

Verge Of Insanity

By

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FADE INTO A QUOTE IN BLACK LETTERING AGAINST A RED
BACKGROUND:

"Everything you can imagine is real."

-Pablo Picasso.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT - NIGHTTIME - THE LIGHTNING ROD, MIDTOWN MANHATTAN, NYC

As the scene opens, we descend from a moving wide shot over the crowd in a vibrant club, down toward the end of the dance floor, where we can just barely make out the people who are in that area. Suddenly, we cut to a closer shot of the people in that part of the club, but only from the distorted viewpoint of the person whose' heavy breathing can be heard as we watch the room spin. Periodically, we get brief shots of his brown eyes, but mostly we just see visions of the room as it spins increasingly and becomes more and more distorted. In the first-person viewpoint, we can see what appears to be a small group of figures standing there. As the room continues to spin, we can hear the sporadic but distorted voice of the person whose' viewpoint we're seeing from, apparently directed at one of the figures in particular and seemingly engaged in a conversation that started before the scene began.

VOICE

I think...

He stumbles again, as we continue to see from his viewpoint, which by now is completely distorted.

FIGURE

(In a distorted but possibly
female voice)

You think what?

The figure continues to look at him.

VOICE

I ...see things... (He uses his
arms clumsily to describe the point
he's trying to make) I...think...I
think he...

Just then, the figure speaks up.

(CONTINUED)

FIGURE
Are you feeling okay?

VOICE
(Stumbling yet again, and then
trying weakly to re-gain his
footing)
I...think...he...

Suddenly, he collapses, and as we get another shot of his eyes during his fall into unconsciousness, we see the shadow of the figure as she moves toward him. Just then, we zoom into his closing eyes and as the picture goes black, the opening titles come up.

CUT.

EXT - NIGHTTIME - THE LIGHTNING ROD, MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

After the opening titles, we cut back to see the person whose' viewpoint we saw most of the opening scene from, but this time, we can see him a lot clearer. He's white, but dirty, and his clothes are tattered. He's obviously of a young age, but also, apparently homeless. As the scene continues, we can see that he's being dragged down a black and empty corridor in the club, with the music still being heard in the background. Suddenly, we get a medium shot of the person who's dragging him; a very large bouncer, tossing him out the side door of the club, and onto the filthy concrete ground of a dark alley.

BOUNCER
(As the homeless guy hits the
ground with a thud and a
groan)
Don't let me catch you in here
again, man.

With that, the bouncer goes back into the club and leaves the homeless guy just lying on the ground. Just then, Vicki; a young, light-skinned black woman who's standing outside the club near the entrance to the alley notices what just happened.

VICKI
(Speaking to her friend Linus;
who's also white; as he walks
out of the club to meet her)
Did you see that?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
(Looking down the alley)
See what?

VICKI
(Pointing)
Down there...see him?

LINUS
(Looking closer)
I don't...wait...

VICKI
You see him?

LINUS
Yeah. I see him.

VICKI
Well, he doesn't look too good.

LINUS
No, he doesn't.

At that moment, Vicki starts walking over toward the homeless guy.

LINUS
(Still standing at the entrance to the alley as Vicki heads toward the homeless guy)
Wait...Vicki...where're you going?

VICKI
He looks like he needs help.

LINUS
So we'll call an ambulance! But, you don't just walk up and-

VICKI
(As she gets to the homeless guy, kneels down and examines him)
Linus!

LINUS
(Walking over to her)
What?!

VICKI
Call 911!

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
(Looking over the homeless
guy)
Why?!

VICKI
Because he's going through severe
withdrawal!

Following Vicki's request, Linus dials 911 on his cell
phone.

VICKI
(To the homeless guy, who
still appears to be half
conscious)
You'll be okay...Help'll be here
soon. Just hang in there.

CUT.

EXT - NIGHTTIME - THE LIGHTNING ROD, MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

As paramedics assist the homeless guy, Linus and Vicki stand
and talk to the police.

POLICE OFFICER #1
So neither of you knows this guy?

LINUS
No.

Just then, the homeless guy tries to sit up, with a gasp and
wide eyes, looking directly to the side of Vicki, near
Linus, watching as if something next to Vicki is getting his
attention. As Vicki, Linus and the police officers look over
at him in total surprise, the paramedics who are attending
to him try to hold onto him. Just then, he starts to relax,
then at the urging of the paramedics. Immediately, the
police look at Linus.

POLICE OFFICER #1
Did you do something to him?

LINUS
(Surprised)
Excuse me?

POLICE OFFICER #1
Did you do something to him?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

No. Of course not!

POLICE OFFICER #2

Don't give us, "Of Course not." He looked right at you.

LINUS

So?

POLICE OFFICER #2

So, did you see the look on his face?

LINUS

Yeah, but what did that have to do with me? I mean, okay, so what? So he looked in my direction...

VICKI

Officer, Linus and I were standing right here when the bouncer threw this guy out.

POLICE OFFICER #2

A bouncer threw him out?

VICKI

Yeah. The guy dropped him on the ground and he wasn't moving, so I wanted to see if I could help him. That's when I noticed that he was going through withdrawal.

POLICE OFFICER #1

How did you know he was going through withdrawal?

VICKI

I'm a pre-med student at Columbia.

POLICE OFFICER #1

Oh, okay.

VICKI

(Noticing a bit of skepticism from the police officer)
You don't believe me?

POLICE OFFICER #1

We just know that there's usually a lot of drug running in and out of this club.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

So what? That doesn't mean that I use any of it.

LINUS

I can vouch for that.

VICKI

(To the police)

Look...there might be a lot of drug use here, but that doesn't have anything to do with us. We just come here once in a while to let off some steam. Now, if this guy is on drugs, then that's something he'll need to deal with. But I'm telling you, the only way that I knew he was going through withdrawal is because I'm a pre-med student. Period.

The police look at Vicki and Linus for a moment, mildly amused at Vicki's spirit. Just then, one of the officers speaks up again.

POLICE OFFICER #1

Okay. Well, thanks for your help.

LINUS

(Obnoxiously)

Anytime.

POLICE OFFICER #2

We're gonna head into the club and see if we can get some answers there.

VICKI

Yeah. Like why did they just throw him out without looking first to make sure he was okay?!

POLICE OFFICER #1

No offense ma'am, but they're bouncers...not doctors. I think it's probably just a situation where this guy came in, maybe looking for a fix, and a bouncer threw him out before he could get it. Believe me, if that's the case, then maybe getting thrown out was a blessing in disguise.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
(Trying to divert Vicki's
attention)
Okay well, we should let them do
their jobs. Why don't we go back
inside?

VICKI
(Annoyed)
I don't want to go back in there.

LINUS
Um...okay. Well, we can figure out
something else to do, I'm sure.

POLICE OFFICER #2
Yeah, that's a good idea.

LINUS
Thanks, officers.

As the police officers head into the club, Linus and Vicki
watch as the homeless guy is wheeled on a stretcher into an
ambulance.

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - SORELLO'S PIZZA, MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

As Linus And Vicki sit in the pizzeria, Vicki worries about
the homeless guy, while Linus tries to get her to think
about something else.

VICKI
I'm really worried about that guy.

LINUS
What...the homeless guy? Why,
Vicki? You don't even know him.

VICKI
Linus, this guy could have died!

LINUS
(Realizing Vicki's tone)
Yes...I know. But I just meant that
it's not really your problem.

VICKI
Not my problem?!

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

No.

VICKI

Linus, I study medicine.

LINUS

So?

At that moment, Vicki becomes annoyed.

VICKI

So, it's my job to help someone
when they're in need.

LINUS

But you did. You looked him over,
you called 911...

VICKI

So what?

LINUS

So now he's at the hospital. Let
them take care of him.

VICKI

Linus, you don't get what I'm
saying...

LINUS

I don't?

VICKI

No. You think I'm taking this too
personally, right?

LINUS

Well, yeah.

VICKI

And what I'm saying is that I'm
doing the right thing. Doctors need
to show that passion...that concern
above and beyond the normal
routine. Patients need to know that
we really do care.

LINUS

But Vicki, you're not a doctor yet.

Just then, Vicki gets up from the table and gathers her
things.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
Wait...where are you going?

VICKI
To the hospital.

LINUS
(Getting up in a hurry)
What?

VICKI
(Heading out the door)
I'm going to the hospital.

Vicki walks out the door and Linus follows her.

LINUS
(Trying to catch up to Vicki
as she walks down the street)
The hospital?! Wait...Vicki...

Vicki tries to hail a cab.

LINUS
(Pulling her arm down and
getting in front of her)
Vicki, will you please hold on a
second?!

VICKI
What is it, Linus?!

LINUS
Will you please stand still for a
minute?!

VICKI
I'm right here!

LINUS
Okay...Well for starters, why are
you going to the hospital?

VICKI
You know why, Linus. Don't play
dumb with me, okay?

LINUS
You're really gonna go all the way
to the hospital to check up on this
strange guy that you don't even
know?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

That's right, I am. Because even though I'm not actually a doctor as you pointed out, I am a medical student. And if I don't have the same passion that a doctor should have, even in a situation like this...then why should I even bother going to school? To party? To get wasted every night for four, six, eight years straight? I don't need school for that.

At that moment, Vicki hails a cab and gets in as soon as it stops. As she does this, Linus watches her as she looks back at him. Finally, the cab takes off and Linus begins walking up the street.

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - MT. SINAI HOSPITAL, MANHATTAN

As the door opens to the room of the homeless guy that Vicki saved, Vicki peeks her head in from behind it. Immediately the homeless guy, Casey, who is a bit cleaner now and eating a hospital meal, looks over at her.

CASEY

Hi.

VICKI

Hi. How are you feeling?

CASEY

Much better, thank you. They want to keep me overnight anyway though, just to be safe.

VICKI

Well good. That's probably a wise idea.

Casey smiles.

VICKI

(Approaching a chair)
You mind if I sit down?

CASEY

Not at all. Please, make yourself comfortable

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
(Sitting down, surprised at
Casey's manners and
politeness)
Thank you.

CASEY
You're welcome. My name is Casey,
by the way. Casey Taylor.

VICKI
I'm Victoria Branford. But most
people just call me Vicki.

CASEY
Hmm...so what should I call you
then?

VICKI
Vicki's fine.

CASEY
Okay then. It's nice to meet you
Vicki.

VICKI
Likewise.

The two of them sit there for a moment, then Casey speaks up
again.

CASEY
Well, thanks for helping me outside
the club.

VICKI
I didn't do all that much.

CASEY
You did enough, trust me. I don't
know what would have happened if
you hadn't come over and examined
me.

VICKI
I just did what I thought anyone
else would have done.

CASEY
Well, I don't know if I'd say that
they would have.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

All right...well maybe it was something they should have done.

CASEY

In any case though, you were the one who did it, and I'm grateful.

For a moment, Vicki sits and thinks, then speaks up.

VICKI

You seem to be very intelligent.

CASEY

Thank you.

VICKI

I'm surprised.

CASEY

Why?

VICKI

Well, because you're...

She hesitates for a moment.

CASEY

A drug addict?

VICKI

(Slightly embarrassed)

Um...yeah.

CASEY

(Smiling for a moment)

Well, many addicts are very intelligent, despite the addictions. Don't be embarrassed to bring up the fact that I am an addict though. It's my own doing.

VICKI

(Surprised at Casey's comment)

How?

CASEY

The drugs, naturally. I was an art student a few years ago, going to college on a scholarship because my parents didn't have the money to pay for my education themselves...

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
(Listening attentively)
Okay...

CASEY
...But the pressure of school got
to me after a while.

VICKI
So you turned to drugs?

CASEY
No. I turned to alcohol.

VICKI
And that led to the drugs.

CASEY
Yeah.

VICKI
Okay.

CASEY
I started partying really hard.
Sometimes I wouldn't even come back
to my dorm until like, ten in the
morning.

VICKI
Wow.

CASEY
Yeah, it sucked. After a while I
dropped out of school and just
devoted all my time to finding the
next fix. Nothing was enough, you
know? It was like, the higher I
went, the more I wanted.

VICKI
But what about your parents?

CASEY
What about them?

VICKI
I mean, won't they help you?

CASEY
They know what I'm going through,
but I won't let them help me.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Why?

CASEY

Because then it'll be back to square one. I used to have a lot of trouble in high school, you know? Like, a lot of trouble paying attention and all. All I wanted to do was draw.

VICKI

Okay...

CASEY

And they were very supportive because they loved me. But I also know that they went through a lot emotionally to help me get through high school and into a good art school. It wasn't easy for them. I have Attention Deficit Disorder, so they would always try to help me stay focused and all. I just don't want them to get mixed up in my situation now. I don't want them to have to go through anything like that again. That was a very stressful time for all of us.

VICKI

So you've just blocked them out of your life?

CASEY

Temporarily. Yes.

VICKI

But don't you think that they're going through just as much pain, if not more, by not being able to help you because you won't let them?

CASEY

Well, they know that the reason I won't let them help me is because I want to finally do it myself, you know? To finally get back on my own two feet and stay there.

VICKI

Well, do you at least call them? You know, to make sure they know that you're okay?

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

Yeah. Actually, I clean up and get online once a week to send them a message.

VICKI

I guess that's good.

CASEY

It does help them.

VICKI

How do you know?

CASEY

They tell me. And they always remind me that they're right there for me if I need them.

VICKI

It sounds to me like you have good parents.

CASEY

I do. Which is why I haven't given up on myself. Because I know that my parents raised me to be better than this.

VICKI

It's good that you know that.

CASEY

I never forget it.

VICKI

Well don't. Because that's the kind of mentality that keeps you going in hard times like this.

CASEY

(Finishing his meal and sitting back, trying to get comfortable)

Don't I know it.

VICKI

(Changing the subject)

So, if you don't mind me asking, what were you doing at that club before? I mean, no offense, but you weren't exactly dressed to be there.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

You're right, I wasn't. To tell you the truth, I'm not really sure why I was there. I might have been there in a moment of weakness, you know? Trying to get another fix? I just can't remember.

VICKI

Well, whatever you were looking for, it doesn't seem like you got it.

CASEY

Yeah, I guess that bouncer threw me out before I could.

VICKI

That's when Linus and I saw you. When the bouncer threw you out. (She thinks for a moment) That reminds me, what was with that look you gave Linus before?

CASEY

Linus?

VICKI

Yeah; he's the friend I was with.

CASEY

Oh, okay. I gave him a look?

VICKI

Yes, you did.

CASEY

(Bewildered)

What kind of a look?

VICKI

Like...a terrified look.

CASEY

Terrified?!

VICKI

Yeah.

CASEY

Why would I be terrified of him? I don't even know him.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

I don't know. Actually, it didn't seem to be exactly toward him, but like, in his direction.

CASEY

(Thinking for a moment)

Hmm...

VICKI

Yeah. It was weird.

CASEY

Well...between that and my not being able to remember why I was even at the club in the first place, the only suggestion I can offer is that perhaps I wasn't straight.

VICKI

Straight?

CASEY

Yeah. Straight. You know, like...right in my mind.

VICKI

Oh. Okay.

CASEY

(Seeing that Vicki is a little confused)

You remember that I told you about what my parents went through with me during my high school years?

VICKI

Yeah.

CASEY

Well, that was all part of it. Visions.

VICKI

You get visions?

CASEY

Yeah. I have since I was a kid. My parents always considered them part of the learning disability. Whenever I get into an intense situation or into moments of deep

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CASEY (cont'd)
concentration, I tend to get
visions of things that are going on
right in front of me, but I also
tend to see them in representation.

VICKI
Representation?

CASEY
Like metaphors. It's like
hallucinating, you know? LSD, but
without the drugs.

VICKI
Really?

CASEY
Yeah. The only problem though, is
that I'm not always myself when it
happens. I almost seem to go into a
trance. Like, my perception
just...changes.

VICKI
Oh. Well, do you remember what
happens when you're in the trance?
Like, any thoughts that you get or
details of anything that comes to
you?

CASEY
Not usually. Sometimes I do, but
the times when that happens are few
and far between. Only like, during
the most extreme situations.

VICKI
That's kind of interesting,
actually.

CASEY
Yeah, but it can be frustrating
also.

VICKI
I imagine it would be.

CASEY
You have no idea. The emotional
effects are probably the worst
part.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
What kind of effects?

CASEY
Anxiety attacks. Minor depression.
Lack of self-confidence. Things
like that.

VICKI
Well, have you ever thought about
counseling?

CASEY
I used to get it.

VICKI
Oh. Recently?

CASEY
No. When I first started college.

VICKI
What happened, if you don't mind me
asking?

CASEY
I became too busy.

VICKI
With school work?

CASEY
Yeah. Because it takes so much for
me to do it.

VICKI
But, it seems like you love art.

CASEY
I do. But the ADD doesn't make it
very easy for me to focus. It's
like, the talent and the drive are
there, but I have to battle to keep
concentrating. After a while, that
became what I was focusing on all
the time.

VICKI
Then the frustration started
catching up to you and you fell
into...

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

Substance abuse. A lame attempt to escape the frustration. After the end of last semester, I was too far gone into the drugs and drinking. My grades had dropped pretty dramatically so I just made it out without completely failing. But school was no longer a priority for me.

VICKI

So, how long have you been going through withdrawal?

CASEY

On and off since August. I slowly began to realize my situation, so now I'm just trying to make it better. I've been getting moral support from my parents and from this local place called "The Mission Of The Five Thousand" that's always giving food and shelter to the homeless, but I'm really trying to finally strengthen myself now. I really believe that if I don't...you know if I keep running to my parents for help, then I'll never be able to finally regain control of my emotions. That's why I'm doing it the way I'm doing it right now. I do want to continue going for counseling again, but only after I face my own weaknesses first.

Just then, a nurse walks into the room.

NURSE

Okay, I think it's time for the patient to get some sleep.

VICKI

(Getting up and getting herself together)

That's a good idea.

CASEY

I agree. I'm exhausted. But thank you, Vicki, for coming to see me. And thank you again for helping me out at the club.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
You're welcome. It was nothing.

CASEY
It definitely wasn't nothing. I
really appreciate it.

VICKI
I know you do. (Pause)

CASEY
So will I see you again?

VICKI
I'm sure we'll run into each other.

CASEY
Good.

VICKI
Yeah, that is a good thing...

CASEY
Okay then. I'll see you around.

VICKI
Sounds good. Feel better.

CASEY
Thank you.

Vicki smiles and heads toward the door.

VICKI
Bye.

CASEY
Bye.

Vicki leaves the room.

CUT.

INT - DAYTIME - THE PSYCHOLOGY LIBRARY AT COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY

Vicki and her roommate Mariah, who is a psych major, are
sitting in the library, about to look up books and
information on learning disabilities.

(CONTINUED)

MARIAH

So now, how do you know this guy?

VICKI

I told you...

MARIAH

Yes, you met him at a club. But, he's homeless?

VICKI

Yeah. He was going through withdrawal and he got thrown out of the club by some bouncer.

MARIAH

But if he's homeless, then what was he doing in the club in the first place?

VICKI

I don't know. I didn't ask him.

MARIAH

Do you think that maybe he was there looking for a fix?

VICKI

Possibly. Again, I didn't ask him.

MARIAH

Okay.

VICKI

I didn't think it was necessary. The fact of the matter is that he's clean right now, and he seems to be trying to stay that way, so I want to help him.

MARIAH

Well Vicki, while I admire the fact that you want to help this guy, I also can't help but wonder-

VICKI

(Suddenly looking up from the book she's skimming through)
Wonder what?

MARIAH

I wonder if you're taking this desire to be helpful a little too far.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

(Insulted)

Well that's a hell of a thing for you to say. Especially considering the fact that you're a psych major. I mean, you should know where I'm coming from better than anyone else.

MARIAH

(Trying to relax Vicki)

Hold on, Vick; I wasn't trying to offend you. I was just suggesting that you be a little hesitant when it comes to the amount of help you give this guy. I mean, you don't even know him that well yet, you know?

VICKI

I understand what you're saying, and Linus gave me the same counsel the other night. So I do appreciate it. But I know what I'm doing. You don't have to worry about it so much.

Suddenly, Vicki looks around, feeling uneasy; almost as if someone or something is watching her. Looking across the library, she sees a quick movement from around the corner of one of the bookshelves.

VICKI

(Standing up slowly) Who is that?

MARIAH

What?

VICKI

(Looking toward the bookshelf, which is behind Mariah)

That. Over there, near the shelf. The last row. I think they're watching us...

MARIAH

(Quickly turning to look)

What? Where?!

VICKI

(Moving forward, trying to see who the person is, but having

(CONTINUED)

trouble because of the other
people passing through her
line of sight)
See 'em?

MARIAH
(Standing up and looking now)
Wait...yeah, I think I do...

Vicki starts heading toward the bookshelf.

MARIAH
Wait...Vicki! Where are you going?!

VICKI
(Still moving forward)
I want to see who that is...

As Vicki picks up speed, she quickly sees the movement of the character near the bookshelf as they take off down the row.

VICKI
Hey! Wait!

MARIAH
Vicki, be careful!

VICKI
(Paying more attention to
catching the watcher than to
what Mariah just said)
Stop!

As Vicki rounds the edge of the bookshelf, she sees the watcher disappear around the corner on the other end of the row.

VICKI
(Charging down the aisle)
Wait a minute!

Coming around the corner of the aisle, Vicki can no longer see her watcher, but rather, just the students walking back and forth, going about their business. Stopping for a moment, she looks around, trying to catch her breath. Just then, Mariah catches up.

MARIAH
Did you see who it was?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
(Still looking through the crowd)
No, I didn't.

MARIAH
(Pause)
You have any idea who it might have been?

VICKI
No. Not that I know of, at least.
They were watching us though. I know that for a fact.

MARIAH
Are you sure they weren't just looking at us? You know, like maybe a guy who thought you were cute or something?

VICKI
No. They were watching us. I could see that clear enough.

MARIAH
Oh. Well, we'll just keep our eyes open for a while, okay? I'm sure it's nothing though.

VICKI
Yeah. Well, we'll see.

MARIAH
Come on. Let's go back to the table.

As the two women turn to return to their table, Vicki still looks back into the crowd, still a little uneasy, but also trying to relax a little bit...for now.

CUT

INT - DAYTIME - POP'S BILLIARD, HELL'S KITCHEN, MANHATTAN

Linus and a few of his buddies are shooting pool at Pop's, a place where they're regulars. As they shoot, Linus engages in a conversation with his roommate Spinner, with frequent interjections by some of the other guys shooting with them.

(CONTINUED)

SPINNER
So what's the deal with you and Vicki?

LINUS
(Passively)
What deal?

SPINNER
What deal? You're bullshitting me...

PAT
You haven't tapped that ass yet?

LINUS
How do you know I haven't?

NICKY
Because you wouldn't be sweatin' her so much if you had.

SPINNER
Okay, so what's the deal?

LINUS
I'm working on it.

PAT
You've been working on it since the beginning of the semester.

LINUS
Yeah. But she's classy though. So I can't just rush her into it. Besides, I thought I was getting close.

NICKY
But?

LINUS
But I hit a snag.

SPINNER
(Laughing)
A snag?

LINUS
Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

NICKY

What kind of snag?

PAT

Some other guy?

LINUS

No. Well, not really, but kind of.

SPINNER

Well, there either is or there
isn't.

LINUS

It's some homeless guy. Our age.
Used to be in college last semester
or something...then he became a
drunk, got into drugs, all that
shit...

PAT

What?!

SPINNER

Homeless?!

LINUS

Yeah. Homeless. Some crack head
who's trying to shake the habit.

NICKY

And she wants this guy?

PAT

Damn, Linus. I thought you weren't
into skanks.

LINUS

I'm not. And it's not like that.

SPINNER

(Laughing)

Oh, it's not like that?

LINUS

No, it's not.

SPINNER

So how is it then?

LINUS

She feels bad for the guy.

(CONTINUED)

PAT

So?

LINUS

So?

PAT

Yeah. So? So what? So she feels bad for him. What does that have to do with you?

LINUS

She's a pre-med major, so she's trying to help him.

SPINNER

(Sarcastically)

Oh, okay.

LINUS

(Getting annoyed)

What is this shit? "Oh, okay..."

PAT

I mean, it sounds like you're believing that bullshit.

LINUS

Should I believe something else?

NICKY

Yeah Linus. Believe that if Vicki helps this fucking guy get back on his feet, she's most likely gonna end up with him.

LINUS

What?! Man, you're on Crack. She doesn't want this guy. I mean, he's nothing, you know? He's a fucking bum. I think I have more to fear from her passion for being a doctor. I don't think I can compete with that anymore.

SPINNER

So what then, you're just gonna give up, just like that?

Linus looks at Spinner.

(CONTINUED)

SPINNER

Linus, you've been working on this bitch for what, four, five months now? And what's the one thing that you've learned above everything else?

LINUS

You tell me. What have I learned?

SPINNER

You've learned that she is the kind of girl who has to fix everything. You've learned that she has to take care of everything, or else she isn't happy. You have learned that she has to be Doctor Vicki...the one who has to heal the problems of a world that would be just as screwed up without her as it is right now. And she thinks that she has to heal those problems, one loser at a time. So she has to put everything that she can into it. Her soul, her passion, everything she is...has to go into helping these people, because that's what guys like you allow her to do.

LINUS

Okay. So then, what are you thinking?

SPINNER

I'm thinking I'm gonna up the stakes. I'm gonna make this personal for you.

He slaps a bunch of hundreds down on the pool table.

LINUS

(Smiling)

Oh, come on now, man. You know how I get.

SPINNER

Exactly, and that's why I put it down. One thousand dollars says that you don't give it to her by the end of the semester. (He points to Linus) You want the money? Then prove me wrong. I'm not letting you give this one up. You should take the next step forward.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
The next step...

SPINNER
(Confidently)
Hell yeah. The next step.

LINUS
And what is the next step?

SPINNER
Make her see what she's doing. Open
her eyes to what people like this
guy really are.

Linus just looks at Spinner, contemplating his statement,
then speaks up again.

LINUS
Make her see it, huh?

SPINNER
Damn straight, you make her see it.
Take his sorry ass out of the
equation.

LINUS
But how?

SPINNER
(Snickers a little bit)
Take some time, you know? Figure
him out.

LINUS
Figure him out?

SPINNER
What, are you a fucking
parrot? Yes, Linus. Figure him
out. Figure his sorry ass out.

With that, Spinner picks up his money, and the four guys go
back to shooting pool again as Linus continues to think
about the points made in their conversation.

CUT.

INT - DAYTIME - THE MISSION OF THE FIVE THOUSAND, MIDTOWN
MANHATTAN

Remembering that Casey had mentioned how he tends to
frequent the mission, Vicki decides to pay a visit, hoping
to run into Casey and see how he's doing.

VICKI

(Walking up to an older woman,
Bernice, who's gathering some
clothes together in a
vestibule area at the mission)
Um, hi. I'm looking for someone...

BERNICE

Oh, are they a volunteer?

VICKI

No. Actually, it's a young man who
comes in here I guess for food
sometimes.

BERNICE

Oh, okay. Um...

She looks around for a moment, then turns back to Vicki.

BERNICE

Do you know his name?

VICKI

Yeah. Casey-

BERNICE

-Taylor?

VICKI

Yes.

BERNICE

Yeah, he's here.

VICKI

(As Bernice leads her toward
the kitchen area)
I guess he comes here pretty often.
You seem to know him fairly well.

BERNICE

Well, that's because he's more than
just a patron here.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Really?

BERNICE

Yeah. He likes to come here and help out also.

VICKI

What, you mean, like...help feed the other homeless people?

BERNICE

Well that, plus he helps sort the clothing like I was just doing, and he goes and spends a little time with the children of some of the parents that come in here....He's really a pleasure to have around.

VICKI

Wow. It sounds like it.

BERNICE

To tell you the truth, I don't know what we'd do without him sometimes. I mean, he's not here all the time of course. But when he is, we're really glad to have him.

VICKI

Hmm. I had no idea.

Bernice looks around for a moment, then spots Casey.

BERNICE

There he is...

Vicki looks and notices Casey, actually looking relatively clean.

BERNICE

Casey! Casey, you have a visitor!

Immediately, Casey looks up from the packages of fruit that he's unwrapping.

CASEY

Vicki!

He walks over to Vicki and Bernice.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Hi.

BERNICE

Hey, Casey.

CASEY

Hi, Bernice. I see you met Vicki.

BERNICE

Yes I did.

CASEY

Vicki's the one who helped me out the other night.

BERNICE

What, at the club?

CASEY

Yeah, that's right.

BERNICE

(Turning to Vicki)

Well it's an even greater pleasure to meet you then...

Bernice gives Vicki a hug.

VICKI

(Pleasantly surprised)

Thank you.

BERNICE

No dear, thank you. I told you that we wouldn't know what we'd do if we didn't have Casey around. And the other night, you helped keep him with us. So thank you.

VICKI

It was my pleasure.

Pause.

BERNICE

Okay, well I have some work to do. (She looks at Vicki) I'm glad to have met you.

VICKI

Thank you, the feeling's mutual.

(CONTINUED)

BERNICE

Bye.

VICKI

Bye.

CASEY

Bye Bernice.

BERNICE

Talk to you later Casey.

Bernice walks away and Casey turns to Vicki.

CASEY

So, hi.

VICKI

Hi.

CASEY

What's up? Just in the
neighborhood?

VICKI

(Laughs)

No. I actually came here
specifically to see you.

CASEY

Oh, you did, huh?

VICKI

Yes I did. I wanted to see how
you're felling.

CASEY

Well that's nice of you.

VICKI

Yes, I know.

(The two of them share a momentary laugh)

VICKI

So, have any interesting plans for
today?

CASEY

Well, I was actually thinking about
taking a walk down to the internet
café and E-mailing my parents.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Really?

CASEY

Yeah. I was thinking about our conversation last night, and I decided it might be nice to get in touch with them again, you know?

VICKI

Yeah...

CASEY

So, you want to come with me?

VICKI

Sure. I don't have any more classes today.

CASEY

Cool.

The two of them proceed to leave the mission and head out to the street, walking in the direction of the internet café. As they walk, Vicki strikes up a new conversation.

VICKI

Hey, I'd like to ask you something.

CASEY

Okay...

VICKI

Without you getting offended.

CASEY

(Laughing) Offended?

VICKI

Yeah.

CASEY

Okay.

VICKI

Earlier today, were you at Columbia?

CASEY

Columbia University?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Yeah.

CASEY

Yes I was.

VICKI

At the psych library?

CASEY

Yeah.

VICKI

(Surprised)

Oh. Okay...

CASEY

I actually didn't think you
recognized me.

VICKI

Well I didn't. Not really, anyway.
I just thought I would ask if it
was you who was there. I'm not
really sure why.

CASEY

Oh.

VICKI

Well...

CASEY

Well...

VICKI

Well, why were you there?

CASEY

Because I wanted to see you.

VICKI

(Surprised)

Oh. Um...Okay.

CASEY

I know, that was kind of an unusual
way of doing it...

VICKI

Yeah, kind of...

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

But I didn't want you to know I was there. Not yet, at least.

VICKI

What do you mean?

CASEY

I wanted to see you to thank you. For last night. I just wasn't sure though...

VICKI

Sure of what?

CASEY

I wasn't sure if you wanted to see me or not.

VICKI

Okay. But, why wouldn't I want to see you?

CASEY

I don't know. I guess I'm just used to people overlooking me in public.

VICKI

Overlooking you?

CASEY

Yeah. That's what happens out here. That's one thing I've learned. When people see that you don't have money, it's almost like you cease to exist.

Vicki looks at him as they stop walking for a moment.

CASEY

The worth of everything seems to be measured in currency these days. Even a person's character. Even their very existence is measured in terms of money.

They start walking again.

VICKI

I know. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing.

Casey looks at her.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
Getting a medical education, I mean.

CASEY
There's good money in that field.

VICKI
I know that. But the money isn't why I'm doing it.

CASEY
So why are you doing it then?

VICKI
To help people. People like you, for example.

CASEY
People like me?

VICKI
Yeah. People who can't afford health care, you know? Like, people who have no jobs or money, or people who have jobs but no health insurance.

CASEY
Well, that is me, but remember; I'm allowing myself to be here for a reason.

VICKI
I know. But many of these people out here don't have a choice.

CASEY
I know.

VICKI
Those are the ones I'm trying to help. Unfortunately, sickness and disease don't care about how much money people have...

CASEY
Or whether or not they have health care.

VICKI
Exactly.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

Well, it's very admirable that you want to be in the medical field for that reason.

VICKI

Thank you.

CASEY

You're welcome. So, what exactly do you want to do with it?

VICKI

Huh?

CASEY

Your education, I mean.

VICKI

Okay...

CASEY

How exactly do you want to use it to help people?

VICKI

Well, I'd like to probably open my own practice where I charge people on a sliding scale, you know? Like, they pay me what they can, when they can.

CASEY

That's cool.

VICKI

Yeah. I mean, if they have insurance, then of course, I'll charge them whatever the insurance company will pay. But if they don't have the insurance, or the money to pay with, then like I said a minute ago-

CASEY

They pay you what they can, when they can.

VICKI

That's right.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

Great.

VICKI

Plus I want to do some work at a hospital, you know? Maybe like, work there one or two nights a week or every Saturday or something.

CASEY

Wow. So you really have a good idea of what you want to do, don't you?

VICKI

Oh yeah. I've just had too many conversations with people at school who didn't know what they wanted to do, and they basically just got into this pattern of sailing through school like it's one big party.

She thinks for a second.

CASEY

What's wrong?

VICKI

(Snapping out of her thought)

No; I was just thinking about Linus.

CASEY

Linus...oh, your friend at the club the other night.

VICKI

Yeah. He's like that.
Like...sailing through school.

CASEY

He is?

VICKI

Yeah. His family has money, and they always gave him whatever he wanted. I know, it's cliché, but that's just the way it happened.

CASEY

I see...

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Don't get me wrong, he is a nice guy...

CASEY

But?

VICKI

But, he just doesn't always see things realistically.

CASEY

Realistically like how?

VICKI

Well, like how he doesn't seem to understand that he's not always gonna get what he wants .

CASEY

Okay. I've known quite a few people who were that way, actually.

VICKI

So have I. It's annoying.

CASEY

Yeah it is. But hey, that's how people are, you know?

VICKI

Yeah, I know.

Just then, they come to the internet café and pause outside the main entrance.

CASEY

Okay, here we are.

VICKI

Do you have money for this?

CASEY

Yeah, I do. It's amazing how you can save little bits here and there, even when you're poor, if you just stay away from the drugs and alcohol.

VICKI

I'm sure. (She looks up at the sign above the main entrance to the building) Well, you ready to go in?

(CONTINUED)

CASEY
Yeah. I am.

As the two of them head toward the door, Casey turns to Vicki.

CASEY
Hey, I just want to thank you for coming with me.

VICKI
It's my pleasure.

With that, the two of them share a smile, then proceed to walk into the building.

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - STARBUCKS COFFEE, BROADWAY, MIDTOWN
MANHATTAN

As Mariah, Vicki's roommate, sits in Starbucks, drinking her coffee and reading a book for school, Linus comes in and sits down at her table.

LINUS
(Sitting down)
So Mariah, anybody ever tell you that you're the perfect package? Beauty and intelligence. Can't go wrong with that.

MARIAH
Linus, what are you doing here?

LINUS
Oh, come on. You don't think I like coming to Starbucks? The coffee here kicks ass.

MARIAH
You haven't answered my question. What are you doing here?

LINUS
(Smiling)
You know me, don't you.

MARIAH
I know you well enough to know that you're always trying to get something from someone. Now what is it?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

I want to know about Vicki's new best friend. You know, the homeless guy.

MARIAH

He's not her best friend.

LINUS

Yeah, I know, I know. She's just trying to help him.

MARIAH

That's right. She is. Now come on, Linus. Every time Vicki does anything regarding another guy, you start asking me questions about it. And every time you ask, I tell you the same thing. It's none of your business. (She looks right at him) I know what it is you're up to. The only reason I haven't said anything to Vicki about that recently is because I know that she's trying to give you the benefit of the doubt, and when I tried to talk to her about it in the beginning, she got upset with me because she thinks that you can be a good person if you tried. I guess she wants to help you see that. But you and I both know that her helpful nature tends to make her emotionally sensitive, so you have no right trying to play her like you do to every other girl.

LINUS

(Laughing)

Trying to play her?

MARIAH

Yes.

LINUS

Do you actually think that's what I'm trying to do?

MARIAH

Well, aren't you?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

Mariah, would I be so cruel as to try and play a woman like her?

MARIAH

Don't ask me questions like that if you don't want an honest answer, Linus.

LINUS

Okay Mariah. You don't have to love me. That's fine. But right now, I'm asking you about this guy simply because I'm concerned about Vicki's welfare. I know that you and she were having a conversation about him in the library today.

MARIAH

(Getting very angry)

What?! (Looking around, then lowering her voice) Were you following her? Was that you in the library today?!

LINUS

(Speaking to her in a reassuring way, trying to calm her own.) No! (Looks around, then lowers his voice a little more) No. Brianna, Spinner's girl, was sitting at the table in back of you guys. She overheard your conversation. Now, what did you just say? Someone was following you in the library?

MARIAH

(Quieting down)

No. Never mind.

LINUS

Don't tell me to never mind, Mariah. Was someone following you guys in the library today?

MARIAH

No. But someone was watching us. From across the library, behind a bookshelf.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
Who was it?

MARIAH
I don't know Linus. Vicki went
after them, but they took off out
the door.

LINUS
Oh.

He thinks for a moment.

MARIAH
Was there anything else?

LINUS
Yes. I want to know about this guy.

MARIAH
I already told you-

LINUS
I know what you told me.

MARIAH
So then-

LINUS
I want to know about this guy
because if he was the one watching
you, then there could be a problem.
I mean, how do you know he isn't a
stalker? He's homeless-

MARIAH
So?

LINUS
And he's also a drug addict.

MARIAH
He was going through withdrawal,
remember?

LINUS
Yeah. But in order to withdraw from
something, he had to have been an
addict. Right?

MARIAH
I guess.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

You guess?

MARIAH

Yeah, I guess.

LINUS

Well, you're the psych major. You should know if that's how it works.

MARIAH

All right, you're right, okay? He probably was a drug addict.

LINUS

Okay. So then, how do we know he's not some psycho?

Mariah thinks for a moment.

LINUS

Hey, look. I know that I don't always do things with the best intentions. But do you think that perhaps this time, given the circumstances, I might actually just be trying to help Vicki?

MARIAH

But who says she needs it? She might be emotionally sensitive, but she's not a child.

LINUS

Someone was stalking you guys today Mariah. I know she isn't a child, but who says that she still doesn't need the help? I mean, do you even know where she is right now?

(Pause)

MARIAH

I think she went to see him earlier. Just to see how he's doing.

LINUS

And that was the last time you saw her?

(CONTINUED)

MARIAH

Yeah. (She pauses again.) Okay, fine. Vicki told me that he has this unusual type of learning disability. I found it online after she left the library.

LINUS

And?

MARIAH

It's 'called "Traver's Disorder." It's a chemical imbalance so it's actually correctable with treatment; but until then, it's usually worst under extreme circumstances.

LINUS

Extreme?

MARIAH

Yeah. It seems just like regular ADD until the person who has it falls under extreme emotional distress.

LINUS

What happens then?

MARIAH

Well, emotional difficulties start to set in, like anxiety for example, but then those give way to hallucinations and symbolic images.

LINUS

What do you mean, "Symbolic"

MARIAH

Like metaphors. They see everything that's in front of them, but they see it in a sort of, visual representation.

LINUS

Well that's different.

MARIAH

Very different. It's recently discovered, and very rare. The people who have it are born with it, but one thing that they have in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARIAH (cont'd)
common is that they're all very creative. It's almost like, their creativity physically interferes with their perception.

LINUS
So, what, they like, walk around in a fantasy world or something?

MARIAH
No. Not completely at least. But when they do start seeing things under this altered perception, it seems normal to them. It's like their mind adapts to the existence of the alteration as it happens. It's like LSD without the LSD. But when they do mess with drugs, that tends to amplify it.

LINUS
So then they're like, in a semi-trance or something?

MARIAH
Yeah, something like that.

LINUS
And this guy has that?

MARIAH
Well, that's at least what his symptoms suggest.

LINUS
So, have people with this disorder ever been known to become violent?

MARIAH
Not that I've ever heard.

LINUS
But the possibility still exists though?

MARIAH
I don't know, Linus.

LINUS
But they do tend to become irrational. I mean, if they go into trances, then that would render them as irrational, would it not?

(CONTINUED)

MARIAH

In a manner of speaking...

LINUS

So then someone with the disorder could, in fact, become violent. Because people who are irrational have been known to become violent.

MARIAH

Linus, I don't know, okay? Why don't you just leave it at that instead of reading things into it and coming to your own conclusions?

LINUS

Because I want to-

MARIAH

Yes, I know. Because you want to protect Vicki.

LINUS

That's right.

MARIAH

But like I asked you before, what if she doesn't need protection? What if this guy really is harmless? What if you end up causing more harm than good?

LINUS

Well, that's a risk I'm willing to take for Vicky.

MARIAH

(Becoming annoyed)

Linus, what is it going to take for you to understand that Vicki doesn't need for you to come running in like her knight in shining armor and rescue her from threats and dangers that might not even exist?

LINUS

Well, who says that there's anything for me to understand?

MARIAH

What are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

Vicki is a sweet girl who does have really good intentions, but is still headed for a really bad fall.

MARIAH

Now what the hell is that supposed to mean?

LINUS

I mean that if she winds up indiscriminately running to the aid of the wrong person, like this recent situation for example, she could end up getting herself into more trouble than she can handle.

MARIAH

So what, you're saying that you believe it's up to you to save her?

LINUS

I'm saying that maybe she just needs or someone to look after her.

MARIAH

(Surprised at Linus' smug comment)

Look after her?

LINUS

Well...

Mariah looks at him, waiting for him to justify his comment.

MARIAH

Well?

LINUS

Yes...look after her.

MARIAH

(Finally losing patience)

Linus, you know, I really think that you're gonna have to learn the hard way.

LINUS

Learn what?

MARIAH

That maybe Vicki isn't as helpless as you think. She knows how to handle herself.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
Whatever you say.

LINUS
(Looking at his watch)
Well, I hate to end our
conversation, but I have to get to
class.

MARIAH
(Sarcastically)
Have fun. What class are you headed
to again?

LINUS
Human sexuality.

MARIAH
(With continued sarcasm.)
That's what I thought.

LINUS
(Getting up and heading out
the door)
See you again, Mariah.

MARIAH
(Still sarcastic and not even
looking up from her book as
Linus leaves)
I can't wait.

CUT

EXT - DAYTIME - SHEEP'S MEADOW, CENTRAL PARK, MANHATTAN

The following day, Vicki is walking through Sheep's Meadow in Central Park, just enjoying the activity of the area at that time of a beautiful sunny afternoon. Looking around, she feels the peace of the warm sun as shines down through the trees. She notices as some people just lounge on the grass, some play frisbee or walk their dogs; some of them watch as their children play a few feet in front of them, and some of them just stroll down the concrete walkways. Scenes like this are what help remind Vicki why she loves New York. Just then, as she looks ahead at a group of people standing and watching a sidewalk artist, she notices someone very familiar.

VICKI
(Walking up toward the group
and tapping Casey on the

(CONTINUED)

shoulder as he watches the
artist.)
Hey there.

CASEY
(Turning around, pleasantly
surprised)
Hey, what are you doing here?

VICKI
Oh just, enjoying the day. What
about you?

CASEY
I'm enjoying the art show. I always
come around here and watch him.

VICKI
(Looking at the artist as he
works)
Oh, okay. Wow...he's good.

CASEY
Good? (Chuckles) The guy's a
genius.

Just then, the artist, who is Jamaican, overhears Casey's
comment.

ARTIST
Genius? (He laughs, then looks at
Vicki) Little lady, have you ever
seen this man's work?

VICKI
You know, I never have.

ARTIST
(Pointing to Casey, as the
crowd looks on)
Well, if you want to see
genius...all you got to do is look
right there.

VICKI
Yeah, he did tell me that he's an
artist. I just kind of assumed that
he was good because he seems to
really have a passion for it.

ARTIST
(As he stops his own work
temporarily and lays down a
new canvas)

(CONTINUED)

Assumed?! No, no, no...you got to see it for yourself.

CASEY
(Realizing what the artist is getting at)
What? No; wait...

VICKI
Oh, come on Casey.

ARTIST
(Offering Casey a clean brush)
Come on, man. God gave you a talent.

CASEY
(Embarrassed)
So?

ARTIST
So use it then. (Hands Casey the brush) Here you go.

CASEY
(Sighs playfully as he kneels down to face the canvas, which is flat on the ground)
Okay, fine. But only because I know that you won't leave me alone until I do it.

As Vicki smiles, the artist agrees with Casey.

ARTIST
That's right, man. So get to it.

As the artist, Vicki and the crowd look on, Casey proceeds to slowly draw this image that nearly jumps off the canvas before it's even done. Watching it, Vicki can hardly believe what she's seeing as the people in the crowd starts to mumble to each other about the incredible job that Casey is doing. As Vicki watches, she can see how the paint flows from Casey's brush onto the canvas like water pouring down a cliff, and then blending into the lagoon at the bottom of the falls. Piece by piece and section by section, she finds herself enveloped in each stroke of Casey's masterpiece, unaware of what the full image is going to be; although that doesn't seem to matter to her. Suddenly however, after what seems like a peaceful eternity, the crowd, which has now grown to about fifty people, gasps and the street artist smiles as Casey lifts the canvas and shows an image that causes Vicki to become almost lightheaded when she sees it.

(CONTINUED)

ARTIST

That's what I'm talking about, man.

Just then, the crowd begins to drone in wonder, and Vicki is stunned as she sees that this image is the most beautiful picture of herself that she has ever seen in her life.

VICKI

(Stunned)

Casey...

CASEY

(Still holding the picture)

You like it?

VICKI

Like it?!

ARTIST

(Smiling)

She likes it, man.

VICKI

(Still stunned)

I don't think there's a word for how I feel looking at that.

CASEY

That's quite a compliment. Thank you.

VICKI

No, thank you. That picture is amazing.

Just then, Casey steps forward and hands the picture to Vicki.

CASEY

It's yours.

VICKI

(Shocked)

What?!

CASEY

You heard me. It's yours.

VICKI

Casey, I can't...

(CONTINUED)

ARTIST

Come on little lady; this is how he sees you.

CASEY

That's right. If I want to see this image...

ARTIST

...All he has to do is look at you.

CASEY

Exactly.

VICKI

Casey...

CASEY

Vicki...I made this for you.

VICKI

(Pausing for a moment)

Is this really how you see me?

CASEY

It wouldn't have come out the way it did if I saw you any other way.

VICKI

(Taking the painting from Casey)

Thank you Casey.

CASEY

Anytime.

As the two of them start walking away, the crowd disperses, and the artist says goodbye to Casey and Vicki and goes back to his work, almost immediately starting to draw a new crowd. Meanwhile, Casey and Vicki begin a new conversation as they walk.

CASEY

I'm glad you like the painting.

VICKI

I love it. Really.

CASEY

Good. It does mean a lot to me that you feel that way.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
I believe it does.

CASEY
This is how I really express
something very strongly, you know?
Like the way I feel about someone
or something.

VICKY
I can see that actually. I really
can. When I look at it, it's almost
like you're telling me something.

CASEY
Well, I am.

VICKI
You are?

CASEY
Yes.

VICKI
What is it?

CASEY
Look a little more closely at the
painting.

VICKI
(Unrolling the painting)
Okay...

As she unrolls it, Vicki stands there for a moment, just
looking into what seem to be her own eyes, even though this
is a painting from an outsider's point of view.

VICKI
(After looking at the painting
for a moment, then turning to
Casey)
How do you do that?

CASEY
Do what?

VICKI
Don't play modest with me.

Casey Smiles.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

You know what I'm talking about.
It's almost like...

Suddenly, Linus comes walking up.

LINUS

Like what?

VICKI

(Surprised to see Linus at
first, then proceeding to
answer his question)
Like he can speak words through the
painting.

LINUS

(Pretending to be impressed)
Really?

VICKI

Yeah, really. (She shows him the
painting) See?

LINUS

(Looking at the painting,
although he really doesn't
care much, despite the quality
of the artwork)
Impressive.

VICKI

(Lowering the painting after a
few moments)
So what brings you out here?

LINUS

Not much. Just decided to take a
walk, you know? It's a nice day.

CASEY

(Trying to be civil)
Yeah, it is. It's beautiful out. I
love days like this.

LINUS

So do I.

VICKI

(Suspicious)
Of all the places in the city, you
decided to come for a walk here,
now?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
(Trying to smile innocently)
Yeah. Why not?

VICKI
(Becoming annoyed)
Whatever you say, Linus.

CASEY
(Extending his hand)
My name is Casey, by the way.

LINUS
(Shaking Casey's hand)
I'm Linus.

CASEY
Yeah, Vicki brought you up the
other night.

LINUS
(Looking over at Vicki
momentarily, who doesn't seem
too thrilled to see Linus)
Oh, she did?

CASEY
Yeah. At the hospital. We were
talking about when you guys helped
me at the club.

LINUS
(Recalling the events of that
evening)
Oh, yeah. Okay.

CASEY
Yeah, thanks again. I thanked
Vicki, but I didn't get a chance to
thank you.

LINUS
Well, it was my pleasure.

VICKI
(Surprised at Linus' response,
considering how he was
regarding Vicki's assistance
of Casey that night)
Your pleasure-

(CONTINUED)

LINUS
(Interrupting Vicki)
So Casey, how long have you been an
artist?

CASEY
(Clearly uncomfortable)
Um...all my life.

LINUS
Is that right?

CASEY
Yeah. I love art. Been doing it for
as far back as I can remember.

LINUS
Well that's good. Planning on doing
something with it?

CASEY
Yeah. I'd like to finish school,
then maybe get a job as an art
teacher, and do some commissioned
work on the side.

LINUS
That sounds like a good plan.

CASEY
Thanks. I like to hope it is.

LINUS
(Intentionally trying to push
Casey's buttons)
I guess right now wouldn't much of
a time to try to work on that
though, huh?

CASEY
(Slightly confused)
I don't follow you.

LINUS
Well I mean, with your obvious
financial situation and all.

VICKI
(Obviously annoyed with Linus'
comment)
Linus, I don't think that's any of
our business.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY.

(Trying to keep the peace)
No, it's okay. I don't mind. It has
to be talked about if it's to be
dealt with, right?

LINUS

(Slightly amused by Casey's
response)
That's right. Well said, Casey. It
does need to be talked about if you
want to fix it.

VICKI

(Still annoyed with Linus)
Well, just remember Casey, we don't
absolutely have to talk about it.
This isn't group therapy.

CASEY

Than you Vicki. I appreciate your
concern. (He turns back to Linus)
At the moment, my primary focus is
to try and improve my emotional
situation, actually.

LINUS

Well, an improvement of finances is
always good. What do you plan to
do?

CASEY

First, stabilize my emotions. I
seem to suffer from a unique form
of stress response.

LINUS

What, like from excessive stress?

CASEY

Yeah. Things like that. I was going
to school, but the pressure got to
be too much for me. I became so
involved that it more or less
overtook me, and started bringing
on certain emotional reactions.

LINUS

(In a subtly condescending
way)
Isn't there a medication you can
take for that? Something legal, I
mean.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

(Notices, along with Vicky,
Linus' smart-ass comment, but
still tries to play it off)
Yeah, of course. There are a
variety of meds, actually. But I've
been on and off of them for years.
I'm trying to strengthen my
endurance now so that I don't have
to keep jumping back on them so
frequently. That's part of the
reason why I made myself quit the
drinking and illegal drugs. I
absolutely do not need that shit in
my life

LINUS

Well, the good thing is that you're
doing something about it.

VICKI

(Trying to stay active in the
conversation, despite being
annoyed with Linus)
I agree.

CASEY

(Laughing a little bit)
Thanks. So do I.

LINUS

So Casey-

Suddenly, Vicki interrupts, having run out of patience with
waiting to see if Linus is going to say something really
stupid.

VICKI

So Linus, didn't you tell me that
you have a quiz coming up?

LINUS

(Surprised)
What?

VICKI

Your quiz. For Bio.

LINUS

What about it?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

You have to study for it, right?
And its' tomorrow, isn't it?

LINUS

Yeah. Why?

VICKI

Well, let's go study for it. I'll
help you.

LINUS

Oh...um...okay.

VICKI

(Turns to Casey)

Sorry to cut this short Casey, but
Linus really has to study for this
quiz and I promised him last week
that I would help him with it.

CASEY

(Slightly surprised)

Oh...okay then.

LINUS

(With a bit of arrogance, as
if he won something)

Sorry Casey...we'll have to chat
some other time then.

VICKI

(Whispering to Casey - as
Linus starts heading in the
other direction)

I'm sorry...I'll find you later...I
promise. Try to be around here at
about...seven.

Casey nods, understanding what she's doing.

VICKI

(Putting on the show for Linus
as the two of them start
walking toward the exit)

Talk to you again sometime Casey.

CASEY

(Going along)

Okay then. Talk to you again.

As they all part ways, Vicki looks regretfully back toward
Casey as he walks further into the park.

EXT - NIGHTTIME - THE OUTSIDE OF THE ENTRANCE TO THE PARK,
NEAR SHEEP'S MEADOW

As Casey stands, nicely cleaned up, near the entrance to the park, Vicki walks up, smiling at being able to see Casey again without Linus there, trying to throw a wrench into the gears.

VICKI

Hi.

CASEY

Hello.

VICKI

I'm really sorry about before Casey. Linus knows I come here sometimes and I guess that recently, with us talking like we have been and all, he's been kind of...protective, if you want to use that word.

CASEY

It's okay, Vicki. You don't have to be sorry.

VICKI

No Casey. I really do.

CASEY

Why?

VICKI

Because I let Linus do those things. I let him do them and I don't give him a hard time about it because I'll feel bad.

CASEY

Okay. Well, I know that you're a very considerate person-

VICKI

But?

CASEY

But, if you're not happy in a situation, then you have to change it.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

I know.

CASEY

Even if it means having to step a little bit out of character from time to time.

Vicki just looks at him for a moment.

CASEY

Understand?

VICKI

Yeah, I understand. It's just not always that easy, you know?

CASEY

Trust me, I know what it's like to have to do something that you really feel like it's not at all in your nature to do.

VICKI

It's just that, I feel like if I was to do that, I would be abandoning the way that I really am. You know, abandoning myself.

CASEY

But Vicki, stopping people from taking advantage of you is not a way of abandoning yourself. On the contrary, you're actually sticking up for yourself and showing people that while you do want to help them if they need it, you're not gonna let them walk all over you either. You understand what I'm saying?

VICKI

Yeah, I understand.

At that moment, the two of them start walking down the street.

CASEY

So if you feel like Linus is taking advantage of the leniency that you give to him, then speak up. Believe me, if this is the way that he always is, then you have given him more than enough chances to change

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CASEY (cont'd)
it already. Everyone has their
breaking point.

Vicki stops and looks at Casey for a moment.

VICKI
I've never met anyone like you
before, Casey.

CASEY
(Chuckles a little bit)
I hope that's a compliment.

VICKI
Oh, believe me, it's the highest.

CASEY
Oh, okay. Well, thank you then.

VICKI
You're welcome.

She just looks at him for another moment, then smiles.

CASEY
(Laughing)
What? What is it?

VICKI
You look good. A lot better than
you did the other night.

CASEY
The other night...at the club?

VICKI
Yeah.

CASEY
Well, I wasn't at my best at that
particular moment.

VICKI
I know. But you've improved since
then.

CASEY
Yeah, well...I believe I'm getting
stronger. I've cleaned up; took a
shower at The Mission before. I'm
even thinking about getting a job.
You know, and using The Mission as
my home address for the moment.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
That's a good idea.

CASEY
Thanks. I think so.

VICKI
(Pause)
I really am very happy for you
Casey.

CASEY
Thank you Vicki. I can't tell you
how much your support-

Suddenly, Vicki steps forward and kisses Casey, much to his surprise. After a few seconds, they release the kiss and just standing there, neither of them really knowing what to say.

CASEY
(Stunned)
Wow.

VICKI
(Smiles for a moment)
I'd like to be modest and tell you
that I'm not sure where that came
from...

CASEY
But?

VICKI
But I know exactly where it came
from.

With that, they kiss again, this time becoming a little bit more passionate, until Vicki, glancing up momentarily, spots a police officer walking on patrol just up the street. Suddenly, Vicki's cell phone begins to vibrate, ending her kiss with Casey, but after looking to see who it is, she doesn't really think this is the appropriate time to answer; so she drops it back in her pocket.

CASEY
Everything okay?

VICKI
Yeah; it's fine. (She takes Casey's
hand) Let's get out of here.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY
(Following Vicki's lead)
Okay, cool. Where're we going?

VICKI
I know this little coffee house,
not too far from here. They have
great poetry readings.

CASEY
(Going with Vicki)
That's great. I love poetry.

VICKI
(As they're heading off into
the distance)
Good. So do I.

CASEY
Oh...is there a cover charge?
Because if there is, I have to see
how much I have on me, then I have
to pay for myself and you, because
it wouldn't be right not to, with
us going there together and all;
and I really don't mind, but it 's
just that-

VICKI
(Laughing a little bit)
Casey...

CASEY
Yeah?

VICKI
Don't worry about it.

CASEY
(Pause)
Okay.

The two of them disappear down the street.

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - CLOCKWORKS COFFEEHOUSE, UPPER WEST SIDE,
MANHATTAN

As Casey and Vicki sit in the coffee house, listening to the
different poets as they take advantage of the open mic,
Casey can't help but feel his own emotions stirring as the

(CONTINUED)

passionate words of the poets mix with the smell of incense and cappuccino, and the sound of a gentle acoustic quartet narrates it all, bringing Casey into an extremely realistic daydream as he glances over and admires Vicki's beauty while she listens to the recitals from the center of the room. As Casey looks over at her, he gets a vision of her hair as it turns to a warm breeze and the room around them turns into a meadow underneath a bright, starry sky. Feeling the peaceful but inspiring joy of this scene, Casey can't help but wonder how it is that this woman who he just met can have such an emotionally profound effect on him, despite everything he's been going through for so long. Looking around, Casey begins to feel like nothing is wrong, anywhere...

VICKI

(Leaning over and whispering
in Casey's ear, interrupting
his daydream, but not enough
to completely snap him out of
it)

How are you enjoying it?

CASEY

(Still in the daydream,
feeling the wind pick up
whenever Vicki speaks to him)
More than I've enjoyed anything in
a long time.

VICKI

Good. I was hoping you would.

CASEY

You have no idea.

VICKI

(Picking up on Casey's last
comment)
Are you okay?

CASEY

Yeah...I'm just in a vision.

VICKI

(Becoming concerned)
Oh...and you can still talk to me?
Aren't you usually in like, a
trance or something when this
happens?

CASEY

Not always. It usually depends on
the situation. This one is
pleasant.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
You get pleasant visions?

CASEY
Sometimes. What I see here...is a
visual interpretation of this
particular environment.

VICKI
(Baffled)
Wow. That's really cool.

CASEY
It's probably the only good thing
about this disorder.

VICKI
You'd never know after the other
night-

CASEY
I know. But it still doesn't
compensate for the difficulties
that it brings.

VICKI
I understand what you're saying.

Vicki looks at her watch.

VICKI
It's getting late. Can you walk?

CASEY
(Coming out of the vision)
Yeah, I'm good. When the visions
are pleasant and peaceful, I can go
in and out of them. That's usually
how I'm able to make the art that I
do.

VICKI
Okay. Good. (Pause) You want to
walk me home?

CASEY
Sure. (The two of them get up and
push their chairs in.) This is
actually the first time in a while
that I've been to one of these.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Me too. I guess I've been so busy recently that I barely get around to doing things like this as much as I used to.

CASEY

I guess that tends to happen.

VICKI

That night at the club...the night I met you...that was the first time I'd been to a club in like, months.

CASEY

Well I'm glad you decided to go that night.

VICKI

(Taking Casey's hand and smiling at him as they prepare to leave)

So am I.

With that, the two of them head out the door together.

CUT.

EXT - NIGHTTIME - BROADWAY, JUST SOUTH OF 112TH STREET, MANHATTAN

Later on that evening, as Casey and Vicki walk back to Vicki's dorm building at the corner of Broadway and 114th Street, both of them notice, to themselves, another, older homeless man who frequents that area; sitting on a bench, reading an old newspaper. Immediately, Vicki thinks about Casey.

CASEY

(Noticing Vicki's concern)
Everything okay?

Vicki stops and turns to Casey.

VICKI

I have something to tell you.

CASEY

Um...okay.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

It's good. I mean, it's something that might help you.

CASEY

Okay. Well, what is it?

VICKI

I think I might know what you have. Your learning disability, I mean.

CASEY

You don't think it's ADD?

VICKI

Well, I do, but...

CASEY

But what?

VICKI

I think it's like, a rare form of it.

CASEY

(Very curious)
I'm listening...

VICKI

It's called, "Traver's Disorder."

CASEY

Traver's Disorder?

VICKY

Yeah. It's a unique type of ADD that, when it does occur, it affects very creative people.

CASEY

But there are a lot of creative people who express their creativity in different ways.

VICKI

But not like this.

CASEY

So you're saying that this disorder could be what's behind my issues?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Yes. It's consistent with your symptoms.

CASEY

Hmm. Well, that's pretty interesting. Where'd you find out about this?

VICKI

My roommate Mariah. She's a psych major, and she and I were looking up your symptoms the other day in the library. She apparently found this after I left to see you. She told me about it earlier this evening.

CASEY

Okay. So, is there anything that can be done about it?

VICKI

Well...that's the thing. There is a medication for it that actually trains the brain after a while to not respond the way it does to certain types of situations.

CASEY

Like in my case.

VICKI

Exactly.

CASEY

Hmm. I wonder why my therapist hasn't told me about it.

VICKI

You haven't been to counseling in a while, have you?

CASEY

No, I haven't.

VICKI

That's probably why you haven't heard about it. It was only publicized within the last few months.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

Okay. Well, I guess that's all the more reason for me to get back into counseling again.

VICKI

I guess so.

Pause, then Vicki starts walking again, and Casey follows suit.

CASEY

Well, thank you for the research. I really appreciate the fact that you're so concerned about my situation.

VICKI

It would be a crime if I wasn't, Casey.

CASEY

No one outside my family has ever cared about my situation like you do, Vicki.

VICKI

(Genuinely surprised)
Really?

CASEY

Yeah. Really.

VICKI

I don't know...It's just that...you really speak to me. Not always in your words, but also in your actions, and through your art. I always try to help people. It's in my nature. But you - you're...different. (Pause) I know it sounds strange but, you're like a part of me that I didn't even know was missing until we met. I feel like when I'm helping you, I'm not just helping another person in need. I'm caring for myself also.

CASEY

Wow. (He stops and pauses momentarily) I'm...

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
Uncomfortable?

CASEY
(Laughing lightly)
No. Speechless.

VICKI
Really?

CASEY
Yeah.

VICKI
Is that a good thing?

CASEY
Yeah. (He moves forward.) It's very
good.

As Casey moves forward, he leans in and kisses Vicki again. After Casey steps back, Vicki leans in and kisses him again, longer. After a few moments, they release the kiss and continue their conversation.

VICKI
You know what I want to do?

CASEY
What?

VICKI
I want to get some of your work
sold.

CASEY
(Surprised)
What?

VICKI
Your paintings. I want to help you
sell them.

CASEY
But...I don't actually have any
that are done right now.

VICKI
I know. But maybe like, if you do
some samples, I can show them
around. And at the same time, you
can work on something to sell. That
way, after we get someone who is
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VICKI (cont'd)
interested, you'll have something
to show them for actual
consideration.

CASEY
I think we can do that.

VICKI
Good. I think it'll definitely help
you get back on track.

CASEY
You're probably right.

VICKI
(Looking at the building
behind her)
Well, this is my stop.

CASEY
(Also looking at it)
Oh, okay. So this is where you
live.

VICKI
Yes it is.

CASEY
You like it?

VICKI
Yeah, it's okay. It's fairly
inexpensive. That's always good.

Pause.

CASEY
Well, it's been a real pleasure. As
always.

VICKI
I agree. Am I going to have this
pleasure again anytime soon?

CASEY
Of course. You want to meet me at
the Met tomorrow?

VICKI
Yeah. That would be great. I
haven't been there in a long time
anyway. Besides, it'll be my first
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VICKI (cont'd)
time going there with a real
artist. That should be interesting.

CASEY
Good. I'm glad you're looking
forward to it.

VICKI
I am.

CASEY
Well then, I'll try not to
disappoint you.

Vicki puts her arms around Casey.

VICKI
I don't think you could disappoint
me if you tried.

CASEY
(Responding to her action)
That's a nice thing to say.

VICKI
It's true.

For another moment, the two of them look at each other, then
kiss again. After the kiss they proceed to go their separate
ways.

VICKI
(Looking at Casey and smiling
as she heads toward her
building)
I'll see you tomorrow.

CASEY
(Smiling as he stands there,
watching her go)
See you tomorrow.

As Vicki heads into the building, Casey begins to walk away,
feeling happier than he's felt in a long time. As he walks
away however, we see that Linus is watching him from around
the corner of the building across the street. Finally, as
Casey heads down the street, Linus subtly follows him.

CUT.

EXT - NIGHTTIME - BROADWAY, JUST SOUTH OF 112TH STREET,
MANHATTAN

As Casey walks down the way that he and Vicki just walked to get to her dorm, he can see the old homeless man still sitting across the street. Suddenly however, he hears someone call his name from behind.

LINUS
(Trying to catch up to Casey)
Casey!

Casey turns to look and sees Linus as he gets to where Casey is.

CASEY
(Surprised)
Linus. What are you doing here?

LINUS
Hey, nothing. I just wanted to talk to you about something.

CASEY
Oh. Um, okay. Well, what's up?

LINUS
There's an issue that I just thought should be brought to your attention.

CASEY
An issue?

LINUS
Yeah. Regarding Vicki.

Casey stops.

CASEY
Linus, I'm telling you, do not get involved here...

LINUS
(Playing innocent)
What? No, no, no...wait. You've got me all wrong. I'm not getting involved in anything.

CASEY
Okay. So then what is this about?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

I just wanted to bring something to your attention.

CASEY

What?

LINUS

Okay, I know that you and Vicki have recently become really close, and I know that you really like her and all...

CASEY

Okay...

LINUS

But I just don't want you or her to get your hopes up for something that isn't going to go anywhere.

CASEY

(Getting annoyed)

Okay, Linus, you have about five seconds to tell me what the hell it is you're getting at.

LINUS

What I'm getting at Casey, is something that you don't seem to be facing.

CASEY

And what is that?

LINUS

Well, do you love Vicki?

CASEY

What does that have to do with anything?

LINUS

Everything, Casey. Do you know what she needs?

CASEY

What does she need, Linus?

LINUS

Stability, Casey. She needs stability.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

We all need stability in our lives.

LINUS

Yes, and single women like Vicki need stability in their men.

CASEY

Are you standing here, telling me, to my face, that you don't believe I'm stable enough for Vicki?

LINUS

Yeah, Casey. I am. I'm sorry, but it's true.

Suddenly, Linus barely completes his sentence when Casey knocks him back with a right hook.

CASEY

Who the fuck do you think you are?! You don't know me! You don't know how I am or what I've been through!

LINUS

(Touching his mouth, then looking at the blood on his hand)

Maybe not, but I know that you're not even sure of yourself when it comes to her.

CASEY

And what the hell gives you that idea?

LINUS

I can see it in the way that you act when she's around. For example...that was you that day in the library, wasn't it? That was you spying on her.

CASEY

I was not spying on her.

LINUS

But it was you, right?

CASEY

Yes, it was. Your point?

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

My point is that you didn't even have enough confidence in yourself to talk to her the day after she had done so much for you. You know what kind of person she is. You knew it then, too. You knew she would talk to you. It wasn't her you were afraid of. It was yourself. You were afraid of embarrassing yourself because you knew that you couldn't give her what she deserves. A good, strong, stable man.

CASEY

(Really angry at this point)
Fuck you, Linus!

LINUS

(As Casey turns to walk away in disgust)
You can dismiss me all you want Casey, but you know that what I'm saying is true.

CASEY

(Turning back in anger)
Linus, what gives you the right to judge me? I mean really, do you honestly think you're that much better than me?

LINUS

I'm not judging you, Casey. I'm just being honest. This is what I see. Do you disagree?

CASEY

Whether or not I do is not any of your concern

LINUS

On the contrary, I think it is.

CASEY

And how do you figure that?

LINUS

Because Vicki is my friend, Casey. Because I care about her just like you, and I only want the best for her.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

You only want the best for yourself, Linus. Do you really think I'm that stupid? I know that you want me out of the way so that you can have her.

LINUS

Come on now, Casey. If that was the case, don't you think I'd be with her already?

CASEY

Not at all, because Vicky is not interested in guys like you. Egotistical and self-assuring.

LINUS

Okay, so now who's being the judgmental one in this conversation?

CASEY

(Throwing Linus' own excuses back in his face)

I'm not judging you, Linus. I'm just being honest. This is what I see.

LINUS

(Mildly amused at Casey's wit)
Touché.

CASEY

Linus, you and I both know that Vicki does what she wants. And apparently, she's not interested in being with you because if she was, you guys would be together already.

LINUS

Perhaps that's true, but that doesn't mean that you're everything she needs, either. So far, all she does is support you and build you up. Where's your strength? Where's your character as a man, Casey?

CASEY

And where is your integrity, Linus? You can't just be happy that Vicki's happy, right? No, you have to come and start trying to get in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CASEY (cont'd)
the middle of it, as if she needed
your help.

LINUS
But my intentions-

CASEY
Your intentions are only for
yourself, Linus. I've known that
since I first saw you outside the
club the other night.

LINUS
(Losing patience)
Okay, you know Casey, you can do
what you want. But I'm telling you,
Vicki needs more than what you can
give her. I'm sorry. You just
ultimately don't fit together.

CASEY
(As Linus walks away.)
Get lost, Linus. You have no idea
what you're talking about.

CUT.

EXT - NIGHTTIME - THE MISSION OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

Later that night, as Bernice walks through the mission,
carrying some folded blankets, she looks over at Casey and
sees him cleaning a counter in the kitchen. After a moment
though, she starts to notice that something is really wrong.

BERNICE
(Noticing that Casey is
twitching and blinking a lot)
Casey...you all right?

CASEY
(Blinking and cleaning
furiously)
Yeah.

BERNICE
You don't look like it.

CASEY
I'm fine!

Bernice jumps.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

(Stops cleaning and tries to
regain himself, even though
he's still blinking)
I'm sorry, Bernice. I didn't mean
to yell at you.

BERNICE

It's okay, Casey. I'm just
concerned about you.

CASEY

Thank you. I'll be fine.

BERNICE

Are you sure, Casey? Because I
haven't seen you like this in a
while.

CASEY

(Visibly distressed)
I know. I haven't been like this in
a while.

BERNICE

(Growing more concerned)
Well, do you need something?

CASEY

(Falling into confusion)
No. Yeah.

BERNICE

(Heading toward the phone)
I'm calling for some help.

Just then, Casey takes off out the door.

BERNICE

(Running out to the doorway,
trying to get Casey's
attention as he runs up the
street)
Casey! Casey!! Shit!

Immediately, Bernice runs back inside, trying to figure out
what to do.

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - VICKI AND MARIAH'S DORM

Later that evening, as Vicki sleeps in her dorm, we can see that only her bed is occupied because Mariah is presumably out studying. Suddenly however, the door opens, letting some light into the darkened room. Just then, Mariah enters, seemingly distressed.

MARIAH
Vicki! Vicki! Wake up!

VIKI
(Waking up, but still half
asleep)
What?! Huh? What's...what's wrong?

MARIAH
You have a visitor.

VICKI
(Confused)
A visitor?

MARIAH
Yeah.

As Vicki wakes up and looks behind Mariah, she sees Bernice standing there, looking like something is on her mind.

VICKI
Bernice, hi.

BERNICE
Hi.

VICKI
(Rubbing her eyes)
Is...is everything okay?

BERNICE
I don't know.

VICKI
You...wait, howd' you know where I
live?

BERNICE
Casey told me in one of our earlier
conversations. Actually, he just
kinda mentioned it, but I figured
out exactly where it was based on
what he said. I'm sorry. He just
tells me everything. (She starts to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BERNICE (cont'd)
look worried.) He's like a son to
me.

VICKI
What's the matter?

BERNICE
It's Casey.

Immediately, Vicki becomes concerned.

VICKI
What about him?

BERNICE
He's gone.

VICKI
What are you talking about?

BERNICE
He seemed really upset before,
almost like he was going to have an
anxiety attack. But when I went to
get help, he ran out of the
Mission.

VICKI
(As she gets out of bed and
throws her jacket and shoes
on)
Did he say where he was going?

BERNICE
No, he didn't.

VICKI
Well, did he say why he was feeling
that way?

BERNICE
No.

VICKI
I wonder if something happened on
his way from here to the Mission.

MARIAH
It might have. You saw him before,
right Vicki?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Yeah. Just like, about two hours ago.

BERNICE

Well, is there someone who might know what happened?

VICKI

I don't know. I mean, he probably walked back alone - wait a minute...

BERNICE

What is it?

VICKI

(As she heads out the door with Bernice and Mariah in tow)

I think there is someone who might know what happened; or could at least give us a clue...

Just then, we cut to a shot of the three women running up to the homeless man sitting on the bench across the street.

VICKI

(Squatting down to be face-to-face with the man)

Sir, I don't mean to bother you, but did you see me with a young man walking across the street a couple of hours ago?

HOMELESS MAN

Yeah. I remember you. You two seem very happy.

VICKI

Thank you. Um...did you happen to see the young man walking back alone in the other direction a short while later?

HOMELESS MAN

Yeah. But he wasn't alone though.

VICKI

What?

(CONTINUED)

HOMELESS MAN
He wasn't alone.

VICKI
He wasn't?

HOMELESS MAN
No. He was at first, but then
another guy came up from behind and
started talking to him.

VICKI
Did...something happen between
them? Like, maybe a fight or
something?

HOMELESS MAN
They started arguing and your
boyfriend there, he clocked the
other guy.

VICKI
He hit him?! Casey hit him?!

HOMELESS GUY
Oh yeah. It was a good shot, too.

VICKI
Could you maybe, describe the guy
that he hit?

HOMELESS GUY
Couldn't really tell the exact
color of his hair because it was a
little hard to see in the dark. But
he was dressed pretty nice. Maybe
he was rich. I wonder what a rich
guy would be doing walking alone up
here at night. It's a nice
neighborhood, but still...

VICKI
(Realizing who the guy
probably was)
Oh, no...

MARIAH
(As Vicki looks at her)
You don't think...

VICKI
I wouldn't put it past him...

(CONTINUED)

BERNICE

What? Who is it?

VICKI

Mariah, say he did push Casey too far. Do you think that...

MARIAH

I don't know. But given Casey's disorder, and the fact that people with psychological disorders can sometimes react violently while at a high level of emotional duress if for no other reason, just to eliminate the source of the negative emotion, even if they don't mean to do it...

VICKI

I think maybe this time, Linus finally over-stepped his boundaries.

BERNICE

Who's Linus?

VICKI

I'll explain it on the way. (She turns to the homeless man and hands him a twenty dollar bill) Sir, thank you very much. You've been a big help to us.

HOMELESS MAN

(Pleasantly surprised)

Thank you.

BERNICE

(As Vicki turns and tries to hail a cab)

Wait...where are we going?

VICKI

To save Casey. I think I know where he is.

BERNICE

Okay. But why do we have to save him? I mean, from who? This Linus guy?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
No...from himself.

As a cab stops, the three women get in. After a moment, it takes off quickly, heading south down Broadway.

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - THE LIGHTNING ROD

As people dance and mingle around the club, we see Linus standing there with Pat, Spinner and a few other people. At first, Linus appears to be having a nice time, but then, feeling like he's being watched, he looks around for a moment. Not seeing anything, he starts to focus on his friends again. At that moment, we get shot of a dark figure looking in from the fire escape of a large, open window at the far side of the balcony. Just then, we cut to a shot of the three women in their cab as it speeds south down Broadway.

VICKI
(To the driver)
Please hurry.

DRIVER
I'm hurrying. I can only go so fast
in City traffic.

Just then, Bernice speaks up.

BERNICE
Are you girls sure that Linus is at
this club?

VICKI
Positive. He's there every Saturday
night.

BERNICE
And you actually think Casey might
do something to him?

MARIAH
I think he's preparing to right
now, if he hasn't already. If he's
in one of his "Visions," then he
might not even realize what he's
doing. But it sounds like Linus
really pushed him, so now I think
he's instinctively responding.

(CONTINUED)

BERNICE

But Casey is such a sweet, patient guy. Do you really think he'd want to actually hurt Linus?

MARIAH

Trust me Bernice, he probably does. Linus tends to have that effect on people...

Just then, we cut back to a shot of Linus in the club again.

SPINNER

Breaking Linus' concentration as he looks uneasily around the room) Hey man, what's the problem?

LINUS

(Still looking around the room)
I don't know. I just have this uneasy feeling.

SPINNER

It's cool, man. You just need to get laid, that's all.

LINUS

No, man, it's not that kind of feeling.

SPINNER

(Trying to dismiss Linus' concern)
Well, you need to lighten up. Here...

Spinner passes Linus a joint. Immediately, Linus smokes it, still looking around a little bit.

SPINNER

(Getting Linus' attention by grabbing him firmly but affectionately by the back of the neck)
Loosen up.

Still a little stressed out, Linus tries to loosen up, walking across the room with his friends. Just then, we slow zoom in a wide shot over the crowd to the dark figure standing in shadow from an elevated spot over the floor. Suddenly, we get a shot of the room from the figure's perspective. The music and the people in the room, as well

(CONTINUED)

as the room itself, are very colorful but very distorted. The viewpoint of the figure however, seems to be focused on what we can barely make out as Linus and his friends, arriving at a table on the other side of the dance floor. In the distortion however, with a slow pan to a close-up shot, we start to see some definition in the viewpoint. It seems that the figure is seeing and hearing Linus and his friends as a pack of jackals, barking and snarling as they laugh and drink at their table. Suddenly, we cut back to a shot of the three women, still in the cab, which is stuck in traffic, just up the street from the club.

VICKI

The club is just up the street.
(She turns to Mariah and Bernice)
We can get there faster at this point if we run.

BERNICE

I'm ready when you are.

VICKI

(To the driver)
Right here is fine.

She looks at the meter and hands him some money.

CAB DRIVER

Thank you.

VICKI

(As the three women exit the cab)
Thank you.

MARIAH

(Looking down the street)
There's a pretty long line.

VICKI

Well, then we'll have to figure out another way in.

BERNICE

How?

VICKI

I don't know. But we'll figure something out.

At that moment, the three women quickly make their way through the throngs of people walking up and down the street near the club. Immediately, we cut back to a wide shot of

(CONTINUED)

the club, focusing on Linus and his party at their table. Just then, we go to a close-up of Linus, laughing and seemingly loosened up, still smoking the joint.

PAT
(Reaching for the joint)
Gimme some of that shit.

Linus passes it to Pat who, in turn, takes a drag.

SPINNER
So Linus, did you hit it with Vicki yet?

LINUS
(Still disgusted over the situation)
I don't wanna talk about it.

SPINNER
I didn't think so. (Smiles sarcastically) What is it, that nasty guy she's been sweating? I knew it. She wants him, doesn't she? She wants that fucking beggar!

LINUS
(Starting to become annoyed)
That's bullshit and you know it, Spin.

SPINNER
(Laughing)
Yeah, I know you're full of shit. You wanna just give me the money now and be done with it then?

LINUS
Hell no! This isn't over by a long shot!

SPINNER
Yeah, well, I still haven't seen the proof.

LINUS
I don't have to prove anything to your dumb ass.

SPINNER
If you want my money, then you damn well better start proving something!

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

(Arrogantly, as he gets up
from the table)
Don't you worry; I'm doing what I
do best.

SPINNER

(Laughing)
Playin' the chump?

LINUS

(Taking out his cell phone and
smiling confidently)
Playin' the bitches!

As Linus' friends start laughing and howling at his arrogant reply, Linus walks toward the exit, dialing on his cell at the same time. Just then, as he walks across the room, we get a distorted wide shot from an elevated position, indicating the mysterious figure's viewpoint as Linus is watched consistently. From there, we cut to a shot of the three women again, this time, just coming up to the club; trying to figure out how to get ahead of the line. Suddenly, Vicki's cell phone starts to ring and vibrate.

VICKI

(To the other women, as she
looks at the display on the
phone)
It's Linus! (She answers) Linus!

Cut to a shot of Linus, trying hear Vicki above the music that's still loud, despite the fact that he's near the club's exit.

LINUS

Vicki! Can you hear me?!

VICKI

Linus! Linus! Where are you?! Are
you at the club?!

LINUS

Vicki! I can't hear you! Listen,
I'm at the club! Why don't you come
on down?! I'll be on the opposite
end of the floor at a table with
Spinner and everyone else! See you
in a little while!

Hangs up.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
Linus! Linus! Hello! Shit!

She hangs up her phone and turns to the other women.

MARIAH
We have to get in there right now.

VICKI
(Looking around, trying to
figure out how)
Yeah, we do.

Just then, we cut back to a shot of Linus walking toward the upstairs bar in the club. As he gets there however, he notices the long line and decides to come back later. Just then, he stops and looks around, feeling like someone is watching him again. After a moment though, he keeps walking, remembering what Spinner said about lightening up. Suddenly, however, we cut to another shot of Linus, this time, from the distorted viewpoint of the figure, which follows Linus as he starts heading down a corridor toward the men's room. Just then, we cut back to a shot of the three women, standing outside, arguing with the large, stocky bouncer about letting them in.

BOUNCER
(A large black man, weighing
about 350 pounds)
I'm sorry, ladies. You need to be
dressed appropriately if you want
to come in.

VICKI
But there's a guy in there that's
in danger of being attacked;
possibly killed!

BOUNCER
How do you know this?

MARIAH
It's hard to explain...

BOUNCER
Well, I can't just let you in here
because you say that some guy MIGHT
be getting attacked.

VICKI
Okay. Let us talk to your
supervisor then!

(CONTINUED)

The bouncer, moderately annoyed but still mildly sympathetic, gets a hold of his manager, who comes outside to address the situation.

MANAGER

What seems to be the problem?

BOUNCER

These ladies say they have knowledge about an attack that's gonna happen in the club.

VICKI

(To the manager)

Well, we don't know that it's going to happen for sure. But we know that the intended victim is in there.

MANAGER

But you don't know for sure that he's going to be attacked?

VICKI

No, not for sure.

MANAGER

So, how do you know that the possibility even exists of this happening?

Mariah steps forward.

MARIAH

Sir, I am a straight-A psych major at Columbia University, and I am telling you that there is a guy in there who might be in danger of being attacked. He had an altercation earlier this evening with another guy who has a rare psychological disorder and may or may not turn violent in a tense situation. This guy was really on the edge after their confrontation-

MANAGER

(Interrupting)

The one with the psych disorder?

MARIAH

Yeah. He was so on edge after the fight that he ran off in a possibly

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARIAH (cont'd)
unstable state a little while
later, and we think he might have
come here to take out the source of
his frustration.

MANAGER
Okay. And you think this guy is in
here now? Waiting to attack the
other guy?

VICKI
Casey and Linus. Their names are
Casey and Linus. Linus is the one
who's in danger of being attacked.

MANAGER
By...Casey?

MARIAH
Yes. And we think Casey might be in
the club already, looking for
Linus.

The Manager stands there, looking at them and thinking for a
second. Suddenly, he picks up a walkie-talkie.

MANAGER
(On the walkie-talkie)
Mike.

In reply, Mike's voice comes back over the walkie-talkie.

MIKE
Yeah?

MANAGER
Come down to the main entrance.

MIKE
Okay. Be right there.

Just then, the manager turns to the women.

MANAGER
The only reason I'm doing this is
because I don't want to take a
chance on someone getting hurt in
my club. I really don't need the
legal hassles, you know?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

(Eager to get inside)

Yeah, we understand.

Just then, another large bouncer; a white guy, shows up at the entrance.

MANAGER

(To the white bouncer)

Mike, I need you to escort these women around the club for a few minutes.

MIKE

Um, okay. (Sarcastically) Are we giving tours now?

MANAGER

(Laughs)

No, smart-ass. There might be a little bit of a problem.

MIKE

A problem?

MANAGER

Yeah. Just take them around the club. They'll explain the situation to you.

MIKE

Okay. (He turns to the women, signaling for them to enter the club) This way, ladies... (As the three women follow Mike into the club, Vicky and Bernice immediately start looking around for Linus or Casey while Mariah explains the situation to Mike.)

CUT.

INT - NIGHTTIME - THE LIGHTNING ROD

As Mike and the three women begin searching for Linus or Casey near the entrance to the club, on the other side, Linus comes out of the men's room and starts to head back over to his table. Suddenly, he looks ahead and stops.

LINUS

(Surprised and uncomfortable)

What? What is it? What the hell are you looking at, man?

(CONTINUED)

No answer.

LINUS

(Looks around for a moment,
then looks ahead again,
smirking a little)

Dude, you have something to say? I
thought we finished all this
bullshit already.

He stands there for a moment, then loses patience after Casey still says nothing, but just stands there, disoriented, but in a combat stance. Immediately, Linus starts to move forward again, intending to go around Casey and head back out to his table.

CASEY

(Jumping in his spot, as if
confronting a wild animal)

Get back!

LINUS

(Stopping in his tracks, very
surprised and confused)

What the fuck are you doing, man?!

CASEY

(Putting his hand out,
stumbling and swatting at the
air)

Get back!

Just then, one of the other people coming out of the restrooms sees what's going on and runs to get help. At that moment, we cut back to a shot of Mike with the three women, still searching through the club. Suddenly, Mike hears a transmission over his walkie-talkie.

VOICE

(Transmission)

Anyone near the restrooms, there's
a fight brewing. Someone get over
there.

MIKE

(To the women, as he leads
them toward the restrooms)

There's a problem near the
restroom. A fight starting.

The women look at each other, then proceed to follow Mike. At that moment, we cut back to Casey and Linus.

(CONTINUED)

LINUS

Man, I'm not playing games here.
Get the hell out of the way.

CASEY

BACK!

LINUS

Dude, what the hell are you
trippin' on?!

Just then, we get a shot of Linus from Casey's distorted perspective again. We can see that Linus still appears as a jackal-like creature, snarling and barking at Casey. Suddenly, Mike and the three women, as well as other bouncers, show up on the scene.

VICKI

Casey!

Casey looks over at Vicki, surprised. Just then, Linus turns to her.

LINUS

Vicki, will you do something about
your pet here before I beat his
ass?!

At that moment, we see Linus talking to Vicki from Casey's perspective, which still shows Linus as a jackal, this time, threatening Vicki. Immediately, Casey jumps in front of Vicki.

MARIAH

Wait...

VICKI

What?

MARIAH

Casey's disorder...

VICKI

Okay? What about it?!

MARIAH

Look at the way he's
standing! It's like he's fending
off an animal! That's how he sees
Linus; as a threat to you! But he
doesn't see it in a rational way!
He's hallucinating! You have to
talk to him, Vicki!

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
(Turning to Casey)
Casey! Casey, listen to me! It's
okay, Casey!

Casey looks over at Vicki, while still looking cautiously at Linus.

VICKI
It's okay...

Still a bit cautious, Casey starts to loosen up. Suddenly however, Linus loses patience.

LINUS
This is bullshit! He's crazy...

As Linus goes to move forward and one of the bouncers moves to restrain Casey, Mariah jumps forward to stop them.

MARIAH
Wait...NO!!!

Immediately, Casey jumps forward toward what he sees as the jackal as it lunges in Vicki's direction. Linus reacts instinctively, attacking Casey, but then Casey spins him around and throws him with all of his strength across the corridor and right through a large, open window. As Linus starts to fall however, he latches onto Casey's arm, pulling him out the window as well.

VICKI
NO!!!

As the other onlookers also react in shock, Linus and Casey fall three stories down to the street. Hitting the ground however, Casey suddenly feels not pain, but peace. With his eyes closed, he expects to lose consciousness - but experiences an awakening sensation instead. As this happens, Casey slowly opens his eyes and sees what looks like the inside walls and ceiling of the club around him. After a moment, Casey realizes that he's lying on the middle of the dance floor. Suddenly, as his vision clears, he raises his head, looks at himself and notices that he's nicely dressed. He also sees paramedics kneeling over him, as well as police officers with disposable gloves on, inspecting a used but empty plastic cup. Just then, one of the paramedics, a male about thirty-years old, speaks up.

PARAMEDIC
Hey, welcome back. Just take it
easy. You'll be fine.

(CONTINUED)

At that moment, Casey hears a familiar, female voice. It's Vicki. Looking over to the side, he sees her speaking to a police officer, who's taking her report.

VICKI

He's' my boyfriend. His name is Casey Taylor. We met here a few months ago.

OFFICER #1

And you're both in college?

VICKI

Yeah. I'm pre-med at Columbia and he's an art student at SVA.

OFFICER #1

And how do you know the perpetrator?

VICKI

He goes to my school. We became friends in one of my elective classes last semester, but he always wanted more. I didn't though, so Linus developed an animosity toward Casey. You can ask anyone that knows him. Linus is used to getting what he wants.

OFFICER #1

Yeah, apparently. Does Casey have any relatives around here?

VICKI

His parents live upstate but his aunt Bernice lives here in Manhattan. I already called her. She works at The Mission of The Five Thousand.

OFFICER #1

Okay. I know where that is.

VICKI

She's on her way to the hospital already. She said she'll call his parents on the way.

OFFICER #1

Good.

Suddenly, Vicki hears Casey call her name.

(CONTINUED)

CASEY

Vicki...

Overjoyed, Vicki immediately goes over to Casey, kneels down and gently hugs him, with tears of joy streaming down her face.

VICKI

Hey, baby. How are you feeling?

CASEY

I'm okay. What happened?

VICKI

Linus happened. He laced that drink he gave you with LSD. I guess he figured I would think you were on drugs and leave you or something.

Just then, Casey looks over and sees two more police officers standing with Linus, who is in cuffs, as one of the officers gives Linus' name into his radio.

OFFICER #2

First name, Linus, last name, Traver; that's T-r-a-v-e-r...

CASEY

(Laying his head back)

I remember now. He came over...wanted to bury the hatchet. That's what he said. Offered me that drink. Said something about understanding that I make you happy.

VICKI

Well, he was full of shit. Mariah saw him lace the drink, but she couldn't get to you in time, so she told one of the bouncers and he restrained Linus while Mariah called 911.

Casey raises his head up again and sees Mariah a few feet away, along with some of Linus' friends, giving a police report.

CASEY

(Laying his head back down again)

Tell her I said thanks.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

I will. You know, even Spinner said a few minutes ago that he knows how he and Linus can be assholes sometimes, but he never thought Linus would go this far. He could have killed you...

CASEY

I guess you never can tell about people.

VICKI

I guess not.

Casey smiles at her. Just then, a paramedic speaks up.

PARAMEDIC

Okay, can you sit up and get yourself on the stretcher?

CASEY

(Starting to sit up, with Vicki's and the paramedic's help)

Yeah.

As the other paramedics bring the stretcher over, Casey sits on it and lies down slowly, then looks at Vicki.

CASEY

I love you, Vicki.

Vicki looks at Casey and gives a sincere smile.

VICKI

I love you too, Casey.

As the paramedics wheel Casey out of the club, with Vicki accompanying them, we go to an ascending wide shot of the entire room, then fade out.

CUT.

END CREDITS.