

WORKAHOLIC ROMANCE

By

Michael Zielinski

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FADE IN:

THIRTY YEARS EARLIER

1 INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

ROB JOHNSON, a tall, slim, brown-haired high school student, is the only actor on stage. Batting right-handed and holding a baseball bat, he takes a series of swings at an imaginary baseball. Each time we hear a loud CRACK of the bat.

MALE I (V.O.)

Go out there and tell Buster to throw hard.

MALE II (V.O.)

He is throwing hard. Can't you hear him grunt?

MALE I (V.O.)

Well, go out there and tell him to bear down.

Rob as Shoeless Joe Hardy takes another violent swing and you can hear an even louder CRACK of the bat.

MALE II (V.O.)

Shoeless Joe Hardy can hit the ball a country mile.

ROB'S FATHER, tall, muscular, brown-haired and in his 40's, stands on his theater seat and screams at his son on stage.

ROB'S FATHER

Rob, you're not loading around your rear hip. You're lunging toward the pitcher and opening up your front side too early.

ROB'S MOTHER, a pretty blonde in her 40's, is seated next to her husband. She tugs on his arm and he sits down.

ROB'S MOTHER

Stop embarrassing him, me and yourself.

ROB'S FATHER

He should be embarrassed. He can't spend his whole life in fantasyland.

ROB'S MOTHER
He has a gift for the theater.

ROB'S FATHER
Don't encourage him in this nonsense.

2 INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - NIGHT

A good-looking brown-haired FATHER in his early 40's, an attractive brunette MOTHER in her late 30's and LACEY LONDON, their beautiful 14-year-old brunette daughter, are eating dinner at their kitchen table. It appears to be dinner for three, but conversation-wise it's dinner for two. The daughter might as well be an empty chair.

LACEY'S MOTHER
How was your day, dear?

LACEY'S FATHER
Fine. Yours?

LACEY'S MOTHER
Fine.

LACEY
Mine was fine.

Her parents ignore her.

LACEY'S FATHER
You pay the bills today?

LACEY'S MOTHER
Of course. I always do my job.

LACEY'S FATHER
Me, too.

LACEY
I had a good day at school.

One again her parents ignore her. Lacey starts playing with her peas with her fork.

LACEY'S MOTHER
Want to go to the circus this Saturday?

LACEY'S FATHER
No, I have a golf date.

LACEY'S MOTHER
OK. I'll go shopping instead.

LACEY
I'd love to go to the circus.

Her parents are focusing on eating their food and ignore her.

LACEY
Would you like to see some of my
fashion sketches?

Her parents ignore her.

LACEY
Peas, since my parents don't talk to
me, I'll talk to you. Will you peas go
to the circus with me?

LACEY'S FATHER
You want us to talk to you, Lacey?
Work harder and give us something to
talk to you about.

PRESENT DAY

3 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S CONDO - NIGHT

ROB JOHNSON, in his mid-40's, tall, handsome with brown hair and a trim but muscular build, sits at his desk, typing on his desktop. The walls are decorated with a variety of enlarged Broadway playbills. There are Tony Award statues perched on shelves. He makes all sorts of faces while writing, alternating smiles with grimaces. The clock on the wall displays 2 a.m.

4 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

LACEY LONDON, a beautiful, tall, slim brunette in her mid-40's, sits propped up against her pillows in bed. The walls are decorated with a variety of enlarged framed high fashion sketches. Fashion magazines are piled on a nearby nightstand. Her bent knees support her sketch pad. She sketches dresses for a bit, pauses to think, then sketches some more. The clock on the wall displays 3 a.m.

5 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Rob sits alone in a crowded restaurant. His table is surrounded by tables of COUPLES and FAMILIES smiling, laughing, talking and dining. Between forkfuls of food and

sips of wine, Rob stares through the people interacting as he is sequestered in silent isolation.

6 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Lacey sits alone on a bench, drawing on a sketch pad and twirling her hair. She takes frequent breaks to glance wistfully at COUPLES walking by holding hands and WOMEN pushing BABIES in strollers. Her cellphone chirps constantly with text messages.

7 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob sits at his kitchen table, eating a turkey sandwich on rye. Also on the table is a pumpkin pie donut perched on a napkin. He alternates bites with glances at his iPad and a football game on his television. Scrolling across the bottom of the latter screen is HAPPY THANKSGIVING.

8 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey sits alone on the floor, opening presents next to her Christmas tree while listening to Christmas carols. She sips a glass of white wine and smiles contentedly.

9 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob is sitting up in bed, intently working on his iPad. Lying next to him is STACEY, a pretty blonde in her 30's.

STACEY

Come on, baby. I'm in the mood.

He continues to type away.

STACEY

Did I ever tell you that the sound of
your fingertips on a keyboard lights
the fuse on my libido?

She rolls over and starts kissing him on the cheek. Then she quickly yanks the iPad from his hands. Without missing a beat and without even looking at her, he grabs the iPad back and resumes typing. Angry, she grabs a pillow and slams him over the head with it. She jumps out of bed and pulls her dress over her panties and bra.

STACEY

Since you'd rather make love to your
iPad than me, I'm done. You're a lost
cause.

ROB

Don't take it personal, Stacey. When Samuel Beckett was writing Waiting for Godot, do you think he stopped in mid-scene whenever his lover was in the mood?

STACEY

Probably not. So here's the title of your next play: Drop Dead.

He finally makes eye contact with her.

ROB

Hey, that has possibilities. Please stick around. I'll miss you.

STACEY

No you won't. Our relationship is more one-sided than playing solitaire.

ROB

Amuse yourself by playing strip solitaire while I finish this scene.

STACEY

Godot wasn't worth the wait. And neither is Rob Johnson.

10 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey and SETH, a guy in his 40's, sit on her living room sofa. She is working on her iPhone. Looking annoyed, he is staring into space while impatiently drumming his fingers on his right thigh.

SETH

Our dinner reservations were two hours ago.

LACEY

They know me. They'll serve us whenever we get there.

SETH

Not if they're closed.

LACEY

Don't be silly, Seth. I'll be done in an hour or so. Have a glass of wine.

SETH

I've already had three. I want to be able to pick up my fork when we get there.

LACEY

I have sparkling water in the fridge.

SETH

You're pouring cold water on our relationship with your constant preoccupation with work.

LACEY

Sorry. You knew the deal. I can't help myself.

SETH

My last girlfriend was an emergency room doctor and she worked less than you.

LACEY

She didn't have deadlines and fashion critics up her ass.

SETH

Nah. Just nasty germs, wicked injuries, heart attacks and strokes.

LACEY

Point taken.

Annoyed, she gets up, walks into the kitchen, returns with a can of peanuts and hands it to him.

SETH

You know I have a peanut allergy.

LACEY

I forgot. Eat some peanuts and maybe you'll see your ex-girlfriend in the ER tonight.

SETH

You're now my ex-girlfriend.

LACEY

We'd be the perfect couple if you loved your work as much as I do mine.

SETH

I'm an exterminator. My company kills
rats big enough to saddle.

11 EXT. 42ND STREET NEAR SEVENTH AVENUE - DAY

Rob is standing beside a street vendor truck, putting mustard on his hot dog. It is snowing heavily. Lacey, in a hurry and on her phone, barrels past him and slams into him. His hot dog falls to the ground and splats mustard on her high heel shoes. Irritation shows on both of their faces.

LACEY

Oh my God! You ruined my expensive
Jimmy Choo shoes!

ROB

Me? You blindsided me.

LACEY

A little bump shouldn't make you drop
your hot dog, butterfingers.

ROB

You owe me a hot dog.

LACEY

I did you a favor. That hot dog likely
would've taken five minutes off the
back end of your life.

ROB

If I'm being boiled alive in hot oil
at the time, I might love checking out
five minutes early.

LACEY

Suppose you're having the best sex of
your life and would absolutely love
five more minutes before your fatal
heart attack?

ROB

You've got a point.

LACEY

If you were a real Prince Charming,
you'd have a pair of backup glass
slippers on you.

ROB
I'm not into fairy tales.

LACEY
You could at least lick the mustard
off my shoes.

He bends down, grabs some snow and rubs her mustard-splattered shoes with it.

LACEY
Thanks. You try walking in the snow in
heels. So I slid into you? Big deal.

ROB
Forget your snow galoshes?

LACEY
Not very fashionable.

ROB
A slave to fashion?

LACEY
That's an understatement.

ROB
My condolences.

She turns and walks away. He bends down, grabs some snow, makes a snowball and fires it at her back. She quickly turns around and gives him the finger. And then smiles. He grins.

ROB
Don't be naughty, Snow White.

12 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

Capacity AUDIENCE gives a standing ovation to the I Hate Love CAST on stage, who bow before the curtain closes and the house lights go up. Rob and VALERIE ROTHMAN, in her late 50's and silver-haired, stand together in the theater wings.

VALERIE
Rob, you have a problem.

ROB
What problem? I Hate Love had a
rousing premiere tonight.

VALERIE

There was so much laughter there had to be leaking bladders in the audience. You need someone to share this with.

ROB

Do I need to become a bigamist before you stop calling me the loneliest playwright on Broadway?

VALERIE

I'm not buying that your work keeps you from being lonely.

ROB

Nothing like cuddling a funny script on a cold night.

VALERIE

You need a fellow workaholic to have a relationship with. Your neglected girlfriends quickly vanish.

ROB

I know. Disappear quicker than the morning dew.

VALERIE

Exactly.

ROB

So this workaholic and me neglect each other and neither one gets pissed?

VALERIE

I have the perfect candidate. She's the CEO of her own fashion house. Her name is Lacey London.

ROB

Never heard of her.

VALERIE

I'm not surprised. You have the fashion sense of a nudist. Lacey, please let me introduce you.

Lacey walks over and joins them. She smirks. Rob grimaces.

LACEY

Butterfingers, the hot dog guy.

ROB

Snow White, the finger-flashing
bowling ball.

LACEY

You said you're not into fairy tales.
Of course you are. You're a
playwright.

ROB

The theater is more than A Midsummer
Night's Dream.

LACEY

I wouldn't know. I don't have time for
the theater. I missed your play
tonight because I just got here.

VALERIE

Lacey neglected all her previous
boyfriends because her work came
first. You two would be great
together.

LACEY

No way I'm dating a guy who wobbles
like a ten-pin after the slightest
bump.

ROB

No way I'm dating a sidewalk menace in
heels.

VALERIE

Am I missing something?

LACEY

We've met. He owes me a pair of Jimmy
Choo heels.

ROB

And she owes me a hot dog.

VALERIE

So on your first date stop by a hot
dog vendor for an appetizer that Lacey
buys and then stop at a Jimmy Choo
boutique where Rob buys.

ROB
Can you also get egg rolls there?

LACEY
My next six months are a bear.

ROB
We're clones.

SEVEN MONTHS LATER

13 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Rob and Lacey are sitting across from each other at a large conference table, which sports various foods that they nibble at between glances at their cellphones.

Her phone beeps. She glances at the text and makes eye contact with him briefly before checking her phone again.

His phone rings and he glances at it. She twirls her hair. He watches her twirl her hair and then runs his fingers through his hair.

ROB
What changed your mind about seeing me while I'm still alive?

LACEY
Valerie the overzealous matchmaker was pissing me off with all her texts and voicemails.

ROB
Did she mention that I'm now dating Miss Nude Universe?

LACEY
In your wet dreams.

ROB
It's freezing in here.

LACEY
Jacked up AC makes erect nipples.

ROB
If they were anymore erect, you could hang wash on them.

LACEY

Tell me about yourself.

ROB

I would rather write a great script
than bed a beautiful woman with a body
built for sin.

LACEY

Clothes often turn me on more than a
guy.

Her phone beeps, rings and beeps again. She longingly looks
at her phone.

ROB

I couldn't write a grocery list if
some girl always was tying my wrists
to the bedposts.

Her phone is going berserk with beeps and rings. Still, they
both suddenly lock eyes upon one another, almost lustfully.
They both suck on bites of melon with a sexual flair.

ROB

I guess we have nothing in common.

She plays with her hair and he follows suit.

LACEY

I wouldn't say that.

They stare wickedly at each other and smile.

ROB

Two busy worker bees from the same
hive.

LACEY

So why are you a workaholic?

ROB

It's the art of playwrighting.

LACEY

It's the creativity you love, right?

ROB

The most fun you can have with your
clothes on.

LACEY

I still get the greatest high
imaginable from designing clothes.

ROB

There has to be more than creativity
that makes you a workaholic.

LACEY

My workaholic parents neglected me as
a child. I became obsessed with hard
work to win their favor.

ROB

Same story for me. But I wish my old
man neglected me. He always was up my
ass like some gastroenterologist.

LACEY

Do you think we're screwed up?

ROB

We just need the right person to fuck.

LACEY

I wish I could fuck my work.

ROB

Exactly.

She gives him a look oozing sexuality. She twirls her hair,
leans over and passionately kisses him.

ROB

Man, you really must be friendly when
you get to know a guy.

LACEY

I wouldn't know. I never stick around
that long.

She smiles, which quickly melts when her phone beeps.

LACEY

Damn. A shipment of fabric has been
delayed.

She sits glumly, staring at her phone. Rob's phone beeps. He
reads the text.

ROB

Damn. The lead actress in my next play just walked out of rehearsal because she just quit smoking.

LACEY

Why's that a problem?

ROB

The play's titled When Did Cigarettes Become A Capital Offense?

LACEY

Sounds like your production could go up in smoke.

Her phone rings again.

LACEY

Sorry. I simply must take this call.

She answers her phone, gets up and starts pacing and grimacing while twirling her hair. She ends the call and stalks back to the table.

LACEY

One of our other suppliers quit and signed an exclusive contract with a competitor.

Rob's phone rings and he answers it. He stands up and paces.

ROB

So she did quit? Shit. I'll stop by Macy's on my way back to the theater and buy another lead actress who smokes like a chimney. I hear they're having a sale.

LACEY

We're perfect for each other.

ROB

Indeed.

LACEY

You only give a shit about your work, Me, too. The only person you care about is you. The same is true for me.

ROB

I couldn't have said it better.

LACEY

Let's make our relationship purely transactional. We use each other to enhance our work. And for the occasional fuck.

ROB

I love it. We're in this together for the convenience.

LACEY

Our clear want is to have a relationship that's a business transaction. In exchange for the occasional date and sex, we give each other space to work.

ROB

My clear motivation is to have a lover who screws me but never my work.

LACEY

The key to making this work is not to fall in love.

ROB

We're reinventing the whole concept of the significant other. Or rather, the insignificant other.

LACEY

One of the ground rules is never to say we're in a relationship. We have a transactional arrangement.

ROB

No falling in love.

LACEY

Love is a bad four-letter word to us.

ROB

Fuck is much better.

LACEY

We fuck sometimes. Work most of the time.

ROB

We won't even screw around with
foreplay.

LACEY

Wastes time that we could be working.

ROB

The climax always is more satisfying
than the foreshadowing.

LACEY

What do you say we begin our
transactional arrangement by you
finally springing for a pair of Jimmy
Choo heels and me buying you a hot
dog?

ROB

It's a deal, partner.

They shake hands.

THREE MONTHS LATER

14 INT. BACKSTAGE AT FASHION SHOW - NIGHT

Lacey and Rob stand watching a lot of orchestrated chaos...
STYLISTS hurriedly hemming skirts, MAKEUP ARTISTS putting
glam and glitz on female MODELS, DRESSERS quickly changing
outfits on other female MODELS and and other female MODELS
sprinting in 5-inch heels backstage from the runway for
another costume change.

ROB

Man, this is organized chaos.

LACEY

It takes months of design work for a
show. But there always are last-minute
changes.

ROB

I appreciate you inviting me.

LACEY

I have a few details to attend to.
Text me about our next date.

ROB

The premiere of my next play is in two
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
months. Hopefully you can be my guest.

LACEY
My schedule can be more fluid than
Niagara Falls. Let's take a quick look
at what's happening on the runway.

Lacey and Rob walk over to the stage curtain and peek through it.

15 INT. FASHION SHOW - NIGHT

Female MODELS strut down the runway to the sounds of throbbing, very loud music as PHOTOGRAPHERS on a media riser at the end of the runway take pictures and videos.

16 INT. BACKSTAGE AT FASHION SHOW - NIGHT

Rob and Lacey, twirling her hair, still are peeking through the stage curtain.

LACEY
What do you think about my designs?

ROB
Not bad. And the models definitely are worth the sacrifice of making eye contact.

LACEY
If I make the premiere of your next play, I'll be the toughest theater critic who ever whispered in your ear.

ROB
You're not wearing the Jimmy Choos I FedExed to your office.

LACEY
Autumn leaves and November rain don't mix with Jimmy Choo heels. Suppose I bumped into another sexy guy at a food truck?

ROB
By the way, the hot dog with mustard you FedExed to my theater was cold.

TWO MONTHS LATER

17 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

Rob and Lacey sit with the AUDIENCE watching When Did Cigarettes Become A Capital Offense? as ACTORS interact on stage.

The audience roars with laughter as Lacey frowns. Rob keeps looking over at her, grimacing each time he sees her not laughing. Or looking down at her phone.

The audience gives a sustained standing ovation as the curtain closes and the ovation continues through the curtain call as the actors take their bows.

Lacey finally stands to clap politely as the applause wanes and Rob then stands.

LACEY

Your play was interesting.

ROB

A polite way of saying you didn't like it.

LACEY

Do you want me to say that I found When Did Cigarettes Become A Capital Offense? to be about as funny as lung cancer?

ROB

Humor is subjective. One person's Mel Brooks is another person's Edgar Allan Poe.

LACEY

You must hate me.

ROB

I'm going to rip your head off and belly laugh down your neck. But do it out of love.

FOUR MONTHS LATER

18 INT. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM - DAY

Lacey and Rob stroll through the Guggenheim Museum, looking at masterpiece paintings. Despite infrequent dates, they fit seamlessly together as a couple.

LACEY

I come here because beautiful works of art inspire my designs.

ROB

Since paintings seldom come with witty one-liners, they don't do much for my playwrighting.

LACEY

We'll have to ride the subway. You might find literary gold in the graffiti.

ROB

Man, you're more beautiful than any painting here.

LACEY

Careful. No emotional involvement.

ROB

It would help if you were coyote ugly.

A mischievous grin lights up her face as she twirls her hair.

LACEY

Have time for a quickie?

ROB

Are you crazy? Suppose somebody sees us?

LACEY

There are more live bodies in a morgue than in this gallery. We can bang one out before a security guard makes it a threesome.

ROB

I wonder how often they wax the floor.

They kiss madly and go for it.

19 INT. FITNESS CENTER - DAY

Rob and DOUG KORVER, tall, muscular, blond and in his 40's, alternate sets of bench presses while they talk. Two MEN work out on two nearby lat pulldown machines.

DOUG

So that's why I've hardly seen you.

ROB

The little spare time I have I've been with her. We keep our time together to the minimum.

Doug adds a 10-pound plate on either side of the barbell before he bangs out another set of benches.

DOUG

So you and Lacey have a relationship based on benign neglect?

ROB

It's a transactional arrangement to have someone to fuck occasionally who doesn't fuck with our work.

DOUG

What about balance in your life? I run my own engineering firm and still have time for my wife and kids.

ROB

If I had balance, I'd be a ballet dancer.

20 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Lacey and JULIE BRIDGES, a tall, thin, beautiful Black woman in her 40's, walk along a path. It is a gorgeous summer day.

JULIE

So what have you been up to?

LACEY

Seeing a guy now and then.

JULIE

Will this relationship stick for a bit?

LACEY

It already has a shelf life longer than artichokes because it's a transactional arrangement, not a relationship.

JULIE

Huh?

LACEY

Our vow is to selfishly use each other to each other's satisfaction -- we trade occasional sex for the freedom to work.

JULIE

Won't find that in any Hallmark movies.

LACEY

That's the whole point. Love fucks with focus.

JULIE

You two should be an example to other workaholics.

LACEY

I'm not going on your talk radio show.

JULIE

Did I ask you?

LACEY

You will.

JULIE

How about you and Mr. Right come on my show?

LACEY

He and I aren't pied pipers willing to lead other busy professionals to the promised land.

JULIE

Who's your infrequent other?

LACEY

Rob Johnson the playwright. Heard of him?

JULIE

Very talented. And very good-looking. You two have to do my show.

LACEY

Why?

JULIE

If you don't, I'll tell my listeners that the famous fashion designer Lacey London once went skinny dipping with a guy in Central Park and he took off with her clothes. Buck naked without any money, she hailed a cab and the driver didn't charge her a fare because she gave him a blow job.

LACEY

It was a hand job!

JULIE

So you insist.

LACEY

We'll do your show.

21 INT. RADIO STATION STUDIO - DAY

Julie sits behind a console. Lacey and Rob sit in front of the console. All three wear headsets with microphones.

JULIE

Congratulations Lacey on how well the new House of London line was received at New York Fashion Week.

LACEY

We were quite pleased.

JULIE

How do you stay on top?

LACEY

Hard work.

JULIE

Which you love to do. Rob, you've authored a dozen smash hits on Broadway. Any plans for a 13th?

ROB

I'm kicking around ideas. Maybe I'll call it Lucky 13.

JULIE

I hear you too have a monstrous work ethic.

ROB

I consider it to be more of a gift than a monster.

LACEY

What can be more satisfying than doing what you're good at and enjoy?

JULIE

Many people would say a great relationship is more satisfying.

ROB

Not me.

LACEY

Or me.

JULIE

Amazingly, the two of you have found that if you're a workaholic, you can find happiness if you date a fellow workaholic.

ROB

The key is to make sure your limited time together makes you want to come back for more.

LACEY

Rob is like the handle of a whip. All my thoughts eventually ripple back to him.

ROB

Emphasis on eventually.

JULIE

Any drawbacks to your arrangement?

LACEY

None that I can think of.

ROB

I can think of one.

JULIE
Please share with our audience.

ROB
There are Trappist monks who get laid
more often than I do.

TWO MONTHS LATER

22 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey and Rob sit contentedly on a plush sofa. She draws on a sketch pad and he writes on his iPad.

ROB
It's past 2. Let's go to bed.

LACEY
To sleep?

ROB
After we make love.

LACEY
It's late.

ROB
This is my first sleepover at your
condo and all you want to do is sleep?

He winks impishly at her. She smiles.

LACEY
OK, you know I can't resist your
charms.

They kiss passionately. Her cell phone rings. She answers,
listens and grimaces.

LACEY
Thanks for letting me know.

Twirling her hair furiously, she disconnects the call.

ROB
What's wrong, Lacey?

LACEY
One of my top models was arrested for
cocaine possession.

ROB

What?

LACEY

She has been battling weight. Some models use cocaine to speed up their metabolism.

A beat.

LACEY

This is going to damage her career.
And tarnish the London image.

He goes to kiss her but she turns her head, his lips landing on her cheek.

ROB

You're blaming me for this, aren't you? This wasn't my fault. Or yours. It's your model's fault.

LACEY

It was our arrangement's fault. She's just a kid at 19. If it weren't for us, I would've been there for her.

ROB

We're not together all that much.

LACEY

Can you go down to the police station and bail her out? I'm too emotional and upset.

ROB

It's not your job to babysit her. Let her modeling agency deal with it.

She stands up and points an index finger in his face.

LACEY

(Sharply)

Don't ever, ever tell me what my job is!

ROB

Duly noted. my queen. Please spare me from the gallows.

23 INT. MANHATTAN POLICE STATION CELL - NIGHT

Rob and MONICA, a stunning brunette model, sit beside each other in a holding cell. Monica is crying.

MONICA

Please tell Lacey I'm sorry.

ROB

She'll call you in the morning and get you all the help you need.

MONICA

She's been like a mother to me.

24 EXT. MANHATTAN POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Rob and Monica are walking out of the police station when a swarthy DRUG DEALER walks up to them and gets in her face.

DRUG DEALER

Give me the 15 grand you owe me for the coke by tomorrow or I'll mess up your pretty face.

Rob shoves the dealer away from Monica, grabs her hand and they start to walk away when the guy pulls out a gun.

DRUG DEALER

I did two tours of duty as a sniper in Afghanistan.

ROB

On which side?

DRUG DEALER

One more word out of you funny man and I'll shoot both of you in the face.

25 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

A fidgety Lacey nibbles on a blueberry muffin while Rob is eating eggs and hash browns. A WAITRESS pours them another cup of coffee.

ROB

I had never been threatened with a gun before. Then some guy likely named Guido had me and your model in his gunsights.

LACEY

That had to be frightening.

ROB

Before your model got busted, our limited time together seemed to be working.

LACEY

Perhaps for you. But not me. You were starting to feel like an obligation to me.

ROB

Well, then it's time we said goodbye. An obligation is not who I am.

She takes a sip of her coffee. Then another. Then twirls her hair. Then grabs his hands.

LACEY

Life is less complicated for both of us without us.

ROB

I almost took a bullet for you last night and now you break up with me?

LACEY

This is more than Monica getting busted. My arrangement with you took my focus off work. And work is my life.

ROB

So I've heard.

Looking glum, he stands up, leans over and kisses her on the cheek and walks away. She watches him walk away. Her eyes are moist. Once outside the restaurant, he looks up at the sky, lost in his thoughts.

26 EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAY

Lacey stands on the sidewalk, gazing up at the building. She then watches a COUPLE holding hands walk by, their footsteps crunching autumn leaves on the sidewalk. Lacey bites her lip and frowns.

27 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey and Monica are finishing up dinner in the kitchen.

MONICA

The grilled chicken was delicious.

LACEY

Get used to grilled chicken and fish,
fresh vegetables and brown rice. We're
going to get your weight down and have
you looking gorgeous again.

MONICA

Again, so sorry about the cocaine. I
learned my lesson.

LACEY

Stick to grapes.

MONICA

Since my mother died when I was 13,
you've become my mother. I need you
staying on my ass.

LACEY

A big ass might work for Kim
Kardashian. But not for fashion
models.

MONICA

Been jogging two miles a day in
Central Park. And taking a barre class
twice a week.

LACEY

Now that Rob is out of my life, I may
have time to meet you at a barre
class.

MONICA

He seems like a great guy. Sorry it
didn't work out for you.

LACEY

Our part-time arrangement still was
eating up too much of my time.

MONICA

Speaking of eating, what are good
snacks?

Lacey gets up, walks over to the pantry, pulls out a can of almonds, walks back to the table, puts the can in front of Monica and sits back down.

MONICA
Where's the Snickers?

LACEY
In the freezer. Frozen Snickers and a model's smile are mortal enemies.

28 INT. VALERIE ROTHMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Valerie and Rob sit in chairs. He has a long face. She has a concerned face.

ROB
I miss Lacey. It's screwing with my writing.

VALERIE
Do you want me to talk to her?

ROB
Hell no. Unless she reaches out to me, I'm done with her. I'm not kissing her ass.

VALERIE
She has a rather nice ass.

ROB
You're not making this any easier.

29 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey sits sketching Rob's face instead of dresses.

30 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob sits in his kitchen, alternating stares at the wall and his iPad screen. He then sighs and puts his face in his hands.

31 INT. WINE BAR - NIGHT

Lacey and Julie sit at the bar, sipping wine.

LACEY
I broke it off with Rob.

JULIE

Why did you break it off?

LACEY

Our time together, limited as it was, was distracting me from work. Even when I wasn't with him, I was thinking about him.

JULIE

Sounds like you're in love.

LACEY

Love is a foul four-letter word in my life.

JULIE

Rob was perfect for you.

LACEY

I'll look weak if I reach out to him.

Julie shakes her head in disgust.

JULIE

Look weak? This is a relationship, excuse me, a personal arrangement. Not a professional one.

LACEY

I'm not used to the personal side of me.

JULIE

Well, it's damn time you embrace Lacey London the person and not Lacey London the brand.

LACEY

I do lose myself in my brand. My brand is all I have.

JULIE

Don't scar your life with a branding iron.

A MONTH LATER

32 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Rob sits at his desk, typing on his desktop computer. His

cell phone rings. He looks at it in surprised disbelief, smiles and quickly answers it.

ROB
Lacey, did you butt dial me by accident?

LACEY (V.O.)
Rob, don't be an idiot. I called to tell you I miss you. I miss us, our back and forth banter.

ROB
I thought you'd say our great sex.

LACEY (V.O.)
Oops, I forgot that. Yes, Rob Johnson is the greatest swordsman since Errol Flynn.

ROB
So you love classic movies, too.

LACEY (V.O.)
I hate them. That's all my parents watched. Our television set was a time machine to the past.

ROB
Tell me about your parents.

LACEY (V.O.)
I'd rather not. Tell me about yours.

ROB
I'd rather not.

LACEY (V.O.)
Good. I'm in too good of a mood to think about the past. I just want to think about us.

ROB
It's not quite noon so I assume you're sober.

LACEY (V.O.)
Very funny. You must write comedies.

ROB
Not as well as I used to. I'm shifting
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
gears and doing a tragedy.

LACEY (V.O.)
Why?

ROB
Because I'm a tragic figure without
you.

LACEY (V.O.)
I've also become a tragic figure.
Missing you has screwed with my
creativity.

ROB
Are we in danger of violating our vow
not to get emotionally involved?

LACEY (V.O.)
Missing isn't loving. You can miss my
ass without loving it.

ROB
I can?

LACEY (V.O.)
You'd better. Remember I own lots of
sharp fabric scissors.

ROB
Got any nose trimmers?

LACEY (V.O.)
Come see me at my condo. Bring your
cock but leave your heart at home.

ROB
Do you ever think that at your core
you really want to be in love with
someone?

LACEY (V.O.)
Now don't go soft on me. Especially
since I'm horny as hell.

ROB
Trust me, I'm not soft there.

LACEY (V.O.)
That's a relief.

ROB
Relax, because this is just a
hypothetical.

LACEY (V.O.)
Uh-oh.

ROB
Suppose work isn't the true love of
our lives? That our real want is to
find the love of our lives.

LACEY (V.O.)
Are you crazy? Get your ass over here
now. A great orgasm will straighten
out your mind.

A beat.

LACEY (V.O.)
Just so you know, missing you had
nothing to do with me falling in love
with you.

ROB
As Tina Turner sang, what's love got
to do with it?

33 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - DAY

Rob and Lacey are in her bedroom, savoring their reunion and
chatting on her bed as they eat grapes and sip wine.

LACEY
How's your next play coming?

ROB
The writing took longer than normal
because it's a tragedy spanning 13
acts.

LACEY
Who would invest the time in watching
such a marathon?

ROB
Ken Burns does multi-part
documentaries. I'm doing it with live
theater.

She sighs and twirls her hair. Then she gets up, lights some

candles and turns down the lights.

ROB

It's in honor of my 13th play on
Broadway. I'm calling it Lucky 13.
It's about the youngest of 13 children
who wishes he was an only child.

She removes her blouse and slacks and is down to her bra and
panties. She starts unbuttoning his shirt.

ROB

One day when the boy is seven a
terrible fire destroys the family home
while their parents are out, sparing
only him. He suddenly is an only child
haunted by his wish come tragically
true.

LACEY

That is some quantum leap from your
comedies.

She caresses and kisses him. But he's unresponsive because of
his obsession with his play.

ROB

I wanted to expand my horizons with a
tragedy. The boy learns a cruel
lesson. Be careful what you wish for.

LACEY

Who would want to see this play?

ROB

Because as the boy matures, his
depression and guilt gradually are
erased by his deceased siblings, who
periodically visit him in his dreams.

She slams his back on the bed and mounts him. But he drones
on.

ROB

His siblings use him as the instrument
to live out their dreams. But none of
their dreams are his dream. And no
matter how hard he tries, all their
dreams tragically go unfilled.

LACEY

That's some heavy shit. My advice to you is to shit can Lucky 13 before it sinks your career like the Titanic.

ROB

You don't see my vision.

LACEY

Just an iceberg. Now make love to me.

ROB

I can't. Too focused on my play.

LACEY

Maybe if you shut up about your shipwreck of a play you might be able to get it up.

ROB

How can I make this up to you?

LACEY

Run out and buy me fresh batteries for my vibrator.

ROB

Now?

LACEY

No, three weeks from next Tuesday.

TWO MONTHS LATER

34 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - DAY

Rob and Lacey are sitting in her living room. A beautifully decorated Christmas tree stands regally in one corner.

ROB

Your Christmas tree is gorgeous.

LACEY

I'm a designer. It would ruin my reputation if I had a shitty Christmas tree like yours.

ROB

How many people see it?

LACEY

Monica. You. My dozen other
boyfriends.

ROB

Where am I in the pecking order of
boyfriends?

LACEY

You're Lucky 13.

ROB

And now you too are a humorist.

LACEY

Couldn't resist. You still doing Lucky
13?

ROB

Yep.

LACEY

Fatal mistake.

ROB

I believe in the project.

LACEY

You used to believe in the tooth
fairy, too.

ROB

How do you know I still don't?

LACEY

I have a suggestion for your next play
that would move you back into the
realm of comedy.

ROB

Tell me more.

LACEY

We would call it Model Citizens. It
would be about a depressed small town
that slipped into despair after the
local auto plant closed, leaving most
of them unemployed.

ROB

That's a hell of a premise for a
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

comedy.

LACEY

One morning all the men, women and children in the town wake up and discover they're gorgeous highly paid models living in beautiful homes. But inside they still are the same people they were when they were poor and ordinary looking.

ROB

Hey, that intrigues me.

LACEY

Good. Because that's all I got. It's your job to flesh it out and make their jolting transformation funny.

ROB

Easier said than done.

LACEY

Not for a genius like you. I'll give you insight into modeling and design all the costumes.

ROB

I love the concept.

LACEY

I already talked to Valerie and she loved it. Said she and I would be co-producers.

ROB

Awesome. How long have you been thinking about this new play and our partnership?

LACEY

I saw it play out on the back of my eyelids every night when I went to bed during our separation.

ROB

Man, this is perfect for fulfilling our vow to embellish each other's work.

LACEY

Why do you always call me man? Haven't you noticed yet that I'm a woman?

ROB

I'm not freaking blind, man. Just a figure of speech.

LACEY

No big deal. Soon we'll all be living in a non-binary world.

ROB

That should be as much fun as a circus without clowns.

THREE WEEKS LATER

35 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Lacey and Rob, bundled up in warm coats on a gray, windy afternoon, are sitting on a bench as two MEN jog by.

LACEY

I've been thinking how we can help people like us.

ROB

Workaholics?

LACEY

Deeper than that. Our childhoods. I'm sure plenty of other kids have been emotionally stunted by parental abuse.

ROB

Maybe I started writing comedy to counter my depression. And maybe I acted in school plays so I could be someone else for awhile.

LACEY

That makes sense.

ROB

When I played Hamlet and Macbeth, I thought they were more screwed up than I was.

LACEY

I read where ignoring your child can
(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)
affect her ability to form lasting,
healthy relationships.

ROB
(Laughing)
Which is why an intermittent unhealthy
non-relationship with me works for
you.

LACEY
Let's set up a foundation for
psychologically traumatized children
and adults.

ROB
Sounds great.

They stand up and start walking through the park as they
continue their conversation.

LACEY
You and I have to contribute some seed
money to get the foundation started
and lean on some friends and
associates to do the same.

ROB
As long as our good work doesn't screw
with our real work.

LACEY
Our foundation will make grants to
existing non-profits and medical
facilities that treat traumatized
children and adults.

ROB
What will we call the foundation?

LACEY
SAW.

ROB
What the hell does SAW stand for?

LACEY
Soothing Abuse Welts.

ROB
SAW is perfect for abused carpenters.

LACEY

I'll serve as chairman of the board of directors. You'll be the vice chair.

ROB

Good. I like vice and the vice chair doesn't do nearly as much work as the chair.

LACEY

Oh, yeah? Don't forget we're a couple.

ROB

More associates than a couple.

LACEY

What was I thinking? Well put, Mr. Wordsmith.

TWO WEEKS LATER

36 EXT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - DAY

A NUN wearing a traditional Bernardine Franciscan habit descends the steps from the church and approaches Lacey and Rob who are walking by on Fifth Avenue.

NUN

Excuse me, but aren't you Rob Johnson?

ROB

I am. Do I know you, Sister?

NUN

Not as a nun. I'm Sister Maria now. You knew me as Tori Rossi.

ROB

Oh my God! Tori! You're the last girl I thought would become a nun.

LACEY

Rob, your eyes are as big as beer coasters.

NUN

My becoming a nun is definitely a miracle. I was rather relaxed morally in those days.

ROB

You were hotter than sin. And absolutely gorgeous.

NUN

But I wasn't happy. Especially after I only saw you about a half-dozen times in the nine months we dated.

ROB

Sorry. I was busy with my plays. So what made you turn to God?

NUN

You were a god to me. A false god. After I became semi-celibate thanks to you, I figured I should go celibate all the way and marry Jesus Christ.

ROB

So I did you a favor.

NUN

Absolutely. Jesus never neglects me. Is this your girlfriend?

ROB

Business partner. This is Lacey.

NUN

Hey there, girlfriend.

LACEY

Would you say cloistering yourself in that nun's habit is because you're in the Rob Johnson witness protection program?

NUN

Apparently so. We don't have to wear the traditional habit but I choose to do so.

ROB

Since you have more curves than a Formula One racetrack, probably the prudent choice.

LACEY

Trust me, you're better off with Jesus.

NUN

Does Rob neglect you in your, uh,
partnership?

LACEY

As a busy fashion designer, I probably
neglect him even more.

NUN

I shall pray for both of you.

ROB

Tori, I don't remember ever quoting to
you Hamlet's line to Ophelia, Get thee
to a nunnery.

NUN

Because you're Rob Johnson, not
William Shakespeare.

The three of them laugh and hug goodbye. The nun walks away.

LACEY

You must be some kind of evil to drive
a woman right into the arms of Christ.

ROB

What can I say? Rob Johnson is a
religious experience.

LACEY

The devil you are.

A WEEK LATER

37 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Rob and Lacey are having dinner and drinks with Doug and his
wife MAUREEN, a pert blonde in her 40's.

MAUREEN

It's so nice to meet you Lacey. I love
your clothes.

DOUG

She spends a fortune on your clothes.

LACEY

What do you do, Maureen?

MAUREEN

I own a florist shop called Flowers by Maureen.

LACEY

You're that Maureen? Your beautiful floral creations are all over my office and condo.

MAUREEN

How lovely of you. Our Manhattan shop is doing so well I'm thinking about opening a second location in Brooklyn.

DOUG

Then she'll never be home and I'll be cooking dinner every night for the kids.

MAUREEN

He hates to cook but loves to eat.

LACEY

I hate to cook. Cooking for one doesn't make sense anyway.

MAUREEN

Doesn't Rob ever have dinner at your place?

LACEY

He has different appetites when he comes over.

She smiles mischievously and the others laugh.

DOUG

You're making me nostalgic for sex.

MAUREEN

Sex is why we have three kids and why we seldom have sex anymore.

LACEY

So glad that we aren't having kids.

MAUREEN

No marriage plans?

DOUG

Maureen, I neglected to tell you that
(MORE)

DOUG (CONT'D)

Rob and Lacey have an unconventional relationship.

LACEY

We prefer to call it a partnership.

MAUREEN

Interesting.

LACEY

We see each other as little as possible so our partnership doesn't mess with our work.

MAUREEN

Don't you miss each other when you're apart?

LACEY

I know he's there when I need him.

MAUREEN

Rob is allergic to conventional relationships so perhaps your arrangement will work.

LACEY

Rob only finds peace in his work. Me, too. What we offer each other is emotional and physical support that enhances, not diminishes, our work.

DOUG

Enough Dear Abby talk.

ROB

Lacey and I want to talk about something we're passionate about.

LACEY

We've started a foundation to help children and adults who were psychologically and emotionally traumatized in their childhoods.

ROB

We both were traumatized by our parents in childhood.

LACEY

To try to win their love, we became
hopeless workaholics.

MAUREEN

How awful. We won't pry into the
details. How can we help?

LACEY

We would like one of you to join our
board of directors and help us raise
grant money.

MAUREEN

I'm in. And we'll write you a sizable
donation. When you open your
foundation office, I'll donate the
floral arrangements.

ROB

Thank you both very much.

LACEY

We'll pick up the dinner tab tonight.

DOUG

You're more generous than Rob. I can't
remember the last time he picked up
the check.

ROB

He speaks with a forked tongue. Which
is why he and I usually eat Chinese.
He uses the chopsticks as tongue
depressors.

38 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Lacey is sitting at her desk, poring over sketches. Monica
walks in, looked annoyed. Lacey looks up and smiles.

LACEY

You're looking good. The fitness
routine and diet are working.

MONICA

It's hard to stay motivated with you
neglecting me.

LACEY

Sorry. It's not intentional.

MONICA

Busy as usual?

LACEY

Busier.

MONICA

Not too busy to go jogging with Rob instead of taking a barre class with me. Not too busy to design costumes for his play. Not too busy to blow me off for lunch so you can meet with him about your foundation.

LACEY

Guilty on all counts.

MONICA

I'm depressed. My self-esteem fluctuates every day depending on what my scale tells me.

LACEY

You look great. I want you to model in my upcoming fashion show.

MONICA

You're there for me when my body is trim enough to be a hanger for your clothes. But you don't give a shit about me the person.

LACEY

That's utter nonsense. I don't know of a single fashion designer who has taken one of the models she uses under her wing like I have you.

MONICA

My guardian angel has blown her wing. Maybe I should be one of your fucking foundation's clients. You neglect me just like your mother neglected you.

An awkward silence ensues for a couple moments.

LACEY

God, I'm so sorry.

39 INT. VALERIE ROTHMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Valerie sits behind her cluttered desk. Rob and Lacey sit in front of it.

ROB

I love Lacey's concept of Model Citizens.

VALERIE

Make Model Citizens a great comedy. But first focus on finishing the Lucky 13 rehearsals. It sure as hell is different from your comedies. I hope it resonates with your audience.

LACEY

Rob and I wanted to talk about our new foundation for psychologically traumatized children and adults.

VALERIE

I'm fortunate I was never traumatized as a child.

LACEY

Will you sit on our board, make a donation, and raise awareness and funds from your associates and investors in your plays?

VALERIE

Were you two traumatized as children?

ROB

Man, my old man constantly belittled me. He hated that I was into theater.

LACEY

My father and mother hardly ever spoke to me. To this day I can't stand listening to Simon and Garfunkel's The Sound of Silence.

ROB

And for me, it's one of my favorite songs.

VALERIE

It's a worthy cause. But for me it's a conflict of interest. I can't ask

(MORE)

VALERIE (CONT'D)

people to invest in a play and then double dip them for a donation to your foundation.

ROB

Valerie, some of your Broadway angels have pockets deep enough to hide a body.

VALERIE

They're infatuated with the arts, not another do-good foundation.

LACEY

How about you join our board, gives us some leads and leave the asking to us.

VALERIE

Fine. Hey, I just had a thought. If Model Citizens is a box-office hit, how about we donate a percentage of the profits to your foundation?

LACEY

That would be awesome. Thank you.

ROB

If Lacey wasn't here, I'd kiss you on the lips, Valerie.

VALERIE

And make me nauseous before lunch?

40 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey and Monica are sitting on a sofa, drinking glasses of green juice.

MONICA

Thanks for hiring me a trainer and a nutritionist.

LACEY

You're more than welcome. You look fabulous. But more importantly to me, your state of mind is fabulous.

MONICA

I'm no longer depressed. I just need routine shots of Lacey in my life.

LACEY

When you told me I was just like my mother, it hurt me deeply. Trust me, I never neglected you anywhere near to the degree she neglected me.

MONICA

I shouldn't have said that.

LACEY

You had a point. Which is why I'm committed to being there for you even with work, Rob, the foundation and the play costumes.

MONICA

Of course, now that I'm seeing Kenny, I have less time for you.

LACEY

Understandable.

MONICA

I'm thrilled to be in your next fashion show.

LACEY

You'll be stunning. Just don't get pregnant until after the show.

MONICA

We never had that mother-daughter talk.

LACEY

Google the birds and the bees.

A MONTH LATER

41 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

Rob, Lacey and Valerie sit squirming uncomfortably in the front row as the unseen AUDIENCE toggles between boos and silence.

42 INT. BACKSTAGE OF BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

Rob, looking crestfallen, huddles with Lacey and Valerie.

ROB

Since most of the audience left early,
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
it didn't take long to clear the
theater.

LACEY
As I suspected, your play was awfully
depressing.

ROB
I'm not going to jump off my condo
balcony when I get home. I'm going to
jump in front of a cab on the way
home.

VALERIE
Lucky 13 wasn't so lucky after all. I
should have talked you out of doing
this disaster.

ROB
I guess I wanted to give this play a
little bit of gravitas.

LACEY
Great violinists don't suddenly play
the trombone at symphony concerts.

ROB
They do if deep depression over a
breakup hijacks their mind.

LACEY
You're blaming me for your flop?

ROB
You broke up with me and in my funk I
wandered off course from comedy.

LACEY
When we got back together, I pleaded
with you to trash Lucky 13.

ROB
The damage already had been done.

He suddenly bolts from his seat and runs away. Lacey sprints
after him.

43 EXT. THEATER ROOF - NIGHT

A distraught Rob now is standing on the edge of the theater

roof, looking way down at passing traffic. Lacey is standing behind him.

LACEY

One failed play isn't worth killing yourself over. But some of the audience may have went home suicidal.

ROB

I'm not good with failure.

LACEY

History's biggest failures didn't commit suicide. Did the captain of the Hindenburg kill himself? Did Custer kill himself?

ROB

The explosion killed the Hindenburg pilot and the Indians killed Custer.

LACEY

But they didn't kill themselves.

ROB

Help me save face and push me off the roof.

LACEY

I'll be damned if I'll let you turn me into a murderer. Forget about saving face. Your head will split open like a watermelon in the fall.

ROB

Make sure it's a closed coffin.

LACEY

We're merely partners so I'm not making funeral arrangements.

ROB

You could at least say you love me.

LACEY

Love is a foul word to us.

ROB

Even under these circumstances?

LACEY

If you want to jump, jump! But what would your father think of you quivering like a coward on this rooftop?

ROB

Man, he'd have a field day making fun of me.

LACEY

Your father thought you were a total loser. Do you want to make a prophet out of the bastard?

ROB

On second thought, let's go for a drink.

He backs off the ledge. She pulls him down and mounts him.

LACEY

I've got a better idea. All this has made me hotter than summer heat rising off two-lane blacktop.

She kisses him passionately. Then her phone chirps with a text. She looks at it and grimaces.

LACEY

Monica's boyfriend dumped her. She just ate a big plate of pasta with meatballs and has a craving for cocaine.

ROB

We'd better go see her.

LACEY

I just walked you back from the edge of the roof. Can you handle any more depression in one night?

ROB

If not, Monica and I can walk off a roof together.

LACEY

That's not funny.

ROB
Just like my play.

44 INT. MONICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Monica, Lacey and Matt are squeezed together on a small sofa. Monica is eating ice cream with a table spoon from a half-gallon container. Monica and Matt's faces are portraits in despair.

LACEY
Just consider this your cheat day.

MONICA
Kenny was the one doing the cheating.

LACEY
I apologize for my poor choice of words.

MONICA
Making it worse, I caught him screwing some skinny skank.

LACEY
You're better off without him.

MONICA
Now I need you more than ever. I don't want to relapse and start using coke again.

LACEY
I'll be there for you.

Monica, still eating ice cream from the container, stands up and faces both of them.

MONICA
(Sarcastically)
Yeah, right. You have oodles of time between your fashion house, your play costume designs and exchanging bodily fluids with lover boy here.

ROB
Trust me, the latter doesn't happen all that often in our arrangement.

MONICA
You mean relationship.

LACEY

Rob and I are not in a relationship.
More of a partnership with benefits.

Monica rolls her eyes.

MONICA

Whatever.

LACEY

Enough! I'll find time for both of you
if I have to give up sleeping.

MONICA

Maybe the three of us can hang out
together.

LACEY

That's a great idea.

MONICA

Since this is my binge night, let's
all go out for Chinese.

FIVE WEEKS LATER

45 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Lacey and Julie jog side by side on a crisp spring morning.

JULIE

How is Rob doing after his last play
flopped?

LACEY

Damn depressed. They closed his show
after only a few performances.

JULIE

That's a shame.

LACEY

He's struggling with the script for
Model Citizens. The Grim Reaper is
funnier than Rob is right now.

JULIE

He's pressing. Lighten him up. Take
him skinny dipping here in Central
Park.

LACEY

Will you forget about the damn skinny dipping?

JULIE

You need to be his bridge over troubled waters.

LACEY

If I only had the time.

JULIE

Be sweet to Rob and find the time.

LACEY

He's blaming me for his writer's block. Says it only happened because when I broke up with him, his personal tragedy morphed into professional tragedy.

JULIE

Otherwise known as Lucky 13.

46 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Rob stares at his desktop. He gets up and walks around his office. Frustrated, he punches his right fist into his left hand. He sits down at his desktop, types a few words. He stands up and kicks his chair over.

47 EXT. TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Rob stares at the TKTS ticket booth, looking forlorn.

48 INT. RACQUETBALL COURT - DAY

Rob and Doug chat while they play racquetball.

ROB

Thanks for playing today. I need to blow off some steam. I can't write for shit these days.

DOUG

You write one flop and you suddenly lose your ability to write?

ROB

I think I have the yips. Like golfers who suddenly can't putt because of a
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
mental block.

DOUG
Do you know what golfers do to
overcome the yips?

ROB
I don't play golf. Tell me.

DOUG
They try to get out of their thinking
pattern.

ROB
How do they do that?

DOUG
They change their grip.

ROB
I can't change the way I type.

DOUG
Change up your device.

ROB
I write primarily on a desktop at
home. I'll try writing on my laptop
instead.

DOUG
One of my golfing buddies had the
yips. He found out that you basically
need a brain drain, to rid your mind
of overthinking.

ROB
Just let it flow. Write, write, write.

DOUG
Exactly. You must break the cycle of
anxiety and fear of being embarrassed
about writing another flop.

THAT NIGHT

49 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey and Rob sit on a sofa, drinking wine.

ROB
I found out why I'm having trouble
with the script for Model Citizens.

LACEY
Why?

ROB
I have the yips.

LACEY
What?

ROB
Like golfers who suddenly can't putt,
I can't write.

LACEY
Since I've put the reputation of my
clothing line on the success of the
play, I don't find that funny.

ROB
I'm not joking. Doug confirmed it's
the yips.

LACEY
Doug's an engineer, not a doctor.

ROB
But he's a golfer who knows a guy who
had the yips and overcame it.

LACEY
How?

ROB
I need to change up my pattern.

LACEY
You have to squelch the anxiety that
is imprisoning your talent.

ROB
I'm hearing my old man's voice again,
telling me what a failure I am.

LACEY
Whatever happened to your father?

ROB

He had a bad stroke that left him without the ability to speak. Talk about irony. And then he had a fatal stroke. A month later my mom died of a heart attack.

LACEY

How sad.

LACEY

It'll take some blood, sweat and tears, but I know you can lick the yips.

ROB

For now I just want to lick you.

50 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Rob sits at a small table, writing on his iPad, sipping coffee and frowning while two MEN sit at a nearby table, talking loudly.

51 INT. SUBWAY STATION PLATFORM - DAY

Rob stands pecking on his iPhone, looking frustrated as COMMUTERS jostle him.

52 INT. FITNESS CENTER - DAY

Rob sits on a weight bench, typing on his iPad and scowling while two GUYS in their 20's noisily clang plates on a barbell perched on a nearby weight bench.

53 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob, wearing briefs and a sleeveless undershirt, and Lacey, wearing a sports bra and panties, sit on his bed.

ROB

I tried writing Model Citizens at different locations.

LACEY

Did it help?

ROB

Too damn many distractions.

LACEY

Back to writing on your desktop in
your office?

ROB

I want to try something else first.
Can I balance my iPad on your chest?

LACEY

What? You're not serious.

ROB

Do you want me to write a funny
script?

LACEY

Perhaps not that badly.

ROB

Come on.

LACEY

This is absolute nonsense. But what
the hell.

Lacey lies on her back on the bed while Rob, kneeling on the floor beside her, balances his iPad on her breasts and starts typing. She starts giggling and winds up laughing hysterically.

ROB

You're not helping my concentration.
You're jiggling my iPad.

LACEY

You need a firmer surface.

She rolls over onto her stomach. Rob balances his iPad on her buttocks and resumes typing and typing and typing while Lacey lies still and quiet.

ROB

(Suddenly animated)

Hey, this is working! I got it
flowing. I'm in the zone.

LACEY

Stay quiet or you might lose your
rhythm. Just write quickly. I have to
fart.

Rob laughs out loud and types furiously.

ROB

Damn, this script is funny. I got my comic gift back. You helped me to pop the cork and let it flow.

She rips a loud fart.

LACEY

If you ever tell anybody about this, especially Doug, I'll never, ever forgive you.

Just then Monica walks in and is startled at what she sees.

MONICA

(Laughing)

What the fuck?

Embarrassed, Rob quickly removes the iPad from Lacey's butt and stands up wearing a sheepish grin on his face. A mortified Lacey rolls over and bolts to a sitting position.

LACEY

I know you have a key but you could at least ring the bell first?

ROB

The three of us might as well move in together.

LACEY

You forget we're in a limited partnership.

MONICA

Could you become a playwright in residence in London's West End for a couple years?

ROB

I hear there's an acute model shortage in Tibet. You should go check it out.

LACEY

How about you two stay in Manhattan and I open a fashion house above a garage in beautiful downtown Sweet Grass, Montana?

ROB
With your allergies?

THE FOLLOWING WEEK

54 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE WAREHOUSE - DAY

Lacey and Rob are walking through her fashion warehouse accompanied by several of her ASSISTANTS and MODELS. They all stop as Lacey pauses to inspect some fabric swatches on a table. She then takes some dresses off a rack and puts them up to the models to check out hemlines.

LACEY
The key is being fashion forward,
knowing what will become a trend in
the near future.

ROB
I assume you're fashion forward.

LACEY
If I weren't, I'd be out of business.
This is a cutthroat business. So you'd
better be cutting edge in your
approach.

ROB
With all the references to cutthroat
and cutting edge, I see why scissors
are so important in your line of work.

They walk over to her nearby office and sit in plush chairs.

ROB
How are the designs going for the
Model Citizens cast?

LACEY
I'm pleased so far. But considering
how many actors are in the cast and
multiple costume changes, this has
been more work than I ever imagined.

ROB
Especially with you multitasking with
your latest line.

LACEY
But if the play is a smash hit, it'll
be awesome for my brand.

ROB
Not to mention mine.

LACEY
How's the writing going?

ROB
The script is done. I love it. Valerie loves it.

LACEY
I want to see the script.

ROB
When will you have time to read it?

LACEY
I'll make the time. Even if I have to mimic you and read while on the toilet.

ROB
Nothing makes a famous designer shit faster than reading one of my scripts.

55 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - DAY

Rob and Valerie are standing in the theater lobby.

VALERIE
It continues to be difficult attracting investors after your last play flopped.

ROB
Try putting a gun to their heads.

VALERIE
I did. But they preferred taking a bullet.

ROB
That hurts my feelings.

VALERIE
I always keep the artistic side separate from the financial side.

ROB
As you should. They should stay in their own lane.

VALERIE

Until now. Lou Benedict, the hedge fund manager, is willing to make a sizable investment in Model Citizens.

ROB

And he wants me to write a soliloquy for his checkbook?

VALERIE

Nah, he wants his girlfriend cast in the lead role.

ROB

You can't make casting decisions, let alone for the lead role, based on financial considerations.

VALERIE

I have no choice.

Rob snatches her scarf from her neck, puts it around his neck like a noose and feigns hanging himself.

VALERIE

The good news is that his girlfriend has superstar potential. She's inexperienced but very talented with considerable charisma.

ROB

Where did you see her act?

VALERIE

Lou showed me a video of her in a full-length play at a repertory theater in Manhattan. She was wonderful.

ROB

I want her to audition for the role.

VALERIE

Fine. Just keep an open mind.

ROB

I have a feeling that as long as she can string two words together that aren't fuck you, she's got the part.

A WEEK LATER

56 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - DAY

Valerie, Rob and GUY ST. JOHN, a director in his 40's, sit on folding chairs on the stage. Standing across from them on the stage is MONA MANSON, tall, lithe, blonde, stunning and in her 20's, holding a script.

GUY

Please begin.

MONA

(Reads from the script)

I used to look forward to nightfall. I couldn't wait for the veil of darkness to cover my ugly face. And I seldom put on a light. That would illuminate my face. And light up my electric bill beyond my meager means.

Mona pauses, then an incandescent smile suddenly beams from her formerly forlorn face.

MONA

(Resumes reading from the script)

Now, I worship the light. My little old house used to be as dark as a catacomb. Now my mansion is awash with artificial light all night along. I want the world to see my beautiful face and to know that my electric bill is so big it has to be sent by FedEx.

Guy stands up, holding the script in his hands.

GUY

Very good, Mona. Now I want you to turn to page 37 on the script and pick up Amy's lines from the top.

Mona turns the pages of the script until she finds the proper page. She looks up to her audience of four so it can soak in her poise and presence.

MONA

(Resumes reading from the script)

Now that I'm gorgeous and my bank account is even bigger than my boobs, I won't look twice at a guy unless he's tall, dark, handsome, hung like a Clydesdale and is so filthy rich nobody can money launder his fortune.

Mona flings the script to the floor, puts her hands on her hips, tosses back her hair and flashes a huge smile.

GUY

Most impressive, my dear. With acting ability like that, I'm surprised your resume is so thin.

MONA

All work and no play is no way for Mona to live.

ROB

Are you willing to work very hard during rehearsals and the run of the play?

MONA

As much as my love life permits. And I live for love.

VALERIE

We're taking a big chance on you. You have to respect Guy and Rob's expertise. Listen to them and they will make you a star.

MONA

I'm already a star. The world just doesn't know it yet.

A MONTH LATER

57 EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - DAY

Lacey and Rob are on a Statue of Liberty cruise in New York, smiling and pointing to various landmarks as they view the Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey skylines. After they view the Statue of Liberty, Lacey turns to Rob and kisses him on the cheek.

LACEY

I've never taken this cruise before, never seen the Statute of Liberty up close until now.

ROB

We picked the perfect summer day for it.

LACEY

A sunny day also looks good from my office window.

ROB

I guess we're getting less tethered to our inner beasts.

LACEY

Who you kidding? I was wracked with guilt all morning about taking the afternoon off.

ROB

I could hear my old man screaming in my ear that I was lazy.

LACEY

You never mention your mother.

ROB

My dad basically reduced her to a cipher. She was totally overshadowed by my father's strong personality.

LACEY

A mere appendage to her husband, huh?

ROB

Exactly. What about your parents?

LACEY

My mother is a high-powered attorney. My father is a general contractor. I see them very infrequently. We have little to talk about.

She pauses, then sighs. She starts playing with her hair.

LACEY

They have no interest in my career. They're not into fashion. My mom only wears business suits and my dad only dresses up for weddings and funerals.

ROB

Sorry.

LACEY

Screw them. I'm into myself.

ROB

Our workaholism has made us two selfish people. We need to work together to make us better versions of ourselves.

LACEY

It's almost impossible for us both to become selfless when we need our selfishness to do our work.

ROB

We can do it if we transcend being merely work-centric.

LACEY

Careful. The whole basis of our detached personal arrangement is work-centric.

ROB

Sometimes I think we have a negative want.

LACEY

What?

ROB

We want not to fall in love.

LACEY

A positive want is to fall in love?

ROB

Maybe.

LACEY

Oh, God. The positive and negative terminals on your battery are cross-wired.

ROB

Guess I'll have to plug into the nearest EV charging station.

58 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Lacey is sitting at her desk, which is carpeted with all sorts of sketches. She is sketching designs, twirling her hair and scowling. Suddenly she slams her right palm on the desk.

LACEY

(To herself)

I'm not happy with the sketches for my new fashion line. I've devoted too much time to Model Citizens and the fashion line is getting short shrift.

59 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - DAY

Mona and a male ACTOR who is tall, slim and in his 30's, stand on stage. Guy and Rob sit in the front row of the theater.

GUY

Mona, you're overacting.

Mona shakes her head with frustration, pauses and then sighs deeply.

MONA

The words aren't strong enough to carry the scene. That's why I need to overact.

GUY

In your opinion.

MONA

My opinion is that you have to make me shine.

GUY

My job as director is to make the entire cast shine so the play shines.

MONA

I have a friend who's a playwright. I showed him the script and he said it's weak in spots.

Rob bolts out of his seat.

ROB

I'm not going to waste time going over my resume with you.

MONA

I live in the present, not the past. I need a script that snaps, crackles and pops.

ROB

Then let's have breakfast tomorrow
over a bowl of Rice Krispies. We need
to talk.

MONA

I usually skip breakfast.

ROB

Not tomorrow. See you at 9 at the
diner across the street.

MONA

And if I don't show up?

ROB

You're out.

MONA

Save your jokes for the script.

60 INT. DINER - MORNING

Rob sits alone at a table, fiddling with his phone and
sipping coffee. Mona approaches his table and sits down.

MONA

Sorry I'm a little late.

ROB

An hour is a bit more than a little
late.

MONA

So what do you want to talk about?

ROB

Do you want to order first?

MONA

I had a protein bar at home. I'm good.
What's up?

ROB

I want to do you a favor.

MONA

Good. Let me be me.

ROB

That would be doing you a big
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
disservice. This is a golden
opportunity for you.

MONA
So please tell Guy to get out of my
way and allow me to blossom.

ROB
Do you know how many actresses would
kill for the chance to be the lead in
a Broadway play?

MONA
Apparently everyone but me. I know I
should tone it down. But self-control
isn't in my DNA.

ROB
I can't find you a genetic scientist.
But I will find a way to rein in your
impulses.

MONA
Gonna crack the riding crop, huh? That
could get kinky.

ROB
You obviously can act. But you have
limited experience and need direction.
You need to trust Guy. And trust me.

MONA
Why?

ROB
Because we have a track record. We
know what we're doing.

MONA
Then why did your last play flop?

ROB
Ego. I write comedies. I wanted to
adopt a deeper tone than just a clever
comedy sketch.

MONA
Just know I've got to be me.

ROB

If you allow Guy to direct you and trust my script, your acting career will skyrocket.

MONA

And if I don't?

ROB

I'll have Valerie fire you.

MONA

Fire me and Lou Benedict will withdraw his big investment. And then you're screwed.

ROB

And so are you. We need each other. I need you to be wonderful and help get my career back on track. And you need me to get your career off the launch pad.

MONA

You're desperate, aren't you?

ROB

It's that transparent? I'm desperate to have you be the vehicle to drive my career back to the top. So if you disagree with Guy, see me. If I agree with you, we'll do it your way.

MONA

As those lyrics go, I'm your vehicle woman. Now that we've made up, want to fuck?

ROB

I don't fuck where I eat.

MONA

That hasn't been my experience with men.

ROB

I was referring to my livelihood. I don't fuck actresses in my plays.

MONA

I was just busting your balls.

(MORE)

MONA (CONT'D)

Speaking of balls, I need a favor.

ROB

Now that we're buddies, name it.

MONA

My sister Monique is an aspiring singer. She's working on some tracks for her first album and needs help with the lyrics.

ROB

I'm a playwright, not a lyricist.

MONA

She's up my ass about this. Indulge me. Just meet with her to discuss it.

ROB

Like I have the time.

MONA

You'll have plenty of time if Lou Benedict pulls his money.

ROB

Very persuasive.

THREE WEEKS LATER

61 INT. BACKSTAGE AT FASHION SHOW - DAY

Choreographed chaos... STYLISTS hurriedly hemming skirts, MAKEUP ARTISTS putting glam and glitz on female MODELS, DRESSERS quickly changing outfits on other female MODELS and other female MODELS sprinting in 5-inch heels backstage from the runway for another costume change.

62 INT. FASHION SHOW - DAY

Female MODELS, including Monica, walk the runway to the sounds of throbbing, very loud music as PHOTOGRAPHERS on a media riser at the end of the runway take pictures and videos.

63 INT. BACKSTAGE AT FASHION SHOW - DAY

Lacey and Rob are peering through the stage curtain. She is frowning and twirling her hair.

LACEY

This isn't going well.

ROB

Your designs look wonderful to me.

LACEY

You're no fashion critic. The audience applause is merely polite. I haven't seen one prominent fashion critic smile. Or even nod approval.

ROB

Perhaps you're reading into things.

LACEY

I should've focused more on my fashion line. But then again, the play costumes could add more dimension to my designs.

ROB

I should've talked you out of being the costume designer.

LACEY

Why? It's our play. Who else would do the designs? I just wish there were two of me.

ROB

Me, too. I could have a transactional arrangement with one of you and fall in love with the other you.

LACEY

Don't cave on me. I've got enough shit going on without worrying about you violating our no-love commandment.

ROB

I'll inject some Flex Seal into my heart to keep love from oozing out.

LACEY

I don't even want to read the reviews. If they're bad, it's going to cost me a fortune. Sales of the new line will suck.

ROB

Wait until you see the reviews before
you crucify yourself.

LACEY

I can't tolerate failure.

ROB

Sounds like me.

A tweet dings. She looks at her phone.

LACEY

One prominent fashion critic just
tweeted: House of London burning down!

Another tweet dings. She looks at her phone again.

LACEY

Another critic tweeted: House of
London is ashes!

ROB

The reviews are bad.

LACEY

They're cataclysmic.

She steps forward and yells.

LACEY

Fuck critics!

64 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob and Lacey sit on a sofa.

LACEY

I'm sorry I didn't reply to your texts
and voicemails the last two days. I
needed time alone to think.

ROB

I was worried you were suicidal.

LACEY

I'm not dramatic like you. But I'm
morose. I'm OK with silence right now.
After all, I grew up in it.

ROB

Were the rest of the reviews that bad?

LACEY

Worse.

ROB

Ouch. But remember that critics can be bastards. They critique fashion or plays but they can neither design clothes or write plays.

LACEY

Yeah, but we love them when they rave about our work.

ROB

Remember that you are not your work.

LACEY

I am. And once again my time with you has screwed my work.

ROB

Meaning?

LACEY

I can't have it both ways.

ROB

Meaning?

She sits silent for a moment, twirling her hair.

LACEY

We have to say goodbye. This time for good.

ROB

I feel like I just swallowed a giant squid.

LACEY

Such an emotional response violates our vow.

ROB

Let me know what I can do to help you through this. You were there for me when Lucky 13 flopped.

LACEY

The best thing you can do for me is leave me alone to focus on my work. Who was I kidding? Work is my life. The only thing in my life.

ROB

So we're back to that, huh? What about our foundation?

LACEY

We'll still work together on that. Just not be together.

ROB

Not sure I can work with you but not be with you. Perhaps I'll step down from the foundation.

LACEY

Do what you must.

ROB

I can't believe you're breaking up with me again. Nobody understands you like me.

LACEY

Our part-time arrangement is just an excuse for you to get laid when you take a break from your work.

ROB

The same applies to you.

Lacey furiously twirls her hair. He pulls out his phone and starts typing on it.

LACEY

You're writing at a crucial time like this?

ROB

Nah. I'm signing up on Elite Singles.

LACEY

The dating app for single professionals?

ROB

Yep. Let's test ourselves with a
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
double date.

LACEY
How does that test us?

ROB
We bring dates to dinner and see if we
feel uncomfortable. If we don't, we're
done.

LACEY
Challenge accepted.

65 INT. BROADWAY THEATER -DAY

Mona and Rob are sitting on folding chairs set up on the
empty stage.

ROB
Mona, I need a big favor.

MONA
What about my favor with Monique?

ROB
Can we see her together?

MONA
How about later today at her studio
apartment?

ROB
If you insist. But I don't write
lyrics.

MONA
But Lou Benedict writes checks.

ROB
OK.

MONA
What's your favor?

ROB
Isn't one of the guys you're seeing a
fashion critic?

MONA
Yes. He's not that good in bed but he
(MORE)

MONA (CONT'D)
gives me great fashion tips. Why do you ask?

ROB
Lacey's fashion show the other week wasn't well received by fashion critics. She was devastated.

MONA
That sucks.

ROB
Did your boyfriend review the fashion show?

MONA
He intended to. But I had him tied up.
She winks and smiles mischievously.

ROB
Well, now that you've untied him, please ask him to review the fashion show video on the House Of London website. Do you think he'd do that?

MONA
He'd drink motor oil if I asked him to. Especially if I'm naked when I ask.

ROB
How sweet of you.

MONA
I'm many things. Sweet isn't one of them.

66 INT. MONIQUE'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

MONIQUE MANSON, tall, blonde, attractive and in her 20's, sits alongside Rob on a bench in front of her piano. They are surrounded by recording equipment.

ROB
Imagine. A studio apartment that actually is a studio apartment.

MONIQUE
Singing is not a lark for me. I've
(MORE)

MONIQUE (CONT'D)
gotten great feedback performing in
clubs.

ROB
When's Mona getting here?

MONIQUE
She's not. Something came up with Lou
Benedict.

ROB
I'm sure it did.

MONIQUE
I've read all your plays. Even though
you specialize in comedy, you write
poignantly and poetically.

ROB
That doesn't make me a lyricist.

MONIQUE
Yes it does. Lyrics are poetry set to
music.

ROB
I find most memorable songs have a
clever chorus punctuated with a great
lyric hook line.

MONIQUE
Precisely.

ROB
I don't have time for this.

MONIQUE
Lyrics are brief compared to plays.
Please let me send you some melodies.
Listen to them and if the muse strikes
you, write some lyrics for them.

ROB
I do owe Mona a favor.

MONIQUE
I think you have enormous potential as
a lyricist. If so, I'm doing you a
favor.

ROB
So we're the next Carole King and
Gerry Goffin?

MONIQUE
From your lips to God's ears.

ROB
You a religious person?

MONIQUE
Hedonism and religion don't mix.

ROB
There's something to be said about the
pursuit of pleasure.

MONIQUE
That's it! Let's name my album Pursuit
of Pleasure.

ROB
So you're looking for romantically
seductive lyrics?

MONIQUE
Exactly. Keep this up and I'm going to
fall in love with you.

ROB
I'm not into love.

MONIQUE
Why?

ROB
It's a four-letter word that fucks
with my work.

MONIQUE
Work is a four-letter word.

67 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Lacey and Seth are sitting at a table set for four.

SETH
Getting a dinner date invite from you
was even more startling than finding a
polar bear in my foyer.

LACEY

You could've exterminated it and
mounted it on your family room wall.

SETH

Still a hopeless workaholic?

LACEY

Nah. I've become a lazy shit.

Rob and Stacey approach their table and sit down.

LACEY

This is Seth.

ROB

And this is Stacey.

SETH

So you two are business partners?

ROB

Lacey is co-producing my next play and
also designing the costumes.

SETH

I thought you said you were a lazy
shit now, Lacey.

LACEY

I may have exaggerated.

STACEY

You should go clothes shopping with
Rob. He dresses like a football coach,
not a playwright.

LACEY

What do you do, Stacey?

STACEY

I'm a taxidermist.

SETH

Really. I'm an exterminator and an
avid hunter.

STACEY

I've shot three bucks. Their heads are
mounted in my apartment.

SETH

Awesome. I'd love to see them
sometime.

STACEY

What do you say after dinner we dump
these two and go over to my place?

SETH

Awesome. Your apartment sounds like a
good place to get mounted.

LACEY

Oh, dear.

68 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Mona walks unannounced into Lacey's office. Startled, Lacey immediately looks up from the sketches she is reviewing on her desk.

MONA

I'm Mona. I just stopped in to tell
you that Valerie showed me the
costumes I'll be wearing. I absolutely
love them.

LACEY

Thank you.

MONA

Rob told me that the critics panned
your latest line. They all must have
been on the rag that day. I love your
designs.

LACEY

I appreciate that, Mona.

MONA

One of the guys I'm seeing is Frank
Vincent.

LACEY

The fashion critic for Wow magazine?

MONA

He loves your work. But he missed your
latest show.

LACEY

I looked for his review online and was surprised he didn't write one.

MONA

Totally my fault. I had him tied up in some afternoon delight. Literally tied up, if you catch my drift.

LACEY

Got it.

MONA

Frank watched the video of the show posted on your website and loved your new line. Raved about it. I'll text you the link to his review. You're going to love it.

LACEY

Terrific. Suddenly I'm in a much better mood.

MONA

Rob told me to ask Frank to review your latest line.

LACEY

He did, did he?

MONA

He's a great guy. He won't put up with my shit. And I can be a handful.

LACEY

As long as he hasn't been too hands on with you.

MONA

No worries. He's like a big brother to me. I'm into a lot of kinky stuff. Incest isn't one of them.

LACEY

I can see why a free spirit like you was born to play this role.

69 EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

Rob, behind the wheel, and Lacey are driving up Fifth Avenue.

ROB

Our double date wasn't much of a test,
was it?

LACEY

You stacked the deck by bringing your
ex you broke up badly with, didn't
you?

ROB

Yep.

LACEY

Me, too.

ROB

I remember you saying once that Seth
was an exterminator and hunts. Since
Stacey also hunts and is a
taxidermist, I was hoping you'd bring
him.

LACEY

They had instant chemistry.

ROB

If Model Citizens flops, I'm becoming
a matchmaker.

LACEY

Guess who stopped in my office today?

ROB

Brad Pitt?

LACEY

I wish.

ROB

Who?

LACEY

Mona.

ROB

What?

LACEY

Thank you for having her boyfriend who
just happens to be a prominent fashion
critic post a glowing review of my

(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

show.

ROB

So you take back all you said that night?

LACEY

Absolutely. I promise to stop threatening to break it off with you whenever something goes wrong at work.

ROB

Can I have that in writing?

LACEY

You're the writer, not me.

ROB

Why did you want to take a ride?

LACEY

Out of the blue, my parents invited me for dinner. Actually, they invited us for dinner.

ROB

Us?

LACEY

They saw online that you and I are dating. I didn't tell them you and I have a partnership, not a relationship.

ROB

So you took me back so I could accompany you?

LACEY

There's no way I'm going alone.

ROB

Let's take advantage of the ride to your parents and talk. We both have to be each other's someone who brings out the best in us.

LACEY

How do we do that?

ROB

Stop trying to impress our parents or the memory of our parents. We simply try to impress each other.

LACEY

The experience of being around you should bring out the best in me? And vice versa?

ROB

I feel that vibe in you.

LACEY

Yeah, when we're making love.

ROB

Deeper than that. Work always gets in our way emotionally. But working with you on Model Citizens and with our foundation is incrementally bringing us into a real relationship.

LACEY

You meant to say limited partnership.

ROB

Kind of ironic, wouldn't you say?

LACEY

We're here. Unfortunately.

Lacey twirls her hair furiously as he pulls into her parents' driveway.

LACEY

Into the valley of death we go.

ROB

You no longer have to impress your parents. Only me. Finally be the mouse that roared in their presence.

70 INT. LACEY'S PARENTS HOUSE - NIGHT

JACK LONDON, in his late 60's, and JOAN LONDON, in her early 60's, greet Lacey and Rob at the door.

LACEY

Mom and Dad, this is Rob.

JOAN

I've never met a playwright. Jack and I love the theater.

JACK

Can I get you two something to drink?

LACEY

A bottle of white wine, please.

JACK

You meant glass, right?

Lacey looks stern.

LACEY

I meant a bottle but a glass will do for starters.

Her phone rings. She listens and frowns.

LACEY

(Into the phone)

Tell that fat fuck to fuck off. A fucking deal is a fucking deal.

She ends the call and smiles. Her parents' eyes are as large as fried eggs.

LACEY

Sorry. The fashion business is not for pussies.

JOAN

What language!

JACK

With a mouth like that you could work on one of my construction crews.

LACEY

I don't work for anybody. I'm the boss.

JOAN

Lacey, you always look like you're facing a firing squad when you come here.

JACK

What would like to drink, Rob?

ROB
Jack Daniels.

JACK
Glass or bottle?

ROB
You're not my father. A glass will do.

JACK
Please take a seat at the dining room
table while I get the drinks.

Joan, Lacey and Rob walk into the dining room and sit at the
table. Jack walks in and serves drinks to Lacey and Rob.

JACK
I'll be right back with drinks for
your mother and I.

Jack departs the room. Joan is smiling broadly.

JOAN
Rob, it must be so exciting to see
your work come to life on a Broadway
stage.

ROB
It's an amazing adrenaline rush. But
we all have our different talents. You
must be incredibly proud of Lacey.

JOAN
I'm not much into high fashion. But
we're proud of her success.

Jack returns with a glass of white wine for his wife and a
beer for himself.

JACK
I'm damn proud of Lacey. Hard work is
the secret to her success. I'm glad
Joan and I ingrained that in her.

LACEY
That's the first time I've ever heard
either one of you say you're proud of
me.

JACK
Nonsense. Of course we did.

LACEY

Nope.

JOAN

Then it was implied, dear. So Rob, where do you get your ideas for your plays?

ROB

From observing life and people. Something will pop out at me and I look for the humor in it. I don't follow any particular blueprint.

JACK

As a contractor, I'm always following blueprints. I admire your freedom to just wing it.

ROB

But you've got to wing it just right. People invest a lot of money in plays. If a play flops, it's a disaster.

JOAN

Have you ever written a flop?

ROB

Just one. And one is one too many. Thank God Lacey helped me through it. She's fabulous. She even gave me the idea for my next play, is co-producing it and also is the costume designer.

LACEY

You guys never come to my fashion shows. Perhaps you can come to see Model Citizens.

JOAN

Depends on my trial schedule.

JACK

And my construction projects.

LACEY

Rob, my parents totally ignored me when I was a kid. Once I had a fever of 104 degrees because I had measles and mumps at the same time.

ROB

Did you wind up in the hospital?

LACEY

I never even went to the doctor. My parents couldn't get off work.

JOAN

I was in the middle of a trial.

JACK

We were behind on a major construction project because of rain. Besides, measles and mumps don't kill kids.

LACEY

What goes around comes around. Don't expect me to take you guys for chemo treatments if you ever get cancer.

JOAN

We wouldn't expect you to if you have to work.

A CATERER wheels in a tray of appetizers and places it on the table.

LACEY

Rob, we never had dinner catered when I was a little girl. Nor did I have much conversation. My parents would talk about work or whatever between themselves and I sat there like an empty chair. I ate every meal in silence. Except when I talked to my peas or mashed potatoes.

With great flourish, Lacey picks up some bacon wraps from her plate.

LACEY

And how are you today, bacon wraps? Were you a good little piggy until you were led to the slaughterhouse?

JOAN

(Defensively)

I never heard you talk to your food as a child.

LACEY

Perhaps you should have served
cauliflower. It has bigger ears.

JACK

I never heard you talk to your food
either. Did your food ever talk back
to you?

LACEY

Only when I burped.

ROB

Remember when I said I'm an observer
of life? From knowing Lacey's
backstory and seeing this interaction,
I would say that Joan and Jack are
into Joan and Jack and that Lacey is a
mere extra appendage -- like having a
sixth finger.

JACK

(Loudly)

Now see here. No stranger is going to
walk in here and tell us that we
sucked as parents.

Lacey stands up and pounds the table with both hands,
startling her parents.

LACEY

(Screaming)

YOU DID SUCK AS PARENTS! YOU TOTALLY
IGNORED ME. YOU FUCKED ME UP FOR LIFE.
ALL I KNOW IS WORK. I'M INCAPABLE OF
MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS BECAUSE OF
YOUR ABUSE. OUTSIDE OF ROB, OF COURSE.
AND THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE HE'S AS FUCKED
UP AS ME BECAUSE OF HIS PARENTAL
ABUSE.

Lacey sits down and starts bawling. Rob stands up and walks
over to comfort her.

ROB

My old man belittled me constantly.
Lacey and I both became hopeless
workaholics in a pathetic bid to gain
even a morsel of love and respect from
our parents.

Joan and Jack sit in stunned disbelief. Joan is crying softly.

JACK

If we neglected you, honey, it wasn't intentional.

JOAN

We thought you were just a quiet child who liked her space.

LACEY

(Angrily)

Space? Space? I might as well lived in Utah for all the attention you two ever gave me at home.

JOAN

You exaggerate.

LACEY

Mom, you were the cold as ice lawyer. You were more stoic than a statue of Lady Justice when you brushed my hair as a little girl.

JOAN

Don't you remember our little chats by the fireplace?

LACEY

(Sarcastically)

Who could ever forget them? They happened once a year on my birthday. They weren't chats to me. I always felt you were grilling me on the witness stand.

JACK

We may not have been the best parents around. But we tried our best.

LACEY

You didn't even try. Remember when I was 11 and broke my leg? You two were too busy to take me so I took a cab to the hospital.

JACK

We thought it was just a sprain.

LACEY

Give me a break.

ROB

Was Lacey an accident?

Joan and Jack sit in silence.

LACEY

Of course I was. Which is why I was the unwanted child who intruded on their work.

JOAN

It was a surprise pregnancy. I never wanted children. So I always felt inadequate as a mother.

JACK

I never wanted a child either. But your mother and I were never cruel to you, Lacey.

LACEY

You most certainly were. Ignoring or belittling a child can lead to as many devastating consequences as physical or sexual abuse.

ROB

Our childhood abuse gave us scars for life. But Lacey and I are working to stop trying to win parental approval and instead win each other's approval.

LACEY

I couldn't give a fucking shit whether you ever see one of my fashion shows or come to our play. Rob's parents are dead. And my parents are dead to me.

ROB

We no longer give a damn about what ghosts from our past think about us. Which is my Lacey has the balls to speak to you the way she has tonight.

JOAN

We had no idea.

JACK

No idea at all. We wanted Lacey to succeed. We stressed hard work. You listened. And you succeeded.

LACEY

And the cost on me was incalculable.

JOAN

How can we ever make it up to you?

LACEY

Rob and I have started a foundation to help victims of parental child abuse. How about a sizable contribution?

JACK

How about a hundred grand?

ROB

Thank you. I wish I could say it was a pleasure meeting you. Maybe next time.

LACEY

We can't stay for dinner. I have a late call with my attorney and Rob has to call his producer regarding construction renovations to the theater.

JACK

Call them both while we eat. After all, apparently all we ever talked about over dinner was the law and construction projects.

LACEY

You got that right.

JOAN

We'll see you both at your play.

LACEY

I won't be holding my breath.

71 INT. MONIQUE'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Monique and Rob are sitting on a bench in front of her piano.

MONIQUE

So what do you think after hearing
(MORE)

MONIQUE (CONT'D)
your lyrics put to my melodies?

ROB
Not bad.

MONIQUE
Not bad? They're fucking awesome. And
wait to you hear them with multitrack
layers added.

ROB
Glad my lyrics worked for you.

MONIQUE
I absolutely love them. You and I are
a great team.

In her excitement she hugs him and plants a surprise kiss
smack on his lips. He instantly recoils.

ROB
My favor doesn't include fucking you.

She laughs.

MONIQUE
My apologies, Mr. Altar Boy. My
happiness got the best of me.

ROB
If we continue working together, it's
strictly professional.

MONIQUE
Mona said you're a great guy. Your
girlfriend is a lucky girl.

ROB
She's more like me than me.

She laughs again.

MONIQUE
Isn't fucking yourself like
masturbation?

ROB
Better. You don't need pictures or
videos.

A MONTH LATER

72 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

The stage is filled with the incandescent Mona and the CAST of Model Citizens dressed in an array of beautiful costumes and tuxedos basking in rapturous, sustained applause as they take their curtain call.

Standing in the theater wings are Rob and Lacey.

LACEY

I couldn't be prouder of you, Rob.
Your play is hysterically funny.

ROB

I'm so happy for you. Your costumes
are breathtaking.

LACEY

I love working with you.

ROB

I love how you came up with the
concept of Model Citizens and then
designed its awesome costumes.

LACEY

But don't love me.

ROB

Vice versa.

A beaming Valerie approaches them.

VALERIE

The play is magnificent and the
costumes are gorgeous. A splendid
couple you two are.

ROB

Model Citizens is my redemption from
Lucky 13. And it wouldn't have
happened if I didn't have Lacey's
inspiration.

VALERIE

I know your costumes for the play are
going to generate a ton of favorable
publicity for you.

Mona sprints up to them and embraces Rob.

MONA

I can never repay you for all your work in helping rein in my creative impulses and making me a disciplined actress.

ROB

And thank you for being so wonderful in the role.

Monique rushes up to them. She practically jumps into Rob's arms and kisses him on the cheek.

MONIQUE

Just finished recording our CD. It's going to be fabulous with my melodies and your lyrics.

LACEY

(Startled)

Excuse me?

MONA

This is my sister Monique.

MONIQUE

You're a divine designer, Lacey. You simply must design my wardrobe for my first concert tour.

LACEY

Rob, you forgot to mention the album, the lyrics and most of all Monique to me.

ROB

I knew you were busy.

LACEY

Surprised you weren't too busy to become a lyricist.

ROB

I owed Mona a favor.

LACEY

Considering Monique is as beautiful and seductive as her sister, I'm sure it was a real hardship.

Guy, smoking a cigar, walks up to them.

GUY

Mona, you were magnificent tonight. It took double teaming by Rob and myself, but we managed to illuminate your talent.

VALERIE

Guy, I'll forgive you because it's opening night. But if I ever see you smoking a cigar in this theater again, you'll wind up directing traffic in the Bronx.

GUY

Ever the quipster, Valerie. And Lacey, your costumes are divine.

LACEY

Thanks. I put more hours of labor in them than the Egyptians did the pyramids.

ROB

And gave me more hours of celibacy than a vestal virgin.

Lacey's parents rush up and put her in a double-team bear hug. Rob is standing by her side.

JOAN

What a fabulous fashion designer you are. I had no idea. I'm going to start buying your clothes.

JACK

Lacey, you're absolutely incredible. Your mother and I will be eternally sorry for your childhood.

JOAN

Rob, you're an amazing playwright. More importantly, perfect for Lacey.

Monica, tears of joy streaming down her cheeks, rushes up to Lacey and Rob and hugs her.

MONICA

So proud of both of you. I love you, Lacey.

LACEY

I love you, too. You're my daughter.

THREE WEEKS LATER

73 INT. SAW FOUNDATION BUILDING

Lacey and Rob are standing behind a podium in the large lobby of the Soothing Abuse Welts (SAW) Foundation building. Flanking them are other BOARD MEMBERS that include Valerie, Maureen and Lacey's parents. Monica, Doug and Julie also are there. In front of them are PHOTOGRAPHERS, REPORTERS AND CAMERAMEN.

LACEY

Welcome everyone to the grand opening of the Soothing Abuse Welts Foundation that Rob and I founded to provide grant money to organizations helping children and adults coping with the ravages of childhood psychological and emotional traumatic abuse.

ROB

Joining us in our new SAW headquarters are our fellow board members.

LACEY

And now we are proud to introduce our chief executive officer, Colonel Samuel Sanders.

COLONEL SAMUEL SANDERS, tall, trim, white-haired and military erect in his 50's, strides to join Lacey and Rob at the podium.

COLONEL SANDERS

I'm honored and flattered that Lacey, Rob and the board of directors have placed their trust in me to launch this foundation into becoming a powerful force in helping victims of childhood traumatic abuse.

He pauses and then smiles.

COLONEL SANDERS

By the way, I'm a recently retired Army colonel who as a vegetarian never eats fried chicken. But I'm willing to make an exception if any Kentucky

(MORE)

COLONEL SANDERS (CONT'D)
Fried Chicken franchise owners want to
make a sizable donation.

TWO MONTHS LATER

74 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Rob and Doug are having dinner and drinks.

DOUG
It's nice to have a night away from
work and family. Thanks for the
invite.

ROB
You were my second choice. Lacey
canceled because a business dinner
popped up.

Doug does a double take and frowns.

DOUG
Isn't that Lacey over there having
dinner with Buck Bronson?

ROB
The New York Giants quarterback?

Rob wheels around in his chair and sees Lacey having dinner
with BUCK BRONSON, who is in his early 30's, tall, muscular,
handsome and sporting long blond hair. He looks like a guy
who just fell off the cover of a paperback romance novel.

Lacey seems almost giddy as she and Bronson talk, dine, laugh
and drink wine. Rob looks anything but giddy as he watches
them.

ROB
Looks more like monkey business than
fashion business to me. I can't
believe Lacey is cheating on me.

DOUG
Now don't overreact, Rob. People do
have fun even at business dinners. It
may not be what it looks like.

ROB
It sure as hell looks like she's
flirting with him.

DOUG

Perhaps Lacey is star struck because
he's a famous football player.

ROB

Lacey wouldn't know the difference
between a Giants quarterback and a
Rams cornerback. I can't watch
anymore. I'm out of here.

Rob leaps out of his chair and briskly walks away. Doug
sighs.

DOUG

(Aloud to himself)

I guess I'm stuck with the dinner tab
again.

75 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob repeatedly rings the doorbell, which awakens Lacey on her
living room sofa but not the guy in her bed, Buck Bronson.
She looks at the clock on the wall and it's 3 a.m. She throws
her robe over her nightgown and rushes to the front door.

LACEY

(Whispers anxiously)

Who is it?

ROB (V.O.)

It's me.

LACEY

(Softly)

Shit! Rob?

ROB (V.O.)

Sorry if you were expecting Buck
Bronson.

Lacey opens the door and an angry-looking Rob walks in.

LACEY

(Whispering)

What's the matter with you? It's three
in the morning.

ROB

(Sternly)

Trust is the single most important
quality of our partnership. And you
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
lied to me.

LACEY
About what?

ROB
You said you had a business meeting
last night. Instead you're all gushy
with Buck Bronson.

LACEY
It WAS a business dinner. His agent
called me and said Buck wants to
become a male model. And since I've
been contemplating starting a men's
fashion line, I took the meeting.

ROB
You were fawning all over him. Like
some giddy cheerleader with a crush on
the star football player.

LACEY
(Defensively)
I was not.

ROB
(Emphatically)
Come on. I'm not blind.

LACEY
Keep your voice down.

ROB
Why? Hung over from too much wine with
Buck Bronson?

LACEY
Were you spying on me?

ROB
When you canceled on me, I called Doug
and we went to dinner. It was pure
coincidence, or perhaps fate, we
picked the same restaurant.

LACEY
Why didn't you come over to our table
and join us?

ROB

And spoil all your fun with your new boyfriend? It looked like you two lovebirds were about to duck under the table for a quickie.

She chuckles.

LACEY

You're jealous. You can't be jealous! We're not in love.

ROB

Well, I am jealous. So fucking shoot me. And don't tell me you weren't jealous when you found out about Monique and my lyrics.

LACEY

I wasn't jealous. Just suspicious because you kept it a secret from me.

ROB

I didn't tell you because I did it in exchange for Mona getting her fashion critic boyfriend to write a rave review about your otherwise harpooned clothing line.

LACEY

So his review was total bullshit?

ROB

I didn't say that. Mona just told him to review it.

LACEY

If she asked him to review the sewers in Manhattan, he'd write that they smell as sweet as her pussy.

ROB

Well, his review made you a lot of money. And my teaming up with Monique could make me a lot of money.

LACEY

So fuck her. A win-win for you. You'd be fucking your work with her instead of fucking up your work with me.

ROB

If I wanted to fuck her, I would have.
The thought never crossed my mine.

LACEY

Then you should be fucking canonized.

She furiously twirls her hair.

LACEY

OK. Buck and I dated briefly a few
years ago.

ROB

Man, I knew it!

LACEY

He and I definitely are past tense.
Last night was about business.

ROB

Why the hell would an All-Pro football
player want to become a model?

LACEY

Because he has cervical and lumbar
stenosis, which is narrowing of the
spine. He has to retire from football
or risk paralysis.

ROB

That sucks.

LACEY

It sure does. I feel sorry for him.
And he's feeling sorry for himself.
Got drunk off his ass last night to
ease his pain.

ROB

Henceforth, I could care less what you
do.

LACEY

Good. So it won't be awkward when you
meet him at our foundation's next
board meeting. Buck agreed to join our
board and be our spokesman.

ROB

For you. Not me. I'm done with your
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
silly foundation.

LACEY
Suit yourself! I thought we were two
sides of the same coin. We're not.
Once again, work derails our
partnership.

ROB
You call getting drunk with Buck
Bronson work?

Just then an obviously hungover Buck walks into the room. He is wearing boxers and a sleeveless tee shirt. His long blond hair is disheveled. He rubs his eyes and blinks at Rob's death stare. Lacey is twirling her hair so hard she threatens to pull it out from the roots.

BUCK
Who's this guy making all this racket,
Lace?

LACEY
Apparently my ex.

ROB
Definitely your ex after seeing you
spent the night with him.

BUCK
No worries, pal. I slept in her bed
and Lace slept on the sofa.

ROB
Some gentleman.

BUCK
I've got a bad back. Sofas kill bad
backs. Nothing happened between me and
Lace.

Buck laughs and smiles at Lacey.

BUCK
Hell, nothing much happened between us
when we were dating. Lace is all work
and very little play.

LACEY
Rob, Buck was so drunk I didn't want
(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)
him driving home to North Jersey. So I
let him bunk here.

BUCK
I kept the sheets warm for you two if
you want some great makeup sex. I
don't believe I pissed on them but not
completely sure.

ROB
I'll take a raincheck.

LACEY
I'll make a piss check.

A WEEK LATER

76 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Lacey sits at her desk doing paperwork and constantly
checking her phone for text messages. With each check, she
frowns and fires off a text of her own.

77 INT. LONDON FASHION HOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Lacey sits her desk, sketching. She pauses several times to
make a call on her cell. Each time she hears Rob's voice
asking the caller to leave a message, punctuated by her
slapping her desk in annoyance.

78 INT. ROB JOHNSON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Rob is staring at his cellphone, looking at all the missed
calls and text messages from Lacey. He puts down the phone
and paces and paces. He picks up the phone several times,
each time ready to make a call. Each time he puts down the
phone without making a call or sending a text.

79 INT. LACEY LONDON'S CONDO - NIGHT

Lacey and Julie are sitting and sipping wine in the living
room.

JULIE
You and Rob still on the outs?

LACEY
Is New Jersey the Garden of Eden?

JULIE

Why didn't you tell Rob you were having dinner with Buck? Or better yet, invite him along.

LACEY

I was afraid Buck would start talking about our past relationship and that would freak out Rob. And when Rob did find out, he absolutely freaked out and dumped me.

JULIE

A hunk like Buck is a tough act to follow for any guy.

LACEY

I'm going to get Rob back. We're both screwed up and we need each other to unscrew ourselves.

Lacey pauses, takes a sip of wine, and twirls her hair. Her face then lights up with a megawatt smile.

LACEY

(Excitedly)

I just got a great idea!

FIVE WEEKS LATER

80 EXT. TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Rob is standing on Seventh Avenue, looking up through snowflakes in astonished disbelief at a gigantic Times Square billboard of Buck Bronson just wearing boxers and displaying his muscles and six-pack.

The billboard signage reads:

Trust In The Lacey London Line For Men.

If She Can Make New York Giants Quarterback Buck Bronson Look Good In Her Boxer Briefs, Imagine What She Can Do For You!

Or For Her Boyfriend Playwright Rob Johnson, The Real Love Of Her Life!

Rob smiles, grabs his phone and makes a call.

LACEY (V.O.)

I take it you finally saw the
(MORE)

LACEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
billboard. Everybody else is calling us about it. Sales for my new men's fashion line are skyrocketing. We're going to feature Buck in an entire ad campaign.

ROB
The billboard says I'm your boyfriend and the real love of your life. A blatant violation of our commandment.

LACEY (V.O.)
When I saw how needlessly jealous you were of Buck, I realized how much you love me. And how much I love you.

ROB
Have dinner with me tonight and watch me eat crow.

LACEY (V.O.)
We'll both have crow. But make it tomorrow night. I have some shopping to do first.

81 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Rob and Lacey are having dinner.

ROB
It's nice to see you again.

LACEY
I just came to enjoy watching you eat crow. Do you know the subliminal message in that billboard ad?

ROB
That even fat guys can look hot in your skivvies?

LACEY
That's the obvious message. The subliminal one is that work can facilitate our relationship. Like Model Citizens. Like the billboard.

ROB
Relationship?

LACEY

We always were in a relationship.
We're were deluding ourselves with
that partnership crap. Me more than
you.

ROB

Relationship. Partnership. It's all
semantics in the end.

LACEY

There's a profound difference. At our
core we really wanted to be in love
with each other.

ROB

And be loving enough to give each
other enough space to work.

LACEY

Like with Model Citizens, I turned the
tables and had work facilitate, not
screw, our relationship. The billboard
was designed to bring us back
together.

ROB

Can you forgive me for doubting you?

LACEY

Depends on how you answer this
question.

She suddenly gets on bended knee and pulls out a small box
from her purse.

LACEY

Please open it.

He stands up and bends in front of her to comply. When he
opens the box, he sees a gorgeous engagement ring.

LACEY

(Trembling and twirling her hair)
Will you marry me?

She looks up at him, her face radiant and her eyes
glistening.

ROB

I couldn't be more shocked if somebody
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
shot a ton of voltage up my ass.

LACEY
(Impatiently)
Just answer the damn question.

ROB
(Gleefully)
Yes!

He pulls her up and they kiss rapturously.

ROB
I'm resisting the temptation to ask if
the engagement ring is for you or me
and who's paying for it.

LACEY
You already know the answers. The ring
is all mine and the invoice is all
yours.

ROB
Your diamond is big enough to land a
cargo plane on.

LACEY
Trust me, I'm worth it.

They return to their table, where two large champagne glasses
await them. They toast one another and kiss.

LACEY
It dawned on me that the most
convenient way to have a relationship
was to get married.

ROB
So we can love each other while we
work.

LACEY
Exactly.

ROB
Now that we're getting married, can I
ask you a personal question?

LACEY
Of course.

ROB

Why are you always twirling your hair?

LACEY

Nervous habit.

ROB

What would you do if you ever went bald?

LACEY

I'd let my armpit hair grow long enough to twirl.

ROB

You'd look like a non-gender-identifying Hasidic Jew with side curls.

LACEY

I'm not that orthodox.

ROB

I love you, Mrs. Johnson.

LACEY

No way. My name will remain London. As important as we are, the House of London still is my primary brand.

ROB

I guess toggling back and forth between work and romance remains a work in progress.

FADE OUT:

THE END

