Episode 02 - “Playing With The Queen Of Hearts”

by Bradley Jacobson
EXT. IRVING VERANDA - MORNING

DYLAN IRVING is writing in a notebook and drinking coffee. SCOTT IRVING comes out of the house and kisses Dylan’s neck.

SCOTT
Good morning. I see you made breakfast.

Dylan holds up his cup of coffee.

SCOTT (CONT’D)
What are your plans for today?

DYLAN
I don’t have anything planned.

SCOTT
So the Sheriff won’t be calling me today.

DYLAN
Ha ha.

Below the Irving’s, LARRY BUSTAMANTE and his TWINS are on the beach collecting sea shells.

Dylan sees the Bustamantes and leans over the railing.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Hi Larry!

Larry turns around but ignores Dylan.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Did you see that? Did he just snub me?

SCOTT
He’s just busy with his kids. Hi Larry!

LARRY
Hello Scott!

SCOTT
Well I’m off. I expect dinner at 6.

DYLAN
Then I expect you’ll be home by 5:30 to make it.

SCOTT
Love you.

Scott kisses Dylan and walks into the house.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DYLAN
Love you more.

Dylan watches Larry gather the twins and leave the beach.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
He did just snub me.

INT. BUSTAMANTE KITCHEN - MORNING

Larry enters through the back door pushing the twins in the stroller. ZIMMY BUSTAMANTE is at the kitchen table tying his running shoes.

ZIMMY
How was the stroll?

LARRY
The twins enjoyed it but I didn’t.

ZIMMY
Are they giving you trouble?

LARRY
It’s not the twins. It’s Dylan Irving.

ZIMMY
What has he done?

LARRY
He got into a public fight with Ruth Carlton for one thing. Maybe this will all blow over but until then I think we need to keep our distance.

ZIMMY
You’re the boss. Let me give you all a kiss and then I’m off on my run.

Zimmy kisses his kids and Larry and runs out the back door.

INT. MITCHELL KITCHEN - MORNING

MARTY MITCHELL puts juice in a glass and takes a bowl of oatmeal out of the microwave. RONALD MITCHELL comes into the kitchen.

MARTY
Good morning.

Marty attempts to kiss Ronald but he turns his cheek.

Ronald sits at the table and picks up the paper.

(CONTINUED)
Marty puts the bowl and the juice next to Ronald.

RONALD
This is breakfast?

MARTY
Yes. Oh wait, Larry made us some fruit salad. He dropped it off this morning.

Marty goes to the refrigerator to get the salad.

RONALD
Are you ever going to learn cook?

MARTY
Oatmeal doesn’t just heat itself.

RONALD
Oatmeal, juice. Coffee from a can! 10 years of the same thing.

Ronald takes a bite of the oatmeal and spits it out.

RONALD (CONT'D)
Marty it’s not even warm.

MARTY
I’ll heat it up.

Marty tries to take the bowl away but Ronald gets up from the table.

RONALD
Forget it. I’m going to work.

MARTY
What about your breakfast?

RONALD
I can get a better meal from a vending machine.

Ronald exits.

Marty sits at the table

He pushes the bowl of oatmeal across the table.

END OF TEASER.
ACT ONE

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Dylan is walking through the aisles with his cart. Behind him numerous other shoppers talk about him in whispers.

As Dylan turns a corner to enter another aisle, a woman pushes her cart into Dylan’s.

DYLAN
Oh excuse me.

Dylan goes down the aisle when another person rams his cart.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Hey, watch it.

The customer walks off when Dylan comes to the end of the aisle where three more customers have him blocked in.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
What is going on?

CUSTOMER 1:
That’s the one who beat up Ruth Carlton.

Dylan turns his cart around, looking over his shoulder as he runs down the aisle. He runs right into another cart.

DYLAN
Oh my god.

The cart he runs into is being pushed by Marty.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Marty you scared me.

MARTY
Are you all right?

DYLAN
They’re after me. They’re all after me.

Marty sees the customers at the end of the aisle.

MARTY
You got a problem? I said, “YOU GOT A PROBLEM?”

The crowd walks away.

(CONTINUED)
MARTY (CONT’D)
Yeah, I didn’t think so.

DYLAN
I don’t get it. I’m as nice as I can be to these people...

MARTY
They’re just a bunch of bullies. Don’t worry, this will all blow over in a few weeks and they’ll find something else to talk about.

DYLAN
I hope you’re right.

MARTY
I’m always right. Believe me something new will happen and they’ll forget all about you.

DYLAN
What are you doing here anyway? I thought you didn’t cook.

MARTY
I don’t.

Inside Marty’s cart are a dozen cans of generic coffee.

MARTY (CONT’D)
Did you think I had some kind of special blend? What are you doing here?

DYLAN
Besides being harassed? I’m going to surprise Scott with dinner tonight.

MARTY
That’s nice. Do you do that often?

DYLAN
No, that’s why it will be a surprise. See I have it all, bagged salad, frozen lasagna. He’ll never know what hit him.

MARTY
A romantic dinner for two? Maybe I should do that. Since I just helped you out of a jam, could you return the favor?

Dylan smiles.
INT. M&A BANK - MAIN LOBBY - DAY

AIDAN PALMER walks in where Scott is up on a ladder hanging a sign announcing a party.

AIDAN
Nice view handsome.

SCOTT
Oh hi.

AIDAN
So there’s a party?

SCOTT
Just a customer appreciation thing. We try to sell more products to the rich. It’s tomorrow night, are you going to be there?

AIDAN
I don’t think so. Is Ronald in?

SCOTT
Yeah, I’ll go get him.

AIDAN
No stay there, your cute little ass will bring customers in.

INT. M&A BANK - RONALD’S OFFICE - DAY

Aidan walks in. Ronald gets up from his desk and walks to Aidan. They begin to kiss passionately.

RONALD
I’ve been thinking about this all morning.

AIDAN
You didn’t tell me about this party tomorrow night.

RONALD
It’s nothing special. It’s for the clients really. I wouldn’t do it if I didn’t have to.

AIDAN
Since you do have to do it, I think there’s one more person you should invite.

(CONTINUED)
RONALD
I didn’t think you’d want to come.

AIDAN
Not me. I’ll have other plans. This is an old friend of mine. I think you’ll like him. I think Scott will like him too.

RONALD
What are you up to?

AIDAN
This whole happy marriage thing the Irvings have going on makes me sick. I need Dylan distracted and what could be distracting than marital problems?

RONALD
Alright. I’ll take care of it if you take care of this.

Ronald grabs his crotch as Aidan smiles.

INT. MITCHELL KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Marty and Dylan are looking at a piece of raw chicken.

MARTY
Well now what?

DYLAN
I guess we could bake it.

MARTY
That sounds a little risky. Couldn’t we just throw it in the microwave?

DYLAN
I don’t think so. I know, give me that bottle of wine.

MARTY
Are we going to marinate it?

DYLAN
No, but it will help me think.

Marty pours them both a glass of wine.

MARTY
It’s probably no use anyway. I don’t know what I was thinking.
DYLAN
No, don’t worry. Just give me that recipe sheet from the Shake and Bake.

Marty hands him the recipe as Dylan starts pulling items out of the cupboard.

Marty sits at the kitchen table and puts his head in his hands.

MARTY
Chicken can’t save a marriage.

DYLAN
You weren’t going to use it in some strange sex act were you?

MARTY
Do you ever feel like your whole life is falling apart?

DYLAN
Well.

MARTY
No, you don’t. You have a happy marriage. I don’t have that. I can’t cook.

DYLAN
You think that’s why you have a bad marriage? I can barely make toast.

MARTY
I just want him to notice me. To look at me like I see Scott look at you.

DYLAN
With pure terror?

MARTY
I’m not kidding. I met Ronald in college. He was so good looking. Everyone wanted him. Guys made fools out of themselves to get his attention, but he wanted me. Me? But he doesn’t want me anymore and I don’t know what to do.

Dylan puts his arms around Marty.

DYLAN
We bake the hell out of this chicken and make him notice you, that’s what we do.
INT. CARLTON MANOR - MAIN LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

RUTH CARLTON and three old women are sitting around a table. They are GERTIE WINSTON, MARGARET MACKENZIE and GLADYS TUDROW.

HALEY OSBOURNE walks in carrying a tea tray.

HALEY
Here you go ladies, this should keep your palettes soaked while you dish.

RUTH
Haley, thank you. That will be all. You can go back to your post.

HALEY
Fine. Don’t get too crazy ladies.

Haley exits.

RUTH
All right ladies, let’s call this meeting of the First Ladies Auxiliary of Carlton Heights to order. What’s on the program for tonight Margaret?

MARGARET
First and foremost I think it’s about time we get rid of all that smut that’s been seeping in at the library. Look at this magazine I found on the shelves. It has a half naked man on the cover.

GERTIE
Let me see that.

Gertie puts on her bifocals.

GERTIE (CONT'D)
He’s half naked all right.

GLADYS
What kind of filth is it? Let me see.

GERTIE
It’s called Esquire. Sounds filthy to me.

GLADYS
I’d better just slip this into my purse before we are all offended beyond repair.

(CONTINUED)
RUTH
What needs to be done is some good old fashioned book burning. I think it’s high time we got back to the values that made this town so grand.

MARGARET
I couldn’t agree more. You can have Toddy arrange the whole thing can’t you Gladys?

GLADYS
Of course.

RUTH
Wonderful. We need all the help we can get. Margaret, I assume we can count on your son our beloved Sheriff.

MARGARET
Of course, of course.

RUTH
Good. There’s one more thing we really need to take care of. This town has always had its little problems, most notably right down below me in that horrid cul-de-sac. Now I know it comes as no news to you ladies that I was viciously attacked by one of those homosexuals who live down there.

GERTIE
Terrible, terrible. I was there you know.

RUTH
I think it’s only right we ban together as women of class, as women of justice, as women of America and rid ourselves of the vermin taking over this town.

All the women nod their heads in agreement.

RUTH (CONT’D)
Let’s pray. Dear God, please give us the resources to stifle this evil. We give our hearts to you and to Jesus. Amen. Well let’s get down to work shall we?

Gladys flips over the moveable table top where a poker table is set up. Ruth puts on her visor and begins dealing out cards while Margaret grabs a bottle of booze out of her purse and starts pouring shots.
INT. MITCHELL DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Ronald and Marty are having dinner.

MARTY
So what do you think?

RONALD
I'm not sure what to think.

MARTY
I'm taking cooking lessons. I may even start baking, that could turn some profits at the coffee shop. And that's just the beginning.

RONALD
What is this all about?

MARTY
I want to start over.

RONALD
Start over?

MARTY
Yes. Remember that time in college, the picnic? You and I and a bottle of wine and that little patch of grass in the park? Maybe we could take a picnic this weekend.

RONALD
Right.

MARTY
Come on Ronald, I’m trying here.

RONALD
What is it you’re trying to do?

MARTY
We don’t talk, we don’t eat together. We haven’t made love in months.

RONALD
That’s what this is really about. You think cooking lessons and walks in the park are going to make you attractive to me.

MARTY
There was a time when you wanted me.

(Continued)
RONALD
Times change Marty.

MARTY
Fine. I tried. Can we at least have a civil dinner together?

Ronald picks up his fork then puts it back down.

MARTY (CONT’D)
What?

RONALD
Now I’ve lost my appetite.

INT. CARLTON MANOR - NIGHT

Haley is looking through Ruth’s binoculars at the cul-de-sac below her. She sees Ronald walk out of his house and go to Aidan’s house.

Haley sees Aidan open the door as Ronald kisses Aidan passionately.

Haley exits the room.

INT. CARLTON HEIGHTS CITY LIBRARY - THE NEXT DAY

Dylan walks up to a woman behind the desk. The woman is Margaret Mackenzie.

MARGARET
Can I help you?

DYLAN
Yes, I hope so. I’m looking for some history books. Anything on Carlton Heights.

MARGARET
Why?

(CONTINUED)
DYLAN
I’m doing some research. Can you just point me in the right direction?

MARGARET
I’m afraid the reference section is closed due to renovations.

DYLAN
You just locked up all the books?

MARGARET
Look Mr. Irving, I don’t want any trouble. I’m just telling you the reference section is off limits.

DYLAN
Do I know you?

MARGARET
I know you. The whole town knows you and no one is going to help you do anything. You should do us a favor and just go back to where you came from.

DYLAN
If I have done something to you, I apologize. I can assure you I’m a very nice guy.

MARGARET
You’re a pervert.

TODDY TUDROW wearing a bright colored shirt and bright pants sashays from the left of the back office.

TODDY
(speaking with a lisp)
Margaret, is there a problem?

DYLAN
Yes there is. I was just looking for the reference section when..

TODDY
Oh my! You’re Dylan Irving aren’t you?

DYLAN
Yes.

TODDY
I’ve been so looking forward to meeting you.

(CONTINUED)
Toddy walks around from behind the desk.

**TODDY (CONT'D)**
I’ve read your book and it is absolutely fabulous. Not to mention that great picture of you on the back. I must admit it had my heart all a flutter.

**MARGARET**
Toddy what are you doing?

**DYLАН**
I believe he’s telling me how much he enjoyed my book.

**TODDY**
I feel like a gushing school boy. Margaret, why don’t you take your break.

**DYLАН**
Yes, Marg you do look tired.

**MARGARET**
Well, you can bet your mother is going to hear about this Toddy Tudrow.

Margaret leaves the desk area.

**TODDY**
You wanted to see the reference section?

**DYLАН**
You’re like a kind stranger. You know I’ve always counted on the kindness of strangers.

The two stroll into the files section.

**INT. AIDAN PALMER’S LIVING ROOM – DAY**

Haley walks into the house without knocking.

**AIDAN**
Hey, what are you doing here?

**HALEY**
We have to talk. I want to know what’s going on with you and Ronald Mitchell.

**AIDAN**
There isn’t anything going on between us.

*(CONTINUED)*
HALEY
Don’t deny it. I saw you guys together.

AIDAN
We’re always together. We’re neighbors.

HALEY
Do neighbors run around at all hours of the night? Kissing?

AIDAN
Haley, it’s really none of your business.

HALEY
How can you say that? When I offered to help you there was nothing said about sleeping with your married neighbors.

AIDAN
You haven’t been much help.

HALEY
Marty is a friend and I don’t want to see him get hurt.

AIDAN
Blah blah blah.

HALEY
If you don’t stop seeing him I’ll...

AIDAN
You’ll what? Tell Marty? It wouldn’t matter their marriage is a joke.

HALEY
You can’t run around breaking up marriages. Who else are you sleeping with?

EXT. AIDAN PALMER’S HOUSE – BACK DOOR – DAY
Zimmy runs up the stairs wearing only his running shorts.

INT. AIDAN PALMER’S KITCHEN – DAY
Zimmy comes through the kitchen door. He pulls his shorts off.

INT. AIDAN PALMER’S LIVING ROOM –DAY
Zimmy walks in naked with his shorts draped over his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)
ZIMMY
Daddy’s home and he’s sweaty just like you like it...

HALEY
Oh, that’s just brilliant.

AIDAN
Doesn’t anybody knock?

EXT. AIDAN PALMER’S HOME – DAY

Haley runs out the door with Aidan following her.

AIDAN
Haley wait.

HALEY
I really can’t believe you!

AIDAN
There’s a reason for all of this. You have to trust me. Just give me some time.

HALEY
You’re playing with people’s lives. A great prophet once said, “Playing with the Queen of Hearts isn’t very smart. The joker is the only fool who will do anything for you.”

AIDAN
Wasn’t that Juice Newton?

HALEY
Yes, yes it was.

Haley gets into her car and drives off shaking her finger at Aidan.

INT. CARLTON MANOR – FOYER – DAY

Ruth opens the door to find Margaret waiting there.

RUTH
Margaret what are you doing here? I won that game fair and square.

MARGARET
It’s not that, Ruth. We have a problem.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

EXT. AVENUE SEA - THE CUL DE SAC - DAY

Marty is watering his lawn when Dylan drives to his house.

Marty walks over as Dylan begins taking books out of his car.

MARTY
Hi. Need a hand?

DYLAN
Oh thanks.

MARTY
I hope these books don’t mean you have plans for tonight.

DYLAN
Well Scott is working late.

MARTY
I know, the annual big wig swig party.

DYLAN
The what?

MARTY
They wine and schmooze the richest clients. Hoping they’ll look for tax shelters or something. I don’t understand it. But it leaves me free for the night. I thought the two of us could spend the evening together. Maybe a video, maybe some wine.

DYLAN
I’m two steps ahead of you.

Dylan pulls out a bag with videos and wine.

Aidan Palmer walks from his house to the Irving house.

AIDAN
Hey neighbors.

Aidan approaches.

DYLAN
Hi.

(CONTINUED)
AIDAN
I was wondering what you were up to tonight.

DYLAN
We were just talking about that. Ronald and Scott are working late so we are going to watch some videos.

Aidan looks at the bag and pulls out a video.

AIDAN
“Muriel’s Wedding.” Please I had something more exciting in mind. I want to show you the sights.

MARTY
What sights?

AIDAN
Uncle Randy’s.

DYLAN
Uncle who?

MARTY
Uncle Randy’s Rooster Ranch. It’s a bar just outside of town.

DYLAN
A real bar? With music and booze?

AIDAN
And men. I’ll pick you up at 8.

Aidan walks back to his house.

MARTY
Why do I have a feeling we’re going to regret this?

Dylan and Marty begin walking up to the Irving house.

DYLAN
So how was your dinner last night?

MARTY
Let’s just say, you’re in charge of dinner tonight.

DYLAN
Come on. You pick the place and I’ll dial.
INT. M&A BANK - LOBBY - EVENING

There is a group of 20 PEOPLE drinking and talking.

Scott and Ronald are by the bar.

    SCOTT
Who are all these people again?

    RONALD
The richest of the rich sans Mrs. Carlton of course. That old man is Horatio Kane, he made all his money in lumber, talking to him is Chip Chandelor, he runs the newspaper. We want to keep all of them happy. Now grab yourself a drink and schmooze your way into their pocket books.

Scott walks over to HORATIO KANE and CHIP CHANDELOR.

    CHIP
Scott Irving. I wanted to let you know we all think you’re doing a bang up job.

    SCOTT
Thanks so much, I appreciate it.

    CHIP
I’m Chip Chandelor and this is Horatio Kane.

    SCOTT
Nice to meet you both. I’m glad you could come out tonight.

    CHIP
We look forward to these parties. It gets us away from our spouses. Speaking of which, you’re married to that writer who beat up Ruth Carlton aren’t you?

    SCOTT
Yes. I apologize for Dylan.

    CHIP
Ruth has been pushing buttons for years, it’s about time someone pushed that woman back.

    HORATIO
She once attacked me with her cane at an ice cream social.

(Continued)
SCOTT
I’m glad no one is holding it against us.

CHIP
Hell no. I just told Ronald I’m willing to sign up for whatever it is you guys are selling this time around. And here, you give my card to your husband and tell him if he needs a job he’s always welcome to come work for me at the newspaper.

SCOTT
I’ll do that, thank you Mr. Chandelor.

Across the room, Ronald is talking with a very hot younger man. His name is SIMON REXLER.

SIMON
So that’s him?

RONALD
I want you to pay extra special attention to him. That’s what I’m paying you for. He’s kind of shy so no matter how much he protests keep going for it. He’ll give in.

SIMON
He’s hot, this will be a breeze.

RONALD
Well, let’s get you to work.

Ronald and Simon approach Scott.

RONALD (CONT'D)
Scott, I’d like you to meet Simon Rexler. He’s very interested in the new high yield market plans we are offering.

SIMON
Oh yes, I’m really into umm markets. Sometimes I shop in them.

RONALD
I’ll leave you two to talk while I mingle a little more.

Ronald walks across the room.

SCOTT
I’d love to sit down and talk to you about our latest plans.

(CONTINUED)
SIMON
Me too. But I’d really love one of those drinks first.

SCOTT
Sure. So what can I get you?

SIMON
Whatever you’re having is fine.

Scott pours a drink for the two men.

SCOTT
Here we are. Let me run to my office and I’ll get the information.

SIMON
Why go to that trouble? I’ll follow you, it’s too loud out here and I’d hate to miss anything you have to say.

INT. UNCLE RANDY’S ROOSTER DEN – NIGHT
There is a guy singing karaoke on a stage while other patrons occupy the bar, tables and booths.

Haley is at the bar when The MAN IN BLACK approaches her.

MAN IN BLACK
I don’t normally do this but I was wondering if I could buy you a drink?

HALEY
How do I put this so you understand? Bugger off.

Haley walks to the other side of the bar and talks to UNCLE RANDY, the bartender.

HALEY (CONT’D)
Uncle Randy, could I have another pint and do you think you could keep that creep away from me?

UNCLE RANDY
What creep?

HALEY
That guy at the end of the bar.

Haley points to the end of the bar but the Man In Black is gone.

(CONTINUED)
HALEY (CONT’D)
That’s strange. He was just there. I guess he did bugger off.

Dylan, Aidan and Marty walk into the bar.
Haley comes up to the group as they grab a table.

HALEY (CONT’D)
Hi guys. I can’t believe you made it.

AIDAN
I thought you’d be at my grandmother’s.

HALEY
It’s my one night off. The only thing I’m nursing tonight is whiskey. So what do you think of Uncle Randy’s Dylan?

Dylan
It’s so, so...

MARTY
You can say it awful.

A shirtless waiter approaches the table.

AIDAN
We’ll have four Ball Busters Wayne. Let’s get you drunk Dylan so you can tell us all your secrets.

The waiter winks at Aidan.

Dylan
I don’t really have any secrets to tell.

AIDAN
I know one you could tell me. Did you cheat on Scott or did he cheat on you?

Dylan
What?

AIDAN
You wrote that book about cheating and writers write from experience right? So did Scott cheat on you or did you cheat on Scott?

Dylan
Actually neither.

(continued)
AIDAN
Don’t be embarrassed. You’re among friends. I’m sure Marty’s been cheated on a million times, right Marty.

DYLAN
The book was all research. I interviewed people. It was quite enlightening and made me really appreciate what Scott and I have.

HALEY
That’s beautiful. More people should respect the sanctity of marriage.

The waiter brings the drinks.

AIDAN
Here you go Dylan. Drink up. Oh and if you want I can always hook you up with someone. You know for more research.

MARTY
Can we change the subject?

AIDAN
Of course, I know how sensitive you are when it comes to the subject of cheating husbands.

DYLAN
You know I have one secret. It’s kind of silly but...

AIDAN
Dish, please.

DYLAN
I used to be a singer. I was in a band called Ciji’s Demise. We were great. We had this kind of goth new wave thing going on. Oh it was so much fun. It was the best three weeks of my life.

HALEY
We have to duet. Come on, I know the karaoke guy, we’re a shoo in.

DYLAN
Okay.

Dylan and Haley leave the table.
Marty and Aidan look at each other with disdain when a hot guy walks past the table. He is STEPHEN MERRICK.

AIDAN
I could use some of that.

STEPHEN
Thanks.

Stephen turns around to see who said it when he sees Marty.

STEPHEN (CONT’D)

MARTY
Stephen.

Marty jumps off his stool and the two awkwardly hug.

STEPHEN
You look great as always.

MARTY
Thanks. What are you doing here?

STEPHEN
I had some business in town. I was supposed to meet someone here. I guess they never showed up.

MARTY
Here?

STEPHEN
You can’t go near Carlton Heights without stopping at Uncle Randy’s.

AIDAN
Excuse me, but I would like to meet this hunk.

MARTY
Sorry. Stephen Merrick meet Aidan Palmer. You can shake his hand but you can’t be sure of where it’s been.

AIDAN
Marty has such a sense of humor. You can tell he’s funny by those laugh lines all around his eyes.

STEPHEN
It’s nice to meet you.

(CONTINUED)
AIDAN
You will join us.

STEPHEN
Sure, if I’m not intruding.

AIDAN
No, you’re not.

Stephen joins the table as Haley and Dylan return.

HALEY
We’re all signed up.

MARTY
Stephen Merrick, this is Haley Osbourne and Dylan Irving.

DYLAN
Stephen, nice to meet you.

MARTY
Stephen used to live in Carlton Heights. He is the one who helped Larry and Zimmy adopt the twins.

STEPHEN
Ah, it was nothing I just helped out.

MARTY
Stephen used to be our neighbor as well. He lived in your house, Dylan.

STEPHEN
You live on Avenue Sea? How do you like it?

DYLAN
We love it.

AIDAN
Dylan and his husband just moved in and everyone in town just wants to eat them up.

INT. M&A BANK - SCOTT’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Scott and Simon are at a sofa looking through papers.

SCOTT
So you see here, if you put the money into the secured plan your earned interest could be as much as

(CONTINUED)
Simon moves closer to Scott.

SIMON
So what’s this little chart here?

SCOTT
That is the amount of interest I was just telling you about.

SIMON
Charts are hot don’t you think?

Simon takes an ice cube out of his drink and licks it.

SCOTT
Umm, okay. Like I was saying, this particular plan could..

Simon knocks his drink over in Scott’s lap. Scott jumps up.

SIMON
I’m sorry. Here let me clean it.

Simon grabs a napkin, drops to his knees and starts rubbing Scott’s crotch.

SIMON (CONT’D)
Maybe I should just lick it off.

Simon moves forward so Scott jumps out of the way and runs to the door.

SCOTT
No, that’s quite alright. I think we’ve accomplished enough tonight.

Simon gets up and walks to Scott.

SIMON
I don’t want to leave you with wet pants. Why don’t we take them off.

Simon tries to get at Scott’s pants again.

SCOTT
Mr. Rexler, please I’m a married man.

SIMON
That’s never stopped anyone before.

SCOTT
It stops me. I’m sorry but this meeting is over.

(CONTINUED)
Simon exits.

INT. UNCLE RANDY’S ROOSTER RANCH – NIGHT

Haley and Dylan take the stage and begin singing Juice Newton’s “Queen Of Hearts.”

Stephen and Marty watch from their table.

STEVEN
They’re pretty entertaining. Dylan seems nice.

MARTY
He is. We’ve become pretty good friends.

STEVEN
Is he as good of a neighbor as I was?

MARTY
Well. I don’t find myself running over to borrow sugar as often as I did when you lived there.

STEVEN
I miss all of this.

MARTY
All of this? What this? Uncle Randy’s?

STEVEN
No, this. You and I talking. Remember we used to spend a lot time talking.

MARTY
No I don’t remember that. I do remember a lot of trying to talk to you but for some reason my lips just never connected with my mind.

STEVEN
Really?

MARTY
Yes. Now don’t laugh but I have to admit I had a crush on you. I feel so stupid even admitting it.
STEPHEN
So I guess you’re over it.

MARTY
What?

STEPHEN
You seem to be able to talk to me just fine.

MARTY
Ah, liquid courage works wonders.

STEPHEN
Since we’re being so honest, I have a confession as well.

MARTY
What’s that?

STEPHEN
I had a crush on you too.

Marty pretends he didn’t hear Stephen and he looks to the stage.

MARTY
They’re really quite good aren’t they?

On the stage, Haley continues to try to outshine Dylan by dancing in front of him. Dylan does the same back.

Dylan and Haley finish the song and everyone applauds.

HALEY
For my next number, I will be SOLO.

Haley pushes Dylan off the stage.

INT. M&A BANK - RONALD’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ronald is writing a check for Simon.

SIMON
Sorry it didn’t work out.

RONALD
You could still earn that bonus.

Ronald leans back in his chair and Simon goes to his knees.

Scott walks into the office.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SCOTT
Ronald, I’m taking off.. oh sorry. Sorry.

Ronald and Simon are startled. Scott backs out of the room.

RONALD
Don’t sit there with your mouth open. Get back to work.

INT. UNCLE RANDY’S ROOSTER RANCH - NIGHT

Dylan walks over to the booth where Aidan is talking with THREE YOUNG GUYS.

DYLAN
Aidan, I think I’ve had enough fun for one evening.

AIDAN
Boys, I’d like you to meet Dylan. He’s a cutie huh. How about the five of us..

DYLAN
Aidan, I’m serious. Let’s go.

GUY #1 stands up and checks out Dylan. He walks behind him and puts his arms around him to kiss his neck.

GUY #1
You are hot. Are you sure you don’t want to..

Dylan elbows the guy in the stomach, then he pulls the guy’s arm around his back.

DYLAN
I am a married man. You, let’s go.

AIDAN
I’m not going anywhere and I have the keys. I’m sure if you let go of John he’d be willing to take you home.

Dylan lets go of the guy.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Why don’t you have a little fun? I mean it’s not like your guy’s not having fun of his own. Or is that why you want to leave? Are you worried your upstanding husband may be doing something wrong?
DYLAN
You can stay but I’m leaving.

EXT. AVENUE SEA - THE CUL-DE-SAC - NIGHT

Dylan gets out of Stephen’s car.

DYLAN
Thanks for the ride Stephen. Are you coming Marty?

MARTY
No, you go in. Scott is probably worried sick.

Scott walks out of the house as Dylan walks up to him.

SCOTT
I’ve been worried sick.

DYLAN
How was the party?

SCOTT
It was jaw dropping. I’ll tell you all about it.

Scott and Dylan walk into the house hand in hand.

INT. STEPHEN MERRICK’S CAR - NIGHT

MARTY
I should go in too. It was good to see you again.

Marty starts to reach for the car door.

STEPHEN
Marty, wait.

MARTY
Yes?

STEPHEN
I had a really good time tonight.

MARTY
Me too. Well, good night.

STEPHEN
Marty, wait. What I’m trying to say is, I had a really good time tonight.

(CONTINUED)
MARTY
You did say that.

STEPHEN
What I mean to say, see I’m the one who’s tongue tied. (sigh) I want to see you again. I need to see you again.

MARTY
Stephen don’t.

STEPHEN
I’m sorry, I thought I was being

MARTY
You are “being” that’s the problem.

STEPHEN
Marty, I don’t want you to do something you don’t want to. I just want to spend more time with you. You are perfection. I’ve always thought so and I’m sorry your husband doesn’t see it.

MARTY
Oh Stephen.

Stephen leans in to kiss Marty. Marty begins to move forward.

MARTY (CONT’D)
I’m sorry, I can’t do this. I thought I could. I just can’t. I’m sorry, sorry...

Marty gets out of the car and runs to his front door.

Stephen bangs his hand on the steering wheel.

STEPHEN
Stupid, stupid.

INT. MITCHELL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marty runs into the house breathing a sigh. He looks out the window and sees Stephen drive away.

END OF ACT TWO.
ACT THREE

INT. CARLTON MANOR - MAIN LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ruth and Gladys Tudrow are looking through a photo album.

    RUTH
    Remember this? The four of us had such a good time that summer.

Gladys looks at the picture. It is a formal gathering with people dancing.

    GLADYS
    As I recall that was one of the last Founder’s Day dances.

    RUTH
    Well things turned a little ugly shortly after.

    GLADYS
    Things tend do that in this town.

Haley enters with a tray of tea and cookies.

    HALEY
    Here you go ladies. Oh pictures. How fun.

    RUTH
    That will be all Haley.

    HALEY
    Fine. If you won’t be needing anything else I do have to get into town.

    RUTH
    Yes, just go.

Haley exits the room.

    GLADYS
    Alright Ruth, she’s gone. You can cut through the pleasantries. What exactly do you want?

    RUTH
    You always were so astute Gladys. That must be how you ended up marrying so far above you.

    GLADYS
    Well, he was no Edgar now was he?

(CONTINUED)
Tell me, how is Toddy these days?

He’s fine, why do you ask?

Have you asked him to remove those items from the library?

I have and he’s been more than cooperative.

You never could lie Gladys. It has come to my attention that those months at Mrs. Maloney’s Homo Remedy Center didn’t give us the results on Toddy that we expected.

What are you saying?

I’m saying they didn’t yank the fag out of the boy. He was all over that Dylan Irving at the library. Margaret saw him and told me in great detail how they were using their homosexual senses to communicate.

Gertie spits out her spot of tea.

I hope you aren’t finding humor in this.

Of course not. I am just as concerned about my son as you are.

Good, because if you don’t use your parenting skills, lacking as they may be, to keep your son in line and away from that Irving character then I’ll be forced to react. And you don’t want to be the one I’m reacting to. Cookie?

Gladys takes a cookie as Ruth smiles at her guest.
INT. CARLTON HEIGHTS LIBRARY - DAY

Dylan is looking through tour books and making notes. Toddy comes behind him, looking over his shoulder.

TODDY
I see you’re back at it today.

DYLAN
A researcher’s work is never done.

TODDY
What exactly are you looking for?

DYLAN
I’m not really sure yet. I think I’ll know it when I see it.

TODDY
People have been talking a lot about this new book you’re working on. Is that what all this is about?

DYLAN
Yes. I think. I’m just very curious about this town. I think it’s fascinating that it’s a sort of hidden treasure. When I was moving here there was hardly any information about it at all. These tour books that are all over in the library never seemed to have made it outside of Carlton Heights.

TODDY
We used to have a bigger tourist crowd. But that all stopped when the hotel burned down.

DYLAN
The hotel? There was only one?

TODDY
No. There’s several hotels but the big A list crowd would come to Carlton Heights to stay at the Chateau Monroe.

DYLAN
Chateau Monroe?

TODDY
Yes, here, I’ll show you.

Toddy joyously takes a seat next to Dylan.

(CONTINUED)
Toddy thumbs through a few books until he finds what he is looking for.

TOODY (CONT’D)
Here. See the Chateau Monroe.

Toddy shows a picture of a giant hotel by the ocean.

DYLAN
That is gorgeous. It burned down?

TOODY
Yeah, in like 1960 something. Since then our tourist crowd has dwindled.

DYLAN
What kind of crowd did this place bring in? You said A list?

TOODY
Well I don’t want to drop names but it was a lot of celebrities, politicians and the like. Anyone on the down low, with money that is.

DYLAN
The down low?

TOODY
You know in the closet, not willing to commit to Dorothy, type of thing.

DYLAN
A gay resort in Carlton Heights? That explains some things. It sure didn’t stop the gays from moving here though did it?

TOODY
Shh, I don’t want Margaret hearing but this town has always had its share of gays. All the way back to the beginning.

DYLAN
Really?

TOODY
Oh yeah. Years and years of gay couplings in this town. I’m sure there’s a picture.

Toddy cozies up a little closer to Dylan.

Toddy finds a picture of a formal ball with both same sex and opposite sex couples dancing.

(CONTINUED)
TODDY (CONT'D)
The Blue Ball.

DYLAN
Excuse me.

TODDY
The Blue Ball, it was the Annual Founder’s Day Gala. It was tradition for years. All the old fogies always talk about it.

DYLAN
Do you know who any of these people are?

TODDY
No I wouldn’t know that. It was before my time. But I know who would know all these people.

DYLAN
Don’t tell me Ruth Carlton. We’re not exactly on speaking terms.

TODDY
Oh heaven’s no, I would never succumb anyone to that she devil. My own mother, that’s who. She has been around forever and a day and she knows everyone and everything that ever happened in Carlton Heights. I’ll just take this stuff home with me tonight and tomorrow we can go over it together.

DYLAN
You would do that?

TODDY
No problem. I’m sure Mother would love to take a trip down memory lane and as for me, it sends goose bumps right down to my toes to be helping a famous writer.

DYLAN
Well thanks. I’ll see you tomorrow then.

Dylan grabs his coat.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Oh Toddy, out of curiosity where was Chateau Monroe?
TODDY
Silly, that’s where your house is. It was vacant for years until Larry and Zimmy started building the cul-de-sac.

INT. CARLTON MANOR - FOYER
Ruth using her cane to support herself walks Gladys to the door.

RUTH
I’m glad we had this talk Gladys and don’t worry, I’ve made all the arrangements.

Gladys walks out the door.

EXT. CARLTON MANOR - FRONT PORCH

GLADYS
Bitch. I’ll make some arrangements of my own.

INT. M&A BANK - RONALD’S OFFICE - DAY
Ronald is working at his desk when Scott walks by.

RONALD
Scott. Can you come in here a second?

Scott enters.

SCOTT
Did you need something?

RONALD
I wanted to talk to you about last night. I think I should explain something.

SCOTT
You don’t have to explain anything to me.

RONALD
It’s just that Marty and I we just don’t connect. I like to have a little fun. That’s all.

SCOTT
It’s really none of my business.

RONALD
Right.

(CONTINUED)
SCOTT
Anything else?

RONALD
Yeah actually. Did Simon you know try something with you?

SCOTT
I guess he’s just a horny guy.

RONALD
Why didn’t you go through with it? I mean what stopped you?

SCOTT
I’m married. I mean not just married but “Married.” I love Dylan. I wouldn’t want to jeopardize that.

RONALD
But don’t you want something else? Even just once?

SCOTT
I’ve had other people before him. Dylan makes me laugh, he makes me happy. I wouldn’t know what I’d do if I didn’t have him and that makes me want him even more.

RONALD
But you could be missing out on so much.

SCOTT
Maybe you’re the one missing out.

INT. MARTY’S MAYHEM COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Marty is making coffee while Haley and Larry are playing cards at one of the tables.

LARRY
Oh a three of diamonds. Is this the third round? It is, isn’t it?

HALEY
I guess so. What does it matter?

LARRY
Looks like I may win this round. If you discard a three of diamonds on your third round it’s nothing but bad luck.
HALEY
Bad luck huh?

LARRY
Oh yes, my Mama always read cards. She could take a regular deck of playing cards and tell you all kinds of things.

MARTY
That’s ridiculous Larry.

LARRY
No, it’s true. I’ll show you. Come on.

Marty takes a seat with Larry and Haley.

Larry dramatically shuffles the cards.

LARRY (CONT’D)
Okay, now pick up the first card and flip it over. This will be your life card.

MARTY
Life card?

LARRY
Yes. It will show you what is happening in your life.

MARTY
Oh if I flip this card it will show me playing cards in my coffee house.

LARRY
You know that’s not what I mean. Go on flip it.

MARTY
Oh alright.

Marty flips over a 3 of Spades.

LARRY
Oh my goodness. Three swords. 3 of Spades. It’s really three swords, see. It’s a mirror of your life. Goodness, I didn’t know things were so bad. You’re stifling yourself, you aren’t being heard and worst of all, you’re not happy.
MARTY
Of course I’m not happy, I’m sitting here in the middle of the afternoon listening to this.

LARRY
Do another one.

MARTY
Larry.

LARRY
Come on, do it.

HALEY
This is fascinating.

MARTY
Fine. A Queen of Hearts. That’s got to be good right?

LARRY
I’m afraid not. You see it’s really a Hanged Man, or in this case a Hanged Woman.

HALEY
A Queen of Hearts? That’s so strange.

MARTY
Why?

LARRY
You see the Queen of Hearts represents the Hanged Man in the tarot sense, at least according to Mama who learned it all from my Aunt Isabelle in Carolina. Anyway, the Queen of Hearts means you are denying yourself your true self. You are afraid of being alone and thus have created a false sense of security by pretending to be someone else.

HALEY
Who are you?

MARTY
I don’t believe any of this.
LARRY
Look I just read the cards. You have to know the Queen of Hearts is bad. I mean she was hung because she was caught cheating.

MARTY
This is ridiculous. I’m going back to work.

LARRY
Wait. There’s one more card. Your future.

MARTY
No, I’m not doing this anymore.

HALEY
Marty, you have to.

MARTY
Fine, then will you both leave me alone.

HALEY
You got it.

MARTY
There, an Ace of Clubs. Let me guess, I have a brain tumor.

LARRY
No, actually this is good. The Ace of Clubs is like the Ace of Cups. It shows strength and hope. It’s a sign that things are changing and moving to a stronger plane. Thank goodness, Marty you will be happy after all.

MARTY
Yes, I can already feel it.

A DELIVERY MAN walks in carrying flowers.

DELIVERY MAN
Excuse me, Marty Mitchell?

MARTY
Yes?

DELIVERY MAN
I need you to sign for these.

MARTY
Okay.
Marty signs the paper as Haley and Larry look on. Marty opens the card which reads:

“I had a wonderful time Love, S.”

LARRY
See things are already looking up. Ronald sent you flowers.

HALEY
Brilliant! Now read my cards.

INT. IRVING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Dylan comes running into the house with books and papers.

SCOTT
There’s my little investigator. Dinner’s almost ready.

DYLAN
I have been so busy. Did you know this cul-de-sac used to be a hotel?

SCOTT
No, I didn’t. But I have something to tell you.

DYLAN
It burned down, my guess is under mysterious circumstances but I can’t prove it yet.

SCOTT
Okay. But listen, you’ll want to hear.

DYLAN
I tell you the more I learn about this place the more I feel like we moved into the Twilight Zone.

SCOTT
Will you listen. Ronald called me into the office today..

DYLAN
First there was that Ruth Carlton business, then Margaret what’s her name and then..

SCOTT
Margaret? Who’s Margaret?

(CONTINUED)
DYLAN
Just some old lady. I didn’t tell you about her, I didn’t want to upset you.

SCOTT
Did you get in more trouble? Is the Sheriff going to be knocking on the door?

DYLAN
No. Meanwhile, Larry is mad at me for something, Marty can’t do anything right according to Ronald and now we know he’s cheating on Marty.

SCOTT
That’s what I’m trying to tell you...

DYLAN
Then there was that whole grocery store debacle and that Aidan Palmer is nothing but trouble.

SCOTT
Margaret. Grocery store debacle. What do you do all day?

DYLAN
It was nothing really. I didn’t mention it because

SCOTT
You didn’t want to upset me.

DYLAN
Exactly. Oh dinner smells great.

Dylan walks to the kitchen.

SCOTT
I swear if the Sheriff comes I’m just turning you in!

INT. MITCHELL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marty is in a chair reading when Ronald comes out of the bathroom in a towel still wet from the shower.

RONALD
The party was a big success. I think we’re going to end up with a lot more business. Everyone seemed to really like Scott too.
Ronald takes off the towel and finishes drying himself off. Ronald puts on a pair of boxers.

MARTY
I’m glad.

RONALD
We should do something nice for the Irving’s I think. We haven’t really had them over. Maybe we could have a dinner party. Oh wait we’d have to order in.

MARTY
Is that supposed to be a jab at me?

RONALD
I was kidding. I was just trying to be funny. What, you don’t have a sense of humor anymore?

MARTY
I guess not.

RONALD
It was just a joke.

Ronald walks over to Marty and straddles Marty’s legs.

RONALD (CONT’D)
Maybe there’s a way I can make it up to you.

Ronald drops his shorts.

RONALD (CONT’D)
You want it?

INT. AIDAN PALMER’S LIVING ROOM – EVENING

Aidan walks into the house and turns on the light. Zimmy is sitting on the sofa.

AIDAN
You scared me. What are you doing here?

ZIMMY
Ever since Haley caught us you’ve been avoiding me. This is the only way I could see you.

Aidan walks over to Zimmy.
AIDAN
I haven’t been avoiding you. I’ve just been very busy.

ZIMMY
With Ronald?

AIDAN
You too huh? Why is everyone suddenly so concerned about Ronald and I.

ZIMMY
I’m worried about you and me too. Is Haley going to tell Larry what she saw?

AIDAN
Haley is concerned about Ronald and I not you and I.

ZIMMY
How did she find about that?

AIDAN
I guess we weren’t as discreet as I thought. She wants me to stop seeing him.

ZIMMY
So do I. I can’t handle you being with someone else.

AIDAN
Why is it always the married men who say that?

ZIMMY
We had a plan. Now everything is getting too complicated for me.

AIDAN
Haley has nothing to gain by telling Larry about you and I.

Aidan starts rubbing Zimmy’s shoulders.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
You’re so tense. Let me help you out those clothes.

ZIMMY
No, this is serious.

AIDAN
Are you saying you want us to stop?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

ZIMMY
No, I don’t. I need you.

AIDAN
Good. I need you too.

Aidan continues rubbing Zimmy’s shoulder.

ZIMMY
Oh that feels good.

AIDAN
Yeah, that’s it, just relax.

ZIMMY
I just don’t understand why you have to sleep with him?

AIDAN
Men like Ronald think with their dicks. Now, let’s get you out of those clothes.

Aidan begins undressing Zimmy.

INT. MITCHELL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ronald and Marty finish having sex.

MARTY
That was wonderful.

Marty tries to give Ronald a kiss but he turns away.

Ronald gets out of bed and heads to the door.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

RONALD
I’m going to sleep in the guest room.

MARTY
What? But I thought...

RONALD
I just wanted to see if I was missing out on something and as it turns out I’m not.

Ronald walks out.

END OF ACT THREE
Dylan walks out of his house and sees Larry playing with the twins in the front yard. He waves to Larry.

DYLAN
Hi Larry. (to himself) Of course you’re not waving back.

Dylan gets in his car.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
He’s not going to do this to me.

Dylan gets back out of the car and walks to Larry’s.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Hi guys.

Dylan bends down to play with the kids.

LARRY
Oh hi Dylan.

DYLAN
I was just headed to town and thought maybe you guys would like to come with me.

LARRY
No, I can’t. I have plans all day long.

DYLAN
Alright, well maybe we can have dinner sometime this week.

LARRY
Yes, I’ll let you know. With the twins things are always so hectic.

DYLAN
Right, I understand. I’ll see you later.

LARRY
Okay, bye.

Dylan starts walking back to the car but turns around.

DYLAN
Larry, if I did something to offend you I’m really very sorry.

(CONTINUED)
LARRY
Offend me? Why would you think that?

DYLAN
I get the impression we are on the outs and I don’t want that. Come on, until you tell me what I did, I can’t fix it. I’ll bend over backwards, I’ll bend over forwards. Just tell me what I did wrong.

LARRY
I don’t know what you’re talking about. There’s nothing wrong between us.

DYLAN
Alright if you say so. I just don’t feel the love Larry.

LARRY
Is everything a joke to you?

DYLAN
No, of course not.

LARRY
Maybe someday you and Scott will have children and you’ll understand the sacrifices a parent sometimes has to make.

DYLAN
What are you getting at?

LARRY
Never mind.

DYLAN
Is that what this is about? Did I do something to the twins? I swear when I gave them that candy I had no idea they didn’t have teeth.

LARRY
No, you didn’t do anything. I have to get the twins breakfast. Thanks for stopping by.

Larry grabs the twins and heads to his house.

DYLAN
Yeah, have a nice day.
INT. MITCHELL KITCHEN - MORNING

Marty is fixing a plate for breakfast with eggs and pancakes. He pours a cup of coffee and puts the plate on the table with fruit and a flower.

Ronald comes into the kitchen.

    RONALD
    When are you going to give up?

    MARTY
    It’s not for you, it’s MY breakfast.

Marty sits at the table to eat.

    RONALD
    I have a breakfast meeting anyway.

Aidan knocks on the back door and walks in.

    AIDAN
    Hi neighbors. Is that fresh brewed coffee I smell?

    MARTY
    No.

Marty gets up to get himself some coffee.

    RONALD
    Marty made breakfast. First time in years.

    AIDAN
    Really? I guess you can teach old dogs new tricks. Are you ready for our breakfast meeting Ronald?

    MARTY
    This is your breakfast meeting?

    AIDAN
    I am terrible with my finances. Luckily Ronald is always around to help me.

    MARTY
    Of course he is. Ronald’s always a big help to anyone in need.

    RONALD
    Do we have to do this now?

(CONTINUED)
MARTY
Do what? I was simply saying how nice you are. To everyone.

RONALD
Except you. Is that what you mean?

MARTY
No, it’s not what I mean at all. I think it’s great that you two get along so well and I feel sorry for you Aidan. Not being able to manage one’s own money can be very embarrassing. But like you said, Ronald’s always available to help.

RONALD
I don’t know what’s going on with you but I’d stop drinking so early in the morning. Let me get my brief case then we can go Aidan.

Ronald walks out the door.

AIDAN
That’s a nice charade you’re putting on.

MARTY
How do you sleep at night?

AIDAN
Oh, I don’t get much sleep... ever.

Ronald comes back in the room.

RONALD
Aidan, are you ready?

AIDAN
Absolutely.

RONALD
I won’t be home for dinner so you only have to heat up one TV dinner tonight.

Ronald exits.

MARTY
Maybe I won’t be home either.
EXT. AVENUE SEA - DAY

Ronald and Aidan walk out of the Mitchell house.

Instead of getting in the car, they walk over to Aidan’s house. They kiss passionately before walking in the door. 

Across from the cul-de-sac, Haley is in her car watching them.

   HALEY
   I warned you Aidan. Now it's time to take action.

INT. CARLTON HEIGHTS LIBRARY - DAY

Dylan walks into the library and goes to the counter carrying books.

   DYLAN
   Hello? Toddy I’m returning these books.

Dylan drops a book and bends down to get them.

Margaret makes her appearance behind the counter startling Dylan.

   DYLAN (CONT’D)
   Oh my god. Sorry you startled me. Where’s Toddy?

   MARGARET
   Toddy and his mother have taken a vacation. He won’t be back for two weeks.

   DYLAN
   Really? He never said anything about a vacation.

   MARGARET
   I’m sure there are many things he hasn’t told you.

   DYLAN
   I guess I don’t really need him today. I’m returning these books and I have a few more I need to check out.

   MARGARET
   I’m sorry but with Toddy gone I’m just not able to let anything out.

(CONTINUED)
DYLAN
You’re kidding me right. That’s fine. There are some reference books I need to look through anyway. I know I can’t check those out.

MARGARET
Our reference section is closed.

DYLAN
For how long? Wait let me guess, two weeks?

MARGARET
Maybe longer.

INT. SHADY GROVES HOTEL - DAY

Marty walks up to the front desk where a hotel clerk sits behind the desk.

DESK CLERK
Can I help you?

MARTY
Room 16 please.

The desk clerk rings the hotel room but there isn’t an answer.

DESK CLERK
I’m sorry there isn’t an answer. Would you like to leave a message?

MARTY
No, that’s okay. I shouldn’t have come anyway. Umm thank you, you have a nice day.

Marty walks to the door then turns around and walks back to the front desk.

MARTY (CONT’D)
I’m sorry. I would like to leave a message.

The desk clerk grabs a pen and paper to begin taking a note.

MARTY (CONT’D)
Actually, do you mind?

The desk clerk hands the paper and pen to Marty.

(CONTINUED)
Marty walks to the lobby passing the man in black as he walks in.
The man in black goes to the front desk.

DESK CLERK
Can I help you?

MAN IN BLACK
Yes

The phone rings and the desk clerk puts her hand up.

DESK CLERK
Shady Groves Hotel, can I help you?

The Man in Black looks around and sees Marty.
The desk clerk hangs up the phone and looks up but the man in black is gone.

Marty looks at his note:

“THANK YOU FOR THE FLOWERS.”

Marty tears up the note. He writes again.

“MEET ME TONIGHT AT UNCLE RANDY’S”

Marty tears up the second note. Marty writes again.

“COULD USE A GOOD TALKING TO. MEET ME TONIGHT. UNCLE RANDY’S 8 PM. MARTY.”

Marty walks up to the desk clerk.

MARTY
Could you make sure Stephen Merrick gets this?

DESK CLERK
Sure.

MARTY
Thanks and do have a nice day.

Marty exits as the Man in Black watches him leave from a corner.
INT. ZIMMY’S BISTRO – NIGHT

Zimmy is at the front desk when Haley comes in.

HALEY
Hello Zimmy. I’m here to pick up some dinners. I called in.

ZIMMY
Of course. I’m glad to see Mrs. Carlton likes our food.

HALEY
She doesn’t know where it comes from. She thinks I’m in the kitchen right now.

ZIMMY
Angelo, can you get the order for Carlton please?

ANGELO runs to the back as Haley takes a seat to wait.

HALEY
You’ll forgive me if I can’t help staring. I keep seeing your naked image in my head.

ZIMMY
I’ve been wanting to talk to you about that.

HALEY
I imagine you were.

ZIMMY
I don’t want you to think that something was really going on.

HALEY
Why would I think that? I mean plenty of men run into their neighbor’s homes without clothes on screaming, “Daddy’s home and he’s sweaty.”

ZIMMY
Yeah, see I realize how that could confuse you.

HALEY
That’s bullocks and you know it. I wasn’t confused at all.

(CONTINUED)
ZIMMY
Aidan says you aren’t really interested in telling Larry about this. I hope he’s right.

HALEY
Living on hope won’t get you very far Zimmy. But you should use hope and faith in this situation. Hope that I don’t tell Larry what I saw, and faith that if I do tell Larry he’ll still want to be with you.

ZIMMY
Think about my kids. I love Larry and I love my kids. I don’t want this to ruin my life.

HALEY
You should’ve thought of that before you started shagging Aidan. You should be ashamed of yourself.

ZIMMY
I am. I am ashamed. That’s what I’m trying to tell you. Aidan just has a power.

Angelo brings the food over and Zimmy takes it handing it to Haley.

HALEY
Aidan is a user. He’s using you just like he’s using Ronald. As soon as he gets what he wants he’s going to dump you both. Now how much do I owe you?

ZIMMY
It’s on the house.

HALEY
No, here. You’re going to need the money.

Haley exits.

EXT. UNCLE RANDY'S ROOSTER RANCH - NIGHT
Marty drives into the parking lot and turns off the car.

MARTY
Come on Marty Samuels Mitchell. It's just a drink, two friends having a drink.

(CONTINUED)
Marty sighs and gets out of his car.
Marty gets back into the car.
Marty throws his head in his hands.
Marty is about to get out of the car again when he sees Stephen walking towards the entrance of the bar.
Marty ducks under the dashboard.
Marty takes another sigh.

MARTY (CONT'D)
A drink, it’s just one drink.

Marty gets out of the car.

INT. IRVING BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dylan is in bed making notes. All around him are papers, books, photos and the newspaper.

Scott is in the bathroom brushing his teeth.

DYLAN
I just don’t understand why Toddy would just leave like that. I’m sure he would’ve told me if he was going on vacation. I mean we had agreed to talk today.

SCOTT
What?

DYLAN
I said Toddy didn’t say he was going on vacation.

SCOTT
Maybe it was a family emergency.

DYLAN
No. Margaret told me it was a vacation. Not that she wouldn’t lie to me.

SCOTT
What?

DYLAN
She probably lied to me.

Scott finishes brushing his teeth and comes in the bedroom.

(CONTINUED)
SCOTT
Are you sure you’re not just looking for more conspiracies?

Scott gets into bed.

DYLAN
He told me there have always been gay people here.

SCOTT
Dylan, there’s always been gay people everywhere.

DYLAN
Not like here. I was really hoping Toddy could give me some insight.

SCOTT
I think you’re wasting your time. You’re going to find out Carlton Heights is just like every other place we could live. There’s nothing strange happening here.

DYLAN
Right. Doesn’t it bother you to know that woman has me locked out of the library?

SCOTT
Imagine if there was a place where you could find information at the touch of your fingers right in your very own home. Oh wait, there is.

DYLAN
You are real funny. They don’t have everything on the internet you know. They can’t tell me who’s sleeping with who and what my neighbors aren’t telling me.

SCOTT
Did you call Mr. Chandelor yet about the job at the paper?

Dylan picks up the paper.

DYLAN
No, have you ever read this?

SCOTT
The newspaper? A few times.
DYLAN
The local paper. There’s nothing but good
news in it. There’s no catastrophes, no
fires, no police log. Only so and so got
married, so and so got promoted, so and
so put in a new hedge. Pages and pages of
it.

SCOTT
Maybe nothing bad ever happens here.

DYLAN
I’m living proof bad things happen here.

SCOTT
Put the paper down. I have some good news
for you.

DYLAN
What?

SCOTT
You’re going to get lucky tonight.

DYLAN
Ooh that is good news.

Dylan throws the paper over his head as Scott kisses him.

INT. CARLTON MANOR - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Haley enters the room where Ruth is asleep at her desk.

HALEY
Poor dear she’s plum tuckered out from
being a bitch to everyone all day.

Haley walks to Ruth and tries to shake her but Ruth continues
to sleep.

Haley notices there is something under Ruth’s head. Haley
pulls a photo album out from under Ruth.

Haley nudges Ruth until she finally stirs.

RUTH
Oh did I fall asleep?

HALEY
Must have been all of your excitement the
last few days.
RUTH
I was just looking through old memories. Things have certainly changed around here. Maybe you should wheel me to the stairs. I am a tad tired.

HALEY
I’ll wheel you over there but you can use your cane up the stairs. I can’t carry your dead weight.

RUTH
I’m thinking of reporting you to the health officials.

HALEY
I’m only looking after your best interests. Kind of how you look after this town’s best interests.

RUTH
Oh please, don’t compare yourself to me.

HALEY
You’re right, I could never be as devious and conniving as you.

RUTH
Don’t be so sassy or you may end up on the unemployment line and I seriously doubt that voice of yours is going to get you too far.

INT. UNCLE RANDY’S ROOSTER RANCH - NIGHT

Stephen is at a table.

STEPHEN
I’m glad you decided to meet me.

We see it isn’t Marty he’s meeting but the Man in Black.

EXT. UNCLE RANDY'S ROOSTER RANCH - NIGHT

Marty gets back into his car and drives away from the bar.

INT. IRVING BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dylan and Scott lay post coital when the door bell rings.

DYLAN
Who could that be?

(CONTINUED)
The door bell rings again. Dylan walks to the window but can’t see anyone.

SCOTT
Who’s there?

DYLAN
I can’t see anyone. I’ll be right back.

INT. IRVING LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dylan walks down the stairs and to the front door. He opens the door but there isn’t anyone there.

Dylan is about to shut the door when he sees something on the ground. He picks up a white envelope with his name written on it. Dylan opens the envelope. He pulls out a photograph of two men smiling in front of a white building. It is the same picture from Ruth’s photo album.

Scott comes down the stairs.

SCOTT
What’s that? Fan mail?

DYLAN
I don’t think so.

Dylan flips over the photo and there's a note.

SCOTT
What does it say?

DYLAN
Roses are red, violets are blue, if I seem familiar, it's because I look like you.

SCOTT
Not exactly Shakespeare is it?

DYLAN
What do you think it means?

Dylan opens the door again but no one is around.

FADE OUT.

THE END.