a year,
Celeste?

CELESTE
Yeah, I'm bushed. And I'm
probably the only sober one here.

FRANK
Sober is a relative state.

Carl looks towards the front window. Snow is falling.

CARL
Look, it's snowing.

126 INT. YANIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Mick and Dana have finished the bottle of wine.

DANA
It's funny, you know. You want
to be an actor and me being in a
couple of Carl's commercials. I

never realized we had stuff in
common.

MICK

Hey, I'm as common as they come.
You like shooting pool?

DANA

Yeah. Eight ball.

He looks at her.

MICK

You like sports?

DANA

I am a sport.

MICK

Kinda cozy in here.

DANA

We're the last two people on earth.

Mick takes her in his arms and kisses her, at first softly and then more and more passionately. She starts to rub his butt with her hands. He starts to undo the buttons on the back of her dress. She begins to moan as they begin to frantically tear each other's clothes off as they sink to the floor.

127 INT. FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Frank, Celeste and Carl have their coats on.

CELESTE

I'll go get the car.

FRANK

(to Carl)

So are you taking that job in
San Francisco?

Cheryl looks curiously at Carl as he helps her on with her coat.

CARL

Nah. I gotta make things work
right here.

He smiles at Cheryl.

CHERYL

You don't have any women stashed

back at your place do you?

CARL
(laughing)
No. You still dating clients?

CHERYL
(sheepishly)
Oh no. You know about that?

CARL
(smiling)
Doesn't matter.

Cheryl holds her hand out to Carl with a big smile.

CHERYL
(to Carl)
Let's walk.

He takes it.

CARL
Night, Frank.

CHERYL
Bye, Frank.

FRANK
Seeya.

128 EXT. FRONT DOOR - CARNEGIES - NIGHT

Snow falls gently down on Carl and Cheryl as they leave the restaurant and walk OUT OF FRAME.

CAMERA ZOOM into the blackness between the snow flakes.

FADE OUT