

THE HUB

"Pilot"

A MULTI-CAM SITCOM

LOGLINE: In the heat of 2013 Tucson, a broke community arts director must save his collapsing nonprofit by going back into business with his "surgical" ex-wife—the only person who knows how he works and exactly which buttons to push.

THE HUB

"Pilot"

CAST

RICKY THOMPSON (30S) - Idealist with a clipboard. Ex-musician who treats his man-bun like a crown. Fighting "The System" - but keeps forgetting to pay the Wi-Fi bill. Passion first. Plan never.

VERONICA CLARK (30S) - Elegant. Surgical. Politically weaponized. She didn't leave Ricky - she upgraded. Believes emotions are inefficiencies and chaos should be taxed.

EDDIE SYKES (30S) - Ricky's cousin. Legal-adjacent energy. A deranged bodyguard with a tie. Speaks in jargon he barely understands and somehow wins arguments with it.

IVY COLLINS (30S) - Trust-fund dropout with tattoos and a motorcycle. The Hub's survivalist secretary. Sees every lie before it's told. Lets it play out anyway.

NAOMI JONES (25) - Chaotic Good. Works when she feels like it. Feels like it more than she should. The vibe-check. The wild card. The only one emotionally fluent.

THELMA ALVAREZ (60S) - Veronica's mother. Rich. Bored. Socially weaponized. Desert Sue Mengers. Treats crises like brunch and men like appetizers

JULIO ORTEGA (20S) - Brilliant painter with viral-destruction energy. Treats public space like an emotional experiment and viewers like unwilling participants. Can only create while listening to static, because silence "lies too much."

COLD OPEN

EXT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB - SOUTH WILLOW ST., TUCSON - DAY

A community arts office in a mixed-use building.

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

(Ricky)

A cramped, messy community arts office in full crisis mode. RICHARD "RICKY" THOMPSON (30s), an ex-musician and sociology major turned nonprofit arts organizer.

Attractive but a little frayed around the edges. Beard, man-bun, bracelets, at least one visible tattoo. He's juggling a landline and two buzzing smartphones.

On the wall, a mural reads "yes, we can", already blurred -- like it gave up.

RICKY

(rapid-fire, frustrated)

No! That wasn't our agreement! I need a clown for the outreach - can't get one. I need a doctor - got plenty! I'll tell you what, if you don't show up to sign this contract at a fair price, you don't need to show up at all. And tell the others - Ricky said so!

Slams the phone -- hard enough to scare himself. He steps back. Beat. Another phone immediately starts ringing. Ricky stares at it.

END OF COLD OPEN.

ACT ONE

EXT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB - SOUTH WILLOW STREET, TUCSON - DAY

The Hub sits on a cheap stretch of rent on South Willow. Not cultural, not pretty, just affordable.

SFX: intercom buzz.

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes and Ivy)

Ricky is doing the math. He picks up the intercom.

RICKY

Talk to me, Ivy! How bad is it?

IVY COLLINS (30) rushes in. She's Ricky's trusted secretary. Sharp truth-teller. Several visible tattoos.

IVY

We cannot let the Stern Organization keep using the same calling pattern.

(MORE)

IVY (CONT'D)

Everyone giggles at the mere sound of
"Do you wanna be a Stern Donor this
weekend?"

RICKY

I'll call Stern myself.

IVY

(feeling heard)

Thank you!

Ivy leaves. Door swings open. EDDIE SYKES (30s) steps in as
Ivy leaves. Sykes walks in like he's late for a lawsuit.
Wrinkled shirt, manila folder. It's not his first emergency.

SYKES

Well, good morning, people! Looks like
Uncle Sam brought you an earlier
Christmas present!

RICKY

It's just a warning.

SYKES

That you've completely run out of
money. And why isn't Veronica helping?
She just married the city's Financial
Officer last month.

RICKY

I can't just hold her at gunpoint,
Eddie!

SYKES

Then allow me to downsize, please! How
about Julio over there?

RICKY

No way. He's a great painter. That kid
is gonna be a star someday.

SYKES

He's totally behind schedule!

RICKY

At city mural? No, he's not--

Ricky opens the door to yell at Julio.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Julio, how is it going out there?

JULIO (O.S.)

I'm blocked!

RICKY

Good to hear.

(back to Sykes)

Just give him some space, will you?

SYKES

He has a space. A whole wall!

Ivy rushes back in.

IVY

Hurry, pick up - she's on the phone!

RICKY

Who?

IVY

Who do you think?!

RICKY

(after a beat, determined)

Hello!

(reacts, listens, scoffs)

Yes, Mrs. Thelma, I'll hold.

(puts his hand over the
phone)

It's her mother. She must have gotten
one of those.

SYKES

When?

Ricky holds up the crumpled government document.

RICKY

Shh!

(back to the phone)

Really? When did she get that?

(back to Sykes)

Just this morning. Yeah, huh-huh.

(back to the phone, already
writing a note)

Fine, we're coming over.

Ricky hangs up. Throws his car keys to Sykes.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Hurry -- you drive.

SYKES

You got it.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB MAIN WORKING AREA - DAY

(Ricky, Ivy, Sykes, extras)

Ricky moves fast while the others follow him.

IVY

Where? Her mom's?

Ricky grabs a cleaner shirt from the hallway closet and splashes on cologne.

RICKY

Worse. Where she lives with her current husband.

Ricky hands Ivy a note.

IVY

That's gonna be awkward.

SYKES

Don't worry, we're all grown-ups. Things will run smoothly enough.

CUT TO:

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes, Thelma and Veronica)

Upscale house in Sam Huges. Ricky and Sykes stand awkwardly. THELMA (60s), sharp, dressed like Sue Mengers, if she'd moved to Arizona. She's holding a glass, looking at Ricky like he's a gluten-free muffin.

THELMA

So -- are you still in love with my daughter or what?!

RICKY

Mrs. Thelma --

THELMA

Living on my dime -- in my house. No
passion. No noise. I told my daughter -
- "Ronnie, you're with a man who
doesn't make you scream!"

RICKY

When nobody was home, we did just
fine!

Ricky realizes he over-shared.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Oh, man!

Ricky goes for the door.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Maybe it's better if I wait outside --

VERONICA (V.O.)

So that's why our relationship didn't
work. You never stayed for dessert.

They turn. VERONICA CLARK (30s) stands in the doorway, calm,
composed, completely in control. Stunning.

RICKY

Veronica?

VERONICA

Richard. Sorry if I kept you waiting.
The maid's in withdrawal.

(throws a bottle of pills at
her mother)

Here. We're taking turns.

THELMA

Oh, crap.

(to Sykes)

Ever seen an old Latina lady puke her lungs out? You're in luck!

Sykes and Thelma leave. Ricky and Veronica look at each other. An awkward smile.

RICKY

Opioid, right?

Walk and talk. He clocks everything.

VERONICA

Ugh, don't get me started. Never seen anything like it.

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S OFFICE - DAY

(Veronica and Ricky)

They walk and talk.

VERONICA

It's like the flu -- if the flu could stab you. Anthony keeps her as a PR move. Politician language -- I can't even translate it into coherence.

They sit opposite each other in her office. Beat.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

So it's good to see you!

RICKY

It's good to see you too.

VERONICA

(embarrassed)

Sorry about Mom.

RICKY

Hey, if your parents can't embarrass
you -- why have them, right?

Ricky address his CD on her shelf.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Looks like you still have the CD.

VERONICA

It was your first. Why wouldn't I?

A beat. They actually exchange a smile.

RICKY

Look, if this is some kind of charity-

VERONICA

It's not charity. It's a business
proposal.

CUT TO:

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S DECK - DAY

(Sykes and Thelma)

Thelma and Sykes are on the deck. Chatting and drinking.

SYKES

This is nice.

THELMA

Yes!

Then the loud argument coming from the inside the house

catches them off-guard.

RICKY (O.S.)

No way in hell!

CUT TO:

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

(Ricky, Veronica, Thelma and Sykes)

Ricky storms into the living room, followed by Veronica.
Thelma and Sykes appear right after.

VERONICA

Ricky, wait!

RICKY

This was your husband's idea, not
yours.

VERONICA

He was being creative, so what!

RICKY

Great, he's a creative, then! He
should be trying for a city bid then,
not me.

THELMA

What's going on here? What did she
say? What did you say?

VERONICA

I said nothing. He just stormed out of
the office. Maybe if I was wearing a
big sombrero -

RICKY

What?

VERONICA

Or maybe if I was running around town
screaming Ay Ay Ay as Speedy Gonzales!

RICKY

Speedy Gonzales is a hero for Latinos!

VERONICA

Which you're not. You just shacked up
with one to feel good about yourself!

Ricky is finally offended.

RICKY

Wow. I really sound awful when you say
it out loud.

(to Sykes)

I'll wait in the car.

VERONICA

Just go!

RICKY

Already leaving!

VERONICA

See if I care!

Ricky leaves. Veronica almost leaves, but heads back.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

He did eat while he was waiting,
right?

They all stare at her.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I really don't care!

Veronica leaves.

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes, Ivy and Naomi)

NAOMI JONES (25), a stunning young Black woman is up on a stepladder, reaching for an old accounting ledger from the top shelf. Ivy gets it. Ricky and Sykes burst in.

RICKY

(to Sykes)

What year did you say he was from?

SYKES

'76!

Ivy gives Ricky a book.

RICKY

So it matches. I could see his hands
inside the puppet!

(pounds the board)

She's so blind she can't even notice.

IVY

She's not naive.

RICKY

But she's stiff! She's not like you,
you know. But it doesn't matter,
'cause the moment we get help from
them - this, gone. You, replaced. You,
branded!

NAOMI

Branded how?

RICKY

'Diverse'.

NAOMI

I can live with that.

RICKY

But this is not how we roll. We're bringing something to society here or not?

SYKES

But you hate society!

RICKY

I do not.

NAOMI

Yes, you do.

RICKY

No, I don't.

SYKES/NAOMI/IVY

Yes, you do!

RICKY

Wait -- no!

IVY

Oh, come on. We all hate people on some level -- that's why we're here!

RICKY

Not always! I really think we can make a difference around here!

IVY

And we do!

RICKY

I know -- that's what I told her. "We don't want your half-million." Then I left!

Sykes' brain collapses.

SYKES

You said what?!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes, Ivy and Naomi)

Sykes is already choking Ricky. Naomi and Ivy try to intervene, finally pulling them apart.

NAOMI

Oh, my God! Are you alright?!

RICKY

I'm fine! He has girly hands!

SYKES

How's this for girly hands?!

Sykes puts him in a chokehold, yanking on his man-bun.

RICKY

Stop it! Stop it!

Ricky gets free.

RICKY (CONT'D)

How the hell did you get so strong?

SYKES

I'm not, I just eat meat! I'm heading back!

Sykes tries to leave. Ricky holds him, but is easily dragged while Sykes tries to walk out.

RICKY

No, you're not! It's not even money, it's a charity dinner thing with the city's endorsement--

SYKES

That's a free meal and a bonus in one sentence -- I'm in!

JEFFREY (50's), a gay activist who works for the hub storms the office.

JEFFREY

Oh my God, what's going on here? We're having a real emergency outside!

RICKY

Excuse me, but I'm kind of having a meltdown here!

JEFFREY

So is Julio. He's on the ledge!

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB ROOFTOP - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes, Julio, Naomi and Ivy)

Julio is already at the ledge. Ricky comes right off the rooftop door, breaking out. The commotion is already happening down on the street.

RICKY

Oh my God!

(calling Julio out)

Julio, what are you doing?

JULIO

Stand back! I'm just a meal ticket in
this office! I feel like a whore!

SYKES

Well, welcome to Arizona, baby!

IVY

(calling Julio out)

Come on, Julio, here -- look at me!
Don't you want to be part of something
bigger, something meaningful,
something colorful?

JULIO

What colorful? I painted black.

NAOMI

You mean you finished it?

JULIO

(blurt it out)

No! It was supposed to be a kid's
park, but that's all I can paint right
now! All I see is black!

SYKES

(calling Julio out)

Julio, do me a favor and look at that
beautiful Tucson sky - would you,
please?

JULIO

Ow! It hurts!

SYKES

Now you're seeing black, you son of bitch!

(back to Ricky)

Get rid of him!

RICKY

No!

(calling Julio out)

Julio! Listen to me, you're not depressed. You're a human seismograph!

JULIO

Am I what now?!

RICKY

(snaps)

You're jumping through the roof!

(calling the crowd -- buying time)

Are you seeing this, people? It's a performance piece on the public sector's abandonment of the arts!

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S OFFICE - DAY

(Veronica and Thelma)

Veronica and Thelma are glued to the television.

VERONICA

(figuring his BS a mile away)

Ha!

THELMA

It's a four-story building. What's he gonna break, an elbow?

EXT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB ROOFTOP - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes, Ivy, Julio and Naomi)

The same.

RICKY

Julio, look down.

Ricky looks. Regrets it immediately.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Forget what I said. Just looking down makes me think you're out of your freaking mind here, but I won't tell you that. I won't.

Julio is puzzled.

JULIO

So what are you gonna say to prevent me from being smashed all over the pavement -- 'cause I'll do it!

Julio threatens it again.

RICKY

(quick)

Wait - okay! See that news van there? Right over there?

JULIO

Yes! They came here to see me. Now back off!

RICKY

(blurt it out)

No! That's not a crowd. That's content! You wanna be a headline or the guy who finished the wall?

JULIO

(quick)

Headline!

Julio take a step forward.

RICKY

(even quicker, desperate)

No! Wait! If you jump, they win!

Julio thinks for a bit.

JULIO

You mean the government?

RICKY

If it works!

Julio stops for a sec.

JULIO

Well, we cannot let them do that.

RICKY

No, sir!

Julio doesn't take much to convince.

JULIO

Okay.

Julio steps down. Relief on Ricky's face and on his crew.

Applause downstairs. Ricky hugs Julio.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB MAIN WORKING AREA - DAY

(Ricky, Ivy, Julio, Naomi, Sykes, Jeffrey and extras)

They enter, still riding the adrenaline.

IVY

(to Ricky)

Didn't think you had it on you, boss.

RICKY

Are you kidding? Aging Millennial! --

I'm just more ready than you are.

(to Julio)

Are you okay?

JULIO

I guess--

RICKY

Splendid! Back to work.

People disperse. Julio seats by his table. He doesn't show he's shaken. Naomi lingers without saying a thing.

JULIO

What?

NAOMI

Nothing. Is that I used to be an escort--

JULIO

So?--

NAOMI

(sharp)

Do I have to spell it out? Only for
men who were willing to pay!

JULIO

(quickly comprehends)

Oh my God. So then you know!

Julio breaks into tears and holds her.

END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

EXT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB - SOUTH WILLOW STREET - NIGHT

Late at night.

SFX: Knocks on the door.

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB MAIN WORKING AREA - NIGHT

(Ricky and Veronica)

Knocks on the door. Ricky is coming from the office putting on his coat.

RICKY

Okay, hold on!

Ricky gets it. It's Veronica. She's drunk.

RICKY (CONT'D)

(sarcastic)

Hey, it's Veronica. How did you know where to knock? --

Veronica storms in, cutting him off.

VERONICA

Don't be so smug. You're all over the news.

(delivering him the warning)

Got any whiskey?

RICKY

Not the good kind. Have you been drinking?

VERONICA

(scoffs)

Why is everyone so obsessed with that? You and my limo driver. Geez!

RICKY

Here, have some water.

VERONICA

I don't want any water! I don't need any water! How do you do it? How does everything always go your way, even though you defy logic?!

RICKY

It's a struggle.

VERONICA

Tell me about it. Now Anthony wants to give a full grant!

RICKY

WHAT?! He can't be serious.

VERONICA

I thought so too. But he wants you for momentum!

Veronica hands him another document. Ricky is puzzled.

RICKY

He knows I'm an ex-husband, right?

VERONICA

He's trying to be progressive!

RICKY

He's a Republican!

VERONICA

I know! That's what makes me so mad!
That's it.

(grabbing the document back)

I shouldn't have come!

RICKY

See you later!

VERONICA

Ugh!

RICKY

Double ugh!

VERONICA

Fine!

RICKY

Fine! No, wait! Oh, crap, what am I
saying here?

(taking the paper back)

I'm in, okay?

VERONICA

What?!

RICKY

You've heard! But only if it's my way.
Put me in a room with those people and
I'll show you what I'm made of!

VERONICA

You don't have to show me. There's a
lifeline for you here that I think
you're missing the point!

RICKY

But it's not honest, is it?

VERONICA

Why do you care? You're not an artist!

RICKY

Fine, I'm not anymore. I just try to
balance the books. What do you do when
you can't sleep?

That lands.

SFX: A small noise coming from the office.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Excuse me for a second.

VERONICA

Fine, I'll wait at Jeffrey's desk.

Veronica grabs a picture frame from Jeffrey's desk.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Oh my God. Is that my limo driver he's
with?!

(dismissive)

Meh, you think you know people!

Ricky quietly says he'll be right back.

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

(Ricky and Naomi)

An alarm clock lies on the floor -- Naomi might have accidentally knocked it over while sleeping. The room is semi-dark. The sofa bed is open. Naomi is tucked under the covers. Ricky enters. He swaps his coat, grabs a key, speaks softly to her.

RICKY

Honey? We've got company but I'm gonna try to keep it down - so we're going outside, okay? Honey?

Naomi snores.

RICKY (CONT'D)

That one is a goner.

INT. COMMUNITY ARTS HUB MAIN WORKING SPACE - NIGHT

(Ricky)

Ricky walks back with a new coat and a set of keys.

RICKY

(after a moment)

Okay, let's discuss it upstairs--

Ricky realizes Veronica is gone. The door is open.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Whoa, look at that. She's done it again.

Ricky throws his keys back at the counter, frustrated.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK ALLEY - SOUTH WILLOW - DAY

(Ricky, Sykes, Ivy, Naomi, Jeffrey, Julio and extras)

The wall is covered by a colorful curtain waiting to be open. It's a wall from a city building next to the park and an alley. The press is there and there's a crowd. "South Willow Arts Hub presents" it's written in a big strip. Ricky stands on the podium.

RICKY

Hello, people. Glad the way it turned around. I'm not gonna waste precious time with a speech since Julio's painting already says plenty. And now, with no further ado, South Willow Community Arts Initiative gives you --

SFX: Sirens.

ICE vehicles all over the place.

RICKY (CONT'D)

-- a full bunch of cars.

Ricky leaves the podium to confront an ICE Officer.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, what's going on here?

ICE OFFICER

We had complaints.

(calls out everyone)

Is there a Julio Ortega around?

Julio flees immediately.

ICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Oh, crap. They never give you much time.

(calling other officers out)

That's him!

The ICE Officer reaches for his radio.

ICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

In pursuit, now!

Ricky follows the Officer while he talks. The ICE officer paces between the car and the crowd. The officer goes to get a file.

RICKY

Wait, there must be some mistake. He can't be illegal. That's his painting!

ICE OFFICER

Tell it to the judge.

(calling other offices)

He's in the square! Geez! Would it kill you guys to skip lunch before a pursuit?!

(back to Ricky)

It's like this Julio guy is playing with them!

RICKY

But officer! He works for us!

ICE OFFICER

He does, huh?

RICKY

Yes!

(to Sykes)

Tell him!

Sykes thinks for a bit.

SYKES

When you say work--

RICKY

You didn't?

SYKES

I did! Sorry to blurt it out like that, but he was terminated before I could speak to you, okay?

RICKY

Why, because he's a foreigner?

SYKES

No, what kind of person do you think I am? 'Cause he's suicidal!

Ricky scoffs.

SYKES (CONT'D)

(calling out to the Officer)

And be careful with him in prison, he might pull a Kurt Cobain in there!

Ricky is appalled while in the back Julio is still escaping federal agents.

JULIO

I'm a human seismograph! I'm a human seismograph!

Julio accidentally tears down the curtain revealing some of the painting. The crowd gasps, not in shock, but in 'HR-Violation' horror. The phones go wild--this isn't just a mural; it's a career-ending thread on 'Consent in the Workplace.'

SYKES

Is that naked, hot Naomi he painted?!

RICKY

(dead calm)

Yes. Bare naked. On a wall funded by the city. For children.

(deadpan, to the officers)

You can take him.

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S OFFICE - DAY

(Veronica and Ricky)

Ricky just entered the room. Veronica is already in damage control mode.

RICKY

I'm feeling desperate!

VERONICA

So you better sit down. Desperation just comes easily when you're standing.

RICKY

Don't joke about it. This is my life!

Veronica is already on the phone.

VERONICA

You know what, that really pisses me off.

RICKY

Excuse me?

VERONICA

They never come to me to say what a lovely by the book Latina I am. But the moment one of us reveals themselves as a suicidal maniac, they're suddenly very quick to point fingers!

Veronica hangs the phone.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

And no one's picking up.

RICKY

I need a pardon, a redo or something. That's a city mural right there!

VERONICA

Just calm down. I'm sure they'll think of something.

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK ALLEY - SOUTH WILLOW - DAY

(Sykes)

A wrecking ball hits the wall. Sykes is passing by with some groceries.

SYKES

Oh my God! I haven't taken a picture yet!

Sykes runs.

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S OFFICE - DAY

(Veronica, Thelma and Ricky)

Thelma is already serving him some scotch.

VERONICA

Wasn't he trying for Extraordinary
Ability or something?

RICKY

Not so extraordinary now! -- and what
are you serving me?

THELMA

Some scotch.

RICKY

Whoa, no. Get the hell away from me,
then.

THELMA

(to Veronica)

Ugh, what's wrong with kids today --
no booze and all soy.

(to Veronica)

That's why you didn't scream!

RICKY

Hey!

VERONICA

(overlapping)

Again with that?

RICKY

That's it! Tell her, Ronnie!

VERONICA

Tell her what?

RICKY

That I used to rock your world, baby!

VERONICA

I'm not gonna tell her that. She's my mother, for God's sake!

Veronica thinks, then gives in.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

When nobody was home, we did just fine. Now can you please drop it? We need to talk.

THELMA

Fine. But if I hear dead silence, I'm coming over.

Thelma leaves.

VERONICA

Now please, tell me, what can we do to make amends?

RICKY

I don't know. Sell a kidney? -- without this painting, I don't have enough to keep afloat.

VERONICA

Haven't you learned to save money for this kind of emergencies?

RICKY

It's always an emergency! And you know what I learned? You know what I really *really* learned? That if I do nothing, things might actually start going my way, for a change!

VERONICA

You should stop moving, then.

RICKY

Yeah, right. Like that's an option. And you could cover me.

Veronica doesn't know what to say. A moment until Veronica starts to give in.

VERONICA

O-kay.

RICKY

What?

VERONICA

I said okay.

(clocks him)

So o-kay.

Ricky thinks for a bit.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You can close your mouth, now.

RICKY

I'm sorry, I just thought--

VERONICA

That I wasn't serious about me coming back to the workforce?

RICKY

We actually call ourselves woke-force,
now, but you'll catch on.

VERONICA

Oh God! What happened to regular blue
collar in this country?

RICKY

They became indies, weirdos agnostic
types. You'll love us. But if you
think I really need you ?--

VERONICA

Richard!

RICKY

You didn't let me finish. I more than
need you. I really need you. I just
thought you didn't have it on you
anymore --

VERONICA

It's fascinating what you think of me
sometimes--

RICKY

I just thought --

VERONICA

You thought it wrong -- what? You
think you don't have a place in my
heart anymore? --

Veronica freezes.

RICKY

(after a beat)

A what now?

VERONICA

(faking her way out)

I mean, the place. I was talking about
the place! The Hub, not you as a hubby-

-

RICKY

(faking it together)

Yeah, right.

VERONICA

'Cause I got a new life, now. A new
hubby, the whole shebang.

Ricky agrees.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

And I don't have to remind you we used
to be in each other's throats as a
couple --

RICKY

Reminds me? That's all I'm thinking!

VERONICA

There you go! But as a team -- that's
one thing I really miss.

They finally agree on something.

RICKY

(quiet, careful)

We were good at it, right? --

VERONICA

Huh-ho. Yes, we were.

RICKY

(trying his luck)

And we were more than good in the
bedroom as well!

VERONICA

Enough with that.

RICKY

Just tell her already!

VERONICA

I did! I just don't think she's buying
it! -- fine, I try it when she's
sober.

RICKY

Thank you for sharing.

SFX: Notification.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Oh, great!

VERONICA

What?

RICKY

Teenagers rebelling against the naked
mural downfall! I'd better go down
there.

Ricky leaves.

VERONICA

I'll call City Hall!

RICKY (O.S.)

You'll do that!

VERONICA

You're not the boss of me!

RICKY (O.S.)

Not trying to!

Veronica holds her phone. She takes a moment and smiles.

INT. VERONICA'S AND ANTHONY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

(Ricky and Thelma)

Ricky takes a moment. Thelma enters, already drinking.

THELMA

Hm! Congratulations. I finally heard
some screaming.

RICKY

And you'd better get used to it. We're
back together as partners! HA!

THELMA

Good. I've always liked you more.

RICKY

And no matter what you say -- wait,
what?

THELMA

(calmly)

I've always liked you better.

Ricky doesn't understand.

RICKY

(calmly accessing it)

Okay. Are you drunk or something?

THELMA

Eh, not enough to give me amnesia.

Just the sip to make me regular. Don't screw it up this time, okay?

Tidying up loose documents in his backpack.

RICKY

Don't worry. It's just business.

THELMA

Yeah, right. And what I've just told you was the whole truth. You know you're gonna try it.

RICKY

Thelma, I'm broke. I can't afford to burn this bridge acting as a teenager anymore.

THELMA

So look out with the rebuilding, pal. Things might get a little familiar at the site visit.

RICKY

I've got a girlfriend.

THELMA

You mean the hooker?

RICKY

She was an escort. Not anymore.

THELMA

Well, I was a coyote once. People in Mexico still recognize me for it. I just know you're gonna try!

RICKY

I'm not.

THELMA

Wanna bet?

RICKY

I don't gamble.

THELMA

My God, do you have any testosterone left or is it over down there?

RICKY

It's like you're pushing me to try it!

THELMA

She's unhappy!

RICKY

She looks great!

THELMA

See, you're falling in love already.

RICKY

She's married!

THELMA

Have you seen her husband around?
(a beat. starts grooming his
shirt)

(MORE)

THELMA (CONT'D)

Just try to make some money this time,
would you? You're an artist, don't let
that slip by you, even if that hair --

Ricky makes a fake buzz before she comes any closer. A beat.

THELMA (CONT'D)

It's starting to grow on me.

Thelma starts to leave.

THELMA (CONT'D)

Now let's get the maid some booze --
Oh, and just so you know.

(whisper)

My money is on the underdog this time.

Thelma leaves with a bottle. Ricky stands there alone for a
second.

RICKY

Then I won't disappoint.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW.