

Reap & Sow

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

INT. STRIP CLUB-NIGHT

SUPER: LOS ANGELES 2001

A man stands, watching a STRIPPER dance around a pole. XANDER (30's) He tosses a **stack** of **cash** to her.

XANDER
There you go!!

He looks to his right.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Rachel!!

A woman steps towards him. RACHEL (25)

RACHEL
Yes?

He pulls out a stack of **twenties** and hands them to her.

XANDER
You have a new client to escort.
Cash up front.

She kisses him on the cheek.

RACHEL
Thanks daddy.

XANDER
Remember who you really belong to.

Rachel turns and steps away.

He smacks her on the butt.

RACHEL (O.C.)
Oh!

Xander smiles.

INT. DINER-BATHROOM-AFTERNOON

A tall handsome man with wavy dark hair and brown eyes. NICK (27)

A woman in a waitress **uniform** bounces as she stands, and her hands gripped onto the **tile** wall of the bathroom. SUZIE (24) Her pants pulled down to her ankles.

Nick stands up, going back and forth from behind Suzie -- He grabs Suzie by her waist -- and leans his head onto her back --

SUZIE
(moan)

Nick sits down on the toilet and pulls his pants up over his lap.

Suzie reaches down and pulls her pants up. She looks at Nick.

SUZIE (CONT'D)
Why are you so tired?

NICK
Work.

SUZIE
Well, if you don't mind, I better get back to mine. Will you be home later?

NICK
Yeah.

Nick stands up and fastens his belt. He kisses Suzie on the cheek. He grabs a hold of the doorknob and pulls the door open. Nick walks out.

EXT. PARKING LOT-MOTEL-AFTERNOON

Nick sweeps the front porch to the office.

A car pulls into the parking lot of the motel.

Nick stops sweeping.

The passenger door opens.

Nick's eyes look in amazement at the sight of Rachel getting out of the car. A man stands up from the driver side of the car. RACHEL'S CLIENT (23)

Nick holds the **broomstick** close to him as if it is the only thing keeping him from hitting the ground after watching Rachel walk towards the office door and taking her steps past him. Rachel's Client looks at Nick.

RACHEL'S CLIENT
 (point)
 Hands off!

Nick turns around and returns to sweeping the ground.

EXT. MOTEL-POOL-AFTERNOON

Rachel swims in the pool.

Nick walks past. He blows the dust and dirt with a **leaf blower**.

Rachel swims towards the edge of the pool and pulls herself up. She looks at Nick.

Rachel's Client walks towards her.

RACHEL'S CLIENT
 I have to go to my meeting. Will
 you be alright by yourself?

RACHEL
 Yeah.

Rachel's Client leans down and kisses her.

EXT/INT. MOTEL ROOM #105-EVENING

Rachel stands in front of the television, tapping the buttons on the **remote control**. She looks at Nick as he walks past the open door.

RACHEL
 Sir!

Nick walks back to the door and leans his head in.

NICK
 Yes?

RACHEL
 The channels aren't coming up.

Nick walks towards Rachel and takes the remote from her. He looks at the number on the television.

NICK
 The channel has to be on three and
 you must have hit the TV button by
 accident. Next time just hit the
 cable button.

Nick changes the television to live TV and hands the remote back to Rachel.

RACHEL

Thanks.

Nick steps away from Rachel. He reaches the doorway.

Rachel looks at Nick.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Hey! Don't you want to stay for a while?

NICK

What about your boyfriend?

RACHEL

He's not my boyfriend --

-- Rachel walks towards Nick -- She touches his chin with the end of her finger -- She leans her mouth towards his -- and licks his lips --

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE-MOTEL-EVENING

MOTEL MANAGER (40's)

ON SCREEN

The Motel Manager watches Nick in the motel room with Rachel.

BACK TO SCENE

The Motel Manager looks away. He steps out of the office.

MOTEL MANAGER

That's it!

EXT. NICK'S APARTMENT-EVENING

Suzie stands at the front door of Nick's apartment -- She knocks with aggressiveness --

SUZIE

-- Come on, Nick!

INT. MOTEL ROOM #105-EVENING

Rachel lays on the bed.

Nick crawls towards her -- He slides his pants down -- and pulls Rachel's panties down to her feet -- Nick begins to go towards Rachel's face -- and lays his chest up against hers -
- He goes back and forth --

RACHEL
(moan)

NICK
Oh! Baby!!

RACHEL
(moan) Right there!

EXT. PARKING LOT-MOTEL-NIGHT

Nick walks towards the end of the parking lot.

The Motel Manager steps in front of Nick. A **cigarette** in his mouth.

MOTEL MANAGER
Don't bother coming in tomorrow.
You're fired!

The Motel Manager steps away from Nick.

Nick rubs his fingers through his hair and walks away from the motel.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Nick lays on his bed. He looks at the ceiling and looks at the glow in the dark stars. Nick closes his eyes. The house phone rings. Nick covers his face with the palm of his hand. He gets up.

NICK
What is it this time!

INT. NICKS'S LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Nick picks up the **receiver** and puts it to his ear.

NICK
Hello?

SUZIE (V.O.)
 Oh, now you're finally home! I
 thought you forgot where you live?

NICK
 Look, I had a long day and I'm
 sorry I didn't call you.

SUZIE (V.O.)
 I'm right outside your door. Are
 you gonna take me to get a bite to
 eat or what?

EXT. WEINER SCHNITZEL-PARKING LOT-NIGHT

At a table, Suzie sits across from Nick. She eats her **chili dog**.

Nick looks at her.

NICK
 You must really be hungry.

SUZIE
 Where were you?

NICK
 I was working.

SUZIE
 Really? I called the motel and the
 manager told me he fired you. I
 asked why and he told me to ask
 you.

NICK
 I dozed off somewhere at the front
 desk or something like that.

SUZIE
 And that's the story you're
 sticking to?

NICK
 What are you, my mother?

SUZIE
 No. I'm pregnant.

NICK
 What!

SUZIE
You knocked me up.

NICK
But we did it today?

SUZIE
You clearly don't remember how much
we do it.

Suzie stands up, steps away from the table and looks back at Nick.

SUZIE (CONT'D)
I'm keeping the baby.

NICK
What about us?

SUZIE
It won't work. I can't take care of
you too.

NICK
Just like that, we're done?

SUZIE
I still want you in our baby's
life.

Nick gets up and turns. He looks at Suzie.

NICK
I guess I'll call you and we can
set something up?

SUZIE
Yeah.

Suzie walks towards her car and opens the driver door.

NICK
Drive safe.

Nick walks out of the parking lot.

Suzie gets into her car and shuts the driver door.

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT-OFFICE-MORNING

RESTAURANT MANAGER (40's)

The Restaurant Manager sits at his desk. He looks at Nick.

Nick is nicely dressed in a **white collared shirt** and **black khaki pants**.

RESTAURANT MANAGER
Are you good with the **friars**?

NICK
Yes.

RESTAURANT MANAGER
I'll see you tomorrow then.

The Restaurant Manager stands up.

Nick stands up and shakes his hand.

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT-AFTERNOON

The Restaurant Manager steps towards Nick.

RESTAURANT MANAGER
Hey, Nick? There's a lady over at that booth that wants you to take her order personally. She says she knows you.

Nick walks towards the booth. He looks at his **order pad**, and holds a **pen** to it but does not look at Rachel.

NICK
What can I get for you?

RACHEL
Hello!

Nick looks at Rachel.

NICK
What are you doing here?

RACHEL
I was just in the neighborhood.

NICK
You can't be in here unless you're gonna order food?

RACHEL
Fine.

Rachel reaches into her **purse** and pulls out a **hundred dollar bill**. She hands it to Nick. Nick takes it.

NICK
This is too much.

RACHEL
You can keep the change. Just get
me two cheeseburgers and a large
order of fries.

Nick walks towards the *cash register*.

EXT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT-EVENING

Rachel sits on the hood of her car. Her nice smooth legs
crossed.

Nick walks out. He looks at her.

NICK
If I didn't know any better, I'd
say you were stalking me.

RACHEL
Maybe I got something I was
missing.

NICK
And what about him?

RACHEL
I was only with him to make him
look good.

Nick looks at her with a confused look on his face.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I'm an escort, Nick!

Nick looks away and walks towards the restaurant.

NICK
(whisper)
I had sex with an escort.

RACHEL
You did.

Nick looks at Rachel and steps towards her.

NICK
What do you want? Money?

RACHEL
 Oh, Nicky pooh! I don't want
 anything but a good time like we
 had yesterday.

NICK
 What's in it for me?

RACHEL
 You get me.

Rachel pulls Nick closer -- She kisses him --

RACHEL (CONT'D)
 What do you say we take this party
 to my bedroom?

NICK
 Fine with me.

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-EVENING

Rachel lays underneath the covers -- Nick leans himself
 against her -- the covers going up and down -- Nick grips his
 hands onto her -- Rachel pushes him to the side of the bed --
 Nick lays on his back -- Rachel goes up and down under the
 covers --

RACHEL
 (moan)

EXT. CARNIVAL-NIGHT

At the carnival, Nick holds on to Rachel's hand.
 Rachel runs towards a **photo booth** and gets in.

INT. PHOTO BOOTH-NIGHT

Nick and Rachel sit in the photo booth. A snap from the
 camera. Rachel kisses Nick on the cheek.

He pulls her closer towards him. She smiles and he kisses
 her on cheek.

INT. GAME ROOM-NIGHT

At the **Skee-ball games**. Nick rolls balls towards the holes
 and scores enough **tickets** for a prize.

RACHEL

Wow!

Nick grabs the tickets. Nick tosses the tickets on the display case of the **prize table**.

Rachel stands alongside of Nick and grabs his arm.

GAME ROOM EMPLOYEE (late teens)

NICK

What can I get with these?

GAME ROOM EMPLOYEE

(point)

These.

NICK

Those?

GAME ROOM EMPLOYEE

Yes.

Nick looks at the **pink watch** with a **unicorn** on it.

NICK

(point)

That one.

Nick looks at Rachel.

NICK (CONT'D)

For you.

GAME ROOM EMPLOYEE

(roll eyes)

He grabs the watch from behind and lays it on the display case.

Rachel lays her left hand on the desk.

Nick wraps the watch **strap** around her wrist. He kisses her.

RACHEL

You want to go somewhere with me?

NICK

Where?

RACHEL

To meet a friend of mine.

NICK
What friend?

RACHEL
You'll see.

Rachel grabs Nick by his hand and pulls him away.

EXT. MANSION-NIGHT

Rachel steps towards a GUARD (30's)

GUARD
Who is he?

RACHEL
My date.

GUARD
He looks like he's from the wrong
neighborhood.

RACHEL
He looks fine to me.

GUARD
Go ahead.

Rachel walks in and grabs Nick by his hand.

INT. LIVING ROOM-MANSION-NIGHT

Rachel pulls Nick through the living room.

He looks at all the GUESTS. Some of the Guests are sitting on
the couch, kissing each other and having sex.

NICK
Where are we going?

RACHEL
I want you to meet him!

NICK
Who?

RACHEL
The man that took me off the
streets.

NICK
Wait! What?

RACHEL
What are you scared of?

NICK
Did you forget about what we did
last night?

RACHEL
So?

NICK
He's going to break my legs. I know
how these things work.

RACHEL
You watch too much TV.

Rachel pulls Nick to the stairs.

INT. OFFICE-MANSION-NIGHT

Xander sits on a sofa, watching ESCORT #1 and #2 dance in front of him. A **cigar** in his mouth. Xander turns to his office door. A gentle knock from the other side.

GUARDS #1 and #2 (30's)

Guard #1 opens the door.

Rachel steps in. She pulls Nick into the office and smiles at Xander.

RACHEL
Xander!

Xander walks around his desk and walks towards Rachel.

Rachel hugs Xander.

He looks at Nick.

XANDER
And you must be the man that's
keeping my top girl happy.

NICK
You can say that. I'm just an
average man from California.

XANDER
Well Rachel here seems to find
something great about you. Don't
disappoint her.

Xander taps Nick on his shoulder and walks to his seat behind his desk. He sits. Xander tosses a stack of cash to Nick.

XANDER (CONT'D)
For you and my princess! Go to Vegas and have fun.

NICK
No offense, but I don't take bribes.

XANDER
It is not a bribe. Consider it a gift.

Nick walks the stack of cash to Xander's desk and sets it down in front of him.

Rachel steps towards the cash and takes it.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Perhaps, you would be more comfortable if she held onto the money?

NICK
She can do whatever she feels. I'm not touching it.

Rachel looks at Xander.

Xander nods his head "Yes."

She puts the cash into her purse.

NICK (CONT'D)
It was good meeting you.

Nick walks towards the door.

XANDER
You too, Nick. See you soon.

EXT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX-POOL-NIGHT

Nick sits on the edge of the swimming pool.

Rachel swims under water -- She grabs a hold of his legs -- and pushes her head up out of the water --

Rachel leans her head on his lap --

RACHEL

Let's go somewhere. It doesn't have to be Vegas?

NICK

I can't go.

RACHEL

Why not?

NICK

I have responsibility here. I have an ex-girlfriend that's pregnant.

RACHEL

Okay. I'll give you some of the cash to have her take care of it.

NICK

What are you talking about! I don't believe in abortion. Keep your blood money!!

Nick gets up and walks away from the pool. Rachel looks at Nick.

RACHEL

Don't walk away from me, Nick!

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Nick grabs his shoes, pants and shirt from the floor.

EXT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX-EVENING

Nick walks towards the exit of the apartment complex. Rachel walks behind him. She gets in front of him.

RACHEL

Where are you going!

NICK

In case you don't see it. You can't buy me! I'm not like you or any of those whore friends of yours. Stay out of my life!

Nick walks out of the apartment complex. Rachel stops.

RACHEL

Don't you walk away from me you son of bitch!

INT. PATIENT ROOM-HOSPITAL-MORNING

Suzie sits back on a **Examination Table**.

NURSE (30's)

The door opens.

Nick steps in.

SUZIE

It took you long enough.

NICK

Sorry I'm late.

Nick steps towards the chair on Suzie's right and sits.

NURSE

Alright, are you ready?

Nick looks at Suzie.

SUZIE

We're ready.

The Nurse puts **Gel** on Suzie's stomach and puts the **Ultra Sound Wand** against Suzie's pelvis. The picture on the **monitor** comes up. The waves on the monitor catch a **heart beat**. Nick kisses Suzie on her forehead. Suzie looks at Nick. Nick looks away.

NICK

Sorry. I guess I got caught up in the moment.

SUZIE

What are you sorry for? I actually liked it. The mother of your child being kissed feels good.

The Nurse gets up from her chair.

NURSE

I'll get your picture printed and give you two some privacy.

SUZIE

No need, nurse.

Nick looks at the Nurse, and then at Suzie.

SUZIE (CONT'D)

We can work something out. What do you say?

NICK

Life has been crazy without you.

Nick leans down and kisses Suzie.

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Rachel sits on her sofa. A bottle of **vodka** in her hand. A party of people surrounds her. She sits in her **red mink coat**, and a **red bikini**. Rachel stands to her feet. She walks to the center of the room.

RACHEL

Does anyone have a phone!!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-HOSPITAL-NIGHT(DREAM SEQUENCE)

Nick walks into a dark hospital room. He looks around.

NICK

Hello, is anyone there?

Nick sees a **gray cat** sitting in front of him. A **scaly slug** appears behind the cat. Nick rushes towards it -- He grabs the slug -- and shuts its mouth -- Nick looks at the slug --

NICK (CONT'D)

-- You're one ugly mother!

RACHEL (V.O.)

Oh, Nick! That hurts.

NICK

What is this!

RACHEL (V.O.)

Don't you ever pay attention to anything other than where you can put your dick in and satisfy yourself for a day, or two.

NICK

This isn't real. You're not really talking to me.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Then wake up and answer the phone!

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT(END DREAM SEQUENCE)

Nick lies in bed with Suzie. His bedroom phone rings. Nick opens his eyes and reaches for the receiver. He puts the receiver to his ear.

NICK

Hello?

RACHEL (V.O.)

Hey, Nick!! Thought I tell you that I'm having a party. You can come over and see which one of these girls you can hook up with!

NICK

Are you hammered?

Suzie opens her eyes. She looks at Nick.

RACHEL (V.O.)

No, I'm not hammered!! Come and see for yourself! Come on -- son -- of -- bitch!

Nick hangs up the receiver. He gets up and walks out of the bedroom.

Suzie sits up.

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Rachel stands on the edge of her sofa -- She takes a big gulp out of the bottle of vodka -- Rachel tosses it to the floor -
-

RACHEL

Which one of you guys wants to take me to the bedroom and fuck me until I pop!

PARTY GUY #1 and PARTY #2, early 20s. The two party goers approach her. Party Guy #1 lifts Rachel over his shoulder and walks her into the bedroom.

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Party Guy #1 lays Rachel on the bed -- He slides her underwear down -- He yanks down his pants -- and begins to go in deep --

PARTY GUY #1
-- Oh, shit!

PARTY GUY #2
Keep going, bro!

NICK
-- Yeah, keep going bro --

-- Nick pulls Party Guy #1 away from Rachel -- He punches him
in the face --

PARTY GUY #2
-- Hey asshole --

-- Nick kicks Party Guy #2 in the groin --
Sirens sound.

PARTY GUY #2 (CONT'D)
Get up, bro! The cops are here!

Nick looks at Party Guy #1.

NICK
Stay down!!

Nick reaches down and covers Rachel with her coat.

POLICE OFFICER #1 and #2 (20's)

Police Officer #1 points his gun at Party Guy #1, and then at
Nick.

POLICE OFFICER #1
What the hell's going on in here!

Nick looks at Police Officer #1.

NICK
Can you call an ambulance, please!

Police Officer #1 looks at Rachel. He looks at Nick.

POLICE OFFICER #1
What's wrong with her?

NICK
Can you just get a ambulance,
please!!

POLICE OFFICER #2
Do you mind coming out of there,
sir?

POLICE OFFICER #1
And putting your hands on your
head?

Nick raises his hands -- and puts them on his head. He walks
towards the doorway.

Police Officer #2 grabs Nick by his arm -- and walks him out
--

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Police Officer #2 brings down both of Nick's arms behind his
back -- and handcuffs him --

Nick looks at Police Officer #2 --

NICK
-- Can you please listen to me! Get
that woman to the hospital!!

POLICE OFFICER #2
Calm down, sir!

INT. HOLDING CELL-COUNTY JAIL-NIGHT

Nick sits on a bench. He leans his head back against the
wall. He looks at Party Guy #1. Nick looks at his left hand
handcuffed to the bar on the cell.

NICK
If I wasn't restrained, I would
come over there and kick you in the
balls so hard that they would fly
out of your mouth!

GUARD #1 (30's)

GUARD #1
Valens?

NICK
Yes?

GUARD #1
You made bail.

NICK
By who?

GUARD #1
You're girlfriend.

EXT. COUNTY JAIL-NIGHT

Nick steps outside.

Suzie stands on the edge of the sidewalk. She looks at Nick.

NICK
Thanks for bailing me out.

SUZIE
I didn't bail you out.

Suzie moves to the right and reveals Rachel to Nick.

NICK
Oh man!

Suzie steps towards Nick. She touches his face.

NICK (CONT'D)
I ended it -- I promise? She was drunk and was being -- I was doing what I was supposed to do.

SUZIE
I know and understand. This won't work. I wish it could but you're gonna choose her over me. I'll call you.

Suzie walks past Nick. He looks at Rachel.

INT. DINER-DAWN

Nick and Rachel sit in a booth.

She gently raises a mug up to her mouth.

RACHEL
(sip)

Rachel sets the mug down.

Nick stirs his coffee with a spoon.

NICK
I can't see you anymore.

Rachel looks at Nick.

RACHEL
If this is about what happened --

-- Nick slams his hand on the table --

Rachel gets a jump scare --

NICK
-- We're bad for each other. I just
didn't see it.

Rachel reaches for Nick's hand. Nick pulls his hand away. He gets up from the booth.

RACHEL
Nick? Please!

Nick walks towards the doors. He looks at Rachel.

NICK
Later.

Nick steps out of the diner. Rachel's eyes water with emotion.

RACHEL
(sob)

EXT. PARKING LOT-MORNING

Nick wipes his eyes, and fights back the tears.

EXT. REHABILITATION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Rachel stands in front of a rehabilitation center. She looks away and starts to walk. She looks at her watch. The same one that Nick won for her by playing Skee-ball. Rachel smiles and steps towards the doors.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-HOSPITAL-NIGHT(DREAM SEQUENCE)

Nick stands in the dark hospital room. He looks around.

NICK
Why am I back here?

Slugs gather around a **baby doll**. Nick walks towards the doll. The slugs slither away. He grabs the doll from the ground.

NICK (CONT'D)
What the hell is this!!

The doll's eyes open.

DOLL (V.O.)
 You stupid son of a bitch! You
 picked her over your own child!!
 What makes her so special!

Nick throws the doll to the ground and runs.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT(END DREAM SEQUENCE)

Nick lies asleep.

The phone rings.

Nick grabs onto the receiver.

NICK
 Hello?

NURSE (V.O.)
 Mr. Valens?

NICK
 Yes?

NURSE (V.O.)
 You might want to get down to the
 hospital.

NICK
 Why?

NURSE (V.O.)
 Your girlfriend was rushed here in
 an ambulance.

NICK
 I'm on my way.

Nick hangs up the receiver. He stands up and rushes out of
 the room.

INT. PATIENT ROOM-HOSPITAL-NIGHT

Suzie lies in a bed. She looks out the window, and pays no
 attention to the door being open or who comes in.

Nick steps in. A boutique of flowers in his hand.

Suzie looks at Nick, then turns back.

SUZIE
 What are you doing here?

NICK
They called me.

SUZIE
Why don't you get out of here! It's
over.

NICK
Suzie?

SUZIE
Get the fuck out!!

Nick turns around and walks out.

INT. CLASSROOM-REHABILITATION CENTER-AFTERNOON

A classroom of rehabilitation addicts. People in their early
20s and 30s. ADDICT #1 looks at Rachel.

ADDICT #1
(point)
You?

RACHEL
Me?

ADDICT #1
Yeah. Tell us about yourself?

RACHEL
My name's Rachel. I'm addicted to
cocaine. I came here to get clean.

ADDICT #2
What brought that on?

RACHEL
My boyfriend.

ADDICT #1
And how do you feel today?

RACHEL
Better.

ADDICT #2
That's good. Thank you for sharing.
(clap)

ADDICT #1
(clap)

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT-AFTERNOON

Nick stands in front of the cash register. The Restaurant Manager steps towards Nick.

RESTAURANT MANAGER
Hey, Nick?

NICK
Yes?

RESTAURANT MANAGER
Do you mind staying until closing time?

NICK
No. I can close.

RESTAURANT MANAGER
Okay. Thanks.

NICK
No problem.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Nick walks into his bedroom. He falls face down onto his bed.

NICK
Ahh!

The phone rings.

NICK (CONT'D)
Oh! What now!!

Nick grabs the receiver and puts it to his ear.

NICK (CONT'D)
Hello!

RACHEL (V.O.)
Hey?

NICK
Rachel?

Nick sits up.

RACHEL (V.O.)
(laugh)
Yes.

NICK
How are you?

RACHEL (V.O.)
I'm doing good. I'm getting help.

NICK
That's good.

RACHEL (V.O.)
Look, I really like to see you. I
can have visitors next week.

NICK
I don't know.

RACHEL (V.O.)
(sob)
I understand.

Nick looks at the ceiling. He thinks to himself.

NICK
I'll see you next week.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER-HALLWAY-NIGHT

RACHEL
Yes!! Thank you!

NICK (V.O.)
Take care of yourself.

RACHEL
I love you.

NICK (V.O.)
I love you too.

Rachel smiles and hangs up the receiver.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Nick lays down. He closes his eyes.

INT. VISITING AREA-REHABILITATION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Rachel sits at a table.

Nick steps in.

SECURITY GUARD (20's)

The Security Guard walks Nick towards Rachel.

NICK

Thank you.

Rachel stands up.

Nick hugs her.

Rachel sits down.

He sets a **water bottle** and a **Snickers** down on the table. Nick sits across from Rachel.

NICK (CONT'D)

I know it's not much but I didn't know what to get you. I know women love chocolate.

RACHEL

Thank you.

NICK

How are you doing here?

RACHEL

I'm making it day by day.

NICK

When do you get out?

RACHEL

Next week.

NICK

You want to ask me something? Don't you?

RACHEL

I can't live by myself. Not anymore.

NICK

Did you come up with that or did they?

RACHEL

They did.

NICK

I'm not good for you. I see that. It's bad that you can't.

RACHEL
I can do better.

NICK
I guess I can try.

RACHEL
Thank you.

Rachel reaches for Nick's hand.

Nick grabs a hold.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-AFTERNOON

Nick steps into the living room. He holds a box that is labeled *Rachel's Stuff*.

Rachel walks behind Nick. She kisses him on the cheek.

RACHEL
Thanks.

NICK
For what?

RACHEL
Everything. I never thanked you for what you did that night.

Nick touches Rachel on the cheek.

NICK
Shh! Its fine.

Nick kisses Rachel.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Rachel is on top -- She hovers over Nick, going up and down -
- Nick wraps his hands around her waist and back --

RACHEL
(moan)

Rachel leans down. She kisses Nick.

Nick kisses her.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-KITCHEN-MORNING

Rachel switches on the radio. She dances to the music playing -- a **wooden spoon** in her hand.

Nick walks in. Rachel spins in circles and stops --

She looks at Nick and feels embarrassed --

RACHEL
-- This is a surprise.

NICK
That's pretty good.

Nick walks towards Rachel --

She wraps her arms around him -- and kisses him.

RACHEL
I made you **French Toast**.

Rachel grabs the plate from the counter and hands it to him -
-

NICK
-- Thanks.

Nick steps towards the counter, and grabs a fork. He eats.

RACHEL
Can we do something today?

NICK
I have to work.

RACHEL
What about after?

NICK
We can go out to dinner after.

RACHEL
You promise?

NICK
I give you my word.

Rachel rushes towards the bedroom --

RACHEL
-- Thank you!

Nick shakes his head and smiles.

EXT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT-PATIO-EVENING

At a table, Rachel sits across from Nick. Her legs crossed in a red dress.

Nick looks at Rachel.

RACHEL
What?

NICK
You just look so good. It's hard to
take my eyes off you.

RACHEL
That was the plan.

Music begins to play.

NICK
Really?

Rachel gets up and grabs ahold of Nick's hand.

RACHEL
Come on!

NICK
No.

RACHEL
Please?

Nick stands up and walks with Rachel.

She stops and wraps her arms around him. Rachel slowly rocks herself in his arms and leans her head against his chest.

He rocks her slowly.

Rachel closes her eyes, feeling the warmth in his arms.

INT. DINING AREA-FAST FOOD RESTAURANT-AFTERNOON

Nick mops the floor in the dining area. Rachel steps towards Nick.

RACHEL
Can we talk for a minute?

NICK
Say what you have to say?

RACHEL
Okay. I'm pregnant!

Nick drops the mop handle.

NICK
Your what?

RACHEL
I'm pregnant. You know, after we had sex?

NICK
I know how. Let me process this for a second here.

RACHEL
Oh. Fine for you. I'm the one that has to carry it for nine months.

Rachel sits down at a booth. Nick walks to the booth. He sits.

NICK
I'll be with you every step of the way.

Nick grabs a hold of Rachel's hand.

Rachel leans towards Nick and kisses him. She sits back down.

RACHEL
If this is gonna go exactly the way we want it. You're gonna have to get a better job.

NICK
What's wrong with working here?

RACHEL
You're only making five dollars an hour. Not enough to cover the rent.

NICK
What do you suggest then?

INT. LOCKER ROOM-MIDDLE SCHOOL-MORNING

In the middle of the boys locker room. Nick stands, holding a mop.

CUSTODIAL MANAGER (40's)

CUSTODIAL MANAGER
 First, I want this entire floor
 mopped and the toilet's cleaned.
 Now, get to work!

The Custodial Manager walks out of the locker room.

NICK
 Good working with you too.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-EVENING

SUPER: NINE MONTHS LATER

Rachel lays on her side of the bed.

Nick walks in. He lays face down.

She caresses his hair with the ends of her finger. Nick looks at Rachel, and then at the size of her stomach. Nick lays his head on his *pillow* and closes his eyes.

INT. PATIENT ROOM-HOSPITAL-MORNING

Rachel lies asleep.

Nick walks into the room. Flowers in one hand and *balloons* in the other. He sets the flowers down on the counter. His newborn daughter lays beside Rachel in a *incubator*. Nick hovers over the incubator. He lifts the newborn up and lays her against his chest.

Rachel opens her eyes. She smiles at the sight of Nick holding their daughter.

RACHEL
 Good morning!!

NICK
 Good morning, mommy.

RACHEL
 You're good at this already.

NICK
 Do you have a name for her?

RACHEL
 Why don't we call her after her
 daddy.

NICK
Nicole?

RACHEL
No. Yuck! How about Nicola?

NICK
I like it.

Nick steps towards the bed and sits beside Rachel. He holds the newborn up close to his face.

NICK (CONT'D)
She's gonna be amazing, isn't she?

RACHEL
Like her daddy.

Nick leans towards Rachel and kisses her.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-AFTERNOON

Rachel sits on the sofa. She nurses the newborn.

A knock on the front door.

Rachel covers herself and lays the newborn in her bed. Rachel opens the front door.

GLADYS THOMAS (40's) A woman with a bad tan, and cheap make-up. A bad fragrance of perfume and worn out clothes.

GLADYS
Hello, Rachel?

RACHEL
Mom?

GLADYS
Aren't you gonna invite me in?

Rachel opens the door.

Gladys steps in, and looks around.

She looks at Rachel.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
Nice place you have here. Must be the boyfriend's, right?

RACHEL
How did you find me?

GLADYS
Your friend Xander told me you were
hanging around some guy. I had to
see it for myself.

Gladys walks towards the newborn.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
And you must be my granddaughter?

Rachel follows Gladys.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
What did you name her?

RACHEL
Nicola.

GLADYS
Beautiful.

RACHEL
She is.

Gladys turns to Rachel.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
What do you want?

GLADYS
What, a mother can't come and check
on her own daughter's well being?

RACHEL
The last time I saw you, you took
money from me and ran off. I don't
have any money. I gave up that life
style.

GLADYS
Everyone needs a little fix once in
a while.

RACHEL
I don't want what you have to offer
me. I have everything I need right
here. A boyfriend that loves and
takes care of me.

Gladys reaches into her purse and hands Rachel a **bag** of
cocaine -- Rachel smacks the bag from Gladys's hand -- It
falls to the floor --

GLADYS
-- That was rude!

RACHEL
You're the devil.

GLADYS
There's more where that came from.

RACHEL
Get out!

Gladys steps towards the front door. She opens it, walks out, and slams the door shut.

Rachel looks down at the bag of cocaine and picks it up.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BATHROOM-AFTERNOON

Rachel leans down -- and opens the bag -- She dumps the cocaine into the toilet. Rachel gets some on her fingers. Feeling the urge to sniff it, Rachel steps towards the sink. She turns on the water. Her hand comes close to her face. Just underneath her nose.

RACHEL
(sniff)

Rachel leans her head back, and looks at the ceiling.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Ahh!!

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Rachel sits on the sofa. She's in a daze. The newborn crying. The front door opens.

Nick rushes in. He lifts the newborn from her bed.

NICK
Rachel!!

RACHEL
Yeah!

Rachel looks at Nick.

NICK
You don't hear the baby crying?
What is wrong with you?

RACHEL

I don't know. I just put her down
for a minute and then the next
thing I know I'm on the sofa.

Nick rocks the newborn, calming her.

NICK

Shh! I got you. She needs to be
changed!

Nick walks the newborn into the bedroom. He lays her down on
the bed -- He takes off the old **diaper** -- and wipes -- Nick
puts on a new diaper -- He lays her in the **crib**.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BATHROOM-CONTINUOUS

Nick walks into the bathroom. He tosses the diaper into the
garbage can. He looks at the zip lock. Nick grabs it and
rushes out of the bathroom --

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Nick walks towards Rachel. He holds the bag up over his head.

NICK

What is this!

Rachel looks at the bag.

RACHEL

It's just a bag.

NICK

What's it doing in my house?

The door still open.

Gladys stands and knocks softly.

POLICE OFFICER (20's)

Nick looks at Gladys.

NICK (CONT'D)

Who are you?

GLADYS

I'm Rachel's mother. Did I come at
a bad time?

Nick shows Gladys the bag --

NICK

-- I take it you were here before?
I can smell the cheapness from you
in my house.

GLADYS

I was just doing a wellness check
on Rachel and I came at a
reasonable time. See, I told you
officer?

Nick looks at the bag and drops it to the floor.

NICK

It's not mine?

The Police Officer walks towards Nick.

POLICE OFFICER

Get your hands up, sir?

Nick raises his hands.

INT. JAIL CELL-COUNTY JAIL-MORNING

Nick sits against the wall.

GUARD (40's)

The Guard steps towards the cell.

GUARD

Valens? You made bail.

Nick stands up.

The cell door opens.

EXT. COUNTY JAIL-MORNING

Nick opens the door. He looks at Suzie and smiles.

NICK

You bailed me out? Why?

SUZIE

I'm a paralegal now, Nick. I come
here to visit my clients from time
to time. I saw them booking you.
What happened?

NICK
I don't know. Can you take me to my
apartment?

SUZIE
Sure.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-AFTERNOON

Nick pushes the door open. He walks in.

The sofa and coffee table flipped over. Nick walks to the
bedroom.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-AFTERNOON

Nick pushes the door open. Clothes scattered all over the
room. Nick steps into the bedroom and falls to the floor. He
sits and leans his back against the bed. Nick covers his face
with the palm of his hands.

NICK
(sob)

Suzie steps into the bedroom. She crouches down to Nick.

His head falls into to her lap.

SUZIE
Shh!

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT-AFTERNOON

Suzie sits across from Nick. Nick looks down at the table,
and does not blink.

Suzie slides the other half of her sandwich to Nick.

SUZIE
You really need to eat something,
Nick?

NICK
I can't. Not until I get my
daughter back.

SUZIE
Maybe I can help a little. The
first question their gonna ask you
is how did you find the bag in the
garbage can?

NICK
Empty in my bathroom.

SUZIE
Okay. What was the plaintiff doing
when you walked into the apartment?

NICK
She was under the influence.

SUZIE
You do have a case but I can't help
you. I do suggest you go and find a
another paralegal.

NICK
How am I supposed to do that?

SUZIE
I know a few but I would look for
myself if I were you.

NICK
Good thinking.

SUZIE
I better go. My boyfriend is
waiting.

Nick looks down. He looks at Suzie.

NICK
Wait.

Suzie looks at Nick.

SUZIE
Yes?

NICK
I'm sorry for the way things ended
between us. I never meant for it to
happen.

SUZIE
I know. You take care.

Suzie gets up and kisses Nick on the cheek. She walks away.

NICK
Thank you, Suzie!

SUZIE
Your welcome.

INT. LIBRARY-AFTERNOON

At the law section, Nick looks through a book and shuts it. He steps towards the librarian's desk.

LIBRARIAN LADY (40's)

NICK
Can I check out this book, please?

LIBRARIAN LADY
I'm sorry but we're not allowed to
lend out these books.

NICK
Please?

The Librarian Lady smiles.

LIBRARIAN LADY
Okay.

NICK
Thank you.

Nick turns and walks out of the library.

EXT. PARK-AFTERNOON

Nick holds the book open. He reads through it and pays no attention to what's up ahead. Nick steps on something and falls to the ground. He falls and drops the book.

Nick sits up and looks at a woman. BRENDA MICHAELS (21)

Brenda holds her hand as it seems to be injured from Nick stepping on it. He rushes towards her.

NICK
I'm sorry!

Nick grabs onto her hand.

BRENDA
Oh!

Nick slides closer towards Brenda. He grabs a hold of her injured hand, blows on it and rubs away the pain.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
(laugh)
What are you doing?

NICK
Mom always said to blow on
someone's injury.

Brenda pulls her arm back.

BRENDA
Thank you. It actually feels
better.

NICK
I'm sorry. I really didn't see you
here. I was reading. Oh, where's
that book!

Brenda grabs it from alongside Nick and hands it to him.

BRENDA
Here you go.

Nick takes the book.

NICK
Thanks.

BRENDA
Are you having trouble with
something?

NICK
Kind of. I'm trying to get
visitation rights to see my
daughter.

BRENDA
I'm a lawyer. Do you want me to
help?

NICK
If you can spare some of your time?

BRENDA
I was just sitting here, having
lunch and studying. Do you want to
join me?

NICK
Yeah, sure. Maybe for a little bit.

BRENDA
My name is Brenda?

NICK
Nick.

Nick reaches for Brenda's hand.

She grabs a hold of his hand and shakes it gently.

BRENDA

What do you do when you're not walking in the park and stepping on a woman's hand?

NICK

I'm a custodian. I clean a couple of schools.

BRENDA

Do you like working as a custodian?

NICK

It's not bad. It puts a roof over my head and food in my stomach.

BRENDA

You got to have that.

Nick looks away for a second and then looks at Brenda.

NICK

Do you mind if I call you sometime?

BRENDA

I'm sorry. I just got out of a bad relationship.

NICK

What'd he do, if you don't mind me asking?

BRENDA

He was with another woman. I'll take your number?

NICK

Do you have a pen?

Brenda hands Nick a pen. He writes down his home phone number. Nick hands her back her pen along with his phone number.

NICK (CONT'D)

I make it home thirty minutes after five. I'm free Saturday's and Sunday's.

BRENDA
 (laugh)
 Okay.

NICK
 I better get going. I got a lot of
 studying to do.

Brenda grabs her bent tuba ware from the ground. She hands it to Nick.

BRENDA
 Take this?

NICK
 Thanks.

Nick touches Brenda on her injured hand and shakes it gently. He gets up and walks away.

INT. CAFETERIA-HIGH SCHOOL-AFTERNOON

Nick mops the floor. He looks at all the teenagers passing.

NICK
 Just a few more hours.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-LIVING ROOM-EVENING

Nick walks in. He shuts the door and walks a *brown paper bag* towards the kitchen. He hits the button on the *answer machine* to play his messages.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT-KITCHEN-EVENING

Nick sets the paper bag down on the counter.

ANSWER MACHINE (V.O.)
 Message one!

BRENDA (V.O.)
 Hi? This is Brenda from the park. I
 just called to see how you were
 doing. If you're not busy, maybe
 you would like to come over and I
 could help you with your case.
 Here's my address --

-- Nick grabs a pen and rips the paper bag to write on.

EXT/INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE-EVENING

The front door opens. Brenda stands in front of Nick.

A smile on his face and flowers in his hand.

NICK

I hope you like lilies?

BRENDA

I do. Thank you. Come in?

Nick steps in. He looks around. Brenda shuts the door and walks Nick into her living room.

INT. BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM-EVENING

The coffee table is set with food, drinks and snacks.

Nick looks at the set table.

NICK

You really did go all out!

BRENDA

Please have a seat?

Nick sits -- Brenda falls back -- and lands on Nick's lap -- Brenda looks at Nick. She moves over to her right.

NICK

Sorry about that.

BRENDA

It was my fault.

Nick reaches for a plate and hands it to Brenda.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Brenda closes her eyes and prays to herself. Nick looks at Brenda. She opens her eyes and starts eating. Brenda looks at Nick.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

It's just something I do all the time before I eat.

NICK

How does it make you feel after?

BRENDA

Good.

Brenda looks at the food on her plate. She looks at Nick.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

This might seem like a weird question but how do you feel about being a father?

NICK

It feels good.

BRENDA

And that's why you want her back?

NICK

I want her to be safe and away from the lifestyle her mother is going to expose her to.

BRENDA

How did you meet?

NICK

I was working in a motel and she showed up with a client.

BRENDA

Oh.

NICK

I understand if you don't want to see me again --

-- Nick raises his hands --

BRENDA

No. Continue, please?

NICK

I wasn't thinking. We broke it off a couple of times. She went to rehab and called me. I took her back. She got pregnant. Her mother showed up and planned on sending me to jail for an empty cocaine bag left in my garbage can.

BRENDA

Wow.

NICK

I'm sorry. I really didn't want to lay my drama on you like this.

BRENDA

You don't have to apologize. I'm gonna take your case.

NICK

Really?

BRENDA

You're honest and that will help. We're well prepared for it.

Nick looks at Brenda.

Brenda looks at Nick.

Nick touches Brenda on her cheek. He kisses her.

NICK

I'm sorry.

BRENDA

Why are you sorry?

Brenda leans towards Nick and kisses him.

INT. COURTROOM-COURTHOUSE-MORNING

Nick sits along with Brenda at their table.

BAILIFF, early 30s. A Bailiff for five years.

BAILIFF

All rise for the Honorable Judge Sherman Matthews!

JUDGE SHERMAN MATTHEWS (50)

Nick and Brenda stand up. Nick looks at Gladys and Rachel sitting on the opposite side of him.

Judge Sherman Matthews takes his seat.

JUDGE SHERMAN MATTHEWS

Please be seated!

Everyone sits.

BRIAN COLEMAN (30's) A district attorney and a man with a great reputation for settling cases fast. He is cocky, manipulative and has no compassion for blue collar workers.

JUDGE SHERMAN MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Mr. Coleman, please make your opening statement?

Brian steps towards the jury. All members of the jury are in their late 40s and 50s. Four of them are Caucasian, two of them are Asian and six are Latin-American.

Brian stands in front of the jury.

BRIAN

Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, we are here on behalf of joint custody for an infant girl. Mr. Valens was in possession of a bag that contained cocaine. We are here to determine, does Mr. Valens have what it takes to raise a child or care for one. It is without question that he does not take his life serious. How could he take her life serious. He can't do it on his own for one day. How could my client trust him with their daughter's life. It is for the best interest of the child, not the father. Thank you, your honor.

Brian steps towards his table and sits. He looks at Brenda.

JUDGE SHERMAN MATTHEWS

Ms. Michaels?

Brenda stands up and walks towards the jury.

BRENDA

We should all ask ourselves do we have it takes to go home and raise our children. I can tell you one thing; I have no clue. That man does.

(point to Nick)

She steps towards Nick.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

His only concern was to make sure his daughter is looked after by him and her mother.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Not to be taken away like she's a piece of property or a toy. Nobody has the right to take that away from him. Before you judge someone, get to know them. He was there when his daughter was born. Something his own father didn't do. I ask you, don't put him down. Thank you, your honor.

Brenda walks towards her table and sits next to Nick. She looks at Nick.

JUDGE SHERMAN MATTHEWS

The Prosecution may call its first witness?

Brian stands up.

BRIAN

The court calls Gladys Thomas.

Gladys stands and walks towards the witness stand. The Bailiff holds the bible in his right hand, and swears Gladys in.

BAILIFF

Place your hand on the bible?

Gladys lays her hand on the bible and raises her right hand. She looks at Nick.

BAILIFF (CONT'D)

Ma'am, look at me, please?

Gladys looks at the Bailiff.

BAILIFF (CONT'D)

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, so help you God?

GLADYS

I do.

BAILIFF

Please have a seat?

Gladys sits in the witness seat. Brian approaches her and stands at a distance.

BRIAN

Mrs. Thomas? On December 2nd, when you were at your daughter's place of residence, what happened?

GLADYS

Her boyfriend was in the living room yelling at her about a bag.

BRIAN

Do you have any idea of how it got there?

GLADYS

I do not.

BRIAN

What made you decide to see your daughter after two years?

GLADYS

I heard she had a baby and I wanted to make sure she was being taken care of.

BRIAN

Something a good mother does, right?

GLADYS

Right.

BRIAN

Does Mr. Valens strike you as a good guy, Mrs. Thomas?

BRENDA (O.S.)

Objection, your honor! The court does not validate if my client is a good guy!

JUDGE SHERMAN MATTHEWS

Over ruled! Answer the question, Mrs. Thomas?

GLADYS

No, he does not.

BRIAN

What gave you that idea?

GLADYS

He insulted me and accused me of being in the apartment earlier that day.

BRIAN

Were you?

GLADYS

No.

BRIAN

No further questions, your honor.

Brian walks back to his table and sits.

Brenda stands and grabs a **cassette player** from the table. She steps towards Gladys.

BRENDA

Mrs. Thomas, are you sure about the story your telling? That you weren't in my clients' apartment?

GLADYS

Yes.

BRENDA

That's your story?

GLADYS

Yes.

Brenda walks towards the table and Nick. She takes an **audio cassette tape** from her briefcase and puts it into the cassette player.

BRENDA

Your honor, let the court show that my client records every morning of everyday that the plaintiff was left alone. He provided us with the cassette tape.

Brenda presses the play button.

GLADYS (V.O.)

Hello, Rachel?

RACHEL (V.O.)

Mom?

GLADYS (V.O.)

Aren't you gonna invite me in?

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

Nice place you have here. Must be the boyfriend's right?

RACHEL (V.O.)

How did you find me?

GLADYS (V.O.)
 Your friend Xander told me you were
 hanging around some guy. I had to
 see it for myself.

GLADYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And you must be my granddaughter?

GLADYS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 What did you name her?

RACHEL (V.O.)
 Nicola.

GLADYS (V.O.)
 Beautiful.

RACHEL (V.O.)
 She is.

RACHEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 What do you want mom?

GLADYS (V.O.)
 What, a mother can't come and check
 on her own daughter's well being?

RACHEL (V.O.)
 The last time I saw you, you took
 money from me and ran off. I don't
 have any money. I gave up that life
 style.

GLADYS (V.O.)
 Everyone needs a little fix once in
 a while.

RACHEL (V.O.)
 I don't want what you have to offer
 me. I have everything I need right
 here. A boyfriend that loves and
 takes care of me.

A scuffle in the background.

GLADYS (V.O.)
 That was rude!

RACHEL (V.O.)
 You're the devil.

GLADYS (V.O.)
 There's more where that came from.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Get out!

Brenda stops the cassette player. She looks at Gladys.

BRENDA

Are you sure about that story now?

Brian rubs his head and shakes it.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Nothing further, your honor.

Brenda walks around her table. She sits.

Nick looks at Brenda.

Brenda looks at him.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

There you go.

NICK

Thank you.

EXT. PLAYGROUND-AFTERNOON

Nick sits on a bench.

Rachel steps towards Nick and pushes the **stroller** towards him. A **night bag** on Rachel's shoulder. She hands Nick the bag.

RACHEL

There are enough clothes and
diapers in there for two days.

NICK

Good, thanks.

RACHEL

Nick? I never meant for any of this
to happen. I miss you. Do you think
we can make it work?

NICK

Not a chance.

RACHEL

I'm sorry.

NICK

Take care.

Nick turns the stroller around and pushes it. Rachel looks at Nick. Her eyes water and she starts walking.

EXT. PARK-AFTERNOON

Brenda sits on her blanket. An anxious look on her face.

Nick pushes the stroller towards Brenda. He takes his infant daughter out of the seat. Nick sits down, gently sitting the infant on his lap.

Brenda looks at Nick and then at the infant.

NICK
Do you want to hold her?

BRENDA
Yeah.

Brenda takes the infant from Nick. She holds her close.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
She's beautiful.

NICK
You both are.

Brenda smiles.

NICK (CONT'D)
Thank you for your help.

BRENDA
She was worth it.

NICK
Now we're all together.

Nick moves close to Brenda. He wraps his arm around her and kisses her.

INT. AUDITORIUM-CHURCH-AFTERNOON

Nick stands at the altar. He wears a black tuxedo. Brenda starts walking down the aisle. Nick looks at Brenda.

PASTOR (50's)

Brenda steps towards Nick.

INT. VALENS RESIDENCE-BEDROOM-MORNING

Brenda lies in bed, asleep.

Nick walks in. A tray of food in his hands. He sets it down on the **nightstand**. Nick sits on the edge of the bed. He touches her face.

Brenda's eyes open. She smiles.

Nick kisses her.

NICK
Good morning.

BRENDA
Good morning to you.

NICK
How'd you sleep?

BRENDA
Good. Real good.

NICK
Sorry about our honeymoon. Maybe we can go next week.

BRENDA
Yeah, maybe.

NICK
I better get to work. Are you sure you don't mind watching Nicola?

BRENDA
No. Go ahead.

NICK
I love you.

BRENDA
I love you too.

Nick kisses her and stands up. He walks out of the room.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS-AFTERNOON

Rachel steps towards her car, she unlocks it with her key. A **Black Escalade** follows her. The window rolls down.

INT/EXT. ESCALADE-AFTERNOON

Xander leans his head out of the window.

XANDER
Hello, Rachel?

Rachel turns around and looks at Xander.

RACHEL
Xander? This is a surprise.

XANDER
Heard you were living down here. Do you need a little fix?

RACHEL
No thanks. I'm trying quit.

XANDER
Come on! One little hit won't hurt you. A little stress can go away in a heart beat.

Xander pulls out a little zip-lock bag and holds it out for her to take.

Rachel walks towards the Escalade and takes the bag.

RACHEL
Thanks.

INT. CAR-AFTERNOON

Rachel sits down in the driver seat. She shuts the door. Rachel opens the bag and puts it underneath her nose.

RACHEL
(sniff)

Rachel leans her head back on to the head rest.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Ahh! What a rush!

She starts the car, puts the automatic into DRIVE and starts driving towards the busy intersection. Rachel's eyes start to water.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
(cough)

She falls into the steering wheel -- the car swirls into other cars -- and flips in circles --

EXT. FREEWAY-AFTERNOON

The car sits in the middle of the busy road. Rachel's arm lays out of the broken window. The pink watch on her wrist.

INT. WAITING ROOM-HOSPITAL-NIGHT

Nick sits in the waiting room.

Brenda brushes her hands through his hair.

NICK

This isn't right. She was fine the last time I saw her.

BRENDA

I know.

NICK

Its my fault.

BRENDA

No, it's not. You can't take responsibility for her.

NICK

What am I gonna tell Nicola when she grows up.

BRENDA

Tell her the truth. Her mother loved her.

Nick looks at Brenda.

NICK

What if I don't have the strength?

BRENDA

I'll be here. I'll help you. Okay?

NICK

Okay.

Gladys walks into the waiting room. She looks at Nick.

GLADYS

You can go in. I don't see why you
get to. You weren't even married to
her!

Nick stands up and steps towards Gladys.

NICK

She's the mother of my child. I did
everything in my strength to help.
Don't get any bright ideas. I will
get custody.

Gladys steps past Nick and runs her shoulder into him.

INT. MORGUE-HOSPITAL-AFTERNOON(DREAM SEQUENCE)

Nick walks in. He steps slowly towards Rachel's BODY. He
uncovers her face.

NICK

(gasp)

Nick looks at Rachel's face -- She looks at him -- and gives
him an evil look --

RACHEL

-- You stupid son of a bitch! You
let me die!

NICK

No!

RACHEL

You will die painfully --

INT. MORGUE-HOSPITAL-AFTERNOON (END DREAM SEQUENCE)

NICK

No!!!

-- Nick covers his face.

Brenda pulls his hands down --

BRENDA

-- Nick!

Nick looks at Brenda -- He hugs her -- Nick looks at Rachel.
Brenda backs away. Nick reaches across the table -- he grabs
the pink watch from Rachel's left wrist. He looks at it --

NICK

I won this for her on our first date. Nicola would want it.

BRENDA

She would. Come on, let's go home.

NICK

Yeah.

Nick and Brenda walk out.

EXT. VALENS HOUSE-BACK YARD-AFTERNOON

Brenda sits on a bench. She holds Nicola on her lap. Nick stands by a **GAZEBO**. He is painting it white. Nick looks at Brenda and Nicola.

INT. VALENS HOUSE-NICOLA'S BEDROOM-AFTERNOON

Brenda stands behind Nicola. She holds her in front of a mirror.

MONTAGE

-- Nicola at 5 years old.

-- Nicola at 8 years old.

-- Nicola at 10 years old.

BACK TO SCENE

NICOLA (13)

Brenda steps into the bedroom.

BRENDA

Are you ready to go?

NICOLA

Do I really have to go to school?

BRENDA

We all have to. I got to go to work. How do you think we eat every day?

NICOLA

You charge it to a credit card?

BRENDA
No. Come on?

INT. BEDROOM-BROTHEL HOUSE-NIGHT

Xander walks through the hallways of his brothel house. He opens a door to a bedroom. He steps in and shuts the door.

In the bedroom, a young girl lays on a table. TATTOO ARTIST (30's)

JOY (16)

Joy looks at Xander.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
I got a job for you.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
What is it?

Xander pulls out a **photograph** of Nick.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
See this man?

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Yes?

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
I want you to kill him.

Xander lays the photo on the table.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
What do I get?

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
You get to live.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
I want something bigger than that.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Like what?

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
I want to be treated like a member
of your gang.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Forget about it!

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Then you can kill him yourself.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Fair enough. Do the job and then
you're in.

Xander turns around.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Wait?

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
What!

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
If you want this to work, you're
gonna have to give me some money.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
What!

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
I need clothes.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Fine.

Xander reaches into his pocket and pulls out a couple of
hundred dollar bills. He slams it down on the table and walks
out of the bedroom.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
 (in Russian)
 Pleasure doing business with you!

XANDER (SUBTITLE) (O.S.)
 (in Russian)
 Just shut up and do the job!

JOY (SUBTITLE)
 (in Russian)
 Where is this guy from anyways?

XANDER (SUBTITLE) (O.S.)
 (in Russian)
 In California.

Joy looks at the photo.

The Tattoo Artist is finished with the **Butterfly** tattoo on Joy's back and rubs **Vaseline** over it.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL-MORNING

Nick walks Nicola towards the front gate of her middle school. He crouches down and straps the pink watch around her left wrist.

NICOLA
 What's this?

NICK
 It belonged to your mom. I won it for her at a game of Skee-ball. It's yours now. For luck.

NICOLA
 Thanks daddy.

Nicola hugs Nick. She looks at him and kisses him on the cheek.

NICK
 Thank you. I need that. Go be amazing!

Nicola runs.

INT. CLOTHING STORE-AFTERNOON

STORE OWNER (30's)

The Store Owner watches Joy as she holds different tops to her body. The Store Owner steps towards Joy.

STORE OWNER
Can I help you find something?

JOY
Do you have something like this,
but different patterns?

STORE OWNER
Like what kind?

JOY
Plaid, leather or zebra?

STORE OWNER
Right this way?

The Store Owner points Joy in the back aisles. Joy rushes towards the back.

INT. DRESSING ROOM-AFTERNOON

Joy stands in front of the mirror. A leopard and leather top, with a skirt of the same pattern. She looks at herself.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL-AFTERNOON

Joy walks through the shopping mall. Her hands full of shopping bags.

INT. VISITING AREA-COURTHOUSE-AFTERNOON

Brenda sits, and waits to see her new client in the visiting area.

GUARD (20's)

The Guard walks a girl into the room. He pushes her down into the seat, sitting her across from Brenda.

SHELLY OWENS (19)

Shelly looks at the Guard.

BRENDA
I got it from here. Thank you.

The Guard turns and walks out of the visiting area.

Brenda looks at Shelly, then at Shelly's file.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
So Shelly, it says here you were
arrested for shoplifting?

SHELLY
That's right.

BRENDA
Can you tell me why?

SHELLY
I was hungry.

BRENDA
There are food banks too.

SHELLY
I don't have an ID.

Brenda writes down all Shelly's information given to her.

Shelly looks down at the paper that Brenda's writing on.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
What's that your writing?

BRENDA
I have to tell the judge about your
situation.

SHELLY
What will that do?

BRENDA
Help you with an ID, a place to
stay and food.
(wave to Guard)
I'll do what I can.

The Guard steps towards Shelly and pulls her up from the
chair. He walks her out of the room.

EXT. GYMNASIUM-AFTERNOON

Nick polishes the wooden floors. He looks around and sees Joy
sitting on the top **bleachers**. Nick turns off the **electric
buffing machine**.

NICK
Hey!

Joy looks at Nick. She covers her face.

Nick steps up onto the bleachers. He leans down and looks at Joy.

NICK (CONT'D)
Don't you have class?

Joy hugs on her knees, rocking herself.

NICK (CONT'D)
You can't be in here? Do you hear me?

JOY
I can't go into that classroom.

NICK
Why not?

JOY
He'll be there.

NICK
Is he a teacher?

JOY
Yes.

NICK
Do you want me to call the police?

JOY
No!

NICK
Okay, I get it. Why don't we get out of here.

JOY
And go where?

NICK
My house. Are you hungry?

JOY
Yes.

NICK
How about a flame broil burger?
Then maybe you can tell me about your situation?

JOY
That sounds good.

NICK
Come on?

Nick walks down the bleachers.

Joy gets up and steps down.

Nick moves the electric buffing machine off the wooden floor.

INT. TAXI-AFTERNOON

Nick and Joy sit in the back seat together.

Nick's cell phone rings. He answers and puts it to his ear.

NICK
Hello?

BRENDA (V.O.)
Hey? I was trying to reach you at work.

NICK
I took off early. A girl is having a little trouble at the school and I'm taking her over to our house.

BRENDA (V.O.)
Whoa! Nick, I don't think that's such a good idea?

NICK
It'll be fine. I'm just gonna grill some burgers for her and try to get some information from her.

BRENDA (V.O.)
You're so sweet. I better get going.

NICK
Alright.

EXT. COUNTY JAIL-AFTERNOON

BRENDA
I love you.

NICK (V.O.)
I love you too.

Brenda ends the call and puts her cell phone into her pants pocket.

Shelly steps out.

Brenda steps towards Shelly.

SHELLY
You bailed me out?

BRENDA
Yes.

SHELLY
You don't know me.

Brenda grabs Shelly's hand and puts money into it. Shelly looks at the money.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
What's this?

BRENDA
Money for food. Come on?

Brenda walks towards her car.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #216-AFTERNOON

Shelly looks at the motel room and looks at Brenda.

SHELLY
Why are you doing this?

BRENDA
You would do the same for me if you were given a chance. Get some sleep? I'll call you tomorrow.

Brenda steps outside and closes the door.

EXT. VALENS HOUSE-BACK YARD-AFTERNOON

Joy sits at a picnic table. She bites into her hamburger and looks at Nick.

NICK
What's your name?

JOY

Joy.

NICK

Beautiful name.

JOY

Thanks. What's your name?

NICK

Nick.

Joy reaches into her pocket and pulls out a *butterfly knife*.

JOY

How long have you been married?

NICK

Almost ten years. I'm lucky to have her. Excuse me? I feel blessed. That's the right word, and --

-- Nick looks back at Joy -- Her hand still gripped on the handle of the knife. She yanks it out -- Nick falls to the ground -- He reaches for Joy's foot -- Joy backs away -- She runs -- Nick lies on his back -- looking at the sky and the clouds.

NICK (CONT'D)

(breath)

(gasp)

EXT. ALLEY-AFTERNOON

Joy runs through an alley. She puts the knife into her pocket.

JOY'S POV:

The broken concrete road in the alley passes us by and the people watching. Her feet stomp as she runs, not wasting any time.

INT. VALENS HOUSE-BACK YARD-CONTINUOUS

Brenda walks into the back yard.

BRENDA

Baby, why are you letting the grill burn like --

-- Brenda steps to Nick -- She looks at him -- She drops to her knees -- and covers her mouth.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Ahh!!

Brenda drops her head and hugs him with little strength she has left in her.

INT. VALENS HOUSE-LIVING ROOM-EVENING

Brenda sits in the window, looking at the ambulance drive away. She holds her head with one hand and a cup of tea in the other. Her eyes water with emotion.

EXT. VALENS HOUSE-FRONT YARD-MORNING

On the front lawn, Nicola sits on the grass. She plays with her sister LOLA (10)

Gladys hovers over Nicola, trying to get Nicola's shoes on her feet.

GLADYS

Come on! Let's get your shoes on,
Nicola!!

NICOLA

I don't want to! You're not my
mom!!

Brenda walks towards Gladys and Nicola.

BRENDA

What's going on here, huh!

GLADYS

I got it!

BRENDA

You obviously don't!

GLADYS

Don't take it out on me that your
husband is dead --

-- Brenda slaps Gladys across the face --

BRENDA

-- Don't ever say that to me!

Gladys backs away --

GLADYS
I'm gonna sue you!

BRENDA
Go ahead!

Gladys rushes towards her car.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Let's go inside girls.

INT. AUDITORIUM-CHURCH-AFTERNOON

In the front row seats, Brenda sits with Nicola and Lola.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (30's)

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for
coming to celebrate the life of
Nicholas Valens. Here to speak
first is his wife, Brenda.

Brenda stands up. She looks at the **urn** as she walks past it.
To the **podium** she approaches.

BRENDA
Thank you.

The Funeral Director sits down towards the back of the stage.
Brenda grabs the **microphone**. She looks at the Funeral
Director.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Is it alright if I use it like
this?

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Yes.

Brenda looks at everyone sitting in front of her.

BRENDA
Nick was the type of guy to help
someone when they were need. He
really loved people. I know he
wouldn't want me crying but it is
what a wife does. He fought and
fought for his children. That was
the first time I met him. He was
fighting to be around his first
born daughter.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 He was passionate and driven. He
 was my best friend. I love you,
 Nick!

Brenda puts the microphone back and steps off the stage.

The Funeral Director walks to the podium.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
 Thank you. Anyone else?

INT. VALENS HOUSE-KITCHEN-AFTERNOON

Brenda sits at the table. A small mug of tea in her hand.
 Suzie steps towards the table.

SUZIE
 Hi?

BRENDA
 Hey? Do I know you?

SUZIE
 Nick and I were --

BRENDA
 -- You must be Suzie?

SUZIE
 Yes. Can I sit down?

BRENDA
 Sure.

Suzie pulls out a chair and sits --

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 I didn't see you at the funeral?

SUZIE
 I wasn't in the room. I stood up in
 the lobby because my kids were
 being wild and I didn't want them
 to make any noise.

BRENDA
 Nick did mention you a couple of
 times.

SUZIE
 I know this isn't my business but I
 just like to ask, how'd it happen?

BRENDA

He brought someone home with him. A girl. No one saw anything.

SUZIE

I'm sorry.

BRENDA

So am I. I'm sorry for what is coming her way.

EXT. FRONT YARD-MORNING

On the driveway, Brenda waters the front lawn. A car pulls up to the curb. A man gets out of the driver side and walks towards Brenda.

COURT OFFICIAL (30's)

The Court Official steps towards Brenda.

COURT OFFICIAL

Brenda Valens?

BRENDA

Yes?

He hands her a **subpoena**.

COURT OFFICIAL

You've been served.

Brenda looks at it.

INT. LAW OFFICE-AFTERNOON

JOHN BONDS (30's)

Brenda sits at John's desk.

John looks at the case paper.

BRENDA

What's the damage?

JOHN

You struck her and now she wants to destroy your reputation as a lawyer but she's willing to let it go for one thing.

BRENDA
What's that?

JOHN
She wants custody of her
granddaughter.

BRENDA
Nick left her to me?

JOHN
Nick had custody. You were married
to him but --

BRENDA
-- I am married to him!

JOHN
I'm sorry. You are his wife but you
are not her biological mother.

BRENDA
I'm the closest thing she has to a
mother?

JOHN
Yes. If you don't give her to
Gladys, she'll press charges and
you'll be arrested. Do you want
Lola to be put into foster care?

Brenda shakes her head.

BRENDA
No.

INT. BEDROOM-MORNING

A suitcase on her bed. Brenda folds Nicola's clothes and
tosses them in.

Nicola stands across the room, watching Brenda prepare her to
leave.

NICOLA
Did I do something wrong?

BRENDA
No, sweetie. I did. I did and I'm
sorry.

NICOLA
Where am I going?

BRENDA
You're gonna go live with your
grandmother for a while.

NICOLA
Will I see you again?

Brenda steps towards Nicola, crouches down and hugs her.

BRENDA
Yes! Yes, you will.

EXT. FRONT YARD-MORNING

Gladys stands in the driveway.

Nicola looks at Brenda.

BRENDA
Are you ready?

Nicola nods her head "Yes". Tears stream down Nicola's face.
She wipes her eyes.

INT. BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

On Nicola's bed, Brenda sits. She cries to herself.

Lola steps into the bedroom.

BRENDA
(sob)

LOLA
Mom, don't cry!

BRENDA
Come here!

Lola runs to Brenda.

Brenda hugs her.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I love you.

LOLA
I love you too.

Brenda wipes her eyes. She stands up and grabs a hold of
Lola's hand. Brenda walks her out of the bedroom

BRENDA

What do you say we go out for a bit? We can get something to eat and go to a movie.

LOLA

Yes!

Brenda looks back at the bedroom. She turns off the light and shuts the door.

INT. THOMAS RESIDENCE-NICOLA'S BEDROOM-AFTERNOON

The door opens.

Gladys grabs Nicola by her left wrist and takes the pink watch off. She pushes Nicola into the room.

GLADYS

Dinners at eight!

Gladys shuts the door and locks it.

Nicola drops her suitcase and tries to open the door.

NICOLA

Ugh!

Nicola picks up her suitcase and walks towards her bed. She hears a car door and walks towards the window. Outside, Gladys gets into her car, and starts to leave. Nicola looks around for something to break the window. A **crowbar** sits in a box across the room. Nicola grabs it and breaks the glass -- Nicola kicks the glass out and jumps outside --

EXT. FRONT YARD-AFTERNOON

The car stops --

Nicola runs --

Gladys gets out of the car -- and she runs after Nicola --

GLADYS

Get back here!!

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS-AFTERNOON

Nicola looks back.

She runs into a POLICE OFFICER (20's)

Nicola falls to the ground -- and looks at the Police Officer.

POLICE OFFICER
What seems to be the problem here?

INT. OFFICE-POLICE STATION-AFTERNOON

The Police Officer sits in front of Nicola.

She has her arms crossed.

The Police Officer puts a can of soda on the desk for her.

POLICE OFFICER
Can you tell me what happened with your grandmother?

NICOLA
Fuck her! That's what I have to say! I don't give a shit if she hears me! Fat bitch!

POLICE OFFICER
Whoa! Who taught you to talk like that?

NICOLA
Friends.

POLICE OFFICER
Their a bad influence.

NICOLA
What's a bad influence on me is that smelly fat bitch in the other room! She smells like shit!

POLICE OFFICER
Do you want to go to juvenile hall?

NICOLA
Better to be there than in her shit hole!

POLICE OFFICER
Can you please calm down?

NICOLA
Can you please eat shit!

POLICE OFFICER
Why are you so angry?

NICOLA
The fat bitch took my mother's
watch!

POLICE OFFICER
Okay. If I got it back from her,
would it make everything alright?

NICOLA
As long as you don't send me home
with her.

The Police Officer gets up from his desk and walks into the lobby.

INT. LOBBY-POLICE STATION-AFTERNOON

The Police Officer approaches Gladys.

Gladys looks at him.

GLADYS
Yes?

POLICE OFFICER
Do you have her watch?

GLADYS
Yes, why?

POLICE OFFICER
She wants it. Can you give it to
me?

Gladys reaches into her purse and hands the watch to the Police Officer. He walks back into his office.

INT. OFFICE-POLICE STATION-CONTINUOUS

Nicola grabs a **can** of **COKE** from the desk and opens it.

NICOLA
(gulp)
(burp)

The Police Officer sits at his desk and hands Nicola the pink watch. Nicola snatches it fast from the Police Officers hand. She wraps the strap around her left wrist and fastens it.

NICOLA (CONT'D)

Thank you. Now you can go tell that fat ass bitch I'm not going home with her.

POLICE OFFICER

You know where bad kids go when they curse like you?

NICOLA

Don't try to make me laugh.

POLICE OFFICER

They go to jail.

NICOLA

Do it!

POLICE OFFICER

You're hilarious kid. One of a kind.

NICOLA

Thanks.

POLICE OFFICER

Jail or juvenile hall?

NICOLA

Surprise me.

INT. GIRLS DORM ROOM-DETENTION CENTER-MORNING

Nicola walks towards her bed. She sits. Nicola rubs her mother's watch on her wrist for good luck.

INT. OFFICE-MORNING

At her desk, Brenda types on her computer. Her phone rings. Brenda answers.

BRENDA

Hello?

GLADYS (V.O.)

We had a problem?

BRENDA

What is it?

GLADYS (V.O.)

She's in juvenile hall.

BRENDA

What do you mean she's in juvenile hall?! What did you do?

GLADYS (V.O.)

She broke a window and escaped!

BRENDA

What'd you do, lock her in a room!

GLADYS (V.O.)

I did.

BRENDA

What the hell is wrong with you!

GLADYS (V.O.)

She's a very angry girl!

BRENDA

I don't blame her.

Brenda hangs up the phone.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Ugh!

INT. VISITING AREA-DETENTION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Brenda sits at a table.

A bottle of **apple juice** in front of her and a **granola bar**.

Nicola steps in. She looks at Brenda.

Brenda looks at her and smiles.

BRENDA

Hey.

Nicola walks towards the table.

Brenda stands up with her arms open, ready for a hug.

Nicola sits.

Brenda loses her smile and sits.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Okay.

NICOLA

Is that for me?

BRENDA

Yes.

Nicola grabs the bottle of apple juice, opens it and drinks it fast.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Take it slow?

Nicola slams the empty bottle down on the table. She wipes her mouth.

NICOLA

(burp)

BRENDA

Dang!

NICOLA

What?

BRENDA

You're in here for one day and you're already acting like an animal.

NICOLA

What the hell do you care!
You let that pig take me away.

BRENDA

Hey, I didn't want to but she didn't make it easy for me, okay!

NICOLA

Whatever.

BRENDA

What is it with this attitude? I'm trying here!

NICOLA

Try some place else then.

Brenda gets up and grabs her briefcase. She walks towards the exit door.

NICOLA (CONT'D)

Hey!

Brenda looks at Nicola.

NICOLA (CONT'D)
Can you come back tomorrow?

Brenda smiles.

BRENDA
Yeah.

NICOLA
Okay.

BRENDA
Be good.

NICOLA
I'll think about it.

Brenda pushes the door open and walks out of the room.

INT. OFFICE-AFTERNOON

At his desk, Xander sits and looks at Joy.

Joy slams the butterfly knife down on the desk.

Xander looks at the knife.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
It took you long enough.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Sorry, I didn't want anyone to
follow me back here.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
It's fine.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
So am I in?

Xander stands up. He walks towards Joy.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Almost.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
What more do you want me to do?

He reaches down to his belt and unbuckles it. He unzips his pants. Xander touches her on the top of her head.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Nice and slow. No teeth, please?

Joy looks at him, hesitating but reaches out.

He backs away.

XANDER (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
(in Russian)
Got you!!
(laugh)

He zips his pants back up.

XANDER (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
(in Russian)
We'll be in touch!

Joy smiles.

EXT. PLAYGROUND-AFTERNOON

TEENAGE BOYS #1, #2 and #3. Early teens.

A game of **craps** on the concrete ground.

Shelly holds a stack of cash in her hand. Teenage Boy #1 rolls the dice. His money on twelve. The dice rolls on ten and he loses.

TEENAGE BOY #2
Oh!

SHELLY
Oh! So close! Too bad.

TEENAGE BOY #1
Hey!

SHELLY
Get in the back of the line!

Feet approach Shelly.

Shelly looks at Brenda.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
Can I help you with something?

BRENDA
 Maybe we can help each other. Are
 you hungry?

SHELLY
 I could eat.

INT. PARK-AFTERNOON

A *hotdog* in her hand. Shelly takes a bite.

SHELLY
 What is it you want me to do?

BRENDA
 Scope out the school and hang
 around for anyone suspicious. Look
 out for anyone new in the area.
 Play your game of craps with the
 boys. Boys like pretty faces.

SHELLY
 A game of craps isn't cheap. Taking
 money from teenage boys is like
 taking candy from a baby.

BRENDA
 But you can do it, right?

SHELLY
 Their money can't get me by.

BRENDA
 What's the cost?

SHELLY
 A Benjamin.

BRENDA
 Fine.

Brenda reaches into her pocket and hands Shelly a hundred
 dollar bill. Shelly takes the money and shoves under her bra.

SHELLY
 Anything else?

BRENDA
 Yeah. Go along with what I do and
 say. Play dumb, and everything will
 go smooth.

SHELLY
Fair enough.

INT. OFFICE-AFTERNOON

At her desk, Brenda sits and looks at a photograph of Nick and Joy. Brenda looks at a blurry photo of Joy. It sits on her desk and all Brenda can do is stare at it.

BRENDA
Who are you?

INT. VISITNG AREA-DETENTION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Photographs of Nick and Rachel together in a photo booth. Nicola lifts the photo up. She smiles.

NICOLA
She was beautiful. Did you ever meet her?

BRENDA
Once.

NICOLA
What was she like?

BRENDA
She was full of life.

NICOLA
Did she love me?

BRENDA
Very much.

NICOLA
Can you keep these safe for me?
Until I get out of here. I don't want my grandmother destroying them.

BRENDA
I will guard them with my life.
When do you get out?

NICOLA
Next week.

Brenda leans down towards Nicola.

BRENDA
Just keep your cool and everything
will work out.

NICOLA
I'll try.

INT. BEDROOM-AFTERNOON

Lola sits at her desk. She works on her math homework.

Brenda knocks on the door.

BRENDA
Hey? What 'ca doing?

LOLA
Math.

BRENDA
Are you getting them solved?

LOLA
So far, yes.

BRENDA
Good. What do you say we order a
pizza and watch a movie?

LOLA
Sounds good.

BRENDA
See you in ten minutes, okay?

LOLA
Okay.

Brenda steps out of the room and walks away.

INT. COURT YARD-HIGH SCHOOL-AFTERNOON

Teen boys gather around the chalked drawn craps game. Dress shoes approach Shelly. Shelly looks up.

PRINCIPAL (40's)

PRINCIPAL
Your on school property?

SHELLY

Yeah, I know. Best place to win the moolah!

PRINCIPAL

You can either leave on your own or I can have the police escort you.

Shelly grabs all the money from the ground. She shoves it into her pocket and walks away.

The Principal looks at her, and watches her leave. Shelly looks at the Principal.

INT. WAITING ROOM-DETENTION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Nicola walks down the hallway. She stops and looks at Gladys sitting in the waiting room.

Gladys stands up.

Nicola walks towards Gladys.

Gladys reaches her arms out to hug Nicola --

Nicola pushes Gladys away -- and walks out the front door.

INT/EXT. CAR-AFTERNOON

Nicola sits in the passenger seat.

Gladys sits and closes her door. She looks at Nicola.

GLADYS

You think that woman cares about you? Think again! She hates you. She's only being nice to you because she feels sorry for you. You're nothing to her. Your mother was the same way. Why do you think she did cocaine. And your father was a loser. Look in the mirror!

Nicola's eyes water with emotion.

NICOLA

Fuck you --

-- Gladys slaps Nicola across the face -- Nicola looks at Gladys with disbelief on her face.

Nicola punches Gladys in the face --

NICOLA (CONT'D)
 -- You piece of shit --

-- Nicola lunges at Gladys --

Gladys opens her car door -- and falls to the ground --

EXT. DETENTION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Police Officers run towards the car.

Gladys backs away.

Nicola crawls towards her like a rapid dog.

INT. LIVING ROOM-AFTERNOON

Brenda sits on the sofa with Lola. A bowl of popcorn in between the both of them. Brenda's phone rings. She answers.

BRENDA
 Hello?

INT. VISITNG AREA-DETENTION CENTER-EVENING

Nicola sits, leaned down at the table.

Brenda steps in and looks at Nicola. A cut on the bridge of her nose.

BRENDA
 Ouch!

NICOLA
 Nice to see you too.

Brenda sits beside Nicola. She touches her nose.

NICOLA (CONT'D)
 That hurts you know.

BRENDA
 What happened?

NICOLA
 She was talking shit about my dad
 and I lost it after she slapped me.

BRENDA
 I told you not to do anything.

NICOLA
She's the adult!

BRENDA
Yes! You're doing exactly what she
wants you to do. I can't keep
coming down here every time you
have a spat!

Nicola looks away.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Nicola! Look at me?

NICOLA
What?

BRENDA
Look at me!

Nicola looks at Brenda.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I'll come over the house and we can
sort some stuff out, okay?

NICOLA
Okay.

Brenda kisses Nicola on her cheek. She stands up and walks
out of the room.

INT. WAITING ROOM-DETENTION CENTER-AFTERNOON

Brenda steps out. She looks at Gladys. Brenda walks towards
Gladys. Gladys backs away. She fears for her safety.

BRENDA
Next time she hits you, don't call
me! I should report you for the cut
on her nose!

Brenda walks out of the front doors of the detention center.

EXT. THOMAS RESIDENCE-FRONT PORCH-EVENING

Gladys pushes the front door open.

Nicola stands aside, and lets Gladys go first. Nicola walks
into the house. She shuts the door.

INT. THOMAS RESIDENCE-LIVING ROOM-EVENING

GLADYS

You better get to bed. You have school in the morning.

Nicola walks up the stairs.

Gladys reaches out and grabs Nicola by her shoulder. She yanks Nicola off the stairs -- Nicola falls on the back of her head -- She lays unconscious -- and makes no movement.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Come on, get up! I didn't pull you that hard.

Gladys crouches down and leans her head against Nicola's mouth. Feeling her breath.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Oh, thank God!

INT. THOMAS RESIDENCE-NICOLA'S BEDROOM-MORNING

Lying in her bed, a wash cloth over her forehead. Nicola opens her eyes. She looks at Brenda and then at Gladys.

NICOLA

What happened?

BRENDA

You took a nasty fall. That's what I was told. Can you remember anything?

NICOLA

Now that you bring it up, who are you?

BRENDA

You can't remember me?

NICOLA

No.

Brenda looks at Gladys.

BRENDA

I'm taking her to the hospital!

INT. PATIENT ROOM-HOSPITAL-MORNING

Nicola sits on a *exam table*.

DOCTOR (40's)

The Doctor shines a *flash light* in Nicola's eyes.

DOCTOR
Okay, Nicola, how does that light
make you feel?

NICOLA
Makes me feel blind.

DOCTOR
(laugh)
Good one. How about we get you a CT
scan and see how your brain is
operating. Sit tight.

NICOLA
Okay.

The Doctor steps towards Brenda.

DOCTOR
I'll call you when she's finished
and we will see what her brain
waves look like.

BRENDA
Thank you, doctor.

Brenda walks past Gladys.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Can I have a word with you in the
the bathroom for a moment, please?

Brenda walks out of the patient room.

INT. BATHROOM-HOSPITAL-MORNING

Brenda walks into a stall. Gladys walks past -- Brenda pulls
Gladys in by her shirt -- She pushes Gladys against the wall
-- Her arm underneath her chin --

BRENDA
-- I don't know what you did but it
stops now!

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 Touch her again or even think about
 touching her, I'll make sure you go
 to jail for the rest of your life!
 You got me!!

Gladys nods her head "Yes".

Brenda lets go and steps out of the stall.

GLADYS
 (cough)

DOCTOR'S OFFICE-HOSPITAL-MORNING

Brenda sits in a chair.

The Doctor sits at his desk. He points at Nicola's CT scan.

DOCTOR
 Mrs. Valens, Nicola sustained some
 brain trauma. She fell on the back
 of her head. Either she was pushed
 or pulled.

BRENDA
 Can it cause amnesia?

DOCTOR
 In this case, yes.

The Doctor points at the normal CT scan of a brain.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 You see, this is what her brain
 should look like.

BRENDA
 How long will it take for her to
 get her memory back?

DOCTOR
 In time, days, weeks or months.
 Maybe, never. Who is she to you?

BRENDA
 My step daughter.

DOCTOR
 What about her father?

BRENDA
 He --

DOCTOR
 -- I'm sorry. I would take it day
 by day. Take her home and let her
 rest, okay?

BRENDA
 Thank you.

Brenda stands up. She shakes the Doctor's hand and walks out
 of his office.

INT. WAITING ROOM-HOSPITAL-MORNING

Brenda walks into the waiting room.

POLICE OFFICER #1 and #2 (20's)

Gladys stands to her feet.

Police Officers #1 and #2 walk past Brenda.

Brenda looks at Gladys.

BRENDA
 Good choice.

GLADYS
 How is she?

BRENDA
 She has no memory of who she is.
 She's going home with me for the
 night. You can pick her up
 tomorrow.

GLADYS
 Okay.

BRENDA
 I didn't tell the doctor. So, don't
 worry.

INT. BEDROOM-AFTERNOON

Nicola lays in bed. Brenda pulls the blanket over her.

BRENDA
 Are you alright?

NICOLA
 A little confused.

BRENDA

In time you'll remember. Just get
some rest, okay?

NICOLA

Okay.

Nicola closes her eyes and turns herself to face the window.

INT. COURT YARD-HIGH SCHOOL-MORNING

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

At the high school court yard, Shelly plays a game of craps
with TEENAGE BOYS #1, #2 and #3.

Shelly looks around and sees Joy walk towards the front doors
of the school.

Joy looks at Shelly.

Shelly looks at Teenage Boy #2.

SHELLY

What else do you have for me?

Teenage Boy #2 drops a twenty-dollar bill on the ground.

Shelly takes it and stacks it with the rest of her cash.

Joy opens the door and steps outside. She looks at Shelly.

Shelly looks at Joy.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

We have a winner!!

FADE OUT:

THE END