

COCA-CONDO

By

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INT. CONDO - DAY

A piece of white paper - A pen begins to write, ELLA'S soft voice repeats the words.

ELLA (V.O.)

I don't know how to write what I want to say, because what I want to say I want to actually say, and not write. But we can't always get what we want. In fact we shouldn't.

Ella, beautifully chic and halfway through thirty, looks across the living room toward the balcony -

There her shirtless, jock husband looks down at New York City below. He holds a silver DESERT EAGLE over the railing, staring at it. He pulls the hammer back, then releases it

Ella writes.

ELLA (V.O.)

It's hard not to cry as I write this. But I'm getting better at holding back tears. It just sucks because I know all the things I thought would make me happy are what I have to give up.

Two tear-drops stain the page. Ella checks if Dan is coming, then continues.

ELLA (V.O.)

Trust is the thinnest line you can walk, and what's true exists only in our memories. My memories are full of truths--

The balcony door slams. Dan now stands in the living room, gun in hand.

DAN

Do we have milk?

ELLA

No.

DAN

I'm going to the store.

He leaves the room, Ella continues writing.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA (V.O.)

When we met, I was the weak and
confused woman I was born to play.

She looks over to see the program for a Broadway play - It says "**Ugly and Beautiful**" beneath the poster-art of Ella and a young man. Ella wears a red dress and faces right, while her co-star faces left, wearing a tweed jacket and a Fedora pulled down over his eye - She reminisces...

A gunshot sounds in the next room. Ella runs to investigate.

INT. BEDROOM

She runs into the bedroom - Dan is putting his pants on, there's a bullet hole in the closet door.

DAN

I threw it on the bed and it went
off.

She rolls her eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Ella's at her page again.

ELLA (V.O.)

Mostly, I'm afraid that what is so
easy will become hard with time.
And you'll only get younger as I
get older. And I know one thing
most of all. You don't deserve a
broken heart. And I'm not giving
that to you. If you look closer,
I'm giving you something much, much
more. The opposite-

DAN

...Ella!

Ella looks over at Dan, who has suddenly appeared again.

DAN

You deaf?

ELLA

Sorry, I was concentrating.

DAN

What are you writing there?

ELLA

Just a letter to my mom.

DAN

A letter, why don't you call her?

ELLA

What do you want?!

DAN

I was asking if you want to come
take a walk.

ELLA

No, I'm good.

Dan gone, Ella leans back on the recliner, the only piece of furniture left besides the little table she's writing on.

She looks back to the "*Ugly and Beautiful*" program; the sound of a theater audiences' CHEERS and APPLAUSE rises from the silence into a deafening crescendo.

ELLA (V.O.)

I always believed I was born in the
wrong time.

The theater audience blends into the cheering of a stadium crowd -

EXT. GIANTS STADIUM BASEBALL GAME - DAY

- *SLAM!* A bat connects with a baseball; home-run.

In the stands, a group of 19 year-olds watch - They look like hoodlums with expensive fashion sense - GANGSTA, LYVE and LD pass a liquor bottle among themselves, while KELLY, a scantily clad lady, snuggles up to the only one of them who isn't dressed like a mugger: TANNAM

Tannam whispers something in Kelly's ear. They leave their seats as their friends throw popcorn at them.

GANGSTA

Where you going?!

LD hits Gangsta's arm.

(CONTINUED)

LD
To fuck, idiot.

LYVE
This is us!

Lyve points to the sky, the crowd roars - LD extends a baseball glove, catching a stray ball. In a flash, Gangsta takes the ball from his open glove.

LD
Yo, G, pass that!

GANGSTA
What are you saying, I caught this.

LD
Don't cheese me bro, you don't even like baseball!

GANGSTA
I'm here, aren't I? Pass that rum.

LD
Seriously?

GANGSTA
Here, you want it?

Gangsta turns around and gets a LITTLE KID'S attention.

GANGSTA
Hey buddy! Catch.

He tosses the Kid the ball as LD looks on.

INT. BOWELS OF GIANTS STADIUM SAME MOMENT

Kelly and Tannam hold hands as they walk through the stadium, eventually finding an empty stairwell.

TANNAM
Check this place, come here sexy.

He pulls Kelly close for a kiss, she resists.

KELLY
No, wait.

TANNAM
What?

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

Just, wait. Not right here.

TANNAM

Why, you don't feel like a little slut right now?

KELLY

What? I just said no now, fuck off.

Kelly starts to panic on the inside. She looks away and it gets hard for her to breath.

TANNAM

Baby, what's wrong?

He pulls her in, but she quickly pulls away.

KELLY

No, Tannam, wait.

TANNAM

Okay.

Kelly says nothing, instead growing more and more uneasy.

TANNAM

Are you trying to break up with me?

KELLY

(suddenly hugging him)

NO! I love you more than anything in the whole world and nothing could ever take me away from you! I don't want to be stupid and crazy anymore I don't care about partying I just care about you!

TANNAM

So you cheated on me?

Kelly cries harder, face buried in Tannam's shirt.

TANNAM (CONTD)

With Sean?

Kelly freezes, un-glues herself from Tannam. She looks at him.

KELLY

What?

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

You cheated on me with Sean.

Kelly backs away from him.

TANNAM (CONTD)

I know.

KELLY

Oh my god!

She breaks down, sitting on the stairs.

KELLY (CONTD)

(crying)

That's so fucking embarrassing!

Kelly cries as hard as it is possible for a girl to cry. Tannam just stands there, watching. She slumps against the wall, hand over mouth, hating herself.

Some DUDES enter the stairwell.

DUDE

Oh shit. Who's getting dumped?

The dude looks from Tannam to Kelly and then offers Tannam a fist-bump.

TANNAM

(shakes his head)

DUDE

Word.

The dudes leave.

KELLY

I'm really sorry. Is that why you wouldn't have sex with me all week?

TANNAM

Look, I'm gonna go-

KELLY

No! Tannam, please! I love you!

She gets up to hug him, he moves away.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Why didn't you just tell me you knew right away- who told you?

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

It doesn't matter.

KELLY

Yeah. Well it's not fair. I know you don't hate me because you wouldn't have waited for me to tell you-

TANNAM

Yeah, you're right, I thought if you confessed I'd see it differently. But I don't.

KELLY

Baby-

TANNAM

No, I'm gonna go. You're forgiven, alright?

He turns around and walks down the stairs.

KELLY

Tannam! Please! Don't just go! What am I going to tell everybody?!

TANNAM

Be honest.

He's gone.

EXT. A BACKYARD - NIGHT

Tannam, Gangsta, LD, Lyve, and a couple of GIRLS relax on pool chairs, smoking and drinking.

GIRL

If it's any consolation, I thought she had bad teeth.

TANNAM

Thanks.

GIRL

You're welcome!

LD

Come here you, giving advice and shit.

LD hugs, and subsequently falls on top of, the girl.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

I wasn't giving advice! You're drunk, get off me!

LD

The council has spoken bro. That kid's getting his jaw smashed in tonight.

TANNAM

No man not tonight, fuck it.

GANGSTA

Sean's a fuckin punk, owes me money, been going behind our backs with this drug shit, and now he fucked your girl. He fucked your fuckin girl.

LYVE

That's fucked up man.

GIRL

Are you gonna let him get away with that?

GANGSTA

Yo, Tan, we're gonna fuck this kid up anyway. Are you gonna man up?

Tannam looks around at his crew.

GANGSTA

My man, we've had beef with Sean over enough shit, for enough time--

Gangsta takes off his own FITTED HAT and carefully places it on Tannam's head in true gangster fashion.

GANGSTA (CONTD)

--and it comes down to this.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

TANNAM

So what's the plan, he doesn't even live around here.

GANGSTA

First we're meeting Jordan, then we're gonna find Sean.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

Jordan? Why the fuck does he have
to come?

They reach JORDAN in the middle of the street, a kid who
looks like he's been around the block a few times.

GANGSTA

Yo J. *Woof-woof!*

JORDAN

What up boys. What up Tannam. Sorry
about this shit.

LYVE

Let's go get us a rat.

GANGSTA

Alright. Call that girl.

TANNAM

What?

LD

Call Kelly bro.

TANNAM

Why?

GANGSTA

So you can get her to call Sean and
ask him to come down for some
titties, and then we jump him.

TANNAM

That's retarded.

LYVE

Bro, you're an actor, right?! Just
fuckin act.

TANNAM

I just broke up with her.

LD

Exactly, she's probably been
waiting by the phone all night.

Tannam doesn't see a way out.

TANNAM

You fuckin owe me, all of you.

EXT. KELLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kelly picks up her cell phone

KELLY

Tannam?

EXT. OUTSIDE OF KELLY'S HOUSE - SAME MOMENT

TANNAM

Hey.

INTERCUT BETWEEN TANNAM and KELLY

KELLY

Baby! I miss you so much, I've been crying all night-

TANNAM

Don't cry. Can you come outside?

KELLY

Are you outside my house?

TANNAM

Yeah.

KELLY

It's one AM. You didn't even do this when we were dating.

TANNAM

Yeah, well, I've been doing some thinking.

EXT. KELLY'S SIDE PORCH

Kelly comes out of her side door, Tannam waits.

TANNAM

Kelly, listen to me. I promise I'll explain later, and we'll talk about everything, but can you please call Sean right now and ask him to come down here?

KELLY

What?

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM
I know, trust me-

KELLY
Are you with Jordan right now?
Tannam, its over don't worry, you
don't need-

TANNAM
No, Kelly, you should just do it
right now because I don't want
anything stupid to happen.

KELLY
Tannam this *is* stupid.

Tannam's friends suddenly creep up on the two of them.

JORDAN
Why you stalling Tannam?

KELLY
Are you fucking kidding me?

Gangsta picks Kelly up over his shoulder.

KELLY
What the hell! Tannam!

GANGSTA
Hey, keep it down, people are
trying to sleep.

KELLY
Yeah like my parents. Mom!-

Jordan puts a bandanna over Kelly's mouth, muffling her
cries.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Gangsta puts Kelly down on the street a block from her
house. The moment her feet touch the ground she starts to
slap and punch.

GANGSTA
(laughing)
Chill! Chill!

KELLY
You just fucking kidnapped me!

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

Kelly, just call him.

KELLY

Why don't you be a fucking man,
Tannam?

LD

Calm down girl. Have some of this

LD hands her a bottle of vodka, which she snatches.

KELLY

It's the least you can do.

LYVE

It's the least we will do.

GANGSTA

Now the least you can do is give
fuckboy a ring.

KELLY

I can't believe you guys are all
here-

GANGSTA

Why you gotta make drama all the
time?

KELLY

You're the ones who kidnapped me! I
could call the cops on you! I know
you idiots. Lyve, LD. I'll fucking
tell your parents. I'll call them
right now!

She takes her cell from her bra but Lyve snatches it.

KELLY

I'll knock on your door then.

LYVE

Don't lie, you love the attention.

KELLY

Just give me my phone!

Lyve tosses the phone to LD, LD to Gangsta.

KELLY

Guys! Fuck! Don't break my phone, I
swear to god!

(CONTINUED)

Gangsta pitches it to Jordan, then Jordan to Tannam. He holds it.

KELLY
Give it back Tannam.

JORDAN
Oh my god.

Jordan takes the phone from Tannam and holds it in front of Kelly's face. She lunges for it; he moves away. She SPITS on Jordan's face.

JORDAN
I expected that. But the only way
I'm not gonna smash this phone
right now, is if you call your boy
and ask him to meet you.

Kelly looks at her phone with pity.

LYVE
We can sit here all night.

KELLY
Yeah cus you have no life.

She looks at Tannam-

KELLY (CONTD)
And he's not my boy.

She snatches the phone back from Jordan and calls Sean.

KELLY
...Hi, Sean? Hey...Just at home,
naked...I was uh, thinking about
you and I couldn't get you out of
my head. It just kept turning me on
so I said I need to see you,
so...Yeah?...Okay, don't come to my
house because my parents are
sleeping. I'll meet you at the
mini-mart...Yes, I'll be
careful...Okay, bye.

She hangs up the phone.

GANGSTA
Well alright then.

KELLY
Now fuck all of you.

Kelly struts home, pissed.

Tannam watches her, wondering what the hell he's doing.

EXT. MINI MART

The crew hide behind the convenience store. Eventually a low-rider convertible comes rumbling down the street.

LD
Where the fuck did this fool get a whip like that?

GANGSTA
No wonder this guy fucked your girl, Tan.

JORDAN
Shut up and get down.

The car stops, SEAN, a serious wanna-be thug, steps out, leans up against the hood, and pulls out his cellphone.

Gangsta, Jordan, Lyve, LD and Tannam emerge from the darkness.

GANGSTA
Where you been dog?

SEAN
Are you kidding me?

LYVE
Nice car homes, where'd you get this?

SEAN
Bought it off my uncle.

JORDAN
With the two grand you owe us? You're fuckin' us. Can't even show your face. I mean I wouldn't either if I was setting people up with these fake deals.

SEAN
What, am I gonna get jumped now?

(CONTINUED)

Sean is reaching behind his back, where a GUN is tucked into his jeans behind his baggy shirt - LD notices.

LD

Nope!

In a flash LD jumps on the hood of the car and grabs both of Sean's arms, lifting them over his head. Gangsta grabs Sean's legs, LD jumps off the car, and they hold him over the ground like a cadaver. The GUN falls out of his pants.

Jordan picks it up.

Sean begins to struggle, and Jordan kicks him in the ribs. Then Gangsta and LD throw Sean at Tannam's feet.

SEAN

What are you doing here Tan? You're a good boy.

LD

Yeah, and good boys don't fuck other boys' girlfriends!

Sean laughs through the pain.

SEAN

Right. Well shit. I didn't think you'd find out I banged your girl. But it's okay, cus...she rode me hard.

At that, Tannam kicks Sean in the face and starts unleashing years of frustration onto Sean's body, just punching and punching. Finally the crew have to pull him off.

Sean spits blood.

Gangsta snatches Sean's GUN from Jordan.

GANGSTA

One more thing.

LYVE

Wow, what the fuck?

Everyone is on their toes, just looking at Gangsta. Gangsta points the GUN at the engine of Sean's car and squeezes the trigger - *CLICK!* - it's empty.

GANGSTA

Pussy.

Jordan takes out his own GUN and fires a shot through Sean's windshield.

GANGSTA
What the fuck!

They all sprint off down the street. Sean slowly gets in his car and floors it in the opposite direction.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Tannam runs to his apartment door and opens it with the utmost stealth. His father, FRANK, sleeps on the couch, the news on mute.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM

The most cramped collage of movie posters adorns one of the walls. His desk, bookshelf and laptop are his entire life and are all within arm's length of each other.

Tannam sees a package on his desk. Something he's been waiting for. He rips it open - a box - inside the box is a SCRIPT.

He's transfixed by the soft white vellum. "***Ugly and Beautiful***" written across the middle of the page. He dreamily scans the bottom corner: "***...first produced on BROADWAY in 1998...***" - a hopeful look on Tannam's face.

Flipping to page 1, he devours every word. Drifts to his bed. Falls on his back, reads.

THUD!...THUD!...THUD!...THUD!...

INT. TANNAM'S BED - MORNING

Tannam sleeps, a THUD pounding away in his head. He wakes up and it stops.

INT. DAVE'S BURGERS - DAY

Flattening burgers - THUD!...THUD!...THUD!

Tannam is tired and uninspired, hammering freshly rolled up balls of meat into patties for the days burgers at a run-down burger-and-fries restaurant.

Tannam's boss DAVE, a greasy bastard, emerges from the fridge room with a cellphone in his hand, holding it up.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE
How old does she look?

TANNAM
Dude what the fuck.

DAVE
It was her birthday man...

Dave is utterly distracted by the picture.

DAVE(CONTD)
...Wait, how old are you?

TANNAM
Alright I'm done here. You want me
to go on grill, or what?

DAVE
No, you're on fries today.

TANNAM
Fries, what? I just made all these
burgers-

DAVE
And I appreciate it, but it's a
busy day and I need a fry-guy who
can actually do fries, I can't have
a bunch of fry-guys who can't do
fries, coming in slowing me down,
cus they're fucking fry-guys, can't
even make some fuckin fries,
alright?!

DAVE is out of breath.

TANNAM
Yeah, alright.

INT. DAVE'S BURGERS - LATER

The place is packed. Dave yells orders and Tannam is making the fries by himself, shaking fry baskets, dumping, scooping, cupping and bagging like a mad-man.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tannam sits on his bed, reading Ugly and Beautiful.
There's a knock on the door and his father peers in.

FRANK
I've gotta go out.

TANNAM
Okay.

FRANK
You hungry?

TANNAM
No.

FRANK
Alright, well dinner's on the table
if you are.

TANNAM
Cool.

FRANK
Later.

Tannam doesn't respond.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM - MORNING

Tannam awakes, still clothed, the script lying on his chest.
He opens it and continues reading.

After a few seconds his phone ALARM goes off. He ignores
it...*THUD! THUD! THUD!*...

INT. BURGER JOINT - DAY

...*THUD! THUD!* - Tannam hammers out burger patties.

Dave emerges from the employee bathroom, a toilet flushing
within.

DAVE
Holy shit, literally. That's why I
don't eat here.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM
Done. Grill?

DAVE
Sorry.

INT. BURGER JOINT - LATER

Tannam shakes, dumps and scoops fries, depressed as can be.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Tannam walks home. Two dark figures in baggy clothes quietly follow him. One of them gets close and steps on Tannam's shoe. He turns around:

MUGGER
What's good homie?

The second MUGGER punches Tannam in the stomach and he drops to his knees. One of them grabs Tannam in a choke-hold while the other forcefully takes his backpack.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT

Tannam opens the door, Frank is asleep on the couch, a black and white film on the television.

Tannam walks past and, noticing the movie, stops to watch. The television illuminates his sweaty face. He forget his problems watching the screen.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM - MORNING

Tannam wakes up to his alarm, the SCRIPT lying on his chest. In his head it's *THUD! THUD! THUD!...*

INT. BURGER JOINT - DAY

...THUD! THUD! THUD!-

Hammering out burgers again. Dave is cutting vegetables.

TANNAM
So Dave, grill today?

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

I need you on fries one more day,
it's Friday, busiest day.

TANNAM

Tomorrow? I can't, I have an
audition. I told you.

DAVE

A what?

TANNAM

An audition.

DAVE

What the hell is an audition?

TANNAM

Are you serious?

DAVE

Yeah!

TANNAM

It's an audition for acting, like
they test you to see if you can
play the part!

DAVE

Acting? What, are you an actor now?

TANNAM

I told you this man, Dave, come on.
You gotta stop smoking so much
weed.

DAVE

Hey! I'm the boss here, you don't
tell me nothing. What's this, some
big movie?

TANNAM

It's a play.

DAVE

A play? Tannam, you got a job here,
what are you in high-school? A
play.

TANNAM

I'm trying to start a career,
alright?

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

Ah fuck you kids and your careers.
A career doing what? Playing a
tree? What, is this Broadway or
something?

TANNAM

Yeah!

DAVE

Broadway?

Tannam nods, Dave laughs.

TANNAM

What?

DAVE

(laughing)

Nah, just, you- nah, nothing,
nothing. Go. Have fun. But fries
today.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tannam creeps past his sleeping father again, the TV is off
this time.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM

Tannam picks up the SCRIPT, looks at it. Then puts it down
and lies on his bed. Closes his eyes.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM - MORNING

An ALARM beeps, it's 7AM. Tannam wakes up with a smile on
his face, darts out of bed.

He brushes his teeth, does his hair in the mirror, making
sure it's perfect.

He shaves. He checks his face for blemishes. He does some
facial exercises, vocal exercises, stretches, a roll-down.

INT. KITCHEN

Tannam eats a shit-load of scrambled eggs, toast and bacon, just shoving it in his mouth.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Tannam screams at the top of his lungs. He puts on dress shoes, does a shitty little tap-dance routine, and walks out the door.

INT. CASTING STUDIO - WAITING ROOM - DAY

The room is quite, full of expectant actors. Half the room is male, and the other female. The males almost look like Tannam, but of course he outshines them all.

At the reception, a very somber lady hands Tannam a form.

LADY

You are?

TANNAM

Tannam.

LADY

Last name.

TANNAM

Is there another Tannam?

LADY

You're a funny kid. Fill this out.

Tannam takes the sheet and fills out his acting information, returning the form but keeping the pen.

He sits down to wait. Then it happens: The door handle turns, the door opens, and in steps the beautiful Ella. Time slows down.

Ella reaches the Lady's desk.

ELLA

H-

LADY

Name?

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Ella.

LADY

Last name.

ELLA

Is there another Ella?

The Lady bitterly hands Ella the form. Ella turns around and notices she doesn't have a pen, then eyes the one in Tannam's hand. She approaches him.

ELLA

Pen?

TANNAM

Pen.

Tannam hands it over.

ELLA

Thanks.

TANNAM

You're welcome.

Ella looks like she hasn't heard *you're welcome* in a while.

A GUY and GIRL emerge from the audition room looking self conscious. They quietly leave the premises as the stern-eyed, female CASTING DIRECTOR walks out into the waiting room, looking from actor to actor.

CASTING TIPPY

You.

She points to Ella.

CASTING TIPPY (CONTD)

With you.

She points to Tannam.

INT. AUDITION ROOM

The Casting Director sits down alongside two other theater types. Ella holds her AUDITION SIDES, while Tannam is empty handed. On the actor's side of the room is a single chair and some blocking tape on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CASTING DIRECTOR

Okay- Did your agent send you the sides?

TANNAM

Yeah, I read it a few times. I know my lines.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Whatever you say. Okay, so, you are?

TANNAM

Tannam.

CASTING DIRECTOR

And you are?

ELLA

Ella.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Ella and Tannam, wonderful. Alright. Take it away, right up until the kiss.

Tannam sits on the chair, and Ella takes her place on the tape mark...

TANNAM (TYLER)

...Action!

ELLA (CASHMERE)

Do you love me, Henry? I mean really, truly love me. I know you like me. Or at least you like to be seen with me. That much is clear...

Tears form in Ella's eyes.

ELLA (CASHMERE) (CONTD)

But...A woman needs to know...she needs to know if she's...if she's...wasting her...

She starts to full-out cry.

TANNAM (TYLER)

Cut! Cut!

He stands up.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM (TYLER) (CONTD)
That's too much, Cash. It's good
you're so involved, but you're
stronger than that. We see a little
tear, just a twinkle, and we know
she's hurting on the inside. But on
the outside-

ELLA (CASHMERE)
No Tyler, I'm not acting! It's just
too much.

Ella drops to her knees and sobs uncontrollably.

TANNAM (TYLER)
Everybody take ten! Take ten
elsewhere please, off the set! Off
the set! Thank you!

ELLA (CASHMERE)
I'm sorry! I'm sorry everyone!

TANNAM (TYLER)
What's the matter? Cashmere?
Darling, what's the matter?

ELLA (CASHMERE)
(darting to her feet)
THAT'S THE MATTER! I'm your
darling, that's the matter! I'm
everybody's darling!

TANNAM (TYLER)
It's your husband, isn't it?

ELLA (CASHMERE)
I'm trapped Tyler, don't you see?!
At home I love my husband, at work
I love you, here in front of the
cameras I love this Henry, and to
each I pretend the other is a
ghost, but they haunt me Tyler! I
have three hearts. A woman is not
built to hold three hearts.

TANNAM (TYLER)
Well, Henry isn't real.

ELLA (CASHMERE)
He feels real to me.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM (TYLER)
Correct me if I'm wrong, but this
is a case-study in taking
responsibility for your actions.

ELLA (CASHMERE)
Don't you judge me.

TANNAM (TYLER)
It's the truth, nothing more.

ELLA (CASHMERE)
Easy for you to say! You're just a
man, and men get what they want.
Like my husband, like this Henry-

TANNAM (TYLER)
Henry isn't real!

ELLA (CASHMERE)
HE FEELS REAL TO ME!

TANNAM (TYLER)
So I forced you into making love to
me, is that it?

ELLA (CASHMERE)
Indirectly, yes.

TANNAM (TYLER)
You've lost your mind.

ELLA (CASHMERE)
That's exactly my point. I've lost
everything to you. To men. You
don't know what it's like to be a
woman like me.

TANNAM (TYLER)
Beautiful.

ELLA (CASHMERE)
It's no more than a curse. To be
desired, chased like a prize. It
makes one blind to the truth.

TANNAM (TYLER)
The truth is that I love you!

ELLA (CASHMERE)
And I am blind to it! Too much love
has gouged my eyes out.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM (TYLER)
Oh, you are so dramatic!

ELLA (CASHMERE)
DON'T YOU JUDGE ME!

Ella steps venomously toward Tannam. They inch closer and closer the more they speak.

TANNAM (TYLER)
AND WHY SHOULDN'T I?! After all it was you who trapped me! You were unfaithful to your husband, you chose that, and you stole my heart only to throw it back in my face!

ELLA (CASHMERE)
WELL I REGRET EVER LOOKING AT YOUR STUPID FACE!

TANNAM (TYLER)
WELL I REGRET EVER PUTTING YOU IN THIS STUPID PICTURE!

ELLA (CASHMERE)
I HATE YOU!

TANNAM (TYLER)
I HATE YOU TOO!

As close as can be, Tannam and Ella lock lips and embrace in the most passionate kiss of all time...

The audition panel is stunned. Tannam and Ella step out of their embrace and out of character.

Silence. The panel simply take in the sight of Tannam and Ella together. One of them whispers something to another.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Okay. You're hired.

ELLA & TANNAM
What?

CASTING DIRECTOR
Yup, you're perfect for these roles. Um, yeah, I think we're done here. Thank you very much. We have your information and we'll be in touch with your agents. Sound good?

Ella and Tannam look at one another.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA & TANNAM

Okay.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Cool. That's it.

Ella and Tannam slowly make their way out of the audition room, and leave the waiting room together.

The Casting Director comes out into the waiting room.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Okay, nobody panic, but you can all go home now.

INT. CASTING STUDIO

Tannam and Ella reach the bottom of the stairs, speechless. They stand there, unsure of how to react, just smiling at one another.

ELLA

I'm Ella.

TANNAM

Tannam.

They shake hands. Tannam notices her WEDDING RING and can't take his eyes off it.

ELLA

You okay?

TANNAM

Uh, no, I just realized I have to take the biggest shit. Excuse me.

Tannam runs back up the stairs.

INT. CASTING STUDIO - TOP FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Tannam is about to descend the stairs when he sees Ella waiting for him right where he left her. He panics silently.

Tannam calmly walks down the stairs toward her.

ELLA

Feel lighter?

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

Oh yeah. That was a good shit.

ELLA

(beaming)

Good!

TANNAM

Yeah...Uh...

ELLA

Yeah, I thought I'd wait for you and we should maybe hang out or something, get to know each other. I mean we just got cast in a play, we're co-stars, so.

TANNAM

Right, yeah, good idea. That's cool. Well I'm Tanna- Right.

ELLA

Must have been a really good shit.

TANNAM

Sorry, it's just, you're a very good actress. Very pretty-- aw man.

Tannam hangs his head. Ella laughs.

TANNAM (CONTD)

That was wrong, you're married and, not that I was looking at your ring, I was just looking at your hands, I mean not looking at them, I just noticed them.

ELLA

I get it. You're young and nubile.

TANNAM

(deep breath)

Okay, normal time. What's up?

Ella laughs again.

ELLA

Well are you hungry?

(A beat)

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM
Want a free burger?

INT. BURGER JOINT - DAY

Ella and Tannam sit at a table eating burgers.

ELLA
Way to show me up, memorizing your
lines.

TANNAM
Its really not about the lines.

ELLA
Oh no?

TANNAM
Nope.

ELLA
Interesting. So I bet you'd say
we're artists then. As actors.

TANNAM
What do you think?

ELLA
I dunno. What is an artist? One who
makes art.

TANNAM
And what is art? A performance
is art.

ELLA
Go on.

TANNAM
If you can make someone feel
something, learn something and
never forget it, through acting,
that's art.

ELLA
Yeah. I agree. So we shouldn't be
acting, but communicating?

Ella looks at Tannam with appreciation. Tannam feels awkward
at the long pause.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

(a beat)

How's your marriage?

Ella looks at him with playful curiosity.

ELLA

How's my marriage?

TANNAM

...Yeah?

ELLA

It's good.

TANNAM

Is it?...

ELLA

Yeah.

TANNAM

Okay.

ELLA

Okay...

TANNAM

Sorry.

ELLA

For what?

TANNAM

I don't know, you made me feel weird.

ELLA

You made me feel weird.

TANNAM

Okay then we're even.

Ella looks at Tannam as he blushes, smiling. She doesn't look away...

INT. DOWNTOWN OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Ella makes Tannam chase her. Rushing off down the hall of the skyscraper, they turn left into a small elevator lobby.

A man is holding the elevator for them.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Thanks, but we're going down.

Another elevator arrives, which they enter.

TANNAM

What are you doing!?

ELLA

Who do you think I'm doing?

She steps towards him. He's scared.

Ella kisses him deeply and begins undressing.

TANNAM

You're taking off your clothes.

ELLA

Yeah right, you think you'll ever see me with my clothes off?

He can't resist her. She presses the STOP button.

INT. TANNAM'S BED - MORNING

The 7 AM alarm goes off. Tannam looks over and groans, dragging himself out of bed.

THUD! THUD!--

INT. DAVE'S BURGERS - DAY

Tannam pounds the last burger. Dave pats him on the back as he walks by.

DAVE

So, how was the "audition" mister fancy pants?

TANNAM

It was awesome Dave. You know why? Cus I got the part.

DAVE

Congratulations! And guess what else! You're on grill today!

TANNAM

Gee, thanks Dave! What a nice parting gift for my last day here.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

Where you going, Hollywood? You're in one play and you think you're hot shit, come on Tan.

TANNAM

I've also been in a commercial, Dave. I'm an actor now. I'm making like fifty thousand notes, I'm straight outta here bro!

DAVE

(a beat)

You what? Don't fuckin talk to me like that.

Tannam walks off, scoring a three-pointer with his gloves in the garbage bin.

TANNAM

Going on grill.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Ella and Dan, with their punk friend CAM, they're blond friend SAM, and their Jewish friend ADAM, hang out in a booth at a local bar.

CAM

Fuckin finally. To Ella, the first famous person I know!

They all drink jovially, Ella shakes her head to deny she possess any fame at all.

SAM

What's the role, is it juicy?

ELLA

Well I cheat on my husband.

The group look to Dan.

DAN

What, it's a play.

ADAM

I don't know I hear things can get pretty steamy up there on stage, all that chemistry flying around.

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Some theater fag? I'm not worried.

ELLA

Okay maybe now you should be.

Laughter.

CAM

So what you just cheat on your man and boom the play's over? Or what?

ELLA

Well, the it's about a woman in the 30's, me, who wants to be an actress so her rich husband bribes a famous director to put her in his movie. And she has an affair with him. But, the thing is, her husband is a serial killer who makes his money as a stock broker who kills his clients, and my character's been helping him but she gets sick of it.

Everyone is looking at Ella intently. She just stares back.

ELLA (CONT'D)

What?

ADAM

Then what happens?

ELLA

I'm not telling you the end.

CAM

You told us everything except the end, what happens after all that stuff?

ELLA

You'll have to come see the play.

ADAM & CAM

Great!/That's what I fuckin thought!/Don't be like that!

ELLA

I'm serious I swore to secrecy, I would actually get sued.

(CONTINUED)

CAM
Are you kidding me? You know we're
not gonna tell anybody!

SAM
What the fuck is wrong with you?
It's a play, you can read it.

Cam and Adam calm down.

SAM
(looking to Dan)
So who is your co-star Ella, Brad
Pitt or something?

DAN
Yeah, probably more like Peter Pan.

He laughs at his joke.

ELLA
What? And I thought you didn't
care.

DAN
Well, who is it?

ELLA
...There's two guys, if you must
know.

They all cheer, except Dan.

INT. DAN'S CAR - LATER

Ella and Dan drive home.

DAN
Your friends are hilarious.

ELLA
Aren't they your friends too now?

DAN
Yeah.

INT. THEATER FOYER - DAY

Tannam enters the grand Broadway theater where rehearsals take place.

In the lobby he is immediately seized by the arm. TIPPY BORN, the middle-aged Broadway director, is a stern but freaky woman with horn-rimmed glasses. He recognizes her from the Audition Panel.

TIPPY
Are you Tannam?!

TANNAM
Yes!

TIPPY
Right not on time, follow. Kill
your ego-

She turns around and levels him a stern glance.

INT. EMPTY THEATER - STAGE

Tippy leads Tannam on to the stage. She raises her hand.
Lighting!

The LIGHTING GUY veers his spotlight onto TANNAM.

TANNAM
Excuse me!

Tippy swoops off stage. She reappears in the front row of theater seats, speaking through a Megaphone:

TIPPY
Silence. Readiness. Scene!

There's an awkward pause as TANNAM stands speechless in the middle of the stage.

TIPPY
Why?!

Tannam is frozen with fright. Tippy puts down her megaphone.

TIPPY
So the stage is yours. Are the
lights tickling your memory? What's
the issue that needs to be
addressed?

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

I just wasn't ready to be rushed on stage-

TIPPY

Rushed on stage? That really takes me back to when I GAVE A SHIT! Clearly you've never been in a production of this caliber.

TANNAM

No I haven't.

TIPPY

How badly do you want this?

TANNAM

Acting's all I've ever known-

TIPPY

Well then you do not know enough. If acting is all you know, it is not enough.

Tannam straightens up, looks ready to perform. There is a silence.

TANNAM AS TYLER

...Jimmy! Can I get lights 2 and 3 a couple feet to the left please! And that camera, on that marker. Perfect. Now Cashmere, stand a little to the left doll. Even more perfect.

Tippy interrupts him.

TIPPY

And what does your character want?

TANNAM

Well, he's got high standards for himself, hasn't been living up to them--

TIPPY

(through the Megaphone)

Boo!

Tannam covers his ears.

(CONTINUED)

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Cashmere. Woman. You want her hot little ass in the red tight-skin leather, like a shotgun being cocked every time she takes a step, it should be illegal, those tits, you can picture them oiled up, bouncing like-

TANNAM

Okay, I get it.

TIPPY

Oh, do you feel uncomfortable little boy? Those feelings are real. Embrace them. This is what you've been waiting for. You can't afford to be a bitch.

TANNAM

(deep breath)

Okay.

TIPPY

It's not okay! I want the animal in you to come screaming out! Scream for me!

TANNAM

What?

TIPPY

Scream, right now!

TANNAM

(screams)

TIPPY

What the hell was that!? Scream like a man for Christ's sake!

TANNAM

(screams again)

TIPPY

Oh for the love of god. Scream like you mean it! AAAAAAHH!--

TANNAM

AAAAAAAH!!!

(CONTINUED)

TIPPY

Better. Take five, I'll let the others in.

INT. CONDO - DAY

Ella sits by the phone watching TV and eating spaghetti.

DAN enters the condo with some shaggy loser, KHRIS, looking like they've had a long night.

ELLA

Oh hi husband, where have you been the past 30 hours?

DAN

Hey babe. Sorry, I should have called.

He walks over and kisses her.

DAN (CONT'D)

I'll take you out to dinner tonight, we'll go to that spot, your favorite.

ELLA

Sounds good.

She fakes a smile.

DAN

This is Khris. He'll be gone in a minute.

INT. ACTOR/CREW COMMON ROOM - DAY

Ella bounces atop Tannam, a chair against the door for ensured privacy.

INT. STAGE - REHEARSAL OF UGLY AND BEAUTIFUL

ACT II is being rehearsed. Tannam watches from the lighting booth, completely entrance by Ella.

Ella and GEOFF, the actor playing CLAYTON, are on stage.

CASHMERE

I can't take it anymore, all this killing. People look at me like they can see right through me.

(CONTINUED)

CLAYTON

That's just paranoia talking.

CASHMERE

And Why should paranoia have anything to say?

CLAYTON

We've got a job to do Cashmere-

CASHMERE

Don't Cashmere me. This isn't a job. You never were quick enough for your career, you had to take a short-cut.

CLAYTON

Are you forgetting we started this short-cut together?

CASHMERE

I know Clayton. But don't you think it's been going on too long?

CLAYTON

You loved it. Getting back at the top-hats one rich bastard at a time.

CASHMERE

Yes but now we've got top hats, Clayton, and we can't even wear 'em!

DOC, the lighting guy, nudges Tannam.

DOC

You think people are going to watch this shit?

TANNAM

Nah.

Back on stage, Clayton gestures toward the barren blackness around them--

CLAYTON

All that killing, it bought this beautiful house! It put you in this marvelous living room, look at it!

Cashmere thinks. Then,

(CONTINUED)

CASHMERE

It's just, can't we do it the old
fashioned way?

INT. TANNAM'S BUILDING - NIGHT

After rehearsal, TANNAM walks to his building. A car screeches around the corner. The windows roll down and Tannam is shook... A few eggs fly out and mess him up.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT

Tannam stands outside his door for a moment before entering. The lights are dim and his father in his usual spot, in front of the TV. Tannam cuts for his room.

FRANK

Happy hour over already?

TANNAM

Rehearsal.

FRANK

Rehearsal... How much they paying
for that anyway?

TANNAM

More than you've ever been paid.

FRANK

(irritated)

Oh yeah?

Tannam walks into his room. Frank turns back to the TV, looking sad more than anything.

INT. ELLA'S CONDO - NIGHT

Ella walks from the elevators to her condo door. She reaches it, and stands outside of it for a moment before entering.

Rock music at high-volume. Dan is standing in the living room topless, polishing his gun. He's got chains around his neck, smoking a cigar, wearing sunglasses.

ELLA

Dan!

(CONTINUED)

DAN

What!?

ELLA

Turn that down and talk to me!

DAN

You can't just barge out and then come back expecting the world on a silver platter!

Ella walks over to the stereo and shuts the music down.

ELLA

I'm sorry I stormed out. You still wanna take me out to dinner like you said?

DAN

Where have you been?

ELLA

I had rehearsal.

DAN

I already ate. We'll go tomorrow.

ELLA

Oh. Okay, cool.

Ella turns the music back on. Dan continues polishing his gun as she goes into the bathroom and closes the door.

INT. CONDO BATHROOM

Ella sits on the toilet and cries. There's a knock.

DAN (O.S.)

You gonna be in there long? I need the Vaseline.

Ella cracks the door and tosses him a jar of Vaseline.

She wallows in misery for a moment.

She puts on mascara, lip stick, cover up.

INT. CONDO LIVING ROOM

Dan is watching some stupid movie from the couch. Ella struts to stand between him and the TV.

Dan makes no moves and shows no emotion as Ella straddles him. She kisses him, more than he kisses her. Then he kisses her neck, starts to remove her clothing. He's being rough.

She holds onto the back of his neck as a TEAR runs down her cheek.

INT. THEATER - REHEARSAL OF ACT II - DAY

Ella (Cashmere) and Tannam (Tyler) are on stage.

A camera is near by and CASHMERE lounges on the couch. TYLER is typing away at a TYPEWRITER.

CASHMERE

Make love to me again.

TYLER

I can't right now Cash, cant you see what I'm doing?

CASHMERE

Can't you see what I'm wearing?

TYLER

There's a time for everything, isn't there.

CASHMERE

What are you working on?

TYLER

I'm re-writing your scene. Before you became this part I had no idea how this woman should sound.

CASHMERE

Hm, do I inspire you?

TYLER

(looking at her)

That would be an understatement.

CASHMERE

So come, make love to me! Breath me in, then spill me out onto the page!

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

You know that's not a bad idea.

He leaves his work and walks to her.

CASHMERE

To my husband I was always a dove,
or a kitty cat, some thing he liked
to look at, knowing it's his. But
to you, I'm a woman. And that's
what I wanna be.

She kisses him.

Tippy claps once from her seat in the audience.

TIPPY

Okay! Here's the thing, we're going
to take ten minutes and when we
come back, I'm going to find a way
to get what I know you have inside
of you, outside of you. Because
that was good. Okay? It was good,
but it wasn't Broadway.

The house lights come on. Ella looks away from Tannam.

INT. STAGE - TEN MINUTES LATER

Tippy sits in the front row. She barks commands which are promptly obeyed

TIPPY

Lights off! A-1 on!

Two SPOTLIGHTS hit the stage.

TIPPY

Cashmere and Clayton, step into the
spotlight.

Ella and Geoff step out.

TIPPY

Imagine you are a soul with no
body, no mind, only emotion which
you manifest in words. From the
beginning, I want to see only your
words, hear them I mean, and see
nothing else.

Silence, as the actors adjust.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

...My love.

GEOFF

Yes, my love.

CASHMERE

I love you.

CLAYTON

...I love you too. I love you very much. I won't let anything bad happen to us.

TIPPY

And lights out! Lights up!

The lights go up and ELLA and GEOFF are dazed.

TIPPY

Scene 2! Go.

ELLA

Line.

TIPPY

Excuse me dear, it's your third line.

ELLA

I know, I'm sorry--

TIPPY

Rule number one, no regrets! Acting is about the laws of nature! You are no where without your self in the greater sense. Her line.

UNDERSTUDY

(from the darkness)

I was thinking--

ELLA

-I was thinking today, walking home, wouldn't it be nice to move!

GEOFF

Fuck, line.

TIPPY

You imbeciles!

(CONTINUED)

GEOFF
It's these damn lights!

TIPPY
Don't you fucking yell at me!

GEOFF
I'm sorry! It's just really stressful-

TIPPY
You're damn right it's stressful!
This isn't a school play!-

GEOFF
I know, I know!

TIPPY
You don't know!--

EXT. BACK OF THEATER

Tannam slips out of a back exit, taking out a cigarette.

Ella comes barging out of the theater. She stops and takes a look at TANNAM, frustration seeping out of her eyes. Then she takes off, speed walking.

TANNAM
Ella!

She turns around.

ELLA
No! I can't do this any more I'm not fucking around with you, that was stupid and I'm sorry but I can't do any of this anymore because it's just too much and I'm so naive, always thinking about what the best possible thing that could happen is, oh isn't that cute, wouldn't that be so amazing, and then I go out and think it could happen and of course it does and it ruins everything!

Ella runs away. Tannam runs after her again, tries to outrun her and get in front.

She stops and hits him in the arm.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA
You're a little kid! I'm married,
stay away from me.

She runs off again. Tannam doesn't follow.

INT. THEATER

Tannam returns to the stage to Tippy yelling his name.

TANNAM
Here!

He stands in the spotlight facing Geoff.

TIPPY
We're skipping that coward Ella's
scenes, so this is your first with
Clayton. Do you know your lines, be
honest.

TANNAM
Yeah.

TIPPY
Go.

GEOFF
Excuse me, you're Tyler Wize, the
famous director?

Tannam stares at Geoff, he's forgotten his line.

INT. CONDO PARTY - NIGHT

Ella walks in to the most raucous party imaginable. Her
condo is full of people dancing, drinking and everything
else.

Ella trudges through the party, pinching, pushing and
shouting in vain.
She reaches the balcony, and safety... Until she finds the
balcony occupied by JUNKIES. Also Sam, Cam and Adam.

ELLA
Hey! What are you doing?!

JUNKIE
Just H girl, relax.

ELLA
Get the fuck out of my house!

JUNKIE
Wow you live here?!

Ella snatches the syringe from his hand and throws it off the the 30th story balcony. The junkies leave, sad.

JUNKIE
Those are really sharp man.

SAM
Ella! What the fuck girl.

ELLA
Did you know about this?

SAM
Yeah, but it got a little out of hand. It sucks in there.

CAM
I hate it, I'm too old for that much bass.

ELLA
Well he didn't invite me.

A chair is thrown through the balcony window.

INT. CONDO BALCONY - LATE NIGHT

Its much later now. Ella wakes up on the balcony, where she had passed out.

INT. CONDO BEDROOM

Ella enters as Dan comes out of the washroom.

ELLA
Hey.

DAN
Hey babe, you have a good night?

ELLA
Thanks for the surprise party.

(CONTINUED)

DAN
Did you not get the email?

ELLA
You emailed me?

DAN
What are you complaining about,
it's a party!

ELLA
Yeah.

She turns around to walk out.

DAN
Babe wait!

He grabs her arm.

DAN
I've been waiting for you all
night.

ELLA
No.

He pulls her closer.

DAN
Come on, I want to show you
something.

ELLA
(pissed)
I've already seen your stupid abs.

She tries to squirm away again but he reels her in.

DAN
(laughing)
No, stop, Ella stop! I'm sorry
about the party okay? Bad timing, I
won't have another one without your
permission okay?. Just let me show
you something.

She sighs.

ELLA
Fine, show me.

DAN

Come.

Dan pulls her by the hand to the bed and he sits her down.

DAN

Close your eyes.

Hundred dollar bills rain over her. She opens her eyes and sees the money. Dan holds a suitcase packed with cash. She's not entirely annoyed any more, though she's trying to be.

ELLA

That's a lot of money.

DAN

A lot.

ELLA

Of dirty money?

DAN

This, baby, is wall street money. Remember what I told you? I've been playing the stocks a bit, I've been working with a broker. It's only been a month.

ELLA

You're stock went that high in a month? Have you been reading behind my back?

DAN

There's a science to this shit, I'll explain everything tomorrow when we're by a computer.

Dan rubs the money all over himself, making Ella laugh. Then he uses it to caress her. She doesn't resist.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Dan and Ella ride in a cab.

ELLA

I guess you're going to be getting pretty smashed tonight considering you're not driving.

(CONTINUED)

DAN
Yeah, why not?

ELLA
It's Tuesday.

DAN
The city don't sleep.

ELLA
It does work.

DAN
Turn a block down.

CAB DRIVER
But right here--

DAN
We're going in through the back.

INT. ELEVATOR - OTHER CONDO

ELLA
So is this a friend of yours, or a
friend of a friend of yours?

DAN
It's a work party.

They reach the 50th floor Penthouse.

INT. PENTHOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

The insane and very colorful party is at least 200 strong. The penthouse is comprised of several floors, all of which are filled with people.

At the far end, on a huge couch installment, sits KING, a 200 pound Samoan watching a soccer game. He's shirtless, tattooed and surrounded by swimsuit models. He wears pimp sunglasses. This is the man Dan walks up to, holding Ella's hand.

Ella takes on look and turns around.

DAN
El!

(CONTINUED)

KING
Yo! Who dat girl?!

DAN
That's my girl, she's pregnant and
she has to go throw up sometimes.

KING
You sure?

DAN
What?

KING
Ah my boy, come here, whats up man
I'm just playing. Make some room
for this man.

He shoos some of his entourage off the couch, Dan sits. King
orders a bunch of girls to sit on his lap.

KING
Here, 4 girls better than 1 girl?

DAN
Yeah but that's my wife man.

KING
A ring is removable, ya dick ain't.

King laughs loudly.

KING
Dan the man, how's the new game
been to you?

DAN
Beats the fuck out of my job,
honestly, no idea how people do it.

INT. BY THE DOOR

Ella gets to the door, her way is blocked by a GUARD.

GUARD
Where to?

ELLA
I'm going home.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD

Look lady, we told you. We have drinks, food, bottles of water too if the girls' feeling woozy. We have toilets, a pool, we got everything. Doors open at two AM.

GUARD

Doors open? I shouldn't even be here.

GUARD

Well you're here, and I seen you come in with King's boy, so at two you can leave.

ELLA

It's- are you kidding me? It's nine.

INT. KING'S COUCH

Dan pulls a thick envelope from his jacket which he hands to King.

DAN

And hey, let me not stand on ceremony.

KING

Mothafucka you already sat on ceremony! But I be straight with you, I like that I don't have to ask. Shit go smoothly?

DAN

Too easy.

KING

Motherfuckers wanna get high man! You know how many rappers are at this party? It ain't even illegal to sell drugs no more! You living tight?

DAN

I'm living alright but, man. You have a helicopter.

KING

I'm da king Dan, you know that. I mean Dan, you wanna live better?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KING (cont'd)

It's all in your mind. Listen, you go swimming or whatever the fuck you wanna do. Come back when you've smoked a blunt or whatever the fuck you toke. There's bottles everywhere. Mad hoes in this joint. Or find your wifey, you know. Do what you gotta do, then come back and tell me how you wanna live.

INT. CONDO PARTY - POOL - LATER

Dan is chilling by the pool, there are two GIRLS on either side of him, chatting him up. A third is massaging his shoulders. Drifting in front of Dan is a floating board designed for snorting white in the pool. Next to it is a floating bar.

Ella stands over Dan.

ELLA

Hey babe.

Dan quickly detaches himself from the Girls and hops out.

DAN

Hey, where'd you go, I wanted to introduce you.

ELLA

To your work friend? No thanks.

DAN

Just come in the pool, let's get wasted.

ELLA

Why did you bring me here Dan, where am I?

DAN

You're on the top floor of the city, look at that view.

He goes behind her and points at the city.

DAN (CONT'D)

I want to share it with you.
Literally.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Dan, I know you're not playing the stock market, can you just stop lying to me, I'm your wife and I want to feel like it.

Dan swings back around to her front, looks into her eyes.

DAN

Hey, hey, how many people you know go to parties like this? Yeah I moved some blow, I didn't tell you cus I didn't want you thinking about whether or not I'm gonna end up in jail.

ELLA

Don't you think about that?

DAN

Jail's for idiots! Look at this place. This is drug money. We're in New York city, this city is built on drug money. Worse!

King calls from inside.

KING

Yo Danny boy!

ELLA

Wait, stay and finish this.

DAN

Just give me five minutes.

ELLA

Dan, no.

He leaves her.

INT. KING'S ROOM

King brings Dan into a small, private room.

KING

I wanted to show you something. Ever sold rock?

DAN

Nah man.

(CONTINUED)

KING

Well if you want to start making triple what you're making now, get the fuck outta that condo life and buy a mansion in the woods. Take this in.

He pulls out a pound of crack-cocaine.

DAN

Damn. How much is that worth?

KING

Why don't you find out?

INT. CONDO PARTY

Dan strolls back and spots Ella across the room talking to a bunch of trashy girls, a pained expression on her face.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE THEATER

Tannam leaves the Theater wearing nicer clothes than we're used to seeing him in. A car comes screeching to a stop in front of him, his friends, the usual suspects, inside.

LYVE snaps a quick picture.

LD

TMZ baby!

INT. CONDO - DAY

The home-phone rings. No one will hear it. There's faint moaning in the background. An answering machine records Ella's voice:

ELLA

(filtered)

Hey baby rehearsal was canceled tonight so I'm coming home with two bottles of wine and some steaks so see you soon, raaawwr!

INT. CONDO - BUILDING

ELLA walks down the hallway from the elevator with a bag from the grocery store and a bag from the liquor store.

She opens the door, not hesitating this time.

INT. CONDO

Ella walks into her condo, the shower is on.

She puts the groceries on the couch and walks towards the bedroom.

She sees a pair of smooth female LEGS on the bed. She slows down, creeps up and looks through the door at Sam, butt naked, reading a magazine.

After a brief moment of surprise, she whispers loudly:

ELLA

Sam!

Sam jerks around. Her face says more than words ever could. Ella stands over her, whispering passionately.

ELLA

This is a broken marriage!

Sam only shakes her head in disbelief.

ELLA

I'm not mad at you.

Sam is about to cry.

ELLA

I'm not, I swear, it's cool, we're all fucked. We're all fucked!

SAM

Ella-

ELLA

Sam, I'm not kidding, I love you. I'll see you tonight? Its game night baby. I'm going to go now. Have fun, I'm serious.

Ella splits with the wine and steaks. Sam is petrified.

EXT. ELLA'S BENCH - DAY

Ella is sitting on a bench, looking off into the Ocean. It doesn't take long for her to pull out her cellphone.

Tannam answers, it's noisy where he is.

TANNAM
(filtered)
Ella!

ELLA
Tannam!

TANNAM
(filtered)
Ella!

ELLA
Whats going on?!

TANNAM
(filtered)
I'm just at this stupid party!

ELLA
What?!

INT. BUNGALOW PARTY - DAY

TANNAM is in the basement of a small house, a party going on around him. Just the grimiest people

His boys are sitting with him on the couch.

TANNAM
I'm at a party!

INTERCUT BETWEEN TANNAM and ELLA:

ELLA
Sounds like fun!

TANNAM
What?!

ELLA
I SAID COME SEE ME!

Tannam steps outside.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM

I can't. We just got here, it's way across the city.

ELLA

Can't you drive?

TANNAM

No.

ELLA

Well can't you just-

She looks miserable.

TANNAM

What?

ELLA

Never mind, I'm just trying to kill some time.

TANNAM

Okay well I gotta go right now, Talk later, okay?

ELLA

Have fun.

Ella takes a nice swig of WINE and stares at the sunset.. Slowly but surely, she starts to cry. A little at first, until she is possessed by sadness.

INT. BUNGALOW PARTY - SAME MOMENT

Tannam returns to the couch. Some HOOD in a fitted hat approaches the boys.

HOOD

Yo J!

JORDAN

There's the man.

HOOD

Boys.

The boys acknowledge this guy they don't know. He sits across from them.

(CONTINUED)

JORDAN

What's the word? We getting re-upped?

HOOD

Aw yeah bruh, I got that kush right here.

JORDAN

Kush, what? Man I grow my shit, I thought you had blow?

HOOD

Man I did have blow, last week. This city is fucking high, I don't even have the supply for this demand.

GANGSTA

You serious?

HOOD

Yeah yo, but trust.

He hands Jordan a big bag of some shitty looking weed.

JORDAN

What the fuck?

GANGSTA

That's not even weed dog.

HOOD

What? That right there's NYC's--

JORDAN

(throwing the bag back,
aggressive)

It's fuckin oregano!

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

Ella is alone in the city and mashed, she's down one bottle of wine.

A passing car honks at her. Some PRICKS whistle.

Something snaps in Ella and she throws the wine bottle. It breaks the back window. The car stops.

She runs into a grocery store, running through the aisles. When she thinks she's safe, she starts laughing.

INT. GANGSTA'S CAR - NIGHT

Tannam's crew are back on the street looking for trouble. Blunts are being passed and so are bottles. JORDAN is driving this time, because GANGSTA is too drunk.

GANGSTA
Fuckin lame bro.

TANNAM
So where to now? Bar?

JORDAN
Nah.

TANNAM
So where?

JORDAN
How about you stop asking so many questions. Don't worry about it.

GANGSTA
(singing)
We goin riding, we goin riding.

EXT. DAN'S CONDO BUILDING - NIGHT

Jordan's car pulls into the guest parking of Dan and Ella's condo.

INT. GANGSTA'S CAR

GANGSTA
The loot bag, picked at random, a big glass project for try-hards.

The boys laugh.

TANNAM
Are you fucking kidding me, at least let me out.

JORDAN
What?

TANNAM
What three's enough to rob somebody, I have a job.

(CONTINUED)

GANGSTA

Stay in the car then. No one's splitting here.

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE

Jordan, Gangsta and Lyve lie in wait outside of Dan's condo, freezing. A woman opens the door to leave, they catch it and enter.

INT. CONDO - MAIN FLOOR

They walk through a couple of doors until they reach a corridor that leads to the parking garage.

JORDAN

This was dumb, but now that we're here, first person comes out that door's getting' it, we jack em and dip.

LYVE

Don't these places have security?

GANGSTA

Yeah but they don't give a fuck.

INT. CONDO DOOR - SAME MOMENT

Dan locks his condo, picks up his BRIEFCASE. He's wearing a suit and fake glasses. He takes the stairs instead of the elevator.

BACK TO - INT. HALLWAY TO PARKING GARAGE

GANGSTA

I say this' a waste of time.

JORDAN

Wanna bet? Everyone in this place got money.

Suddenly Dan opens the door and stares down the three hoodlums.

LYVE

Now this is what I'm saying.

Jordan and Gangsta pull out guns.

(CONTINUED)

JORDAN
You're being robbed, Wall Street.

They go for his shit. Dan is super pissed, boiling inside. He doesn't react though.

Jordan takes the briefcase.

DAN
That doesn't belong to me.

Jordan throws it to LYVE, who opens it. It's full of money. They tries to remain composed.

JORDAN
Tell him if he wants a war, bring it. Now give me your motherfuckin smartphone, smart boy. And those glasses.

GANGSTA
Wallet my brother.

DAN
I don't carry a wallet.

GANGSTA
Well fuck you then!

Gangsta forces off Dan's designer belt.

LYVE
And watch your back.

The three boys run backwards, pistols pointed until they are at the door--

The moment they turn around, Dan lunges for Jordan.

The others don't notice and Jordan tries to fight but Dan is too strong. He disarms him then takes out his own DESERT EAGLE.

DAN
Get them back here!

JORDAN
Yo! G! Hold up!

Gangsta and Lyve, who have reached the car, look back to see Jordan held hostage. They get in the car anyway.

Dan knocks Jordan out with one punch, runs after the car.

(CONTINUED)

At the last moment he gets a clear view of Tannam's face looking at him from the back seat.

He drags Jordan into some bushes.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Ella enters her condo, dead drunk.

She walks through, checking for Dan. She finally plops down on the couch... The phone Rings at the exact moment someone Knocks on the door.

Ella sits for a moment, undisturbed, enduring the barrage of noise. Finally she answers the phone.

ELLA

Hold on someone's at the door.

She hangs up, goes to the door and looks through the peephole: two potentially dangerous MEN. Ella puts the chain lock on.

MAN 1

Dan?

ELLA

No!

MAN 2

Is Dan home?

ELLA

No!

MAN 1

Do you know where we could find Dan?

ELLA

No!

MAN 2

What if we show you these, does that change anything?

They hold out POLICE BADGES. She opens the door. The cops step inside.

ELLA

I'm really drunk, just so you know.
Is that illegal?

(CONTINUED)

MAN 2

No.

MAN 1

Do you mind if we have a look around?

ELLA

Knock yourself out, I mean, you might find some weed.

MAN 2

When was the last time he was home?

ELLA

The last time I was home which was this morning.

MAN 2

Does Da-

ELLA

Oh wait he was here this afternoon, when I caught him sleeping with my best friend.

MAN 2

Really. And, uh, what time was that?

ELLA

I dunno, three, four, are you guys going to tell me what my so called husband's done?

MAN 2

Well he's been making calls to people who's phone's we've tapped, we have reason-

ELLA

Great, look, officer, do you guys wanna have a threesome?

MAN 2

(laughing)

Uh, no ma'm.

ELLA

Are you sure? Because I'm game. Lay me out.

Man 1 comes back.

(CONTINUED)

MAN 1

Nothing.

ELLA

Do you guys have to wait till he comes back?

MAN 1

Do you know where he is?

ELLA

I already told you, no. I just came home from rehearsal...

She thinks about whether or not that's true for a second.

ELLA (CONT'D)

...I'm in a play.

MAN 1

We're going to come back.

ELLA

Hey wait don't you need a warrant, do you have one of those?

MAN 1

Ah, apparently not. Have a good night ma'm. Be safe.

Man 1 closes the door.

Ella gets up and opens it again.

ELLA

(shouting)

Fuck you!

She slams the door. The phone rings again. But so does her own cellphone. The noise is annoying. She looks from her cellphone to the home phone, and back. She answers the cell, and the home phone stops ringing.

EXT. OCEAN-SIDE - SAME MOMENT

Tannam sits on a bench looking at the Statue of Liberty.

TANNAM

Guess what I'm looking at.

INTERCUT BETWEEN TANNAM and ELLA:

(CONTINUED)

ELLA
A monkey.

TANNAM
No.

ELLA
I give up.

TANNAM
Something I want to share with you.

EXT. OCEAN-SIDE BENCH - NIGHT

ELLA
You know what I think is so cool
about that thing?

TANNAM
What?

ELLA
It means a little something
different to each person.

TANNAM
What does it mean to you?

ELLA
To me it means, hey, I'm holding a
torch and I've got a book, so you
better follow me. And it makes me
want to be that girl.

TANNAM
That's pretty good.

ELLA
What does it mean to you?

TANNAM
I don't know yet.

She nestles up in his shoulder.

ELLA
Can I stay at your place?

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM - MORNING

Tannam's ALARM goes off. Their eyes shoot open.

ELLA

Oh my god.

She gets out of bed too fast.

ELLA

Come on get up get up get up! Can I use your toothbrush?

Ella's already in the washroom.

ELLA (O.S.)

Oh! Hello!

FRANK (O.S.)

Hello...Do you know my son?

ELLA (O.S.)

Yes! I'm his co-star in the play!
My name's ELLA nice to meet you.

Tannam smiles at what he's hearing.

FRANK (O.S.)

Nice to meet you too...I'll be seeing you guys tonight then.

ELLA (O.S.)

Oh! Okay! Have a good day!

FRANK (O.S.)

You too. Break a leg.

The front door is closed. Tannam comes out of his room. Ella is brushing her teeth.

ELLA

Your dad's adorable.

INT. CONDO - DAY

Ella comes home floating on air and Dan is sleeping on the couch, looking like shit.

He wakes up when the door closes. He darts off the couch.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Hey.

She goes about doing things like she hasn't been out all night.

DAN

Where'd you stay?

ELLA

Sam's.

DAN

No you didn't.

ELLA

Uh, yeah I did.

DAN

No, you didn't, because I called Sam.

ELLA

Well what time did you call her because I didn't get there till late.

DAN

Are you cheating on me?

ELLA

What?

DAN

Are you fucking cheating on me, it's a simple question.

ELLA

What are you talking about, no I'm not cheating on you, Dan, I have a big day today, okay just stop.

Ella walks to the bedroom, but he grabs her arm and turns her around.

DAN

Don't lie to me, you're not good at it. Where were you?

ELLA

Don't grab me like that, I told you where I was, I'm not fucking cheating on you, are you crazy!?

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Well I don't believe you!

ELLA

Yeah? Well I don't believe you! Why were the police here last night Dan?! I thought jail was for idiots-

DAN

The police didn't find anything and they're not going to find anything! Stop turning this around-

ELLA

You're turning this around you jackass, you lie to me every day about the most trivial things-

DAN

I never lied about fucking someone else!

ELLA

NO! You didn't! Because I didn't bring it up you piece of shit! You want to talk about cheating, okay, you fucked Sam in our bed, lie to me about that, hu!? Go ahead! Tell me a fucking lie about that!

DAN

What?!

ELLA

Yeah what? What? You fucked Sam, my best friend, in OUR bed!

DAN

Are you out of your mind?-

ELLA

You had sex with Sam, and you know you did, so how dare you accuse me of anything!

Dan just stares at her.

ELLA (CONT'D)

Yeah. I came home with wine and steaks and I find you in the shower and Sam butt naked on our bed cumming all over the fucking

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ELLA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
sheets! So what are you gonna say
now!?

DAN
Yeah. Okay, I fucked Sam. I fucked
Sam, and I sell coke, and what? Do
you expect me to regret it?

ELLA
Oh I don't expect anything from
you!

DAN
Why should I? Sam's got her shit
together, she's got a career, she
doesn't nag, she doesn't sit around
all day searching her fucking soul
like the eternal teenager Ella.

ELLA
Oh... Great...

DAN
You don't do shit, I can't help it
when I'm attracted to someone who
knows what she's doing with
herself!

ELLA
You can help it you pig! you don't
know anything about me-

DAN
You want to compare the two of you?
When's the last time you had fun,
Ella? When's the last time you went
out and got something, you're a
waitress-

ELLA
I'm not a fucking waitress!

DAN
No, sorry, you're an actress,
you're a famous actress, okay
there.

Ella is holding back tears, it's hard.

DAN
Oh yeah, so dramatic, the actress,
waah waah, like you haven't been
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DAN (cont'd)
cheating on me! A man has needs
Ella!

ELLA
Needs!? Fuck you!

DAN
I don't get any fucking respect
from you! I don't get any support!
It's like you resented me the
moment we got married!

ELLA
You think you deserve respect?
That's one thing you don't give
anybody!

She storms out, slamming the door.

INT. CAB - DAY

Tannam rides in a cab, watching people go by, thinking.

Then he notices Ella walking quickly down the sidewalk,
miserable.

TANNAM
Can you stop quickly?

The cab stops, Tannam opens the door.

TANNAM
Hey!

Ella turns around.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT

They sit on the couch.

TANNAM
Do you want to talk about it?

ELLA
No.

TANNAM
Look, you're not going to forget
your lines are you?

Ella laughs.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

No. At least I hope not.

TANNAM

You want to run through the script?

ELLA

No.

TANNAM

Okay.

They sit there, peaceful, sharing the silence.

INT. CONDO - EVENING

A knock on the door. Then another. Dan opens it. Two THUGS stand before him.

THUG 1

Where've you been?

DAN

I've been here.

THUG 2

But you know where you ain't been?

DAN

I talked to the man, I told him what happened, and I'm working on it. I'm taking this seriously.

THUG 1

I hope you are, because so is he. We're just the messengers homeboy, and we got a message for you. You and the King talked about some shit, but now shit is like this. You got until the end of the month.

DAN

I'll have it.

THUG 2

Alright. There's just one more thing homeboy. Nothing personal.

Thug 2 pulls out BRASS KNUCKLES and puts them on slowly. Dan gets a nice punch to the stomach...

INT. THEATER - STAGE - SHOW TIME - NIGHT

- In the audience are Sam, Cam, Frank and LD.

- The SET moves around to become a three part-er: A MEN'S WASHROOM on the right, a hallway in the middle and a MOVIE SET on the left.

INT. LIGHTING BOOTH - SAME MOMENT

Tippy speaks into a walkie talkie.

TIPPY

Cue the final set please. Ready.

INT. ON STAGE

Tannam (Tyler) relieves himself at a urinal. Geoffrey (Clayton), sneaks inside.

TYLER

(looking over his shoulder)
Mr. Wells! Didn't notice you. You here for me or your wife?

CLAYTON

I should say both.

TYLER

So they let ya near the set eh? Did you tell em you were the lead's man? I told you there would be perks!

CLAYTON

Oh there has been a great many of those Mr Wize, hasn't there?

TYLER

Well, sure, there's no business like show business...Well are we just going to stand here by the pisser or shall I wash my hands.

CLAYTON

I've always been a blunt man Mr. Wize.

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

Look if this is about some bonus
you can keep it, I'm more than
happy with the outcome of our
arrangement.

CLAYTON

(pulls out a large knife)

Mr. Wize, I am here because you are
about to die.

TYLER

...You must be an expert with that.

*Tyler pulls out a small GUN from his breast pocket and aims
it at Clayton.*

TYLER

But it appears that I have a gun,
while you only have a knife.

CLAYTON

Well, I wonder, would a man like
you pull the trigger? I have to say
I'm very curious.

He takes a step closer.

TYLER

(cocks the gun)

Curiosity killed the cat.

CLAYTON

Luckily, I am not a cat.

TYLER

Look, take one more step and I'll
blow you away!

CLAYTON

What are you waiting for? Don't you
know when your life is in danger?

TYLER

DROP THE KNIFE!

*Clayton walks up to Tyler and stabs him in the stomach.
Tyler holds onto the gun, Clayton brings him with the knife
into one of the big urinals, and there he plunges it deeper.
Tyler falls into the urinal, blood stained stomach and all.*

(CONTINUED)

CLAYTON

That's for sleeping with my wife.

The lights shift to the MOVIE SET where CASHMERE sits on a bed.

CASHMERE

(talking on the phone)

No Ma! I won't stand for it, I simply won't stand for it! I'm leavin' you maw, you and that whole damn family o' mine!

(She hangs up)

That ought ta show her.

Clayton bursts into the set.

CLAYTON

I love you!

CASHMERE

Huh?

CLAYTON

I love you. I couldn't wait to tell you.

CASHMERE

Clayton, what the hell are you doing?

CLAYTON

Stop this nonsense! All of you people are toiling away at a charade! I've got a document leasing this studio in my name-

CASHMERE

Clayton!

CLAYTON

This is my studio, and technically this is my movie, and you-!

CASHMERE

This is Tyler Wize's shoot!

CLAYTON

Tyler Wize the traitor! The lair. He defiled my wife, HIS lead actress! And I paid him off! That's right, I am the sole orchestrator of your involvement in this joke of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLAYTON (cont'd)
a picture. And all it took was a
hundred thousand dollars. What a
putz.

*CASHMERE stares at CLAYTON dead in the eye as she realizes
he was the one who got her the part, not her talent.*

CASHMERE
What?

CLAYTON
It wasn't fair to you my darling.
But I've come clean, and there's no
need for any of this any more. I'm
willing to forgive you, if you'll
forgive me.

Suddenly CASHMERE begins to shout:

CASHMERE
Security! Security!

CLAYTON
What?!

CASHMERE
I have no idea who this man is he
claims I know him and he won't
leave me alone!

The security grabs Clayton.

CASHMERE
Take this sad, lonely man out of my
sight.

The security drag Clayton away.

CLAYTON
I did it because I love you! You
don't deserve this lie!

CASHMERE
You don't tell me what I deserve.

CLAYTON
Cashmere! I forgive you! Please,
don't be silly! Cashmere we are
married!

CASHMERE

Welcome to the real world
stranger.

CASHMERE adjusts her hair.

CASHMERE (CONT'D)

Let's go fellas.

CAMERA-MAN

Action!

*CASHMERE takes a pose, as the lights fade and the recorded
EPIC ORCHESTRAL SCORE which concludes the play is CUED.*

BLACK OUT. The audience applauds.

INT. THEATER COMMON ROOM - DAY

TIPPY stands before the entire cast and crew, reading a
review for "Ugly and Beautiful."

TIPPY

(reading the review)

"The Ugly and Beautiful shows the
too often seen side of posh,
overproduced Broadway theater;
no-part beautiful, all ugly." How
original. "The actors seem overly
zealous at portraying characters
that could not be more stiffly
written. Their dedication is
commendable, moments of convincing
theater are gleamed, but it is no
use salvaging or experiencing such
an insidiously crap play. The Ugly
and Beautiful should never have
been written, and since it has, it,
at least, should never have been
performed."

She looks around at all the glib faces.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

And that was one of our negative
reviews. In fact they're all
negative. But I'll tell you what.
Maybe it's too verbose, so I'll
just cut some lines, less work for
you, and less work for the
audience, and I think it's really
gonna flow, okay? UP!

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Ella's talking to Sam, upset.

ELLA

I don't know, he hasn't been home in almost two weeks. Something happened to him Sam, he's been doing so much sketchy shit, I don't know, I keep checking the news...

INT. SAM'S CONDO - SAME MOMENT

SAM'S on the phone, making pasta sauce.

SAM

Relax girl, I'm sure he's not dead. Men are like cats they wander off and do their thing and then they just come back out of the blue like "what?"

INTERCUT BETWEEN SAM and ELLA

ELLA

But cat's don't go to drug-lord's parties and have the police looking for them. I can't even call the police, because they're looking for him!

Just then the condo door is opened, in comes DAN, his bruises have diminished in two weeks but it's still evident he caught a beating.

ELLA

Oh my god. Case closed.

She hangs up.

DAN

Hey.

ELLA

What happened to your face?

DAN

I'm sorry about what I said. Look, I don't want a divorce or anything.

Ella bites her lips, trying to fight back tears that always seem to build up when she confronts Dan.

(CONTINUED)

Dan walks up to a numb Ella and hugs her. She hugs him back, her eyes wide open.

ELLA

What happened to your face?

DAN

You should see the other guy.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Frank removes a gold 'dramatic faces' necklace from an old box.

FRANK

This was your mother's. Don't worry
it's unisex.

Tannam admires it.

FRANK

Her mother gave it to her when she
told her she wanted to be an
actress. Her mother had said, "If
that's what you want, that's what
you have to have. Never settle."
And I'm glad you didn't settle,
despite anything I might have told
you. She didn't quite make it, but
that's why you did.

TANNAM

Thank you. This is fly.

FRANK

You were fantastic son, I don't how
you do it, in front of a thousand
people.

TANNAM

Dad.

FRANK

I don't remember the last time you
called me that.

Tannam smiles.

TANNAM

You don't have to answer this, but
why didn't you ever, you know. Get
down with any ladies after mom
died?

FRANK

Well that's a good question.
Honestly, I still feel married to
your mother after all these years.

Tannam accepts this as the perfect answer.

FRANK(CONT'D)

What about you? I remember that
little Kelly, you tried to hide her
from me, I know. But now that
actress. She's a little old for,
don't you think?

TANNAM

Dad, she's married.

FRANK

She doesn't look married.

Tannam looks off into the distance, maybe thinking of how he
could possibly win Ella.

INT. CONDO LIVING ROOM

ELLA is watching TV, some program she hates but can't
un-glue herself from.

She glances at the office room, where Dan is sitting.

INT. CONDO OFFICE ROOM - SAME MOMENT

Dan sits at his desk with his cellphone and cocaine.

Ella enters the room wearing only underwear.

ELLA

Baby?

Dan doesn't acknowledge. She rubs his shoulders.

ELLA

Want me to be your slut?

Dan buries his face in her arm.

ELLA

(whispers in his ear)

Talk to me.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Dan scrambles out of his chair
and grabs his gun.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA
Who is it?!

He grabs Ella, pulls her to a closet.

ELLA
Dan!

He shoves her in behind the clothes

DAN
Stay here!

ELLA
Are you kidding me?

Dan tip-toes to the door. He cracks it, gun ready...and finds Sam. He breathes a sigh of relief.

SAM
Dan?

DAN
What do you want?

SAM
What's up?

Ella comes out of the closet. Dan lets Sam in.

SAM
Is this what you guys are like now?

ELLA
Hey Sam. Welcome to our happy home.

DAN
Did you give her keys to the
fucking building?

Dan walks into the kitchen.

SAM
What's wrong with him?

ELLA
He's high.

SAM
So? So am I. Why does he have a
gun?

ELLA

Because he's a fucking idiot.

Sam lowers her voice.

SAM

Do you think he's gonna get killed?

ELLA

Yes! He's been staring at his phone like a maniac, I don't think he's been going to work.

SAM

Maybe he's planning something special for your anniversary.

In the other room, Dan throws the MILK CARTON at the wall. He walks back to the entree.

DAN

Get your shoes on babe, we're going out.

ELLA

Can Sam come?

DAN

No.

SAM

Oh that's okay, I just came by just... for no reason, alright. Peace.

Ella closes the door once Sam is gone, to see a fully clothed Dan standing there ready to go.

ELLA

Where are we going?

DAN

We're going out.

ELLA

Out where?

DAN

It's a surprise, I wanna surprise you.

ELLA
Oh you've been very surprising.

INT. RESTERAUNT - NIGHT

Ella eats while Dan only picks at his food, totally coked-out.

DAN
I want to sell the condo.

ELLA
I thought it was your baby.

DAN
I'm sick of it, I've been talking to people all week. Let's move out of the city, we'll buy a place somewhere with a lot of hills and trees.

ELLA
Okay, are we in danger?

DAN
What? No. Not even close. Look, I know you hate it there, I thought maybe we should start a new chapter, or even just a whole book, you know? Just say fuck you to this place and everyone we know.

ELLA
I don't want to say fuck you to everyone I know.

DAN
I'm selling the condo. And I'm moving. This week. Somebody's interested, I'm not going to pass it up.

ELLA
Okay. So if I don't wanna come?

DAN
You can do whatever you want.

ELLA
And if it means being apart from you, you don't care?

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Of course I care. That's why I'm asking you to come.

ELLA

But you're going anyway.

DAN

I'm at a point in my life where what I need is more important than what makes sense to you, alright?

Ella shakes her head at her coke-head husband.

ELLA

You're loaded right now.

DAN

Just think about it It'll be me and you and we'll do it all over again. But better. Smarter. No drugs or tall buildings. We'll grow tomatoes and shit.

ELLA

No drugs? I don't believe you but, alright. I'll think about it.

DAN

That's all I'm saying.

They continue eating, Dan is forcing the food in.

ELLA

Are you ever going to come to my show?

EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

Dan's car rolls up to the THEATER, looking with malice at all the people he perceives as snobs.

Then, walking by Dan's car, comes a little blond in a flowery dress, looking like trouble. It's Kelly.

INT. THEATER

The crowd is getting seated. Kelly looks like she's never seen a play before. As does Dan.

The lights dim. Then the spot-light hits the stage, as Tannam steps out...

Dan freezes, his eyes wide, when he recognizes Tannam. It's the kid from the car! He grips his arm rest a little too hard.

INT. STAGE/THEATER - LATER

IN THE AUDIENCE, Dan is grinding his teeth so loud the person next to him looks over.

ON STAGE, Tannam (as Tyler) relieves himself at a urinal. Geoffrey (as Clayton) creeps inside the restroom.

CLAYTON

Mr. Wize.

Tannam looks to Geoffrey , then turns back to finish.

TYLER

Mr. Wells. This is a private lavatory.

CLAYTON

It must be nice to work in the pictures. Give a woman her dream and she'll give you anything.

Tannam walks to the sink.

Geoffrey brandishes a thin blade.

CLAYTON

And now. Was it worth it?

TYLER

...It's still worth it.

Geoffrey lunges in a sudden rage, Tannam pulls the REVOLVER out of his suit. Geoffrey stops short.

CLAYTON

I wonder, would a man like you pull the trigger? I have to say I'm very curious.

TYLER

Curiosity killed the cat.

He cocks the gun.

CLAYTON

Luckily, I am not a cat.

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

It isn't my fault you couldn't
satisfy your wife.

Dan flinches.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Now take one more step and I'll
blow you away!

CLAYTON

What are you waiting for? Don't you
know when your life is in danger?!

Tannam doesn't pull the trigger. Geoffrey "plunges" the
blade into his abdomen. He eases him into a supine position
and stands.

CLAYTON

No guts in there.

He wipes his blade on the private towels--

TYLER

Mr. Wells!

Geoffrey stops in his tracks. He looks into the sea of
people in the audience as he realizes this is NOT part of
the play.

The revolver is still in Tannam's hand. Clutching his
stomach, he stands and aims it in Geoffrey's direction.

GEOFFREY

(mouthing the words)

What the fuck?

Tannam squeezes the trigger. *BANG!* The cap-gun goes off.
Geoffrey flinches, rooted to his spot. He looks at the
audience, then to Tannam, then back again. Finally, with
tears of stress in his eyes, he falls down "dead"

INT. BACKSTAGE - SAME MOMENT

Tippy, watching from the wing, speaks into a walkie-talkie.

TIPPY

Go, just go. We'll kill ourselves
later.

INT. ON STAGE

The stage begins to rotate as designed. The private lavatory makes way for Ella(As Cashmere)'s hotel-room movie-set set.

Tannam bursts through the up-stage door, clutching his stomach.

TANNAM
Cashmere!

ELLA
...Tan-Tyler?

Ella is terrified. Tannam speaks with a breathless malignancy.

TANNAM
I don't mean to interrupt your scene, my scene. Our scene. But as you can see I don't have long. Your husband tried to kill me. And I think he may have succeeded.

The audience is captivated by the bleeding man.

ELLA
What do you mean he tried to kill you?

TANNAM
Do you see this hole in my stomach?

ELLA
Yes, but my husband, my husband?--

TANNAM
He knew. About us.

ELLA
He did?

TYLER
Big time.

ELLA
And?

TYLER
I killed him.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Oh...

The audience is loving it. Except Dan.

Tannam staggers toward Ella, grasps her hands.

TANNAM

This is how it's supposed to be. I know you wished for it. Don't tell yourself you were happy, because my god, I'd never seen a woman so miserable. And I'm no killer. Like him. But I did what I did because I couldn't stand the thought of a place where you wouldn't be. Because I love you Cashmere. I love you this much.

He gestures to his wound.

Ella begins to feel the meaning behind this, it shines out through her eyes.

ELLA

This is so much to experience in such a short time.

TANNAM

You don't seem too upset.

ELLA

You're right. I don't.

The audience laughs. Tannam falls to his knees, overacting. Ella drops down to him and picks his chin up, looks into his eyes.

The audience cries. Except Dan.

ELLA

Your stomach. What can I do?

TANNAM

There's only one thing you can do.

Slowly, she kisses him. He kisses her back.

BACK STAGE, Tippy cries hardest.

TIPPY

(Into the walkie-talkie)
The end.

The curtains close on the lovers and the lights go out to roaring applause from the audience.

INT. THEATER

Dan is the first one out the door, walking fast with fists curled.

INT. BACKSTAGE - SAME MOMENT

Tannam breaths heavily. He runs for the exit, Ella runs after him. The other actors just stand there in awe.

EXT. ACTOR'S DOOR - BACK OF THEATER

Tannam jumps outside and searches for his smokes, his hands shake. When he finds them, he can't pull one out- so he throws the pack at the wall and just breaths air instead.

Ella runs outside, relieved at the sight of him. They look at each other, then begin laughing.

EXT. DAN'S CAR - SAME MOMENT

Dan grabs his handgun from the trunk, a cellphone held between his ear and shoulder as he makes sure it's loaded. Ella picks up his call.

EXT. BACK OF THEATER

ELLA
Hey babe, where are you?

INTERCUT BETWEEN DAN and ELLA

DAN
I'm just wondering where I should pick you up?

ELLA
Oh, um. How about the front in fifteen minutes?

DAN
Fifteen minutes?

INT. THEATER - SAME MOMENT

Kelly walks the halls of the building as people file out. She finds an ATTENDANT.

KELLY

Excuse me, is there any way to meet the cast, or-?

ATTENDANT

Uh, no ma'am. Unless you know a member of the cast.

KELLY

I do.

ATTENDANT

Do they know you know them?

EXT. DAN'S CAR

DAN

Alright babe, I'll see you out front.

Dan slams the trunk and walks inside the Theater.

EXT. BACK OF THEATER

Ella and Tannam enjoy a silence together.

Geoffrey comes out of the door.

GEOFFREY

Did you two plan that?

ELLA

No.

TANNAM

My bad Geoff.

Geoffrey sizes Tannam up, then nods.

GEOFFREY

Good stuff.

INT. THEATER

Dan walks around the empty theater, avoiding ATTENDANTS. He sneaks into a doorway he isn't allowed in.

INT. BACKSTAGE

Tannam and Ella enter the common room, in the middle of which stands Tippy, in thinking pose.

TIPPY
Tannam. Ella. Tannam.

TANNAM
I'm sorry, I don't know what came over me.

Tippy admires him for a moment.

TIPPY
You've got balls. I like balls.

She re-thinks that immediately, then nods it away and leaves the room.

INT. THEATER

Dan ends up in a hallway. He walks cautiously. Tippy suddenly emerges from a door. They pass each other, each one eying the other - Tippy flirtatiously, Dan guiltily.

DAN
...Do you know if Ella's still here?

TIPPY
She's here.

Tippy, eyes on Dan, leaves through the door he came through. Dan opens the door Tippy came through.

INT. ACTOR LOUNGE

Ella and Tannam face each other, as if about to kiss.

TANNAM
Well. That's that.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Yup.

TANNAM

I think we should stay in touch.

ELLA

I think that could be--

Ella looks over Tannam's shoulder and freezes.

Tan turns. Dan stands at the door. He starts to laugh.

DAN

Oh man, I knew it. How did I know
it.

ELLA

Dan?

He walks in, closes the door.

DAN

Hey man, nice work up there
tonight. Really, that was something
else.

Dan shakes Tannam's hand, squeezing hard. Tannam winces in
pain.

ELLA

This isn't what you think.

Dan pulls out his gun, points it at Ella.

DAN

You shut up!

He turns it on Tannam.

DAN (CONT'D)

Where's my fuckin money pretty boy?

TANNAM

I had nothing to do with that.

Dan pistol-whips him in the face. Ella screams.

ELLA

What the fuck, are you crazy?!

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Yeah Ella, I'm seeing things. Like this fucking guy and a bunch of his punk friends steal fifty thousand dollars from me in my own fucking building!

ELLA

What?!

Dan kicks Tannam in the stomach.

TANNAM

Why do you think I was in the fucking car?

DAN

Cus you're a pussy!
(He looks to Ella)
You put him up to it, didn't you? You think I'm fucking stupid? Get up, actor. Act fucking normal. Walk, both of you.

INT. THEATER

Ella and Tannam walk ahead of Dan, who keeps his gun inside his jacket.

He walks them to his car.

DAN

In the back, everybody.

They enter, as he gets in beside them.

INT. DAN'S CAR

Dan holds the gun to Tannam, who's in the middle between him and Ella.

DAN

Nice and cozy? Give me your phone.

Tannam hands it over.

DAN(CONT'D)

You should really lock your phone. Give me a name, one of those idiots.

(CONTINUED)

TANNAM
(a beat)
Gangsta.

DAN
If I look in this phone, I'm gonna
find 'Gangsta?'

Tannam nods. Dan looks through the phone.

DAN
Unbelievable. What a bunch of
fuckin idiots. Now you're gonna
call him, and ask to meet up. Got
it?

He puts the gun right up to Tannam's face.

TANNAM
Sure.

Dan calls 'Gangsta' and puts the phone on speaker.

GANGSTA (O.S.)
Yo.

TANNAM
Yo, wanna smoke a joint?

GANGSTA (O.S.)
Shit, I can't right now man. Me and
Lye are at the casino tearing it
up!

TANNAM
No way, what Casino you at?

GANGSTA (O.S.)
Empire City bro, you don't even
know how it's raining on these dice
tables!

Tannam hangs up.

DAN
Cool. Now you say nothing to no
one. Get the fuck out.

Dan gets out of the car so Tannam can exit. Then he gets in
the driver's seat and speeds away.

EXT. FRONT OF DAN'S CONDOMINIUM

Dan pulls up to the curb.

DAN
Give me your phone?

Ella does.

DAN
Get out, go upstairs. I forgive
you.

Ella waits a moment, then gets out.

ELLA
Thanks.

She slams the door and he floors it.

INT. CONDO

Ella sits on her couch with a pen and paper. Sirens wail in the distance.

She writes the words 'Dear Tannam,'

EXT. CASINO - DAY

Dan parks outside the casino. From his vial, he manages to pour a perfect line of cocaine along the top of his steering wheel.

INT. CAB

Tannam rides in the back of a cab, watching the city go by.

CAB DRIVER
So you still haven't told me where
to.

TANNAM
Can you just drive?

CAB DRIVER
If you got the cash, I got the gas.

Tannam stares out the window.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA (V.O.)
I love you. And I'm sorry that I'll
never see you again.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tannam comes home, closes the door, and looks around at the small apartment. It doesn't exactly inspire.

He sits at the table eating cereal.

ELLA (V.O.)
I often feared I'd never grow up,
as they say. I thought it was
something that either happened, or
it didn't. Now I know it's nothing
more than the outcome of suffering.

Frank comes through the door with champagne and steaks.

INT. CONDO

Dan comes through the door with his gun. Ella stops writing and looks up at him.

ELLA
Careful with that.

Dan looks defeated.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tannam sits beside a sleeping Frank on the sofa, the champagne bottle empty on the coffee table, watching Citizen Kane.

ELLA (V.O.)
I think your friends are okay. Dan
said he didn't get the money.

EXT. CONDO - BALCONY

Dan cocks and un-cocks the gun.

ELLA (V.O.)
But that he's working on it.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Four days are crossed off a calender. Dan crosses off a fifth.

ELLA (V.O.)
I'm scared.

EXT. CONDO - DAWN

Ella lies in bed watching a beautiful dawn. Dan's side of the bed is empty. The bedroom is full of boxes, their life neatly packed up.

ELLA (V.O.)
But I know there's light at the end of this, because I'm going to turn it on. That's what you've taught me.

INT. CONDO - DAY

Ella sits with her letter. She looks to the balcony at Dan with his gun, and his carton of milk.

INT. BANK - DAY

Ella cashes a check. The amount is \$54,000.

The CLERK gives her two heavy envelopes, which she stuffs in her purse.

ELLA (V.O.)
I've though a lot about what you said. How a performance is art.

EXT. CONDO - DAY

Ella watches a moving-truck roll away. Dan follows it in his car, he stops for Ella to get in.

ELLA (V.O.)
Then that makes all of us artists.

EXT. DAN'S CAR

Ella looks over at Dan, who gives a fake smile.

ELLA (V.O.)
But that can't be right.

INT. TANNAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tannam's eye catches the Ugly and Beautiful program on the coffee table. Ella's smiling face flashes before his eyes. Citizen Kane blares from the television as Tannam looks at the program and begins to cry--

CITIZEN KANE ON TV
...a man who got everything he
wanted and then lost it. Maybe
Rosebud was something he couldn't
get, or something he lost.
Anyway...

INT/EXT DAN'S CAR / GAS STATION - DAY

The tragic couple pull into the pump, Dan gets out.

DAN
You want anything?

ELLA
Nah.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM - DAY

Tannam reads Ella's letter in his bed.

(V.O.)
I'm sorry my husband met me before
you did. I just want you to know
he's not my husband anymore.

INT. DAN'S CAR

Ella watches Dan walk into the station to pay. She removes her wedding ring, leaves it on the dash.

She takes the envelopes of cash from her purse and puts them on the driver seat, but not before taking a few bills for herself.

She takes a credit card and ID out of her purse, throws it in the back seat. She gets out of the car.

EXT. GAS STATION / INTERSTATE

Without a look in Dan's direction, Ella runs out of the gas station and sprints back down the side of the interstate. She relishes the feeling of running.

INT. DAN'S CAR

The envelopes of cash have a sticky-note attached to them which reads: "THIS OR ME :)"

ELLA (V.O.)
Maybe one day we'll meet again.
When we're both famous or
something.

INT. TANNAM'S ROOM

Tannam's phone rings. Caller ID says AGENT. Naturally, Tannam answers.

AGENT
(filtered)
Tannam, it's your fuckin agent! How
about an audition? Movie this time.

There's a knock on Tannam's apartment door.

TANNAM
Sure barney, you know it. I gotta
go though.

INT. TANNAM'S FRONT DOOR

Tannam opens the door to find Kelly, cute as can be, holding a single flower.

KELLY
Can I please apologize?

EXT. INTERSTATE

Ella keeps running, a smile on her face, tears in her eyes. She's laughing. Her hair is a mess. She's free.

THE END