

TOGETHER AGAIN

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"TOGETHER AGAIN"

FADE IN:

EXT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

It's not the best part of Los Angeles. From inside we hear the voice of psychic/fortune teller MADAME KASTALANIS OVER:

MADAME KASTALANIS (V.O.)
I hear de shpirits, I feel de shpirits,
und I know dey vish to shpeak!

A CAT (MRS. KVETCH) MEOWS.

MADAME KASTALANIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Not you! You ain' no shpirit!

INT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - NIGHT

MADAME KASTALANIS, olderish, dressed in faux gypsy garb, chants with her eyes closed while sitting at a round table with ADELE TAYLOR, 33. On Madame's lap is her strange cat MRS. KVETCH.

ADELE
Are they friendly spirits?

MADAME KASTALANIS
Dey not quvite cuddly marshmallow but
dey ain' gonna hurt nobody too much!

ADELE
I'm ready.

MADAME KASTALANIS
De shpirits tink you can do better.

Mrs. Kvetch MEOWS.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
Mrs. Kvetch tink dat, too.

ADELE
Better in what way? Better about what?

TAD (O.S.)
(from outer room)
Adele, can we go?

MADAME KASTALANIS
Better dan dat loser out dere!

ADELE
(calling out)
Just a minute, Tad!

MADAME KASTALANIS
You nice girl. You come here for years,
ask de advice. Tourist I lie to but you
I tell de trute: "De one dat got away
he shtill crazy bout you!" How you like
dat?

ADELE
Which one got away? Who is he? It's
kind of important because I think
tonight Tad is going to... well, I'd
hate to miss out if there's somebody
better for me.

TAD (O.S.)
Adele, what's taking so long? Our
reservation was for twenty minutes ago!

MADAME KASTALANIS
Anybody be bedder dan him! But you
godda figger out who by youself,
shveetie. Jusht be open.

Adele gives her a \$20 bill and hurries out.

INT. MADAME KASTALANIS' OUTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TAD BLAKE, 43, is waiting impatiently as Adele emerges
through the bead curtains.

TAD
What did your phony clairvoyant have to
say?

Adele hesitates.

TAD (CONT'D)
Come on -- I'm dying to hear about it.

ADELE
She told me I can do better than you.

TAD
Let's go. I didn't come here to be
insulted.

MADAME KASTALANIS (O.S.)
(from parlor)
Yes, you did! I'm just tell da trut!

Angry, Tad leads Adele out the front door.

EXT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

As Tad pushes through the front door, bell on the door JINGLES. Adele is right behind him.

MADAME KASTALANIS (O.S.)
(from parlor)
Tank you -- come again!

Mrs. Kvetch MEOWS o.s.

TAD
She is your favorite psychic? She's as
phony as a three-dollar bill.

ADELE
Most of the time she's right.

Tad hurries down the street. Adele stops upon seeing
A FULL MOON.

TAD
(stops)
What are you stopping for?

ADELE
It's a full moon. It's beautiful.

TAD
A full moon? Great. More freaks out
than usual. Come on.

Tad keeps going.

Adele struggles to keep up with him.

INT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Madame Kastalanis is looking out her window at the full moon.

MADAME KASTALANIS
(to Mrs. Kvetch)
Tsk, tsk. Vhen da moon shmile at you,
you shmile back!

Mrs. Kvetch MEOWS in agreement.

Madame Kastalanis turns on the TV.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
 (calling out)
 Shpirits, time to vhatch da news!

A GENTLE BREEZE whooshes mysteriously through the room as Madame and her cat sit down to watch the infotainment program "BEST THING EVER."

INT. TV STUDIO "BEST THING EVER" - NIGHT - ON TV

"BEST THING EVER" unfolds with a slick logo, theme MUSIC, and graphics on the UBS network. It's a shiny, glossy set. Anchor NANCY FULLER introduces the lead story:

NANCY
 Did you miss out on the love of your life? UBS's reality-romance extravaganza is barely a year old but riding the top of the ratings while it gives the lonely and long-suffering new hope for reuniting with the love of their life. Tonight, in this exclusive interview, we speak with the show's host and "Love Coordinator" Dawson Foster.

INT. DAWSON'S OFFICE - DAY - ON TV

The segment continues. The office drips with machismo and it's full of trophies from a long career producing hit reality shows. Nancy is interviewing DAWSON FOSTER, 45.

Titles: "DAWSON FOSTER, PRODUCER."

NANCY
 (to CAMERA)
 The show is called "TOGETHER AGAIN" and it reunites ex-lovers in front of millions.
 (to Dawson)
 Dawson, thank you so much for making time for us today.

DAWSON
 Happy to do it.

NANCY
 Dawson, how many exes have you brought back together so far?

DAWSON

To date we have been responsible for thirty-two marriages, twenty-one engagements --

NANCY

Any divorces or custody battles?

DAWSON

Some, but we don't focus on that.

NANCY

Is there a prize?

DAWSON

Nancy, the prize is getting back the love of your life! We're also giving away cash and travel and an exclusive array of artisanal chocolates and various tempting taste treats from Sandy's Candies.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

INT. SPORTS BAR - NIGHT - ON TV

"BEST THING EVER" continues as we WIDEN the shot to reveal Adele and Tad sitting at a table. It's a very non-special chain joint (think TGI Friday's). Sunday night CROWD. Tad avidly watches the TV interview while Adele -- facing away from the TV -- studies the menu.

NANCY (V.O.)

(from TV)

How do you win something?

DAWSON (V.O.)

(from TV)

Whether or not the couple actually gets together, we give each of them five thousand dollars.

TAD

Holy moley! That's a lot of ravioli!

DAWSON (V.O.)

(from TV)

If they actually kiss we give them each another one thousand dollars.

TAD

Even a bad kiss is worth a thousand bucks!

ADELE
(not looking up)
What's that, Tad?

TAD
Would you ever consider being on a
reality show?

ADELE
Why would I want to be on a reality
show?

TAD
For the money.

ADELE
That depends on what they want me to
do.

TAD
(sidles up to her)
If we had the money, would you consider
marrying me?

ADELE
(uncomfortable)
I'd consider it. Someday, maybe.

A waitress (JILLY) notices Adele's distress and heads
toward them, order pad in hand.

JILLY
How are you two tonight?

TAD
She says someday she's gonna marry me
maybe!

JILLY
Then maybe you'd better start saving up
for someday, hadn't you?

TAD
(to Adele)
See? Even she agrees with me!

Jilly glances at Tad, then at Adele, who looks defeated.

A DRUNK PATRON stumbles past their table.

TAD (CONT'D)
(to Drunk Patron)
You hear that? My girlfriend's gonna
maybe marry me someday!

DRUNK PATRON

And I'm gonna maybe get sober someday!

The Drunk Patron falls face-forward onto the ground and passes out. They start to SNORE.

JILLY

You ready to start drinking,
sweetheart?

ADELE

Yes.

EXT. SKIDMORE'S TAVERN - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

It's on the ground floor of a distinguished Wall Street building. We hear "BEST THING EVER" on a TV OVER.

DAWSON (V.O.)

(from TV)

Now an actual wedding -- followed by a
year of marriage -- that will get the
happy couple fifty thousand dollars!

INT. SKIDMORE'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Upscale place. "BEST THING EVER" plays on the TV behind the bar. Bartender CARL FRANKLIN, 33, watches the TV as he dries glasses.

NANCY (V.O.)

(from TV)

But what if the couple is faking it?

CLIFTON and MALCOLM, writer-types, are glaring at the TV.

DAWSON (V.O.)

(from TV)

We have "Love Analysts" monitoring the
relationship.

CLIFTON

(drunkenly)

What the hell is a "Love Analyst"?

DAWSON (V.O.)

(from TV)

If you get cheated on, you are eligible
for a tragedy bonus. You may be broken-
hearted but you won't be empty-handed.

CLIFTON

What a bunch of horseshit!

MALCOLM
Typical TV scam. Carl, turn this crap
off!

Carl TURNS OFF the TV and goes back to wiping glasses.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
(to Clifton)
Speaking of scams, did you finish
writing that biography of the
congressman who killed himself?

Carl starts listening to the Writers' conversation.

CLIFTON
It's done. But it's terrible. What can
you say about a guy who hates his job,
hates his wife, hates his life, and
wants to kill himself? How else could
it end? He kills himself!

MALCOLM
You should have given it a happy
ending.

CLIFTON
There is no happy ending! When you're
dead, you're dead. It doesn't get
better after that.

Startled, Carl drops the glass he is wiping onto the bar
with a CLATTER.

CLIFTON (CONT'D)
Watch yourself, Carl! Break one of
those fancy glasses, they're liable to
take it out of your paycheck.

CARL
They're welcome to do whatever the fuck
they want.

Carl heads toward a side door.

CLIFTON
Hey, can you put the game on?

Carl SWITCHES the channel to a WOMEN'S SOCCER GAME.

MALCOLM
That's the wrong game!

CARL
There's a ball. People are kicking it.
It's a game.

Carl steps out the door to the alley.

CLIFTON
What's with him?

EXT. SKIDMORE'S TAVERN ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Carl steps into the alley and sees a SEXY MAN making out with a SEXY WOMAN (both in their 20s) up against a wall near a dumpster.

Upon seeing them, Carl can't help but stare with a bit of longing.

The Sexy Woman -- mid-kiss -- notices Carl staring at them. She taps on the Sexy Man's shoulder to get him to pause and they both turn to stare back at Carl, annoyed.

SEXY MAN
(to Sexy Woman)
Come on -- my mom won't be home till late.

SEXY WOMAN
Let's go.

The Sexy Couple walk off down the alley, barely able to keep their hands off each other.

RONIN, the cook, exits through the kitchen door and lights a cigarette.

CARL
Can I get one of those?

RONIN
These things'll kill you.

Ronin offers him a cigarette and his lighter.

CARL
That's the point.

Carl lights the cigarette and takes a soulful drag on it.

He starts coughing and spits the cigarette out as Ronin watches, amused.

RONIN
You know, drinking yourself to death is a lot more fun.

CARL
I hate drunks.

Carl goes back inside through the kitchen door. Ronin follows.

The dumpster begins to ROCK rhythmically as the Sexy Couple inside starts to have sex.

INT. SKIDMORE'S TAVERN KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ronin follows Carl inside the kitchen.

CARL
My father was a drunk.

RONIN
So was mine. What's the big deal?

CARL
I think I've reached the end of my useful life.

RONIN
(chuckles)
Me, too! We deserve a vacation! Ever been to Pittsburgh?

CARL
Or maybe the world deserves a vacation from me.

Carl takes off his apron and hands it to Ronin.

CARL (CONT'D)
I'll miss you, Ronin, but I quit.

INT. SKIDMORE'S TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

Malcolm is examining the remote control for the TV while Clifton has pulled out all the cables connected to the back of it and is plugging each one in, trying to get a picture to appear.

Carl exits the kitchen on his way toward the front door.

CLIFTON
Carl, this TV doesn't work!

CARL
So write your congressman!

CLIFTON
Who is my congressman?

CARL
The one who killed himself. The drinks
are on the house!

Carl exits.

Clifton and Malcolm grab beer glasses and start filling
them up.

EXT. DAWSON'S HOLMBY HILLS MANSION - NIGHT

It's like a smaller Playboy Mansion. Fancy cars (Rolls,
Jaguar) are parked in front along with a ten-year-old Kia.
An intercom BUZZES, then a dog BARKS.

DAWSON (V.O.)
What is it, Charlie?

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(through intercom)
Mr. Blake just arrived, Mr. Foster. I
sent him back there to you.

EXT. DAWSON'S BACK TERRACE - CONTINUOUS

Dawson is talking into the intercom while pouring himself a
drink at the outdoor bar near his pool and Jacuzzi. He is
dressed in loungewear. He tosses a couple of ice cubes into
his drink while looking expectantly at the back door of the
house.

A lot of BARKING, which annoys Dawson.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
(into intercom)
Charlie, can you settle Lemmy down,
please?

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(from intercom)
Sure thing, Mr. Foster.

The dog's barking is STIFLED.

Tad steps out through the back door, dressed in a suit.

TAD
Hey Dawse, I saw your interview on that
show the other night. "BEST THING
EVER."

DAWSON
I assume you need to borrow some money.

TAD

Here's how it is, Dawse -- I'm getting married to Adele.

DAWSON

Another brave warrior bites the dust.

TAD

All the nice places to have a wedding are really expensive.

DAWSON

If you're going to have a wedding in Hollywood, you're going to pay Hollywood prices.

TAD

(looks around)

This is such a great place.

DAWSON

I'd let you have your wedding here but I'm not coming to it.

(a beat)

She's a teacher, right? Have it in her school gymnasium.

TAD

I keep hearing that I look really good on TV.

DAWSON

Not likely.

TAD

You should put me on "TOGETHER AGAIN."

DAWSON

You're a little past your sell date to play some eager Romeo. But you could be the sad sack she leaves behind.

(beat)

I seem to remember that your girl is kind of a looker. Does she have any old boyfriends we could use?

TAD

She told me she had a boyfriend in high school.

DAWSON

(presses intercom)

Lana, could you come out here?

LANA PALEY (20s) enters with a computer pad device. She is gorgeous, sensibly dressed, with glasses.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
You know my assistant, Lana Paley. Show her a recent picture of...?

He looks at Tad expectantly.

TAD
Adele.

Tad shows them some photos of Adele on his phone.

DAWSON
(nods approvingly)
Yeah, yeah.

LANA
(impressed)
Yeah, yeah.

DAWSON
All right, get out of here. Send Lana your girl's address and the ex-boyfriend's name and she'll hunt him down.
(to Lana)
This is for "TOGETHER AGAIN." Possible reunion-jilted-lover thing.

Lana nods.

TAD
Can I get some kind of advance?

DAWSON
Lana, cut him a check for five hundred.

TAD
Could I get it in cash?

Dawson gestures vaguely to Lana: give him what he wants. She picks up Dawson's wallet and starts counting out hundred-dollar bills.

DAWSON
Take this money and go straight home -- no stopping at the strip club.

Tad nods intently. Lana hands him \$500.

Tad heads toward the back door of the house.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
Take the side gate.

TAD
Thank you so much, Dawse. I really
appreciate it.

Lemmy's BARKING starts up again.

DAWSON
Yeah yeah yeah. Out. You're freaking
out the dog.

Tad leaves through the gate at the side of the house.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
(after Tad is gone)
Idiot.

LANA
I bet I'd be good on "TOGETHER AGAIN."
I have a few ex-boyfriends who are
pretty obsessed with me.

DAWSON
What about your current boyfriend?

LANA
I'm ready to dump him. The guy never
has any money.

DAWSON
If a young man wants to keep his ladies
happy he has to make as much money as
possible.

LANA
He works for you.

DAWSON
As I said, Lana, if a young man wants
to keep his ladies happy he has to not
work for me.

EXT. CARL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A rent-controlled building on Manhattan's Upper East Side.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carl is opening his mail. He wrestles with a thick envelope
from "Freebase Media" in Hollywood.

He pulls out a DVD with a slick label that reads: "CARL FRANKLIN, PLAY ME OR MISS OUT ON TOTAL HAPPINESS!"

CARL
(to himself)
No thanks.

Carl almost automatically turns to toss the package into the garbage, but stops, curious.

He pivots toward his television, puts the DVD into the player, and presses PLAY.

To his surprise, Dawson Foster himself APPEARS on the screen...

INT. DAWSON FOSTER'S OFFICE - DAY - ON TV

Dawson looks directly into the CAMERA:

DAWSON
Hi Carl, I'm Dawson Foster, the TV star. Carl, maybe you've heard about our show "TOGETHER AGAIN." Someone has asked us to invite you to appear on the show because she thinks you are the love of her life!

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carl talks to the image of Dawson on his TV.

CARL
Sorry, Dawson Foster, but someone is clearly a raving lunatic.

INT. DAWSON FOSTER'S OFFICE - DAY - ON TV

Dawson speaks directly into the CAMERA:

DAWSON
So why not join us on the show? You could win a lifetime of companionship, fabulous cash prizes, and an exclusive array of artisanal chocolates and tempting taste treats from Sandy's Candies! And relax -- we've checked and you both have good credit and neither of you is wanted by the law.

INT. ADELE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Adele watches Dawson's message on her own TV.

ADELE
This has got to be a joke.

DAWSON (V.O.)
(from TV)
We need to hear from you within five days, Adele, so don't think about it too long! Oh -- the gentleman's name is Carl Franklin.

The TV screen switches to a logo of "TOGETHER AGAIN."

Adele SWITCHES OFF the TV and smiles wistfully.

ADELE
Carl...

EXT. CARL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A nice place on Manhattan's Upper East Side. We hear Carl DIAL his phone OVER. It RINGS, then the call is ANSWERED.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Freebase Media.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

CARL
(into phone)
My name is Carl Franklin and I got an invitation to appear on "TOGETHER AGAIN" but I think there's been a mistake.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
(from phone)
I'll put you through, Mr. Franklin.

A few CLICKS, then BRIDGET speaks OVER:

BRIDGET (V.O.)
(from phone)
Hi this is Bridget with "TOGETHER AGAIN" -- do I have the pleasure of speaking with Mr. Franklin?

CARL
(into phone)
Yes, but --

BRIDGET (V.O.)
 (from phone)
 Mr. Franklin will you be joining us on
"TOGETHER AGAIN" to make your dream of
 romance come true and also possibly win
 cash, fabulous prizes, and exclusive
 artisanal chocolates and tempting taste
 treats from Sandy's Candies?

CARL
 (into phone)
 Is this on the level?

INTERCUT CARL'S APARTMENT / INT. BRIDGET'S CUBICLE - DAY

BRIDGET (20s) has a headset on. She sits at her desk in her
 cubicle and speaks to Carl (in his living room) via phone.

BRIDGET
 (into phone)
 We are very much on the level -- last
 week, "TOGETHER AGAIN" was number one
 in the ratings.

CARL
 (into phone)
 I don't watch much TV.

BRIDGET
 (into phone)
 The woman you will be reunited with is
 Adele Taylor.

CARL
 (into phone; shocked)
 Adele Taylor? Does she even remember
 me?

BRIDGET
 (into phone)
 Yes, she does!

CARL
 (into phone)
 She cancelled our last date.

BRIDGET
 (into phone)
 Mr. Franklin, on our show it's common
 for people to have a change of heart
 after a little time has gone by.

CARL
(into phone)
Look, I just want to say good-bye to her.

BRIDGET
(into phone)
Mr. Franklin, you will have the opportunity to say anything to Adele that you want. You will fly First Class on Sunset Airlines and stay at the five-star Garden of Allah Hotel in Hollywood and dine at --

CARL
(into phone)
We were supposed to go to the prom together.

BRIDGET
(into phone)
I know this is going to turn out great for you. Now, a cashier's check for two thousand five hundred dollars will be sent to you immediately along with your plane tickets. You'll receive the rest of your fee on the day of taping.

CARL
(into phone)
I don't care about the money.

BRIDGET
(into phone)
You don't? Well, that's the best reason to do this. Buckle up for romance!

CARL
(into phone)
I'm not going to be around for any "romance."

BRIDGET
(into phone)
Well, "romance" might be around for you! This second chance could be just what you and Adele need.

CARL
(into phone)
If I get to see Adele... I'll do it.

BRIDGET
(into phone)
Great.

CARL
(into phone)
What's an "artisanal chocolate"?

EXT. HUMPHREY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - ESTABLISHING

School is out and the grounds are deserted. Adele converses with LIZ OVER:

ADELE (V.O.)
Carl was my high school boyfriend. We met in the Friendship Club.

LIZ (V.O.)
What the fuck is a "Friendship Club"?

INT. ART CLASSROOM - DAY - CU OF COLLAGE

It is a variation of Edvard Munch's famous painting "The Scream" featuring a person shrieking on a bridge. The collage is composed entirely of dead insects.

ADELE
It was the kind of club where you meet a guy like Carl. But it was just high school kid stuff.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Adele talking with LIZ KERNS, 42, a quirky high school art teacher. Liz is gluing bugs onto the collage one by one.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Are those live bugs?

LIZ
I hope not. How much are they going to pay you for this?

ADELE
Five thousand dollars.

LIZ
Wow -- I hope you said yes.

ADELE
What if Tad gets jealous?

LIZ
The only thing Tad will get jealous of is your five thousand bucks.

ADELE
I'd share it with him.

LIZ
I wouldn't. But that's just me.

ADELE
Do you think I should do it?

LIZ
I thought you went to your prom with
some guy named Clifford.

ADELE
I canceled on Carl and went with
Clifford.

LIZ
Why?

ADELE
Carl scared me a little bit.

LIZ
Was he weird?

ADELE
No, nothing like that. But the way Carl
looked at me sometimes, he was so
intense that I was afraid he would try
to elope with me after the prom.

LIZ
Did you see Carl again?

ADELE
We hugged at graduation.

LIZ
Did Clifford try anything at the prom?

ADELE
No. Clifford wasn't the type to try
anything with a girl. I think he had a
thing for my brother. They've been
living together in San Francisco for
the last ten years.

(a beat)
Do you think Tad would object to me
being on this show?

LIZ
Of course not. He'll love that five
thousand bucks.

ADELE

You don't know Tad. He's very devoted to me. There were many nights I found him sleeping on my doorstep.

LIZ

He was probably drunk. You should see what winds up on my doorstep at three o'clock in the morning.

One of the roaches is still alive and is crawling from a brown area to a white area.

ADELE

That bug is still moving.

LIZ

You can't keep a good man down.

INT. CARL'S BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

Carl is knocking on the door of one of the apartments. There is a little sign: "MANAGER."

MRS. KUNKEL (O.S.)

(yelling through door)

Who is it?

CARL

It's Carl in 12A, Mrs. Kunkel.

MRS. KUNKEL, 60s, opens the door a crack but keeps the chain on. She has headphones on and is listening to 1940S MUSIC on a Sony Walkman cassette player from the 1980s. She talks too loud over her music.

CARL

I'm giving you notice. I'm moving out at the end of the month.

MRS. KUNKEL

Where the hell are you going?

CARL

I just need a change.

MRS. KUNKEL

I suppose you'll be wanting your security deposit back!

He hands her a slip of paper with writing on it through the open doorway.

CARL
You can send it to my mother. Here's
her address.

MRS. KUNKEL
I don't know this person! Why can't I
just give it to you?

CARL
Because I'm going to kill myself.

MRS. KUNKEL
What?

CARL
I'm going to kill myself. Send the
money to my mother.

MRS. KUNKEL
(absentmindedly)
Okay.

She slams her door.

EXT. THE MEN'S RACK - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A clothing store in Beverly Hills. We hear Tad OVER:

TAD (V.O.)
Five thousand bucks would come in
handy.

INT. THE MEN'S RACK - DAY

Tad, in a decent suit, talks to Adele, in teacher clothes.

ADELE
I'm only doing that show because it
will be nice to see Carl again.

TAD
What's so important about "Carl"?

BEAU and CHESTER, two entitled lawyer-types enter the store
and look around impatiently.

ADELE
I heard he was bartending at Skidmore's
Tavern in New York. I understand it's a
very popular place.

TAD
Bartender, waiter, servant. Loser.

BEAU
Hey, could we get some help over here?

TAD
(whispers)
Excuse me -- I have a client.

He rushes over to the Lawyer Types.

TAD (CONT'D)
Welcome to The Men's Rack, where we
will fit you before you throw a fit!

BEAU
I stepped in something. I just need a
pair of socks.

As Adele exits the store, Beau tries to clean his shoe by
rubbing it on the carpet.

EXT. TV STUDIO - DAY - ESTABLISHING

We hear Dawson OVER:

DAWSON (V.O.)
That's great, sweetheart. Let's see you
turn.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

Dawson is holding auditions for a "Survivor"-type show
called "STARVING & DESPERATE." Lovely actress CANDY (20s)
is standing before him in a sexy cavegirl outfit. She turns
around in a sexy way, whipping her hair.

Off to one side are ten more ACTRESSES (including TAFFY,
20s) all in cavegirl outfits, waiting for their turn. They
watch Candy intently and Taffy and five others begin
whipping their hair around the same way Candy did.

Dawson is sitting on a director's chair. Next to him, with
a clipboard, is Lana.

DAWSON
Beautiful, beautiful, but knock off the
hair thing -- you're making me dizzy.
Go get into your bikini and we'll see
you back here.

CANDY
Do you want to hear the lines? I
practiced them.

DAWSON
Sure, do the lines.

CANDY
(overacting)
"You can't vote me off the island
'cause I'm gonna vote you off first!"

DAWSON
Nice. Great.

CANDY
I could do it meaner.
(meaner; shaking her fist)
"You can't vote me off the island
'cause I'm gonna vote you off first!"

DAWSON
That was fine.

CANDY
I can do it sexier.

LANA
No thank you, Candy.

CANDY
If I can't do it sexier, how am I
supposed to do it?

DAWSON
You need to stop doing it!

Lana rushes over and ushers Candy out of the building.

Tad is standing off to one side, in the shadows. He clears his throat.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
Tad, where did you come from?
(to Lana, who is back)
Lana, I need a few minutes. Take the girls and give them some ice cream or something. Get them into their bikinis.

LANA
(to Actresses)
Ladies, if you could please follow me.

Lana starts to lead the Actresses (including Taffy and BEDILIA) out of the soundstage.

TAFFY
What flavor ice cream?

LANA
It's free, that's what flavor it is.

BEDILIA
I'm lactose-intolorant!

LANA
We all have our crosses to bear.

This mystifies the Actresses as Lana leads them out.

DAWSON
(re: the Actresses)
There's dissention in the ranks!
(to Tad)
What are you doing here?

TAD
Did Adele agree to do your show? I
think I talked her into it.

DAWSON
She called, she's in. So you're in,
too. We tape next week.

TAD
What do you need me to do?

DAWSON
We're going to stick a camera in your
face and you need to act like this
asshole is trying to take away your
girl.

TAD
Should I beat him up?

DAWSON
Stay away from the rough stuff. This
isn't that kind of show. But I want you
to come up with some real emotion.
Tears, if you got 'em. I don't want
there to be a dry eye in the audience.

Lana and the Actresses, now all in bikinis, return and line
up. Most of them are devouring ice cream cones.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
And don't tell your girl about any of
this. Now vanish.

Lana leads Tad out.

Candy stares at Dawson, licking her cone provocatively.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
Do you like sweets, Candy?

CANDY
Uh huh.

DAWSON
So do I. I'm having a party later this week. Lana will give you the address. Bring a friend.

Candy smiles.

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

It's flying over the Midwestern States. BABY CRYING OVER.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Carl is sitting in First Class but in the center. He is reading "BEING AND NOTHINGNESS" by Jean-Paul Sartre. There is a HUGE GUY on one side of him and the CRYING BABY is in the row behind him. Even with the extra room the HUGE GUY is crowding Carl while wolfing down a bag of potato chips.

The BUSINESSMAN on the other side of Carl is sleeping on his pull-out tray.

The Baby continues to WAIL throughout the following. Its MOTHER makes no attempt to comfort it.

The Businessman wakes up and frowns at the Baby's WAILS.

BUSINESSMAN
(to Carl)
Are we there yet?

CARL
Another two hours.

BUSINESSMAN
If that kid doesn't shut up, I'm going to kill myself.

CARL
Me, too.

EXT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

We hear the bustle of an airport baggage claim area OVER.

INT. LAX BAGGAGE CLAIM - DAY

LIMO DRIVERS hold up handwritten signs with people's names on them as Carl, the Businessman, and the other Passengers leave Baggage Claim.

Carl notices LOUIE, 50s, holding up a sign reading "CARL."

CARL
You here for Carl Franklin?

LOUIE
Yeah, lemme take that.

Louie takes Carl's suitcase and leads him out the doors.

INT. LOUIE'S LIMOUSINE - DAY

It's luxurious. Carl sits in the back seat; Louie drives.

LOUIE
People say that Los Angeles is full of
insincere, plastic, fake people, but
you know what I say? Fuck 'em!

Carl nods.

LOUIE (CONT'D)
You ever been on TV before?

CARL
Never.

LOUIE
I used to be on TV. You remember that
cop show in the 80s? "MANSLAUGHTER"? I
was a regular extra.

CARL
(unenthusiastic)
Great.

LOUIE
Everybody said I was real good in it.
My wife... everybody.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH HOTEL - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A sumptuous hotel in Hollywood. Louie's limousine stops at the entrance as he speaks OVER.

LOUIE (V.O.)
How about this place, huh?

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Louie opens Carl's door and carries his suitcase.

LOUIE

A lot of big stars used to stay here. I
could have been one of them.

Louie leads Carl to the front desk where JANET (30s) works.

LOUIE (CONT'D)

Janet, Mr. Franklin here is checking
in. He's a big fan of my show
"MANSLAUGHTER."

JANET

Good afternoon, Mr. Franklin.

Carl smiles at her.

LOUIE

Carl, what do you think of a layout
like this?

(to Janet)

Make sure you don't put him in that
room where that English lady died.

Louie exits.

JANET

I have you in a deluxe suite, Mr.
Franklin.

CARL

Did an English woman really die in my
room?

JANET

No.

(a beat)

She was Australian. Here are your keys.

She hands him his room key cards.

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

It is a deluxe suite, with a separate living and bedroom,
bar, and kitchenette. Beautifully furnished with a nice
upper-floors view of Downtown Hollywood. Carl is staring
out the window at the view of Hollywood Boulevard.

He opens the hotel directory to the "DINING" section.

The hotel has a 24-hour coffee shop: "Garden of Culinary Delights." He is intrigued.

INT. ADELE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Adele's room is a duplicate of Carl's, with different pictures on the wall. There is a table and chairs. A room service cart is parked nearby. Adele is picking at the last of a sumptuous dinner. Tad is stretched out on the bed reading the cable TV guide.

TAD

Here's one: snakes get loose at a bachelorette party.

He TURNS ON the TV: young women SCREAMING in terror.

ADELE

Could we watch that some other night?

He turns OFF the TV and pats the bed next to him.

TAD

Why don't you join me here?

ADELE

I can't even think about things like that right now.

TAD

I can't think of anything else. Look at this room. It's a love-nest.

ADELE

Tad, why don't you go home? Stay here tomorrow night. Then we can do whatever you want.

TAD

What a killjoy! Are you kicking me out?

ADELE

Why don't you pick me up first thing in the morning?

Tad picks up his jacket and keys.

TAD

This is pretty fucked-up.

He opens the door to the hallway.

ADELE

Thank you, Tad.

He leaves, trying to slam the door.

The door mechanism forces it to CLOSE very slowly. We hear Tad STOMPING away down the hallway.

Relieved to finally be alone, Adele sits in one of the luxurious armchairs. She sinks into it and smiles a little.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Carl is standing near the floor buttons. A DING as the elevator STOPS on Floor 16.

The doors OPEN and Tad gets on, still in a frustrated mood.

CARL
What floor?

The doors CLOSE and the elevator starts to DESCEND.

TAD
Lobby.

The Lobby button is already GLOWING, so Carl does nothing.

TAD (CONT'D)
Are you here on business or pleasure?

CARL
I'm here for a funeral.

TAD
(brightens)
Oh yeah? Whose?

CARL
My own.

TAD
What?

CARL
I'm also here to be on a TV show called
"TOGETHER AGAIN." We're shooting
tomorrow.

The elevator STOPS and the doors OPEN.

TAD
Good luck at your funeral.

Carl, embarrassed, can't get out of there fast enough.

INT. GARDEN OF CULINARY DELIGHTS COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

It's a charming, retro-style coffee shop where the waitresses wear uniforms and have names like "Blanche" and a full coffee cup is the priority. Muzak PLAYS quietly. The place is mostly empty save for a few colorful HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD TYPES. Carl sits in a booth eating oatmeal and reading his Sartre book.

BENNY, 70s, enters from the street and waves at MELBA, the waitress.

BENNY

Hey Melba!

MELBA

Hey Benny -- coffee's on the way!

BENNY

And how about a bowl of that famous chili, sweetheart?

MELBA

You got it.

Benny sits in a booth next to Carl and offers Carl a friendly smile.

Carl smiles back.

Benny pulls out a folded-up news magazine and starts reading it. He laughs.

Carl glances over at him.

BENNY

Sorry to disturb.

CARL

It's all right. What's so funny?

BENNY

I don't watch those reality shows myself but then you hear about something so ridiculous, you gotta laugh.

CARL

What happened?

BENNY

This lady was on a singing show that was only for yodeling and they shot the whole thing at a farm in Hungary!

Melba brings over a cup of coffee and a bowl of chili for Benny.

MELBA

I bet you're "hungary" for this.

BENNY

You said it!

(to Carl)

Mind if I join you?

CARL

I guess.

Benny moves over to Carl's booth and Melba sets his food down in front of him. He starts right in eating the chili and accidentally BELCHES loudly.

BENNY

'Scuse me!

MELBA

(as she exits)

You boys yodel if you need anything.

BENNY

I shouldn't eat chili, but I just love it so damn much. Every bite is probably killing me.

CARL

I get that.

BENNY

So this one lady, her yodeling thing is to sound like a chicken. She's going "Bak bak bak" there in the barnyard and all the sheepdogs all over town start jumping into the river, one by one. A mass suicide.

CARL

I love the arts.

BENNY

Did the arts bring you to Hollywood?

CARL

I'm here saying good-bye to an old friend. I'm also going to appear on one of those "reality" shows. It's called "TOGETHER AGAIN."

BENNY

God, that show is a stinker. At least you won't have to yodel. You ever been married?

CARL

No. I met the right one a long time ago but it didn't work out.

BENNY

Me, too. But come on -- it's great, right? You're king of your castle! Come and go as you please. I'm living the dream right now!

CARL

What do you do?

BENNY

I work at a dry cleaner.

CARL

You come in here a lot?

BENNY

Sometimes when I can't sleep. Or I get lonely. Couldn't you sleep?

CARL

I'm doing that show in the morning. My stomach is jumpy.

BENNY

Want some chili?

CARL

No thanks. It's been a rough day. Chili would just make it rougher. So much could go wrong tomorrow. I wonder if I should just back out.

BENNY

(sarcastically)

Yep, back out. Why try? Why try anything?

CARL

I'm not saying that...

BENNY

Sure you are. Today was rough, so tomorrow just stay home and don't do anything.

CARL

Haven't you ever had a bad day?

BENNY

I've had my share. But so what? Luck can change. The worst day can turn into the best one! You don't know what's around the corner! Five minutes to midnight you could win the lottery.

CARL

Or get hit by a bus.

BENNY

But you can't count on either thing. Even on the worst day of your life, something good could still happen.

CARL

(stands; pulls out \$20)
So you don't think I should back out?

BENNY

I backed out once, big-time. I'll never do it again. Actually twice -- remind me to tell you about "Santa Land."

CARL

(puts money on table)
Will you make sure Melba gets this?

BENNY

Sure.

Carl exits the restaurant.

Benny tastes Carl's leftover oatmeal. It tastes good so he starts eating it.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH HOTEL - MORNING

A beautiful, sunny Hollywood morning. A cell phone alarm RINGS musically.

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS - CU ON CELL PHONE

which is lying on the bedside table pulsing brightly and continuing to play the ALARM. The time on the screen is "7:00 AM."

Carl's hand reaches into view to pick up the phone and TURN OFF the alarm. The hand is coming from somewhere other than the bed. The bed is still made and hasn't been slept in.

NORMAL ANGLE - THE ROOM

Carl, still wearing what he wore the night before, puts the phone down and sits on one of the luxurious armchairs. Anxious and exhausted, he puts his face in his hands.

Very restless, he stands and walks over to his suitcase sitting on the bureau. He opens the suitcase.

THE SUITCASE

features Carl's neatly-folded clothes arranged nicely. On top of the pile is a fresh, clean shirt and tucked into a corner is a quarter-full bottle of Vicodin prescribed to "MARION FRANKLIN" "FOR PAIN AS NEEDED."

CARL

picks up the bottle of pills and looks at it a moment, considering what to do.

NORMAL ANGLE

Carl puts the pills back and picks up the shirt.

Looking in the mirror, he holds the shirt against his chest, deciding how he looks.

He smiles a little, feeling better.

He takes off the shirt he's wearing and puts on the clean one.

EXT. MOVIE STUDIO - DAY - ESTABLISHING

We hear Tad OVER.

TAD (V.O.)
I thought you were supposed to get
"Artesian chocolates." This stuff is
nasty.

INT. ADELE'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Tad pokes at a tray of vegetables. Adele is reading the Standard Waiver, a ten-page document. Tad also has a copy.

ADELE
Am I supposed to sign both copies of
this?

TAD
(holds up his copy)
You don't sign my copy -- I do.

ADELE
Why are they having you sign anything?

TAD
In case I end up on the show.

ADELE
But it's not even about you.

TAD
These shows love all that "jilted
fiancé" drama.

ADELE
I'm not "jilting" you. Carl and I will
probably just have a nice chat and
that's it.

TAD
What if he gets weird?

ADELE
Carl was the un-weirdest boyfriend I
ever had.

TAD
I bet that never stopped you two from
doing the nasty.

ADELE
It wasn't like that.

TAD
I ran into Carl last night in the
elevator. What a gloomy gus.

ADELE
How did he look? What was he like?

TAD
Like waiter who's a bartender who's a
servant who's a loser.

ADELE
Tad, just stop. Please just stop.

INT. MAKEUP ROOM - DAY

Makeup artist GIANNA is making Carl look handsome as Bridget approaches armed with a clipboard and a portable sound recorder.

BRIDGET

Carl, I just have three quick questions. We need your answers for the taping.

(points recorder at him)

Just speak clearly into the device.

CARL

Okay.

BRIDGET

What did you think of Adele when you first saw her?

CARL

(into recorder)

I couldn't stop looking at her.

BRIDGET

Perfect! Next question --

CARL

Because she had something on her nose. I wanted to warn her. It was P.E. class and I knew if she didn't wipe it off she'd never hear the end of it, get some awful nickname.

BRIDGET

Even more perfect. Next question: What do you always remember about Adele?

CARL

Her laugh. It was like sweet silver chimes on a summer evening.

BRIDGET

(impressed)

Ooh.

CARL

Got what you need?

BRIDGET

Last one: What do you want to say to Adele that you never said before?

CARL

Can we just leave it at two things?

BRIDGET
It doesn't have be anything heavy.

CARL
Adele, you were the best thing that
ever happened to me.

BRIDGET
Great. I need to get this to the
producer!

She is gone.

CARL
Shit. I shouldn't have said that last
thing.

GIANNA
Was she really the best thing that ever
happened to you?

CARL
Yes, she was.

GIANNA
(tearing up)
That is so sweet. I feel like I'm gonna
cry. You're ready for the camera -- you
look great.

CARL
(gets up)
Thanks.

GIANNA
I'm rooting for you.

Carl heads toward his dressing room.

INT. TV STUDIO "TOGETHER AGAIN" - DAY

The set of "TOGETHER AGAIN" is dramatically lit in pink,
red, lavender, and magenta with a heart motif. Two chairs
face the audience. A multi-camera shoot in front of a full
AUDIENCE.

Four overhead "APPLAUSE" signs BLINK on and off and the
Audience goes WILD.

Dawson runs out to greet the Audience.

DAWSON

Our next guest is a school teacher
named Adele Taylor. Adele is about to
reunite with her high school flame.
Let's see if that flame grows hotter!
Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Adele
Taylor!

As the Audience APPLAUDS, Adele walks out from backstage.

ADELE

Hi Dawson!

DAWSON

Adele, do you remember this voice?

A VOICE OVER of Carl is heard:

CARL (V.O.)

I couldn't stop looking at her.

The Audience GASPS. Adele is surprised to feel tears in her
own eyes.

CARL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Because she had something on her nose.

Adele bursts into tearful laughter. The Audience LAUGHS.

ADELE

Could you play that again?

A nice picture of Carl APPEARS on all the video screens. Ad
lib MURMURS of approval from the Audience: "He's cute,"
"Yum yum," etc.

DAWSON

That's the voice of Carl Franklin,
Adele!

ADELE

I know!

CARL (V.O.)

Her laugh. It was like sweet silver
chimes on a summer evening.

ADELE

He was always so romantic!

DAWSON

Adele Taylor, what do you want to say
to Carl Franklin that you never said
before?

ADELE
Carl, you were such a luv! We had so
much fun together! I will cherish it
always.

The Crowd CHEERS.

DAWSON
And now, Adele Taylor, here is Carlos
Franklin!

The APPLAUSE signs FLASH and the Audience CLAPS wildly as
Carl enters, looking quite handsome.

CARL
(brightly)
Hi Adele!

ADELE
Hi Carl!

Their banter is a little mechanical, scripted.

CARL
"You could have just called."

ADELE
"I know, but isn't this more fun?"

DAWSON
How does it feel to be... TOGETHER
AGAIN???

The Audience CHEERS.

ADELE
(to Dawson)
It's "Carl."

DAWSON
What?

ADELE
His name is Carl, not "Carlos." It just
feels really awkward. I think we should
get it right.

Dawson waves over TECHNICIAN #1 who wears a headset and
carries a clipboard.

DAWSON
Can we take that again?

TECHNICIAN #1
 Sure thing.
 (to everyone)
 Back to one, people.

Technician #1 runs off-camera. Two other Technicians guide Carl back off the set.

TECHNICIAN #1 (O.S.)
 Okay, in five... four... three...

Two seconds go by.

DAWSON
 And now, Adele Taylor, here is Carl
 Franklin!

The APPLAUSE signs FLASH and the Audience CHEERS as Carl enters again.

CARL
 Adele.

ADELE
 Hello, Carl.

CARL
 "I could have just called."

ADELE
 (to Dawson)
 Wait, that was wrong. Carl is supposed
 to say --

DAWSON
 Don't worry -- we're gonna fix it in
 the editing.
 (to Audience)
 Don't they make a gorgeous pair, Ladies
 and Gentlemen?

The APPLAUSE signs FLASH and the audience CHEERS.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
 What has kept the two of you apart all
 these years? It's been since high
 school, hasn't it?

ADELE
 I think so!

CARL
 We've come a long way since the
 Friendship Club, haven't we?

DAWSON
What's a "Friendship Club"?

ADELE
I could never figure that out myself --
and I was the president of it! Carl was
my vice president.

CARL
You look wonderful, Adele.

ADELE
(to Dawson)
So what happens now?

DAWSON
What happens now, America?

Signs FLASH reading "CAPITULATE AND CONSUMMATE."

AUDIENCE
Capitulate and Consummate! Capitulate
and Consummate!

DAWSON
They want you to kiss!

ADELE
In front of all of America?

DAWSON
(to Audience)
Do you want them to kiss, America?

AUDIENCE
(cheering)
Yes!

DAWSON
(to Carl and Adele)
America has spoken. Are you gonna say
"No" to America?

AUDIENCE
Kiss her! Kiss her!

DAWSON
Come on -- a kiss never hurt anybody.
(to audience)
Right?

AUDIENCE
Right!

Adele and Carl still look hesitant.

DAWSON
Adele, here is what Carl wants to say
to you that he never said before.

CARL
(to himself)
Oh shit.

CARL (V.O.)
(a recording)
Adele, you were the best thing that
ever happened to me.

The Audience is stunned into silence.

ADELE
(very emotional)
Carl, I...

Adele hurries over and kisses Carl romantically on the
lips.

The Audience CHEERS.

The kiss continues.

The Audience CHEERS louder.

Still kissing.

The Audience is DEAFENING.

GLADYS (70s-80s) stands up:

GLADYS
Don't kiss too long! You'll get a bad
reputation!

Everyone -- including Adele and Carl -- bursts into
LAUGHTER.

A JINGLE for Sandy's Candies PLAYS while a SANDY DANCER
wearing tights and a giant heart-shaped pink candy box
dances out from the left side of the set, past the cameras,
and exits to the right while the SANDY'S SINGERS SING:

SANDY'S SINGERS (V.O.)
(singing)
Sandy's Candies,
The tempting taste treat!

The show's theme music PLAYS.

TECHNICIAN #1
 Annnnnnd... we're out! All right,
 cameras reverse!

The Camera Operators turn their cameras toward the Audience
 to record their reactions.

DAWSON
 (to Audience)
 Ladies and Gentlemen, would you stay in
 your seats for another minute or so? We
 didn't get a few things on camera so we
 need 'em now. Just listen to Jake.

TECHNICIAN #1
 (to Audience)
 First thing, give us a great big gasp,
 like you just saw something astounding
 happen. Ready? One-two-three...

In unison the Audience GASPS dramatically.

TECHNICIAN #1 (CONT'D)
 (to Audience)
 That was perfect. Now let's get a nice
 big "Boo" like you're watching the
 worst villain you've ever seen. Ready?
 One-two-three: Boo!

AUDIENCE
 (in unison)
 Boo!

Adele runs toward her dressing room and shuts the door.

CARL
 (following Adele)
 Adele...

TECHNICIAN #1
 Bigger this time. Ready? One-two-
 three...

AUDIENCE
 Boo!!

TECHNICIAN #1
 Great. Ten-minute warning -- next up
 are Father William and Sister Abigail!

INT. TV STUDIO HALLWAY - DAY

Tad stops Bridget who is on her way to somewhere important.

TAD

When does Adele get her check?

BRIDGET

After the show is done taping we give it to them in their dressing room.

TAD

You can just give her check to me.

BRIDGET

(carefully)

We will conform to the terms of Miss Taylor's agreement. Anything else you need?

TAD

Yeah -- why didn't she get any of those arterial chocolates in her dressing room?

BRIDGET

Miss Taylor requested a veggie platter instead. If you want something else we have a snack machine in the break room.

Bridget hurries away as Dawson intercepts Tad. Accompanying Dawson is Lana.

DAWSON

You're not done yet. I need you for a testimonial.

TAD

What's a "testimonial"?

DAWSON

We already went over this. You talk to the camera. You give us the tears and all that shit. It's time to earn your money.

TAD

Do I have to memorize something?

DAWSON

Don't worry -- Lana will tell you what to say.

(to Lana)

Have Gianna meet us over there with her make-up kit.

TAD

I need to check on Adele.

DAWSON
Oh yeah, that was hell of a kiss,
wasn't it? I'd be worried if I were
you.

Worried now, Tad rushes toward Adele's dressing room.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
(to Lana)
Grab him in five minutes.

INT. ADELE'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

As Adele is taking her makeup off, there is a KNOCK on the door.

ADELE
Come in!

Carl opens the door.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Carl, you and I happened a long time
ago and we're different people now --

CARL
I'm trying to say good-bye.

ADELE
What do you mean?

CARL
It was nice seeing you.

He turns to leave.

ADELE
I think it was more than "nice" --
don't you?

Tad bursts in and swoops down on Adele, making a great show of kissing her on the lips.

TAD
That was fantastic!
(to Carl)
You came off real good. You seemed like
a little moonstruck kid. It made it
more real.

CARL
You're the guy from the elevator last
night.

TAD
You're the funeral guy.

CARL
Adele, best of luck to you.

He opens the door to leave.

TAD
Wait -- we can't let the party end
here!

CARL
I don't want a party.

ADELE
Tad, we don't need a party.

TAD
(to Carl)
Meet us in that bar in the hotel lobby.

CARL
I don't think so.

ADELE
Please come, Carl. I want to talk to
you some more.

CARL
All right.

Carl exits.

ADELE
Can't you see he's uncomfortable?

TAD
He should be. He kissed my fiancée on
television.

ADELE
I'm a little uncomfortable, too.

TAD
Why?

ADELE
That kiss felt real.

TAD
Real to him or to you?

ADELE

Well... to him, of course. And a little bit to me, too.

TAD

That's the magic of television! It made him think he had those feelings. And you played your part beautifully. People were gasping. I almost believed it.

ADELE

I wasn't acting.

TAD

Great -- you're a natural.

A KNOCK on the door, then Lana pokes her head in.

LANA

We're ready for you, Mr. Blake.

ADELE

Ready for what?

TAD

(to Adele)

I'll just be a minute.

He exits, accompanied by Lana.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH MAIN LOBBY - NIGHT

Tad and Adele enter and head toward the elevators.

Tad spots Dawson sweet-talking Janet at the front desk.

TAD

Meet me in the bar as soon as you get changed.

Adele nods and gets on an elevator.

Tad approaches Dawson.

DAWSON

(to Janet)

...It'll be a small party -- only about four or five of us. You think you might be able to drop by?

JANET

I'm going to be busy.

DAWSON

I didn't even tell you what night it's going to be.

JANET

I'm going to be busy for a long time.

Janet turns away and goes into the hotel office, leaving Dawson standing there.

TAD

Hey Dawson!

DAWSON

Good show today, Taddy. You here with your girl?

TAD

Also that guy Carl.
(points at the lobby bar)
We're gonna be in the bar.

DAWSON

Stay there and don't tell either one of them you saw me.

TAD

You gonna join us?

DAWSON

Yeah.

Tad heads toward the lobby bar.

Dawson glances toward the hotel office, but it looks Janet isn't coming back.

He strolls away.

INT. LOUIE'S LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Louie is driving and chatting. Carl is in the back seat.

LOUIE

So how did it go today?

CARL

(shrugs)
I kissed the girl.

LOUIE

That show gives hope to schlubs like me.

CARL
What kind of hope?

LOUIE
Maybe the one who got away might come back sometime, give me another shot. When I was in high school, there was this girl named Denise --

CARL
(gently cutting him off)
I'm afraid my one-that-got-away got away again.

Louie looks sad.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH BAR - NIGHT

Tad and Adele sit in comfortable chairs at a coffee table. Both have drinks.

TAD
Carl should give me the thousand dollars they gave him for that kiss.

ADELE
Why?

Carl arrives.

TAD
I basically loaned you to him. I allowed you two to kiss. This whole thing was my idea.

ADELE
Tad, you're being ridiculous.

CARL
Adele, I thought you were single. I am so sorry.

ADELE
No Carl, please don't feel that way --

CARL
(to Tad)
Is Mr. Foster a friend of yours?

TAD
He hits me up for favors. Sometimes he needs a few bucks.

Dawson bursts in.

DAWSON

Hey hey -- here's the afterparty! Don't miss your episode -- it'll be on tomorrow night.

TAD

I hope I look okay on-screen.

CARL

You're on the show? Why?

TAD

(proudly)

I'm the "jilted boyfriend"!

DAWSON

That's right -- he is. We got that kiss on tape.

ADELE

Fine. You got it on tape. We're not married. I can do anything I want. I could even fly back to New York with Carl!

CARL

(stands)

Actually, I cashed in my return ticket.

(shakes Dawson's hand)

Thanks for everything.

DAWSON

You were really believable.

ADELE

Carl, you're staying in L.A.?

CARL

It was wonderful to see you, Adele.

Carl exits.

DAWSON

I think we might be able to keep this thing going. Do you guys watch my show "COURT OF LOVE"?

ADELE

Never heard of it.

DAWSON

It's for couples having relationship problems. Easy stuff, not murder or violence.

TAD

You want us to be on "COURT OF LOVE"?
Hell yes!

ADELE

Hell no!

DAWSON

You'd get five thousand dollars each.

ADELE

I'm done with being on TV.

DAWSON

We can even bring in your friend Carl
as a "love witness."

TAD

Why do you need him?

DAWSON

Love triangles play much better than
"You never help around the house."

ADELE

This is all wrong. Excuse me.

She hurries away.

DAWSON

Are you sure you want to marry her?
She's pretty but kind of a sourpuss.

TAD

She'll make great television.

DAWSON

I like the way you think! It's perfect:
Carl comes off as totally lovestruck,
your girlfriend is a little bitchy --
which audiences like --

TAD

What about me?

DAWSON

You come off as sleazy.

TAD

Why do I have to come off as sleazy?

DAWSON

I've known you my whole life. You're
nothing but sleazy. You're on the top
of the sleaze list.

TAD

I think I could lose her, Dawse.

DAWSON

So what? Come over to my place -- I'm throwing a party with lots of Candy and Taffy. You'll get a sugar high.

TAD

I'm going to go check on Adele.

As Tad heads toward the lobby, a cocktail waitress (TERRI, 20s) stops by Tad.

TERRI

Can I get you another drink, sir?

DAWSON

I'm a TV star. Did you know that?

TERRI

I think my mom used to watch you when she was young.

DAWSON

Have you ever slept with a TV star?

TERRI

Once. Worst sex I ever had. Can I get you another drink, sir?

Dawson sulks. Terri exits.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR BANK - NIGHT

Adele finds Carl waiting for the elevator.

ADELE

Hey!

He turns to look at her, surprised.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Where are you going to live?

CARL

Live?

A DING as the elevator arrives.

ADELE

You cashed in your plane ticket so aren't you moving to L.A.?

The elevator doors OPEN.

CARL
I don't know. I'll figure it out.

Carl starts to get on the elevator.

ADELE
I could help you look for an apartment!

CARL
I'm fine.

He gets on the elevator and presses his floor button.

She gets on as the doors CLOSE.

Tad arrives seconds later and jams impatiently on the call button.

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

ADELE
Do you want to go to your room so we
can talk?

CARL
Your boyfriend will be missing you.

ADELE
(offers him check)
You can have the thousand bucks they
gave me for that kiss. I didn't do any
of this for money.

The elevator STOPS and the doors OPEN. Carl hands the check back to her.

CARL
Neither did I.

He walks out of the elevator.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Carl marches down the hall to his room. Adele follows, tearing up the check loudly as she walks.

He glances back at her.

CARL
Nice. Please excuse me.

He unlocks his hotel room door, opens it, and enters his room.

Adele follows him.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE ADELE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tad charges up to Adele's door and knocks loudly.

TAD
Adele? Are you in there?

No answer.

TAD (CONT'D)
Are you in there with Carl?

Still no answer.

TAD (CONT'D)
Fine. Stick with that loser and you'll
wind up nowhere!

Tad starts to march away down the hall, then stops.

He marches back to Adele's door, pulls out a key card, and tries to unlock it by sticking the card into the door handle one way, then another.

He can't figure it out.

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Carl enters the room, Adele right behind him. He picks up a wastebasket and holds it out.

She sprinkles the torn pieces of the check into it. He puts the basket down.

ADELE
Do you think you'll ever move back to
New York?

CARL
I'm done with New York. I don't know
why I was ever there. You can't see the
sun between the buildings.

ADELE
So you're staying in Los Angeles?

He doesn't answer.

INT. ADELE'S HOTEL ROOM / BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The door CLICKS as it is finally unlocked. Tad charges in like a cop.

TAD

Ah hah!

But the room is empty. The bathroom door is closed.

TAD (CONT'D)

(flings open bathroom door)

Ah hah!!!

The bathroom is empty.

TAD (CONT'D)

(disappointed)

Oh.

(a beat)

I don't need this shit.

He storms out of the room.

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ADELE

The first time we met, was there really something green on my nose?

CARL

Yes. It was ugly. You never would have heard the end of it.

ADELE

Yuck!

(a beat)

Do you wanna know what I thought when I first met you?

CARL

What?

ADELE

I thought "There is a very sweet, gentle guy."

CARL

I must have disappointed you because after only six months you handed me my walking papers.

ADELE

You didn't disappoint me. I disappointed me. I could have gone to the prom with the sweetest, gentlest guy in school but I cheated myself.

CARL

Instead you went with Clifford.

ADELE

Clifford had me home by eleven.

CARL

On prom night? That stinks.

ADELE

I'm pretty sure after dropping me off, Clifford went to a party where he met my brother. So they had a great night.

(a beat)

If you and I went together, where would we have gone to dinner?

CARL

Chez Panisse.

ADELE

Wow -- fanciest restaurant in town. I missed out on a hell of a meal. What about after the prom?

CARL

Richards Street Park. Behind the basketball court.

ADELE

(feigning shock)

Where it gets so dark? You scoundrel!

(flirtatiously)

I missed out again.

CARL

I bet you thought I wanted to run off and marry you.

ADELE

Something like that.

CARL

You called me and said, "Carl, I think it would be better --"

ADELE
(finishing his sentence)
"...if we started seeing other people."
I remember that speech. I was lying to
you.

CARL
I didn't even believe you could lie.

ADELE
I know, Carl. You thought I was
perfect, but I wasn't.

CARL
I should have fought for you.

ADELE
It's not too late.

CARL
When I met you, I was in a bad place.
Two days earlier, my mom and I ran away
from my dad. He used to beat her up --
usually over something I did. I didn't
want to talk to anybody, but then I saw
you and your nose.

ADELE
You never told me any of this.

CARL
I should have fought for her.

ADELE
Fought for her? Carl, back then you
were hardly bigger than me.

CARL
About a year ago I got a phone call
from a guy who said he knew my dad
through a halfway house in Georgia. My
number was in his wallet. They found
him dead in his room.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH BAR - NIGHT

Dawson is on the phone.

DAWSON
(into phone)
I'd just love it if you were there.
(disappointed)
Yeah yeah, I could probably get you on
the show.
(listens)
Okay. You know the address. I'll see
you there.

As he hangs up, Tad joins him.

TAD
I'm ready to go to your party. Is it
still on?

DAWSON
Jeez, you're up and down like a bride's
nightgown. One minute you want to marry
your sweetheart and the next you'll
play Hide-The-Salami with any girl who
comes along.

TAD
(confused)
"Hide-The-Salami"?

DAWSON
Let's go.

Dawson leads Tad out the front door of the hotel.

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

As before.

CARL
I've been in Survival Mode all my life.
Jobs that pay just enough to get by.
Crappy apartment. No friends to speak
of. People I work with that I barely
like. I've never even been in love.

ADELE
I'm not so sure about that. Hey -- do
you know any psychics? I love that kind
of thing.

CARL
There's this old guy who's got the
answer to everything. He hangs out in
the coffee shop downstairs.

ADELE

In the coffee shop, of course. Where
you find all the great minds --
Einstein, Socrates, Elvis... Let's go!

They head out the door.

INT. GARDEN OF CULINARY DELIGHTS - NIGHT

Benny is sitting in his usual booth, having a bowl of
oatmeal. Melba is working.

Carl and Adele walk in from the hotel entrance. Upon seeing
them, Benny lights up.

BENNY

Wow -- who's the angel?

Benny gets up to shake hands with Carl.

CARL

Benny, this is Adele. I told you about
her.

BENNY

Join me! The oatmeal here is great.
It's probably killing me but what are
you gonna do?

Carl and Adele sit down and pick up menus.

ADELE

Carl says you're a modern-day Socrates.

BENNY

Nah, I never read the book or saw the
movie. I just keep these ladies from
getting lonely. It's the least I can
do.

MELBA

Our Benny always does the least he can
do!

BENNY

What do you say we get out of here?
Adventures are waiting for us!

CARL

(to Adele)

How does that sound?

ADELE

Sure, I'm up for adventure.

Benny, Adele, and Carl walk out the front door.

EXT. ANGEL'S FLIGHT RAILWAY - NIGHT

CONDUCTOR #1 is ushering Adele, Carl, and Benny on board at the Hill Street Station.

CONDUCTOR #1
Hurry up, Benny! Last trip of the night.

They hand Conductor #1 their tickets and sit down on board.

The car starts moving upward. The view of the city is spectacular.

BENNY
How about this? Magical, right?

Adele and Carl nod approvingly.

BENNY (CONT'D)
You two are a pretty magical couple. So I called the city and had them light the buildings up special.

CONDUCTOR #1
Benny, I remember you used to bring your sweetie here all the time.

CARL
Benny, you had a sweetie? I thought you were part of the He-Man Woman Haters Club.

BENNY
I got tired of fighting 'em off. Had to throw in the towel sometime.

CONDUCTOR #1
His sweetie Constance was a real darling.

CARL
(to Benny)
Do tell.

BENNY
(re: Carl and Adele)
Look at these two kids! Big winners on a game show today!

CONDUCTOR #1
What did you guys win?

CARL
We made out okay.

ADELE
"Made out" is right!

Carl laughs uneasily as the train STOPS.

CONDUCTOR #1
Here we are!

Adele, Carl, and Benny get off the train at the top, the Olive Avenue Station.

They stroll to the edge of the platform to gaze at the view of Los Angeles as the Angel's Flight train departs.

ADELE
So Benny, what happened to you and Connie?

BENNY
I was a fool, okay? She would talk about getting married and I would say, "But look how much fun we're having right now!"

ADELE
How old were you?

BENNY
Too young. Young and stupid. I used to write her poetry. Notebooks full of it.

ADELE
I'd love to read them.

BENNY
I got rid of those a long time ago. She bought me a Kodak Instamatic camera with the Flashcubes. We took that thing everywhere. Stacks of pictures. I got a picture of the two us right here looking out at the city. That was a great night.

CARL
So what happened?

BENNY
She dumped me. But you get over those things.

ADELE
Maybe she just wasn't ready.

BENNY

I'm the one who wasn't ready.

CONDUCTOR #2 RINGS a bell as the other Angel's Flight car readies to leave the station.

CONDUCTOR #2

All aboard! Best ride of your life.

Carl, Adele, and Benny get on board and hand him their tickets.

CONDUCTOR #2 (CONT'D)

How are you, Benny?

BENNY

On a night like this, what could be bad?

A GROUNDSKEEPER with a poker and trashbag is picking up trash on the platform.

CARL

Benny, do you know everyone in this city?

BENNY

Only the best people.

The Groundskeeper spots Benny and waves at him.

GROUNDSKEEPER

Oh hi, Benny!

BENNY

(waving back)

Hey Stu, leave some trash for the squirrels!

The Groundskeeper laughs and continues his work.

CONDUCTOR #2

Ladies and gentlemen, the train is leaving the station.

The train car starts to DESCEND the hill.

EXT. DAWSON'S BACK TERRACE - NIGHT

Taffy is in the Jacuzzi, drink in hand, while Candy performs. Both are wearing bikinis.

CANDY
(somewhat believable)
"You can't vote me off the island
because I'm going to vote you off
first!"

TAFFY
Okay, but what's your motivation?

CANDY
Where do I get one of those?

Candy climbs back into the Jacuzzi as Dawson and Tad step out the back door of the house.

DAWSON
We made it!

Candy and Taffy cheer.

TAD
Wait -- where's all the sweets?

DAWSON
Right there in the cookie jar. May I
introduce Candy and Taffy?
(to Candy and Taffy)
Ladies, this is Tad. He's about to
become a big reality star.

CANDY
(to Tad)
"Hey Tad, you can't vote me off the
island -- I'm going to vote you off
first!"

TAD
(to Dawson)
Is she all right?

Dawson strips down to his boxer shorts and slides into the Jacuzzi between Candy and Taffy.

DAWSON
We're not working tonight, Candy. This
is fun time.

Tad has stripped down to white cotton briefs and is neatly folding his clothes and like a garment salesman.

TAFFY
Come on in, Tad!

DAWSON
Ladies, Tad is also in the middle of
dumping his girlfriend.

TAD
I am?

DAWSON
(under his breath)
Get in, dummy.

Tad climbs awkwardly into the Jacuzzi.

CANDY
(to Taffy)
Do you think I should do an accent,
like Russian?

TAFFY
You're so good at those!

EXT. VENICE CANALS - NIGHT

Benny, Adele, and Carl stroll along the canal, which looks
stunning.

BENNY
It's hard to see them at night, but in
daylight, these canals are stunningly
beautiful. You forget you're even in
Los Angeles. Connie and I used to go
strolling right here.

He stops and points southward. Carl and Adele stop as well.

BENNY (CONT'D)
We'd eat at that place on Washington
Boulevard -- Baja Cantina. Best Mexican
food on the Westside.

As they listen, Carl gently puts his arm around Adele.

She leans her head on his shoulder.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Time would just stop.

They all stroll on.

EXT. DAWSON'S BACK TERRACE - NIGHT

Dawson, Taffy, Candy, and Tad are in the Jacuzzi, chatting
and sipping drinks. Tad looks sad.

DAWSON

Girls, wait till you see this guy on my show. The camera loves him!

TAFFY

You don't look happy, Tad. What's the matter?

TAD

I can't stop thinking about it.

DAWSON

About what, Adele? Forget about her, dude! This is going to be the best night of your life.

Candy and Taffy nod flirtatiously in agreement.

TAD

It's not Adele. I'm going to miss out on her five thousand bucks!

TAFFY

If you don't stick around, you're going to miss out on me.

Taffy gives Tad a big, wet kiss.

DAWSON

Hot dog!

Dawson and Candy kiss, too. Things start heating up in that hot tub.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BEACH - NIGHT

Benny is leading Carl and Adele around near the Annenberg Beach House.

BENNY

I used to go to parties here at Marion Davies' cottage back in the old days.

CARL

I'm sorry, Benny, I don't believe you.

BENNY

You're right -- I never went to a party here. But I sure would have liked to.

CARL

I would have loved to meet Marion Davies.

ADELE
Didn't she die a million years ago?

BENNY
I was born a million years ago. Connie
loved this beach.

ADELE
(pulls out phone)
I want a picture!

Adele holds the phone so all three can squeeze into the picture with the Davies Guest House in the background.

She presses the button and the FLASH goes off. The three cheer.

She shows it to them. Carl likes it.

ADELE
It's great! Benny, do you want me to
send it to you?

BENNY
No thanks. I got too many pictures
already.
(checks watch)
There's a place I wanna take you.

EXT. DAWSON'S BACK TERRACE - NIGHT

Candy and Taffy have passed out on two lounge chairs. Their bikinis are still on.

DAWSON
Isn't this the life?

TAD
(rises drunkenly)
I gotta pee.

DAWSON
That happens to the best of us.

Towel around his waist, Tad staggers toward the house, accidentally nudging Candy awake as he passes.

CANDY
(sleepily)
"You cand vote me off the island cuz
I'muna vote you off first..."

She falls back to sleep.

From inside the house there is an explosion of angry BARKING by Lemmy.

TAD (O.S.)
Jesus Christ! Your mutt bit me on the ass!

DAWSON
Good dog.

EXT. THE MAGIC CASTLE - NIGHT

At the entrance, the DOORMAN scowls playfully at Benny while Adele and Carl wait.

DOORMAN
I don't know if we got a coat that can fit you, Benny.

BENNY
I'll wear it open. Come on -- we're celebrating!

The Doorman pulls a large sportcoat off a rack and offers it to Benny. It doesn't quite fit.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Fits perfectly!

DOORMAN
Have a good time, everyone.

He ushers them inside the club.

INT. MAGIC CASTLE CARD ROOM - NIGHT

Adele, Carl, and Benny watch a magician -- THE GREAT GABBO -- as they sip drinks. Gabbo has a deck of playing cards fanned out on the table, face up.

Gabbo picks up the deck, shuffles it, and spreads it out face down on the table.

GABBO
(to Adele)
Pick one.

Adele draws a card.

GABBO (CONT'D)
Look at it, then put it down.

Adele looks at her card -- three of diamonds -- then puts it face-down on the table.

GABBO (CONT'D)
(to Carl)
Same thing.

Carl draws a card, looks at it -- jack of spades -- and puts it face-down.

BENNY
Now me!

Benny draws a card, looks at it -- six of hearts -- and puts it face-down.

GABBO
(to Adele)
Of all the places that Benny took you to this evening, which was your favorite?

ADELE
I loved the view from the Angel's Flight station downtown.

Gabbo taps the card in front of Adele.

GABBO
Take a look.

Adele turns the card over.

On the other side instead of a three of diamonds there is a black-and-white photo of a lovely girl -- CONSTANCE (17) -- posing with YOUNG BENNY (17), arms around each other, on the Angel's Flight platform at night. Behind them the city glows.

ADELE
Benny -- is that you?

BENNY
Yeah, I was a little punk. But wasn't she beautiful?

Adele and Carl nod.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Carl, what was your favorite place?

CARL
Santa Monica. The beach house.

Gabbo taps the card in front of Carl then gestures for Carl to turn it over. He does.

On the other side of the card is a black-and-white photo of Young Benny and Constance -- very much in love -- posing in front of Marion Davies' guest house years ago. Inside the house behind them a beautiful blonde woman (MARION) glares out a window at the camera.

CARL

Mr. Gabbo, how did you do that?

GABBO

It's magic.

CARL

Who's that blonde lady in the window?

GABBO

That's Marion Davies.

BENNY

Marion always had a thing for me but I was a one-woman man. Nobody could hold a candle to my Connie.

(beat)

My favorite place was the canals in Venice.

Gabbo taps Benny's card and Benny turns it over.

It's Young Benny and Constance posing on one of the bridges over the Venice Canals, in black-and-white.

Gabbo turns over the entire fanned-out deck.

All of the card faces have been replaced by black-and-white photos of Young Benny and Constance in beautiful spots all over Southern California, including the places they visited earlier that evening -- even the Garden of Allah.

Adele and Carl are astonished.

CARL

That's incredible.

BENNY

Don't you believe in magic?

CARL

Not before tonight.

BENNY

Can you two get back to the hotel
without me? I have some catching up to
do with The Great Gabbo.

ADELE

I think we can find our way. Thanks for
a great evening!

CARL

See you, Benny!

Carl and Adele exit.

BENNY

Did I ever tell you about the time I
missed Santa Land because of a dirty
shirt?

GABBO

(with a sigh)
Many times.

BENNY

Just deal some Blackjack, will you?

Gabbo deals them both a round of Blackjack.

The card faces are BACK TO NORMAL -- no photos.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH HOTEL - NIGHT

A cab has stopped at the entrance and Carl and Adele are
getting out.

They close the door and the cab pulls away.

Carl starts to head inside the hotel but Adele is looking
up at

THE MOON

which is full and bright.

Carl follows her gaze and sees the moon, too.

They spend a moment looking at the moon.

A smiling face EMERGES on the white disk of the moon.

The face WINKS at them, then the moon RETURNS TO NORMAL.

Adele and Carl glance at each other quickly, each wondering
whether the other saw what they saw.

Instead of speaking, they exchange warm smiles and head inside the hotel.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH HOTEL FRONT DESK - NIGHT

Carl and Adele talk to Janet at the front desk.

CARL

What time is checkout tomorrow?

JANET

Checkout is 11 a.m. but your room is paid up through Tuesday, Mr. Franklin.

CARL

What are you talking about?

JANET

Mr. Foster arranged it. He left you an envelope.

She hands Carl a sealed manila envelope labeled "Freebase Media" with his name typed on it.

Carl examines the envelope, mystified.

ADELE

May I move to a different room?

JANET

Certainly. Is there a problem?

ADELE

Too many problems -- the boyfriend kind.

JANET

I could move you to the suite next door to Mr. Franklin.

They glance at Carl, who is reading a letter he took out of the envelope.

ADELE

(quietly)

Same floor is fine.

Janet nods.

ADELE (CONT'D)

(to Carl)

Whatcha got there?

CARL
Dawson wants us all to be on his "COURT
OF LOVE" show.

ADELE
He can count me out.

JANET
Ms. Taylor, your new room number is
one-five-four-two-three.
(gives Adele new keys)
You're paid up through Tuesday, as
well.

ADELE
How nice. Thank you.
(to Carl)
Let's go see my new room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Carl and Adele walk toward her new hotel room.

CARL
Are you really going to marry Tad?

ADELE
Why did you cash in your plane ticket?

CARL
I didn't think I would need it.

They stop outside her door.

CARL (CONT'D)
I wanted to see you one last time.

ADELE
Why does it have to be "one last time"?

CARL
Because you're getting married. Aren't
you?

ADELE
I don't know about that. Do you want to
come in?

CARL
This has been one of the most fantastic
nights of my life. It's maybe a little
too much for me. I don't know if I can
handle it all at once.

ADELE

Take a raincheck. Join me tomorrow night and watch our show! Watch our kiss.

CARL

Aren't you watching it with Tad?

ADELE

I kind of owe it to him. He did instigate the whole thing.

CARL

Count me out.

ADELE

I'll call you right after the show.
(kisses him sweetly)
You are the best thing that ever happened to me, too, Carl.

CARL

Good night.

She starts to close the door.

ADELE

Hey, what is "Santa Land," anyway?

CARL

It's where Benny left his childhood.

She nods and closes the door.

EXT. TAD'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A high-rise long past its glory days. From somewhere inside it, we hear the "TOGETHER AGAIN" theme PLAYING.

INTERCUT INT. TAD'S LIVING ROOM / "TOGETHER AGAIN" - CONTINUOUS

IN LIVING ROOM Tad is sitting on his couch in front of his TV in his one-bedroom apartment (full of manly touches like antlers over the fireplace and a leather saddle thrown awkwardly over the back of the couch). Adele is in the kitchen cutting up carrots. The TV is on and the "TOGETHER AGAIN" theme is ENDING.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(from TV)

"Together Again." Brought to you by Sandy's Candies.

ON TV the JINGLE for Sandy's Candies PLAYS while the Sandy
Dancer in the heart-shaped candy box dances across the
screen and Sandy's Singers SING:

SANDY'S SINGERS (V.O.)
(from TV; singing)
Sandy's Candies,
The tempting taste treat!

TAD
(calling out)
It's on!

IN LIVING ROOM Adele brings in a bowl of carrots which she
puts on the coffee table. She sits in a separate chair.

ON TV an ANNOUNCER'S voice is heard OVER slick SHOW
GRAPHICS and Audience APPLAUSE.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
(from TV)
Welcome to "TOGETHER AGAIN," the show
that reunites old loves, new loves, and
sometimes strange loves! Here's our
host, Dawson Foster!

ON TV the lights RISE on the two chairs facing the
audience. Dawson runs out from backstage to wild APPLAUSE
to address the CAMERA:

DAWSON (V.O.)
(from TV)
Our next guest is a school teacher
named Adele Taylor. Adele is about to
reunite with her high school flame.
Let's see if that flame grows hotter!
Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Adele
Taylor!

ON TV Adele walks out as the Audience APPLAUDS.

ADELE (V.O.)
(from TV)
Hi Dawson!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
(from TV)
Also joining us is Adele's fiancé,
international dealer in men's
luxurywear Tad Blake!

ON TV Tad appears on screen, sitting in an armchair, very
dramatically lit. He is slicking back his hair.

DAWSON (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Are you there, Tad?

TAD (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Yes I am, Mr. Foster.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Tad has no idea what's about to happen.
 He thinks he is attending a fashion
 show.

IN LIVING ROOM Adele turns to look at Tad, suspicious.

ADELE
 Fashion show? What fashion show?

TAD (V.O.)
 (from TV; woodenly)
 I am excited to see the new fall
 menswear lines.

ADELE
 What is all this?

TAD
 Don't worry about it.

ON TV:

DAWSON (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Adele, do you remember this voice?

CARL (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 I couldn't stop looking at her.

ON TV unlike during the taping, there is no audible
 Audience reaction. The effect is creepy.

DAWSON (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 That's the voice of Carl Franklin!

ON TV Tad looks angry.

TAD (V.O.)
 (from TV; badly acted)
 Who?

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Stalker Carl Franklin has been obsessed
 with Adele for many years.

IN LIVING ROOM:

ADELE
 Carl never "stalked" me!

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

IN ROOM Carl is watching "TOGETHER AGAIN" on the hotel TV.
 He is dismayed by what he is seeing.

ON TV:

DAWSON (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 And now, Adele Taylor, here is Carl
 Franklin!

ON TV Carl enters but there is no sound of applause, only
 awkward SILENCE.

CARL (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Adele.

DAWSON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 (from TV)
 It's been since high school, hasn't it?

ADELE (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 It just feels really awkward.

CARL (V.O.)
 (from TV; to Adele)
 You look wonderful, Adele.

ADELE (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Wait, that was wrong!

CARL (V.O.)
 (from TV)
 Oh shit.

CARL
 (to himself)
 What the hell?

INTERCUT INT. TAD'S LIVING ROOM / "TOGETHER AGAIN" - NIGHT

ON TV Adele kisses Carl on the lips.

ON TV Tad is watching a TV screen that shows Adele kissing Carl on the lips.

TAD (V.O.)
(from TV)
Oh god -- that's my fiancée!

ON TV the Audience is BOOING angrily.

ON TV the kiss continues. So does the angry BOOING.

IN LIVING ROOM:

ADELE
They were cheering us! Now they're
booing us? It's all a lie!

TAD
I was pretty good right there, wasn't
I? Like, believable?

ON TV Tad is watching the kiss and "crying" by dabbing dramatically at his eyes with a kleenex.

TAD (V.O.)
(from TV)
I never imagined she would cheat on me
this way. It's such a betrayal.

DAWSON (V.O.)
(from TV; arm around Tad)
Sorry, old boy.

IN LIVING ROOM:

ADELE
You and Dawson are both so full of
shit.

DAWSON (V.O.)
(from TV)
Are you still going to marry Adele?

TAD (V.O.)
(from TV)
I don't know if I can, not after this.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(from TV)

All guests on "TOGETHER AGAIN" enjoy artisanal chocolates and various tempting taste treats from Sandy's Candies. Sandy's -- the official candy of "TOGETHER AGAIN"! Ain't life sweet?

Adele TURNS OFF the TV.

ADELE

Tad, how much did they pay you?

TAD

For what?

ADELE

To say all that bullshit?

TAD

Only about three thousand. Dawson said the big payday would come if we do "COURT OF LOVE."

ADELE

On TV you said you didn't know if you could marry me. Well I don't know if I can marry you, either. I didn't realize that the "magic of television" meant a big steaming pile of horseshit!

She walks out the front door.

TAD

Adele, wait! Did my hair look okay?

Tad is about to follow her but his phone RINGS.

TAD (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Yeah? What did you think?

(listens)

How were the ratings?

(listens)

Can you tell me as soon as they come in? So what about "COURT OF LOVE"? Do you still want us for that?

(listens)

She went out for a second. But I'm sure she'll do it.

INT. CARL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

As the "TOGETHER AGAIN" closing credits ROLL and the show music PLAYS, Carl TURNS OFF the TV.

Thoroughly depressed now, he puts on his coat, goes over to his suitcase, takes out the bottle of Vicodin, and puts it in his pocket.

He takes a bottle of water out of the mini-fridge and puts it in another pocket.

He walks out of the room.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH ELEVATORS AND LOBBY - NIGHT

An elevator OPENS and Carl steps off.

Instead of heading toward the Garden of Culinary Delights, Carl heads toward the front entrance of the hotel, his aura very dark and gloomy.

He spies Benny heading into a men's restroom.

Carl brightens and speeds up to catch Benny.

CARL

Benny!

Benny does not react; he just keeps heading into the restroom.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room is a little dark, with dramatic lighting. It looks empty but one of the stall doors is closed. Carl rushes in.

CARL

Benny? You in here?

There is no answer.

CARL (CONT'D)

Benny? Where are you hiding?

The toilet in the closed stall FLUSHES.

The stall door opens and Benny steps out, smiling.

BENNY

Hey -- there he is! I watched your show!

CARL

What a mess! For a "reality" show, they sure made mincemeat of reality, didn't they?

BENNY

The only thing anybody's going to remember about that show is your big juicy kiss anyway. Adele looked like she was ready to have your baby.

CARL

That kiss felt as good as it looked.

BENNY

Good. She's a sweet girl and you deserve some happiness.

CARL

Maybe.

BENNY

But you don't look happy. Kiss like that, you should be on top of the world.

CARL

She's encumbered.

BENNY

Oh, I see. So everything's not perfect? You're still waiting for the right moment?

CARL

I don't want to be an asshole who just barges into somebody's life.

BENNY

Why not? I barged into your life and look how much better it is! I know about making things "encumbered." When I was a kid this place opened called "Santa Land." I was going there on a field trip and I knew it was going to be a fantastic day. I woke up that morning -- no clean shirt. All dirty. And I was a kid, so "dirty" meant smelly, food stains, mud. Embarrassing. Humiliating.

CARL

Did you wash one?

BENNY

I should have. But I was worried it wouldn't be dry and kids would make fun of me. See, perfect day, everything had to be perfect. So I just didn't go. I never made it to Santa Land.

CARL

Did you go the next year?

BENNY

Place burned down couple a months later. Remember, everything was made of wood and crepe paper back then -- flammable city. So I never saw Santa Land. I missed out.

(beat)

Do you think maybe I should have just killed myself?

CARL

(startled)

What are you talking about?

Benny points at Carl's pocket. Carl sheepishly takes out the bottle of Vicodin.

BENNY

Suicide is a supremely selfish act. What makes you so special?

CARL

Things haven't gone so well for me.

BENNY

You mean they haven't gone perfect? Things don't go well for anybody.

CARL

I was going to do it in a nice way.

BENNY

How does a person commit suicide in "a nice way"?

CARL

I wasn't going to just leave a big mess somewhere. I was on my way to do it in the men's room at the bus station. Some place where folks kill themselves regularly.

BENNY
(shakes his head)
Don't. Go to the restaurant. Have some
coffee. Melba'll fix you right up.
Remember -- five minutes to midnight
you could win the lottery.

The bathroom door OPENS and a JANITOR comes in pushing a
rubber garbage can on rollers.

He goes over to the urinals to take a leak.

Carl leans against the sink and turns back toward Benny.

CARL (CONT'D)
How did you know I was thinking of
committing suicide?

Benny is not there. Anywhere. Carl, startled, looks around.

The Janitor zips up his pants.

JANITOR
Just don't do it in here -- my job is
messy enough.

The Janitor pushes the garbage can out of the restroom.

CARL
Benny? You still here?

No answer. Carl opens all the toilet stalls one by one.

They are all empty.

Confused, Carl walks out of the restroom.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH LOBBY - NIGHT

The lobby is mostly empty. Carl exits the bathroom and
crosses the lobby.

He passes the Janitor mopping the floor near Janet at the
front desk. The Janitor watches him suspiciously.

Carl heads into the Garden of Culinary Delights.

The Janitor looks at Janet and makes a "crazy" gesture.

JANITOR
Keep an eye on that one.

Janet nods.

INT. GARDEN OF CULINARY DELIGHTS - NIGHT

Melba is straightening up the pie case. Adele is sitting at the counter with a cup of coffee.

Carl enters, still confused.

ADELE

Carl? I called your room but there was no answer. Wasn't it awful what they did to our show?

CARL

Tad was pretty broken up, wasn't he?

ADELE

Don't fall for Tad's "crying" stuff. Right now I'd like to break him up.

CARL

Benny liked our "big juicy kiss." Those were his words.

ADELE

You saw Benny?

CARL

I just ran into him. He talked me out of... we had a good talk.

Melba turns around and stares at Carl, a little suspicious.

MELBA

When did you run into Benny?

CARL

I saw him in the men's room a few minutes ago.

MELBA

I don't think so, honey.

CARL

Why not?

MELBA

Benny died early this morning.

CARL

That can't be true.

MELBA

'Fraid it is. Can I get you a cup of coffee?

CARL
(shaken)
Yeah, Benny said you'd... fix me right
up.

Melba stares at Carl a moment, then heads to the kitchen.

CARL (CONT'D)
(to Adele)
Do you believe in ghosts?

ADELE
No. But I'm starting to believe in
magic.

CARL
Let's forget what I said about Benny.

ADELE
Carl, listen -- I did not know that Tad
was going to "cry" or whatever that
was.

CARL
Hey, it was good TV.

ADELE
You and I were "good TV." Tad made a
fool of himself. Crying like a little
kid. You could puke.

MELBA
(puts down coffee)
Here you go -- on the house.

CARL
Thank you.

Carl's phone RINGS. He looks at it.

CARL (CONT'D)
It's Mr. Foster.

ADELE
Find out what he wants.

CARL
(into phone)
Hi, Mr. Foster.
(listens)
You want me to be a witness on "COURT
OF LOVE"? Hang on one second.
(covers phone; whispers)
I'll do it if you will.

ADELE
What? No! My TV career is over!

CARL
Let's go on that show and give America
what she really wants.
(into phone)
Yeah, I'm in.

He hangs up.

ADELE
Why do you want to do this?

CARL
Because a ghost just saved my life.

ADELE
(smiles)
You're crazy.

CARL
And getting crazier by the minute.

ADELE
Let's do it!

CARL
So you got me as a witness. You
probably need a lawyer. Do you know
anyone smart and sassy?

ADELE
(gets up to leave)
I just might. I'll call you tomorrow.

She exits.

Carl's phone BEEPS with a text message.

He reads it: "WHAT MAKES YOU SO SPECIAL".

CARL
(to his phone)
She does!

The text message changes to "WEAR A CLEAN SHIRT".

The message changes again to "MARION D SEZ HI".

Carl chuckles to himself.

EXT. HUMPHREY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Adele addresses her class in a formal "teacher voice" OVER:

ADELE (V.O.)
 Raise your hand if you're sick of
"ROMEO AND JULIET."

INT. ADELE'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Adele's classroom is full of English STUDENTS. Nearly every one of them is raising their hands, including LUCY and JERRY.

ADELE
 Sorry, no such luck. In this class we do love the right way. Read "ROMEO AND JULIET" over the weekend and answer this question: Was Romeo truly a romantic figure or just a big whining crybaby?

JERRY
 Like your boyfriend on TV last night!

Jerry pretends to cry like a crybaby. Another boy joins him, pretend-crying and holding Jerry.

Soon nearly every Student is hugging each other and pretend-crying.

ADELE
 Yes, exactly like that.

Everybody laughs. The school bell RINGS.

ADELE (CONT'D)
 See you Monday! Don't do drugs.

LUCY
 (as she exits)
 Bye, Miss Taylor!

As Adele gathers her things to leave for the day, several Students wave to Adele on their way out.

Liz enters through the door between their classrooms. She is obviously ready to go home for the day.

LIZ
 Did your students give you shit today?

ADELE

No more than usual. Hey, you wanna play a lawyer on TV?

LIZ

On "COURT OF LOVE"? Will I get to nail Tad's tiny balls to a wall?

Adele and Liz walk out of her classroom.

INT. HUMPHREY HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Adele locks her classroom door.

ADELE

Only one way to find out.

LIZ

I'm your girl!

Adele and Liz walk toward the exit to the parking lot. They are intercepted by Lana.

LANA

Hello, Miss Taylor. Mr. Foster is just out front. Can we speak with you?

ADELE

Hi, Lana.

LIZ

(puts on glasses, buttons coat)
Ms. Taylor's time is extremely valuable.

LANA

Do you represent her? We are hoping she will appear on --

LIZ

On "COURT OF LOVE." We know. We are currently weighing other offers.

ADELE

(to Liz; quietly)
We are?

LANA

It would only take a moment.

Lana opens the front door of the high school.

EXT. HUMPHREY HIGH SCHOOL MAIN ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Lana, Liz, and Adele emerge to find Dawson and Bridget standing on the front steps of the school just outside the front door. Gathered in front of them for a makeshift news conference is a small crowd of REPORTERS and NEWS CAMERA PEOPLE. Parked at the curb is a limousine decorated with the logos of "TOGETHER AGAIN," "COURT OF LOVE," and "STARVING & DESPERATE," along with logos for Freebase Media and Sandy's Candies.

DAWSON

...and Freebase Media will continue to be a major purveyor of truth and justice well into the twenty-first century and beyond!

BRIDGET

Adele Taylor is about to meet with Mr. Foster in his limousine, if we could make a path for them.

The Reporters spot Adele and surge toward her even as Lana and Bridget try to guide them toward the limo.

REPORTERS

Miss Taylor! Miss Taylor!

LIZ

One at a time! Back off, you mugs!

REPORTER #1

Miss Taylor, what do you say to the people calling you "Queen Evil" for breaking Tad Blake's heart on national television?

ADELE

"Queen Evil"? I like that.

LIZ

Ms. Taylor has a heart of gold and wishes Mr. Blake well.

REPORTER #2

Adele, Tad Blake has an offer from Sleazy Publishing to write a tell-all book about you. How do you respond?

LIZ

Ms. Taylor looks forward to reading that.

REPORTERS

Miss Taylor! Miss Taylor!

LIZ
All right, last question!

REPORTER #3
Miss Taylor, is it true that you are
being surveilled by the DHS,
investigated by the FBI, and audited by
the IRS?

Adele gives Liz a worried look.

LIZ
FYI, Ms. Taylor needs to get out of
here PDQ, so you can all FOD! Okay?

Adele, Liz, Lana, Bridget, and Dawson climb into the limo
and pull the door shut.

INT. DAWSON'S LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Some NOISE of clamoring Reporters outside.

BRIDGET
(to Dawson)
This is Miss Kerns, Miss Taylor's
representative.

DAWSON
(dismissively)
Yeah yeah.
(to Adele)
We got huge ratings for your show last
night. Huge. So we need you, Tad, and
Carl to be on "COURT OF LOVE."

LIZ
What is Ms. Taylor accused of?

LANA
Tad Blake claims that Carl Franklin has
alienated the affections of his
betrothed, Miss Taylor.

Liz stifles a laugh.

ADELE
I'll agree to be on your show but only
because Carl thinks it might be fun.

LIZ
And because money. My client wants
money. There's money, right?

DAWSON

Nothing happens in Hollywood if there's no money.

ADELE

My lawyer gets money, too, right?

DAWSON

(to Lana)

Make sure her person gets money.

Lana nods, then hands Liz and Adele each a printed waiver.

LANA

We shoot tomorrow morning. You just need to sign the waiver.

Liz and Adele immediately scrutinize the waiver.

ADELE

I can't sign this.

LIZ

My client can't sign this!

(to Adele)

Why not?

ADELE

(to Dawson)

Get me a new agreement stipulating that you will broadcast the show live.

LIZ

And uncut! You guys really butchered that other show.

DAWSON

If we broadcast it live, that means you can't take back anything you say.

ADELE

Fine with me.

LIZ

Fine with her. Us. Me. Her.

DAWSON

All right. Lana will get a new agreement out to you this evening.

LIZ

Stipulating that...?

LANA
Stipulating that Miss Taylor's
appearance on "COURT OF LOVE" will be
broadcast tomorrow night live and
uncut.

ADELE
Good.

LIZ
I don't know...

ADELE
No, you know. We're good.

LANA
Okay, they're good.

DAWSON
Very good. Wait here.

Lana opens the door and she and Dawson step outside.

EXT. HUMPHREY HIGH SCHOOL MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

Lana and Dawson emerge from the limousine to face the
Reporters.

LANA
Mr. Foster has a statement.
(to Dawson)
Sir?

DAWSON
We're good. Everything's good. The
show's going to be good. Everything's
fine. So see you tomorrow and it's all
good.

ANGLE ON LUCY AND JERRY

along with about five other of Adele's Students watching
the Reporters from some distance away.

JERRY
I was going to try to get his autograph
but for a TV star that guy seems like a
schlub.

LUCY
Poor Miss Taylor. But she's okay. She's
good.

EXT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - DAY - ESTABLISHING

From inside we hear Madame Kastalanis OVER:

MADAME KASTALANIS (V.O.)
Vhat, you again? All right, sveetie,
sit down.

INT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - DAY

Madame Kastalanis leads Adele in and they sit.

Mrs. Kvetch climbs onto Adele's lap and curls up, to Adele's surprise.

MADAME KASTALANIS
Mrs. Kvetch like you, sveetie, und she
don' like nobody!

Adele pets Mrs. Kvetch, who PURRS in response.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
I hear de shpirits, I see de shpirits,
und now dey vish to shpeak!

ADELE
What do the spirits "vish" to say?

MADAME KASTALANIS
Do you know a Denny?

ADELE
I knew a Benny.

MADAME KASTALANIS
Benny gotta message for you: "You und
Carl gotta go to Santa Land togedder,
go on all de rides!"

ADELE
I can do that.

MADAME KASTALANIS
You bedder! Von more ting -- my
boyfriend send me dis.

She pulls out the deck of Magic Castle cards that The Great Gabbo had and fans them out on the table.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
Ta dah!

ADELE
Your boyfriend is The Great Gabbo?

MADAME KASTALANIS
Actually his name eez Sheldon.

ADELE
"Sheldon"?

MADAME KASTALANIS
Dat's showbiz!

Adele turns over several of the cards. Instead of card faces, they have the photos of Benny and Constance taken all over Los Angeles.

ADELE
Benny's cards!

MADAME KASTALANIS
(picks up card)
Dis one special.

Madame places the card face-up in front of Adele.

ON THE CARD

is a black-and-white close-up picture of Benny smiling. As Adele watches, the image of Benny WINKS at her (in the same way that the full moon did in the earlier scene).

BACK TO SCENE

Adele gasps.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
Deez are for you now. Benny don' need dem no more.

Adele hands her a fifty-dollar bill.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
You need change, sveetie?

ADELE
No, but... is Carl the right one?

MADAME KASTALANIS
Dat boy sure vanna be. Sometime dat good enut. Leesten to vhat's in you heart!

Adele smiles.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
Now get outta here! Get to da shtudio! Mrs. Kvetch und me gonna vatch you on "COURT OF LOVE."

ADELE
Bye! Thank you!

Adele puts Mrs. Kvetch on the table and heads out.

MADAME KASTALANIS
(to Mrs. Kvetch)
Turn on da ting, vill you?

Mrs. Kvetch points a remote at the TV and presses the ON button. The TV TURNS ON.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
You tink dis time de girl gonna listen
to me?

Mrs. Kvetch MEOWS doubtfully.

MADAME KASTALANIS (CONT'D)
Me, needer.

Both Madame Kastalanis and Mrs. Kvetch SIGH.

INT. TV STUDIO "COURT OF LOVE" - NIGHT

The "COURT OF LOVE" set resembles a regular courtroom but with a live studio AUDIENCE (composed mainly of teens 16-18 years old including Lucy). At the back of the set hangs a set of red velvet curtains. Toward the back left is a jury box with eleven JURORS including Jerry (mostly 16-18 years old) and Gladys (from "TOGETHER AGAIN"). Up the rear center on an elevated platform is the bench. On the rear right is the witness box. Forward left is a table at which Adele and Liz sit and forward right are Tad and Lana at a table. In the center sits a podium with the "COURT OF LOVE" logo. Everything is decorated with pink hearts and magenta bunting.

The lights are LOW as a theme song PLAYS and an ANNOUNCER (who has a little podium off to one side) speaks OVER. As each person is named, a SPOTLIGHT points them out, then TURNS OFF and MOVES ON to the next one.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Tonight on "COURT OF LOVE," menswear mogul Tad Blake defends his claim on the love of his life, Adele Taylor! And he's up against...

Carl enters from the right and sits in the witness box.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...this man -- New York City
 "bartender" and party animal Carl
 "Crazy Carl" Franklin -- who will be a
 key witness tonight!

Searchlights PAINT across the set as four SEXY DANCERS wearing little white outfits with angel wings parade out from either side of the set and do a cute dance.

Two plaster cupid boys SWING DOWN from spots above the set on either side. They have decals of the Sandy's Candies logo on their stomachs. The cupids SWING toward each other, almost touching as they pass. They continue to swing side to side in time with the music.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And now the Arbiter of Amour,
 everybody's favorite cupid, Judge
 Dawson Foster!

The cameras TURN toward the Audience. Flying in (suspended by wires, of course) over the Audience is Dawson, waving and smiling. He wears a white suit, cupid wings on his back, and carries a white bow that shoots white arrows (of love) with little suction cups on the end of them.

AUDIENCE
 (chanting)
 Daw-son! Daw-son! Daw-son! Daw-son!

As he flies, Dawson shoots arrows at random people.

DAWSON
 Gotcha! Gotcha!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 Hear ye, hear ye! All those with
 matters of the heart shall step forward
 and be heard!

Dawson swings around and shoots an arrow at the Announcer, hitting him in the center of his forehead. It sticks.

DAWSON
 Gotcha!!

ANNOUNCER
 Ow!

Dawson continues to shoot arrows at people as he is carried to his place on the bench.

DAWSON
 Good evening, everybody, and welcome to
"COURT OF LOVE."
 (sits down)
 Last week on our other hit show
"TOGETHER AGAIN," America watched as
 this...

ON A VIDEO SCREEN the clip PLAYS from "TOGETHER AGAIN" of
 Carl and Adele endlessly kissing.

The Audience HOOTS and WHISTLES.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
 ...led to this!

ON A VIDEO SCREEN the "TOGETHER AGAIN" clip PLAYS of Tad
 dabbing at his eyes.

TAD (V.O.)
 (from video screen)
 It's such a betrayal.

AUDIENCE
 Awwwwww!

DAWSON
 All we know is somebody done somebody
 wrong so let's get into it! And
 remember -- by special request of one
 of our litigants, tonight's show is
 live and uncut!

The Audience APPLAUDS.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
 Let's hear a statement by Miss
 Cheater -- uh, sorry, Miss Taylor
 herself!

SPOTLIGHT on Adele as she approaches the podium.

ADELE
 His Honor, I've dated Tad for about two
 years. A few weeks ago he asked me to
 marry him but I never actually gave him
 a straight answer.

Adele sits back down.

DAWSON
 Now let's hear from Tad Blake!

SPOTLIGHT on Tad as he steps up to the podium.

TAD

Adele promised to marry me sometime maybe -- I have witnesses! Then she wanted to go on "TOGETHER AGAIN" -- it was all her idea -- just so she could hook up with some dude she knew in high school!

LIZ

Objection!

DAWSON

On what grounds?

LIZ

He's lying, Your Honor. And his only "witness" was so inebriated that he passed out!

TAD

Objection! Who's ingratiated?

LIZ

No -- drunk. Your so-called "witness" was drunk as a skunk.

TAD

Bullshit!

DAWSON

(bangs gavel)

Order! Order! Mr. Blake, there is no swearing in the Court of Love! If you can't say what you have to say using decent language, then to hell with you!

LIZ

Can I cross-examine Mr. Blake?

DAWSON

Give it a shot.

LIZ

(as if talking to an unruly teenager)

Tad, go to the witness stand.

Carl steps out of the witness stand. Tad gets lost on his way to it.

LIZ (CONT'D)

The witness stand! Right there!

Tad finds the witness stand and sits.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Mr. Broke, isn't it true that --

LANA
My client's name is "Mr. Blake," if it
please the court.

DAWSON
It does not please the court, but carry
on anyway.

LIZ
Tad, weren't you were bragging to Adele
and Carl that going on "TOGETHER AGAIN"
was your idea?

TAD
Yes... but no.

LIZ
He rests his case!

DAWSON
Do you rest your case, Mr. Blake?

TAD
Whenever I can.

Tad sits down next to Lana.

LIZ
I call to the stand Ms. Adele Taylor!
Adele sits in the witness stand, to much APPLAUSE.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Ms. Taylor, can you describe for us how
your life has changed since your
appearance on "TOGETHER AGAIN"?

ADELE
I can't sleep. I can't get to bed
before four o'clock in the morning.
It's affecting my performance as a
teacher. I wonder if I even make sense
to my students. I just want my life
back.

TAD
Objection!

DAWSON
On what grounds?

TAD
Obviously Adele is the only one around
here who's ameliorated!

DAWSON
Overruled.

TAD
Objection again!

LIZ
Overruled!

DAWSON
(to Liz)
That's my job.

LIZ
You're overruled, too.

TAD
But Adele, we're on TV! We're famous!
We're stars! That's what everybody
wants.

ADELE
Tad, you want all that crap. I don't.

LIZ
Ms. Taylor, what damages do you seek?

ADELE
Can I sue for a public flogging?

DAWSON
Who do you want to flog?

LIZ
You, for starters, Your Honor. You had
a lot to do with all this.

DAWSON
Denied! The court reserves the right to
not be wrong.

LIZ
Ms. Taylor, what are your feelings
toward the witness, Carl Franklin?

ADELE
Carl is one of the kindest people I've
ever known.

TAD

Objection! If Carl was so great, why
did you cancel your prom date with him?

All gasp except Adele, Liz, and Carl.

DAWSON

Sustained!

(to Adele)

Canceling a prom date is pretty bad,
Miss Taylor.

ADELE

Agreed, Your Honor.

(to Carl)

I'm sorry, Carl.

CARL

Your Honor, may I ask the accused a
question?

DAWSON

Sure.

CARL

Adele, why did you cancel on me?

ADELE

Carl, a great guy like you wasn't
supposed to happen in high school! You
were supposed to come later!

CARL

But I was just being myself.

ADELE

Exactly! You were wonderful. I wasn't
ready for that. You scared the hell out
of me.

TAD

Ah hah!

(to Dawson; re: Carl)

Bailiff, arrest that man!

DAWSON

I'm not a bailiff. There is no bailiff.

TAD

He's scaring the hell out of the
accused!

ADELE

That was a long time ago, Tad. I was
just a kid.

CARL
I really wanted to go to that prom. I
never made it to Chez Panisse.

ADELE
It's still around.

TAD
(stands)
I move to strike!

DAWSON
Move to strike what?

TAD
That guy "Panisse"! I never heard of
him!

ADELE
It's a restaurant, Tad.

Tad scowls, dubious.

CARL
Your Honor, I rise today in defense of
love itself!

Everyone GASPS.

DAWSON
Can you do that?

CARL
Someone -- one particular person in
this chamber tonight -- is very guilty,
Your Honor! And it's not Mr. Blake, and
it's not Miss Taylor!

DAWSON
It's not me, is it?

CARL
It's me, Your Honor. I am guilty of
love!

TAD
Him? What's so special about him?

DAWSON
The court knows all this, Mr. Franklin.
Tell us something new.

CARL

Mr. Blake seems like a good guy. He sure knows how to dress. He's spiffy, smooth, perfect hair.

TAD

He's saying that I should win the case!

DAWSON

No, he's not.

(to Carl)

The witness will continue witnessing.

CARL

Mr. Blake might care for Miss Taylor, but I love her, Your Honor!

DAWSON

All righty then. Do you rest?

CARL

Not lately.

DAWSON

What about you, Miss Taylor?

ADELE

It took me about fifteen years to realize it, but I love Mr. Franklin, too. The evidence is undeniable. When I saw Carl on your other show --

DAWSON

(helpfully)

"TOGETHER AGAIN" -- check your local listings.

TAD

You didn't just "see" Carl -- you kissed him!

ADELE

I did kiss him -- and I don't regret it. Everything that felt wrong or just "off" suddenly felt right. It felt good. It made sense. For me, being with Carl is like being... home.

(to Tad)

I'm sorry, Tad. You're not the guy for me.

TAD

But Adele, you can't be with Carl -- he wants to kill himself!

GASPS from the Jury and the Audience.

LIZ

Objection! Hearsay! Malfeasance!
Discombobulation! To summarize, he's
full of crap!

DAWSON

That's a serious allegation, Mr. Blake.
Do you have any evidence?

TAD

On the elevator in the hotel a few days
ago Mr. Franklin actually told me that
he wanted to kill himself!

ADELE

Carl, do you really want to kill
yourself?

CARL

I did at one point.

DAWSON

Mr. Franklin, we can stop these
proceedings if you would rather --

CARL

No thank you, Sir.

(to Adele)

My dad died alone, sad, and hopeless. I
felt like I was following in his
footsteps. I was in love once, and we
all know how that ended. Suicide
sounded like a good idea.

ADELE

Objection! It hasn't ended!

DAWSON

What hasn't ended?

ADELE

Mr. Franklin's "love" thing. It's still
happening!

CARL

It is?

ADELE

Yep. You and me, Carl. We're happening!

TAD

Mistrial! I declare a Mistrial!

DAWSON

Why?

TAD

Because I'm not winning! All that talk about "It's happening," "You're happening," "I'm home," "Everybody's home"... Nobody's home!

LIZ

Tad, sit down and shut up!

LUCY

(stands up)

I object, Your Honor!

DAWSON

Who are you?

LUCY

I'm one of Miss Taylor's students.

(to Adele)

Miss Taylor, you're the best teacher I have!

STUDENT #1

(stands)

You're my favorite teacher, too!

(to Dawson)

Really, Mr. Judge, we're all crazy about Miss Taylor! That's why we're here!

DAWSON

How many of you are Miss Taylor's students?

Nearly every hand in the Audience goes up.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

What about the jury?

Every Juror's hand goes up except Gladys'.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Why are you crazy about her?

JERRY

(stands)

She believes in romance! She teaches us about "ROMEO AND JULIET!" Why shouldn't we be crazy about her?

DAWSON
(points at Gladys)
You -- you didn't raise your hand.

GLADYS
I'm not her student but she's fine in
my book!

Audience and Jury APPLAUD.

TAD
Objection! This is a hostile jury!
In the Audience, Candy stands up energetically.

CANDY
(decently acted)
"Your Honor, you can't vote me off the
island, because I'm gonna vote you off
first!"

TAD
Candy, sit down and shut up!

DAWSON
Mr. Blake, I am very close to
dismissing your case.

TAD
Why?

DAWSON
Because it's within the scope of my
jurisprudence!

TAD
I don't even know what that means!

LANA
It means "Shut up!"

TAD
Do you have a closing statement, Miss
Taylor?

ADELE
I do, Your Honor.
(turns to Carl)
Mr. Franklin, would you marry me?

CARL
Absolutely! In a heartbeat!

Audience and Jury APPLAUD enthusiastically.

INT. LOUIE'S LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Sitting in the driver seat, Louie watches "COURT OF LOVE" on his phone.

LOUIE
Nice going, buddy! There's hope for us all.

INT. TV STUDIO "COURT OF LOVE" - NIGHT

TAD
(stands)
Your Honor, this is ridiculous!

DAWSON
But it's great TV!

TAD
But -- but --

GLADYS
(stands)
Tad, sit down and shut up!

Tad sits down and shuts up.

DAWSON
(bangs gavel)
Order! Order!

Everyone quiets down and pays attention.

DAWSON (CONT'D)
How do we know that you two actually love each other? The court requires further evidence.

ADELE
"Evidence," huh? Put this "evidence" in your pipe and smoke it!

Adele kisses Carl passionately.

DAWSON
Hot dog!

SERIES OF SHOTS - LIVING ROOMS ALL OVER THE WORLD - NIGHT

As they watch "COURT OF LOVE" all over the world, VIEWERS spontaneously turn to each other and kiss:

- A) Manhattan -- a LOVELY YUPPIE COUPLE smile at each other and kiss, eat salads, and drink kombucha.
- B) Small town farm -- an OLDER COUPLE -- the man in overalls -- kiss while each is holding a jar of lemonade.
- C) West Village (NYC) -- a HANDSOME GAY COUPLE kiss while relaxing in their tasteful living room.
- D) London -- a BEAUTIFUL ROYAL COUPLE kisses while sitting on matching thrones.
- E) Some American beach city -- a GORGEOUS SWIMSUIT COUPLE kisses while enjoying umbrella drinks on the beach and watching "COURT OF LOVE" on their cell phones.

INT. TV STUDIO "COURT OF LOVE" - NIGHT

Carl and Adele are still kissing.

The Jury, the Audience, and everyone except Tad explode into APPLAUSE.

Suddenly, spotlights start BURNING OUT at various points on the overhead electrical grid, accompanied by SPARKS.

Everyone flinches at the SPARKS except Carl and Adele, who continue to kiss.

Loosened by the noise and commotion, the two plaster cupid boys SWING DOWN from their spots on either side of the set.

The cupids CRASH INTO EACH OTHER directly above Dawson's head, raining plaster down on him.

The cupids continue to SWING uselessly from side to side.

The Sandy's Candies jingle PLAYS while the Sandy Dancer in the heart-shaped box dances out from the left, past the cameras, and to the right side while the SANDY'S SINGERS SING:

SANDY'S SINGERS (V.O.)
(singing)
Sandy's Candies,
The tempting taste treat!

As she reaches the right side of the SHOT the Sandy Dancer trips and falls face forward. She is motionless and unconscious and only her legs are visible.

Two TECHNICIANS run out from the left, each takes a leg of the Sandy Dancer, and they drag her back off to the left in front of the kissing couple.

TAD

What happened? Did I lose? Did I win?
Who won?

Technician #1 runs on and pushes Tad off.

TECHNICIAN #1

Annnnnnd... we're out!

Carl and Adele continue kissing as the show stops shooting around them. Throughout the following, the CAMERA is gradually UNDERCRANKED so the motion is SPED UP.

Production Assistants herd the Audience and the Jurors off the set.

The hot lights TURN OFF and drab worklights TURN ON.

The cameras TURN OFF and are pushed off the set.

Pieces of scenery are moved back into storage.

JANITORS charge on and sweep the set clean in record time.

A GRIP rolls the ghost light into place right behind the kissing couple and TURNS IT ON. The Grip exits.

Someone TURNS OFF the overhead work lights. The Camera frame rate returns to normal, getting rid of the "silent movie effect."

The soundstage is now dark and empty except for the ghost light and Carl and Adele, whose kiss comes to a sweet end.

BENNY (V.O.)

(ghostly)

Shmuck! Now take her home! What are you
waiting for -- an engraved invitation?

CARL

Did you hear something?

Adele shakes her head. They kiss again.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. MADAME KASTALANIS' PARLOR - NIGHT - ON TV

Carl and Adele are still kissing.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Madame and Mrs. Kvetch watching TV.

MADAME KASTALANIS

I tink she finally find da right boy!

Mrs. Kvetch MEOWS in agreement.

FADE OUT.

THE END