



A MOSAIC OF WOMEN: BRUISED, HEALED, DAMAGED, STRONG

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BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD: DOLCE, FRAUD RELATIONSHIPS

FADE IN:

INT. ISABELLE'S MAN HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - MORNING

We come in on a television showing a video game on pause.

Slowly panning away, we see the clutter scattered about the nicely furnished, spacious living room.

Dishes, pop and beer cans are on the table, along with open chip bags, ashtrays that need emptying and liquor bottles.

Sneakers, house shoes, flip flops and socks are seen on the floor.

On the sofa there's a blanket, video game controllers and remote controllers.

The sound of the front door being opened and closed is heard.

We turn our attention to ISABELLA.

A beautiful Caucasian woman in her early twenties with long brunette hair, deep gorgeous green eyes and an adorable face.

She's standing in her peacoat and jeans, scanning over the room annoyed.

Taking a deep breath, sighing frustration, she takes her coat off.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

What are women these days? We're certainly not the gleaming glow in a man's eyes or the rhythm that makes his heartbeat. I won't say this for all of us, but for women like me. Women who settled for a preference and lifestyle. We're pushed to the side because he's been there and done that. We allowed them into our greatness, while filling their heads with lies, and then they flipped what we told them on us, and now we believe the lies we told them are the truth.

Placing a hand over her face, she sighs, slowly pulling her hand down.

With another deep sigh, she begins cleaning the living room.

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

What if we told men the truth off the rip? What if we told men we only want a nut, just like you? I mean we can, but would it really make a difference? And if you sleep with a man, don't you dare tell him he was horrible in bed. Especially if you've slept with him more than once. But sometimes, once is good enough for him to call you every degrading name in the book. So since we avoid that, we remain silent because we love the lifestyle we thought would be heaven, knowing it would be hell. We talk to our family and friends about the fucked up situation, and oddly, we all have the same fucked up stories. So, what do we do when that fails?

Gathering up the dishes, she makes her way towards the kitchen, walking in pausing, looking around the elegant kitchen.

She sighs looking at the dishes piled up in the sink, open loaves of bread, cheese wrappers and various other snacks are on the island.

Anger spills from her body walking to the sink, placing the dishes down.

She opens the dishwasher, and then loads it with the dishes that were in the sink.

Once it's filled, she places some liquid inside, closes the door and starts it up.

With the remaining dishes, she drains the old dish water and then makes some fresh water so she can clean them.

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

It's the same cycle every week. Him and his friends fuck up the house, and we clean it up. It makes you think back to the beginning of the relationship. Romantic dates. Superb foreplay healing our bodies, ending in a euphoria of endless orgasms. But now... Now we barely go out. If dinner is involved, we're the ones preparing it. And sex... During sex, we're

treated like whores, and every woman ain't into that bullshit. Women like me are, but still. It goes by so fast we don't even know if we were wet. But like the dishes, we allow it because we love the lifestyle. Besides, these days a vibrator is a woman's best friend.

As she washes the dishes, we see a sense of serenity taking over her body.

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

Clearing your mind from a man and his bullshit is required after pretending to enjoy fucking him and watching him go to sleep, just to wake up and do it all over again. But this is the price you pay to live a life you thought you wanted.

Once she's done with the dishes, placing them away, she cleans the island up.

Coming from the kitchen making her way down the hallway with pictures along the wall, she comes to a stop at the bathroom, and opens the door. The sound of her tongue clicking against the roof of her mouth is heard.

Clothes are all over the floor, the toothpaste on the sink is open, with toothpaste coming from the tube, there's a used washcloth in the tub, and the toilet seat is up.

She enters the room now wearing a wife beater and jogging pants, with cleaning gloves on.

She picks the clothes up and tosses them into the hallway before she starts cleaning.

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

When you're in a relationship... Well, you're single, playing along with the whole relationship title. You already know you'll be picking up after your man physically and painfully mentally. But you didn't have to deal with this mess in the beginning. Worrying about checking his phone, social media and where he was going didn't matter because he told you and let you check everything you wanted without a question. Sadly, everything doesn't remain as it was in the beginning. And

here we are.

(Scoffs)

After everything is cleaned up, we believe we're right back in the beginning, but we know that's a lie.

While she continues cleaning, that look of annoyance returns on her face.

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

Everything I've said is minor if you're chasing the good life. But even with me saying this, every woman has a breaking point. But women like me don't break until the lifestyle breaks. Of course we can hire maids, but there's nothing like cleaning your own, considering you never know what you might find.

Finishing up with the cleaning, she steps into the hallway, picking up the dirty clothes.

She makes her way through the lovely house reaching the basement door, opening it, walking downstairs.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CARMEN'S MAN HOUSE - THE BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The basement is furnished like a living room with a bar off to the side.

Carmen, a Latina in her mid-twenties is wearing a sports bra and leggings with her hair in a ponytail and her arms folded across her chest, staring at a pile of dirty clothes.

CARMEN (V.O.)

One thing you can think about while doing your laundry is the painful memories in your relationship that you're washing away. Then again, once you create happy new memories, you're right back down here, washing those away. It's funny how everything you do in life can relate to your relationship or lack thereof. It's all about morals. Women like me don't believe in morals because we'll do anything to obtain and keep this life. But who needs morals when you can buy and do whatever you want? That irritating emotion called '**love**' comes

here and there, but we have money. We
can buy or do something we love to
solve that problem.

Standing there for a few seconds pondering on something, she
then walks over to the bar, walking behind the counter
grabbing a tall shot glass and an expensive bottle of
tequila.

Pouring a shot, she quickly downs it, followed by pouring two
more repeating the process.

Letting the shots marinate, she pours another one, placing it
down, staring at it.

Looking into her eyes, you would think they're glossy because
of the shots, but that's far from true.

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

When men see women down shots, they
instantly think they'll get some
pussy. They don't think maybe she's a
hard drinker who loves getting wasted.
Or maybe she had a long day, and could
possibly be suffering from some shit.
But when it comes to women like me,
it's a direct bullseye.

She downs the shot, closes her eyes and shakes her head.

When she opens her eyes we see the tears prepared to fall,
but she quickly regains her composure, slamming her hand on
the counter before leaving the basement.

Coming into the kitchen, she walks over to the island and
pauses.

The tears are still in her eyes, turning her attention
towards the refrigerator.

Opening both doors of the refrigerator, she glances at the
various foods and drinks inside.

She begins taking various meat out, placing them on the
island.

Returning back to the refrigerator, she grabs some heads of
lettuce, and then she pauses, placing them back.

Looking at the meat she pulled out, she sighs, pulling her
phone out.

Scrolling for a few seconds, she stops on a catering service,

calling them, placing the phone to her ear.

She starts pacing back and forth, while speaking on the phone.

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

When you're done cleaning and you know your man will be home soon, it's time to prepare dinner. Back then, it was dinner for two. Now dinner is for you, him and his friends. Those same friends he forgot about when you first started dating, but after he got some pussy, you became a distant memory. The friends who compliment you more than he does, but that's something else you'll become accustomed to. Of course, they're only giving you compliments to try and fuck, but at least for that moment, it makes you feel good. What am I saying? That emotion was trying to sprout. But why fuck his friends knowing they'll tell, and he'll fallout with you before them? The real thing is always better than a toy, dildo, or finger, so you find somebody to fuck who doesn't live within the radius of your home.

She gets off the phone, and then places the meat back in the refrigerator.

Standing there pondering for a few seconds, she makes another call.

Placing the phone to her ear, she leans up against the island, tapping her fingers on the counter.

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

Knowing you're about to have a long night, you invite your girls over so you won't feel like a shadow in a dark room. Technically, they're not my girls. They're just like me, looking for the next upgraded lifestyle and will do anything to get it. Yes, we act like we're good friends, the same way we act as if we're happy in our relationships. Deep down inside... We only hang around each other to see what men like the most about the other woman so we can copy everything perfectly.

Walking out of the kitchen, she heads to the staircase leading upstairs.

She walks past a few closed doors, and paintings on the wall, making her way to the bedroom.

Stepping into the beautiful bedroom, she takes a seat on the king size bed covered with a black and white blanket and pillows.

She says a few more words on the phone, and then hangs up, placing the phone on the bed.

Looking around the room, we can tell she's forcing herself to appear happy, but the loneliness and loss of self-respect is starting to outshine the cover up.

Getting up from the bed, she walks over to the flat wall mirror placed on the bathroom door.

She stares at her reflection trying to form a smile.

Slowly, she removes her jogging pants, and then the wife beater.

She begins posing in her bra and panties trying to smile, but the pain of what she goes through on a regular basis is starting to kick in.

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

It's crucial when you don't recognize yourself. You go through these changes to keep his attention solely on you. From petite to thick, thick to big, big to in between. Surgeries, piling on makeup, fake hair, eyes and eyelashes. You're a different bitch every waking day, but you can never wake up as the woman you were before you met him. And what does he do for us? What the fuck does he do to make us go through all these hoops while he remains the same?

Covering her face with both hands leaving only her eyes revealed, she closes them, and a single tear falls down.

Quickly opening her eyes, she shakes it off, wipes her eyes and then moves over to the closet.

Opening the closet door, she walks in staring at all of the shoes and clothes filling the room, scanning the clothes.

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

Sorry about that moment. I'm trying to mix other women with women like me, knowing women like me only have one emotion. Greed. This is why we jump through those hoops. Clothes, cars and money. Those are the only things in life that bestow love. It reminds you of when you first met him. The love constantly coming from his wallet was hard to resist. But on a better note, this woman has to make sure she's the sexiest bitch in the house at the party later.

With a new aura in her walk, she makes her way to the bathroom, walking in.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NICOLE'S MAN HOUSE - THE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nicole, a black woman with brown skin and almond-shaped eyes is standing under the shower head with her hair wrapped up, letting the warmth of the water soothe her mind. She closes her eyes, and begins thinking about what makes her happy.

NICOLE (V.O.)

Sex makes the world go round. Something we all love, but don't necessarily enjoy. You have women who love having sex with their man because they receive natural orgasms without having to fake or display fake moans. Women like me fake our orgasms. We get loud and call him nicknames to stroke his ego, hoping that he'll hurry up and finish. We do this because it's part of the plan. But as it was said, you can't have morals if you're attempting to accomplish this goal.

Opening her eyes, she looks around, and then grabs a loofah, and some body wash.

After applying the body wash on the loofah, she places it back.

She begins bathing herself as if it's the hands of a man touching all over her body, enjoying the sensation.

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

A woman's body is pleasurable.

Delicate. Delicious. Providing a sensation you'll never be able to explain if treated right. So, how can I say that when I allow this man to treat me as if I'm a back alley two-dollar bitch? How can any woman who fucked more than one man say such things? Because we know the truth and why we engaged with those different dicks. And for some reason, every man except for the first one we made love to is the same. An exception can be made for some women when speaking about the man who took her virginity. He was probably the one who knew the priceless texture of a woman's body. Or he was just like the men we complain about, but we can't live without because that's our preference. Whoever was the first man to say you have some good ass pussy, an ignorant switch in your head flipped on, and now your body count is sky high. Well... That goes for women like me.

Continuing bathing herself, it appears she's more into touching on her body by the way she's biting her lip.

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

Experiencing the cream and warm splash from a woman's quenchable well is something very few men experience at the same time. A lot of men will be quick to say they have, but he doesn't know we're thinking about the one who made us perform the act effortlessly. So, how can he tell the difference? A mixture of moving like the sands of time and an earthquake, sending uncontrollable tremors through our bodies is what we seek, and that only comes with knowing every crevice to touch and taste. But... We settle for the constant jackhammer pounding because he needs his ego stroked so we can continue getting the spoils of life.

From looking like she's taking a shower, it appears as if she's about to climax, rinsing the suds from her body.

She takes a deep breath, biting down hard on her lip as she turns the water off, and then reaches outside the shower door

to retrieve her towel to wrap around her.

Stepping from the shower, she walks up to the sink and wipes the fog from the mirror.

The orgasmic look she had is fading away as she looks at her reflection.

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

It's getting close to that time, so let me get back into character. A created freak who only cares about her looks, body and money. I'm sure the women I call my girls are doing the same thing. We can't break this image. Breaking this image could possibly ruin what we have going on, so the show must go on.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NICOLE'S MAN HOUSE - THE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

We come in on a lovely spread, different cheeses, dips, a vegetable platter, deserts, seafood, steaks, champagne, champagne glasses and more.

Isabelle is standing by the counter with her third glass of wine in hand, watching the performance.

Carmen is showing off new earrings.

Nicole is sitting at the table, barely able to keep the fraudulent smile on her face.

NICOLE (V.O.)

Here we are. A table full of lost souls and money-hungry bitches. Each one has an ego bigger than the other, but we swear we're all friends. How do we tolerate each other? Well, who else can we relate with? Women are sweet as pie and precious as the air we breathe. But women like me... We're a bitter substance that's only sweet to our identical twins and the men we let use us.

Various men of different sizes and races are moving about the table making their plates, completely ignoring the women.

While the women are talking, Nicole prepares to get her something to eat, when a fairly handsome brown skin muscular

man comes up beside her, tapping her shoulder with an empty plate, holding a beer in his other hand.

She looks at him, and he hands her the plate.

We can see the disgrace in her movement as she moves around the table making him a fully loaded plate.

She comes back to him, and he takes the plate, extending her the beer.

Taking the beer, she opens it.

She leans in for a kiss and he takes the beer, and then walks off.

Looking out the corner of her eye, she sees a few of the women seen what transpired, shaking their heads, laughing under their breath.

Nicole clears her throat, gaining the attention of all the women.

She says some harsh words towards the women who were laughing, and a big argument breaks out.

NICOLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This shouldn't have turned into an argument because we've all seen things our men have done to embarrass us. But we thrive on drama and gossip because that's all we have.

The argument starts getting heated as some of the women stand up, swaying their heads from side to side, with their hands on their hips.

Carmen jumps in, defending Nicole.

Isabelle tries to play peacemaker.

The other women who are not arguing are sitting back and eating, enjoying the show.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NICOLE'S MAN HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

We come in on Nicole lying in bed under the covers, with a look of emptiness dwelling in her eyes.

The sound of her man and his friends shouting, listening to music and playing games can be heard in the background.

NICOLE (V.O.)

When the arguing is done, you cleaned your house earlier, took an orgasmic shower, ate and had a few drinks... What do you do? Lie in bed alone, listening to your man having a good time with his friends until he gets wasted, and then decides to come to bed. He believes he'll **'put our ass to bed,'** but we'll remain awake, pretending to be asleep. We say men are dogs, scared to love and it sounds good, but we don't put our accountability along with why they're this way.

(Clicks tongue)

We don't take into consideration we're only dealing with him for money, and in some cases sex, if the size fits what we think will satisfy us. Two people using each other for the wrong things. The only difference between men and women is that women are more hurt because we gave away our goods and performed shameful acts.

(Smacks lips)

We put up the front like we don't care, bouncing to the next man without thinking twice. We behave just like men, and that's where they have the upper hand over us because we should know our worth. Well, women like me know our worth. Our worth is letting a man do anything he wants as long as the funds are unlimited. So at the end of the day, what do women like me do?

She reaches on the nightstand, grabbing her fancy blindfold that reads "Number 1 bitch" placing it over her eyes.

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

We continue satisfying his sexual needs, and then satisfy ours afterwards, praying the sexual acts we performed will keep him around. We keep altering our bodies and personalities, praying he'll keep his focus on us. We keep putting up with him treating us like his personal property, praying he doesn't find another woman who'll go through what we've been through and take it further. And Lord forbid if she looks

good with a better body. If he leaves,
the lifestyle is over, and then we'll
have to find another one like him,
hoping that he's less controlling. We
go to sleep dreaming about being loved
by a man who'll appreciate us as a
whole, knowing when we wake up to the
perfect dolce performance we did
today, we'll repeat it unless he
pushes us to the left.

The activity going on downstairs is still heard, along with
her deep sigh, and snuffle.

FADE TO BLACK:

BLACK SCREEN:

"The price of love is valued based on your worth."

~Bernard Mersier~

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD: JUSTIFIABLE BEATING

FADE IN:

INT. THE LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Silence embraces the library as the students study with the
sun glaring through the windows.

Teenage Monica and Teenage Deena, two beautiful high school
students preparing to graduate are sitting at a table across
from each other.

Teenage Monica, with her golden-brown complexion and soft
brown eyes is wearing a baggy jogging suit with her hair
pulled up into a ponytail.

Teenage Deena, brown-skinned and petite, is wearing a crop
top and leggings, playing with one of her long braids while
looking at a flyer for prom.

Teenage Monica is hard at work with a stack of books resting
beside her.

TEENAGE DEENA

What are you wearing to prom?

Teenage Monica doesn't look up as her pen scratches against
the paper.

TEENAGE MONICA
I'm not going.

TEENAGE DEENA
Why not? You only get one prom.

Monica's pen pauses, though her eyes remain on the page.

TEENAGE MONICA
Should I be impressed by that?

TEENAGE DEENA
It's not about being impressed. It's about one last night with the people you know. One last chance to feel alive before we're all scattered to the winds.

TEENAGE MONICA
Uh-huh. Like I said, I won't be attending.

TEENAGE DEENA
I know why.

TEENAGE MONICA
Why?

TEENAGE DEENA
You're scared of leaving your comfort zone.

TEENAGE MONICA
What's my comfort zone?

Deena gestures toward Monica's outfit and plain ponytail.

TEENAGE DEENA
Those baggy clothes. Your basic hairstyles. You're scared of being free.

TEENAGE MONICA
Why should I **'be free,'** as you call it, when I already get enough attention?

TEENAGE DEENA
(Laughs)
What attention?

TEENAGE MONICA
I'm the only graduating virgin. Need I

say more?

TEENAGE DEENA

(Laughs)

As long as you know it's not because
of your looks.

TEENAGE MONICA

You ugly women love to hate, don't
you?

TEENAGE DEENA

(Smacks her lips)

I'm far from ugly. Come with something
better.

Monica smirks, leaning back in her chair.

TEENAGE MONICA

If you were worth the time, I would.

TEENAGE DEENA

Whatever. You're going, right?

TEENAGE MONICA

(Sighs)

Why are you so pressed about this?

TEENAGE DEENA

Because going to prom without my best
friend wouldn't feel right. We do
everything together, Mo. You have to
come.

Teenage Monica's gaze drops to her notebook as her fingers
fiddle with the edge of the page.

TEENAGE MONICA

I'll think about it.

TEENAGE DEENA

Girl, stop playing. You're going.

TEENAGE MONICA

I said I'd think about it.

TEENAGE DEENA

What's the alternative? Sitting at
home, staring at the walls?

Teenage Monica doesn't respond, looking at her chipped nails.

TEENAGE DEENA (CONT'D)

My point exactly. When do you wanna go shopping for a dress?

TEENAGE MONICA

I'll figure it out.

TEENAGE DEENA

I hope you don't pick something tacky.

TEENAGE MONICA

You won't be picking it.

TEENAGE DEENA

What do you mean by that?

TEENAGE MONICA

Nothing, hotbox.

TEENAGE DEENA

Oh, I'm a hotbox?

TEENAGE MONICA

(Laughs)

And my best friend.

Deena stands up chuckling as she walks away, leaving Teenage Monica alone at the table.

Teenage Monica turns her attention to the prom flyer, brushing her fingers against it.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Laughter and loud talking fill the room, while Teenage Craig and Teenage Jason are talking, standing by the lockers wearing their basketball jerseys and shorts,

Teenage Craig is handsome, dark-skinned, and tall with a Southern charm.

Teenage Jason is medium in height and light-skinned with hazel eyes and curly hair.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Who do you have lined up for prom?

Teenage Jason flexes his biceps.

TEENAGE JASON

I don't know, I have a lot to choose

from.

TEENAGE CRAIG
Living in that fantasy world again?

TEENAGE JASON
Fantasy? Look at me.

He flexes again, grinning.

TEENAGE CRAIG
So?

TEENAGE JASON
What female can resist these guns?

TEENAGE CRAIG
Apparently, a lot, considering you
don't have a date.

TEENAGE JASON
Hater. Why did you ask?

TEENAGE CRAIG
Just wondering.

TEENAGE JASON
I do have my eye on Monica.

TEENAGE CRAIG
(Laughs)
Is that right?

TEENAGE JASON
Who doesn't? But unlike them, I'll be
the one taking her to prom and her
virginity.

TEENAGE CRAIG
Oh, you think so?

TEENAGE JASON
I know so.

TEENAGE CRAIG
I doubt either scenario happens.

TEENAGE JASON
Oh, let me guess. You'll be the one to
do it?

TEENAGE CRAIG
I'm not saying that.

TEENAGE JASON

Good. You don't have a chance with her anyway.

Teenage Craig strokes his thin goatee, interested.

TEENAGE CRAIG

What makes you think that?

TEENAGE JASON

You don't have the three things.

TEENAGE CRAIG

What are the three things?

Teenage Jason retrieves his wallet from his locker, opens it and pulls out some money.

TEENAGE JASON

The body. The looks. And... The money.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Money?

TEENAGE JASON

Money makes women open their legs faster than you can flash it.

TEENAGE CRAIG

I believe you're using the wrong analogy. Money doesn't make **'women'** respond the way you're claiming.

TEENAGE JASON

They're all the same, bro. Don't get it twisted.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Monica isn't that way.

TEENAGE JASON

What makes you so sure?

TEENAGE CRAIG

You need the one thing you don't have if you're trying to date Monica.

TEENAGE JASON

I'm all ears.

TEENAGE CRAIG

The manners of a gentleman.

TEENAGE JASON

(Laughs)

Women these days don't know what a gentleman is. All they know is money, and they'll use their bodies to get it.

TEENAGE CRAIG

So... Why is Monica still a virgin?

TEENAGE JASON

I haven't put my game down yet.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Even with this so-called '**game**' you claim to have. Nothing will happen.

TEENAGE JASON

Are you sure about that?

TEENAGE CRAIG

Of course.

Teenage Jason extends his hand, with a challenge in his eyes.

TEENAGE JASON

Put something on it.

TEENAGE CRAIG

I'm not betting on that.

TEENAGE JASON

Because you know I'll win?

TEENAGE CRAIG

No. I just don't view women as objects to bet on.

Teenage Jason pulls his hand back, scoffing.

TEENAGE JASON

So, you're admitting I'm right?

TEENAGE CRAIG

You can think what you want.

TEENAGE JASON

I'll tell you how good it was.

TEENAGE CRAIG

You can't tell me what you'll never know.

TEENAGE JASON
Watch what I tell you.

Teenage Craig pats Teenage Jason on the shoulder, chuckling as he walks off.

Teenage Jason stares after him, fuming.

TEENAGE JASON
He hates the fact I'm right.

CUT TO:

INT. GWEN'S HOUSE - TEENAGE MONICA ROOM - NIGHT

Teenage Monica is sitting on her bed writing in her notebook, with a book beside her.

Gwen, enters the room.

The source of teenage Monica's beauty is standing in front of her because they almost look identical.

GWEN
Have you decided on a dress yet?

Teenage Monica places her pen down, and closes her notebook with a decisive snap, looking up with exasperation.

TEENAGE MONICA
What is it with you and Deena about prom?

GWEN
What do you mean?

MONICA
Why is everyone acting like prom is some life-changing event? It'll just be dancing with people I barely speak to, and being surrounded by guys who only have one thing on their minds.

GWEN
You really don't think prom night will be something important?

TEENAGE MONICA
No, I don't. There's more important things to focus on.

GWEN
Is that the real reason why you don't

wanna go?

MONICA

Why wouldn't it be?

GWEN

Because you don't have a date.

MONICA

You don't think I can get a date if I wanted one?

Gwen steps closer

GWEN

Oh, sweetheart, I know you can get a date. You're beautiful, you get that from your mother. I just find it strange that my brilliant, accomplished daughter is so determined to miss out on what should be one of the most memorable nights of her senior year.

MONICA

I just... There's bigger things to worry about. College applications, scholarships, my future-

GWEN

Monica.

Gwen moves to sit on the edge of the bed.

GWEN (CONT'D)

You need to learn how to have fun at some point in your life. Don't end up alone, relying on... Other things for satisfaction. Success is wonderful, but it can't keep you warm at night.

MONICA

(Laughs)

Mama, really? Are we really having this conversation?

GWEN

Go have some fun, baby. You'll still accomplish all of your goals.

MONICA

(Low tone)

...I'll go.

GWEN

You know what? You'll probably end up meeting the one.

MONICA

I seriously doubt that.

GWEN

Girl, go have some fun. I love you.

Gwen leans over and kisses Monica's forehead.

MONICA

I love you too, Mama.

After Gwen gets up and leaves, Monica remains motionless, staring at the ceiling. Her mind is swirling with doubt and possibility.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I don't know why those two think prom is going to change my life.

INT. THE HALL - NIGHT

On the night of the prom, inside the hall, glittering decorations hang from the ceiling, casting shimmering light on the swirling mass of students on the dance floor.

Music blares from the speakers, punctuated by squeals of laughter and shouted conversations.

Teenage Monica enters, a vision in a fitted, powder blue dress that accentuates her curves.

Her long hair cascades down her back, and her eyes sparkle with a mixture of apprehension and defiance.

Heads turn and the guys momentarily forget their dates to admire her.

She heads towards the refreshment table, intending to pour herself some punch, but Teenage Jason, looking awkward in a rented black tuxedo, intercepts her, already holding a cup filled to the brim.

Teenage Monica raises an eyebrow, with a 'what are you doing?' expression etched on her face.

TEENAGE MONICA

What's this?

TEENAGE JASON

A woman with your beauty shouldn't
pour her own punch.

TEENAGE MONICA

What?

TEENAGE JASON

This is a job for a gentleman.

She takes the cup with delicate fingers, but her eyes never
leave his.

TEENAGE MONICA

You're treating me nice because?

TEENAGE JASON

I always liked you.

TEENAGE MONICA

(Laughs)

That's bullshit. This devastating body
has you acting up.

TEENAGE JASON

(Clears throat)

I was thinking-

TEENAGE MONICA

You'd take my virginity tonight?

TEENAGE JASON

(Fake laugh)

Why would you say that?

TEENAGE MONICA

(Takes a sip)

Considering everyone in school knows
I'm a virgin, it fits perfectly with
this goofball expression on your face.

TEENAGE JASON

I'll be honest. My limo's outside.
After the dance, we should go for a
ride, have a drink or two. Maybe go
down by the water-

TEENAGE MONICA

And give you some, right?

TEENAGE JASON

Nah, we could just-

TEENAGE MONICA
This conversation is over.

Monica turns to leave.

Teenage Jason grabs her arm.

TEENAGE JASON
Girl, you know you want me.

Monica turns around, laughing with genuine amusement.

TEENAGE MONICA
If I wanted you, I could have you.
Since that's not the case, let my arm
go, please and thank you.

Teenage Craig enters the scene wearing a sleek black suit.

He sees the tension between Teenage Monica and Teenage Jason,
and without a word, he moves with deceptive casualness,
stepping behind Teenage Jason unnoticed.

TEENAGE JASON
Don't tease me, slut. This innocent
role bullshit doesn't fool me.

Monica yanks her arm free.

TEENAGE MONICA
You got the wrong one. Get your
trifling ass away from me.

Teenage Jason reaches for her again, but Teenage Craig's hand
clamps down on the back of his neck, forcing him into a
painful bend that makes his knees buckle.

TEENAGE CRAIG
What's the problem?

A few of the students look over at what's going on.

TEENAGE JASON
What's wrong with you, man?

TEENAGE CRAIG
The fact that you're bothering her is
bothering me.

TEENAGE JASON
All of a sudden you care about her?

Teenage Craig squeezes harder.

TEENAGE CRAIG

This conversation is over, right?

Teenage Jason nods frantically, and Teenage Craig releases him with a dismissive shove that sends him stumbling.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Find you a girl who fits those three things you told me about.

Teenage Jason stumbles, regaining his balance as his face twists with humiliation and impotent rage.

TEENAGE JASON

When did you start caring about her?

TEENAGE CRAIG

Get moving.

TEENAGE JASON

I'll get you.

Teenage Jason slinks away into the crowd.

Teenage Monica feels a faint blush creeping up her neck, though she quickly composes herself.

TEENAGE MONICA

I had that under control.

Teenage Craig's eyes soften as he turns to her.

TEENAGE CRAIG

You probably did.

TEENAGE MONICA

I did.

TEENAGE CRAIG

A little extra help never hurts.

TEENAGE MONICA

Thanks.

TEENAGE CRAIG

No need for that. Enjoy the dance.

He goes to walk away, and Teenage Monica grabs his arm, stopping him before he can disappear back into the crowd.

TEENAGE MONICA

Wait. Why did you help me?

Craig turns back around.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Two important things about women that all men should know. One, she already knows if she wants you. And two, if she doesn't show interest, it's best to leave it alone.

TEENAGE MONICA

Out of all these girls, you decided to rescue me?

TEENAGE CRAIG

I'm just making sure what I want is safe.

TEENAGE MONICA

And what is that?

TEENAGE CRAIG

You'll find out if you give it to me.

She releases his arm, momentarily speechless as he walks away.

Teenage Deena materializes beside her, radiant in a soft pink dress.

TEENAGE DEENA

Sexy, sexy.

Monica blinks, snapping out of her reverie.

TEENAGE MONICA

Huh? Hey, what's up?

TEENAGE DEENA

What's wrong with you?

TEENAGE MONICA

Nothing. Just a little stunned.

TEENAGE DEENA

Are you sure?

TEENAGE MONICA

Yeah. Let's get on this floor.

They link arms, and join the throng of dancing students.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PARKING LOT - LATER

An hour has passed.

It's a clear night with a slight breeze blowing.

Limos, party buses and nice cars fill the parking lot.

Teenage Monica and Teenage Deena emerge from the hall with laughter bubbling between them.

TEENAGE DEENA

See, you're having fun.

TEENAGE MONICA

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

TEENAGE DEENA

And you left your comfort zone.

TEENAGE MONICA

(Laughs)

What made you think I was lame?

Teenage Jason and three other boys approaching them.

Teenage Jason takes a sip from his silver flask.

Teenage Monica and Teenage Deena exchange a look of pure disgust.

TEENAGE JASON

(Drunk)

Are you ready to go on that ride?

TEENAGE MONICA

You again? What do you want?

TEENAGE JASON

I was waiting for you, so we can grab some drinks and go by the water. Since your friend is with you, she can keep my boys occupied.

TEENAGE MONICA

I don't think we'll be doing anything with you or your boys. I suggest y'all get in your limo and use your hands to keep each other company.

TEENAGE DEENA

Low key, they already did.

TEENAGE JASON

(Takes a sip)

That's very funny, sluts. Look. We can give y'all two hours before we ditch y'all and move on to something better.

Without thinking, Teenage Monica steps forward and slaps him hard across the face.

TEENAGE MONICA

That's the second time you disrespected me. Don't even think about going for a third.

Teenage Jason rubs his cheek.

TEENAGE JASON

You're right. I'll take what I want now.

He lunges forward, grabbing Teenage Monica roughly, trying to force his lips against hers.

Teenage Monica struggles desperately, with her elbows flying as she fights to break free.

Without hesitation, Teenage Deena drops her purse and begins hammering on Jason.

The other three boys are shocked by the sudden violence.

TEENAGE JASON (CONT'D)

Don't stand there looking dumb! Grab her girl!

The command snaps them into action, seizing Teenage Deena, pulling her away from Teenage Jason despite her screams and struggles.

Both girls' cries pierce the night as they're dragged toward the waiting limousine.

Teenage Craig burst from the hall doors, running over to Teenage Jason, not wasting any time with words, simply grabbing Teenage Jason by the collar, throwing him aside with surprising strength.

The three boys immediately release Teenage Deena, focusing their attention on Teenage Jason as he stumbles to his feet.

TEENAGE CRAIG

You're so desperate to get some that you'll resort to this?!

Teenage Jason glares at him, wiping the saliva from his chapped lips.

TEENAGE JASON
After I knock you out...
(Licks his lips)
I'll finish what I was about to start
with that slut.

The two collide, and their formal wear tears as they grapple in the parking lot.

Teenage Craig manages to get Teenage Jason on the ground and begins pounding him, but the odds quickly shift, when the other three jump on Teenage Craig, turning the fight into a vicious three-on-one beatdown.

Teenage Jason, winded but enraged, stumbles back to his feet and takes another swig.

TEENAGE JASON (CONT'D)
Hold him down!

The three pin Teenage Craig to the asphalt, and Teenage Jason, with a cruel grin, stomps on Teenage Craig's ankle.

Teenage Craig's scream is beyond agony.

Teenage Jason and his cronies turn their attention back to the girls huddled together, trembling with terror.

TEENAGE JASON (CONT'D)
Back to you two. Get ready to-

Teachers come running from the hall.

The four attackers scramble into their limousine, which screeches off into the darkness, leaving the smell of their cowardice.

Teenage Craig is clutching his ankle, and his face is contorted in pain, when Teenage Monica comes and kneels beside him.

TEENAGE MONICA
Are you okay?

Despite his agony, Teenage Craig forces a weak smile.

TEENAGE CRAIG
Don't worry about me. As long as
you're okay, that's all that matters.

TEENAGE MONICA

Thank you. Once again, you didn't have to do that.

TEENAGE CRAIG

This time I had to. If you're not ready for sex, it should stay that way.

Teenage Monica leans down and kisses him softly on the cheek.

Other students pour out of the hall with their excited chatter dying as they take in the scene.

The teachers are already calling the police and an ambulance, with their voices urgent in the night air.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Teenage Craig is lying on a hospital bed with his ankle heavily wrapped, with Gwen and Teenage Monica standing by his bed.

GWEN

Thank you for helping my daughter.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Any man would've done the same.

TEENAGE MONICA

You and I both know that's a lie. The only way any other man would've helped me is if I was giving him something in return.

TEENAGE CRAIG

(Chuckles)

That's... Unfortunately it's true.

GWEN

Regardless, I appreciate what you did. Your parents raised you well.

TEENAGE CRAIG

The thanks would go to my grandmother. She's the one who taught me the rules of life. Especially how to treat a woman with respect.

GWEN

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to bring up

anything painful.

TEENAGE CRAIG

No offense taken. My grandparents raised me because my parents were going through... Domestic issues. Um, let's just say their relationship wasn't exactly a healthy example to follow.

GWEN

I'm truly sorry to hear that.

TEENAGE CRAIG

It's fine, really. In a way, that difficult situation helped shape me into a better man, or at least, the man I'm trying to be.

GWEN

At least you didn't let it define you negatively. Well, I'll leave you two alone to talk. Once again, thank you for everything.

TEENAGE CRAIG

No problem at all.

Gwen quietly exits the room.

TEENAGE MONICA

I never would've guessed that about your parents. You seem so... Grounded.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Yeah. My father's an alcoholic who beats on my mother, and my mother... She believes there isn't another man in the world who can love her better than him.

TEENAGE MONICA

Why would she believe something like that?

TEENAGE CRAIG

She's convinced that a woman should stay with one man no matter what happens because that's her duty to make things work, regardless of the cost to herself.

TEENAGE MONICA

She's living in denial of the truth.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Exactly. Watching those two throughout my childhood, seeing that cycle of violence and enabling, I came to one firm conclusion. I'll never take a drink. Ever.

TEENAGE MONICA

That's an incredibly wise choice.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Do you really think so?

TEENAGE MONICA

If witnessing that pain helped create the man you are now, someone willing to get hurt protecting someone else, then yes, absolutely.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Thank you. That... Means more than you know.

TEENAGE MONICA

What did you mean earlier when you said you wanted something from me?

TEENAGE CRAIG

You want the truth?

TEENAGE MONICA

Duh.

TEENAGE CRAIG

I wanted to grab something to eat and have a real conversation. The kind where we can actually get to know each other beyond surface pleasantries.

TEENAGE MONICA

That's it? Really?

TEENAGE CRAIG

That's it.

TEENAGE MONICA

(Soft laugh)

You're lying on a hospital bed with a serious injury because you wanted to ask me out on a date?

TEENAGE CRAIG

(Chuckles)

And because I wanted to get to know the real you. Not just the version everyone sees.

TEENAGE MONICA

Why didn't you just ask me out directly?

TEENAGE CRAIG

Good point. I suppose I overthought it.

TEENAGE MONICA

So what have you learned from all this?

TEENAGE CRAIG

When my ankle heals, and assuming you don't think I'm completely insane. I'm hoping you'll actually go on that date with me.

TEENAGE MONICA

I'll be waiting.

TEENAGE CRAIG

Really?

TEENAGE MONICA

Why wouldn't I? You're in here because you chose to help me when you didn't have to. That says a lot about who you are.

TEENAGE CRAIG

I'll hold you to those words.

Teenage Monica leans down slowly, pressing a gentle kiss to his cheek.

TEENAGE MONICA

Just make sure you actually ask this time.

She turns and walks toward the door, pausing briefly to look back at him with a smile.

Teenage Craig smiles despite the throbbing pain in his ankle, watching her leave.

CUT TO:

INT. GWEN'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - LATER

Gwen and Teenage Monica are sitting on the sofa.

TEENAGE MONICA

What do you think about Craig?

GWEN

He seems like a good man. I appreciate him helping you.

TEENAGE MONICA

But?

GWEN

It's something about his story.

TEENAGE MONICA

What about it?

GWEN

I can't put my finger on it, just yet.

TEENAGE MONICA

Oh my God, Mama. How do you always find something negative in everything? You nagged me about going to prom and because of that, I was almost raped and a good man ended up in the hospital. Now here you are searching for flaws where there might not be none. Why can't you just be happy for me?

GWEN

I'm not looking for negativity, sweetheart. I'm just sharing the whispers of a mother's heart.

TEENAGE MONICA

Sure, you are. **'He's a nice man, but there's something about him I can't place my finger on.'** I can't win with you, can I? I believe I've finally met someone who actually sees and cares about me. What more do you want from me?

GWEN

It doesn't matter what I want, Monica. I'm just sharing my thoughts because I love you.

TEENAGE MONICA

Considering I came up just fine
without a father figure, I don't see
the difference between his situation
and mine.

GWEN

Despite your father not being in your
life, you had me and I made it my
sacred mission to ensure you didn't
come up like I did. Hungry for love,
settling for crumbs. But if that's the
scenario you wanna use, you go right
ahead. I'll keep my thoughts to
myself.

TEENAGE MONICA

That would be a first.

GWEN

And it won't be the last. Technically,
you're grown, so perhaps it's time you
learned life's lessons without my
interference.

TEENAGE MONICA

I'm glad you finally realize that.

GWEN

Don't think I won't be here to protect
you. That's a mother's job, even when
her child no longer wants her
protection.

TEENAGE MONICA

I know you'll always be here to
protect me. I just wanna give this a
try. I wanna see if love can be
different for me than it was for you.

GWEN

My baby girl grew up so fast.
Sometimes I wish I could freeze time,
and keep you safe in this moment
forever.

TEENAGE MONICA

I'll always be your baby girl, Mama.
That will never change.

They embrace, letting their arms form a circle of
unconditional love.

GWEN

My baby girl. I hope this works out for you. I hope he deserves the treasure he's found in you.

TEENAGE MONICA

Thank you, Mama. Your blessing means everything to me.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Teenage Monica and Teenage Craig are going on random dates before they end up getting married.

Monica finds out she's pregnant, and Craig is overwhelmed with joy.

END MONTAGE:

Five months later...

INT. MONICA AND CRAIG'S HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Craig is sitting on the bed wearing a wife beater and shorts watching the basketball game with anguish on his face, rubbing his ankle.

Monica enters the room walking on sunshine, wearing a two-piece business suit, with her belly poking out.

She walks over to Craig and gives him a kiss on the cheek.

MONICA

How's my baby?

Craig suddenly feels like her presence is an intrusion into his private pain.

CRAIG

I'm okay.

MONICA

Are you hungry? I can make you a steak and baked potato.

CRAIG

Nope.

His eyes remain fixed on the screen, watching other men live the life he was denied.

MONICA

What's wrong, baby? You've been

distant lately.

CRAIG
Just leave me alone.

Monica's eyebrow rises in surprise.

MONICA
Attitude, much?

She brushes off his rudeness, heading toward the closet to change clothes.

Craig looks over with his cold eyes, sucking his teeth in disgust.

CRAIG
I'm bothered because I'm watching a career I'll never be able to pursue. Every day I have to live with throwing away my future for someone who can't even appreciate the sacrifice.

Monica turns to face him with empathy on her face.

MONICA
Baby, I understand your pain. I see how much it hurts you, but sadly, there's nothing we can do about that. We have to focus on the life we're building together.

CRAIG
(Scoffs)
I should've let what was about to happen go down. I should've minded my own business.

MONICA
Are you serious? You're saying you should have let me get raped?

Craig doesn't respond, and his silence is more damaging than any words.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Niggas will always be niggas, no matter how much they say '**I love you.**' It's so crazy because after they get what they want, the woman still ain't shit to them."

She storms toward the door, and Craig springs to his feet,

following behind her.

His hand clamps down on her arm as she reaches the landing.

CRAIG
What the fuck does that mean?

Monica yanks her arm free.

MONICA
Nobody asked you to intervene! Nobody
asked you to throw away your dreams
for me!

CRAIG
You're so stupid!

MONICA
Well, watch my stupid ass walk out the
door.

Monica turns to leave, and Craig's hand finds her arm again,
and his grip tightens until she gasps.

CRAIG
Where are you going? You're not going
anywhere!

Monica spins around, and her hand cracks across his face.

MONICA
Don't put your fucking hands on me!
You know damn well what I've been
through!

Craig's backhand is swift and brutal, connecting with her
cheek, sending her tumbling down the stairs.

She lands at the bottom and blood begins to pool beneath her.

Craig stands at the top of the stairs with his chest heaving.

CRAIG
What made you think you could talk to
me like you're crazy? I'm the man in
this relationship! You better remember
that! Do you hear me?"

Monica doesn't respond.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Mo, get up! I'm hungry, and you need
to get up and cook!

His voice echoes through the house, but there's no answer from the crumpled figure below.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Mo, don't let me tell you again.

He finally notices the blood spreading beneath her body.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
My baby...

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Within an hour and after surgery due to her miscarriage, Monica is lying on the hospital bed exhausted, with Deena beside her bed.

DEENA
What happened?

Monica turns her head away.

MONICA
I don't wanna talk about it.

"You don't wanna talk about it? You lost your baby, Monica. Your baby. And you don't wanna talk about it?"

Monica's gaze flicks back to meet Deena's.

MONICA
We got into it.

DEENA
And he had to put his hands on you?

MONICA
Who said he put his hands on me?

DEENA
So you tripped over your own feet and fell down the steps?

Monica swallows hard.

MONICA
That's exactly what happened.

DEENA
Are you comfortable with that lie?

Monica shuts her eyes tightly, and a single tear escapes.

MONICA

I'm comfortable because it's not a lie.

DEENA

Does he still go to that bar you told me about?

MONICA

Yeah.

The door creaks open and Craig enters the room.

CRAIG

How's she doing?

Deena's nostrils flare, and her entire body tenses.

DEENA

We'll talk when you get back to work.
All of a sudden, I feel sick.

She brushes past Craig without so much as a glance.

He watches her go, and then approaches Monica's bedside.

He reaches for her hand, but she pulls away as if his touch will burn.

CRAIG

I know what you're thinking. There's nothing I can say that'll justify my actions.

MONICA

You're damn right. I lost our first child because you had a moment of rage fueled by regrets of helping the woman you claim to love.

CRAIG

That's my fault. I was watching the game-

MONICA

And you decided to take it out on me?

CRAIG

I know sorry-

MONICA

Do you understand my child is gone?
Why should I have anything to do with
you?

Craig falls to his knees beside the bed, gripping her hand
despite her resistance.

CRAIG

Because I love you, and you love me.

MONICA

(Sighs heavy)

Our child would still be in the
process of coming into this world if
that was true.

CRAIG

I know you don't want anything to do
with me. And I know no matter how much
I apologize, it won't change the
situation. But I swear on my life,
I'll never do this again.

MONICA

The man I love would've never done
this.

CRAIG

I am the man you love.

Monica breaks down completely, pulling her hand free.

MONICA

I can't believe you.

CRAIG

All I'm asking is for one more chance.
Just say yes. I'm begging you. Say
you'll stay.

INT. MONICA AND CRAIG'S HOUSE - THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Monica is standing over the stove wearing something casual,
humming a tune while cooking dinner.

Craig staggers in drunk, wearing his construction uniform,
holding a bottle of vodka.

His eyes are red, and he can barely hold the saliva inside
his mouth.

He makes his way to the table and plops down on the seat.

CRAIG
(Drunk)
What's cooking?

Monica turns from the stove, forcing a brittle smile.

MONICA
Roast. Macaroni, green beans-

CRAIG
Okay, whatever.
(Takes a swig)
When will it be done?

MONICA
(Clears throat, nervously)
It'll be ready in a matter of minutes.
I'm waiting for the roast to get done.

Craig slowly shakes his head with disappointment.

CRAIG
You've been here all day and my dinner
ain't ready yet? What the hell were
you doing?

Monica takes an instinctive step back.

MONICA
I had to clean the house before I
started.

With a violent motion, he slings the bottle across the room,
and it shatters against the wall.

CRAIG
I want my meal hot and ready after
work! I don't wanna hear excuses!

MONICA
Craig-

CRAIG
Craig what?

He stands to his feet, and walks over grabbing her wrists
with a bruising force.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Craig what?! That's not putting a meal
in front of me!

Monica screams as he shakes her violently.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I know why my meal ain't ready! You were in here fuckin' another man!

MONICA

Craig, I swear-

He releases one wrist only to bring his hand across her face in a vicious slap that snaps her head to the side.

CRAIG

Shut up! I smell another man on you!
You wanna be with another man? I'll
make sure he wants the lights off.

Monica's screams fill the kitchen as he slaps her again before throwing her into the kitchen island.

She slumps to the floor, instinctively using her hands to shield her face from the next blow she knows is coming.

Craig slowly unbuckles his belt, and wraps it around his knuckles.

INT. THE OFFICE - MORNING

Monica is in her cubicle typing.

Pictures of her and Craig when they were happy are taped on the walls, along with sticky notes with various messages.

Monica pauses typing to make sure the bruise above her eye is covered.

Deena enters the room and walks over to Monica, placing a hand on her shoulder.

Monica jerks in fear, slowly turning around.

DEENA

Are you okay?

MONICA

(Nervous laugh)

I'm fine. I didn't get a lot of sleep
last night. You know how it is when
the husband can't get enough of what
you got.

Deena moves Monica's hair to the side and sighs, looking at the bruise.

DEENA

When does the wife get enough of her
husband beating her?

Monica moves Deena's hand, ashamed.

Deena walks over to an empty cubicle, grabs a chair and then
comes back placing it beside Monica.

MONICA

I don't know what you're talking
about.

DEENA

Girl, everybody knows. He's no longer
the loving high school sweetheart you
fell in love with.

MONICA

He's under a lot of stress. I'm the
woman of the house, so I should uphold
my job as far as keeping the house
clean and having dinner ready on time.
Because I slack in those areas
sometimes, we have our altercations.

DEENA

Mo, you can't believe what just came
from your mouth.

MONICA

It's the truth. I don't focus hard
enough on my duties as a wife.

DEENA

So, a beating justifies it?

Monica doesn't respond.

Because responding means examining the lie. And examining the
lie means confronting the truth. And the truth is too heavy
to carry right now.

DEENA (CONT'D)

(Sighs, shakes her head)

I can relate to your situation.

Monica stares at her with glossy eyes.

MONICA

What do you know about my situation?

Deena pulls down the neck part of her shirt, just enough to

see the scar on her chest from being stabbed.

Monica covers her mouth.

MONICA (CONT'D)

What happened?

DEENA

I was like you. I thought it was love
and nothing else in the world
mattered.

(Soft sob)

Thank God I survived, but I told
myself there's no love in the world
worth losing my life. When are you
gonna realize that?

Monica shakes her head in denial.

MONICA

It'll never go that far with us.

DEENA

I said the same thing. I was so
ashamed of myself for forcing myself
to believe that lie. You see I didn't
even tell you, and you're my best
friend.

MONICA

We love each other.

DEENA

He loves knowing his grip is so tight,
that you'll never leave. Can you
honestly tell me why you love him?

Monica doesn't respond, closing her eyes, letting the tears
fall.

Deena places a hand on her shoulder, feeling her pain.

DEENA (CONT'D)

Don't let what happened to me, or
worse happen to you. You're a
beautiful, intelligent woman. You
don't have to take abuse while making
yourself believe it's love.

Deena gets up and walks away.

Monica remains with her head down, weeping low, wiping the
tears from her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. MONICA AND CRAIG'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Monica is sitting on the sofa looking at old pictures of her and Craig in a scrapbook, wiping the tears from her face.

Craig comes in drunk wearing a basketball jersey and shorts, holding a bouquet of roses, leaning up against the wall.

CRAIG
(Drunk)
Baby, I'm home.

Monica sighs, setting the scrapbook aside with trembling hands.

MONICA
(Low tone)
Hey.

CRAIG
I know I was out of line last night.
And I know there's nothing I can do or
say to make you forgive me. But... I
have something that'll prove I'll
never hurt you again.

Monica's finger rises to the tender bruise.

MONICA
Do you think roses can heal this? Do
you think roses can mend the invisible
scars you've placed into my soul with
your lies and fists?

Craig moves forward, and his knees hit the hardwood floor, placing the roses on the sofa beside her.

CRAIG
I understand what you're saying, baby.
I do.

MONICA
What happened to the man I fell in
love with? The man I gave my heart to
without reservation because I believed
he loved me as fiercely as I loved
him?

CRAIG
It's my fault you lost him. I lost
myself somewhere in the darkness, and

by doing that, I lost my true love.
That's why I have this.

His hand disappears into his pocket, emerging with a small red box.

The lid opens with a soft click, revealing a diamond ring.

MONICA
(Gasps)
Oh, my God.

CRAIG
Today marks our anniversary.

MONICA
Craig-

CRAIG
Don't say anything. Just know that
from this moment forward, I'll never
hurt you again. I swear on my life.

Monica's tears fall like rain as she melts into his arms,
letting her lips find his face in desperate kisses.

But then her expression changes, and her nose wrinkles as an
unwelcome scent invades her senses.

MONICA
What's that smell?

She pulls back.

CRAIG
What smell?

MONICA
Unless you're exploring your feminine side, which I seriously
doubt. Why do you smell like another woman?"

She pushes him away.

CRAIG
Baby, I don't know what you're talking
about.

MONICA
Right. So these scratches on your neck
mean what exactly?

Without warning, she grabs the roses and strikes him across

the head.

She rises from the sofa with feline grace.

Craig scrambles to his feet.

CRAIG

Baby, let me explain.

Monica pauses, but she doesn't turn around.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I was with the guys playing ball, and
I got scratched up playing defense.
After we won, some women were trying
to hug me, so, that's why I smell like
perfume.

Monica turns slowly.

MONICA

You're pathetic. Why can't you be a
man for once and own up to what you've
done?

Craig's expression hardens.

CRAIG

Is that what you wanna hear?

MONICA

It's not about what I wanna hear. It's
about you telling me the truth for
once in your miserable life.

CRAIG

Fine. I was with another woman
tonight. Actually, I've been with
different women for the past few
months, and you won't do anything
about it because you know better. Now,
get your ass upstairs and get in bed.

MONICA

You're a worthless excuse for a man.
I'm actually grateful you knocked me
down those stairs and killed our
unborn child. It would have destroyed
me to watch our baby grow up and
realize their father is nothing but a
piece of shit like his own pathetic
father.

Craig lunges forward, and Monica lets her foot connect with devastating precision between his legs, sending him crashing to the floor in a heap of groaning agony.

MONICA (CONT'D)

You're so predictable. I'll be back to collect my things, but you can keep my heart. Let it remind you every day of the good woman you destroyed because you weren't man enough for her.

She walks out of the room.

CRAIG

Monica! Monica, get back here! I'm gonna kill you! I swear to God, I'm gonna kill you!

CUT TO:

INT. GWEN'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - LATER

Monica and Gwen are sitting on the sofa as Monica wipes the tears from her eyes.

MONICA

I can't believe this. How did I let it get this far?

GWEN

Baby, I tried to tell you it was something about him. From the very beginning, something in his eyes didn't sit right with me.

MONICA

Mama, it's not the time for that.

GWEN

Do you enjoy getting smacked in the face with everything but the truth? Because that's what you've been doing, sweetheart.

MONICA

How can you say that at a time like this?

GWEN

The same way you took those beatings. The same way you lost your child. Baby, I love you to death, you know that. But how can you not listen to

someone who's been around the world more than once? Someone who's seen this dance before?

MONICA

I'm a product of that old saying, **'love is blind.'**

GWEN

(Soft laugh)

That's not what you're a product of, honey. You're a product of stupidity.

MONICA

Mama, come on.

GWEN

You're a tad bit on the stupid side when it comes to men. You loved him for being your prince charming to the rescue. The good looks. The charm. The sex.

(Coy snicker)

How was the sex, anyway? I heard those tall boys-

MONICA

(Laughs)

Mama, please!

GWEN

(Laughs)

Sorry, baby. But what you thought was love back then was nothing more than spur of the moment infatuation. You told me to let you handle it, and I did. Against my better judgment, I stepped back. Do you remember what I told you my mother told me?

MONICA

You told me a lot of things she said.

GWEN

But this one stuck, didn't it? A real man never puts his hands on a woman. A real man loves his woman for more than just an object. More than just something pretty to have on his shoulder. He loves her for being his partner, his equal. Making sure they both stand strong together.

MONICA

(Sighs deeply)

What do I do now, Mama? I feel so lost.

GWEN

Are you happy you're still alive?

MONICA

Yes. God, yes.

GWEN

Then that's all that matters right now. Everything else from here on out is your new beginning.

MONICA

Thanks, Mama.

GWEN

No need to thank me. I should've stepped in sooner before it went this far. I should've trusted my instincts instead of respecting your independence.

MONICA

There's no one to blame but myself. I saw the signs when he told me about his parents, and how his father treated his mother. I didn't expect him to go through the same cycle, but I should've. Hell, we're reliving his parents' relationship down to the last detail.

GWEN

You don't feel like I let you down? Like I failed you as a mother?

MONICA

Mama, I let myself down. I remember when I asked him why his mother couldn't move on from his father. I mean, look at what's happening to me. I became her.

GWEN

I feel like I should've done something more. I should've made you see-

MONICA

Being here for me now is the best

thing you can do. Just being here, not judging me, letting me figure this out.

GWEN

I love you, baby. More than you'll ever know.

MONICA

I love you, too. You don't mind if your baby stays here for a few days? Just until I can figure out my next move?

GWEN

No matter how old you get, and no matter what mistakes you make, this will always be your home.

Monica sniffles, wiping her eyes with the back of her hand before pulling out her phone. Her fingers shake slightly making a call.

MONICA

Hey, Deena? Can you meet me at my house in twenty minutes? I need to get some things... And I'll tell you all about it when we link up. You still have the key I gave you, right?

(Listens)

Good. I might need moral support.

(Listens)

Yeah, I'm finally doing it. I'm finally leaving him.

CUT TO:

INT. MONICA AND CRAIG'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - LATER

Monica enters the house and tries to creep upstairs, while Craig lies on the sofa.

A bottle of vodka is resting on the table.

When she gets to the steps, he sits up and grabs the bottle, taking a sip.

CRAIG

It's about time you came home.

She turns around with a stone cold face.

MONICA

This is not my home. That feeling left a long time ago. I was just naive and didn't hand over the keys.

He takes another sip and then stands up.

CRAIG

This is your home! Now, like I told you earlier! Get your ass up those stairs, get in bed and take what I have to give you.

MONICA

At one point, I loved you and didn't wanna lose you. But my eyes are open now, and I realize it was neither of those reasons. I was afraid to not love you because of what you would've done to me. I didn't wanna leave because I knew you would torment me until I came back. But here's something I know you're not expecting to hear. I'm no longer your recyclable object. I'm about to get my few things and start a new life... Without you!

CRAIG

You think it's that easy?! You think you can come in here all high and mighty without repercussions?!

MONICA

There's nothing you can do or say that'll knock me down.

CRAIG

You'll get knocked down if I come over there and go upside your head.

MONICA

You do what you need to do.

She starts to walk up the stairs, and he runs over and grabs her, causing her to turn around and push him back, followed by a slap across the face.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Don't you ever put your hands on me again! I'll be damned if I continue being your punching bag! You put another finger on me, and one of us has to go.

A sinister smile spreads across his face.

CRAIG
One of us has to go?

MONICA
That's what I-

His fist connects with the side of her head.

The force lifts Monica off her feet, crashing hard against the banister, falling to the floor.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Get up! I've done worse than this!
Stop playing!
(Kicks her)
Monica?

Silence answers him.

DEENA (O.S.)
Mo?

Craig looks around in fear before running out of the room.

Deena enters and sees Monica lying motionless.

She quickly runs over to her.

DEENA (CONT'D)
I told you!

Deena drops to her knees and holds her dead friend in her arms, rocking back and forth, crying.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BAR - LATER

A half an hour later in the bar, the atmosphere is somber as jazz music plays.

With each shot Craig takes, he shakes his head in sorrow.

CRAIG
I can't believe I did that.

Deena walks in with a stone-cold expression, making her way towards Craig, stopping behind him.

DEENA
You're a worthless bastard.

Craig is confused, but he doesn't turn around to see the face behind the voice.

CRAIG
Who is that?

DEENA
Don't even look at me until I say so.

She pulls a snub nose out and cocks it, placing it on the back of his head, causing everybody in the bar to scream and drop to the floor.

He tries to turn around, and she presses the gun harder against his head.

DEENA (CONT'D)
What the fuck did I just tell you?!

CRAIG
What do you want?

DEENA
I want you to feel helpless. If I had the time, I'd beat your ass. But for now...
(Scoffs)
Savor these last few moments of your useless life.

Craig registers Deena's voice.

CRAIG
Listen. I didn't mean-

DEENA
You meant it. You meant every bruise you put on her, along with every ounce of her dignity you took, leading to her murder.

CRAIG
(Sobbing)
I didn't mean to kill her. She said something that hurt my pride.

DEENA
Pride?! What man beats on a woman and then turns around and says he has pride?

CRAIG
I honestly can't tell you.

DEENA

Turn around and look at me. These eyes
filled with hate will be the last
thing you see.

He turns around with tears pouring down his face, staring
into the barrel of the gun.

CRAIG

I guess I deserve this.

DEENA

You deserve a beating. You deserve a
destroyed soul with the scars to
match. That's what you deserve.

CRAIG

Can I say one more thing?

DEENA

What?

CRAIG

I did love-

She fires a round in his head, and he falls back against the
bar, falling to the floor dead.

Everyone screams.

She takes his seat and picks up one of his shots, tilting it
back.

Placing the gun on the counter, she waits for the police to
arrive.

FADE TO BLACK:

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD: CONCEITED

BEGIN DAYDREAM SEQUENCE:

FADE IN:

INT. BRIDAL SUITE - AFTERNOON

Inside the bridal suite, Maryi admires herself in the mirror,
waiting to walk down the aisle so she can exchange vows with
her husband.

The beautiful twenty-four-year-old is short in height and has

a peanut butter complexion.

She's wearing a baby blue dress that matches her nails.

Her light brown, long dreadlocks look marvelous on her shoulders.

MARYI (V.O.)

This is my day. This man has changed me. I'm entirely grateful for this blessing. When a man gives a woman true happiness, nothing can ever tarnish it.

Knowing she's a mouth-watering vision of beauty, she pushes up her large, perky breast, followed by running her hands down her slim waist.

She lifts her dress and stares at the baby blue garter belt with a fancy bow.

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

I didn't want to wear a garter, but my hubby insisted. He feels that when he takes it off and tosses it. Whoever catches it should be lucky. I was skeptical, but he said, "If they want to fantasize, let them."

(Pats her chest)

Hearing his warming words makes my desire for him stronger by the second.

With a sinful smile, she blows herself a kiss.

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

My husband said there's no need for a veil covering my beauty. He believes wearing a veil means I have something to hide, and we don't hide things from each other. He knows my past, my fears and what I love. He utilizes what he knows to make sure I remain happy and the pain from my past is never experienced again.

(Soft, joyous laugh)

Ah, I love my husband so much. He satisfies me. He makes me feel protected and loved. Without him, I would've still been sharing my goodies with men who didn't deserve me. But the past is in the past, and now my life is filled with heaven's kisses.

She begins posing, and it's hard to decipher if she's getting aroused by staring at herself or thinking about how her husband will devour her body on their honeymoon.

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

We decided on baby blue because we're not virgins, so why destroy a blissful occasion by faking what we're not? As most of us know, the color blue represents "loyalty." That's what we have between us. For better or worse, we're each other's shadows. We share the same heart.

She blows herself one more kiss and then walks to the door, pausing.

She looks down at a piece of paper folded on the table.

Picking up the paper and unfolding it, she releases a passionate sigh.

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

Truthfully, I don't need to read this because I know every word by heart. I just like looking it over, since the words I'll be saying will come directly from my heart as I stare into my husband's eyes.

(Clears her throat)

Taking a breath without inhaling every fiber of you causes my lungs to collapse. My thoughts become misty if I don't see you every waking day because you are my life.

There's a knock at the door.

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

This is it. It's time to become one with my husband.

She opens the door and walks out.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The church is filled with people wiping tears of happiness from their eyes, waiting for Maryi to come down the aisle while some music plays.

Maryi enters with her father, and everyone focuses on them as

they walk down the aisle.

The sound of people sniffing is heard with smiles on their faces.

Reaching the altar, where her husband stands facing the preacher, Mary's father walks off.

The music comes to a stop, and the room becomes silent.

PREACHER

We're gathered here on this beautiful day to celebrate a union of love between these two young people, who deserve this more than anyone could imagine. God is looking down on them, blessing them with his love, the same as everyone here today. Let us rejoice in their happiness.

A thunderous applause and amen are heard throughout the church.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

The lovely couple would like to recite their vows. Maryi, you can tell your husband what's in your heart.

Maryi clears her throat, and when she turns to face him...

END DAYDREAM SEQUENCE:

INT. MARYI'S HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

She wakes up from her daydream, realizing she's in her room, lying in bed, holding her phone.

A ding goes off, and she looks at the message, which reads...

INSERT PHONE SCREEN

You wouldn't be in this situation if you were loyal. I treated you differently from the other guys you dated, but that wasn't enough. I didn't treat you as a one-night stand, and that wasn't enough. I was your best friend and lover. But you treated me like another trophy. You can't miss what you don't love, which is yourself. I have no hard feelings. I wish you the best. But kindly leave me alone just as easily as you cheated.

A teardrop falls on the screen.

She closes the text message screen to look at a picture of

her and her ex-man laid back against a headboard, smiling with her arms wrapped around the handsome, light-skinned man.

Turning the phone off and placing it on the bed, she gets up crying, walking over to her mirror.

Her hair is frizzy, and the tears running down her face have her makeup running.

MARYI (V.O.)

Displaying yourself as easy is all fun and games until you meet the one who wants you to prove it. It's cool at first until you wake up and realize you're cheating yourself. All men don't follow the hype, wanting something easy. You would think you're a rock in a tight space, but you're not.

She sits at the vanity, pulling her hair back into a ponytail.

She picks up some wipes and takes a few out, wiping the makeup from her face.

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

When a man approaches you, you can tell his intentions by his introduction. If he's consistently calling you, dying to get to know you better and listening to your good and bad stories without giving him any, he's the one. But... you have to watch it because there are men who play the role, and as soon as you give him some, they're gone. If you've been down this road more than once, there's no excuse why you continue going back without admitting this is what you love.

After removing the makeup, she remains beautiful, but the pain in her heart is seen in her eyes.

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

Everyone craves sex, but it's more abused than appreciated. That's how I ruined my relationship with the man who loved me. He wasn't the best I ever had, but how could I truly say this without giving him the chance to learn my body like he learned my mind?

(She sighs)
This is why people can't find
satisfaction in one person. We're busy
seeking what we want, thinking the
people we meet will come perfectly
wrapped, and that's far from true.
Ladies, the men we call dogs are high
in numbers because we chase after
dogs, letting them mark their
territory, leaving us high and dry.
What do we do? We complain and talk
about the next woman dating a dog
instead of helping her out of the
situation. When the dust clears, we
see the same road we walked down,
prepared for us to take another trip.
And without hesitation, we're back
down that road. We love our hearts
getting broken instead of giving a
different type of man a chance to show
us a new road.

She remains crying.

FADE TO BLACK:

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD: ONLY TOWARDS YOU

FADE IN:

INT. THE CHURCH - MORNING

The room is empty, and a closed casket rests in front of the room.

DONNA, a beautiful light skin woman with long curly hair wearing something casual comes into the room.

She's carrying a folding chair in her left hand, and in the right she's holding a gift bag with three white roses sticking out.

Reaching the casket, she places the bag down, and then unfolds the chair, propping it beside the casket.

She takes a seat on the chair.

Grief heavily outlines her face.

DONNA
I won't say I didn't see this coming

because I did. I will say I was hoping you'd smarten up, but look at us now.

(Soft chuckle)

Don't worry, I won't lecture you. You didn't listen while you were alive, so why would you listen now?

(Low chuckle)

Do you remember our plans? Do you remember we said we'll grow old together while sitting on the beach looking back laughing at all the fun we had?

She lowers her head sighing, but somehow manages to get a slight delightful laugh out.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I don't have a lot of time, so let me get this off my chest. You know how we get down, so I don't want everybody in our business.

She pulls out a cute little diary from the bag, and places it on her lap.

The way she places her hand on the cover with the brightest smile, we can tell what's in the book makes her feel special.

DONNA (CONT'D)

The first few pages had me in tears reading about the abuse you went through. No one believed you were getting molested as child causing your thoughts of suicide. Fast-forwarding to when we met, it verified you loved me, until...

She releases a sarcastic chuckle, shaking her head.

She opens the diary flipping through the pages.

DONNA (CONT'D)

...Our friendship and what I thought was love was a lie. You dragged me through the mud behind my back, but made sure I was clean when we were together. Why were you talking about me behind my back? You thought I wanted the little boy who placed you here? I'm calling him a little boy because you and I both know he's far from a man.

(Scoffs)

You thought I wanted him, and I was
the only one telling you, you should
leave him alone?

She takes a moment gathering her thoughts, thinking of how
her friend died believing she would betray her weighs heavy
on the heart.

After a few more seconds, she does a low sniffle looking down
at the diary, and then the casket shaking her head.

DONNA (CONT'D)

You were the sister I wish I had
growing up, and I thought you felt the
same about me. But... I guess the love
from a man's penis is thicker than a
bond between friends, and longer than
the rough road I went down with you.

No longer able to hold back her tears, she places her hands
over her face crying.

Sulking in sorrow, she keeps her hands over her face as we
listen to the cries.

Finally calming her emotions, she slowly drags her hands down
her face along with the tears.

Taking one last look at the diary, she sighs deeply, placing
it on the floor.

She goes back in the bag, but this time she pulls out a
picture frame.

From feeling sad, she looks at the picture smiling, delighted
with humor.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I remember when I took this picture.
It was the day before your birthday,
and we decided we should celebrate the
day before and on your birthday. Me
being me, I thought it was a ladies
night out.

(Scoffs)

I was uncomfortable, and you saw it on
my face. But because you were my best
friend, I went along with it. For some
reason you just knew he was the one.

She stands up staring at the picture.

Continuing to stare at the picture, she just shakes her head,

placing it on top of the casket.

We see the picture has been ripped in half, leaving the image of a dark skin muscular man wearing a tank top.

The smile on his face signifies whatever he was doing, he was enjoying himself.

She continues staring at the picture.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Look at him. Look how happy he looks.
I had to remove you from the picture.
I felt it would be inappropriate
showing the miserable person in what
was supposedly a happy relationship.

(Laughs)

This was the day before your birthday.
...You were perfectly happy until you
told him our location. It went from
being fun, to all about him within
seconds.

She points her finger at the picture, shaking it with deep emotions.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I caught a bad vibe from you right off
the back when you approached her. No
man with genuine intentions would
approach a woman with that typical
line, and then laugh as if you were
playing, knowing you were serious.
But... I understand why your approach
was so basic. Women these days love
hearing trash thinking it's cute.

(Scoffs)

Unfortunately for my best friend...
well, the woman I thought was my best
friend. In her case she had no idea of
what she was stepping into. She was
desperately seeking love. What she
thought she wanted in a man, she
thought she found it in you.

She places her hand up towards the picture as if he's about to speak, and she's telling him to stop.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Do you wanna know what makes this sad?
The day she found out your money was a
mirage, your loyalty was less than a
grain of sand and your street

portrayal was only relevant when it came to the fights between you and her.

(Scoffs)

But... the day before her birthday should've been her sign you were no good. Sadly... she stayed with you, thinking the dream of happiness she searched for finally came true. ...She also forgot no matter how many good dreams you have, a nightmare is always right around the corner.

Still staring at the picture, she just shakes her head before turning her attention back to the gift bag.

She reaches inside, and then pauses for a moment, as if something is holding her back from the item she wants to retrieve.

After a few seconds, she pulls her clenched hand from the bag, and the tears start falling again.

With her clenched hand, she rubs it across her brow in aggravation still crying, trying to grasp why she's in this situation.

Slowly lowering her hand, she opens it revealing a pair of torn blood stained panties.

DONNA (CONT'D)

(Sobbing)

This was some birthday gift he gave you. You kept telling him no, and he still took what he wanted. Due to your past nobody believed he raped you. And with him saying it was something you wanted because you saw it in a movie didn't make it any better. What virgin would want her first time aggressively violent?

(Sniffles)

Even with me going down to the police station filing a report with you, it didn't do you any good. I was the only one who believed you, and you stabbed me through the heart and in the back.

She gently places the panties beside the picture.

While she continues sobbing, she pats the panties before taking her seat.

DONNA (CONT'D)

From that point on people thought you were sprung on his sex, when in reality you had no choice in the matter. Whenever he wanted it, and how he wanted it was no longer an option for you. The day he proposed a threesome between me, you and him, and I turned him down before he could even think about attempting to persuade me. I guess that's when you began thinking I wanted him behind your back.

(Laughs)

I guess I can't blame you. He was sleeping with any and everything behind your back, and sometimes blatantly in front of you. Why? Not just because you bragged on him so much, but he knew you wouldn't stand your ground and leave or speak back. That's when he got you turned out on women because you had no choice but to join in the threesomes he wanted to have.

(Scoffs)

The irony is within that same week, that's when he convinced you to stop communicating with me. Once he did that... there was no stopping him. He had full control over you, and that's why we're sitting here talking like this.

She begins pacing back and forth, shaking her head, sobbing, regretting the entire aspect of why she's speaking with her dead friend, instead of trying to do something to prevent what happened.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Why didn't I do something? Why did I let him stop me from helping you, and you were my sister? Who made him God, and decided our bond should end?

She pauses, and starts rubbing her chin looking around.

As if a light bulb just went off in her head, she looks up in the air snapping her fingers, knowing she has the answer.

DONNA (CONT'D)

My mother told me when I was younger there's nothing wrong with helping people, but you can't help those who

don't help themselves. That's why I didn't push harder to help you. That's why I was submissive when you told me he said we couldn't talk, but I knew you truthfully didn't wanna go through with what he said. ...In your mind, which was his mind welded into yours... when you met him, and all of what he put you through... you came to the conclusion that you didn't need me anymore.

Still pondering as if she has something else she wants to speak on, she finally smiles, taking a seat.

As she continues to laugh, she reaches down in the bag, grabbing the three roses.

Holding the roses in her left hand, she taps her heart as if she's placing the blame of what happened to her friend on herself, but in actuality, she's acknowledging what she's about to say, feeling she won't be in the wrong.

She glances at her watch, and then she looks at the roses cracking somewhat of a smile.

DONNA (CONT'D)

My time is almost up. Well... I brought you three roses. Two for each crucial moment in your life, and one personally from me. The first rose I'll place down is for your miscarriage only you and I know about.

She places one of the roses on the casket.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Despite him knowing you were pregnant, he would still beat on you, and make you smoke and drink. You had the ability to birth a new life, and you still loved him more than yourself, and your own child. So, this rose is for the life of an innocent child who didn't deserve what happened.

(Scoffs)

This next rose is for the everlasting gift he gave you.

She places another rose on the casket.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Being loyal to a clown got you one

thing I'm guessing he made sure you'll keep. Herpes was the only true gift he gave you without hesitation. Another secret kept between me and you. In a strange sense, even if you did move on, it would've been hard considering what he gave you. True, there's medications for it, but it's embarrassing revealing this to someone.

(Sniffles)
This last one...

She places the final rose on the casket.

DONNA

Here's mine from me to you. I love myself the same way I loved you, if not more. I wish you loved yourself like you loved him, and maybe you'd still be here. Then again... maybe this was the only way you could escape the pain in your life. Only you know the truth. But, I'll tell you this much. No matter how much you talked about me behind my back, I'll forever love you. I wish you were here with me now, but we can't always have what we want, nor can we question what apparently was meant to happen. I hope wherever you're at, you're at peace.

She walks to the head of the casket, and then turns around gripping both sides, slowly placing her head down on the casket in a loving manner, closing her eyes.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I hope what he put you through happens to him while he rots in jail. It didn't take long for the jury to convict him. Aside from him getting what he deserves... It was funny watching him kicking and crying as they dragged him off, saying what happened was an accident. I loved her.

(Chuckles)
So, my last few words to you are... the image you believed was true was an act. He was only tough towards you because you allowed him.

She places a soft kiss on the casket, and then slowly stands straight.

DONNA (CONT'D)
I love you. Until we meet again.

As she wipes her eyes, she begins making her way to the doors.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE CHURCH - MORNING

Now, the room is filled with grieving family and friends.

Standing in front of the casket is Donna's friend BRITTANY wearing a black dress with her hair down.

As tears run down her pretty brown cheeks, we notice the gift bag with the three white roses sticking out beside her foot.

Resting on the casket is the picture we saw earlier, only now we see Donna standing next to her boyfriend, and as it was explained, he's the only one looking happy in the picture.

Just from looking at Brittany, we sense it's taking a lot for her to be here mourning her dead friend.

BRITTANY
(Sobbing)
...I'm sorry for taking so long, but understand, she was more than a friend. She was the sister I wish I had.

She reaches down in the gift bag, and pulls out a piece of paper.

As she looks it over, she takes a deep breath, and then slowly exhales.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
Before I begin with my poem, I would just like to say...
(Deep breath)
I won't say I didn't see this coming because I did. I was just hoping she would've opened her eyes before it came to this point.
(Sniffles)
I would also like to say, I brought an item that might offend some, but her family has to know the pain she went through that was ignored. I also have her diary with me, which will back up my words.

(Sniffles, clears throat)
With that said... I'll start with my
poem. I call it only towards you.

Gaining her focus, she glances down at the paper, and then
back up at the people.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
A spider's web has many layers,
catching you off guard if you're not
aware, once snared, the complication
of escaping becomes aware. A predator
in its own nature creating this
contraption for survival, feeding on
its victim until it goes idle, this
metaphor will be flipped so it can
reflect you two as an item. You
blindly flew into the web, and now
we're here saying goodbye to you. His
eyes spoke the lies salivating the
cortex of your mind, while his lips
adored the confusion he installed in
your mind, a beautiful presentation of
lies, Within minutes, your heart was
no longer yours, clutched in the cold
grasp of his hands due to his
perfectly orchestrated lies. The oil
painting was ruined by your own tears
streaming down your face. Your inner
beauty of light is going dim, taking
the mental and physical abuse from
him, you know it doesn't matter to
him, destroying your beauty and
vaginal hem are the only things that
mattered to him. The fly caught on the
spider's web. Seconds away from your
eternal bed, apologies won't bring you
back from the dead, you allowed his
nonsense to linger in your head, and
he made sure by any means his presence
was the only thing lurking in your
head, and now you're dead. He's crying
lies of apologies on his jail bed. My
tears are lacing every word now, which
I should've told you before you ended
up dead. He only acted that way
towards you because you refused to get
rid of him.

She wipes her eyes, taking a nice breather, staring at the
people in their chairs.

They're silent for the moment digesting her words before

slowly starting to clap.

As the clapping grows louder, we slowly fade out.

BLACK SCREEN:

"Without a real friend watching your back, it'll always be exposed for a dagger to easily stab you."

Bernard Mersier

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD: SOUR 3SUM

FADE IN:

INT. THE RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Indistinct talk can be heard from the few customers dining inside the old-fashioned-style restaurant, and cars can be seen through the windows resting in the parking lot or driving past.

Angela and David. A lovely Puerto Rican couple in their mid-thirties are sitting at a booth by the window with a basket of breadsticks on their table.

Angela has a petite body, long black hair and hazel eyes.

David has a nice build and curly hair styled into a low fade.

David grabs her hand, causing her to look at him.

DAVID

I love you so much.

ANGELA

I love you, too.

DAVID

Have you decided on the steak, or are you getting something else?

ANGELA

I'll go with the steak since you mentioned it.

DAVID

You'll end up putting weight on those thighs.

ANGELA
(Laughs)
You'll love it, so shut up.

He releases her hand, smiling.

DAVID
You're right about that.

While they continue talking, a petite brown-skinned waitress in her early twenties named Nicole comes to their table, glowing with happiness.

Angela is so wrapped up in love that she doesn't notice Nicole giving David a seductive eye wink.

NICOLE
Is the lovely couple ready to order?

ANGELA
Yes. Can I have your porterhouse steak medium rare with a baked potato?

NICOLE
You sure can. And for you, sir?

DAVID
I'll have the same with a side of macaroni.

Nicole writes down the orders.

NICOLE
Sounds great. Would you like anything to drink?

ANGELA
I'll have a Sprite.

DAVID
I'll have a Coke, please.

When she's finished writing the order, she winks at David again on the sly.

NICOLE
Okay. I'll place your orders, and I'll be right back with those drinks.

Nicole walks off.

ANGELA
This steak better be good.

DAVID
Have any of my suggestions been wrong?

ANGELA
What does that have to do with the
quality of the steak?

DAVID
(Laughs)
I'm about to hit the bathroom. Don't
eat all of the breadsticks.

ANGELA
And if I do?

DAVID
I'll spank that ass.

ANGELA
Stop looking for excuses to touch my
ass. You love doing it, so do it.

DAVID
You're too much.

He stands up from the booth, heading to the bathroom, and
when he opens the door, Nicole grabs him from the side,
pulling him in, pressing him against the wall, kissing him
passionately.

He embraces her for a second and then pulls away.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You better cut it out before you get
it in this stall.

NICOLE
What's stopping you?

DAVID
You're too goddamn loud.

She smiles, pulling out a dishcloth from her apron.

NICOLE
I can bite down on this.

DAVID
(Low laugh)
Just messy.

NICOLE
So...

Glides her hand across his face

Are you giving me some dick now or later?

DAVID

How would I look going back to the table, smelling like pussy?

NICOLE

I doubt she'll notice.

He looks at her, raising his eyebrow.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

(Bashfully laugh)

Okay. But she is sexy, just like in the pictures you showed me. Did you talk to her about joining us?

DAVID

I'll do it on the way home.

NICOLE

You need to hurry up. I want you sexy motherfuckers in bed with me, doing whatever y'all wanna do.

DAVID

What am I gonna do with you?

NICOLE

Fuck me while I'm licking her.

He takes a deep breath and grabs his crotch.

DAVID

Let me get back out here. I'll talk to you later.

She sticks her tongue out in a provocative manner.

NICOLE

Let me lick the tip.

He gives her a kiss, followed by caressing her face.

DAVID

Another time. Can you bring our food, please?

NICOLE

(Blushes, licking her lips)

I sure will.

He walks out, and she stands, blushing.

David returns, taking his seat, looking at Angela, smiling.

ANGELA

It took you long enough.

DAVID

Did you miss me?

ANGELA

No. I was bored, and nothing on the internet caught my attention.

DAVID

(Laughs)

Oh, I'm supposed to entertain you?

ANGELA

You're supposed to love me, make sure I'm safe, comfortable and satisfy my sexual urges. You can't satisfy my urges right now, so entertain me.

DAVID

Straight up?

ANGELA

It better be up when we get home.

DAVID

Freaky ass.

ANGELA

And?

DAVID

Let me shut up.

ANGELA

You do that. I need your mouth fully functional when we get home.

They lean over the table, kissing each other.

CUT TO:

INT. ANGELA AND DAVID'S HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

While lying under the covers in the tranquil room with the television on low, Angela and David just finished taking a picture while kissing.

ANGELA

The way you satisfy me... I'm glad you took your shot.

DAVID

You're giving me too much credit.

ANGELA

I'm giving you the credit that's due. If your dick wasn't hitting on shit, I woulda been done with you after the first night.

DAVID

You're only with me for dick?

Angela taps him gently on the chest, with a shy laugh.

ANGELA

You know I love you.

DAVID

Did you think about what I asked?

ANGELA

That threesome shit?

DAVID

Don't you think it would be fun?

ANGELA

I haven't given it much thought. The idea of sleeping with another woman never crossed my mind.

DAVID

Don't look at it that way. Look at it as exploring a new sexual side in our marriage.

ANGELA

I guess. I'm about to use the bathroom. When I come back, I'm going to bed.

She gets out of bed naked, making her way to the door, and David sits up, smiling.

DAVID

Look at that beautiful woman right there.

She stops, and turns back around.

ANGELA
And she's all yours.

She walks out of the room, and the smile on David's face vanishes, knowing he's wrong for cheating on his wife, releasing a sigh.

INT. THE RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

David is sitting in the booth wearing a suit, looking out the window at the traffic, with a steak and baked potato on his plate in front of him, and a glass of orange juice.

Focusing back on his plate, he takes a bite from his steak, followed by a sip of juice, when Nicole comes over to the table and places a note down.

He picks up the note, which says...

INSERT NOTE

I got the room for the night. Is she ready?

With a straight face, he looks at her.

DAVID
I was looking for the bill.

NICOLE
It's already paid for. I'm ready to get this threesome jumping.

DAVID
Is that right?

NICOLE
Does it look or sound like I'm playing?

DAVID
(Sighs)
It's not happening. She's not feeling it.

NICOLE
You have to try harder, baby. How hard can it be?

DAVID
You don't know my wife.

NICOLE
I gotta get back to work. Call and let

me know what we're doing.

She walks off, and he sighs, taking a sip of juice.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Angela is alone in the company lounge, drinking coffee while scrolling through her phone, when Wendy, a pretty woman with caramel skin and a little on the hefty side enters the room taking a seat next to Angela.

WENDY

What's going on, girl?

Placing her phone down, Angela looks at her, releasing a sigh of exhaustion.

ANGELA

I'm ready to go home and relax in my bed.

WENDY

I hear that. What's the conclusion?

ANGELA

That's not in our future.

WENDY

But you love your husband, right?

ANGELA

What the fuck does love have to do with it? Do you and your husband have threesomes?

WENDY

If he were into it, we would.

ANGELA

What?

WENDY

When I get the urge, I slide off with a sexy female. But he feels like you. Women shouldn't sleep with other women.

ANGELA

I should've met his ass because we're on the same script.

WENDY

Sleeping with a woman is the same process as sleeping with a man. Who knows our bodies better than us?

Angela is silent, taking a sip of her coffee.

Wendy places her hand under the table on Angela's thigh, and Angela quickly gets offended, standing up.

ANGELA

What the fuck is wrong with you?

Wendy is a bit startled, but she gains her composure.

WENDY

Angela, calm down. Okay, I came at you wrong, but look at you. Who wouldn't want their hands on you?

ANGELA

I appreciate the compliment, but that wasn't the move.

WENDY

I understand where you're coming from. Let me ask this. If I were a man who touched you and you found me attractive, would your reaction be the same?

ANGELA

It would've been worse.

Wendy stands up with a smile.

WENDY

Angela, you don't know what you're missing.

Wendy walks out of the room, and Angela takes a sip, shaking her head.

CUT TO:

INT. ANGELA'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

After work, Angela is listening to music on her way home with happiness written on her face.

As she continues driving, David's name pops up, and she answers the call.

ANGELA
What's up, baby?

DAVID (OVER THE SPEAKER)
Where are you?

ANGELA
I'm on my way home as we speak.

DAVID (OVER THE SPEAKER)
Did you change your mind about the situation?

ANGELA
(Scoffs)
After the day I had, I don't ever wanna hear shit else about a threesome.

DAVID (OVER THE SPEAKER)
What happened?

ANGELA
Didn't I just say I don't wanna talk about it?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Cars are parked on both sides of the street, and some are in the driveways of the quiet middle-class neighborhood.

David comes from the house wearing a button-up and slacks, walking down the steps, eager to get where he's going, walking over to the beige Chrysler 300 parked in the driveway.

DAVID
Okay, okay. What do you wanna do for the night?

ANGELA (V.O.)
Relax in my bed. Why, what's up?

David approaches the driver's door, prepared to open it.

DAVID
Because I need to run over to Jay's house.

As she cruises down the street, she pulls over to the side when she sees how clean David looks, and he's supposed to be

going over to his friend's house.

ANGELA

What are y'all about to do?

David gets in the car, starts it up, and pulls out.

DAVID (OVER THE SPEAKER)

Just shoot the shit and probably have
a few drinks. I can stay home if you
want.

ANGELA

Oh no, go chill with your friend. I'll
make something to eat and wait for you
to get home.

DAVID (OVER THE SPEAKER)

I love you.

She hangs up and waits a few seconds before finally pulling
out, following behind him.

They're driving for a while as anger pulsates through her
body.

David finally pulls into the parking lot of a seedy motel and
comes to a stop.

Angela parks across the street, making sure he doesn't notice
her while she keeps her eyes on him.

David gets out, smiling and fixing his clothes before walking
up the staircase, stopping at the first room, knocking on the
door.

Within seconds, the door comes open, and he walks in.

Angela gets out of her Lincoln and then makes her way across
the street.

Walking up the staircase, she comes to the door, ready to
bang on it, but instead, she places her ear on the door.

Inside the room, wearing nothing but a thong, Nicole has
David pinned against the door, kissing him.

On the bed lies another woman who has the same complexion and
weight as Nicole, only wearing a thong, staring at the two
getting aroused.

Taking a break from kissing, David looks at the woman on the
bed.

DAVID

Who is that?

NICOLE

Since you said your wife wasn't coming, I brought somebody I know. Don't worry, she's clean and just as freaky as me. I want your first time to be one you'll never forget.

They return to kissing, and Nicole jumps up, wrapping her legs around him. They continue kissing, making their way towards the bed.

Placing her down while staying on top of her kissing, the other woman joins the fun, kissing David.

Outside, Angela doesn't know if she wants to hurl or kick the door in.

Finally getting a hold of herself and taking a few deep breaths, a smile comes across her face as she makes her way down the staircase.

INT. THE KITCHEN - MORNING

The sun is coming through the blinds, giving the kitchen a happy glow as Angela and David sit at the table having breakfast.

Angela is sitting with a smile as if nothing happened, while David eats his food full of life, delighted about the evening he had.

ANGELA

Y'all must have passed out. You didn't get home until almost four in the morning.

DAVID

I'm sorry about that, baby. We were reminiscing about back in the day and throwing back cup after cup. I'm glad I got the day off because I don't think he wanted me to leave.

ANGELA

I'm glad you had fun with your friend. Listen, I was thinking. We should go back to that restaurant. The steak was so good that I wanna try it again. We can go on my break if that's cool with you.

DAVID
Whatever you want, baby.

ANGELA
Cool. I'll meet you there.

She gets up, walks over to him, and kisses him on the cheek before leaving the room.

With a smug smile, David takes a sip of juice.

DAVID
Shit, after last night, I know I'll be doing that again soon.

CUT TO:

INT. BREAK ROOM - AFTERNOON

Wendy and some other women who work for the phone company are standing around laughing and talking, when Angela comes into the room and looks at them, confused.

When they notice her, they simmer down, trying to control their laughter.

Angela is confused as she walks to the coffee pot to pour some coffee.

With her coffee poured, she looks around the room, looking at the women looking at her funny.

Frustrated, Angela places her cup down.

ANGELA
Okay, what's with the funny acting shit?

The room is silent.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Nobody has shit to say, right?

Wendy steps over to her.

WENDY
Girl, you should leave.

Angela is baffled, locking eyes with Wendy, folding her arms across her chest.

ANGELA
The joke is about me, so why should I

leave?

RANDOM WOMAN

You better watch out, she might be hungry.

The women break out laughing.

ANGELA

What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

Wendy gives Angela a slight smirk, clearing her throat.

WENDY

Some of the women here aren't comfortable with your sexual preference.

Angela smiles, cocking her head to the side.

Wendy smiles, prepared to speak and Angela slaps the shit out of her.

Wendy releases a moan of pain, turning her head, and the other women in the room look stunned.

ANGELA

Bitch, what the fuck do you mean?! You're the one eating pussy from time to time. I don't play that shit, and you found out when you touched my thigh. You bitches that believed whatever she told you might be undercover Bi or whatever. But next time, you better hear shit from the horse's mouth.

Wendy is still stunned, but Angela adds insult to injury, splashing her coffee in Wendy's face.

Angela stares all of the women down before leaving the room.

CUT TO:

INT. THE RESTAURANT - LATER

Now, the restaurant is fairly crowded, and the atmosphere is more lively with waiters and waitresses moving around.

People are coming in and leaving the restaurant.

David is sitting in an empty booth, smiling, staring out the

window, when Nicole approaches with a similar smile, placing a hand on his shoulder.

NICOLE

I know that was your first time. But
the way you made us feel...

(Deep breath of satisfaction)

We can't wait to do it again.

DAVID

That's exactly what I was thinking.

While the two continue talking, they don't notice that Angela has entered the restaurant.

NICOLE

I figured you would. Only this time, I
want-

Angela approaches the table and pauses, looking at Nicole.

ANGELA

You want what?

Nicole and David look at Angela, stunned.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Do you need me to replace the other
woman in the threesome you had with my
husband?

The two are speechless.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

From the reaction, I'm assuming that's
the answer. Well, you can have all the
threesomes you want with this bitch.
I'm not-

Nicole gets an attitude, putting her hands on her hips.

NICOLE

Who are you calling a bitch?

Angela steps up in Nicole's face.

ANGELA

You, bitch!

The people stop what they're doing to focus on the two, while David remains silent with a lost expression because he's never seen this part of his wife.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

You can do whatever it takes to put a smile on his face, but I'm not. So you two motherfuckers can go off and be happy together.

Angela doesn't take her eyes off Nicole, ready for her to speak or budge so she can have a reason to hit her.

The people in the restaurant remain focused on the two, waiting to see if a fight will break out, and some of them have their phones out recording.

After a few seconds and seeing the fear in Nicole's eyes, Angela scoffs and then leaves the restaurant.

Nicole rolls her eyes and cracks her knuckles, displaying that she was ready to fight but didn't react.

There's a low murmur of disappointment from the people returning to what they were doing.

Rolling her shoulders, she sits in the booth across from David.

David has a flushed look, staring in the direction Angela left.

Nicole reaches across the table and grabs his hand.

NICOLE

We don't need her. I'm more than enough woman, and we can add as many women as we want.

David looks at her, disgusted, realizing she's holding his hand, snatching away.

Nicole is confused, attempting to grab his hand again, and he pulls back.

DAVID

Maybe you don't need her, but I do. I can't lose a genuine love over some pussy I know will never be faithful.

He pulls his wallet out and opens it, reaching inside to remove a hundred-dollar bill.

He places the money on the table, and puts his wallet away.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Keep the change for yourself. This is

the last time we'll speak.

He stands up and then leaves the building, leaving Nicole hurt, holding the money with tears in her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. JAY'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is set up like a bachelor's pad.

David and Jay are smoking, drinking, and playing the game.

Jay is a tall, slender, brown-skinned man in his early thirties.

Taking a break from the game, they put their controllers down to pick up their glasses and take a sip.

JAY

So, how did she find out?

DAVID

I have no idea.

Jay picks up a cigarette from the ashtray and lights it, taking a pull, sighing.

JAY

Now what?

DAVID

(Takes a sip)

I don't know.

JAY

She needs some time to calm down. When she gets home, just apologize, tell her some sweet nothings, and then dick her down.

DAVID

I don't think it'll be that simple. You know how she is.

JAY

(Takes a sip)

Then let it go.

David takes a sip from his drink and then looks at Jay, confused.

DAVID

I'm not letting the woman I love go.

JAY

If you loved her, you wouldn't have been fuckin' around. That's why I don't have a woman. I know I'll still be out here fuckin' other hoes, and what's the point of doing that if I claim to love one woman?

David sits silent, taking a sip from his cup.

JAY (CONT'D)

But that's just me. Just know that since you hurt her, it'll come back around. You'll never know when or how. But it's coming.

David sits, pondering Jay's words, taking a sip from his cup.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

David arrives home, pulling into the driveway.

He gets out of the car confused because he doesn't see Angela's car. Walking on the porch to the front door, he unlocks it and walks in.

He looks around the nicely furnished living room before going upstairs to the bedroom.

Walking into the room, he instantly becomes worried, seeing the room in shambles.

He quickly pulls his phone out and calls Angela, thinking something might have happened to her.

From worried to confused, he listens to the message she has set for him.

ANGELA (V.O.)

A threesome was more important than our love, which I feel is the most selfish act you could've pulled. I'll leave you alone so you can reflect on whether having some extra pussy on the side was worth losing the love coming from a real woman.

He hangs up, lost in thought.

You can tell he wants to call her back, but he already knows he'll get the same response, if not worse.

With nothing but his guilt to comfort him, he leaves the room with his head down.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BAR - MOMENTS LATER

The atmosphere is gloomy, with people sitting around trying to drown their sorrows while listening to the blues.

David is sitting at the bar, shaking his head, taking shots of tequila.

An attractive brown-skinned woman in her early twenties sitting at the other end of the bar stands up and makes her way down towards him.

You can tell by the way she's walking that she's promiscuous.

She takes a seat next to him and stares at him, smiling.

He turns to look at her and sighs before taking another shot.

WOMAN

You look lonely down here. What's wrong?

DAVID

I'm a fuck up. That's what's wrong.

WOMAN

Well, I know a way-

He takes another shot and then puts his hand up in her face before turning to look at her.

DAVID

I'm not trying to hear it. It's because of loose pussy bitches like you that my life is ruined.

WOMAN

Fuck you too.

She gets up and walks away.

He takes another shot, pulling his phone out, staring at a picture of him and Angela.

FADE TO BLACK:

BLACK SCREEN:

"Is satisfying the desires of another to keep a smile on their face worth losing who you are?"

~Bernard Mersier~

TITLE CARD: ACCOUNTABILITY**INT. ROSA APARTMENT - NIGHT**

We come in on the apartment door, listening to someone knocking.

ROSA (O.S.)
It's open.

The door comes open and in walks GISELLE.

She's wearing a black leather trench coat, holding a brown carryout bag.

The Puerto Rican woman in her early-forties is a vision of beauty, with long black hair and bedroom brown eyes.

As she makes her way into the comfortable living room, there stands ROSA.

Rosa is petite with long sandy brown hair and light brown eyes.

She's wearing black leggings and a black and blue football jersey.

On the front of the jersey is a demonic skull with a serpent's tongue coming from the mouth, wearing a fancy crown.

Giselle looks over the room with a smile, while Rosa stares at her with a look of annoyance.

GISELLE
I brought dessert.

ROSA
I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

GISELLE
(Sighs)
Right. This is amazing. I love what you've done with the place.

ROSA
What's amazing about it?

GISELLE
Rosa, what's with the attitude?

ROSA
No attitude. But I swore we agreed to not be on bullshit, and here you are on bullshit.

GISELLE
Giving you a compliment about your apartment implies I'm on bullshit?

ROSA
We both know the real reason why you're here. The decor of my apartment will be the last thing on your mind if you hear what you wanna hear.

GISELLE
What do you think I want to hear?

ROSA
Let's just eat and hopefully have a pleasant conversation?

GISELLE
That's why I'm here.

Rosa looks at her with disgust, sucking her teeth as she makes her way to the dining room table.

On the back of her jersey reads...

INSERT JERSEY

ONLY ONE

Giselle sighs, making her way to the table, placing the bag down.

She reaches inside the bag and pulls out a lemon cake, placing it on the table.

She takes her coat off and places it on the back of her chair before taking a seat.

On the table, nicely put together meals with a glass of wine beside both of their plates are in front of their chairs.

Rosa takes a seat across from her and stares with a cold

glance.

Giselle looks over the meal with delight.

 GISELLE (CONT'D)

This looks great.

 (Soft laugh)

Well, you learned from the best, so
why am I surprised?

 ROSA

I hope you're not speaking about
yourself.

 GISELLE

 (Sighs)

Who's on bullshit now?

 ROSA

That would still be you. When did you
start eating lemon cake?

 GISELLE

I know that's what you like, so I
decided to pick one up.

 ROSA

 (Sighs)

Come back when you're ready for a real
conversation.

 GISELLE

Are you putting me out?

 ROSA

You already put yourself out when you
came over here with bullshit.

 GISELLE

This new attitude and appearance.

 (Soft laugh)

I must say I love it.

 ROSA

Bringing back the oldies with a little
touch of my own. Why wouldn't you love
it?

 GISELLE

What does that mean?

 ROSA

The real reason why you're here. The

reason why I wanted a normal conversation so we'll never have to speak again. But since you don't want it that way, you can let yourself out.

Rosa begins eating.

Giselle stares at her, taking a sip from her wine, followed by clearing her throat.

 GISELLE
All bullshit aside.

 ROSA
That would be nice.

 GISELLE
Come on with it.

Rosa wipes her mouth, followed by a sip of wine.

 ROSA
Why is it for all these years...you were telling me lies about a man who only wanted to be in my life?

 GISELLE
Everything I said wasn't a lie.

 ROSA
I didn't say it was. That wasn't the question, either. See, you're still on bullshit.

 GISELLE
(Deep breath)
Fine. I lied because I thought it was best.

 ROSA
Best for who? You or me?

 GISELLE
For you! Everything I've done was for you! Who knows how you would've turned out if you stayed in communication with that man.

 ROSA
No different from who I am now. That's why I have a brain to make decisions, good or bad. My decisions are what I have to deal with. But you... you made a

decision for me and laid it on so thick, I was unable to see past the layers of bullshit. I had no choice but to go along with what you told me.

GISELLE

How can you sit with a straight face, believing what came from your mouth?

ROSA

The same way you told me lies every night with a straight face. I get it honest, wouldn't you say?

Giselle's eyes water up, taking a sip from her wine.

GISELLE

I did what was best. Your father is a nobody. A bum. You would've never gained anything from being around him.

ROSA

How do you know?

GISELLE

Because...

(Sighs)

At this point, why does it matter?

ROSA

Of course it doesn't matter to you because you only care about yourself.

GISELLE

That's a goddamn lie.

ROSA

Oh. Did I strike a nerve?

GISELLE

No. I'm just tired of listening to your bullshit, when we both know cutting you off from your father was the best thing that could happen in your life.

ROSA

Again... How do you know?

GISELLE

What would you have gained having a bum in your life?

ROSA

I don't know, I don't deal with bums.
But... having my father in my life, you
wanna know what I would've gained?

GISELLE

(Scoffs)

If that's what you wanna call him.

ROSA

That's who he is. MY FATHER.

GISELLE

...Okay.

ROSA

If I had my father in my life. The man
who loved me unconditionally. The man
who gave me life. The man who would
always be by my side. If I had HIM in
my life. I know I would be in a better
position in life, knowing the true
difference between a man and a boy.

GISELLE

(Sarcastic laugh)

You would be in a better place in
life? You would be able to distinguish
the difference between a man and a
boy?

(Laughs)

How would you have learned any of that
from him?

ROSA

Because a real father loves his
daughter with his soul, doing
everything, making sure she stays
happy and succeeds in life. That can't
be found in every man without thinking
about fuckin' you and lying, saying he
doesn't want to fuck you. That's a
major part that fathers teach their
daughters to look out for. That's what
I would've learned.

GISELLE

That's what you believe?

ROSA

That's what I know.

GISELLE
I beg to differ.

 ROSA
Figures. So, let me ask you something.

 GISELLE
Go ahead.

 ROSA
If my father is so fucked up, why did you stay with him for so long?

 GISELLE
Blinded by what I thought was love, until I finally woke up and realized he would never amount to shit.

 ROSA
So, you knew he wasn't shit when you got with him?

 GISELLE
Yes.

 ROSA
And not only did you stay with him... you decided to get pregnant?

 GISELLE
Young and dumb. Don't think for a second I regret having you.

 ROSA
That's not important. Young and dumb is your answer?

 GISELLE
What do you want me to say?

 ROSA
The truth would be so nice.

 GISELLE
Yes... yes, I was in love with your father. He was my first love.

 ROSA
I know that much.

 GISELLE
...The only...
 (Sips wine)

The only problem I had with your father is, I felt he didn't have enough to give you a good life.

ROSA
Money doesn't create happiness.

GISELLE
I know.

ROSA
My father did whatever he could, while spending time with me, showing me undying love, right?

GISELLE
...Yes.

ROSA
Since you're telling the truth, how about you tell me the real reason why you told me lies about my father and removed me from his life?

GISELLE
Can I ask one question before I tell you why?

ROSA
As long as I hear the truth, yes.

GISELLE
Can we go back to the way things were?

ROSA
Things can never go back because my father missed the majority of my life. Rekindling the false relationship you made me believe between a mother and a child...

(Takes a sip)
There's a possibility we can try to reconstruct something without lies.

GISELLE
...That's fine.

ROSA
Good. Now... Tell me the reason why you excluded my father from my life.

Giselle takes a sip from her wine, and then inhales and exhales regret.

GISELLE

You call me selfish. You believe I only care about myself. You could possibly... no... you're right. I'm all of that and some. Do you know why?

ROSA

You can tell me.

GISELLE

Moving on from your father didn't bother him. So... I did the next best thing I knew would crush him, and he'll feel somewhat of the pain I felt parting ways with him.

ROSA

Wow. So fuck me altogether as long as you could make my father feel the pain you brought on yourself? If that ain't diabolical, I don't know what is.

GISELLE

Call it what you want. But even with you knowing the truth, what's going to change? If you wanna communicate with your father, there's nothing stopping you. Shit, if he wanted to communicate with you, what's stopping him?

ROMEO (O.S.)

Because I didn't want to believe you would actually stand on those words, "I'll make sure your daughter hates you."

Giselle's mouth drops and her eyes get wide watching Romeo enter the room.

ROMEO is in his early-forties, slim and handsome with a low fade and thin goatee.

He's wearing the exact jersey Rosa is wearing, with black jeans.

The chain around his neck has the letter "R" as the charm.

Rosa gets up from the table, walking to him with a smile, wrapping her arms around him.

He wraps an arm around her, while looking at Giselle smiling.

ROMEO (CONT'D)

Hm. I was right all along. Saying fuck me wasn't enough. You had to make sure my first child hates me as well. What made you believe that would crush me, instead of knowing it would make me remember why I never allowed myself to open up and love?

GISELLE

Wha-what is this?

ROSA

This is my "Father." The man you took away from me. Can you answer his question?

GISELLE

I-I don't understand. How did-

ROSA

(Laughs)

Dad, you were right. She stutters and stammers when you address her with the truth.

ROMEO

(Laughs)

I told you, I'll never lie to you. Now, since she can't answer the question, I'll answer for her. It wasn't about my financial state. It wasn't about love because she knows I'll always love her. It's about hurting me. She let me talk to you one last time, and then went along with her plan. We both knew I could care less about her moving on, but I was still there for both of you if you needed anything.

ROSA

Sounds about right to me. Mother, what do you think?

GISELLE

I can't believe you two-

ROMEO

Don't worry about it, sweetheart. I told her the good and bad on my end, and I never threw you under the bus. Just take accountability for what you

did, and I guess carry on with your somewhat happy life. I think you forgot the old saying "what happens in the dark, always comes to the light."

ROSA

Now that the light has revealed the truth.

(To Giselle)

Can you kindly lock up after you leave?

GISELLE

What?

ROSA

My father and I are going out on the town. I just wanted you to admit to us, you did something foul for your own satisfaction. But now that the truth has been exposed, there's nothing else to say.

GISELLE

Rosa, please. I told you what he did to us. How can you be comfortable with this man?

ROSA

Because the only man who ever touched me is the one I lost my virginity to, and we both know my father doesn't abuse or violate women in a sexual manner. So mother...

(Low laugh)

Please, lock up when you leave. We'll discuss if we'll continue communicating after I'm done having a good time with my father, catching up on the things he missed in my life.

ROMEO

It was never meant to be this way. But this is the story you wanted to play out, and now you see the ending isn't what you planned. Like you told me, "be blessed and I hope everything works out for the best."

Romeo and Rosa prepare to walk off, and Giselle stands up.

GISELLE

Wait a minute!

They stop.

GISELLE (CONT'D)

If there was no "us" she wouldn't be here! That's the child I gave birth to, and now you somehow made her trade on me! You got some nerve!

ROMEO

(Laughs)

Sounds like the same thing you did to me, except I told the truth on my end.

ROSA

(Chuckles)

I get it honest from my father.

ROMEO

Of course you do, Princess. Don't have a gripe with your mother because of this. Just know how to read people and see the truth behind their lies.

ROSA

I will. I love you, dad.

ROMEO

I'll never stop loving you. Come on, let's go.

The two make their way to the door, and we see on the back of Romeo's jersey it says "THE ONE."

The two leave the apartment.

Giselle has tears rolling down her face, shaking her head, trying to register not only did she ruin the relationship with her daughter... she knows there's nothing she can do to fix it.

FADE TO BLACK:

BLACK SCREEN:

"Conception was designed for happiness, but you have those who use it for benefits."

Bernard Mersier

TITLE CARD: THE CONDOM

FADE IN:

CLOSE UP - DANTE'S FACE

We see a peacefully sleeping four-month-old boy lying on a fluffy white pillow with a white beanie snug on his head.

DANTE (V.O.)

My parents love me.

(Clears throat)

Pardon my raspy voice, it probably runs on my father's side. But right now... I'd like to share something special. I wanna share what love truly means. Not just through my eyes, but the eyes of my parents.

EXT. THE GAS STATION - NIGHT

The gas station is located on a dim corner with flickering streetlights.

The last car resting by a gas pump pulls off.

Coming from around the corner wearing some skimpy shorts and a T-Shirt is DOMINIQUE.

She's in her early-twenties, jaw-dropping sexy with the perfect body, smooth caramel skin and long hair.

You can tell by her walk she's filled with confidence, knowing she can have any man she wants with the bat of an eye.

Approaching the gas station door, she walks in without a care because this is her neighborhood.

While inside the gas station, she begins browsing.

The GAS STATION ATTENDANT stares in awe.

As she continues shopping, loud music can be heard outside that comes to a stop, followed by a truck door being opened and closed.

Turning our attention to the door, in comes JAMAL, mid-twenties on the husky side, clean cut and dark brown skin.

He's dripping with jewelry, wearing fancy clothes.

Cool as the wind that followed in behind him, he walks up to the counter prepared to pay for his gas.

Dominique comes up holding two packs of noodles, some chips and a pop.

Jamal turns looking at her, and he has to catch himself from being overwhelmed by her body and beauty.

Dominique likes what she sees, but plays as if she's annoyed, trying to see what his next move will be.

DOMINIQUE

Can I help you?

JAMAL

Can you?

DOMINIQUE

If that's all, can you move so I can pay for my stuff?

Jamal notices the items and cracks a smile showing his pearly whites, shaking his head.

DOMINIQUE (CONT'D)

What?

JAMAL

Don't tell me that's dinner.

DOMINIQUE

So?

JAMAL

How about you let me take you out to dinner?

DOMINIQUE

No thanks. I wouldn't wanna spend your gas money.

JAMAL

(Laughs)

Gas money?

He goes in his pocket pulling out a wad of money.

DOMINIQUE

What does that mean? You could be the typical nigga saving up his checks, just so you can stunt.

JAMAL

Is that right? Look out there and you tell me.

DOMINIQUE'S POV

She looks out the gas station door and sees the fully kitted all-black Yukon with tinted windows.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Well?

DOMINIQUE

I guess you're working with a little something.

JAMAL

So, are you gonna let me put some real food on your stomach?

DOMINIQUE

We can do that. It's nothing more than dinner, right?

Jamal smiles, putting his hands up, taking a step back.

JAMAL

It's nothing more than that, beautiful. I'm not a creep out here in these streets. You look like you're in a tight spot for food, so why not lend a hand?

DOMINIQUE

Do you do this with every woman you meet?

JAMAL

Honestly, I'm used to women approaching me. This is a first.

DOMINIQUE

Is that right?

JAMAL

Yes, ma'am. I'm Jamal by the way.

DOMINIQUE

I'm Dominique.

JAMAL

Well, Dominique. How about you leave this stuff here, and go wait in the truck?

Dominique places her items down, looking at him strangely.

DOMINIQUE

You trust me to sit in your truck

alone?

JAMAL

It's nothing in there you can take that I can't replace. I can even replace the truck. And if you decide to get down on me, I can only blame myself.

DOMINIQUE

You keep it real. Okay, I'll be outside.

She rubs her hand across his face before making her way out the gas station.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT

Why did you go through that process? It's not that hard to fuck her.

JAMAL

I know. But sometimes, you gotta make hoes feel special. Let me get sixty on pump three.

Jamal places a hundred dollar bill in the slot.

The gas station attendant takes the money ringing up the total, and then he gives Jamal his change.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT

She's known around here.

Jamal takes his change placing it in his pocket.

JAMAL

Did you hit?

GAS STATION ATTENDANT

Nope. I wish I could.

JAMAL

Then don't worry about what I do. Have a good night.

Jamal walks out of the gas station.

DANTE (V.O.)

This was the beginning of their love. Although... I think my mother wanted me more than my father.

INT. INSIDE JAMAL'S TRUCK - NIGHT

The truck is parked outside of a park.

Jamal is sitting in the driver seat taking a sip from the liquor bottle, followed by a pull from his cigarette.

Dominique is sitting in the passenger seat cleaning the dirt from under her nails.

DOMINIQUE

What are you gonna do about this situation?

JAMAL

(Takes a sip)

What do you mean? I'm giving you the money to take care of that.

DOMINIQUE

And I told you, I don't believe in abortions. You better man up and accept what you did.

JAMAL

You don't believe in abortions, but you sell pussy? Explain.

DOMINIQUE

I don't have to explain shit!
Regardless of what you think, that has nothing to do with what happened between us!

He takes a pull from his cigarette, and then slams the butt down in the ashtray, turning to look at her with rage in his eyes.

She looks at him rolling her eyes, not impressed by the tough guy act.

JAMAL

Bitch, I know for a fact I had a condom on! You better find that weak ass nigga who got you knocked up!

DOMINIQUE

Yo weak ass did, nigga! Why did I even bother letting you hit?!

JAMAL

Bitch-

DOMINIQUE

First off, you can quit this so-called tough shit, because I know ya ass is soft. Second, if you call me another bitch, I know something.

Jamal reaches under his shirt for his gun, and she places a hand up in face, followed with laughter.

DOMINIQUE (CONT'D)

Why are you reaching for a gun, and we both know you won't use it? And even if you did, I already told my people everything they need to know about you. Where you hang. Where you keep your shit. I should've known yo ass was soft because no real man tells a woman he just met that much information after a few dates. So, since you pussy-whipped, and we both know it. You're about to take care of me and this baby, and that's all there is to it.

Knowing she spoke the truth, Jamal removes his hand, leaning back in his seat, taking another sip from the bottle.

DOMINIQUE (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. Take me home.

With no further words, Jamal starts the truck, and pulls off.

DANTE (V.O.)

See what I mean? Now despite the arguments, my dad grew to love me. They still argued from time to time, and he'd always take me and mom to this place where they'd talk with a stranger about who I should live with. In my mind, I was always confused why I couldn't have them both, but I'm happy. And despite dad going through this every other week with the stranger... he's happy as well.

INT. DOMINIQUE'S APARTMENT - THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

DANTE'S POV

We can tell from the view and how the sound of clutter is gently moved by his little hands, he's lying on his stomach.

The entire bed is filled with clothes, makeup kits, paper

plates with old food, utensils and empty pop cans.

All of this rests on top of a stained mattress.

The bedroom door is open, allowing us to see the hallway.

Dominique can be heard talking loud, and it appears as if she's angry by the way she's yelling.

DANTE (V.O.)

Mommy loves leaving things for me to place in my mouth. I don't know if it's because I'm not loud enough or if she doesn't understand my words. But... she always comes when this weird taste and bright color fills my mouth causing me to scream.

We see Dominique quickly storm past the bedroom door still talking loud.

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

She must be talking to dad. The other men I've seen her with who get loud, she seems to enjoy how they speak because she ends up on top of them or they're on top of her causing her to make strange noises.

We hear a door being slammed.

Dante slowly inches across the bed, reaching for a knife resting on top of a paper plate.

Just as he gets ready to grab the knife, Dominique comes to the door.

As messy as her room is, she's dressed to the nines, wearing a fitted dress with heels.

She has an attitude storming over to Dante snatching him up, staring at him sucking her teeth, wishing he was never born.

DOMINIQUE

What the hell are you doing?

(Scoffs)

You're just as stupid as your father. Always doing dumb-shit, instead of what you're supposed to do. But, you're not about to ruin my night. I'm trying to get lit and get these niggas money. Since grandma said you kept her up all night, I got something special

for you.

She places him down, and then reaches on the floor picking up a baby bottle with some milk left inside.

With a smile, she walks over to the dresser, which is just as filthy as the rest of the room.

Opening the bottle, she places some more milk inside, followed by opening up a double shot of vodka that she pours inside.

She closes the bottle, and shakes it real good with a smile, making sure the vodka mixes with the milk.

Walking back to the bed, she picks Dante up, and places the bottle in his mouth.

DOMINIQUE (CONT'D))

This should keep you down for the night. I guess I should change your clothes and pissy diaper.

(Scoffs)

Ya punk ass daddy is gonna wish he stayed with me.

DANTE'S POV

His vision is slowly fading.

DANTE (V.O.)

Whatever is in my milk... it doesn't taste the same as in the beginning. There's a weird burning sensation in my stomach, but I'm too tired to speak. Maybe it's good for me, considering I love staying up late. But, who am I? Mommy knows best.

FADE TO BLACK:

DANTE (V.O.)

This new milk my mother gives me went on for weeks. I always seemed to throw it up, but she kept giving it to me. I couldn't complain. It did help me sleep. Whenever dad would see me, he would ask what's wrong with me. She would always say it's something babies go through. I wonder why she never told him about the special milk. Ah, well. Here we are, another Saturday. Mom is going out again, and grandma is

watching me for the night.

INT. DOMINIQUE'S APARTMENT - THE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Surprisingly, unlike her bedroom, the bathroom is actually clean.

Dominique is standing by the sink with her arms folded across her chest staring down at Dante in his baby bather in the tub halfway filled with water.

DANTE (V.O.)

By this time, I was accustomed to the special milk. It still made me sleepy, but I was able to stay awake. Right now, I'm just relaxing, enjoying my bath.

Dominique's phone resting on the sink begins ringing, so she quickly picks it up with a smile.

DOMINIQUE

What's the word?

(Listens)

Who gon' be there? You know I only deal with real D boys, and I don't have time for small time niggas. I need hundreds and up if they fucking with me.

(Listens)

I'll be up in there shaking this ass. You know I got cakes for days. You on the way?

Dominique walks out the bathroom, but we can still hear her talking.

DANTE'S POV

We can tell by the way the water is rising, the alcohol is kicking in, and he's starting to drift off.

DANTE (V.O.)

Yeah... it's close to nap-time. But... Why am I still in the tub? It's okay. I'm sure mom will be in here at any moment.

The apartment door can be heard opened and slammed closed.

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

I'm guessing she went downstairs to let her company in. It's cool. I'll

lay here and take a little nap. She'll be back before I know it.

The water level becomes higher as Dante slides down into the water.

FADE TO BLACK:

An hour later

INT. DOMINIQUE'S APARTMENT - THE BATHROOM - NIGHT

DANTE'S POV

He's under the water looking up at the ceiling.

The apartment door can be heard opening and closed.

TAMALA, Dominique's mother's voice can be heard.

TAMALA (O.S.)

Did this girl leave my grandson in her room? He's supposed to be in his crib, especially if she left before I got here. That girl, I swear.

We hear her moving through the apartment towards Dominique's room.

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

Maybe she took him with her. She needs to spend more time with her son. It doesn't matter if she's not with his daddy, that's still her child. Let me use this bathroom.

Footsteps are heard approaching the bathroom.

She reaches the door, and we can see she's a fairly aged brown skin woman wearing something sophisticated.

When she realizes what she sees, she instantly breaks down crying rushing to the tub, grabbing Dante's dead body from the water, placing him against her chest.

TAMALA (CONT'D)

Oh my God! Not my little man! Lord please, not my little man!

INT. THE FUNERAL HOME - MORNING

As we saw in the beginning, Dante is peacefully sleeping, but now at a wider angle, we see he's inside a casket with white

roses on each side of him.

Some music can be heard in the background, but it doesn't compare to the weeping coming from Jamal standing over his only child's casket, wishing he could've got custody preventing this from happening.

DANTE (V.O.)

I'm finally in a better place, but my father is in pain. It's okay. The angels told me what he contracted from my mother will send him to me soon. The angels also told me what she gave daddy will kill her soon. Well... How did you like my love story? As I said... I have no idea why it turned out this way, but the irony is if she didn't want to deal with this type of love, all she had to do was...

CUT TO:

INT. THE MOTEL - THE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dominique is standing in her bra and panties looking in the mirror with a sinister smile.

JAMAL (O.S.)

Come on girl, you got daddy waiting too long!

DOMINIQUE

Here I come.

She looks down with her eyes.

DOMINIQUE'S POV

On the sink is a pill bottle of "ART" pills. In her right hand she's holding a condom in the wrapper and in the left is a safety pin she uses to puncture little holes into the condom.

Placing the pin down, she looks back in the mirror with the same sinister smile, winking at her reflection before turning towards the door.

DANTE (V.O.)

...Let the condom do what it was designed to do.

She walks out the door.

FADE TO BLACK:

BLACK SCREEN:

"You're blessed with children for reasons beyond your thoughts. Don't accept a blessing if you're taking it for granted."

Bernard Mersier

BLACK SCREEN:

"Some women chase after a status, ignoring the consequences."

~Bernard Mersier~

TITLE CARD: THE SAME SIDED COIN

FADE IN:

INT. THE BROTHEL - SOPHIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sophia, (20s), is sitting in front of a mirror wearing sexy lingerie that looks scrumptious on her golden brown skin as she applies makeup.

Her natural long black hair brings out her amazing light brown bedroom eyes.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

Can we blame men when our emotions run wild? Do we look at ourselves and think we might be the problem? Of course not. How did those words slide outta my mouth? Before you get offended and start thinking 'Who does this young bitch think she is?'

Through the mirror we can see her client walking out.

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

Considering I've been in the business since I was eighteen, and now I'm twenty-three, I think I can speak a lot.

She runs a comb through her hair a few times, applies some lip gloss, cracks a smile and then stands up.

As she moves towards the bed, we see various fetish items hanging on the wall.

On the bed, there's various size dildos and anal plugs, but

at the moment, we're more focused on her mouth-watering full body as she takes a seat on the bed.

Looking at the nightstand, we see various oils, Ky-Jellies, anal beads and a stack of money.

She looks at the money and scoffs, focusing her attention back on getting dressed so she can leave.

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

When I first started here, I barely made a hundred dollars on a packed night. Well, let me be honest. When I first started, I was only giving out hand-jobs and massages. When the other women working here told me if I wanted some real money, I'd have to go all the way... well, you see what I'm making now.

She stands up so she can pull her pants up, and then she reaches down for her shirt, placing it on.

After adjusting her clothing, she takes the money from the nightstand and makes her way to the door, grabbing her purse, placing the money inside.

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

A lot of ladies can understand my upgrade. The first dude you thought was the one, you started with simple hugs, kisses and maybe massaging his dick through his jeans. After a few days, or maybe it was on the first night, you were sucking dick and swallowing just so you can get a few trinkets, thinking you got him hooked. I'm throwing that out there for the ones judging, and my story has just begun.

With a smile, she places her purse on her shoulder and then leaves the room.

As Sophia stands in the hallway, we can hear various people having sex through the walls, and the people who have their doors open.

She takes a deep breath and then makes her way down the hall towards the staircase.

While moving along looking in the rooms, we see various sexual scenes that might seem strange, but it doesn't matter

because people pay for what they want, and the women aim to please.

Continuing downstairs, we see the area by the doorway filled with men and various women of all sizes and races dressed provocatively.

Sophia walks to the Madam and they hug before Sophia goes into her purse and pulls a few bills out, extending them to the Madam.

She takes the money and places it between her breasts before they hug again, and then Sophia makes her way out the back door.

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

Don't think I forgot about the question I asked. I'm just waiting to leave my establishment before I elaborate.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIA'S HOUSE - THE BATHROOM - LATER

With candles lit around the bathtub, and a mini table resting to the side with a bottle of red wine and a wine glass, we see Sophia propped up against the tub reading a book.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

Is it legit to say, 'There's no win for a woman these days, or hell, even before a lot of us were born?' No, it's not safe to say. The things men say about us, we do our best to try and prove them right. You don't think so?

She places her book down and then grabs the glass, swallowing the last bit.

Placing the glass back down, she picks up the book and continues reading.

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

In the words of Mother Teresa, 'I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love.' You can't deny we relate with these words. The ones in denial are like the women who swear up and down they're not hoes just to gain the attention of a man. But for

those who agree, please keep that in mind as I carry on with my story. Right now, let's talk about the men for a second.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIA'S HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She's lying on the bed with red satin sheets wearing a lace bra with her lower half covered, and her eyes locked on a pornographic movie.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

One thing men will never know is if we really had an 'Orgasm.' They think because we're squirting and creaming everywhere, adding on some extra loud moans we caught our nut. Here's a hidden secret. A woman will display any form of deep affection if you're giving her what she wants. A performance is a small thing for a woman. But my personal favorite is when we're lying there tired, a man will be like 'Yeah, I worked that ass out.' I would think after being bent up in so many positions, yeah, your ass should be tired. None of this matters to a man because he got his nut off. And even with us knowing this, what do we do? We make sure he gets that nut.

(Laughs)

If you're still keeping up with what I've been saying, then you understand. Back on the 'Orgasm' tip. I can't tell you how many partners I've had, but... I can tell you I've only had one true 'Orgasm.'

Her eyes are still locked on the screen as she reaches over for a few seconds, bringing forth a nice-sized dildo.

With a comforting look on her face, she slowly slides the dildo down under the blanket.

The way she closes her eyes from the sensation, we can only imagine she knows what she's doing.

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

Ask a woman how many 'Real Orgasms' she's had, and I bet you she'll have

to think about it. Not because it was so many, but because she's relapsing on the few she's had.

Judging by her expression, she's getting close to her climax.

The moan she releases, along with the way her body is shaking and how tight she closes her eyes, you can tell she's satisfied.

Taking a few minutes to gather her bearings, she brings up the dildo with a smile and licks it before placing it to the side.

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

Pardon me. I've been working all day, and this is the first time I actually got a nut. But... Yes, men don't know if we came or not. I can't speak for all women, but if I wanna get off, I think about that one night. When men say 'I eat pussy for my pleasure.' Women feel the same way about giving head. We're thinking this is the only way he'll get inside of me because I'm nowhere near wet. And I believe men feel the same way when they're down there slurping away.

INT. THE GAS STATION - AFTERNOON

Sophia is standing at the Slurpee machine debating on what flavor she wants.

SOPHIA POV

Sean, (30s), dark-skinned comes up to the counter.

While he's being rung up, a big, beautiful woman comes into the gas station.

Apparently, she loves what she sees, looking at Sean as if she's ready to take him right there in front of everybody.

She approaches him just as he gets his change, and when he turns around, he's stunned.

Sean shakes his head no, causing the woman to walk off.

Sophia walks up to pay for her Slurpee.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

If this was social media that whole

scenario would've played out differently. As easy as she displayed herself, he would've been all up in her DM doing his best to get on. But in real life, dudes refuse to be seen with any woman that's not up to the world's standards as far as 'Beautiful.' It's a pure sin if she's a big girl. But... the big girls are the main ones they go after calling them 'Thick' and so on.

(Scoffs)

Men.

While Sean stares at Sophia, she rolls her eyes and then proceeds to pay for her Slurpee.

SEAN

Can I talk to you real quick?

SOPHIA

If you're about to ask for my number, the answer is no.

After paying for her Slurpee, she makes her way towards the door, and Sean quickly gets in front of her, opening it.

She looks as if she wants to blush, but she keeps it cool walking out, and he's right behind her.

As she walks to her black Cadillac, Sean is following her every step, fascinated by what he's looking at.

Sophia does a quick head glance, seeing Sean is behind her.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

You're persistent, ain't ya?

SEAN

I can't let a fine woman go by without shooting my shot.

She gets to her driver's door and turns around.

SOPHIA

You're all up in my ass because of my looks?

SEAN

Unless you're about to inform me about something deeper, that's all I have to go on.

SOPHIA

The woman in there is beautiful. Why did you turn her down?

SEAN

I won't deny her beauty, but I won't agree to taking something easy. If it's easy, it's not for me.

SOPHIA

And what makes you believe I'm not easy?

SEAN

If you were easy, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

SOPHIA

Not true. I could be going along with what you're saying just to see if you have a good dick game or money to take care of me. So, I ask again. How do you know I'm not easy?

SEAN

The only way I'll find out is if you accept my number. If you're not trying to accept my number, I'm sorry for wasting your time.

SOPHIA

Well played.

SEAN

(313) 555-7845. My name is Sean. Thank you for the compliment, and I hope to hear from you.

She pulls her phone out, and puts the number into her phone.

He turns, ready to walk away.

SOPHIA

Wait a minute. You're not about to stand here and watch me call you?

He turns back around.

SEAN

That's what desperate niggas do. You'll either call me, or you won't. Nice talking with you...

SOPHIA

Sophia.

SEAN

Nice talking with you, Sophia. And again, I hope I'll hear from you.

He walks off.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

Majority of men today ain't worth a fuck, and that's literally as well. Either I'm not used to hearing the words he spoke, or I'm just slipping because I'm used to the basic approach from men. I guess there's only way I'll find out.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BROTHEL - SOPHIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Three guys and six women are in her room drinking and doing drugs, having a good time, half-dressed, listening to the music playing.

Sophia is standing up against the wall wearing latex clothing watching them.

One of the men comes over offering a drink, and she shakes her head no.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

I don't drink or do drugs while I'm on the job. Not because I can't, I just feel like I don't need something to say in so many words 'Block me out from what I'm about to do.' I understand we as women feel 'If a man can do it, I can do it,' and there shouldn't be any ridicule behind it. Look... the shit-talking is said because we're viewed as the source of life, and we're giving away the good soil for what? Here's what I find funny.

(Laughs)

Some women would view women like myself as whores, but they do the exact things we do for free, just to get on social media and have sob stories. Men have been calling us hoers from the beginning, but they want a

woman who acts just like us without the excess baggage. Pretty funny, wouldn't you think?

The people in the room start getting intimate with each other.

Sophia shakes her head, taking a deep breath before engaging with them.

The beginning of a perfectly planned out orgy begins in front us.

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

Threesomes, orgies, or whatever you call them. It's been going on since men and women were placed on this earth. Not encouraging people to do it, but if you feel that's the move for you, why not? Especially if you're getting good money for it. As far as engaging with the same sex... it's no different than being with the opposite sex. The process is still the same. The only difference is you're licking and sucking on the same parts you have or plastic. And contrary to belief, a lot of people love this type of shit. If they don't, it's because they can't find someone to do this type of shit with them.

(Laughs)

Married couples or what most would call 'Swingers.' This gives them a different type of rush. Men always try to slip it in with the woman they supposedly love, and women do the same, mixing it up with a man or a woman. And like I said, same-sex isn't respected by most, but if they had the opportunity, they'd accept it because it's all about making your mate happy.

SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK:

INT. THE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Sophia and Sean are sitting by the window conversing while waiting for their food.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

As you can see, I gave him a try. So far, I'm digging him as a person.

Nothing to the extremes of wanting to jump in bed with him, but he could possibly work his way up to being the one.

SEAN

So, what are you into? As far as movies, music, all of that good stuff?

SOPHIA

Movie-wise, if it doesn't catch my attention off the back I would hope the storyline is remarkable. I love a good story from beginning to end, but it can't be boring. With music... it has to appease my ears and warm my soul with the beat and words.

SEAN

Hm.

That's deep right there.

SOPHIA

(Laughs)

What makes you say that? You didn't expect that type of response?

SEAN

(Laughs)

I'm not about to lie. Women these days don't get deep with their responses or conversation.

SOPHIA

Hopefully, you've just learned all women are not the same, just as all men are not the same.

SEAN

Yes, I did.

SOPHIA

Good. So tell me something about yourself.

SEAN

You probably wouldn't believe it, but I'm an accountant. Truth be told, I'm a loner. I like peace and quiet. Old school music or jazz. From time to time, I like to go down by the water to release whatever I felt was

stressing me out. I'm single. Well, that's obvious because we're on this date. I...

SOPHIA

Hold on. Just because we're on this date doesn't mean you're single. You could be married, have a girlfriend, a crazy side chick, who knows.

SEAN

Greedy men who believe they won't get caught do things like that. And didn't we just agree all men and women are not the same?

SOPHIA

Indeed, we did. I was just seeing if you would flip the script on me.

As they continue talking, a brown-skinned man in his mid thirties walks by, and then he stops doing a double take, coming back to their table.

SEAN

Not happening. So, what do you do?

SOPHIA

I work in the...

MAN

Excuse me. I'm sorry to intrude on the conversation, sir, but I have to ask her a question.

(To Sophia)

Are you working later on tonight?

Sophia and Sean are confused.

SOPHIA

Excuse me?

MAN

I'm sorry if it's coming off as rude, but I was just wondering because...

SOPHIA

Wondering what? I don't know you, and I know for damn sure you don't know me.

MAN

There's no need to make a scene. I was

simply asking you if...

SOPHIA

No, it won't be a scene. Sean, I'm sorry, but I'm leaving. You know my number, so call me if you want to hook up later.

Sophia grabs her purse, stands up and then shoves through the man leaving the restaurant.

The man looks on with a sly smirk.

SEAN

Can I ask you something?

The man looks at him.

MAN

What would that be?

SEAN

What was all of that about?

MAN

Listen. I don't know what she was feeding you, but...

(Pulls out a business card)

If you wanna know the truth, call that number. And just a heads up...

He leans down into Sean's ear.

MAN (CONT'D)

If you pay her right, she loves getting beat and choked. It turns her on.

The man stands up, taps Sean on the shoulder and then walks off.

Sean picks up the card, astonished.

Bitting down on his lip with anger, he goes into his pocket, pulls out some money and drops it on the table before leaving the restaurant.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIA'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sophia is on the couch reading a book, with the irritation of what happened in the restaurant laced on her face.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

I swear to God, if people would mind their own business instead of trying to put somebody on blast, things might be different. We all know this will never happen because people feel they have to expose somebody for their greater good without exposing themselves. Married men and women. People who claim they're in love. They all have the same common interest of attempting to expose somebody without speaking about themselves. If I could...

The sound of the doorbell interrupts her.

Rolling her eyes annoyed, she gets up and walks toward the door.

She takes a deep breath, opens the door and at first she's smiling, until she gets punched in the mouth.

BLACK SCREEN:

SOPHIA (V.O.)

Most women in the business are concerned about the end game. Will they have enough money to sit back and live a good life? They start thinking about children and marriage, hoping a man will accept their past. Those things never crossed my mind. What should've crossed my mind, which should be on every woman's mind in this business.

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Sophia is sleeping with her head bandaged, two swollen black eyes, a busted mouth and tubes inside her mouth.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

This is what scares me, and it finally happened. Yeah, the bruises can heal. I can spend some money on surgery to gain my sexy back. But at the moment, I'm more focused on the fact of if I'll wake up. Ending up in a coma was the last thing on my mind. All I have is my thoughts replaying everything I've done, and now that I'm reflecting on my thoughts... I'm slowly seeing the life I was living wasn't as glorious

as I thought. But...

(Deep sigh)

That's not me. This is my twin sister, Cassie. They say what you do in the streets can touch home, and I'll be goddamn if it didn't reach me.

Sophia comes into the frame with sorrow in each step she takes, stopping beside her sister's bed, gently placing a hand on her head, leaning down, kissing her forehead.

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

My sister caught the wrath of my lifestyle, and she's nowhere near being like me. She was saving herself to start a family with the man she knew would complete her. She's educated, hard-working and stood her ground. Now... Now, she's in a position where I can have the plug pulled to end her suffering or I can let the suffering continue, praying she'll wake up.

(Sniffles, sobs)

Presentations and attitudes are identical twins in every woman and race. Yes, some women don't behave the way women like me behave, only craving the next big dollar using our bodies. For the women that's not like us, it's sad if some of you suffer behind our actions, but that's because there's more of us than you, so men will always think all women are the same.

Doctors come into the room and Sophia remains in the room with tears in her eyes.

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

...We can't get mad at men when our emotions run wild. We should look at ourselves for subjecting our bodies and emotions to a man for the wrong reasons, and maybe things can change. But we all know that won't happen because we have an obsession with money, and we always have to feel like we're better than the next woman, despite the fact we're all riding in the same boat. Some of us might be at the helm for various reasons, but we're all viewed the same, and we accept it for what we want and a

status.

One of the doctors walks over to her saying a few words, and she lowers her head sobbing, shaking her head yes.

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

Living life with money means nothing
if it costs losing someone you love.
Having sex for money, giving away
pussy you claim is good is a
contradiction. Life presents easy ways
out you think are right, but
everything easy comes with harder
consequences. But... this is the life of
women like me who represent the same
sided coin. We keep doing what we do
until the pressure busts the pipes and
we have to deal with life flooding us
with a reality we knew was there but
tried so hard to ignore.

One of the doctors walks over to Cassie's life support machine.

BLACK SCREEN:

We hear the machine go flatline.

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

What you do can affect the people you
love without them even knowing.

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE CARD: THE SAME WOMAN AS A WHOLE

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - NIGHT

The wind howls, a visceral sound cutting through the darkness, with dark clouds, heavy and ominous, swirling above.

Rain begins to fall, lightly at first, and then with increasing intensity.

A woman, obscured by a tattered hood, walks barefoot along the broken asphalt.

Her clothes are ragged and soaked by the rain, and her movement is an unsteady mixture of exhaustion and grim determination.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.)

We've all been down this brutal road,
hoping we'll reach a smooth freeway of
true love we never experienced or were
told. But before birth, the brutal
road was set, and we can't gain
control of it until later in life. But
these are the women in me, just as I'm
in them.

She almost falls, catching herself at the last moment as her
breath comes in ragged gasps.

Gotta keep moving. Can't stop. Not now. That's what she
repeats in her mind as she continues walking.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

From birth, we view one woman as a
role model and one man we'll forever
love. Some of us are placed in
different situations, where our role
model neglects us and the man we love
either isn't around, or he's taking
advantage of what we'll give our
husband, telling us this is how a
father shows love. Yes, it can happen
with other family members, keeping it
deep within, uncertain if telling
would be right or if we'd be shamed,
even though we didn't ask for or
deserve what happened. This situation
creates a strong will to escape the
pain or makes us believe this is the
only thing we're worth. But these are
the women in me, just as I'm in them.
People judge us without knowing our
past, and we still walk down the road
hoping we'll reach our dreams of
unconditional love.

She clutches the hood tighter, trying to ward off the wind
and rain.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

As adolescents, we're discovering more
about the woman we'll become, no
matter if we're still letting the pain
of the past drain our energy or we're
still on the straight and narrow with
the help of our role models. We all
have one male best friend who'll be
there for us through thick and thin,
making us believe he's the one who'll

give us the radiating glow at the end of the road. But we don't wanna risk what we have, knowing adding sex can ruin the friendship, and it's hard finding a true friend who loves us without judging. But some of us take this friend for granted, and we start thinking he wants us for sex, swearing he's the enemy, not seeing he's protecting us from the enemy. So, we end up driving him away, focused on sex and fun, but when the fun is done, and sex no longer cures the pain and shame endured... We're back alone, wishing we had that friend we should've never let go. But these are the women in me, just as I'm in them. Sometimes, we're so focused on what we think will make us happy, we neglect the happiness right in our faces because we're impatient, and we'll release the hand we could've continued holding as we walk down the brutal road to lead us into the world of true love unknown.

She stumbles again, and this time she catches herself on a roadside sign, with its message obscured by dirt and rain.

The rain intensifies, and as the wind picks up, she forces herself to push forward, doing her best to keep the hood over her head.

She digs her bare feet into the asphalt, pushing forward with newfound resolve.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A peach pit is how men view us, tossing us aside. In some cases, as we prepare for graduation with our high school sweetheart who has the same goals as us and refuses to let us go, we also have our male friend who encourages us. Some of us are graduating with diplomas in sex education, sleeping with anything, unaware of who the father is when we're pregnant because we slept with so many. Maybe we slept with so many men because they talked well and said 'I love you.' They don't want us or the child, yet they wanna plant seeds in us for growth. The growth begins,

and we don't hear from them or even come close to seeing them. But some men stay around doing the best they can until he can uproot us from the dead grass, moving us onto the land where he knows a family belongs because we as women can give men the world and love as long as he appreciates us, giving him undying love equal to when his mother gave him birth.

Lightning flashes.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Some of us are sophisticated women who keep a clean household, a steady income, and a 'Husband,' not a 'Man,' which is something real women understand. We have loving husbands who love our meals made from scratch. We don't do it because it's a wife's job. We do it because he deserves something on his stomach after a long day. In return, he showers us with affection, followed by toe-curling love, leaving us with a smile brighter than the first day of Summer. Some of us are single by choice because we know there's no point in giving up something good, knowing it'll completely drain our energy for a bragging story instead of seeing a blessing placed in his life for change. But you can't change a man who doesn't want to change. He's never tasted love, but he'll say he's in love to get what he wants. But these are the women in me, just as I'm in them. Some of us took the shortcut of disgrace, and maybe in our eyes, there's nothing wrong with it because it's the only way we can make ends meet. We love money and attention during the moment, but when it's over, we sit on the bed drinking our glass of tears, wanting love and a family, but we're afraid no one will accept us because of what we do. Some of us remain taking mental and physical abuse because he's the one providing us with money and a roof overhead. We know the suffering we're going through

isn't worth it, but we're scared to tell because we believe no one will believe us. We think people will say, 'How can you reach out for help if you're not helping yourself?' But these are the women in me, just as I'm in them. Sometimes we think sleeping on the brutal road is happiness because we've been trained to believe we're only worth our bodies and nothing more.

She continues walking along the deserted gravel road in the pouring rain, getting soaked.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Some of us are still married to the same man as we teach our daughters right from wrong, making sure they grow up with close to no negativity, because negativity can be a woman's worst enemy and deceitful friend. Some of us never found the father of our children but continued adding on new ones. Some of us know the father, but since we're not a couple, we keep the children from him. While being spiteful, we don't realize our daughters are going down a road of destruction. And if we do notice it, we think it's cute, encouraging it until they end up raped or dead, placing blame on everyone but ourselves. But these are the women in me, just as I'm in them. Some of us are devoted wives taking care of our home, and some of us still live life as if we're teenagers, only able to recognize something's wrong with our daughters when harm is done. Some of us can look back on life happy with what we accomplished, and some didn't fare out for the best. And the daughters... Some of them turned out successful, and some are stuck on the brutal road, suffering humiliation for money, believing sex outweighs love. Some of us don't even make it to this age or out of high school, dying early from a disease because we were out there fast, thinking we knew it all. Some of us were raped and murdered at a young age, either by a stranger, our

father, or a person one of our parents was involved with who didn't want kids around. Even if they were caught and prosecuted, it doesn't remove the fact that our innocent lives were ended, and there's no real reason that can begin justifying why our lives were ended. But these are the women in me, just as I'm in them. Some of us are living out the happy life we dreamt of, and sadly, some of our lives ended on the gravel road, sometimes before our feet could even touch it.

She limps forward, determined.

Each step sends a sharp pain through her feet, but she keeps moving.

Her breathing is heavy and ragged as the gravel and glass crunch beneath her feet.

She stumbles, catching herself.

Suddenly, a faint light appears in the distance.

The light grows stronger, pulsating with warmth.

The sound of faint whispers is heard in the wind.

ENERGY OF LIFE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This is our story, spoken from the good, bad and in between. The trials we go through build character in the women you encounter. As life ends and begins, it continues its consistent cycle of life. The women born will be just like me, starting on the same brutal road with no control over how life will carry on or end. These are the women in me, just as I'm in them, you and every other woman around the world. The only problem we have is neglecting the true meaning behind the brutal road placed beneath our feet. It's more than a test of character. It's there so we can see that we as women should stand by each other as one, paving over the brutal road with a smooth pavement of love we deserve. We make mistakes like everyone else. We are 'LIFE!' We can make a big difference if we form as one, creating

a solid bond, not budging or cracking,
making the world understand our worth.
We are one woman with good and bad
traits, but with support, we can
outweigh the bad, creating a new
evolution of good! We are the women in
every woman! Let's love each other as
one and make the world understand
we're more than just appearance, sex
and being degraded! Let's make them
look at us as the sun, water, air and
earth... Highly needed, and without
them, the world would be nothing!
Stand tall and proud as the woman you
are! Help the woman beside you if you
see she's down! We're the same women
as a whole. The world isn't ours, but
we play a major part making sure it
revolves.

She continues walking toward the light, taking the final
steps where other women are waiting to greet her with open
arms and smiles.

The women embrace her, and the light envelops everything.

FADE TO WHITE:

END CREDITS: