

Hello Goodbye

By

Mike Shelton

shelton.mike@gmail.com

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

A basic kitchen. Nothing too fancy, but functional. A flame radiates on one of the stove's burners, heats a pot.

DREW, mid twenties and dressed in a casual manner, enters the kitchen and washes his hands at the sink.

As he dries them with a hand towel, he looks over to the stove. Water boils over in the pot.

Drew tosses the towel on the counter, rushes to the pot and turns off the heat. The water settles down.

He moves the pot to an open burner, cleans up the mess.

As he moves downward to get what's on the floor, there's a knock at the door.

Drew looks up, not sure if he heard something.

Another knock. He checks his watch, then looks at his appearance. He's definitely behind schedule.

He gets up from the floor and walks to the

LIVING ROOM

As a third knock rings out, Drew answers the door.

On the other side is BETH, also mid twenties but dressed much nicer than Drew thanks to a cocktail dress.

Looking at the two of them, they couldn't be further apart on the fashion scale right now.

Beth holds a bottle of wine in one hand, her purse in the other.

DREW

Hello.

BETH

Hi.

DREW

When I first heard the knocking I thought you were way early.

BETH
You said eight, right?

DREW
Yeah, you're right on time. I'm
just running behind.

BETH
No big deal.

They stand in silence for a moment.

Beth gestures toward the inside of the apartment.

BETH
Can I come in?

DREW
Yeah. Sorry.

Drew steps to the side to allow Beth's entrance. Drew
closes the door behind her.

They look at each other for a moment, then an awkward hug.

DREW
Good to see you.

BETH
You too.

They release their embrace.

Beth looks at her surroundings, like they're new to her.

BETH
You've done something in here. It
looks different.

DREW
Not really. Just cleaned up a bit.

Beth laughs.

BETH
I'd say that qualifies as
different. Should I put this away
or leave it out?

DREW
Probably better to put it away for
now. I'm behind in making dinner
too. Unless you want some.

She thinks it over.

BETH
Nah, I think I'll wait.

Beth makes her way to the fridge, sets her purse on the kitchen counter.

BETH
You making spaghetti?

DREW
How'd you guess?

BETH
Cause there's only two things you know how to make, and I doubt you invited me over for a scrumptious dinner of scrambled eggs.

Beth opens the fridge. It's filled with wine bottles and beer. She looks back to Drew.

BETH
Think you got enough?

DREW
Just wanted to be safe.

BETH
Did you remember to pick up cigarettes?

Drew sighs in aggravation.

DREW
No. I forgot.

She puts the wine bottle in the fridge with the others, shuts the door, and goes to her purse where she retrieves two packs of cigarettes.

BETH
You always did.

She smiles, sets the cigarettes on the counter.

DREW
That's why we make such a good team. One of us always fills in when the other one forgets.

Beth's smile fades.

BETH

I guess that's one advantage of not ever being on the same page.

An uncomfortable silence.

DREW

I should go get ready.

BETH

You don't have to do that.

DREW

What, and sit here dressed like a frat boy while you walk around in a dress? No way.

BETH

I just over dressed. Don't worry about it.

DREW

Over dressed or not, you look great.

She takes in the compliment, likes it.

BETH

Thanks.

DREW

I read somewhere recently that it's good to say things like that sometimes.

BETH

What, compliments?

DREW

Yeah.

BETH

And this was new to you?

DREW

Yeah. I don't read much. You know that.

BETH

Reading or not, you never knew that it's nice to pay someone a compliment?

DREW

No, of course I knew that. I'm just saying that it's nice to compliment people out of the blue. You know, like I just did. It works on a deeper psychological level that way.

Beth goes to the fridge, takes out her bottle of wine, and looks to Drew.

BETH

Changed my mind. So, you were saying something about a deeper psychological level.

DREW

Yeah, there's just something more to it.

Beth takes two glasses from an overhead cabinet.

BETH

You want some?

DREW

You know I don't like wine.

She puts one of the glasses back, pours a glass of wine as she talks.

BETH

You don't like to clean either. I thought maybe you'd turned over a new leaf.

DREW

Nope, still can't stand the stuff.

BETH

So, tell me more about this article you read.

DREW

It's like when someone shows up at your house for a date. It's instinct for you to tell the other person that they look nice, whether they actually do or not. It's just customary. People come to expect it anymore, and it's just random words with nothing behind them.

Beth sips the wine.

BETH

I see.

DREW

But if you say it out of the blue,
it's not expected.

BETH

Obviously. If it were expected, it
wouldn't be out of the blue.

Drew goes to the fridge, grabs a beer.

DREW

Right, so by surprising someone by
saying something nice, you catch
them off guard. Sweep them off
their feet in a way.

BETH

Where did you read this?

DREW

Some magazine at the doctor's
office. Wasn't much else to choose
from.

Beth is intrigued.

BETH

What did you go to the doctor for?

Drew shrugs.

DREW

I don't know. I haven't been
feeling all that well lately.

BETH

That's normally why people go to
the doctor. What's wrong?

DREW

I just feel tired all the
time. Can't sleep. You ever get
like that?

BETH

Sure. A little more so as of
late. Seems like I've been burning
the candle at both ends.

DREW
You been working a lot?

BETH
Maybe not a lot, but definitely
more than usual. You?

DREW
Probably the same. Just trying to
keep myself occupied.

Beth nods in agreement.

BETH
Yeah.

Drew opens his beer, takes a swig as he tosses the bottle
cap at the garbage can. It misses.

The two of them stare at the cap on the ground.

DREW
I'll get that later.

BETH
You should leave it. It's very art
deco. Classes up the place.

DREW
There's a good excuse for not
having to clean.

BETH
You could start with the bottle
cap, and then expand into even
tackier things.

DREW
Good idea. Maybe I'll look into
one of those dogs playing poker
paintings too.

BETH
You should have your own show.

Drew holds his hands out in front of him like he's
displaying a large banner.

DREW
"Decorating with Garbage"

Beth considers the title.

BETH
Needs more pop. Something like
"Trash Your House".

Drew raises his beer.

DREW
I'll drink to that.

Beth salutes as well, and they take a drink.

BETH
So this magazine. Did it give you
this idea too?

DREW
How'd you know?

BETH
Cause the compliment thing sounds
like something you'd read in a
chick magazine, and chick magazines
like to write articles with stupid
suggestions in them.

DREW
You think this is a stupid idea?

BETH
A little bit, yeah.

DREW
Why?

BETH
Because we're already friends,
Drew. We don't need some magazine
to tell us how to do that.

Drew takes a seat at a bar stool near the counter.

DREW
So you're telling me that the last
couple weeks haven't been just
totally weird for you?

BETH
Of course they have, but it's not
because we're not friends.

DREW
Then why?

Beth opens her mouth to speak, but hesitates.

BETH

It's because... you're not there.

DREW

See? That's exactly what I mean. I'm not there. We haven't seen each other since we broke up, and we didn't talk on the phone until yesterday when I invited you over here.

BETH

We both needed the space.

DREW

What? To get over things?

BETH

That's exactly why.

DREW

Well, I got news for you, Beth. It's not working. For you or me.

BETH

I think I'm doing just fine with it.

DREW

Oh really? Then why can't you sleep?

Beth works on a response, but comes up empty.

DREW

I'll tell you why. It's the same reason you've felt totally weird about things lately. It's because I'm not there.

BETH

Is that your theory?

DREW

It's not a theory, it's a fact. And just in case you're wondering how I know that, it's because it's the very reason that I haven't been able to sleep lately.

Beth folds her arms across her chest.

BETH
Because I'm not here.

Drew takes a deep breath.

DREW
I roll over in the middle of the night to put my arm around you, and when I realize you're not there and not going to be, it startles me awake. After that I just lie there for an hour or two, thinking about what you might be doing. If you're thinking about me.

BETH
I think about you too. All the time.

DREW
Then why are we even doing this?

Beth is confused.

BETH
I... thought you wanted to be friends.

DREW
I do, but we were friends before weren't we?

BETH
But that's different, we were together then.

DREW
And why aren't we still?

Beth sighs, takes a seat at the bar stool next to Drew. She grabs his hand.

BETH
Because we both know it's not going to work out for us in the long run. What we want is just too different, and sooner or later it's going to cause problems. Real problems. To the point where something like this won't even be a possibility. Is that what you want?

Drew deflates a little.

DREW

No.

BETH

And neither do I. I can't even imagine what my life would be like if you weren't in it at all.

DREW

I know.

They sit in silence until Drew chuckles.

BETH

What's so funny?

Drew gestures toward her dress.

DREW

It's the dress. I'm just so used to seeing you walk around in a pair of my boxers and a t-shirt.

BETH

Well if it makes you feel better, we'll probably still argue over which movie we're going to watch.

DREW

No, you can pick.

Beth reels back in shock.

BETH

I can pick?

DREW

Sure.

BETH

Alright, where's Drew and what have you done with him?

Drew laughs.

DREW

It's just not a big deal. Go ahead. Pick something out while I jump in the shower.

Beth swallows the last bit of her wine and gets up.

BETH

Deal.

Drew gets up and exits to the bathroom.

Beth fills her glass with fresh wine, and the shower turns on a moment later.

She picks up her glass and goes to the

LIVING ROOM

Where she makes her way to a shelf filled with dvds.

She glances through the titles until she catches something out of the corner of her eye.

It's a magazine, lying face down on the couch.

She looks at it with curiosity, walks to it, and picks it up.

She glances back and forth between the front cover and the sound of the shower, and bites her lip. It's like she just discovered someone's diary.

She flips through the pages until she finds what she's looking for. She reads for a moment, then stops.

There something to this.

BETH

Wow. This actually makes sense.

She looks to the air in thought, then smiles.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Drew, dressed in a pair of gym shorts, dries himself with a towel. He does a half assed job, good enough for a guy, and puts the towel back on the rack.

He moves to the sink, rests his hands on it, and takes a good long look at himself in the mirror.

There are probably a million different things going through his mind, but his stare is just an odd mixture of determination and self-pity.

A quick slap on the sink, and he exits to the

BEDROOM

He enters just in time to see Beth slipping on one of his t-shirts.

Coupled with the pair of his boxers that she already wears, it's her old lounging clothes.

Drew freezes, takes her in until he's zoned out.

She turns and sees him.

BETH

I hope you don't mind.

Drew snaps to.

DREW

No. I don't mind.

BETH

Good thing it's not cold out otherwise my feet would probably get frostbite.

He laughs.

DREW

You could always put the heels back on.

BETH

Yeah, cause that's a really nice outfit.

DREW

C'mon, it's casual and formal at the same time. Very sexy.

BETH

Yeah, if you're a dominatrix.

DREW

Nah. I don't know too many dominatrixes that wear cotton underwear.

BETH

Do you even know one dominatrix?

DREW

Personally, no, but I've seen a lot on the internet.

BETH
Is that something you normally
check out?

DREW
What do you mean?

BETH
Like is that what you're into.

DREW
No, not really. You see one thing,
that leads to something, then
something else again, and sooner or
later you see a dominatrix.

BETH
I've actually always found it kind
of fascinating myself.

Drew is surprised.

DREW
Really?

BETH
Well, yeah. I don't think it's for
me personally, but the whole
culture aspect of it is really
intriguing.

DREW
I guess I can see the logic in
that.

BETH
It's like, how do these people find
each other and potentially hook up?

DREW
Now, I'd say it's via the
internet. Back in the day, I don't
know. Special bars maybe?

BETH
That's possible.

They stand in silence for a moment.

DREW
Anyway, there's socks in the drawer
if you want.

Beth waves that off.

BETH

Oh no. I know what you do with your socks when you're not wearing them.

Drew doesn't follow, until Beth makes a jerking off motion.

He's stunned.

DREW

You know about that?

BETH

Of course I do. You think I didn't know you did that?

DREW

Well, no. All guys do it. I'm just surprised you knew about the sock thing.

BETH

It took awhile to figure out, but it came to me once I found a sock that felt like it was made out of cardboard.

Drew smiles, reminisces.

DREW

Ah, good old Sally.

Beth is creeped out.

BETH

You named your sock?

DREW

I'm kidding.

BETH

How do you go about doing that?

DREW

The sock thing?

BETH

Yeah. Is it there the whole time, or does it come into play at the end?

DREW
Could go either way, but bringing
it in near the end is probably more
common.

BETH
Because of the cardboard thing?

DREW
Exactly. Don't wanna scratch
yourself.

Beth thinks it over.

BETH
Interesting.

DREW
Embarrassing is more like it.

Drew grabs a shirt from the dresser, slides it on.

BETH
There's nothing to be embarrassed
about. You think I don't do things
like that?

Drew laughs.

DREW
Never.

He turns and exits. Beth puts her hands on her hips in open
mouth shock, then follows him out.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Drew sits on the bar stool drinking his beer.

Beth walks up, stands in front of him.

BETH
What's that supposed to mean?

DREW
It means I don't think you do
things like that.

BETH
Are you saying I don't know how to
be sexy?

DREW

No, you're sexy without even trying. You just don't do too many things outside the norm.

Beth folds her arms across her chest.

BETH

Oh, really? Well, what about the time I wore that schoolgirl outfit for you?

DREW

Yeah, one time. You never wore it again after that.

BETH

Because you said it had more to do with the cotton panties than anything.

DREW

I did kinda dig the little plaid skirt, but you're right. I did say that.

BETH

And what did I do?

Drew stares blankly. He has no idea.

Beth sighs.

BETH

I went out the next day and bought new cotton panties. Literally dozens of pairs in all different colors, just because you liked them.

DREW

I remember you saying something about it being a lot easier too.

BETH

Of course it's easier. Why go through everything at Victoria Secret when I can get five pairs in a pack for six bucks at Target?

Drew smiles.

DREW
Because you bought my favorite ones
at Victoria Secret.

BETH
Really?

DREW
Yeah, the black and pink striped
ones. Those were hot.

Beth breaks into heavy laughter.

DREW
What's so funny?

Beth turns, pulls the boxers down just enough to expose her
underwear. Black and pink striped.

She pulls the boxers back up, smiles.

DREW
You did that on purpose.

BETH
I swear I didn't. It's just a
weird coincidence.

DREW
Yeah, right. I haven't seen you in
those in forever.

BETH
Because I knew you liked them so
much. I only pulled them out as a
treat on special occasions.

DREW
And the fact that you're wearing
them right this minute is just a
coincidence. That's your story?

Beth nods, smiles a mischievous smile.

BETH
And I'm sticking to it.

Beth leans against the counter.

BETH
So, tell me something. Why the
fascination with the most basic of
underwear?

DREW

I just like the way they fit. Accentuates the hips. Those stringy things always look weird to me.

BETH

So, you're saying you prefer fabric to skin?

DREW

Yeah, unless we're talking about flat out nakedness. Cause that's always preferable.

BETH

Definitely.

DREW

How bout you? What is it about gray boxer briefs?

BETH

I just like the way they look on you. Tight in all the right places.

DREW

Okay, I can buy that logic.

BETH

You wearing them now?

DREW

Yeah. About seventy five percent of the underwear I own are gray boxer briefs. You know that.

BETH

Let me see.

DREW

Seriously?

BETH

Yeah.

Drew turns, flashes a glimpse like Beth did.

Beth she looks at him, unimpressed.

BETH
That's all I get?

DREW
That's the same thing you did.

BETH
I'll show mine if you show yours.

Drew laughs.

DREW
What are we, little kids?

BETH
What's the matter, Drew? Getting
too freaky for you?

DREW
Please. Talking about what kind of
underwear we like is hardly freak
worthy.

Beth raises a challenging eyebrow.

BETH
My point exactly. Don't just talk
the talk, walk the walk.

Beth slips off the boxers, tosses them at Drew. She stands,
uninhibited.

Drew looks on in satisfaction.

DREW
Yeah, those are still my favorite.

BETH
Quid pro quo, Drew.

Drew laughs and follows Beth's lead. Beth takes him in,
nods approvingly.

BETH
I still like those.

DREW
So now that we're both sitting here
in our underwear, when does the
pillow fight start!

Drew raises his hands in mock enthusiasm.

BETH
You wanna up the stakes?

DREW
How so?

BETH
We'll play a game. I tell you
something, you tell me something.

DREW
Freaky stuff?

BETH
The freakier the better.

Drew shrugs.

DREW
Alright.

Beth loses a little of her assertiveness.

BETH
Really?

DREW
Sure. What guy doesn't wanna hear
a girl talking about freaky shit?

She thinks it over.

BETH
Gay ones?

DREW
I'm sure they do too. Now, c'mon,
spill it.

Beth shakes her head, slowly at first, but picks up speed as she gains confidence.

BETH
Alright, I'm in. But let's move to
the living room. I left my wine in
there.

Drew picks his shorts up, goes to put them back on, but Beth snatches them away.

BETH
Hold on a second there,
cowboy. I'm still enjoying the
view.

She tosses the shorts to the floor, then kicks them and the boxers away. They end up right next to the bottle cap.

They exit to the

LIVING ROOM

and plop down on the couch. Beth picks up her wine, takes a sip.

BETH

Okay. You want me to go first?

DREW

Wasn't that the whole point? You tell me something and I tell you something?

BETH

Okay, I'll start.

They sit in silence. Drew gets impatient.

DREW

Well?

BETH

Alright, alright. I masturbate.

Drew waits for the rest. Apparently there isn't any.

DREW

Yeah, and?

BETH

That's it. It's your turn.

DREW

What do you mean it's my turn? You just told me that like five minutes ago. You're supposed to elaborate on it.

BETH

How?

DREW

I don't know, but saying "I masturbate" is about as risqué as saying "I eat cereal". It's just an every day occurrence.

BETH

I don't eat cereal every day.

Drew raises an eyebrow.

DREW

Do you masturbate every day?

BETH

I don't have some ridiculous streak going if that's what you mean, but I do have spurts where I will every day, yeah. What about you?

DREW

If we're keeping track of consecutive days played, I've long surpassed Cal Ripken's Iron Man record.

Beth is lost.

BETH

Is that a long time?

Drew sighs.

DREW

I forgot you don't know shit about baseball. It's in the thousands. Probably over five.

Beth's jaw drops.

BETH

Five thousand days in a row?

DREW

Or thereabouts.

BETH

That's like...

Beth looks up, does the math in her head.

BETH

...fourteen years.

DREW

What can I say? I discovered myself and never looked back.

BETH

How did you manage to fit it in every day?

DREW

That's just what guys do. For us it actually is like eating cereal. Some days, it's breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

BETH

More than once?

Beth takes a drink of wine.

Drew nods.

DREW

My personal best is five.

Beth does a spit take, coughs a little.

BETH

Five times! How could you possibly do that?

DREW

It was back in high school. I faked sick one day not long after my parents got the internet, and I discovered online porn. It was funny. The dial up connection was so shitty I finished before the picture was done loading a couple times.

BETH

I'm just... I'm just in shock. Five times in one day?

DREW

Only once. I found out it wasn't a good idea when I had trouble walking the next day.

Beth laughs.

BETH

I'll bet.

Beth looks away, takes a sip of wine. Drew notices her averted glance.

DREW
Alright, now stop stalling and give
me an answer.

BETH
I'm not stalling.

Drew laughs.

DREW
You're so avoiding the
question. You don't have anything
to be embarrassed about.

Beth gestures toward her appearance.

BETH
Would I be sitting here like this
if I was worried about embarrassing
myself?

DREW
Then you should have no problem
divulging a little bit of dirty
info.

They share a smile.

Beth takes a deep breath.

BETH
I use my cell phone.

DREW
Your... cell phone.

BETH
Yeah.

DREW
What do you do, call yourself from
another phone or something?

BETH
No. I just go into where you
change the ringer and jump back and
forth between the vibration
settings.

DREW
And that works?

BETH

Like a charm. You just have to know which ones to use.

Drew reclines.

DREW

Does it really make a difference?

BETH

Definitely...

She sets her glass down on the coffee table.

BETH

...the best way to do it, at least for me, is settings three and four. Three is two long vibrations, and four is four really quick bursts, so it goes something like this.

Beth uses her hands and makes the vibration noises to demonstrate.

DREW

And that does it for you?

BETH

Every time.

DREW

Do you, like, stick it up in there?

BETH

No, nothing like that. Just hold it up against it.

DREW

Wow.

BETH

Your turn.

Drew takes a sip from his beer, looks the other way.

DREW

Uh, yeah. I don't think I want to play any more.

BETH

What? Oh no! You're not getting off that easily.

DREW
No, but apparently you are.

Drew laughs. Beth softly punches him on the arm, but can't help but laugh as well.

BETH
Jerk.

Drew sits up straight, sets his beer on the table.

DREW
Alright, I'll play along with this,
but you gotta promise that you're
not going to freak out on me,
alright?

BETH
I thought the whole point of this
was to be freaky.

DREW
No, just talk about freaky
shit. I'm just telling you cause I
don't want you to get up and leave
or anything.

Beth looks at him with immense wonder.

BETH
Jesus, what the hell did you do?

DREW
Just promise.

BETH
Okay, I promise.

Drew musters up the courage.

DREW
I fuck the couch.

Beth is lost.

BETH
What?

DREW
I said I fuck the couch.

BETH

I know what you said, but what does that mean?

DREW

What do you think it means? It means I fuck the couch.

BETH

How is that even possible?

DREW

Two ways. I can either go up top or from the side. The side works a little better in my opinion. You don't really bottom out.

BETH

Is this something you've done recently?

DREW

Yesterday.

Beth jumps up.

BETH

That's gross!

Drew stands.

DREW

You said you wouldn't freak out.

BETH

But you fuck the couch. The couch! With your dick!

DREW

Yeah. You wanna keep it down so the neighbors don't hear?

BETH

But this is our couch. We sit on it. Our friends sit on it. How could you do that?

DREW

It's not like I just jump in and have at it. There's a whole system involved.

BETH

Okay, you gotta tell me how this one works, cause this is seriously beyond anything I've ever heard.

DREW

Okay. Just sit down.

Beth looks at the couch, nervous.

BETH

I don't think I want to.

DREW

The couch is clean. Would you just trust me on this?

Beth sits down. Drew follows.

DREW

Alright, well, you take a baggie--

BETH

With or without the zipper?

DREW

Doesn't matter. Whatever's handy. Then you put some lotion, or whatever your lube of preference is, inside the baggie. Coat it really well. You don't want to end up with chafing.

BETH

Makes sense.

DREW

Take it over to the couch, stick it in the gap of your choice, and... you know the rest.

Beth looks at him with wonder.

BETH

Whatever possessed you to think that up?

DREW

I didn't. I found it on the internet. It's come a long way since slow loading jpegs.

BETH

And just how do you happen to
stumble upon something like that?

DREW

By searching "innovative
masturbation techniques" of course.

BETH

You're serious? You really looked
that up?

DREW

Yeah. You can only do the regular
stuff for so long. You gotta mix
it up a bit.

BETH

That's just bizarre.

DREW

If you think that's weird, I won't
even try to tell you what can be
done with a cantaloupe.

Beth leans forward, intrigued at first, but then thinks
better of it.

BETH

Yeah, maybe some other time.

They sip from their drinks in silence until Beth opens up.

BETH

You ever try using someone else's
hand?

DREW

Don't you remember when we used to
make out in High School and I'd
always try to move your hand down
there?

BETH

That's not what I mean.

DREW

Then what?

BETH

On nights when we'd go to bed and
you'd be all passed out drunk, I
used to use your hand instead of my
own to get off.

Drew laughs.

DREW
No shit.

BETH
Nope. Did it a few times.

DREW
Wow, I never noticed.

BETH
It's your turn now.

Drew laughs harder.

DREW
I did the exact same thing.

Beth's eyes light up.

BETH
You what?

She grabs her glass, downs the rest, and goes to the kitchen for a refill.

DREW
I did the same thing you did. Why are you getting mad?

BETH
Cause that's just wrong. It's a violation of trust.

DREW
And it's not when you do it?

BETH
No, I just rubbed a little. You had me grab on to you. How'd you manage to do that anyway?

DREW
You just kinda went on auto pilot. Grabbed it with no problem.

Drew finishes his drink and gets up.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Drew reaches into the fridge for a fresh beer.

BETH
I'm such a whore.

DREW
Oh, calm down. It's not like you
hadn't done it before.

BETH
Not in my sleep!

DREW
You were just going with the
flow. It's natural.

She takes a big gulp from her wine glass.

BETH
How can I tell anybody about that?

DREW
Why would you?

BETH
I don't know, it's bound to come up
at some point. Right?

DREW
I've never had a conversation that
went the route of someone asking me
if I've given a handjob in my
sleep. It just doesn't happen.

BETH
But what if we start talking like
we are now?

DREW
You mean in our underwear?

Beth shoots him a playful glare.

BETH
You know that's not what I mean.

Drew shrugs.

DREW
Who do you mean when you say "we"?

BETH
Well... me and somebody else.

DREW
Then don't tell them about it.

BETH
I'd feel bad if I held anything
back though.

Drew thinks on that.

DREW
Didn't we just share a whole bunch
of info that neither of us knew
before?

BETH
This is different.

DREW
Is it?

BETH
Well, yeah. I feel comfortable
enough around you to tell you these
things.

DREW
But you didn't before?

BETH
It wasn't that. We just never
talked about those things.

DREW
We should have. It's pretty fun.

Beth gulps her wine. She's hitting it pretty hard.

DREW
You know, if it bothers you that
much, there's one thing we could do
to avoid all that.

They share a quick glance. Beth gets the picture.

BETH
Drew, no.

DREW
You know I'm right.

BETH
Maybe so, but there'd be worse
things to deal with than that.

DREW
You make it sound like our
relationship was just flat out bad.

BETH
No. It wasn't bad at all.

DREW
That's exactly my point. We were
good together, things were perfect
between us.

BETH
Yeah. Until.

Drew concedes a bit.

DREW
We could have worked through that,
Beth.

BETH
No, Drew. I could have worked
through it. You wouldn't have had
to do anything because it would've
been exactly what you wanted.

DREW
For the time being. I don't know
what I'll think in the future.

BETH
I do. It'll be the exact same way
you feel right now.

She swallows the last of her wine, refills the glass, and
walks back to the living room.

Drew follows her.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Drew takes a seat on the couch next to Beth, lights a smoke.

Beth looks at him, not pleased.

BETH
You know I hate it when you smoke
in the house.

DREW
I haven't been doing it much
lately.

Drew takes a drag, looks up as he exhales, thinking.

DREW
Do you really believe what you just
said?

BETH
About not liking when you smoke in
the house?

DREW
No, before that. About me not
changing.

BETH
Unfortunately, yes.

Beth takes a swig.

DREW
Why didn't you say something
before?

BETH
What good would it have done?

DREW
We could have talked it out.

BETH
And then what? You promise me
you're going to change?

DREW
Maybe.

BETH
No thanks.

Drew stares in confusion, takes a drag from his smoke.

DREW
Wait a minute. Now you're not
making any sense at all. We break
up because you think I'm not

DREW
capable of changing, but when I
suggest that I might be able to
you're not interested?

BETH
That's right.

DREW
Fuck that's confusing.

BETH
No, it makes perfect sense. If I
go along with that you're either
going to pretend to be something
you're not and end up resenting me
for it, or you may actually change
and I might not like what you
change into.

Drew gets aggravated, dies the cigarette out in an ashtray
on the coffee table.

DREW
Change. Don't change. Change, but
only in a certain way. Jesus
Christ, Beth, what the fuck do you
want?

A sadness fills Beth, plain as day on her face.

BETH
I don't want to fight with you.

Drew calms, the hurt getting to him a little.

DREW
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to
snap. Let's just not talk about
that right now, alright?

Beth nods in agreement, takes a sip of wine.

DREW
Let me go start dinner back up so
we can eat something.

Drew gets up.

BETH
I'm not hungry.

DREW
You should really eat something
though. It's not good to be
drinking all that wine on an empty
stomach.

BETH
I'll be fine. I'll have some bread
or something later.

Drew scratches the back of his head.

DREW
Uh, yeah... I don't have any bread.

BETH
Crackers?

DREW
Maybe in the pantry.

BETH
That'll be fine then.

DREW
I'll start dinner up, just in case
you change your mind.

BETH
You don't want to keep talking?

DREW
I'm only going to the kitchen. We
can still talk.

BETH
No, it's fine. I'll just finish
reading that article.

Beth turns and grabs the magazine behind her.

DREW
You read it?

Beth puts her feet up, flips through the magazine.

BETH
I started to. I can't believe you
took the magazine from the doctor's
office.

DREW

They said I could have it. It's old anyway. How far did you get?

BETH

The part about continuing to do things that you used to do as a couple.

Beth settles on a page, reads.

Drew takes a good, long look at her.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Drew stands at the edge of the living room with two beers.

Beth sits on the couch with her feet up, flips through a magazine.

Her clothes are different, but they were definitely borrowed from Drew.

Drew looks at her in adoration, until Beth notices him.

BETH

What are you doing?

DREW

Nothing. Just looking at you.

Beth poses in a jokingly seductive way.

BETH

Like what you see?

Drew chuckles, joins her on the couch, and hands her a beer.

She snuggles up to him. He puts his arm around her.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT

Drew still stands and stares.

Beth looks up from her reading when she notices him.

BETH

What are you doing?

DREW
Nothing. Just looking at you.

Beth goes back to the magazine.

BETH
Oh.

Drew lets this totally different reaction settle in.
He grabs his beer, takes a drink, and goes to the

KITCHEN

He sets his beer down on the counter and grabs the pot off the stove.

He looks into it, totally disappointed.

DREW
Shit.

Inside the pot is a clump of spaghetti, rock hard and stuck to the bottom.

He puts the pot back and goes to the fridge.

A little bit of searching through the abundance of liquor and various condiments, he finds what he's looking for. A carton of eggs.

He pulls them out, takes a bowl from the cupboard, a pan from the stove and goes to work on "dinner", cracking the eggs and emptying them into the bowl.

Beth enters the kitchen and heads straight for the wine bottle.

BETH
Finished it.

DREW
What'd you think?

BETH
It had its good points and bad points.

DREW
Like?

Beth thinks about it as she pours.

BETH

Let me get back to you on that. I want to let a couple things settle in before I choose a side.

Drew shrugs, mixes the eggs.

DREW

Well you obviously agree with the one about doing things you used to do as a couple.

BETH

What makes you say that?

DREW

Cause that's where you stopped reading, right before you went into my room and put on lounge clothes.

Beth smiles.

BETH

Good work, detective.

Beth raises the bottle to eye level. It's almost empty.

Rather than waiting to finish it off later, she downs it on the spot, tosses it into the garbage.

Drew turns back from the noise.

DREW

You drank that whole bottle already?

BETH

Oh c'mon, it wasn't that fast.

DREW

Couple hours.

BETH

Like I said, not that fast. And technically, the bottle's not done until I finish this glass.

Beth picks up her glass, salutes Drew.

BETH

Cheers.

She takes out about half its contents. Drew watches, a sickly look on his face.

DREW
I still don't know how you drink
that stuff.

BETH
It's good for you. Shows class.

Beth wipes her mouth with her forearm. Drew chuckles a little to himself.

DREW
Yeah. Class.

BETH
I'm telling you. It just gives you
more of a dignified presence.

DREW
You sure about that? Cause I was
just about to ask you if you wanted
a funnel.

BETH
That's very funny coming from a guy
that's making a gourmet dinner of
scrambled eggs.

DREW
Just wait until I add in some
cheese.

They share a laugh.

BETH
I think I want some crackers now.

DREW
In the pantry.

Beth takes a step, then stops.

BETH
You don't have a pantry.

Drew goes to the dishwasher, opens it up to reveal it's filled with miscellaneous food.

Beth looks at it in wonder.

BETH
That's your pantry?

DREW
Well it doesn't work
anymore. Might as well get some
use out of it.

BETH
What happened to it?

DREW
I think I killed it. You know I
never knew how to use that fucking
thing.

Beth sifts through the food until she settles on a bag of
tortilla chips.

She rips open the bag, and goes to work.

DREW
Change your mind on the crackers?

BETH
Why eat crackers when there's
tortilla chips? Got any salsa?

DREW
No, but there's some ketchup in the
fridge.

Beth makes a disgusted face.

BETH
That's gross.

DREW
Why's it gross? It's made from
tomatoes.

BETH
Okay...

Beth goes to the fridge, takes out a bottle of ketchup, and
squirts some of it onto a tortilla chip.

She holds it out to Drew.

BETH
...try it.

Drew stares at it, almost in fear.

DREW
I don't want that.

BETH
Why not? It's made with tomatoes,
right? It's just like salsa.

DREW
I was wrong. I'll pass.

BETH
You're such a chickenshit.

Beth pops the chip in her mouth, chews. Then the taste hits her.

She rushes to the garbage can, spits it out.

BETH
That's fucking disgusting.

DREW
I figured it would be once I saw
it.

BETH
Do me a favor. Don't suggest
anything else to me tonight.

Beth grabs a paper towel, cleans the foul taste from her tongue.

DREW
(sarcastic)
Yeah, cause I've been doing so well
with that.

Beth freezes.

BETH
What's that supposed to mean?

Drew goes back to his preparation.

DREW
Nothing.

Beth moves next to him, looks for an answer.

BETH
I'm serious. What did you mean by
that?

DREW

Look, I don't want to get into all that again, okay? Let's just not talk about it like we agreed on.

BETH

I agreed to not talk about it then. I want to talk about it now.

DREW

And I don't. I'm trying to cook here.

Drew focuses on the eggs. Beth picks up the bowl and drops it into the sink.

DREW

Why did you do that?

BETH

I told you. I want to talk.

DREW

That was our dinner!

BETH

That was your dinner. I told you I wasn't hungry.

Drew can only shake his head. He grabs his beer off the counter and exits.

Beth grabs her glass and a fresh bottle of wine from the fridge.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Beth enters with the bottle and glass in tow, takes a seat on the couch with Drew.

They're a fair distance away from each other.

Beth sets the wine bottle down on the coffee table.

Drew doesn't acknowledge her entrance, just stares at the TV as he flips through the channels.

Beth watches him for a moment, then finally breaks the silence.

BETH
I'm sorry.

DREW
Don't worry about it.

BETH
No, I shouldn't have done that. You were just trying to do something nice and I acted like an idiot. Obviously I was hungry if I was going to eat tortilla chips.

DREW
Yeah.

Drew still focuses on the TV.

BETH
Can you turn that off?

DREW
Why?

BETH
Because I want to talk to you.

DREW
So we can just argue again?

BETH
We don't have to talk about that if you don't want to.

He looks to her.

DREW
It's not that I don't want to, I just don't want to argue.

BETH
Neither do I.

DREW
Okay then. Since that's settled.

Drew goes back to the TV, agitating Beth.

BETH
Drew.

Drew huffs, shuts off the TV and sets down the remote.

He reclines back on the couch.

DREW

So what do you want to talk about?

He takes a sip from his beer.

BETH

I don't care, whatever you want to talk about.

Beth swirls the wine glass in her hand while Drew drinks.

They sit in absolute silence, not knowing what to talk about.

Drew gets up, walks to a small rack of cds. He scans through it, finally settles on one.

He takes it out of its case and pops it into a CD player nearby.

Seconds later, a slow, romantic tune flows through the apartment. (Note: This could be anything. Perhaps an artist willing to volunteer one of their songs?)

Drew looks to Beth, who immediately recognizes the tune.

BETH

What are you doing?

Drew holds his hand out to her.

DREW

Come dance with me.

BETH

I don't know if we should.

DREW

C'mon. Live a little.

Drew walks to her, takes her by the hand. She sets her wine glass down as she stands.

They dance, close to one another.

Beth rests her head on Drew's shoulder. They speak in hushed tones.

BETH

What made you pick this?

DREW
It's our song isn't it? Seemed
like an obvious choice.

Beth smiles.

BETH
Do you remember the first time we
heard it?

DREW
How could I forget? I think my
hands still hurt from messing
around with that lug wrench.

BETH
Wasn't that just weird though? How
we were so focused on fixing the
flat, but when this came on the
radio we just stopped?

DREW
It was kind of odd, wasn't it? But
you know something. It was right
at that moment that I realized
something.

Beth leans back, looks Drew in the eye.

BETH
What?

DREW
That I loved you.

They maintain eye contact until Beth leans up, kisses
him. It's a deep kiss, filled with passion. Definitely not
between friends.

Drew moves his hands up to her back, a tender embrace.

Beth breaks the kiss, backs away.

DREW
What's the matter?

BETH
I shouldn't have done that.

DREW
Maybe not, but you did.

BETH
But I shouldn't have.

Drew cuts off the radio, then looks back at her, a little more authoritative.

DREW
But you did.

She takes a seat on the couch, goes right back into the wine.

BETH
I don't know what came over me.

DREW
I know what it was. It was the truth.

BETH
It was a mistake.

Drew deflates, moves to the couch and sits.

DREW
How can you say that?

He lights up a cigarette, smokes as they talk.

BETH
Because it was, Drew. Our relationship isn't like that anymore.

DREW
Yet, when I tell you I love you, it still means something to you.

BETH
Of course it does.

DREW
But you don't love me.

Beth is upset.

BETH
That's not fair.

DREW
Is it true?

BETH
You know it's not.

DREW
Then why would kissing me be a
mistake? Aren't two people who
love each other supposed to kiss?

BETH
Not if those two people are trying
to move on from one another.

Drew slams the rest of his beer, gets up.

DREW
Yeah, except two people who love
each other shouldn't be trying to
move on.

Beth watches Drew as he heads to the kitchen, grabs a beer
from the fridge and ducks into the bathroom.

She rests her head in her hands.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Drew sits on the edge of the tub, alternating between drags
on his cigarette and sips from his beer.

His movements are robot-like, his attention obviously
focused elsewhere.

He takes one last drag and tosses the butt into the toilet.

He stands up, looks at himself in the mirror. This time,
his glance isn't a mixture at all. It's pure self pity.

He lowers his head.

BETH (O.S.)
Hey.

He looks to the doorway, where Beth stands with her hands
against the frame.

DREW
Hey.

BETH
You alright?

DREW
Been better.

Beth smiles.

BETH
Yeah, me too.

She moves toward him, wraps her arms around his waist.
They look at themselves in the mirror.

BETH
We do make a cute couple, don't we?
Drew exhales deeply. That one hurt.

DREW
We did.

Drew releases himself from her grip and exits.

Beth looks in the mirror, but turns away like she can't look at herself.

She exits.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Drew sits on the couch.

Beth enters and takes a seat on the coffee table directly across from him.

BETH
Let's talk.

DREW
About?

BETH
About us. I want to know what you think about this whole thing.

DREW
You know what I think about this whole thing. I already told you.

BETH
Tell me again.

DREW
I'd rather not.

BETH
Please.

DREW
Beth, I think I've felt my heart
break a little bit about a dozen
times tonight. If I go back and
repeat everything just so you can
give me the same answers and break
it a dozen more times, I don't
think I could handle it.

BETH
How do you know I'm going to give
you the same answers? You don't
know what I need to tell you.

Drew sits forward, their faces not far apart from each other
now.

DREW
If you've got something to say then
say it. I'm not in the mood to go
through all these mind games with
you.

They stare at each other until Beth cracks and smiles.

BETH
You are so stupid.

Drew sits back. Beth stands, moves around to the other side
of the coffee table.

BETH
Haven't you heard one thing I've
said to you tonight? Were you
listening when I said that I
haven't been able to sleep and I
think about you constantly since we
broke up? Did you not catch when I
referred to the couch as "our
couch" earlier, or how I just
happen to be walking around the
house in your absolute favorite
underwear right now? Jesus, Drew,
I've practically thrown myself at
you.

DREW

Oh, I'm sorry. I must have missed those things when I was dwelling on you saying that any future with me would be terrible, and that kissing me was a huge mistake.

BETH

I didn't mean those things.

DREW

Well you sure as fuck fooled me.

BETH

You know I didn't mean it.

DREW

Then why say them?

Beth paces nervously.

BETH

Because that's what I'm supposed to say. If I told you what I really wanted to tell you, we would have gotten back together five seconds after I walked in the door.

DREW

And what's wrong with that?

Beth stops her pacing, faces Drew with tears in her eyes.

BETH

Because I don't want to be your girlfriend anymore, Drew. I want to be your wife.

Drew lowers his head.

DREW

I... I can't do that. Not right now.

Beth moves to the couch, sits down facing him.

BETH

Could you ever?

DREW

I know I could spend the rest of my life with you. Doesn't that count for anything?

BETH

If you could do that you should be able to get married.

DREW

It's not that easy. It's just the whole thing with my parents. They--

BETH

We're better than them.

DREW

I'm sorry?

BETH

I said we're better than them. Our love is so much stronger than theirs.

DREW

Of course it is. They fucking hated each other, even after they got divorced.

BETH

I know, you told me.

DREW

But I bet it wasn't always like that. They probably had a relationship just like ours at some point.

BETH

And you're afraid that we're going to turn into them?

DREW

Exactly, and if we split up, we force any kids we might have to only have one parent.

She places a hand on his knee.

BETH

You can't let what happened between your parents dictate what you do with your own life.

DREW

Why not? You let what happened to your mom dictate yours.

BETH
That's not the same.

DREW
It is the same. I don't want to get married because I'm afraid that if we had a kid it could wind up with only one parent, and you want to get married because you're afraid if we had a kid it could wind up with only one parent. Am I right?

Beth nods.

BETH
Yes.

DREW
Except I'm not your father. Just like you say we're not my parents, I'm not your father. I would never abandon you, and I don't think I've ever given you any reason to think that I would.

BETH
You haven't.

DREW
Then why can't we just be together and let the chips fall where they may? Fuck, I don't know what I'm going to think about things an hour from now, let alone years down the line. And who knows if we'll even be able to have kids?

BETH
Then why are you worried about kids that we may or may not have? Can't you just focus on us?

DREW
I am focusing on us. We don't need to be married for me to do that.

Beth takes his hands, brings them up close to her. She looks at Drew with total sincerity.

BETH
This is just something I need. For me.

DREW
It's just a piece of paper, Beth.

Beth breaks down. She lets go of Drew's hands and rushes to the bathroom.

Drew watches her exit, then sighs.

He lights a smoke, reclines back, and stares at the ceiling.

DREW
Fuck.

He takes another drag from the cigarette. Sounds of Beth vomiting draw his attention back to the bathroom.

He sets the cigarette in the ashtray, gets up.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Drew enters to see Beth on her knees at the toilet.

He moves to her, kneels down by her side, puts a hand on her back to comfort her.

He uses his other hand to keep her hair back.

The vomit stops, but Beth waits with caution.

She looks to Drew.

BETH
Thank you.

DREW
I told you to eat something.

BETH
I'm not puking because of the drinking.

Beth gets up, goes to the sink.

Drew sits on the floor and watches as she rinses her mouth and splashes water on her face.

He has a realization.

DREW
Are you... pregnant?

She looks to him.

BETH
Would I be taking a valiant attempt
at consuming an entire winery if I
were pregnant?

DREW
Only if you weren't interested in
keeping it.

She peels her eyes at him.

BETH
You know I don't believe in
that. We've discussed that before.

DREW
Things like that can change once it
actually happens to someone.

BETH
Not to me they don't.

She goes back to rinsing, turns off the water.

DREW
You okay?

BETH
I'm fine.

Beth dries her face with a hand towel.

Drew gets up and moves behind her. He puts his hand on her
back again.

The look at themselves in the mirror.

He wraps his arms around her, rests his chin on her
shoulder.

Beth puts her hands over his, smiles.

BETH
I love it when you put your arms
around me.

Drew says nothing, just continues to stare at the
reflection.

Beth takes notice of his expression.

BETH
What are you thinking?

DREW
Nothing really. Just enjoying
this. I miss this.

Beth lifts her hand, runs it through Drew's hair.

BETH
I do too.

She nuzzles her head against Drew's.

He smells her hair, kisses her neck.

Beth closes her eyes.

Drew tightens his grip on her waist, whispers to her.

DREW
Marry me, Beth.

Beth opens her eyes. She looks at Drew in the reflection,
but his attention is still on her.

BETH
What did you say?

Drew turns her so they're face to face. He looks into her
eyes.

DREW
Marry me.

Beth caresses his face, leans up and kisses him. When she
pulls back, there's heartbreak on her face.

BETH
I can't.

She moves past him and out of the bathroom.

Drew places his hands on top of his head in frustration.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beth lies on the edge of the bed, stares at the
ceiling. The sad look still prevalent on her face.

Drew enters.

Beth doesn't look at him, but knows he's there. She motions for him to join her.

He moves to the bed and lies down. He's on his side, facing her.

DREW
I thought that was what you wanted.

BETH
It's what I want, Drew. It's not past tense.

DREW
Then what's the problem?

BETH
It's not what you want.

DREW
It doesn't matter what I want. Not anymore.

Beth turns on her side to face him.

BETH
Don't say that.

DREW
It's true, Beth. If we're going to be together, one of us has got to concede, and I'd rather it was me.

BETH
I can't let you do that. I'd just end up hating myself.

DREW
Because you think I wouldn't be happy.

BETH
I know you wouldn't be happy.

Drew puts his hand on her side.

DREW
We'd be together.

She nods.

DREW
That's all I need.

Beth sighs, shuts her eyes.

BETH
God, why is this so hard!

She covers her face.

DREW
I know what it is.

She lowers her hands, looks back to him.

BETH
What?

Drew hesitates.

DREW
You don't love me any more.

Beth sits up, rests on her elbow.

BETH
Don't say that. It's not even
remotely true.

DREW
Then how come, after all the
different ways I've laid out for us
to get back together tonight, we
still haven't?

BETH
Because I don't want you to be
miserable. Would I think that if I
didn't love you?

DREW
I've been miserable ever since you
left.

BETH
And I haven't?

DREW
Then why don't we just get married
and stop all this bullshit?

Beth gets aggravated.

BETH
Because you don't want to.

DREW
I asked you.

BETH
Because you felt you had to. It's
not the same.

DREW
The end result's the same.

BETH
No it's not. I said no.

Drew sits up.

DREW
What would it take for you to say
yes?

Beth sits up.

BETH
When you ask me to marry you, I
want you to mean it. I want you to
have a ring ready, take me out for
a nice romantic dinner, maybe a
walk on the beach. I don't want
you to ask me in front of your
bathroom mirror while we're both
standing there in our underwear.

They share a smile. Drew turns to her.

DREW
I know what I did wasn't exactly
the traditional way of going about
things, but that doesn't mean I'm
not sincere. I love you,
Beth. More than anything.

BETH
I love you too.

Drew reaches toward the head of the bed, pulls a picture
frame from under a pillow.

He gives it to Beth. It's a picture of her.

BETH
Why is this in here?

DREW
Because I want you to be the first
and last thing I see every
day. It's what makes my life worth
living. Nothing else matters.

Beth sets the picture down, takes Drew by the hand, and they
lie back.

BETH
What are we going to do?

DREW
I don't know, but being together
and happy seems like a good place
to start.

BETH
Would things be different between
us?

DREW
Why would they be?

BETH
I mean, would it feel like we were
starting over?

DREW
I don't think so. We seem to have
picked up pretty much where we left
off. Except for maybe the arguing.

Beth smiles.

BETH
We have argued a lot tonight,
haven't we?

DREW
Probably more than we have in all
the six years we were together.

BETH
Isn't that weird?

Drew shrugs.

DREW

Weird? No, but I definitely think it's a sign. We're not supposed to be friends. It's all or nothing.

BETH

Do you really believe that?

DREW

You're here because we tried to take a crack at being friends, but all we've done is talk about the reasons for why we should and shouldn't get back together. You wanted to get married, I didn't. I wanted to get married, you didn't. We still have that problem where we eventually agree on things, just never at the same time.

BETH

It's because we're not selfish people. We give and give and give to one another, but never take anything back.

Drew laughs.

DREW

I know, right? We're both perfectly willing to do things that we don't really want to do because we want to make each other happy, but we don't want to accept those things because we know it won't make the other person happy.

Drew and Beth sit in wonder for a moment.

DREW

I think.

Beth smiles.

BETH

Yeah, it's pretty confusing.

DREW

How did we get to this place?

BETH

That's just how love works. You don't fall in love with somebody because of the way you feel about them. You fall in love because of the way that person makes you feel about yourself. And if you force the person you love to do something they don't want to do, you're going to end up not liking yourself and probably fall out of love with them.

DREW

Wow, that's pretty deep.

BETH

It's really not when you think about it. But, to answer your question in a less long winded way, we're in this place because we don't want to fall out of love with each other.

Drew raises a brow in a confusion.

DREW

By breaking up?

BETH

Yes.

They stare at the ceiling for a few moments.

Beth sits up.

BETH

I want some more wine.

Beth takes Drew's hand, pulls him up from the bed.

They exit.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They take a seat on the couch.

Beth pours herself a glass of wine.

Drew grabs his bottle, looks at it in disappointment.

DREW
Little warm.

Drew goes to the kitchen. Beth downs her wine, gets a refill.

Drew takes a seat, grabs the magazine off the couch and tosses it onto the coffee table.

Beth looks at it for a moment.

BETH
I've figured out something in that article that I don't agree with.

Drew turns and faces her.

DREW
It's about time. What is it?

BETH
The thing about being friends with benefits.

DREW
Seriously?

BETH
Yeah, I mean, it's probably not ideal for most people, but I think we'd be able to handle something like that.

Drew cocks his head to the side a little, not all that convinced.

DREW
I don't know about that.

Beth reaches out, takes Drew's beer from him, and sets it on the coffee table along with her wine glass.

She pushes him down on the couch, straddles him.

Drew looks at her on wonder.

DREW
What are you doing?

BETH
Seducing you.

DREW
You don't have to do that.

BETH
I know I don't have to. I want to.

She bends down, kisses him, then sits up and pulls off her shirt.

BETH
I want you, Drew. Do you want me? Doesn't seeing me in your favorite underwear turn you on?

DREW
Trust me, it's not that at all. I've wanted to make a move on you about thirty times tonight.

BETH
So why didn't you?

DREW
Are you drunk?

BETH
No, I'm not fucking drunk. I'm horny.

DREW
Just like that?

She nods.

BETH
Yeah, just like that. Now are you gonna do something about it, or do I need to go get my cell phone?

DREW
Jesus, you're blunt.

Beth puts her hands on her hips.

BETH
Do you wanna fuck or not?

DREW
Whoa. Where the fuck is this coming from?

BETH
You don't find me attractive?

DREW
Of course I do. But maybe the
article has a point.

BETH
That's bullshit.

Drew sits up a bit.

DREW
It's really not. If you take a
friendship and move it into the
physical realm, pretty soon that's
all it is. There's no more hanging
out and doing things that friends
do. It's all just booty calls and
empty sex.

BETH
That won't happen to us.

DREW
It might.

Beth pushes him back down on the couch, whispers in his ear.

BETH
We won't know unless we try.

Her soft breath on his ear arouses him a little.

DREW
Beth, it's not a good idea.

BETH
I feel something pressing up
against me that thinks otherwise.

DREW
We should be together if we're
going to do this.

BETH
Then let's get back together.

DREW
Do you really mean that?

She doesn't respond, just pulls his shirt off.

DREW
Beth. Do you really mean that?

BETH
Don't talk, just go with it.

She kisses him, but he doesn't reciprocate. He's frozen.

She sits up and reaches back to unhook her bra. She gets it loose, but before she can get it off, Drew stops her.

DREW
No, I can't do this.

He moves her off and gets up. She hooks the bra back together, looks to him.

BETH
What's wrong?

DREW
I can't do it. Not like this.

BETH
Do you want to move to the bedroom?

DREW
It doesn't matter where we're at. I just don't want it to be empty.

BETH
It wouldn't be empty.

Drew grabs the pack of cigarettes off the table. Empty.

He goes to the counter for a fresh pack, opens it up, and takes out a cigarette.

He goes back to the table, grabs his lighter, and lights up.

DREW
Why did you say we could get back together?

BETH
Because we can.

DREW
But you don't want to.

BETH

I do. I just want to get married.

Drew takes a long drag from his cigarette, exhales in frustration.

DREW

We're back to that again? I asked you to marry me. You said no.

BETH

And you know why I did.

DREW

So what, you wanted to get back together for a half hour while we slept together and then cut it off again when it was over?

BETH

No, I just wanted to prove that our relationship still exists on an emotional level.

Drew takes another drag.

DREW

And you planned to accomplish this by saying "Hey, wanna fuck?"

BETH

I just thought you were looking for something different. Something exciting like we talked about earlier.

DREW

No, I just want you to be you. And I don't need you to prove to me that our relationship still exists on an emotional level either. I know it does.

BETH

I wasn't trying to prove it to you.

Drew does out the smoke, goes back to the couch, sits.

DREW

You don't think it does?

BETH

It's not that. It's just... we got to this place in our relationship where we it seemed like we just weren't connecting anymore, you know?

Drew nods.

BETH

We were hardly sleeping together, we hardly did anything together. We took each other for granted.

DREW

I know.

BETH

But I know that everything is still there because my heart still flutters every time you touch me. I just wanted to build on that. To make love to you in the hope that everything that's going on now would just disappear.

DREW

Disappear?

BETH

That we would just love each other, and that would be enough. Married, not married. It wouldn't make a difference.

They sit in silence.

Drew leans forward, kisses her. It heats up a bit, and pushes her back on the couch.

Beth moves him away.

Drew looks at her in confusion.

DREW

What's the matter?

BETH

I can't do it now.

DREW

What?

BETH

I can't do it now. The moment is gone.

DREW

You're fucking kidding me.

Drew moves back and sits. Beth sits up.

BETH

No. It was spontaneous before.

DREW

And that wasn't? Didn't I just move in and kiss you without you expecting it?

BETH

But only after I said all that. There was a motive.

Drew gets frustrated.

DREW

Isn't there always a motive to sex?

BETH

Not really.

DREW

Of course there is. People have sex so they can get off. That's the goal! That's the motive!

Beth moves closer, tries to calm him.

BETH

I'm sorry. I just don't want to now. Maybe we can try again later.

DREW

Yeah, sure. Maybe we'll get lucky and both be in the mood next time.

BETH

You're a guy. You're always in the mood.

DREW
I wasn't a few minutes ago.

BETH
That's just because I was acting weird. I know we'll have better luck later.

DREW
Do you have some sort of plan in place or something?

BETH
No. If I did it wouldn't be spontaneous.

Drew sits, confused.

DREW
Did I fall down the fucking rabbit hole?

Drew gets up, grabs a smoke, lights it. He rests against the counter.

BETH
What's that mean?

DREW
This whole night has just been fucking bizarre. We've probably talked about these different ways that we could get back together, and each one of them has ended in horrible failure. Yet, we both admit that we still love each other.

BETH
Because we do.

DREW
Then why aren't we together!

BETH
You know why.

DREW
Because you want to get married, but when I ask you, you tell me no.

BETH

Because you--

DREW

And don't tell me I didn't mean it either. I wouldn't have said it if I didn't. But, obviously, you're just not buying it. So, what's the alternative?

Beth thinks on it.

BETH

I don't know.

DREW

I'll tell you what it is. We keep going on like this where we meet up and have these ridiculous conversations about how we can get back together, yet don't, until one of us just gets sick and tired of it and we go our separate ways.

BETH

I don't want to do that.

DREW

Neither do I, but that's the path that we're on. And when it's all said and done, we'll meet new people, some guy will ask you to marry him, and you'll say yes because he does everything the right way and you think he means it.

Drew takes a drag, exchanges a glance with Beth.

BETH

What about you?

DREW

That's easy. I'll meet a girl, think she's nice, but something just won't be right about it. And I won't quite know what it is at first, but later on it'll come to me...

Drew's demeanor softens a bit.

DREW
...she's not you.

Beth doesn't respond. She lies back on the couch, on her side, stares off into space.

Drew puts out his cigarette and goes to the coffee table.

He takes a seat on the table in front of her.

Beth reaches out, takes Drew's hand.

He takes his free hand, places it on top of hers.

DREW
And that's the truth, Beth. Nobody
will ever be able to replace you in
my eyes.

The sadness builds on Beth's face.

Drew gets down on his knees, puts his arm around her. His head rests against her shoulder.

She moves her arm around him, they sit in a tender embrace.

He turns his head. Their eyes meet.

Beth leans forward, kisses him.

The kiss escalates, Drew moves up onto the couch, lies on top of her.

Beth grabs a fleece blanket off the top of the couch, drapes it over Drew's back.

Drew kisses her neck, moves along to her shoulder. Beth closes her eyes, runs her fingers through his hair.

Her hands move downward to Drew's shorts, then her own.

They freeze for a moment in a deep eye contact.

Beth nods.

Drew positions himself, and soon they're making love.

They exchange passionate kisses and tender touches. The eye contact is always there.

They continue on until they climax together. Drew kisses her one last time and lies down next to her.

After a few quick adjustments of their clothing they embrace.

DREW
Something very weird occurred to me
the other day.

BETH
What?

DREW
Well, I was watching Pulp Fiction.

Beth smiles.

BETH
There's a shocker.

DREW
What can I do? I like that
movie. So, anyway, I was sitting
there watching it, right? I was at
the part in the beginning, when
Jules and Vincent were in the car.

BETH
The Royale with Cheese scene.

DREW
Exactly, and that's what occurred
to me.

BETH
I have no idea what you're talking
about.

DREW
Well, that whole bit about how
France calls a Quarter Pounder with
Cheese a Royale with Cheese because
they use the metric system and
essentially don't know what the
fuck a Quarter Pounder is.

BETH
Yeah... and?

DREW
Well, Canada uses the metric
system, yet they don't call it a
Royale with Cheese, they call it a
Quarter Pounder with Cheese.

BETH

No they don't.

DREW

They do. I looked it up online. Isn't that fucked up?

BETH

I don't know if I'd go that far, but it's a little weird. People probably just assume that since Canada is right next door, that they could adjust to our nomenclature.

DREW

They haven't adjusted to our system of measurement, so why should they be forced to call something by a name that ultimately doesn't make sense to them?

BETH

Because it's all a government plot, Drew. Designed to keep the little guy down. I think you've got a real cause on your hands here.

She laughs at him.

DREW

Funny.

BETH

It's just a hamburger. I can't believe you're getting all deep about it.

DREW

I think about things like that sometimes. Keeps you sharp.

BETH

Well between the random things you take from Pulp Fiction and what you read in chick magazines, you're well on your way to being an intellectual powerhouse.

DREW

It worked though, didn't it?

BETH

It did, but I would have come here anyway, Drew. Magazine or not.

They share a smile and a kiss.

BETH

I swear you think about the most random shit after we have sex.

DREW

Just making small talk. Would you prefer if I just rolled over and went to sleep?

BETH

No.

DREW

Well, okay then. What do you normally think about?

BETH

I always end up thinking about something in our past for some reason.

DREW

Like what?

BETH

Just whatever pops in there I guess. Like just a minute ago, I was thinking about the time we went on that picnic.

Drew covers his face with embarrassment.

DREW

Oh God. The picnic.

BETH

You remember it?

DREW

How could I forget? It's the cheesiest thing I've ever done in my life.

BETH

I thought it was sweet.

DREW

Maybe if we were stuck in the space time continuum and transported back to the nineteen fifties, but nobody carves initials into a tree anymore. Now it's just corny.

BETH

You think they're still there?

DREW

I'm sure they are. I promised you they'd last as long as our love, didn't I?

BETH

Yes, and that... was corny.

They laugh.

Beth's phone beeps in her purse.

They both look to it.

DREW

Is that your phone?

BETH

Yeah.

DREW

I thought we agreed we wouldn't have our phones on.

BETH

I must have forgotten to silence text messages.

DREW

Who'd be sending you a text message at this time of night?

BETH

It's probably nobody.

DREW

Is it nobody, or just nobody you want me to know about?

BETH

Drew, it's nobody really.

Drew sits up a little.

DREW
Are you seeing somebody else?

BETH
What? No.

DREW
You sure?

BETH
I'm not seeing anybody.

Drew's look says he just doesn't believe her. She caves.

BETH
Well, there's this guy I met in a bar one night last week, but he just asked me for my number.

DREW
And you gave it to him?

BETH
Well, obviously if he's able to send me text messages.

DREW
Do you like this guy?

BETH
I don't even know him. I talked to him for about ten minutes, he asked me for my number, and I gave it to him. It's no big deal.

DREW
Well it is to me.

Drew gets up from the couch, gets a smoke.

Beth sits up, the blanket still wrapped around her.

BETH
Why are you acting like this?

DREW
Because earlier you told me that you can't stop thinking about me, and now I find out that you're giving your number out to random guys.

BETH

Drew--

DREW

Did you sleep with him?

BETH

I told you, I just met the guy. I haven't even seen or heard from him since that night.

DREW

Does that bother you?

BETH

No, I didn't even like the guy. I just gave him my number to be polite.

Drew reaches into her purse, grabs her phone. He walks over and hands it to her.

DREW

See what he has to say.

BETH

I don't care what he has to say.

DREW

Just do it.

BETH

Drew, no. I'm here with you.

DREW

Do it.

Beth gets frustrated.

BETH

Fine.

She flips the phone open, reads the text.

Drew watches, anxious.

DREW

So what's it say?

Beth looks up from her phone.

BETH
It says "How are things going with
Drew?"

DREW
What?

BETH
It's from my sister you jerk.

Beth throws the phone at him.

He catches it, looks at the display in confusion.

DREW
There's no guy?

BETH
No, but thanks so much for assuming
that I could just move on and
forget about you so quickly.

DREW
That's not my fault. You said
there was a guy.

Drew shuts the phone, puts it on the counter.

BETH
Because you kept insisting that
there was one, so I figured I'd
test you. You failed.

DREW
Why do you insist on fucking with
my head?

BETH
I just wanted to see how you'd
react.

DREW
How do you think I'd react? You
think I'd be happy to learn that
you're seeing somebody else?

BETH
I don't know.

DREW
What do you mean you don't
know! What the fuck have we been
talking about all night! Did I

DREW
invite you over here to tell you to
move on and forget about me! Jesus
Christ, Beth, we haven't
accomplished a goddamn thing
tonight.

Drew takes a drag from his smoke, turns away from her.

Beth tosses the blanket aside, gets up, and goes to him.

She stands next to him.

BETH
We've accomplished a lot tonight,
Drew. It may not seem like it, but
we have.

Drew laughs.

DREW
Oh yeah, like what?

BETH
That emotion is still there. When
we made love, I could feel
it. Couldn't you?

Drew nods.

BETH
I knew it was still there. It was
just buried. And when I tried what
I did earlier, I just wanted to
confirm that. But I went about it
all wrong, and it eventually just
happened on its own, like it should
have. Because it wouldn't have
been the same otherwise.

He looks to her.

DREW
I know.

BETH
Yet things still aren't the
same. Because we're not together.

DREW
But we should be.

BETH
I don't dispute that.

DREW
Then why aren't we?

BETH
That's what I'm getting to. Let me
take the night, think about it.

DREW
What do you have to think about?

BETH
If I can handle the possibility of
us not getting married.

DREW
But we can get married. I already
told you that.

BETH
No, Drew. Not like that. If we're
going to get married, it's because
it's something you really want to
do and not because you feel
obligated.

Drew nods. She's right.

BETH
I just need to figure out if I can
accept the fact that it may never
come, and if being your girlfriend
is enough. Does that make sense?

DREW
Yeah.

BETH
Good, because I really didn't want
to have to say it again.

She smiles. Drew looks to her.

DREW
I'm going to leave you on that
note.

BETH
You don't have to do that.

DREW

No, I'm better off just going to bed now, before I make an ass out of myself any more than I already have.

BETH

Your reaction was fair.

DREW

Maybe, but it was still wrong. Good night.

He kisses her and exits to the bedroom.

Beth looks at the fleece blanket on the couch.

She turns off the light, then moves to the couch.

She lies down and covers herself up.

She looks to a bookshelf against the wall, where there's a picture of her and Drew in happier times.

As she stares at the picture, she becomes consumed by sadness.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Drew lies in bed, clutches the picture of Beth in his hands and stares at it. His face is also full of sadness.

BETH (O.S.)

Hey.

Drew turns, sees Beth in the doorway.

DREW

Hey.

BETH

Would it be okay if I slept in here?

Drew slides over, lifts the blanket.

Beth gets into bed.

BETH

Thanks.

DREW
I was hoping you'd come in here.

BETH
Why didn't you just ask me?

DREW
I wanted to, but I didn't want you
to feel pressured or anything. You
said you wanted to think things
over.

BETH
I do, and I think being here with
you is a good place to do that.

She smiles.

DREW
Then I guess we're off to a good
start.

She kisses him, then cuddles up next to him.

They lie in bed, content.

DREW
I love you, Beth.

BETH
I love you too.

They close their eyes, drift off to sleep.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DAY

Drew lies on his side, fast asleep.

He opens his eyes, a bright smile on his face.

He turns around to see Beth, but she's not there.

His smile instantly fades as he stares at the empty side of
the bed.

He climbs out of bed and goes to the

KITCHEN

where he scans the area. No sign of Beth.

He grabs a carton of orange juice from the fridge, takes a drink from it and puts it back.

He goes to the counter for a cigarette, but finds something placed on top of the pack. A piece of paper.

Drew picks it up, reads the solitary word written on it.

Goodbye.

Drew's heart sinks.

He crumples the paper up, clutches it in his fist, and throws it to the floor.

It lands next to the bottle cap that Drew misfired the previous night and the shorts that Beth kicked away.

He looks at the objects. Symbols of both good times and bad, intertwined together.

He grabs a cigarette off the counter, lights it, and goes into the

LIVING ROOM

He moves to the radio and turns it on.

He shuffles through the buttons until he finds what he wants, and music sways through the house.

It's the slow romantic tune that he and Beth danced to.

He sits, catatonic, taking in the music in between sporadic drags on his cigarette.

He falls to his knees, down and beaten. The sadness swells into tears on his face. His heart is broken again.

Suddenly, the door opens.

Drew looks over, and there stands Beth. She's dressed in her cocktail dress, and has her shoes in her hand.

She has tears in her eyes as well.

Drew gets up, goes to her.

She looks up at him, apologetically.

The tears flow freely from both of them.

BETH

Drew, I--

Drew places a finger to her lips, shakes his head.

DREW

You don't have to say
anything. The fact that you're
here with me right now says it all.

They embrace, and the tears on their face slowly morph into ones of happiness.

They kiss and slowly sway to the gentle sound of the music in an impromptu, romantic dance...

...back together.

FADE OUT.

THE END