

A Pitch for Love

By

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING WITH LARGE BRAXTON BUGLE SIGN - DAY

MATT MEREDITH, tall, good-looking, muscularly trim with blond hair and in his 30s, walks through the front door of the Braxton Bugle newspaper building.

2 INT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

A plump SECURITY GUARD is seated behind a desk as Matt walks by him. The guard looks annoyed.

SECURITY GUARD

Matt, your column had my wife spitting
up her coffee laughing this morning.

Matt smiles. The guard shakes his head and frowns.

SECURITY GUARD

She's a real bear without her
caffeine.

MATT

Buy her a jar of honey before you go
home.

3 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

The newsroom is crowded with REPORTERS and EDITORS typing on desktops, talking on the phone and interacting with each other. The chaos would hardly seem to be a petri dish for creativity. Matt sits off to himself in a corner cubicle, oblivious to the din as he types away at his desktop. NED MARCH, Black and in his 50s, pops into the cubicle.

NED

What's this column about?

MATT

A single mother's battle with breast
cancer while caring for her autistic
young son and invalid father.

NED

A tear jerker.

MATT

She's refreshingly positive.

NED

Good columnists make managing editors
look great. A beer after work?

MATT

First Little League practice of the
season.

NED

Can your Mickey hit like his namesake?

MATT

He's not yet Mickey Mantle. But
definitely better than Mickey Mouse.

4 EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - DAY

Matt is standing on the third base line, addressing his
PLAYERS who are huddling around him on a crisp late
afternoon. Sitting in the bleachers behind them are PARENTS.

MATT

Welcome to the Sorbonne Township Cubs.
I'm Coach Matt. We're here to improve
your skills and have fun. Baseball is
a simple game.

Grinning, he grabs a bat and ball.

MATT

These are a bat and a ball. They're
supposed to connect.

The players and parents laugh.

He drops the bat and picks up a glove. Then chuckles.

MATT

These are a glove and a ball. They're
supposed to connect.

The players and parents laugh.

MATT

My son Mickey and my girlfriend's son
Timmy are on the team. But I don't
play favorites. I play everybody.

Matt puts his 18 boys ranging in age from 10 to 12 through a
series of drills -- pitching batting practice to them,
hitting them flyballs in the outfield and hitting them

infield grounders. Two players stand out at the plate and in the field, MICKEY MEREDITH and TIMMY BAXTER, both 12.

5 INT. BAXTER HOME- NIGHT

ROBYN BAXTER, a pert, pretty brunette in her 30s, is serving dinner in her kitchen to Timmy, his 9-year-old brother BILLY, Mickey and Matt. They come across as a blended family that actually blends.

MATT

Both you guys looked good at practice.

MICKEY

Will I play center when I'm not pitching?

Matt smiles as he passes a plate of ziti to Billy.

MATT

Deep, deep right field.

MICKEY

C'mon on, Dad.

MATT

Center. Just like Mickey Mantle.

MICKEY

My friends never heard of Mickey Mantle.

MATT

Tell them to check him out on YouTube.

TIMMY

Will I play short and pitch?

Matt has a devilish look. Robyn smiles, anticipating Matt's punch line.

MATT

Not at the same time.

TIMMY

Very funny.

BILLY

Timmy, you're lucky I'm too young. I play shortstop on my team and I'm better than you.

To emphasize his point, Billy waves his arm and knocks over his glass of milk, which spills on Matt's lap. Matt quickly grabs some napkins to soak up the milk while Timmy and Billy laugh. Robyn walks over to the kitchen counter, grabs some paper towels, returns to the table and helps Matt clean up.

TIMMY

That would be E-6 if you're scoring at home.

ROBYN

Billy, tell Matt you're sorry.

BILLY

Sorry.

MATT

No problem. Even good ballplayers make errors.

TIMMY

Do I call you Coach instead of Matt at practice?

MATT

Yep.

MICKEY

Me, too?

MATT

That would be silly.

MICKEY

How about I call you the old man?

MATT

Go ahead and see how many laps around the diamond you take.

6 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Robyn is rinsing dishes and Matt is loading them into the dishwasher in her kitchen.

MATT

We can't stay long. Mickey has a science project due tomorrow.

ROBYN

Lucky him. And you. Plus you need to
(MORE)

ROBYN (CONT'D)

change pants. Those smell a little sour.

MATT

If Mickey and I moved in, I could change pants right after every spill.

ROBYN

Nice try, sport.

MATT

I still need an assistant coach. You played softball in college.

ROBYN

I'm content to sit in the stands and work on my tan.

MATT

Hard to believe it's been two years since we met.

ROBYN

I fell for Timmy's baseball coach. Must have been hit in the head by a foul ball.

MATT

You caught my pitch for love.

ROBYN

Don't get too cocky, Coach.

MATT

If the boys didn't get along so well, it would put a strain on our relationship.

ROBYN

I'm glad we're taking it slow. It's better for the boys.

MATT

Our relationship is on low simmer.

ROBYN

And you want to bring it to full boil, huh?

MATT

Of course. It's spring. A young man's fancy turns to baseball and romance.

ROBYN

Our boys are too young for girls.

MATT

I was referencing me.

ROBYN

The old man?

MATT

We need to take our relationship up a notch. Let's start by doing fun things together just as a couple.

She looks dubious.

ROBYN

Easy to say. Hard to do when our lives center on the kids, our jobs and taking care of our homes.

MATT

Marriage solves two problems. One home, one babysitter.

ROBYN

(Giggling)

Marriage takes me off the market when Ryan Gosling comes to town.

MATT

But can Ryan Gosling repair a hole in a screen?

ROBYN

I had to buy two flyswatters after the last screen you tried to fix. We had so many flies I considered hiring an air traffic controller.

7 INT. COMMUNITY TELEVISION STUDIO - NIGHT

Matt is sitting on the set of his weekly community television show with Braxton mayor JIMBO CUMMINGS, towering, portly and in his 60s. Jimbo looks as uncomfortable as a guy sitting in a dentist's chair.

JIMBO

Surprised I showed up tonight after
your column harpooned me?

MATT

Mayor, you're a better man than I am.

JIMBO

I'm a good sport. Even if you did
write that a retired carpenter like me
is turning everything I touch into
splinters at City Hall.

MATT

That was low-hanging fruit.

JIMBO

I may have cut a few pieces of lumber
a tad crooked. But I know of only one
carpenter who was perfect. And they
crucified him.

MATT

I'm familiar with the story.

JIMBO

Like that carpenter, I've made a
career change to help people. And now
my enemies are trying to crucify me.

MATT

I'm not trying to crucify you.

JIMBO

The hell you aren't. You're a regular
Pontius Pilate. You claim I play petty
politics. That my squabbles with City
Council are juvenile.

MATT

When are you going to come up with a
plan to deal with the crime, drugs and
poverty running rampant in our city?

JIMBO

And give your show an exclusive? I
think not.

MATT

I think the only thing you plan all
day is lunch.

The mayor jumps out of his chair, almost trips over an untied shoelace and stomps off the set. Matt smiles and addresses his TV audience.

MATT

I could point out that the mayor apparently is even clumsier than his politics. But that would be a cheap shot, now wouldn't it?

8 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Robyn, Timmy and Billy are having dinner at their kitchen table.

BILLY

Mom, do you think Dad watches us from heaven?

ROBYN

Of course.

TIMMY

I really miss Dad. Why did he have to die in that car accident?

ROBYN

I guess God needed him more in heaven.

TIMMY

God doesn't need him as much as we do.

BILLY

I wish I could remember him better.

ROBYN

You had just turned 5 at the time. If Dad was here tonight, he'd say it's time for homework.

TIMMY

I'd start talking baseball with him and he'd forget about homework.

BILLY

Mom, why can't you be more like Dad?

9 EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - DAY

CINDY LOEPER, plump, rock-band loud and in her 30s, is sitting next to Robyn in the stands. Cindy is bouncing up and

down in her seat while Robyn has her hands clasped in prayer.

CINDY

(Screaming)

Come on, Timmy! You can hit this guy!

ROBYN

If you keep screaming in my ear, I'll get a headache.

CINDY

We're down a run in the bottom of the last inning with two outs and my Derek on second. How can you sit there in silence?

ROBYN

I'm praying.

Matt, coaching third base, calls timeout and walks to home plate and puts an arm around Timmy.

MATT

I know you've already homered today, but just try to make contact.

Matt pats Timmy on the butt for encouragement and then walks back to the third base coaching box.

CINDY

Matt's a hunk. So when are you two getting engaged?

ROBYN

Since we're both widowed, we're taking it slow.

CINDY

Why prolong matters? You two are the perfect couple.

Timmy hits a towering two-run homer to center to win the game for the Cubs. The Sorbonne FANS stand and cheer. When Timmy touches home plate, he's mobbed by his jubilant teammates and by Matt.

MATT

Awesome job, Timmy!

TIMMY

Thanks.

Mickey and Timmy exchange high-fives.

MICKEY

Nice stroke.

TIMMY

Your two-run homer in the third was a shot.

In the stands a giddy Cindy is jumping up and down. Robyn sits there, sniffing.

ROBYN

Just wish his father was here to see this.

CINDY

Bob's looking down and bursting with pride.

Billy runs up the bleachers and leaps into Robyn's arms.

BILLY

(Excitedly)

Mom, Timmy won the game!

ROBYN

Wasn't he wonderful?

10 INT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

Robyn and CHAD, thin and in his 30s, are sitting across from each other at a conference room table. Packets of information are spread out on the table.

CHAD

Another deep research dive, huh? What are we working on?

ROBYN

An image ad campaign for the Braxton Emergency Shelter capital campaign.

CHAD

Our mission?

ROBYN

Tap the purse strings of corporate and individual donors by plucking their heartstrings.

CHAD

Poignant copy by you and eye-catching design by me.

ROBYN

They want to raise \$3.5 million to renovate and expand their building.

CHAD

Our theme?

ROBYN

Compassionate resurrection.

CHAD

What?

ROBYN

The Shelter gave new life to a young Latino mother. Her husband died in an industrial accident, leaving her with three young kids, no job skills, no formal education and no insurance.

CHAD

She had to be desperate.

ROBYN

She turned to the Shelter for help. They found her a job at a food market, a place to live in subsidized housing and provided free childcare at their daycare center.

CHAD

The Shelter was her life preserver.

ROBYN

And did so with compassion. Like they have for so many other people.

CHAD

Gimme me Shelter money would be the perfect campaign tagline.

ROBYN

You stick to the designing and I'll do the writing.

11 EXT. INTERSECTION IN ROUGH PART OF BRAXTON - NIGHT

Matt is standing on the corner of an inner-city intersection with CARL BAKER, a public relations guy in his 40s for the movie Drug Town being filmed on location in Braxton. They are watching a scene with TIFFANY UNDERHILL, a tall, curvy, leggy, beautiful Black in her 20s, and BRONK CASSIDY, tall and muscular with long brown hair in his 30s. The intersection is crowded with lights, cameras and equipment along with movie PERSONNEL and EXTRAS.

CARL

Tiffany Underhill is playing a Manhattan socialite. Her brother was a heroin addict murdered by a dealer in Braxton. Bronk Cassidy is playing her boyfriend.

MATT

Some Braxton folks are worried Drug Town is going to exaggerate the extent of our city's drug problem and violence.

CARL

The film is being shot here but isn't about the city of Braxton per se. Plenty of towns like Braxton have drugs and crime.

MATT

So why film in Braxton?

CARL

The other cities were too poor to pony up the studio's site fee.

MATT

Interesting. Our city has been going steady with bankruptcy in recent years.

On the set two MALE ACTORS portraying drug dealers approach Tiffany and Bronk. One dealer pulls out a gun. Bronk quickly kicks the gun away from him and levels him with a left hook. Tiffany jams a spiked high heel into the shin of the other dealer, doubling him over in pain. The director yells cut.

BRONK

Want to get a bite to eat, Tiffany?

TIFFANY

Can't. Having dinner with a local newspaper columnist.

BRONK

Carl set that up?

TIFFANY

Yep.

BRONK

Call me when you're done.

TIFFANY

The interview shouldn't last long.

BRONK

Who you kidding? You love to talk about yourself.

Tiffany walks over to Carl and Matt. As soon as she takes a glance at Matt, she freezes for a moment.

CARL

Tiffany, you OK? You look like you've just seen a ghost.

TIFFANY

Uh, I just zoned out for a moment.

Matt extends his hand to her. She shakes his hand while staring intently at his face.

TIFFANY

So where are you taking me to dinner, handsome?

MATT

The Nut Bar.

TIFFANY

Cool. I've done research on Braxton. The Nut Bar is an iconic place.

MATT

There's a lot of nuts in there even though the downtown is a shell of its former self.

TIFFANY

Clever. You must be a writer.

Tiffany turns to Carl.

TIFFANY

Carl, you've got the night off. I'll be dining alone with him. Speaking of him, what's your name?

She turns to Matt.

MATT

Matt Meredith.

TIFFANY

We'll take your car, Matt Meredith.

She flashes him a mischievous glance.

TIFFANY

When we're done, you can give me a lift to the Homewood Suites. You up for that?

Matt gives her a wink and a chuckle.

MATT

If you promise to keep your hands off me while I'm driving.

TIFFANY

You're asking an awful lot of a girl.

12 INT. NUT BAR - NIGHT

Matt and Tiffany walk into the Nut Bar, which features a long bar and upscale dining with a homey atmosphere that encourages patrons to toss their peanut shells on the floor. Jimbo is seated at the bar drinking beer along with a few of his City Hall FLUNKIES. Upon seeing Matt and Tiffany, Jimbo stands up and bellows for all to hear.

JIMBO

Well, if isn't that hitman columnist.

MATT

Tiffany Underhill, meet the mayor of Braxton. Jimbo Cummings.

TIFFANY

Pleased to meet you.

JIMBO

Charmed.

MATT

Perhaps you shouldn't be. Tiffany is starring in Drug Town, which puts a spotlight on the drug problem in our city.

JIMBO

I'm sure the movie also will point out some of our fair city's good points.

TIFFANY

Perhaps we can find a cameo for the city's handsome mayor.

JIMBO

That would be dandy. And I won't hold it against you that you're hanging out with Meredith.

MATT

I'm interviewing her about her role in the film and what it means for Braxton.

JIMBO

It means economic revitalization for our fair city once investors see the film.

MATT

Don't trip over any peanut shells, Jimbo, while you're looking up searching for a rainbow and a pot of gold.

A HOSTESS approaches Matt and Tiffany and escorts them to a table.

TIFFANY

This place is delightful. Spend much time here?

MATT

It's across the street from my newspaper office.

TIFFANY

Enough said.

She shells a peanut and playfully tosses the shell at him.

TIFFANY

I know some people think Drug Town will give Braxton a black eye. But the script is empathetic to the drug and violence problems that confront cities like Braxton.

MATT

How so?

TIFFANY

My character's high profile attracts money from the private sector that better equips local law enforcement to crack down on drugs and crime.

MATT

If we could only turn fiction into fact. Our mayor is a buffoon who's in way over his head. That's saying something because he's six-foot five.

TIFFANY

Tell me about yourself.

MATT

You're the column subject, not me. What about your personal life?

TIFFANY

I pour all my energy into my career, leaving little room for a personal life.

MATT

That takes dedication.

TIFFANY

You're only as good as your next role.

MATT

Get lonely at times?

She laughs and tosses another shell at him.

TIFFANY

From time to time I squeeze in a guy. Interested?

MATT
I'm dating someone.

TIFFANY
Is it serious?

MATT
Trending that way.

She grabs both his hands, leans closer to him from across the small table and smiles.

TIFFANY
What can I do to change that?

MATT
Why would I want to change that?

TIFFANY
Because of me, silly.

MATT
I'd be a pretty superficial guy to dump my girlfriend for some woman I just met.

TIFFANY
I'm not just some woman. And you're not just some guy.

MATT
You're in films. And I'm in print.

TIFFANY
Reservations about dating a Black woman?

MATT
It's not your color. It's my existing relationship.

TIFFANY
Discussion to be continued later.

Matt settles the bill. As they rise to leave, a tipsy Bronk stumbles into their table.

BRONK
Let's all have a drink together.

TIFFANY

We're leaving. Do you want us to drop you off at the Homewood Suites? You're in no shape to drive.

BRONK

Ditch the newspaper schmuck and you and I can go back to the hotel.

Bronk laughs heartily as he staggers to keep his balance.

BRONK

You're hooking up with this small-town reporter? All my leading ladies hook up with me. I'm fucking Bronk Cassidy.

TIFFANY

That's precisely why I'll never sleep with you.

As if on cue, Bronk leans forward and projectile vomits all over her. Tiffany recoils in horror.

TIFFANY

Jesus Christ! Uber your sorry ass back to the hotel. Matt, please drive me to my suite so I can shower for about 20 hours.

Matt subtly shoves Bronk into their table, spilling drinks and peanuts.

MATT

Checkmate.

13 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Robyn, Matt, Timmy, Billy and Mickey are eating dinner in a crowded restaurant. WAITRESSES and WAITERS are busy serving PATRONS.

ROBYN

This is our last free Saturday for weeks.

MATT

Maybe I shouldn't have volunteered to also coach the Sorbonne Township 12-under travel team.

ROBYN

With Mickey and Timmy both on the team, we'd be going to all the tournaments anyway.

Tiffany and Carl, the film's PR guy, walk by and stop at their table.

TIFFANY

Matt, your relationship is serious. You two already have three kids.

Tiffany laughs and reaches out a hand to Robyn. They shake hands.

TIFFANY

I'm Tiffany. You must be the girlfriend.

ROBYN

Robyn. And you must be who?

CARL

This is Tiffany Underhill. She's starring in Drug Town.

ROBYN

My apologies for not knowing you.

TIFFANY

You will when you read Matt's column about me tomorrow.

ROBYN

I'll have to get up extra early to read it.

CARL

I trust you did a great job, Matt.

MATT

I let you two be the judges.

CARL

Matt, did Bronk splash you the other night?

MATT

Fortunately not.

ROBYN

Bronk?

TIFFANY

My co-star. A prince of a guy.

MATT

Handles his liquor well.

ROBYN

Am I missing something?

TIFFANY

He vomited all over me after Matt was done with his interview.

MICKEY

Gross!

TIMMY

Puked all over by a movie star.

BILLY

Did he have diarrhea, too?

ROBYN

Matt, your interview questions must have been nauseating.

TIFFANY

We'll leave you folks to your dinner.
Nice meeting you, Roberta.

ROBYN

Robyn. With a y.

14 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Matt is sitting at his desk, typing on his desktop. His landline phone rings. He answers it.

MATT

Hello? OK. Send her up.

He hangs up the phone and smiles. He resumes typing for a few moments when Tiffany saunters into the editorial department, turning heads of other STAFFERS as she carries a bouquet of roses in one hand and a life-size cardboard cutout of herself under the other arm. Work in the newsroom halts, with Tiffany creating a gaper delay as she struts across the room to Matt's desk. She hands the roses to Matt and props up the

cardboard cutout next to his desk.

MATT

Thanks. But why the roses and cutout of yourself?

TIFFANY

I wanted to thank you for the wonderful column. The cutout is so you don't forget me.

Matt looks embarrassed.

TIFFANY

The best story anybody has ever written about me.

MATT

Appreciate that.

TIFFANY

Free for lunch?

MATT

As a matter of fact, I am.

TIFFANY

Good. I made reservations for two at the Nut Bar. My treat.

MATT

Totally unnecessary.

TIFFANY

Oh, I insist.

Smiling, he grabs his suitcoat from a nearby clothes tree and puts the coat on. Ned walks over to them.

MATT

Tiffany, this is Ned March, my managing editor.

TIFFANY

A Black boss. This small town is more progressive than I thought.

NED

We even have street lights and stop lights.

TIFFANY

Impressive. What next?

NED

I'm not only Black, but gay. Two traits that weren't all the popular years ago in this town.

MATT

Tiffany is taking me to lunch to thank me for the column.

NED

That doesn't happen everyday. Enjoy your lunch.

Matt and Tiffany are walking through the newsroom when she suddenly starts holding his hand as staffers stop, stare and smile.

15 INT. NUT BAR - DAY

Matt and Tiffany are sitting at a small corner table in the back of the restaurant.

MATT

Usually they only seat you back here if they're jammed.

TIFFANY

I requested it for privacy.

MATT

You mean intimacy?

TIFFANY

Relax. I'm not going to show you my tits.

MATT

Shy, huh?

TIFFANY

You're a marvelous writer. Ever think of writing a screenplay?

MATT

I'm a columnist. I write about real life and real people. I don't do fiction.

TIFFANY

You could find it to be very creative and fulfilling.

MATT

Why the interest in my career path?

TIFFANY

I want you to be comfortable living in L.A. My agent also represents screenwriters. I'll give you a referral.

MATT

My life is here. I love my job. And you've met Robyn and our kids. I love them.

TIFFANY

All nice. But there are larger horizons for some people.

MATT

And being in a relationship with you would be a bigger horizon?

TIFFANY

Of course. I think you're fabulous and I could open doors for you.

MATT

I don't even know you.

TIFFANY

Afraid of the unknown?

MATT

I know who I am and what I want. I'm not going to dump Robyn and my life for a film actress who could dump me after a month.

TIFFANY

You're stereotyping me. I'm as loyal as a cocker spaniel.

Matt gives her an uncomfortable look.

TIFFANY

Aren't you the least bit intrigued why a beautiful actress is throwing

(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
herself at you?

MATT
You're toying with me. Or nuts.

TIFFANY
This place is full of nuts. I'm not
one of them.

MATT
So why the sudden infatuation with me?

TIFFANY
I believe in love at first sight.

ROB
It has to be more than that.

TIFFANY
Joe Murphy was the love of my life.
Then he died in a plane crash. You're
an exact duplicate of him. Face and
body type. Your mannerisms. You're Joe
Murphy by a different name.

MATT
Sorry for your loss. But they say
everybody has an identical twin
somewhere.

TIFFANY
Your resemblance is uncanny, almost
eerie.

MATT
You really don't want me. You somehow
want to reconnect with Joe. You're
pursuing a ghost.

TIFFANY
A ghost of my own making.

MATT
Huh?

TIFFANY
Joe wasn't supposed to take that
flight. But after hearing me whine
that I missed him terribly, he booked
an earlier flight home to surprise me.

MATT

You can't blame yourself.

TIFFANY

I absolutely blame myself. And now God has given me a second chance with Joe. With you.

MATT

I'm not Joe.

TIFFANY

He was a columnist for the San Diego Union-Tribune. You aren't Joe. But you're closest thing to him I'll ever find in this world.

MATT

I prefer being an original, not a clone.

TIFFANY

I believe in destiny. And I believe we're destined to be together.

She shells a peanut and tosses it at him. He catches it in his mouth, chews it and smiles. He in turn shells a peanut and tosses it at her. She tries to catch in her mouth, but it bounces off her lips and down into her cleavage. They both laugh.

TIFFANY

Well now that you've played with my boobs, you've just got to marry me.

Matt tosses an unshelled peanut directly at her cleavage and scores a bullseye. They laugh.

TIFFANY

Go three for three and I'll buy you a shot.

Matt tosses another unshelled peanut and once again it lands in her cleavage. Tiffany and he are hysterical.

TIFFANY

(Shouting)

Waitress!

A young WAITRESS walks up to their table.

WAITRESS
What do you need?

Tiffany is beaming mischievously.

TIFFANY
Two blow job shots!

A look of discomfort creases the waitress' face.

WAITRESS
Excuse me?

TIFFANY
Tell the bartender to make two shots
of amaretto and Baileys Irish cream.

The waitress departs. Matt still is laughing.

MATT
I haven't had this much fun in
sometime.

TIFFANY
You don't do blow job shots with Robyn
with a y?

MATT
What do you think?

16 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Matt and Robyn are sitting sequestered with tension at her
kitchen table. Timmy runs into the room.

TIMMY
Mom, can Mickey stay to play one more
MLB video game?

ROBYN
Matt?

MATT
Just one more.

ROBYN
It's OK by me if you go home now.
You've been a real grouch tonight.

MATT
Sorry. I've been a little irritable.

ROBYN
A little? What's wrong?

MATT
Bad day at work.

ROBYN
Care to elaborate?

MATT
Nope.

ROBYN
(Yelling)

Timmy, don't start another game. Matt and Mickey are leaving now.

17 INT. BRAXTON EMERGENCY SHELTER - DAY

Robyn, Chad, Jimbo and MILLIE PAXTON, petite, refined and distinguished-looking with silver hair and in her 60s, are standing around a large conference table filled with image ads.

MILLIE
These image ads are perfect for the capital campaign.

ROBYN
Chad did a marvelous job designing them.

MILLIE
You have a lovely way with words, Robyn.

ROBYN
You're very kind.

JIMBO
Millie has dedicated her life to many charitable campaigns and causes.

MILLIE
My late husband was very philanthropic and he figured I was better at chairing capital campaigns than cooking.

Jimbo puts a hand on Robyn's shoulder. She gives him an uncomfortable look.

JIMBO

So why isn't a pretty lady like you married?

ROBYN

I'm a widow busy raising two boys and working. But I'm seeing a guy.

MILLIE

Serious?

ROBYN

We're taking it slow.

MILLIE

Take your time. I didn't after my husband passed and look what I wound up with.

She shoots a bemused look at Jimbo and laughs.

MILLIE

So who's the lucky guy you're seeing?

ROBYN

Matt Meredith, the columnist.

JIMBO

Watch out. That guy has a poison pen.

ROBYN

He's a big fan of yours.

JIMBO

Buy him a hatchet for his next birthday. That's what he is. A hatchet man.

18 EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Robyn is walking to her car when her cell rings. She answers.

MATT (V.O.)

Free for lunch?

ROBYN

With Groucho Meredith?

MATT (V.O.)

Just sweet old Matt.

ROBYN

The guy who had lunch with Tiffany Underhill on his bad day at work?

MATT (V.O.)

How did you find out?

ROBYN

Bumped into Ned at Dunkin' this morning. Why didn't you tell me?

MATT (V.O.)

The lunch was a bit awkward.

ROBYN

How so?

MATT (V.O.)

It was all in good fun and perfectly innocent.

ROBYN

(Sharply)

Tell me what happened?

MATT (V.O.)

This sounds worse out of context.

ROBYN

Spill it.

MATT (V.O.)

I wound up tossing peanuts into her cleavage and doing blow job shots with her.

ROBYN

(Angry)

Are you fucking serious? And what the fuck is a blow job shot? Did she give you a blow job?

MATT (V.O.)

Of course not. We were just goofing around.

ROBYN

How the hell can I have lunch with you now?

MATT (V.O.)
I'll make it up to you. Let's have
lunch at the Nut Bar and I'll toss
peanut shells into your cleavage.

ROBYN
Charming. And after lunch, I'll borrow
the chef's meat cleaver and carve some
cleavage into your chest.

MATT (V.O.)
I'll take that as no.

19 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Matt, looking like he just brushed his ass against some
prickly cactus, walks into Ned's office.

MATT
You told Robyn I had lunch with
Tiffany Underhill.

NED
What's the big deal? You lunch with a
lot of people.

MATT
Not with a gorgeous movie star I wind
up tossing peanuts into her cleavage
and doing blow job shots with.

NED
In your wet dreams.

MATT
I wish.

NED
How the hell did all that happen?

MATT
It's a long story.

NED
What did you tell Robyn?

MATT
I told her the truth.

NED
Ouch.

Tiffany suddenly pops into Ned's office. She is holding two small gift-wrapped boxes.

NED

How did you get past the security guard?

TIFFANY

I winked and smiled at him.

MATT

What's up?

TIFFANY

(Giggling)

Hopefully you. Oh, please forgive me. Sometimes I have no self control.

She hands each of them a box.

TIFFANY

To further express my appreciation for Matt's wonderful column, here is a box of chocolates for him and his editor.

NED

Thanks. But I'm diabetic.

She snatches the box from his hand and hands it to Matt.

TIFFANY

Now Matt has two boxes. Just don't get pudgy on me, darling.

MATT

Tossing peanuts into your cleavage doesn't make us a couple.

TIFFANY

There was a time when that was enough grounds for a shotgun wedding.

She smiles and mimics shooting a shotgun at him.

TIFFANY

Did you tell Robyn with a y about it?

MATT

Yes.

TIFFANY
How did she take it?

MATT
Not well.

TIFFANY
So you're free Saturday. How about
spending the day with me?

MATT
I'm coaching my son's baseball team in
a tournament in Fort Dix, New Jersey.

TIFFANY
Robyn's boys on the team, too?

MATT
The older one is.

TIFFANY
So Robyn with a y will be there, too.

MATT
I imagine. We're not talking at the
moment.

TIFFANY
Now don't go making up with her,
honey.

She looks at her expensive watch.

TIFFANY
Oh, my. I'm past due on the set. Oh,
well. That's what movie stars do.

She then sexily struts out of Ned's office and creates
another stir as she saunters through the newsroom.

NED
It must suck to be you.

20 EXT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

Robyn is standing outside her office when Cindy drives up and
stops. Robyn hops in the front seat and the car drives away.

ROBYN
Where are we going to lunch?

CINDY
That new seafood place at Braxton
Lake.

ROBYN
That's news to me.

CINDY
You don't get out enough.

21 EXT. BRAXTON LAKE DOCK - DAY

Cindy's parks the car near the lakeside dock where rowboats
and powerboats are moored.

ROBYN
Where's the restaurant?

CINDY
(Laughing)
There isn't one. The only seafood here
is in the lake.

Just then a grinning Matt walks up to the passenger door and
opens it. A shocked Robyn looks at him and frowns.

ROBYN
Cindy, I'm going to kill you.

MATT
That'll have to wait. You and I are
going for a romantic boat ride first.

ROBYN
The hell we are.

MATT
I beg to differ.

22 EXT. BRAXTON LAKE - DAY

Matt is driving a small powerboat with Robyn sitting beside
him. He is grinning like a Cheshire cat while she has the
nauseous look of someone who has just swallowed a Cheshire
cat.

ROBYN
Trying to make up for your
indiscretion with the hot actress?

MATT

We were just being playful, tossing peanuts at each other like everybody does at the Nut Bar.

ROBYN

I imagine it's open season on targeting cleavages there.

MATT

One peanut bounced into her cleavage and one thing led to another.

ROBYN

We never did blow job shots at the Nut Bar. So why are we here?

MATT

You won't have lunch with me. On a boat ride I know you won't jump overboard and swim to shore.

ROBYN

Had I known, I would've put on sunblock.

Just then clouds trespass across the sun, a loud peal of thunder bellows and a lightning bolt splits the suddenly ominous sky. A pouring rain quickly drenches them as they masquerade as drowning rats.

MATT

No worries about sunblock.

ROBYN

Matt Meredith, now you're really in the doghouse.

MATT

Your breasts look succulent in that wet blouse.

ROBYN

Going to toss peanut shells at them, then expect me to give you a blow job?

MATT

That would be delightful.

ROBYN

Don't hold your breath. Blue isn't
(MORE)

ROBYN (CONT'D)
your color.

23 INT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

Robyn is sitting at her desk, sneezing and blowing her red nose. Fifty long-stemmed red roses are perched in a large vase on her desk. Her eyes are watering enough to give the roses a stout drink. Chad walks up to her desk.

CHAD
I take it that Matt's in the doghouse.

ROBYN
I'm going to chain him to that
doghouse. These damn roses are driving
my allergies crazy.

She sneezes loudly.

24 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

Matt and Mickey are walking toward his SUV when they see a panel truck with signage that reads HELLO HOLLYWOOD pulling into the lot. Matt's face is contorted with a hostile look as Tiffany, a skinny VIDEO GUY, a fat SOUND GUY with a ponytail and a FEMALE REPORTER who is all teeth, hair and breasts exit the truck. They approach Matt and Mickey.

MATT
Tiffany, what the hell are you doing
here?

Tiffany's face is plastered with an incandescent smile.

TIFFANY
(Gleefully)
Surprise, surprise.

MATT
(Sarcastically)
I get it. Hollywood actress suddenly
becomes Little League fan while
pursuing one of the coaches.

Her mood turns less ebullient.

TIFFANY
If you're going to be part of my life,
there's some things you're going to
have to accept as part of my life.

MATT

I'm not part of your life. This tournament is about the kids, not the movie or you.

TIFFANY

I'll give them a quick interview during the game. Plug your team and the movie. That's it.

HOLLY

Matt, I'm Holly Huckabee. This will be great. The lead actress in Drug Town becomes so enamored with the city of Braxton that she follows its Little League travel team to Fort Dix.

MATT

I don't want the cameras to be a distraction at the game.

HOLLY

I promise we won't be intrusive.

MATT

Yes, you will.

TIFFANY

Are you going to get a restraining order, Matt?

HOLLY

We'll just get a few soundbites from Tiffany as she cheers on your team and some quick shots of you coaching and the kids playing.

MICKEY

Dad, it'll be super cool if the guys and I are on TV.

TIFFANY

Matt, your son and I are gonna be great pals as our relationship blossoms.

HOLLY

See you at the game.

TIFFANY

By the way, Joe loved baseball. He
(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
pitched three seasons for the Padres.

MATT
A relief pitcher, right?

TIFFANY
A relief pitcher with a wicked slider.

MICKEY
Dad is helping me develop a slider.
That was his out pitch, too, when he
pitched in the Phillies' minor league
system.

TIFFANY
Of course it was.

Tiffany and the TV crew pile into the van and take off.

MICKEY
Dad, are you replacing Robyn with her?

MATT
God no.

MICKEY
So why is Robyn mad at us?

MATT
She's not mad at you. Just me.

MICKEY
Tell her you're sorry for whatever you
did. I miss hanging out with Timmy and
Billy.

25 EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - DAY

Timmy is at the plate in the first inning with Mickey on second base for Sorbonne Township. Timmy takes a pitch for a ball. Then fouls off a pitch. Matt, coaching third base, claps his hands and offers him encouragement. Timmy smashes the next pitch to left field for a two-room homer, giving Sorbonne a 2-0 lead over Egg Harbor.

The FANS on the Sorbonne side of the field behind the third base line erupt in cheers as Timmy rounds the bases and returns Matt's high five before doing fist bumps with Mickey and Derek, the on-deck hitter

When Sorbonne takes the field in the bottom of the inning, Timmy is on the mound. He strikes out all three hitters. In the stands Robyn and Cindy happily hug.

CINDY

Your boy is having a great game.

ROBYN

So happy for him.

Mickey leads off for Sorbonne in the third inning and hits a towering home run to center field for a 3-0 lead. As he rounds third base Matt gives him an enthusiastic high five. Mickey then does a fist bump with Timmy, the on-deck hitter.

The Hello Hollywood van drives right past the parking lot and parks behind the third base side bleachers. All the fans and most of the PLAYERS turn and stare. Holly, the sound guy and the video guy pop out of the van, followed by Tiffany.

The game resumes, with the fans and the players paying almost as much attention to the TV crew as it zeroes in on Tiffany cheering in the bleachers and Matt coaching at third base. Robyn turns to Cindy.

ROBYN

Tiffany Underhill, the star of Drug Town filming in Braxton, is what's going on with me and Matt.

CINDY

Really? I must hear more.

ROBYN

Look at that tramp playing the role of instant Little League fan. The way she's cheering, you'd think she had a son on the team.

CINDY

Nobody with a kid has a figure like that.

ROBYN

She's not that hot.

The scoreboard shows Sorbonne still leading 3-0 in the bottom of the fifth inning. Mickey doubles to left. Timmy strides to the plate. The TV video guy and sound guy walk closer to the third base line to get footage of him batting and Matt coaching third.

Just as Timmy is about to swing, the corner of his eye catches sight of the camera and sound equipment. Momentarily distracted, he fails to pick up the ball -- a fastball that is boring in on him. He swings awkwardly at the pitch, his body turned more to his left than normal because he has yanked his shoulder in the direction of the TV crew.

The high and inside pitch misses Timmy's protective earflap on his batting helmet because his face is turned square to the mound. The fastball crashes into Timmy's nose and mouth. Blood gushes from his broken nose and split lips as he lays at home plate.

Matt races toward Timmy, who is being attended to by the home plate umpire. A hysterical Robyn races onto the field from the bleachers.

Matt and Robyn join the umpire in kneeling near Timmy as COACHES and PLAYERS from both teams huddle around them. Lying on his back, Timmy looks disoriented. His face is blooded and his broken nose is swelling. He looks at his mother and smiles.

TIMMY

I'm OK, Mom. But I have a bad headache.

A sobbing Robyn leans over him and kisses him gently on the forehead.

ROBYN

Baby, you're going to be just fine.

Matt, with tears in his eyes, grabs Timmy's hand. Timmy tries to sit up but Matt stops him.

MATT

Just lie down until the ambulance people check you out.

TIMMY

I lost track of the ball. The television camera distracted me.

Billy and Mickey are standing next to Robyn.

MICKEY

You'll be just fine, Timmy.

BILLY

At least you didn't lose any teeth.

ROBYN

(Whispering in Matt's ear)
Had to invite your fucking showoff
girlfriend to the game, huh?

MATT

I didn't invite her. And she's not my
girlfriend.

ROBYN

Timmy, stay with Matt. I'll be right
back.

Matt watches Robyn sprint behind the backstop where Tiffany, a look of horror on her face, is standing with Holly, the sound guy and the video guy. Robyn runs right up to Tiffany and slaps her hard in the face.

ROBYN

(Rattlesnake angry)
This is all your fault, you skanky
bitch!

Tiffany recoils backward a step in silence while Robyn runs back to Timmy. A MEDIC from the ambulance crew approaches Timmy and crouches down to check him out. Matt leans over and pats Timmy gently on the shoulder. The medic and Matt help Timmy onto a stretcher and hoist him into the ambulance. Robyn climbs into the ambulance. Matt walks behind the backstop fence to confront Tiffany and the TV crew.

MATT

Are you all happy now?

TIFFANY

I'm so, so sorry. How's Robyn's boy?

MATT

His lips are split wide open. And he
probably has a concussion.

TIFFANY

I deserved to be slapped by Robyn. I
feel just awful.

MATT

Just imagine how awful Timmy feels.

TIFFANY

I just thought it would be good
publicity for the movie and me.

MATT

And me! Just because you're a movie star doesn't mean it's always about you!

With that, he turns and angrily stomps away. She slumps, shriveling into dejection.

26 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Timmy is sitting up in his hospital bed. At his bedside are Robyn, Matt and a DOCTOR.

DOCTOR

You're going to be fine, son. Once the swelling in your face goes down and your lacerated lips heal, you'll be ready for the movies.

Robyn shakes her head at the movies reference and gives Matt a nasty look.

TIMMY

Can I play ball tomorrow? We're in the Fort Dix Invitational.

DOCTOR

Tomorrow's a little soon. You have a mild concussion. Next weekend is more like it.

Timmy smacks his palm on his bed.

TIMMY

That sucks.

The doctor smiles at Timmy.

DOCTOR

Take care of your parents. You know they're worry warts.

TIMMY

Matt is my coach, not my dad. But I wish he was.

The doctor turns to Matt.

DOCTOR

Coach, my apologies.

MATT

No need.

The doctor nods his head and exits the room.

ROBYN

Matt, can we talk for a moment in the hall?

MATT

Sure.

Robyn and Matt walk out into the hallway.

ROBYN

I don't know whether to castrate you or kiss you.

MATT

I'd prefer the second option.

ROBYN

I despise you for bringing that stuck-up actress into our lives. But your tenderness and care exceeded that of a coach today. You were wonderful with Timmy.

MATT

I didn't do anything more than any coach would.

ROBYN

You're more than a coach to Timmy. He thinks of you almost as a father.

MATT

I'm glad Mickey and I have gotten to know him and Billy. And you.

ROBYN

Why were you acting inappropriately with that tramp at the Nut Bar?

MATT

When the first peanut fell into her cleavage, we just started have fun with it.

ROBYN

You wouldn't dare toss peanut shelves
(MORE)

ROBYN (CONT'D)
in my cleavage.

MATT
Of course not. Tiffany is more free spirited.

ROBYN
I'm a mother. I act the part. You're a man. And men are weak around beautiful women.

MATT
You're beautiful.

ROBYN
Don't bullshit me.

MATT
Look in the mirror.

She smiles.

MATT
Tiffany told me I could be her late boyfriend's identical twin. He was a San Diego columnist who died in a plane crash.

ROBYN
Really?

MATT
She believes God has given her a second chance with him through me.

ROBYN
That's bizarre. Watch out. She's trouble.

MATT
I've no intention of pinch hitting for a ghost. My life is you and our kids.

ROBYN
What am I going to do with you?

MATT
Forgive me.

ROBYN

Did she throw peanuts at you?

MATT

She tossed a couple into my mouth.

ROBYN

I'm going to wash your mouth out with soap before you stick that tongue of yours in my mouth again.

MATT

Just not lye soap.

ROBYN

Hey, thanks for the suggestion.

27 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Matt is sitting behind his desk and Ned is sitting on it.

NED

A source I won't name tipped me off that the mayor may be skimming funds from the Emergency Shelter capital campaign.

MATT

If true, it doesn't surprise me. Jimbo isn't heading for canonization.

NED

Apparently Millie is totally unaware of what Jimbo is up to. She evidently gives him access to everything.

MATT

But why? I hear Millie gives him all the money he needs to supplement his lousy salary as mayor.

Matt pauses, drumming his fingers on his desk.

MATT

And capital campaigns have tight fiscal controls.

NED

My source says Jimbo has a girlfriend on the side and treats her lavishly.

MATT

What kind of money are we talking about?

NED

Upwards of 200 grand.

MATT

Damn. What about the Shelter's board of directors?

NED

Millie has an impeccable reputation. She's run so many successful capital campaigns that apparently the Shelter board gives her free rein.

MATT

And Jimbo takes advantage of it.

NED

Bingo.

NED

I want you taking the lead on our investigation of this.

MATT

Who's the source?

NED

Somebody who swore me to complete secrecy that I wouldn't divulge the name.

MATT

Even to me?

NED

Even to my husband Frank.

28 INT. BRAXTON EMERGENCY SHELTER - DAY

Matt and JOSE GONZALEZ, a trim Latino in his 50s, are sitting in Gonzalez's office.

JOSE

I guess there's no way you can ignore this. Bad publicity will ruin our capital campaign.

MATT

You know I can't do that.

JOSE

Finding out that our capital campaign fund is short 250,000 dollars is a punch to the gut.

MATT

I can imagine.

JOSE

I was hoping it was an accounting error. But it's not.

MATT

It's my understanding that only two people can make withdrawals from the account -- the executive director and the capital campaign chair.

JOSE

As ED, I swear I never touched the funds. But I can't believe Millie would either. She certainly doesn't need the money.

Jose exhales loudly and shakes his head.

JOSE

I'm going to talk to Millie.

MATT

Encourage her to talk to me. If she has no comment, our readers will assume she's guilty.

29 EXT. MATT'S BACKYARD - EVENING

Matt, Robyn, Mickey, Timmy and Billy are sitting on lounge chairs on Matt's patio.

ROBYN

It was nice of you to invite us over for a cookout.

MATT

I wanted to see how Timmy was doing. It's great his lips have healed and his swelling has subsided.

TIMMY

The doctor said I can start practicing again next week.

MATT

I'm sure you can't wait.

ROBYN

I can wait.

She turns directly to face Timmy.

ROBYN

I want you to be careful when you're batting. You don't want to get hit by another pitch.

TIMMY

You can't think like that, Mom. Otherwise I'll get gun-shy and step in the bucket.

MATT

He's right. He just needs to go up to the plate just like before and hit his pitch.

BILLY

I got hit by a pitch last week and then I doubled.

TIMMY

In coach-pitch, they serve you up lollipops. The pitch barely brushed your sleeve.

BILLY

Did not.

TIMMY

Did so.

ROBYN

Boys!

MICKEY

I just hope I never take a fastball to the nuts.

Timmy and Billy join Mickey in laughter.

MATT

Why don't you guys play some
wiffleball while we talk?

The boys run out to the yard and and take turns hitting,
pitching and playing the field. While they play, Matt and
Robyn sit on the patio, chatting while sipping iced tea.

ROBYN

I'm excited about our marketing
campaign for the Emergency Shelter's
capital campaign.

Matt's smile quickly turns upside down and then just as
quickly turns right side up.

MATT

The Shelter does great work. You have
a winning cause.

ROBYN

The heavy hitters from the corporate
sector will be generous. And I believe
our marketing efforts will mine the
individual-giving sector fairly well.

MATT

About the Shelter...

Before he can continue, Robyn suddenly interrupts him.

ROBYN

You remind me a lot of my late husband
Bob. The wonderful way you interact
with the boys, your sense of humor and
your sensitivity.

MATT

Appreciate that. Your kindness,
sweetness and affection remind me of
Lois.

ROBYN

Her bout with pancreatic cancer must
have been awful.

MATT

Fortunately pancreatic cancer takes
you relatively quickly. Mickey and I
hated seeing her suffer like that.

ROBYN

I can't imagine experiencing that.

MATT

Life is so unfair when it cuts down people before their time.

ROBYN

Our shared history as widowers gives us a special bond.

MATT

It ties our relationship together.

ROBYN

I bought a bar of lye soap. As soon as you suck on it for five minutes, you can kiss me again.

MATT

After five minutes, my mouth will taste like an incinerator. You like kissing ashes?

ROBYN

Let me think about that.

MATT

While you're doing that, let me tell you something about the Shelter campaign I found out today.

ROBYN

What?

MATT

Ned got a tip that the mayor, taking advantage of Millie Paxton, may have skimmed a quarter-million dollars in funds from the campaign.

ROBYN

What? Fuck!

MATT

Ned assigned me to lead our investigation. I met with Jose Gonzalez today. He confirmed that \$250,000 is missing.

ROBYN

Think he had anything to do with it?

MATT

I'd be shocked if he did. He's a straight arrow who's devoted his adult life to the Shelter.

ROBYN

Who else had access to the funds?

MATT

Apparently just Millie. I'll be talking to her as well.

ROBYN

My marketing campaign will go up in flames. Nobody will donate a dime to the capital campaign now.

MATT

It's still a worthy cause.

ROBYN

We're on opposite sides of this, stuck in the crosshairs.

MATT

It's business. Not personal.

ROBYN

To me it is. You and I won't be doing any kissing for now.

MATT

I know we've been taking it slow, putting our relationship on low simmer. But don't let the pilot light go out.

ROBYN

I'm sure Tiffany Underhill would be happy to ignite your pilot, lover boy.

MATT

Don't be that way.

ROBYN

I need to digest the Shelter mess. And how this affects us.

MATT

It will hurt us only if we let it.

ROBYN

You write the bad news and I write the good news.

MATT

We can erect a trestle across the chasm and kiss midway.

ROBYN

Not a good time to swap spit.

MATT

Don't quit your day job to become a romance novelist.

30 EXT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING - NIGHT

Matt is walking out of the Braxton Bugle building toward his parking garage when Tiffany suddenly approaches him.

TIFFANY

Boo!

MATT

Halloween is months away.

TIFFANY

Did I startle you?

MATT

Did you fly here on your broom?

TIFFANY

You must think me a witch for coming on so strong to you.

MATT

At least you don't have a large mole on the tip of your nose.

TIFFANY

God forbid.

MATT

How did you know I was working late tonight?

TIFFANY

I can see into the future after drinking my witch's brew of eye of newt, toe of frog, wool of bat and vodka.

MATT

OK, Grand High Witch, what do you want?

TIFFANY

To apologize. The TV crew was a major distraction at the game. I should've turned down their request.

MATT

I appreciate your apology.

TIFFANY

How's Timmy?

MATT

He's fine now.

TIFFANY

Glad he's OK. And how are you and Robyn?

MATT

We're at least talking.

TIFFANY

That's it?

MATT

My personal life is personal.

TIFFANY

You're the first man I ever chased. Men always chase me.

MATT

Which explains why you're so clumsy at it.

TIFFANY

Give a girl who just wants to love you a second chance.

MATT

I'm with Robyn.

TIFFANY
Are you? Really?

MATT
What do you mean?

TIFFANY
There's a reason why you two are
taking it slow.

MATT
Both widowed with kids.

TIFFANY
Your kids blend well. How long are you
guys widowed?

MATT
Four years for her. Three for me.

TIFFANY
My dad died when I was 11. I saw how
heart-wrenching it was for my mother.

MATT
Your point being?

TIFFANY
Perhaps there is another reason why
you and Robyn are taking it slow.

MATT
Are you a marriage counselor?

TIFFANY
My aunt is.

MATT
Go figure.

TIFFANY
I'm sorry for overplaying my hand with
you. I've laid out my cards. Let me
know if you want to shuffle the deck.

MATT
I'm not much of a card player.

TIFFANY
Robyn may be dragging her feet with
you because God's plan for you is to
(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
be with me.

MATT
I believe God wants me to be Matt, not
Joe's understudy.

TIFFANY
You'll never be an understudy. Like
Joe, you're a leading man.

MATT
Body doubles never are leading men.

31 INT. MILLIE PAXTON'S MANSION - DAY

Matt and Millie are sitting in large chairs in her expansive
and expensively decorated living room.

MATT
I appreciate you seeing me.

MILLIE
Your call said it was urgent.

MATT
Unfortunately, yes.

Millie leans forward in her chair, a look of concern on her
face.

MATT
Did you talk to Jose?

MILLIE
He left me a voicemail but I've yet to
call him back. I was away for a few
days.

MATT
Millie, what I have to say you'll find
devastating.

MILLIE
I'm a big girl.

MATT
Someone has stolen a quarter million
dollars from the Shelter's capital
campaign funds. We got a tip at the
newspaper and Jose had the Shelter's
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
accounting firm verify the shortage.

Her eyes and mouth open wide with shock.

MILLIE
Oh Lord, this simply can't be! Only
Jose and I have access to the funds.
And I'd stake my life on his honesty
and integrity.

MATT
Jose and you have sterling reputations
and seem eminently trustworthy.

MILLIE
What do you think happened because
there's no way this could have
happened?

MATT
I was hoping you could shed some light
on this.

MILLIE
I've been involved in numerous capital
campaigns. We have the same fiscal
controls on this one like we did all
the others.

MATT
Does Jimbo have access to the funds?

Her face registers alarm.

MILLIE
Oh, uh, why heavens no. I don't know
why you have to print a story like
this. It will destroy the capital
campaign.

She stands up and walks toward him. He arises in response.

MILLIE
I personally will make up the
shortfall, every penny of it. No need
to write a story.

MATT
When the credibility of a capital
campaign is in question and a
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
substantial amount of money is
missing, there's a story.

MILLIE
You're just trying to sell newspapers.
You don't care if the Shelter and the
people it serves are hurt.

MATT
I do care. But this is about the
public trust, not selling newspapers.

MILLIE
I'm not a rude person. But I want you
to leave my home. Now!

MATT
As you wish.

He turns and walks away. Millie plops down in her chair and
sobs.

32 INT. CITY HALL MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Jimbo is seated behind his big desk and Millie, in tears, is
standing in front of it.

MILLIE
Matt Meredith came to my home to tell
me about the shortage. Jose had our
accountants confirm a quarter million
is missing.

Jimbo stands up, walks around his desk and puts a comforting
hand on her shoulder.

JIMBO
Calm down. I'll call Jose and
straighten it out. What did you tell
Meredith?

MILLIE
He asked me if you had access to the
funds. I lied and told him no.

JIMBO
We all hate to lie. But sometimes it's
in the best interests of a greater
good. Meredith is trying to smear me,
you and the Shelter.

MILLIE

I haven't even told Jose that you're helping me out with the fiscal aspects of the campaign.

JIMBO

Meredith wants me to be the fall guy.

MILLIE

Do you know anything about the shortage that I don't know?

JIMBO

Of course not, dear. I may be a politician. But I'm no crook.

33 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Matt and Ned are standing in Ned's office.

MATT

Millie denied Jimbo has access to the funds. But she was so uncomfortable in saying so I believe she was lying.

NED

Jimbo steamrolls her.

MATT

If Jimbo denies being involved with the funds, and I'm certain he will, we'll have to publish the story without concluding who's responsible for the theft.

NED

Tomorrow's story is just the beginning. We'll eventually crack the case.

MATT

The sooner the better. Robyn's doing the marketing for the Shelter's capital campaign.

NED

That's a real nutcracker for you.

34 INT. CITY HALL MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Matt casually strolls into Jimbo's office. The mayor has his

feet propped up on his desk while taking a nap.

MATT

Getting some much-needed beauty sleep,
your honor?

Startled from his sleep, Jimbo snorts, looks up, removes his feet from his desk and leans forward defiantly.

JIMBO

What the fuck do you want, asshole?
Did my secretary let you in?

MATT

I think she's taking a potty break.

JIMBO

If there's a shortage in the Shelter
capital campaign, that has nothing to
do with me. You can't tie me into this
just because Millie is my girlfriend.

MATT

I merely asked if you as her boyfriend
has unofficial access to the funds.

JIMBO

If you smear me or Millie in this,
I'll sue your damn paper.

MATT

So you deny having access to any
campaign funds?

Jimbo stands up, puffs out his chest, and then pounds his right fist on his desk.

JIMBO

(Yelling)

Of course I fucking am, you fucking
idiot fuck!

MATT

A tad redundant, don't you think?

JIMBO

(Screaming)

Fuck off and get the fuck out of here.

MATT

I'll leave and let you resume your
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
beauty sleep.

JIMBO
(Bellowing)
If I had a fucking hammer...

MATT
You'd hit your fucking thumb.

35 INT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

PAUL MISSONIS, a gruff and decisive man in his 60s, is standing next to Robyn's desk, where she is sitting.

PAUL
If Millie makes good on her pledge to make up for the missing funds, that'll help us.

ROBYN
We have to shift focus on our approach. Cast Millie as a saint riding to the rescue.

PAUL
I hope you're ready to sleep here if necessary in reworking the campaign.

ROBYN
I do have kids.

PAUL
Your problem, not mine.

36 INT. RADIO STUDIO - DAY

Matt is guest hosting Feedback, a local call-in radio program. His guest is Millie. Both are wearing headsets and are sitting on opposite sides of a console.

MATT
This Matt Meredith, filling in for regular Feedback host Paul Roberts. My guest is Millie Paxton, the chairman of the Braxton Emergency Shelter's capital campaign.

MILLIE
I'm here to renew my pledge to make up for any shortage in the Shelter
(MORE)

MILLIE (CONT'D)
capital campaign.

MATT
That's very generous, Millie,
considering there appears to be a
shortage of 250,000 dollars.

MILLIE
I'm also here to announce that I'm
resigning as campaign chairman.

MATT
That's unfortunate. Your contributions
to this community are unparalleled.

MILLIE
You're very kind.

MATT
Nobody has accused you of any
wrongdoing in this matter. Your
reputation is above approach.

MILLIE
Thank you. But this shortage happened
on my watch. I'm ultimately
responsible.

MATT
Did our mayor, Jimbo Cummings, have
anything to do with helping to make up
your mind?

MILLIE
Mr. Cummings has no involvement with
this campaign. We're in a relationship
but I make my own decisions.

37 INT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

Paul and Robyn are standing in front of her desk.

PAUL
You've done a good job revising the
Shelter campaign and doing it quickly.

ROBYN
We canonized Millie for her fiscal
make-good but I wish she hadn't
resigned.

PAUL

I'm giving you a raise of 50 bucks a week.

ROBYN

Thank you, Mr. Missonis.

PAUL

It's time you called me Paul.

ROBYN

Yes, sir. Uh, I mean Paul.

PAUL

I've heard your son Timmy is quite the ballplayer.

ROBYN

He's having an excellent season.

PAUL

He must have a good coach with not having a father around.

ROBYN

He has an excellent coach.

PAUL

What's his name?

ROBYN

Matt Meredith.

He frowns and rubs his chin.

PAUL

The columnist writing those Shelter stories?

ROBYN

The one and same.

PAUL

That must be awkward for you.

ROBYN

It is. But he's just doing his job.

PAUL

Perhaps he should do his job a little less zealously.

ROBYN

Agreed. I missed one of Timmy's games because I was working late here revising our ads.

PAUL

Do you and Meredith discuss the Shelter scandal?

ROBYN

Heavens no. We both stay in our lane.

PAUL

That's comforting to hear.

38 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Robyn and Matt are sitting in her family room.

MATT

I appreciate you letting the boys have Mickey over for a sleepover tonight.

ROBYN

Timmy and Billy missed having him around.

MATT

I'll be sure to pick Mickey up by 9 tomorrow morning.

He laughs.

MATT

Unless, of course, you want me to sleep over, too.

ROBYN

You know that's not happening.

MATT

Maybe someday when we're married.

ROBYN

If we get married. Right now we're just friends with benefits. And those benefits are suspended.

MATT

Temporarily or permanently?

ROBYN
To be determined.

MATT
Because of Tiffany?

ROBYN
And our conflict of interest with the
Emergency Shelter.

MATT
Tiffany won't be filming here forever.
And the shelter capital campaign is
short-term. What then?

ROBYN
I honestly don't know.

MATT
Well, I won't take up anymore of your
time tonight, Mrs. Baxter.

ROBYN
I don't want to hurt your feelings. Or
jeopardize Mickey's relationship with
my boys. But.

MATT
Got it.

39 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ned is sitting at his desk as Matt walks in.

MATT
Short of torturing Jimbo and Millie to
force them to admit the truth, we have
only one recourse. Your source.

NED
No can do.

MATT
What's the problem? The guy talked to
you. Why can't he talk to me?

NED
Sorry.

MATT
If I don't get concrete proof the
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
mayor lifted the funds, this story is
going to die on the vine.

NED
My source was adamant you not know her
identity.

MATT
It's a her? Who the hell is she?

NED
I'll break my promise and call her
again. I'll let you know what she
says.

MATT
I don't know why you're so squeamish
about this.

Ned slams a fist on his desk.

NED
Enough!

Matt turns and walks out of Ned's office. Ned stands up,
walks over and closes his office door. He returns to his
desk, plops down on his chair and exhales. He picks up his
phone and makes a call.

VOICEMAIL
This is Tiffany. Please leave me a
message.

40 INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

A nervous Ned and a pissed Tiffany are sitting on chairs in
her Homewood Suites luxury suite.

TIFFANY
I told you never to call me again.
Please don't tell me you told Matt I'm
your source.

NED
I haven't. His investigation has hit a
dead end. Without concrete evidence,
we can't implicate the mayor.

TIFFANY
I won't go on the record. You're lucky
(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
I told you what I did.

NED
What about your civic duty?

TIFFANY
Screw that.

NED
Why won't you talk to Matt?

TIFFANY
It would be terribly awkward since
he's been rejecting my advances.

NED
He seems committed to Robyn.

TIFFANY
So I swallow my pride even more and
help Matt?

NED
This isn't about helping him. This is
about erasing a black eye the Shelter
has gotten from all of this.

She stands up and walks back and forth for several moments.
Ned's eyes toggle as he follows her as if he's watching a
tennis match.

TIFFANY
Fuck! Tell him to give me a call.

41 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Matt and Ned are standing in the managing editor's office.

NED
My source will talk to you.

MATT
Give me her number and I'll call her
right now.

NED
Perhaps you already have her number.

MATT

(Exasperated)

Don't play games with me. Who the hell is she?

NED

Tiffany Underhill.

MATT

You've got to be shitting me! No fucking way!

NED

It's Tiffany, lover boy.

MATT

You bastard! How could you keep that from me?

NED

Because she wouldn't have told me shit if I hadn't agreed to protect her anonymity.

MATT

I don't have her number.

NED

I'll text it to you.

MATT

My relationship with Robyn is on the rocks, thanks to Tiffany.

NED

(Laughing)

If you fuck Tiffany she'll give you plenty of facts to nail down the story.

MATT

Not sure that's included in the Journalism 101 curriculum.

42 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Matt is sitting at his desk and makes a phone call with considerably less angst than a guy booking an appointment for a colonoscopy.

MATT

Tiffany?

TIFFANY (V.O.)

I'm supposed to help you, huh?

MATT

I need more details from you to nail the mayor in the Shelter scandal.

TIFFANY (V.O.)

Climb into my bed and I'll tell you everything I know.

MATT

Tempting.

TIFFANY (V.O.)

Because you want me or the story?

MATT

Maybe both.

TIFFANY (V.O.)

Ah! A crack in the ice. Could The Iceman Cometh?

MATT

You know the play by Eugene O'Neill?

TIFFANY

Know it? I was in it. Played Pearl, one of the streetwalkers.

MATT

I'm not touching that.

TIFFANY

Meet me at the Nut Bar tomorrow night at 8.

43 INT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

PAUL

Why didn't you tell me you're screwing Meredith?

ROBYN

Because that's none of your damn business.

PAUL

It certainly is. Your relationship with him compromises your Shelter campaign. I'm removing you from the account.

ROBYN

That's uncalled for.

PAUL

You can forget about the raise I promised you. I don't reward disloyalty.

ROBYN

I've never been disloyal. I never allowed my relationship with Matt to compromise my work.

PAUL

If you hadn't been such a good worker all these years, I'd fire you right now.

ROBYN

I dare you to fire me right now!

PAUL

I'll pretend I didn't hear that because you'll regret it later. You have two kids to support.

ROBYN

(Under her breath)

Prick.

PAUL

What did you say?

ROBYN

I said I feel sick.

PAUL

You sure?

ROBYN

Want me to vomit on your shoes?

44 INT. NUT BAR - NIGHT

Tiffany and Matt are sitting at a table in a back corner of

the restaurant. His tape recorder and notepad sit on the table as they dine. She is drinking white wine and he is drinking water.

TIFFANY

You owe me now.

MATT

Agreed.

TIFFANY

I lied to Ned March about the mayor siphoning the funds to wine and dine another girlfriend.

MATT

Why?

TIFFANY

I wanted to distance the scandal from the movie.

MATT

So what's the truth?

TIFFANY

The mayor was hitting on me. He was boasting he was responsible for bringing Drug Town to Braxton.

MATT

How so?

TIFFANY

There was a 250,000-dollar site fee owed to Vintage Studios. Jimbo said the city didn't have the funds so he took the funds from the Shelter campaign.

MATT

Why would he tell you?

TIFFANY

He said he was responsible for making me a star so I should fuck him. I didn't, by the way.

MATT

I admire your taste.

TIFFANY

He said he was going to incrementally replenish the Shelter fund with money from the city's general fund and his girlfriend would never know the difference.

MATT

Was there a 250,000-dollar site fee?

TIFFANY

Our producer Marc Goldstein confirmed it. But he thought the money had come from the city's coffers.

MATT

Will you text me Goldstein's number?

She flashes him a middle finger and smiles.

TIFFANY

Want me to write the fucking story for you, too?

He smiles and laughs.

MATT

Great idea. You go to my office and write it while I sit here and celebrate you handing me the smoking gun to implicate the mayor.

TIFFANY

You're lucky I don't put a gun to your head for picking her over me.

MATT

I'm not sure at this point if Robyn and I are even in a relationship.

TIFFANY

Have you been more interested than Robyn in advancing your relationship?

MATT

Definitely.

TIFFANY

Thought so.

MATT

Why?

TIFFANY

My mother never remarried. Said losing her husband was so painful she couldn't risk losing another.

MATT

You can't lose what you don't have.

TIFFANY

Perhaps Robyn is afraid she'll lose you if she marries you.

MATT

Hmm.

TIFFANY

A low-boil relationship with you trumps being alone.

MATT

Makes sense.

TIFFANY

So why you won't give me a shot?

MATT

Robyn is real. My life here is real. Being involved with a film star and living in Los Angeles seems surreal.

TIFFANY

Perception often becomes reality.

MATT

Me becoming another Joe Murphy is not reality.

TIFFANY

A compelling reason why I'm helping you in this investigation is because a fellow newspaperman like Joe would've wanted me to.

MATT

Thank you.

TIFFANY

Don't take forever to come to your
(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
senses. Filming here should be
wrapping up shortly.

MATT
I'm going back to the office. I have a
story to write. Thanks to you.

TIFFANY
A quick fuck in my backseat would be a
fitting thank you.

MATT
Let me walk you to your car.

TIFFANY
Why do you think I parked across the
street right in front of the Bugle?

45 EXT. PARK STREET - NIGHT

Matt and Tiffany walk across Park Street toward her car. As he opens the driver's door for her, her high heel gets caught in a small crevice in the asphalt. She loses her balance and grabs his neck for support. Their faces brush together and she seizes the opportunity to kiss him on the lips. As she does so, Robyn is driving down Park Street and sees Tiffany and Matt kissing. She slams on her brakes and double parks her car. She jumps out and races over to them.

ROBYN
(Shouting)
Fuck you, Matt! What a fool I've been!
We're finished! Never call me again!

She turns her attention to Tiffany.

ROBYN
As for you, have fun pretending Matt's
your lost boyfriend come back to life.
I saw Ghost. Matt sure as hell is no
Patrick Swayze.

MATT
Robyn...

ROBYN
I don't want to hear it!

Robyn turns and runs back to her car. Matt runs after her but she jumps into her car, slams the door and drives away.

MATT

Fuck!

TIFFANY

Shit! I'm so sorry. The kiss was pure impulse.

MATT

What are the odds?

TIFFANY

Vegas wouldn't touch that line. But karma would.

MATT

Fuck karma.

TIFFANY

Don't you see the destiny in Robyn just happening to drive by at the exact instant I kissed you?

MATT

My head's spinning. But I've got to focus on the scandal story.

TIFFANY

Call me if you need me. And if you never call, you'll always regret it.

46 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Matt is sitting at his desk, typing on his desktop. He frowns and picks up his landline desk phone. He sighs and punches in some numbers.

MATT

(Into the phone)

Again, Tiffany stumbled and impulsively kissed me. I didn't kiss her back. We met because she gave me the key tip in the shelter scandal.

He hangs up and stares into space for a couple moments.

47 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

A scowling Robyn is sitting in bed.

ROBYN

(Aloud to herself)

How many times is he going to leave
the same damn message?

48 INT. MISSONIS ADVERTISING OFFICES - DAY

A determined-looking Robyn barges into Paul Missonis' office.

ROBYN

Now that Meredith has solved the
riddle of the missing scandal money, I
want back on the Shelter account.

PAUL

This isn't about the mayor taking the
money. This is about you being
disloyal by being intimately involved
with a reporter working at cross
purposes with our marketing campaign.

ROBYN

Ex-boyfriend. I've been a top producer
here for years. And I've sweated blood
on this campaign.

PAUL

I'm the boss. Just because Meredith
dumped you, you're not getting back on
the account.

Robyn goes ballistic, kicking his desk and pounding her fists
on it.

ROBYN

You can shove this fucking job up your
shriveled ass.

49 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ned is standing next to Matt's desk, who is seated behind it.

NED

Fantastic job on the story.

Just then both of them are surprised when Tiffany approaches
them.

NED

Thanks again for coming forward with
this, Tiffany. You did the community a
(MORE)

NED (CONT'D)
great service.

TIFFANY
Guess what? The studio PR folks love this. It's gone viral on social media.

NED
Great publicity for your movie. Well, I'll let you two alone.

TIFFANY
You can stay. It's not like Matt is going to take me in his arms and suck out my bicuspid.

NED
Well, call me back over if he does.

Ned walks away.

TIFFANY
I'm not surprised Jimbo once again denied taking the money, calling me a liar.

MATT
He attacks back when attacked.

TIFFANY
I came here to apologize. When our faces brushed together, I couldn't resist.

MATT
She's not returning my calls. It's over between us.

TIFFANY
Want me to call her and tell her the kiss was all on me?

MATT
Like she'll believe you.

TIFFANY
I hope your readers find me more credible.

MATT
Judging by the email and text messages
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
so far, they certainly are.

TIFFANY
I've got to get to the set. Never
forget I love you.

MATT
Once you wrap up shooting here, I'll
be yesterday's news.

TIFFANY
Some love affairs have an endless news
cycle.

50 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Robyn is having dinner with Robert Thaxter, silver-thatched
and in his early 60s, at a popular steakhouse in Sorbonne
Township.

ROBYN
Mr. Thaxter, I'm grateful you're
meeting me so quickly.

ROBERT
It's Robert. Thaxter Advertising has
had its eye on you for sometime.

ROBYN
I'm flattered.

ROBERT
Timing is everything. We need a
copywriter.

ROBYN
That's encouraging.

ROBERT
So you and Paul Missonis had a parting
of the ways?

ROBYN
I quit in a huff. He didn't appreciate
me dating Matt Meredith while I was
working on the Emergency Shelter
capital campaign.

ROBERT
I'm delighted you're dating Matt. He's
(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)
friends with my wife and I.

ROBYN
We're no longer dating. But while we were, I want you to know we both were professional and stayed in our lanes regarding the Shelter scandal.

ROBERT
Sorry to hear you two broke up. Matt's a wonderful guy. But let's talk advertising.

ROBYN
Sounds good.

ROBERT
The job's yours if you want it. I'll pay you 10 percent more than you were making at Missonis.

ROBYN
That would be awesome.

ROBERT
Fabulous. Can you start tomorrow?

ROBYN
Certainly.

ROBERT
Great.

ROBYN
Thank you. By the way, I don't believe Matt is the altar boy you think he is.

ROBERT
Enough about Matt. Your personal life is your business. Unlike Paul Missonis, I won't ask who you're dating.

51 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Matt is typing on his desktop while talking on his landline. As Ned walks over, Matt hangs up.

MATT
Just got a call from the mayor's
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
administrative assistant. He's
resigning.

NED
Back to carpentry.

MATT
He likely uses crooked two by fours.

52 EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - EVENING

A montage of baseball highlights features Timmy striking out hitters, Mickey making several spectacular catches in center and throws to the plate to nail runners, and both of them hitting home runs. Then Timmy, Mickey, Matt and all the Cubs celebrate while Matt hoists a large trophy.

MATT
(Shouting)
The Cubs are league champions! Let's
celebrate at Dairy Queen! The ice
cream is on me! But first the Cubs
have a surprise for that special
someone.

Matt, carrying a large bag of baseballs, and the Cubs jog out to centerfield. The players grab baseballs from the bag and with synchronized precision, spell out MATT LOVES ROBYN in baseballs on the outfield grass.

All the PARENTS and FANS in the bleachers stand, applaud and smile at a frowning Robyn, who remains seated.

53 INT. DAIRY QUEEN RESTAURANT - EVENING

The Cubs, Timmy, Mickey and Matt are sitting together at two long tables while the players' FAMILIES are sitting at nearby tables.

TIMMY
Mom really is pissed at you. She said
your message with baseballs
embarrassed her. She told me only to
talk baseball with you.

MATT
Please listen to her.

TIMMY
Billy and I've been going to bat for
(MORE)

TIMMY (CONT'D)
you. But we keep striking out.

MATT
You two keep swinging away.

MICKEY
Dad, tell her you're sorry so I can
hang out again with Timmy and Billy.

TIMMY
It's the Three Musketeers, not the Two
Musketeers.

Robyn and Billy are sitting at a table with Cindy.

BILLY
Mom, can I sit with the team? You guys
are boring.

ROBYN
Yes. But behave yourself.

Billy smiles and runs over to sit with Timmy.

CINDY
Didn't Matt's adorable message on the
field melt your heart?

ROBYN
I was mortified. His lame stunt
hardened my heart.

CINDY
Are you two done forever?

ROBYN
Yes.

CINDY
So why do you keep sneaking glances at
him?

ROBYN
My emotions are tumbling over and
over, like clothes in a dryer.

CINDY
Confront him and find out the truth
about him and Tiffany.

ROBYN
Can I trust what he says?

CINDY
Give him the benefit of the doubt.

Both of them are startled by Matt suddenly sitting down at their table.

ROBYN
I don't remember inviting you to sit down.

CINDY
Come on, Robyn.

ROBYN
This is none of your damn business, Cindy.

CINDY
Well, excuse me.

Cindy stands up and walks away.

MATT
I guess sitting down was a mistake.

ROBYN
You and I, the whole damn thing was a mistake. Why do you want me when a movie star is throwing herself at you?

MATT
Because we and the boys belong together. Let's stop dragging our feet and get married.

ROBYN
Married? Not on your life.

MATT
Afraid of another husband dying on you?

She looks startled.

ROBYN
What?

Robyn stands up, pours her vanilla milkshake over his head

and stomps away.

54 INT. MATT'S CAR - DAY

Matt makes a call while driving on city streets.

MATT

Do you want to get together tonight?

TIFFANY (V.O.)

Business or pleasure?

MATT

Definitely not business.

55 INT. HOMEWOOD SUITES - NIGHT

Matt, his face looking like he's facing a firing squad, and Tiffany, her face rapturous with joy, are kissing, groping and undressing each other in her hotel bed. Then suddenly he stops and sits on the bed.

TIFFANY

What's wrong?

MATT

I can't do this.

TIFFANY

What do you mean? You've got an enormous erection.

MATT

It's not erectile dysfunction.

TIFFANY

Then what the fuck is it?

MATT

This doesn't feel right.

TIFFANY

(Angry)

I'm not good enough for you?

MATT

It's me, not you. My heart belongs to Robyn. When we were kissing, it was her face I saw. Not yours.

TIFFANY

(Shouting)

I've never been so fucking humiliated
in my life!

MATT

I'm so sorry.

TIFFANY

(Crying and shouting)

Get out! I hate you! I wish I never
saw your face. Joe's face.

She picks up a pillow and slams him over the head with it.

56 INT. BAXTER HOME- NIGHT

Robyn and Cindy are having wine at her kitchen table.

ROBYN

I need someone to talk to.

CINDY

About Matt?

ROBYN

Yes.

CINDY

You haven't been yourself since you
two broke up.

ROBYN

I hate myself for dumping my milkshake
on him. But he said something that has
been haunting me.

CINDY

What?

ROBYN

He asked if I've been dragging my feet
marrying him because I'm afraid of
becoming a widow again.

CINDY

Are you?

ROBYN

Not consciously. But subconsciously I
must be. He opened my eyes.

CINDY

Call him and ask him to marry you.

ROBYN

I'm petrified I drove him into the willing arms of Tiffany.

CINDY

There's only one way to find out.

Robyn's doorbell rings.

CINDY

That must be Matt now.

ROBYN

What?

Cindy runs up to the front door and lets Matt inside. He's wearing a tuxedo. He walks over to a startled Robyn and pulls a bar of lye soap from his pants, puts it in his mouth and sucks on it for a minute. Robyn and Cindy laugh.

MATT

(Gagging)

Can a gentleman please have a glass of water?

ROBYN

Suck it up, pal.

The doorbell rings.

CINDY

That must be your hair stylist.

ROBYN

What?

MATT

We're going to the Heart Ball at the Doubletree tonight. It's a fundraiser for the American Heart Association.

ROBYN

Like hell. I've nothing to wear.

MATT

I beg to differ.

Matt answers the door and lets in the BEAUTY STYLIST. Matt

disappears outside for a couple moments and returns with a beautiful red formal dress.

CINDY

I shared your size with Matt. And don't worry about the kids. I'm babysitting.

ROBYN

Why the last-minute notice, Matt?

MATT

I needed a date.

ROBYN

Fresh out of sexy actresses?

MATT

I prefer sexy advertising copywriters.

57 INT. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ned and Matt are in the former's office, watching Tiffany being interviewed on local television.

TIFFANY

I delivered the smoking gun to Matt Meredith in the Emergency Shelter capital campaign scandal.

TV REPORTER

You implicated former Braxton mayor Jimbo Cummings as the one who siphoned off a quarter million dollars.

TIFFANY

I lied. The mayor never told me he took the money.

TV REPORTER

Why did you say he did?

TIFFANY

Meredith coerced me into lying about Jimbo because he couldn't nail down who stole the money.

TV REPORTER

So you're now recanting your original accusation against Mr. Cummings?

Tiffany dabs her eyes with a tissue.

TIFFANY

Absolutely. I apologize to him and the
Braxton community. And the Shelter.

Matt angrily grabs Ned's remote and clicks off the TV.

MATT

Nothing like a woman scorned. In
tomorrow's column I'm going to
empathetically deny I coerced her into
lying.

NED

In it you will quote me about her
calling me with the allegation. And
we're running your column on top of
the front page.

MATT

She picked the wrong guy to fuck with.

NED

God, if we could only use that for the
headline.

58 EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - EVENING

A shirtless Matt is raking the infield dirt when Robyn jogs
toward him.

ROBYN

The sweat is making your muscles
glisten.

MATT

Come to play in the dirt with me?

ROBYN

I came to kneel in the dirt.

She drops to one knee and beams at him.

ROBYN

Will you please marry me?

Without saying a word, he sweeps her off her feet and kisses
her passionately. All smiles, he then puts her down.

ROBYN

I take it that was a yes.

MATT

A very emphatic yes.

ROBYN

You were right. I subconsciously was afraid that if we got married I would end up losing you like I did Bob.

MATT

I'm not going anywhere. And you'd better stick around.

ROBYN

Our surprise date at the Heart Ball convinced me we totally belong together.

MATT

I was hoping so.

ROBYN

I was afraid I drove you into Tiffany's arms when I dumped my milkshake on you.

MATT

You did. We wound up in bed but I just couldn't do it because I kept seeing your face instead of hers.

ROBYN

So you didn't have intercourse?

MATT

Absolutely not. She was humiliated. And now she's rattlesnake angry.

ROBYN

I saw on TV that she recanted her allegations against Jimbo, claiming you coerced her.

MATT

Ned said I should've fucked her for the sake of the story.

ROBYN

So when do you want to get married?

MATT
After practice tonight.

ROBYN
How about Christmas?

MATT
Santa can be my best man.

ROBYN
Never tell me any details about being
in bed with Tiffany.

MATT
It was so brief details are scarce.

ROBYN
You must love me to spurn a hot
actress you're already in bed with.

MATT
(Laughing)
Either that. Or out of my mind.

ROBYN
(Laughing)
I'll have to suck on lye soap to scrub
images from my mind of you and Tiffany
in bed.

MATT
Trust me, it was more awkward than a
centipede on roller skates.

59 INT. MOVIE SET TRAILER - DAY

Tiffany is packing up her personal belongings in her on-set
trailer. Bronk walks in.

BRONK
Just wanted to say goodbye. The final
day of shooting is always bittersweet.

TIFFANY
Not for me. Can't wait to get out of
this fucking town.

BRONK
You chasing after that newspaper
schmuck was a mistake.

TIFFANY

No shit. And I should've kept my mouth shut about the mayor and the Shelter funds.

BRONK

Damn right.

Tiffany, in her haste to exit the trailer, fails to notice the pair of diamond earrings sitting in a drawer as she closes it.

BRONK

Sorry about puking all over you.

TIFFANY

Hard to believe that wasn't the worst thing that happened to me in Braxton.

60 EXT. INTERSECTION IN ROUGH PART OF BRAXTON - NIGHT

Tiffany is driving toward her trailer on the Drug Town movie set when her rental car suddenly stalls.

61 INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Tiffany tries and fails to restart the car. She pounds her steering wheel in frustration.

TIFFANY

(Yelling out loud)

Damn! I would leave my fucking diamond earrings in my trailer.

She grabs her cell and makes several calls, getting a voicemail each time.

TIFFANY

(Yelling out loud)

Shit! Isn't anybody picking up? Hate to do this. But.

She looks out her window and sees two MEN hanging out on the corner, staring at her car. She quickly makes another call.

TIFFANY

(Pleading)

Thank God you answered. I'm in big trouble. Please come rescue me!

62 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Matt is sitting next to Robyn on her family room sofa. He's on his cell.

MATT
What's wrong?

63 INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Tiffany still is trying and failing to restart her car as she talks on her phone.

TIFFANY
My rental car died near my movie set trailer. I'm at Buttonwood and Elm. There's two nasty men on the corner checking me out. I'm desperate.

64 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Matt stands up as does Robyn.

MATT
How do I know this isn't total bullshit?

TIFFANY
(Screaming)
I'm begging you!

MATT
I'm on my way.

He hangs up.

ROBYN
Why can't anybody from the studio help her out?

MATT
I didn't ask.

He kisses her and she gives him a quick hug.

ROBYN
Are you sure she's not setting you up?

MATT
I could sense the fear in her voice.

ROBYN

I could, too. Love you.

65 INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Tiffany's lips start quivering when she notices the two men approaching her car. One guy knocks on her driver's side window, motioning her to lower the window. She ignores him. The other guy uses the butt of his handgun to smash the passenger's side window, sending shards of glass all over the front seat and a screaming Tiffany.

As the window glass shatters, Matt's car races onto the scene. The man on the driver's side of Tiffany's rental steps into the street, pulls out his handgun and starts firing at Matt's car. Matt ducks low as bullets fissure his windshield. Undaunted, he runs over the guy, who had waited too long to jump out of the way.

Matt adroitly does a dynamic U-turn and races back toward the fallen man. Matt slams on the brakes, opens his front door, reaches down and grabs the handgun that fell out of the man's grasp.

The other guy starts firing at Matt's car, which does another quick U-turn and races toward the man. As he passes him, Matt shoots him in the legs with the handgun. Matt stops the car, turns it around yet again, and drives back to Tiffany's car. She gets out of her car.

Matt jumps out of his car, grabs her hand and is about to help her into his passenger seat when a police cruiser with a blaring siren and flashing lights pulls up. Two COPS pop out of the cruiser, handguns pointed at Matt.

TALL COP

Is that you, Matt?

MATT

Yes, Bill.

SHORT COP

What's with the two dudes lying on the street?

MATT

Tony, I shot one guy in the leg and ran over the other. They were breaking into my friend's car and she was afraid for her life.

TIFFANY
(Sobbing)
Matt rescued me.

SHORT COP
I'll be damned. It's Tiffany, the
actress in the movie they're filming
here.

TALL COP
Matt, you keep good company. But you
should know better than to be in this
part of town at night.

TIFFANY
I forgot some earrings in my movie
trailer. I came to get them before I
leave town. But my rental broke down.

The tall cop walks over to inspect the two fallen men, still
lying on the street and moaning.

TALL COP
I recognize this pair. Two bad actors.
Dealers and gang warlords.

SHORT COP
Matt, for a guy who types for a living
you make a helluva action hero.

TIFFANY
I'll say!

66 INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Tiffany and Matt are sitting in the back seat.

TIFFANY
I didn't deserve your help because I
recanted my story. Now I'll recant my
recantation.

MATT
Thanks.

TIFFANY
I was fucking pissed because you
dumped me after only a few moments in
bed.

MATT

Your love for me is intense.

TIFFANY

That's rather obvious. I still see Joe in you. But you had to make a choice and you picked Robyn.

MATT

Speaking of Robyn, I'd better call her and tell her I'm all right.

TIFFANY

So you two are back on?

MATT

Thanks to you. When I confronted her about it, she realized she was dragging her feet with our relationship because down deep she was afraid of being widowed again.

TIFFANY

Fuck. Little old matchmaker me.

MATT

Why the hell didn't you just call 9-1-1?

TIFFANY

Never even gave it a thought. I'm an idiot. Or maybe we were destined to have this exciting escapade together.

MATT

Maybe you should add this to the Drug Town script?

TIFFANY

We'll save it for the sequel. Starring you and me. We could call it Ebony and Ivory.

MATT

I'll leave that out when I call Robyn.

67 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Robyn and Matt are sitting at her kitchen table, eating ice cream.

ROBYN

This is my last bowl of ice cream
until after the wedding.

MATT

It's not even Thanksgiving yet.

ROBYN

I want to be lean and mean for the
ceremony.

MATT

Then fat and happy after the wedding?

ROBYN

Of course. But now I'm hoping to drop
a couple pounds for the premiere in
two weeks.

MATT

I wish the Drug Town world premiere
would be in Hollywood, not Braxton.

ROBYN

Did you know Tiffany is dating an
European playboy?

MATT

A definite upgrade from a newspaper
columnist.

68 INT. BRAXTON EMERGENCY SHELTER - DAY

Tiffany and Bronk are serving soup and sandwiches to Shelter
RESIDENTS while MEDIA TYPES, Jose, Millie, Carl the PR guy
and JEAN PAUL LOISELLE, Tiffany's handsome French boyfriend,
look on. Jimbo sneaks in beside an annoyed Millie.

MILLIE

I told you to stay away. The Shelter
was gracious enough to restore me as
capital campaign chair.

JIMBO

And miss all the fun?

Jimbo walks behind Tiffany and whispers into her ear.

JIMBO

How's my favorite actress?

TIFFANY

Drop dead.

As Tiffany serves food, Jimbo pours a small vial of zinc chloride into the bowl of soup beside her. When the last of the residents is served, Bronk, Tiffany and Jean Paul sit down at the serving table and eat their soup. Tiffany makes a face.

TIFFANY

Jean Paul, does your soup taste metallic?

JEAN PAUL

Not at all, my lovely.

She pushes her bowl of soup aside.

69 INT. LIMO - DAY

Tiffany and Jean Paul are sitting next to each other in a stretch limo.

TIFFANY

I have an upset stomach. Must have been the fucking soup.

He grabs an ice bucket that was chilling a bottle of champagne, dumps out the ice and puts the bucket in her lap.

JEAN PAUL

Just in case.

TIFFANY

I've got this horrible rotten taste in my mouth.

70 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS SQUARE CINEMA CENTER - DAY

A stretch limo ferrying Tiffany and Jean Paul pulls in front of the movie theater complex. They get out and Tiffany is frowning and slightly bent over at the waist as ONLOOKERS cheer them. Tiffany forces a smile.

TIFFANY

My stomach cramps are killing me.

JEAN PAUL

As soon as we enter the theater, we're heading for the ladies room.

A limo bearing Bronk and his GIRLFRIEND, a sultry razor-thin brunette, arrives. They too are welcomed by loud applause. They walk over to Tiffany and Jean Paul.

BRONK

Tiff, you look terrible. Are you sick?

TIFFANY

I feel faint.

She bends over as a geyser of vomit erupts from her throat, soaking herself and splashing Bronk. She loses control of her bowels as a violent attack of diarrhea loudly soils the backside of her dress. She collapses on the red carpet. The MEDIA swarm toward the fallen Tiffany as Bronk, Jean-Paul and Carl kneel beside her.

BRONK

She's unconscious.

CARL

I'm calling 9-1-1.

Matt and Robyn are standing nearby when they see Jimbo smiling in the crowd.

ROBYN

Jimbo is enjoying this, that bastard!

MATT

I've got a hunch.

Matt sprints toward Jimbo and levels him with a crunching shoulder tackle. Jimbo howls in pain.

JIMBO

My hip! You broke my fucking hip!

Matt grabs Jimbo by the throat.

MATT

You poisoned her, didn't you?

Matt lets go of his throat and twists Jimbo's right arm behind him. The former mayor cries out in pain.

JIMBO

OK, OK! I put a small dose of zinc chloride in her soup. The bitch deserved to be humiliated.

Matt quickly threads his way through the throng of people and races over to the huddle surrounding Tiffany, which now includes a DOCTOR with his medical bag. Robyn stands by Matt's side.

MATT

Doc, the former mayor slipped her a small dose of zinc chloride.

DOCTOR

I'll give her an injection of atropine and alert the ambulance crew that we'll have to flush her stomach. You may have just saved her life.

JEAN PAUL

Thank you, sir. Thank you.

BRONK

Matt, you've been making a habit of saving Tiffany's life.

ROBYN

How on earth did you suspect he poisoned her?

MATT

Her violent reaction tipped me off. And Jimbo was the only smiling face in a sea of somber faces.

71 INT. BRAXTON GENERAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Tiffany is sitting up in bed. Jean Paul is sitting in a nearby chair. When Robyn and Matt walk in Tiffany's private room, a sudden beam of a smile flashes across her lips. Jean Paul stands up and walks over to greet them.

TIFFANY

Matt, once again you've saved my life. I'll be forever grateful.

MATT

How are you doing?

TIFFANY

Relieved my horrible stomach cramps have subsided. But utterly mortified by embarrassing myself in public. And fucking pissed at Jimbo.

JEAN PAUL

The doctor told me that if you hadn't tipped them off to the zinc chloride, she could've been in real trouble.

TIFFANY

I'm genuinely touched by your visit. I know the last few months have been awkward for the three of us.

ROBYN

That's all in the past.

Tiffany reaches out for Robyn's hand.

TIFFANY

Take care of my bodyguard.

ROBYN

We're having a Christmas wedding.

TIFFANY

Congratulations. What a lovely time of year to get married.

ROBYN

We'll send you an invitation.

TIFFANY

We loved to be there. But we're spending the holidays in Paris.

72 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Matt and Robyn are sitting on a sofa and sipping eggnog in her living room. Next to them in the corner is a Christmas tree. Numerous wrapped presents are in front of the tree.

ROBYN

I thought the boys would never get to sleep.

MATT

It's Christmas Eve. What did you expect?

ROBYN

A little time for just us.

MATT

I'm glad Mickey is spending the night
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)
with you so I can stay here a little
longer.

ROBYN
The last night you and I will be
sleeping separately.

The doorbell rings.

MATT
Who could that be at this late hour?

ROBYN
Santa Claus?

They both walk over to the front door and she opens it,
leaving both of them with astonished looks on their faces.

ROBYN
Tiffany? Mrs. Paxton?

TIFFANY
Surprise, surprise!

MILLIE
Merry Christmas. Please call me
Millie.

ROBYN
Please come in out of the cold.

They do so and Matt helps them with their coats.

MATT
No Jimbo?

MILLIE
Heavens, no. I dumped that bastard.
Tiffany and I are celebrating the end
of bad relationships.

TIFFANY
Indeed we are.

MATT
You and Jean Paul broke up?

TIFFANY
I found him too self-centered.

MATT

Both people can't be self-centered in a relationship.

TIFFANY

Me? Self-centered?

ROBYN

Do you two want a drink?

MILLIE

No, it's too late.

TIFFANY

I declined your wedding invitation because I thought I'd be in France with Jean Paul. Too late to accept?

MILLIE

With me as her date?

ROBYN

I think that can be arranged.

TIFFANY

Perfect.

MATT

What are you doing back in town?

TIFFANY

Millie graciously invited me to spend Christmas with her.

MILLIE

I owed her after my ex poisoned her at the premiere that wasn't.

MATT

I heard the rescheduled premiere in Hollywood went well.

TIFFANY

Sorry you two couldn't make it.

MILLIE

Well, we'd better be going and let you two alone.

MATT

See you at the wedding.

Tiffany and Millie leave.

ROBYN

Tiffany is like the last stubborn cereal clot stuck to the side of the bowl.

MATT

Agreed. But don't forget it was her insight into why you were dragging your feet with me that propelled us to the altar tomorrow.

ROBYN

Her only redeeming quality.

73 INT. MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Matt is turning out the lights on his Christmas tree when his doorbell rings. He looks surprised as he opens the front door.

MATT

Tiffany?

TIFFANY

Hey, Matt.

MATT

It's almost midnight.

TIFFANY

How was your Christmas Eve with Robyn and the kids?

MATT

Why are you really here?

TIFFANY

Millie's asleep. And I'm bored. It's cold out here. Can I come in?

She brushes past him into the foyer, giggling. She walks into the family room, takes off her coat and tosses it onto a chair.

MATT

Make yourself at home.

She plops onto his sofa.

TIFFANY
Come sit beside me.

MATT
Just for a few minutes. Then you're
out of here. I'm getting married
tomorrow.

TIFFANY
Actually it's now today. Merry
Christmas.

MATT
If you think I'm gonna have one last
pre-nuptial fling, forget about it.

TIFFANY
Shame on you. The thought hadn't
crossed my mind.

They sit together on the sofa. She then jumps onto his lap.
He shoves her off him.

MATT
What the hell! Not this. Not now. Not
ever!

TIFFANY
We have some unfinished business. You
know you want me. So we fool around a
bit. I'm not gonna tell Robyn. Are
you?

MATT
Please leave.

She leans forward to kiss him and he shoves her away.
Enraged, she grabs a Mike Schmidt-autographed baseball on his
coffee table. At close range, she fires the baseball at him,
striking him right smack on his right eye, leaving a round
welt.

MATT
(Angrily)
Get out of here and don't show up at
my wedding!

TIFFANY
Now I know for sure you'll never be
another Joe Murphy. I have closure.

MATT

You have closure and I'm blind in one eye. My wedding pictures are going to be a real treasure.

TIFFANY

I thought you'd catch my pitch.

She grabs her coat and walks out the front door. As she approaches her rental in Matt's driveway the Thaxters are driving by and spot her.

74 INT. THAXTERS SUV - NIGHT

BETTY THAXTER is driving and Robert is riding shotgun.

BETTY

What's Tiffany doing leaving Matt's house this late at night?

ROBERT

None of our business.

BETTY

It's definitely Robyn's business. You should call her.

ROBERT

This is awkward.

He pulls his cell from his pocket and calls Robyn.

75 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Robyn is asleep in her bed when her phone startles her awake. She quickly grabs it and sees it's 12:40 in the morning on her wedding day.

ROBYN

Robert, it's extremely early on Christmas morning, not to mention my wedding day. What's wrong?

Robyn sits up in bed in stunned silence for a few moments, listening to him. Tears start streaming down her face. She slumps down and lies back on her pillow.

ROBYN

As devastating as this call was, you've saved me from making the biggest mistake of my life.

76 INT. THAXTERS HOME - NIGHT

Robert and Betty are sitting at their kitchen table.

ROBERT

Let's call Matt. If he's innocent,
he'll fight for her.

BETTY

Let's get his side of the story.

Robert makes the call.

77 INT. MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Matt is sitting on his family room sofa, holding an ice bag to his right eye. His phone rings and he answers it.

MATT

Robert? Why the hell are you calling
me at this late hour?

78 INT. THAXTERS HOME - NIGHT

ROBERT

Betty and I screwed up. We were
driving home when we saw Tiffany
leaving your house. So we called
Robyn.

BETTY

Our apologies. Robyn sounded like she
was going to call off the wedding.

79 INT. MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MATT

I wasn't screwing around. Tiffany
showed up uninvited. She put a move on
me. I resisted. She fired a baseball
at me and gave me a black eye.

80 INT. THAXTERS HOME - NIGHT

ROBERT

We didn't assume you were cheating on
Robyn. But we thought we'd give Robyn
a heads up. It was stupid of us.

BETTY

We want to make this right.

ROBERT

I just had an idea. Your black eye is the perfect physical evidence to convince Robyn you're telling the truth.

81 INT. MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MATT

You're right. I'm going over to her house. Please call Millie and tell her you're picking up Tiffany and driving her to Robyn's to corroborate my story.

82 INT. THAXTERS HOME - NIGHT

ROBERT

We'll bring Tiffany if we have to kidnap her.

83 INT. MILLIE PAXTON'S MANSION - NIGHT

Millie, in her nightgown and with her hair in curlers, walks into Tiffany's bedroom. Tiffany still is dressed and sitting in a lounge chair.

MILLIE

Glad you're awake. The Thaxters, who are friends of mine, are picking you up any minute and taking you to Robyn's.

TIFFANY

Suppose I don't want to go?

MILLIE

Robert said if you don't go, the wedding might be canceled.

TIFFANY

How does he know?

MILLIE

They saw you leaving Matt's and called Robyn.

TIFFANY

Busy bodies. So you know I put a move on Matt?

MILLIE

It's no crime to love a man and not
know when to let go. Look how long I
hung onto Jimbo.

84 EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Matt pulls his car into Robyn's driveway and as he exits his
vehicle Robert pulls his SUV alongside it. The contingent
files out of the SUV.

MATT

Quite the entourage.

BETTY

We all care. That's why we're here.

Tiffany runs over to Matt and inspects his swollen, black
eye.

TIFFANY

God, that's nasty. Please forgive me.

MATT

Glad you're here to back me up. I know
this is awkward for you. But Robyn is
going to be a tough sell.

BETTY

You'll startle her and the kids if you
ring the doorbell.

MATT

If I call her, she likely won't
answer.

ROBERT

I've already messed up one phone call
to her.

BETTY

For heaven's sake, I'll make the call.

With the others huddled around her, Betty makes the call. She
smiles and gives a thumbs up when Robyn answers.

BETTY

So sorry to bother you again at this
ungodly hour. But I'm standing in your
driveway with four other people.

85 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

Robyn, holding her phone, bolts out of bed and runs to her window overlooking the driveway.

ROBYN

Oh my God! Matt and Tiffany are with you?

86 EXT. BAXTER DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

BETTY

They want to tell you what happened and what didn't happen.

87 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

ROBYN

Tell everybody to go home. The wedding is off. Period. Merry Christmas.

Robyn ends the call.

88 EXT. BAXTER DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

MATT

I have a key. Maybe she'll have me arrested but I'm going in and fight for the woman I love.

TIFFANY

I'm going in with you.

ROBERT

We all are.

Matt walks up to the front door, inserts his key and walks in, followed by the others.

89 INT. BAXTER HOME - NIGHT

They all are standing in the living room as Matt calls Robyn on his phone.

MATT

Not surprised this went to voicemail. We're all in your living room and we're not leaving until you talk to us.

After a couple moments that feel like an eternity, Robyn, in

her nightgown, descends the stairs and walks over to the group in her living room. She sees Matt's swollen, black eye and steps nearer to him for a closer inspection.

ROBYN

My God! Your eye! It's so black it's purplish.

MATT

If you think my eye hurts, you should feel how much my heart hurts. The thought of losing you is crushing me.

ROBYN

Tiffany always is getting between you and me. I won't marry a guy whose heart, or part of it, belongs to somebody else.

Robyn cocks her head and looks defiantly at Tiffany.

TIFFANY

I showed up uninvited at his house and put a move on him. He totally resisted me. I got pissed and threw a baseball at him and hit him in the eye.

ROBYN

You could've thrown the baseball at him after he fucked your ears off.

TIFFANY

If he had fucked me, I would've sprinkled him with incense. Not maim him.

MILLIE

Oh, dear. Too much information.

ROBERT

We all wouldn't be here if we didn't believe Matt and Tiffany.

TIFFANY

He loves you. Don't punish him for what I did. And don't punish yourself.

MATT

I'm begging you not to cancel the wedding. I love you.

Robyn peers closely at his face.

ROBYN

I can see the impression of the
baseball seams around your eye. And I
can see your love beaming from your
good eye.

She smiles and kisses him gently on the lips.

ROBYN

OK, Coach. I've caught your pathetic
pitch for love. Even if Tiffany threw
it.

MATT

So you'll marry me today?

ROBYN

You'll look sort of roguish with your
gargoyle eye. Our wedding pictures
will go viral.

Matt and Robyn kiss tenderly as the others applaud. Mickey,
Timmy and Billy in their pajamas walk into the room.

TIMMY

What the heck is going on?

BILLY

Hey, where did you get the shiner?

MICKEY

Dad, you didn't keep your eye on the
ball.

MATT

Actually, I did.

ROBYN

Back to bed, boys. We've got a wedding
in a few hours.

BILLY

(Excitedly)

Hey, Santa already was here. Look at
at all the presents under the
Christmas tree.

Billy, Timmy and Mickey run over to the tree and start
ripping open packages.

ROBYN

Now that you're here Matt, you tell them they have to go back to bed.

TIFFANY

I'll do it. It's my fault they're up at this hour.

Tiffany walks over to the boys, talks softly to them for a few moments and they happily run up the stairs back to bed. Smiling, Tiffany walks back to the group.

MATT

That was amazing. What did you say?

TIFFANY

If they went back to bed immediately, I'd have my brother stop by this summer and play catch with them.

ROBYN

Your brother?

TIFFANY

Roy Underhill.

MATT

The Yankees' star pitcher?

TIFFANY

Why do you think I throw a baseball so hard?

FADE OUT:

THE END