Keeping Secrets

by

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(Dedicated to Mark Christian Goldsmith)
FADE IN:

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE – DAY

A tree-lined development of houses on an estate in Rochester, New York.

We home in on Henry Howe’s house, with his pick-up truck in the drive. It is early morning. Sun is breaking through. The birds are singing.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

HENRY HOWE (late 30s) asleep with his wife ANGELA (early 30s). A Mickey Mouse alarm clock rings. Henry wakes and quickly turns it off, an eye on Angela anxious not to disturb her.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – UPSTAIRS LANDING – DAY

Henry carefully closes the bedroom door. He passes his son Ben’s bedroom, the door slightly open. Henry pushes it wider and looks in on BEN (10) fast asleep. Henry smiles proudly, before pulling the door to.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – KITCHEN – DAY

Dressed in shirt and chinos, Henry makes sandwiches. Henry smiles proudly at PHOTOS of Ben and Angela on the door of the refrigerator.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE – DAY

Henry makes for his pick-up truck. This is a normal working day in Henry’s life. Everything the same. Nothing changes.

Across the road, a few houses along, FRANKLIN (40s) gets in his Range Rover in the drive. Chery (40s) his wife, blonde, wearing a bathrobe, waves to him from the front door. They wave to Henry in unison. Henry waves back.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK – MOVING – DAY

Henry sees MARTY (40s) kissing ROSA (40s) dark-haired, at the front door of his house. Marty and Rosa wave to Henry. Henry waves back.
EXT. HORN’S HARDWARE - CAR PARK - DAY

Henry pulls up in his truck. A large store with other stores close by, sharing the car park.

Henry waves to TWO STORE MEN walking in front of the truck.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - STORE- DAY

At the check-out, MONICA(30) a well developed blonde, serves a MALE CUSTOMER, who smiles at her lasciviously. ELAINE(40s) is at the check-out next to Monica.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY

A large WALL CLOCK shows 12am.

LANE(60s) thin, is asleep at his desk, SNORING, his head leaning to one side. LANCE(60s) fat, is asleep at his desk, his arms folded. Henry sits at his desk eating sandwiches, drinking coffee.

INSERT: Photograph of Ben and Angela, in the garden, smiling, arms around one another.

Henry smiles at the photos. APRIL(late 20s) dark-haired, slim, wearing glasses, stops by Henry’s desk.

APRIL
What’s in the sandwiches today, Henry?

HENRY
Cheese and pickle, April.

APRIL
What cheese is it, Henry?

HENRY
Canadian cheddar.

APRIL
Canadian cheddar’s my favourite, Henry.

HENRY
Is that so, April?

DIGBY HORN(55) moustached, charges into the office kicking up dust full of intent, his eyes firmly on Henry.

APRIL
Hi Mr Horn.

April quickly leaves the office, sensing there’s trouble.
DIGBY
Henry, I’ve got something to tell you.

HENRY
Yes, Mr Horn?

DIGBY
I’m sorry to have to tell you, Henry, but you’re surplus to requirements.

EXT. HORN’S HARDWARE- CAR PARK - DAY
Henry walks to his truck, carrying a CRATE of belongings.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY
Henry looks at Lane, who falls to his side, asleep.

HENRY
Surplus to requirements, Mr Horn?

HENRY
That’s right, Henry.

HENRY
But, I don’t understand.

DIGBY
What don’t you understand, Henry?

EXT. A HIGH ROAD - DAY
Henry drives his truck towards lights.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - DAY
Henry brakes hard as the lights turn red. His CRATE of personal effects falls on the floor. The GLASS CRACKS in the framed PHOTO of Angela and Ben. His phone rings.

HENRY
(into cell phone)
Hello.

ANGELA (V.O.)
Henry, I’d like you to collect Ben from school.
HENRY

Oh. Why?

ANGELA (V.O.)

I won’t be coming back to the house tonight.

HENRY

Why not?

ANGELA (V.O.)

I’ve moved in with Marcel.

HENRY

But, I don’t understand.

ANGELA (V.O.)

I’ve got to go, Henry. I’ll ring you later. Bye.

Henry lowers his phone, looks at the PHOTO with the glass broken. The lights go green. Cars behind BEEP.

EXT. BEN’S SCHOOL – DAY

Ben breaks with TWO FRIENDS and runs to Henry’s truck as it pulls up outside of the school entrance. Ben opens the passenger side door.

BEN

Where’s Mom, Dad?

HENRY

She, she had to go somewhere.

BEN

Go where?

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK – MOVING – DAY

Henry drives off.

HENRY

(an inspiration)

An aunt.

BEN

What?

HENRY

An aunt. She had to go and see an aunt. She’s unwell. The aunt.

BEN

What aunt?
HENRY
An aunt she calls an aunt. She’s not really an aunt, but your Mom calls her an aunt.

BEN
Where?

HENRY
Where what?

BEN
Where’s this aunt she calls an aunt?

HENRY
Brooklyn.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY
Ben and Henry walk on the drive to the house.

BEN
How long will Mom be gone for, Dad?

HENRY
I don’t know. It depends on her aunt, how well she is, or not. The aunt she calls an aunt.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY
Henry checks the wardrobe. Angela’s clothes have gone.

BEN (O.S.)
Dad.

Henry quickly closes the wardrobe, turns and faces Ben.

BEN
You weren’t trying on Mom’s clothes, were you?

HENRY
What?

BEN
Dan Clayton said he saw his Dad wearing one of his Mom’s summer dresses. His Dad said he was practising for a kids fancy dress party, but Dan Clayton didn’t believe him. He thinks he’s both ways. You’re not both ways, are you Dad?
Henry walks past him out of the bedroom.

HENRY
I wasn’t trying on your Mom’s clothes.

INT. A PIZZA PLACE - DAY
Ben tucks into a big pizza. Henry drinks coffee, he looks forlorn and distant, his pizza untouched.

BEN
Hm. Great pizza.

Cheryl enters, smiling. She stops by Henry’s table.

CHERYL
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi Cheryl.

CHERYL
Hi Ben.

BEN
Hi Mrs...

CHERYL
(to Ben)
Cheryl. Call me Cheryl, Ben. Please.

(to Henry)
Everything okay, Henry?

HENRY
Everything’s fine.

CHERYL
Angela okay, Henry?

HENRY
Angela’s fine, Cheryl.

CHERYL

BEN
Bye, Mrs...

Ben looks at Henry’s untouched pizza.

BEN
Aren’t you hungry, Dad?

Henry shakes his head. Ben slides Henry’s pizza across the table to his side.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Henry sits at a table, looking at PHOTOS of the family.

INT. MARCEL’S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Angela lies on her front, naked. MARCEL(30s) Hispanic, lies on his side smacking her arse very hard.

    ANGELA
    God, that’s so good! Harder!

    MARCEL
    You fucking whore!

    ANGELA
    Harder!

    MARCEL
    Fucking, shitting whore!

    ANGELA
    Harder! Harder! Much harder! Oh yes! Yes! Yes!

She turns over and bites his lips.

    MARCEL
    Fuck! That hurt!

Marcel turns her over and really lays into her.

    MARCEL
    FUCKING BITCH!

    ANGELA
    Get off of me?

    MARCEL
    WHAT!

    ANGELA
    I’ve gotta make a phone call.

    MARCEL
    I’m full to bursting here, I need to unload.

Angela quickly slides from underneath him. Marcel screams.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

A tearful Henry closes the PHOTO album. Silence. His cell phone rings.
HENRY
(into phone)
Hello. Henry Howe.

INT. MARCEL’S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Angela lies on the bed, on the phone. Marcel sits on the other side of the bed, his back to her, jacking off.

ANGELA
(into phone)
What did you tell Ben, Henry?

INTERCUT:

HENRY
I said you’d gone to see an aunt.

ANGELA
What aunt?

HENRY
I said you’d gone to see an aunt you called an aunt, in Brooklyn. She was sick. And...

ANGELA
An aunt I called an aunt, Henry?

HENRY
That’s right.

Angela lifts herself up.

ANGELA
(aghast)
An aunt I called an aunt? Why did you tell him that?

HENRY
I made it up. Sorry. It’s all I could think of.

ANGELA
Okay. Well, he’ll have to know sooner or later, I guess.

HENRY
Where are you?

ANGELA
With Marcel. Why?

Marcel comes.

HENRY
Is that who I can hear?
Angela gestures for Marcel to be quiet.

ANGELA
I don’t know. Maybe.

Henry moves the phone from his ear.

ANGELA
Henry, where are you?

Henry goes back on the phone.

HENRY
I think I want to go now.

Henry disengages the phone, looks upset.

ANGELA
Henry! Henry!

MARCEL
What is it?

ANGELA
He cut me off.

MARCEL
What the fuck’s wrong with him?

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - GARDEN - THE NEXT DAY

Birds sing in the trees. The sun is up.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Henry wakes just as the alarm clock rings, and shuts it off. He dwells sadly on the space beside him.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ben comes rushing in. Henry’s in a bathrobe, making coffee.

BEN
Dad, what’s going on?

HENRY
Hi Ben. What do you mean?

BEN
Mom’s gone to an aunt she calls an aunt. And you’re not dressed for work.
HENRY
I’m taking a few days off.

BEN
What for?

HENRY
To do some jobs around the house.

BEN
What jobs?

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Henry SMASHES the wooden-framed bed up, using a LARGE AXE.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Henry loads wood from the bed in his truck in the drive. MRS BROWN(late 60s) Henry’s next door neighbour, weeds the borders of her flower bed. She surreptitiously looks at him over her shoulder.

Henry finishes loading, and smacks his hands together.

HENRY
Morning Mrs Brown.

She ignores him and carries on weeding. Henry walks up behind her.

HENRY
Morning Mrs Brown.

MRS BROWN
(she jumps, acting surprised)
Oh. Morning Henry. I was just weeding. The weeds grow more than the plants. I don’t know where they come from. If you don’t catch them early, they’ll strangle everything in their reach.

HENRY
Sure thing Mrs Brown.

She looks past him at the truck. Henry follows her look.

HENRY
Getting rid of my old bed. Wood worms, Mrs Brown.

MOMENTS LATER

Mrs Brown shakes her head as she watches Henry drive off.
EXT. A HIGH ROAD - DAY
Henry pulls up outside of a building called 'The Studio'.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY
A passageway with retail outlets and offices either side.
Henry stands by a half-glazed door. A sign ‘JJG Enterprises’. IRIS(late 30s) sits at a desk, wearing glasses, slim and dark-haired, her hair tied back. Henry knocks on the door and half opens it. Iris nervously touches the end of her glasses.

IRIS
Yes, can I help you?

HENRY
I’m looking for the studio for...

IRIS
Dance lessons? Along the passageway, to your left. The office is on the right.

HENRY
Okay. Thanks.

IRIS
You’re welcome.

He focuses on a poster of 'Chinatown' pinned on the wall.

IRIS
Along the passageway, to your left.

HENRY
Thanks.

Henry walks along a passageway. The sound of Spanish music. Henry looks through double half-glazed swing doors. Marcel is teaching a group of SIX WOMEN(40s) and a FAT MAN(20s).

INT. THE STUDIO - DANCE STUDIO - DAY
A WOMAN steps forward. Marcel puts his arms around her waist and dances with her. Marcel catches Henry looking at him. Henry draws back.

Marcel opens the door. Henry steps inside the studio.

MARCEL
Hi. My name’s Marcel.

Henry looks at Marcel, weighing him up.
MARCEL
You want to join the Salsa class?

HENRY
No. No, I don’t.

MARCEL
Special rates for beginners. This month only. It’s a great deal.

HENRY
(mild intent)
I’m Henry Howe.

MARCEL
Henry Howe. We’ve never met. Hi.

HENRY
Hi. Is my wife here?

MARCEL
She’s gone out. Come back in an hour and she’ll be here.

HENRY
Okay. If she arrives back before I get here...

MARCEL
I’ll tell her you want to see her.

HENRY
Thanks.

INT. A COFFEE HOUSE – DAY

Henry sits drinking a coffee in the front section of the coffee house, by a window. Cheryl sits holding hands over the table with ROLAND(25) a muscular guy outside of the Men’s Toilet at the rear.

Henry approaches the toilet. Cheryl quickly removes her hand, not before Henry sees her.

CHERYL
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi Cheryl.

MOMENTS LATER

Henry’s back at his table. Roland walks past him and leaves the coffee house. Henry sips his coffee. Before he can put the cup down Cheryl arrives.
CHERYL
Henry, can I join you?

HENRY
Sure.

She sits down opposite him.

CHERYL
Not working today, Henry?

HENRY
No. I’m taking a few days off. Doing jobs around the house.

CHERYL
I see.
(looking around secretly)
You saw us holding hands, didn’t you Henry? I know you did.
(leaning forward)
I’ll ask you not to say anything to Franklin. If you don’t mind, Henry?

HENRY
Okay.

CHERYL
I do love him. Franklin. Really I do. I’ve never loved a man more in my life. The problem, is, he can’t keep it up. He gets it up, but he can’t keep it up. Do you understand what I mean by that, Henry?

HENRY
Yes, I do.

CHERYL
I’m not blaming him. He’s a busy man. A man could not work harder. Really he couldn’t. You do understand what I’m talking about, Henry?

HENRY
Yes, I do.

CHERYL
Sex is important to me. As it is to every woman. And if they tell you different, they’re liars. All of them. Every single one. And Roland, that’s, you know, he gets it up and keeps it up. For a very long time. You do see my point, Henry?
HENRY
Yes, I do.

CHERYL
I have to go. Not a word, Henry. Okay?

HENRY
Okay.

She stands, pats him on the arm, and leaves.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry watches Marcel teaching. Henry walks on to Marcel’s office. Angela is on the phone. He knocks on the door.

INT. THE STUDIO - MARCEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Henry sits in front of Angela, his head lowered.

ANGELA
I’m sorry, Henry. It was a mistake to have married you. When your wife died, I felt sorry for you, that’s the truth of it. It was a sympathy thing, Henry. Nothing more. You do understand, Henry?

HENRY
Sure.

ANGELA
It isn’t something I did lightly. I’m not one of those women who just runs off, you know. And Ben, I do care for Ben. I’ve been a Mother to him for nine years, haven’t I Henry?

HENRY
Yes, you have.

ANGELA
It’s just that...I like to be treated badly by a man. I can’t help it. It’s in my nature. I had to suppress it with you. But deep down, I missed being treated badly. You do understand what I’m saying don’t you, Henry?

HENRY
Yes, I do.
ANGELA
If you treated me like a cheap, good for nothing hooker. Slapped me hard, marked me, bruised me, told me I was a worthless piece of shit, and you didn’t give a fuck about me, things might have been different.

HENRY
Okay, well, I’ll go now. If you don’t mind?

Henry stands and makes for the door.

ANGELA
I’ll tell Ben. Soon. Don’t say anything for the moment. Let’s, let’s keep it a secret for now.

HENRY
Okay.

Henry opens the door. A thought.

HENRY
Can I ask you something?

ANGELA
What, Henry?

HENRY
How long’s it been with Marcel?

ANGELA
How long have we been fucking?

HENRY
Yes.

ANGELA
Four years Henry. I was perfectly faithful to you the first year I worked here. Marcel wanted to, but I said no. You have my word, Henry.

HENRY
Okay.

The Fat Man enters.

FAT MAN
I want shit paper lady, and there’s no shit paper in the can!

Angela takes a pack of toilet rolls from the desk and tosses them to him.
FAT MAN
What kind of fucking place is this?

The Fat Man leaves.

EXT. A HIGH ROAD - DAY

Henry drives his truck. The SOUND of crying over. Henry pulls off the road, close to stores and a Motel.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - STATIONARY - DAY

Henry sits crying. He blows his nose with a tissue, looks ahead and sees Franklin with his arms around FATIMA(20s) heavily built, walking from Franklin’s car to the Motel. Franklin pinches her bottom. She slaps his arm and runs ahead. He looks around, and catches Henry looking at him, holding a tissue to his nose. Franklin raises a hand to Henry, nervously. Henry lifts his hand acknowledging him, still holding the tissue. Fatima runs back and grabs Franklin’s hand. Franklin cools it, they talk, and she looks back briefly at Henry. Henry lowers the tissue, and stares.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - STATIONARY - DAY

Henry’s truck is parked in Horn’s Hardware car park. Henry looks ahead sadly at the store. April knocks on the window.

APRIL
Hi, Henry.

EXT. HORN’S HARDWARE - CAR PARK - DAY

Henry and April walk to the store.

APRIL
I miss talking to you, Henry.

HENRY
I miss talking to you, April.

APRIL
What are you here for, Henry?

HENRY
A new bed. The old bed had wood worm.
APRIL
You can use my staff discount
card, Henry, if you want?

She hands him a store card as they reach the entrance.

HENRY
Thanks April.

APRIL
Okay. Bye, Henry.

HENRY
Bye, April.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - STORE - DAY

Henry sees Rosa, looking at the paint section.

ROSA
Hello Henry. I thought you’d be
in the office.

HENRY
Hi Rosa. No, I’m, I’m taking a
break. Doing jobs around the house.

ROSA
I see. Just getting paint, Henry.
To do some painting.

HENRY
Okay, well, good luck with the
painting, Rosa.

Henry walks away. He reaches the bed section. He hears
kissing and sighing sounds coming from the next aisle.

MONICA (O.S.)
You’re moustache is tickling me.
Digby! Don’t! Not here!

DIGBY (O.S.)
Why not?

MONICA (O.S.)
You know why not. Digby! No!

Henry sees Monica at the end of the aisle, wearing an
overall, unbuttoned to her cleavage, straightening her
hair. She smiles at Henry as she passes by.

Digby appears at the end of the aisle. He sees Henry
looking at him. Digby shakes himself down, touches his
moustache, assumes formality.
DIGBY
What are you doing here, Henry?

HENRY
Getting a new bed. The old one had wood worm, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
Wood worm! That’s rare in these parts, Henry.

HENRY
I guess so.

DIGBY
Wood worm, ah?

HENRY
Yes, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
As a recent ex-employee you can get still 15% discount, Henry. Tell them at the counter that I said so.

HENRY
April let me have her staff discount card, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
(slightly put out)
Did she now? Okay. Okay. I guess that’s okay.
(in Henry’s face)
Sorry about...you know.

HENRY
That’s okay, Mr Horn.

Henry stares at Digby’s face.

DIGBY
What are you looking at, Henry?

HENRY
You’ve got lipstick on your face, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
Have I? Really? My wife Myra’s birthday today. She was so excited with the present I bought her. I told her not to overdo it.

Digby rubs his face.

HENRY
The other side, Mr Horn.
Digby rubs the other side.

**DIGBY**

Is it off, now?

**HENRY**

Yes it is.

**DIGBY**

Good.

Digby pats Henry on the shoulders and walks away.

**AT THE CHECKOUT**

Henry stands with a trolley and the bed sections. Monica’s at the check-out. She laughs.

**MONICA**

A new bed?

**HENRY**

That’s right.

**MONICA**

Did you wear the old one out? Too much banging away?

**HENRY**

(matter of fact)
I’ve got a staff discount card. It’s not mine. But I can use it. Mr Horn said it’s okay.

**MONICA**

If Mr Horn said it’s okay, it’s okay. He’s the boss.

Henry looks at a LOVE BITE on her neck.

**HENRY**

Would you...

**MONICA**

Yes?

**HENRY**

Would you give the discount card to April in accounts? I’d rather not go in there.

**MONICA**

Sure. You know April, do you?

**HENRY**

I worked in accounts. For nine years.
MONICA
Really? I never noticed you.

Henry thinks about this.

MONICA
I might be joining accounts soon. That’ll be a 200$ dead.

HENRY
I’m sorry?

MONICA
I said 200$, please.

HENRY
No, I meant, about accounts?

MONICA
Oh yes. I hear there’s a vacancy. Mr Digby thinks I have a lot of potential. He said he wants to groom me for better things. That’ll be 200$ dead.

INT. BOWLING CENTRE - DAY

Ben bowls and gets a strike. Henry stands watching.

BEN
Wow! How about that, Dad? Three strikes on the run.

HENRY
Very good, Ben.

LATER

Henry and Ben sit eating burgers and drinking cokes.

BEN
I played like a dream, too. I was so good.

Henry sees Iris, sitting at a nearby table. She points a camera towards the bowling alleys. Henry follows the line of the camera, which is focused on Marty bowling in a team. Marty gets a strike. He raises his hands as PEOPLE applaud. A YOUNG WOMAN hugs Marty, and kisses him on the cheeks. Iris takes a number of shots of Marty and the Woman kissing.

Henry stands over Iris, who is making notes.

HENRY
Hi.
IRIS (looking up nervously)
Oh. Hi.

HENRY
You play ten-pin bowling?

IRIS
No. Not really.

Henry looks at the notes, the camera, and the group bowling.

HENRY
My name’s Henry. Henry Howe.

IRIS
Iris. Pleased to meet you.

HENRY
Pleased to meet you.

IRIS
Did you join the dance class?

HENRY
No. I never planned to join the dance class.

IRIS
But...

HENRY
My wife, Angela, she, she left me for Marcel, the dance instructor. Two days ago.

IRIS
I see. I’m sorry.

HENRY
I’m getting used to it. Well, not really getting used to it, I mean. I’m not. I miss her. I miss waking up and not feeling her alongside of me. I miss her not being there.

IRIS
I’m very sorry.

HENRY
Thanks.

Henry looks back at Ben, finishing his burger.

HENRY
Oh well, better go. See you around. Bye.
IRIS
Bye.

Henry walks back to the table, and sits.

BEN
What was that lady doing with the camera, Dad?

HENRY
I don’t know. She didn’t say.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The sections of the bed are laid out, the bed ends, the slats, the sides. Henry shakes his head, unable to comprehend how to fix it. SOUND of the doorbell.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Henry opens the door to Marcel and Angela.

MARCEL
Hi Henry.

ANGELA
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi.

ANGELA
Can we come in, Henry?

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Marcel and Angela sit opposite Henry at the kitchen table.

ANGELA
We rent at the studio, Henry. But we want to buy. Don’t we, Marcel?

MARCEL
That’s right. Expand the business, Henry.

Marcel flexes his arm muscles.

MARCEL
Flex a bit. You know, Henry. Get bigger.
ANGELA
I don’t want you to sell the house, Henry. I want you to know that. We don’t want that. Do we Marcel?

MARCEL
No way.
(flexing his muscles)
But we do need to expand. I hope you understand that, Henry?

HENRY
Sure.

ANGELA
We need money from you, Henry. $100,000. So we can both move on.

MARCEL
Gotta go forward, Henry.

ANGELA
We could enforce things. But we don’t want to do that. Do we Marcel?

MARCEL
No way.

HENRY
I lost my job at Horn’s Hardware. So, I don’t have a lot of money. Not right now.

MARCEL
That’s too bad, Henry, but...

ANGELA
I was your wife for nine years, Henry. That counts for quite a lot in dollar terms.

HENRY
You were unfaithful for the last four of them.

MARCEL
Five.

ANGELA
Four. A court’s not going to find out that are they Henry? I mean, you asked me, and I told you. But I’ll just deny it, won’t I? I’m not going to tell them the truth, now am I?

HENRY
I guess not.
MARCEL
So, how soon can you come up with
the money, Henry, so we can...

Marcel jokingly grips Henry round the neck and squeezes.

MARCEL
...expand?

EXT. A HIGH ROAD - DAY
Henry walks towards a bank.

INT. A BANK - DAY
Franklin is behind the counter, talking to a young female
BANK CLERK. He sees Henry lining up.

FRANKLIN
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi Franklin.

FRANKLIN
Henry, can I, can I speak to you
for a moment?

INT. FRANKLIN’S OFFICE - DAY
Henry sits in front of Franklin’s desk, as Franklin walks
around, hands in his trouser pockets, flapping them about.

FRANKLIN
Invigorated. I am invigorated
Henry. The blood is flowing
through my veins like a cool
stream. God, it’s so long ago
since that happened, I almost
forgot it ever did. It’s like
being twenty one again. Do you
understand, Henry?

HENRY
I think I do, yes.

FRANKLIN
It’s like a dream. A dream of
youth. Fatima. Oh Fatima, I want
to fuck the living daylights out
of you every single day until the
day I die.

(MORE)
FRANKLIN (CONT’D)
I can’t get enough of her, Henry. Thoughts of that lovely big juicy fleshy body, fill my head twenty four hours a day. Do you understand what I’m saying, Henry?

HENRY
I think I do, yes.

FRANKLIN
I love Cheryl. Always have. The love of my life. But it’s just not the same.

Franklin suddenly bends down to Henry, up close to him, and secretly.

FRANKLIN
You know what Henry, between you and me, sometimes, after I’ve fucked Fatima, I get so exhausted, that when I make love to Cheryl, as I have to, of course, otherwise she’d suspect something was wrong, I just...

HENRY
Can’t keep it up?

FRANKLIN
What? What did you say?

HENRY
You get it up, but you can’t keep it up?

FRANKLIN
Exactly. How did you know?

HENRY
I just guessed.

FRANKLIN
Fuck a young woman, Henry. That’s my advice to you. Lots. As many as you can get. Feel alive, Henry. In here.

Franklin grabs Henry’s balls. Henry jerks back. Franklin sits at his desk.

FRANKLIN
This is in confidence of course. Between you and me, ah Henry?

HENRY
Of course.
FRANKLIN
(leaning back)
Good man, Good man.
(leaning forward)
If there’s ever anything I can
do for you, Henry, you only have
to ask. You name it, consider it
done.

HENRY
Well, I was wondering about a loan.

FRANKLIN
A loan, Henry?

HENRY
Yes, well, I lost my job at
Horn’s Hardware, and...

FRANKLIN
You lost your job, Henry?

HENRY
Yes. I was surplus to
requirements, and...

FRANKLIN
You lost your job? A loan, Henry?

HENRY
Yes, well, Angela wants $100,000,
and...

FRANKLIN
A loan Henry? Not if you’re not
working. That one no can do.
Sorry Henry.

HENRY
Yes, but...

Franklin takes some papers from his In-Tray.

FRANKLIN
Is there anything else I can help
you with, Henry?

INT. A LIBRARY - DAY

Henry walks along a line of books. He stops and picks a book.

INSERT: Book title. 'A Guide to Being More Assertive'.
EXT. A MALL - DAY

A clothes shop, full of naked dummies. Henry watches a WINDOW DRESSER dress one of the female dummies. He nervously smiles and raises a hand, mouths ‘Hi’.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Henry takes a female shop dummy from the back of the truck and carries it to the house.

Mrs Brown, tending to hanging baskets on her porch looks in disbelief.

HENRY
Hi Mrs Brown.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

The sound of Henry talking upstairs. Ben walks up the stairs.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING - DAY

Ben has his ear against Henry’s bedroom door.

HENRY (O.S.)
From now on things are gonna be different. Don’t think you can get away with treating me like a lump of shit.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Henry stands in front of the naked dummy.

HENRY
Because you can’t. Not any more. I want you to say you’re sorry. Otherwise I’m gonna slap your arse real hard, so it goes red, and stings.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING - DAY

Ben listens.

HENRY (O.S.)
Do I make myself clear?
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Ben opens the door wide. Henry quickly steps right back, disassociating himself from the dummy.

HENRY
Hi Ben.

BEN
What are you doing, Dad?

HENRY
Role playing.

BEN
Role playing? What do you mean?

HENRY
Yeah. It’s, it’s a way of, of dealing with things.

Ben looks at him very seriously.

HENRY
What? What are you looking at me like that for?

BEN
I know why you’re acting strangely, Dad.

HENRY
Who’s acting strangely?

BEN
You are. You’ve been acting strangely ever since Mom went away.

HENRY
I don’t know what you mean, Ben.

BEN
Mom’s not coming back, is she? She’s left us, I know she has. I looked in the wardrobe, all her clothes have gone.

Henry starts to cry.

BEN
You may as well admit it, Mom is not coming back. And there is no aunt she calls an aunt. That’s a lie. A cover. To give yourself time to think of something, before you tell me.

HENRY
I’m sorry, Ben. I didn’t know how to tell you.

BEN
It’s okay. I figured it, somehow. The pieces just didn’t fit.

HENRY
Didn’t they?

BEN
No, Dad.

Ben grabs a tissue from a bedside table for him.

BEN
Here, Dad.

HENRY
Thanks. She’s gone off with Marcel, her dance teacher.

BEN
I guessed there was somebody else.

HENRY
There’s other things, too. I lost my job at Horn’s Hardware. I was surplus to requirements.

BEN
What does that mean?

HENRY
It means they didn’t want me anymore.

BEN
Sorry, Dad.

HENRY
There’s something else, too.

EXT. A CEMETERY - DAY

Henry lays RED ROSES by a grave. Ben watches.


BEN
She was my Mom? My real Mom?

HENRY
Yeah.
BEN
Why didn’t you tell me before?

HENRY
I was gonna tell you before, a long time ago. But every time I thought of doing it, I got scared. I’m sorry Ben.

BEN
What was she like?

HENRY
Beautiful. Very beautiful.

BEN
Was she a good Mom? I mean, did she want me? I wasn’t a mistake or anything?

HENRY
A mistake? What makes you say that?

BEN
Danny Baker said he hears his Mom and Dad say Danny was a mistake all the time, when they’re fighting. Danny’s Mom says it was Danny’s Dad’s fault for not having protection. Danny’s Dad calls his Mom a friggin’ bitch because he thought she was protected. She said she was but...something slipped through.

HENRY
That’s sad.

BEN
I know.

HENRY
That’s real sad.

BEN
I know. That’s why I asked.

HENRY
She wanted you all right. She loved you so much. She was a great Mom to you. She thought the world of you. We both did.

BEN
How did she die?

HENRY
She had a stroke.
BEN
I thought only old people had strokes.

HENRY
Well, no, it can happen to anyone.

BEN
How old was I, when she died?

HENRY
Eleven months and fifteen days.

Henry puts his arms around Ben.

HENRY
Sorry I never told you before, Ben.

BEN
It makes it easier, somehow, Mom going, Angela going, knowing she’s not my real Mom.

HENRY
Your Mom still loves you though. Angela.

BEN
Sure. So why did she leave you?

HENRY
We’re just not compatible.

BEN
How many years you been married?

HENRY
Nine.

BEN
How come you’re not compatible now, when you were compatible for nine years?

HENRY
It’s a long story, Ben.

EXT. HENRY’S TRUCK IN MOTION – DAY

BEN( V.O.)
Can you show me some photos of Mom, Dad?
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Henry takes out a photograph album from one of the drawers, very slowly. Ben watches him.

BEN
What’s wrong, Dad?

HENRY
I haven’t looked at your Mom’s photos for years.

BEN
Why, Dad?

HENRY
I just couldn’t Ben.

EXT. A MOTEL - NIGHT

A yellow taxi stops outside of the same Motel Franklin used. HAZEL(late 30s) gets out of the taxi.

A TAXI-DRIVER takes her case from the boot. Hazel gives him money, and walks to the Motel.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT


Ben stands by Henry who is sitting at his desk.

BEN
She was beautiful, Dad.

HENRY
I know she was. I don’t think I’ve ever really got over her. Even after all this time. I think of her every day.

BEN
You’ve still got me, Dad.

HENRY
Yeah, I’ve still got you.

Henry pulls Ben close.

HENRY
I’ve still got you, Ben.

LATER
ON TV: A DVD film of Norma dipping Ben in the sea, in swimsuits.

Ben and Henry look on not moving.

The film ends where Norma comes close to the camera and waves a kiss. Ben catches Henry’s look of total intoxication.

EXT. A MOTEL - DAY

Franklin and Fatima walk to the Motel, holding hands.

INT. A MOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Franklin goes to reception, grinning at Fatima sitting in the waiting area. Hazel is talking to a RECEPTIONIST. Franklin half covers his face when he sees her, thinking she’ll recognise him.

HAZEL

Hello.

FRANKLIN

Nice day. Very nice day.

HAZEL

Yes. Very nice.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Henry is watering the garden. Franklin pulls up in his Range Rover. He calls from the open window.

FRANKLIN

Hi Henry.

HENRY

Hi Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Everything okay, Henry?

HENRY

Everything’s fine, Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Good man. Good man.

(beat)

By the way Henry, I meant to ask you. When your beloved wife Norma died, did you, did you look at her, in the cask before they buried her?
HENRY
No. Why Franklin?

FRANKLIN
No reason. Just thought I’d ask.
Bye Henry.

HENRY
Bye, Franklin.

Franklin drives off. Henry looks suitably confused.

INT. A LIBRARY - DAY

Hazel sits looking at a newspaper. A commemoration in the ‘Deceased’ Column.

INSERT NEWSPAPER NOTICE ‘ My beloved wife Norma passed away on the 15 December 1999. The memorial service to be held at ’....................’ Hazel smiles, and makes notes.

EXT. A CEMETERY - DAY

Hazel looks at the INSCRIPTION. She lays WHITE ROSES on the grave next to Henry’s red roses.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Hazel slowly approaches Henry’s house, looking at a note. Mrs Brown is kneeling weeding her garden facing the house. She struggles to stand up, and sees Hazel.

MRS BROWN
Oh my God!

HAZEL
Morning. Is this where Henry Howe lives?

MRS BROWN
Oh my God!

Mrs Brown runs to her house as if she’s seen a ghost.

MRS BROWN
Oh my God! Oh my God!

HAZEL
(to herself)
I think it must be.
INT. MRS BROWN’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - DAY

Mrs Brown peers through her curtains at Hazel as she walks towards Henry’s house.

MRS BROWN
Norma Howe, you’ve come back from the dead.

A recent PHOTO of Mrs and Mrs Brown on the wall.

MRS BROWN
Please. No! No!

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Henry pulls up in his truck.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Henry picks up a NOTE. He reads it and looks very shocked.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Henry sits at the table, very still, looking at the note. The faint sound of the TV in the background. Ben enters.

BEN
Can we got to the pizza place, Dad?

Ben looks at Henry, concerned, as he sits at the table.

BEN
Dad, what’s wrong?

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - NIGHT

A yellow taxi pulls up.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Henry opens the door to Hazel.

HAZEL
Hello. I’m Hazel Norman.

Henry just stares.
HAZEL
Am I a little early? You did say...

HENRY
Come in. Please.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT
Hazel sits on a sofa. Ben and Henry sit opposite. They stare at her. An unearthly silence.

HAZEL
It was a shock to me when I found out. All these years, not knowing I had a sister. An identical twin.

INT. A HOSPITAL - DAY - FLASHBACK
Hazel at the bedside of her FATHER(late 60s). Talking.

HAZEL (V.O.)
A week before he died, my Dad told me about us. How he and my Mom had split up when Norma and I were babies.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE(CONT’D) - NIGHT

HAZEL
My Mom went off with somebody. And left my Dad, with me. My Mom took Norma. Then to find out, that Norma had died.

Ben looks at Henry, who doesn’t move a muscle.

HAZEL
I had to...find out more. About my sister. What happened. And how things stood. With everything.

She looks at them both. Silence.

HAZEL
I hope you don’t mind me coming here? Maybe I should have written, and...

She gauges the atmosphere and stands.

HAZEL
Listen, I’ll go. It was a mistake to...
Henry stands immediately following her.

    HENRY
    No. Please. Don't go.

They look at each other. Hazel sits. Henry sits.

    BEN
    You all right, Dad?

Henry touches Ben’s arm.

    HENRY
    I’m I’m okay, Ben. Thanks.

    HAZEL
    How long were you married to Norma?

    HENRY
    Five years. Ben was eleven months old when she died.

    BEN
    And fifteen days.

    HENRY
    And fifteen days.

    HAZEL
    What did she die of?

    BEN
    (chipping in quickly)
    A stroke.
    (looking at Henry)
    I thought it only happened to old people, but...

    HAZEL
    That’s very sad. I’m sorry Henry. What happened to her Mother?

    HENRY
    She died when she was quite young. Eighteen, I think. She was brought up by a relation. In California.

    BEN
    I didn’t know, that Dad.

    HENRY
    I know, Ben. Sorry.

INT. A PIZZA PLACE - DAY

Henry in a queue. Ben and Hazel sit at a window table.
BEN
I usually come here with Dad. On our own. Mom...Angela, hates pizzas. How anyone can hate pizzas is a mystery to me. There must be something wrong with them.

HAZEL
I agree, Ben. I love pizzas.

BEN
What’s your favourite pizza?

HAZEL
Pepperoni.

BEN
Mine and Dad’s, too.

LATER
Henry, Hazel and Ben eat.

BEN
Yummy. What’s yours like, Hazel?

HAZEL
Absolutely delicious.

BEN
Mine, too. I thought the last one I had here was the best I’ve ever had. But this is better. What’s yours like, Dad?

Henry’s in a dream.

BEN
Dad, what’s yours like?

Henry’s too deep in thought to respond properly.

HENRY
Fine, Ben.

Hazel smiles at Henry.

BEN
Dad, can we do something after this?

INT. BOWLING CENTRE - NIGHT
Henry sits watching Ben and Hazel bowl. Hazel gets a strike.

HAZEL
Wow! I can’t believe it.
BEN
Good shot.

HAZEL
Beginner’s luck.

BEN
This isn’t the first time you’ve played, is it?

HAZEL
No, but it’s been a long time. I think I was your age when I played last.

Henry dwells on the back of Hazel as Ben gets a strike.

BEN
Yes!

HAZEL
Well done, Ben.

BEN
Dad, it’s your turn.

Hazel turns and looks at Henry.

HAZEL
Your turn Henry.

Henry slowly stands, happy to sit and watch. Henry picks up a bowl. His shot rolls down the channel.

BEN
Oh Dad, you can do better than that.

HENRY
I’m not very good.

BEN
You’re just not concentrating.

HAZEL
Good try, Henry. Well done.

Henry dwells on her encouragement.

LATER

They sit drinking milk shakes from straws. Ben’s very bright and animated.
BEN
Life’s funny, isn’t it Dad? Not long ago, I found out my Mom, well, Angela was not my Mom. And I was really upset about it. Few days later, I’m okay about it. Funny that, don’t you think, Dad?

HENRY
(matter of fact)
We’d better get going, soon, Ben. School tomorrow.

BEN
Oh, do I have to? Can’t I be sick or something?

HENRY
No you...
Henry looks at Hazel, who smiles.

HENRY
...can’t

EXT. BOWLING CENTRE - NIGHT
Ben, Henry and Hazel walk to the truck.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT
Hazel sits on an armchair. Henry sits opposite.

BEN
Night, Hazel.

Hazel stands and kisses Ben.

HAZEL
Night, Ben.

BEN
I wish you were staying longer.

HAZEL
I know, Ben. But I’ve got to get back to New York, to work. Just like you’ve got to go to school tomorrow, to learn.

BEN
I guess so. Night Dad.

HENRY
Night, Ben.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Ben slowly walks up the stairs, looking back to the lounge.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Hazel takes papers from her handbag.

HAZEL
There’s another reason for making contact, Henry.

HENRY
Oh?

HAZEL
(almost formally)
My Dad...our Dad made a will.
With the stipulation that in the event of...
(drops the formality)
There’s a $200,000 for you, Henry.
For you and Ben.

HENRY
$200,000!

HAZEL
You were Norma’s husband. And Ben’s her son. It’s rightfully yours.

HENRY
I don’t know what to say.

HAZEL
I’ve got some papers for you to sign. I’ll organise the legal side for you. I work for a lawyer.
All you have to do is sign these, and a cheque will be sent to you, when it’s finalised.

LATER

Henry sits at the table, signing papers. He hands them to Hazel, who sits opposite.

HAZEL
Thanks, Henry.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEN’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben lies awake in bed.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – HALL – NIGHT

At the open front door.

HAZEL
I still think I should have written. Broken it slowly.

HENRY
No, it’s, it’s fine. Really.

HAZEL
Thanks for the pizza. And bowling. I really enjoyed that.

HENRY
Me, too.

HAZEL
Bye, Henry.

HENRY
Bye.

They both extend their hands to shake at the same time.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – BEN’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Ben hears a taxi pull up. He gets out of bed, watches Hazel get into a yellow taxi. The taxi drives off.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – LOUNGE – NIGHT

Henry sits in silence. Ben stands by the door.

BEN
You’re right Dad, Mom must have been very beautiful.

HENRY
Yeah, she was.

BEN
I’d like to see her again, Hazel, sometime, just to be reminded of what my real Mom looked like.

HENRY
Go to bed, Ben. School tomorrow.

BEN
Okay. Night Dad.

HENRY
Night, Ben.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Henry lies awake in bed looking at PHOTOS of Norma. The CLOCK shows 3am.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Early morning. The sun is up.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Henry is washing up breakfast things. The PHONE RINGS.

INT. A COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Henry and Hazel sit at a table, close to the window. The cemetery in view across the road. Henry hands her a document.

HAZEL
Thanks Henry. I didn’t realise there was another document to sign.

HENRY
It’s okay.

She puts the document in her handbag.

HAZEL
Sorry about you splitting up with your wife, Henry.

HENRY
I’m okay. I’m getting over it.

HAZEL
Splitting up’s not easy, I know. I split up with my husband. He’s in the movie business, in LA.

HENRY
You said you lived in...

HAZEL
New York. Yes, I do. I left him, and moved back with my Dad. I lived with my Dad for the past two years. Then he got sick.

She drinks her coffee.
HAZEL
Good that I was there for my Dad, really. I don’t know what he’d have done, otherwise.

HENRY
Sure.

HAZEL
He wants to get back with me, Hudson, my husband. But I’m not sure. I don’t like LA. Much prefer New York.

Hazel looks at a YOUNG COUPLE holding hands at the next table, looking into each other’s eyes.

HAZEL
There are some issues, but...

Henry looks at her longingly for too long.

HAZEL
What? What is it, Henry?

HENRY
Nothing. Sorry.

EXT. A CEMETERY - DAY

Henry puts RED ROSES next to Hazel’s white Roses.

HAZEL
I always felt there was something missing. People say that about identical twins.

HENRY
Yes I know.

HAZEL
I had this empty feeling. For years. Not all the time, but...Sometimes I’d wake up, and think, there’s something else. Someone else. And when my Dad died and he told me, it all clicked somehow. That must sound crazy?

HENRY
No. Not at all.

HAZEL
As if she’d been there, all the time, in my subconscious.
HENRY
I know what you mean.

HAZEL
And even though she’s dead, I feel her presence. Sometimes quite strongly. And her voice. Sometimes I hear her voice.

EXT. A ROAD NEAR THE CEMETERY - DAY
Henry’s truck is parked outside of the coffee house. Henry unlocks the door, and holds the passenger door open.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - MOVING - DAY
Henry drives. He’s quiet, deep and thoughtful.

HAZEL
What do you do for a living, Henry?

HENRY
Nothing at the moment. I worked at Horn’s Hardware, in accounts. But I was surplus to requirements.

HAZEL
‘Surplus to requirements’. That’s a strange term, Henry.

HENRY
It means they didn’t want me anymore.

HAZEL
‘Surplus to requirements’. It’s such a strange way of...

HENRY
Yes. I guess it is.

They smile at each other. Then they both laugh together.

EXT. A MOTEL - DAY
Laughter over as Henry’s truck pulls up outside of the Motel. Henry and Hazel stand by the car.

HAZEL
Lovely to meet you, Henry.
HENRY
And you. Have a safe journey back.

Henry puts out a hand awkwardly to shake.

HAZEL
You’ll be hearing from me about the money. I’ll keep you up to date with things.

HENRY
Okay. Thanks.

Henry pulls his hand back.

HAZEL
Bye, Henry.

HENRY
Bye, Hazel.

She puts her arms around him, and hugs him very strongly. Henry just melts and clings onto her longer than he should.

Henry watches Hazel walk to the Motel entrance. Franklin and Fatima leave. Franklin holds the door open for Hazel.

Fatima and Franklin walk to Franklin’s Range Rover.

FRANKLIN
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi, Franklin.

FRANKLIN
Everything okay, Henry?

HENRY
Everything’s fine, Franklin.

INT. BEN’S CLASSROOM - DAY

A male TEACHER talks to STUDENTS. Ben’s totally preoccupied.

EXT. ROCHESTER TRAIN STATION - DAY

Hazel gets out of a yellow taxi. The TAXI DRIVER takes her case from the boot. Sound of CAMERA CLICKING as Hazel walks to the station.
INT. HENRY’S TRUCK – STATIONARY – DAY

Henry lowers his camera, as Hazel disappears from view.

INT. A COFFEE HOUSE – DAY

Henry sits looking at the PHOTOS of Hazel. He smiles, reflecting. Cheryl stands over him.

CHERYL
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi, Cheryl.

CHERYL
Mind if I sit down, Henry?

HENRY
Sure.

Cheryl sits. Henry puts the photos back in the wallet.

CHERYL
Can I tell you something, Henry, in secret? Between you and me?

HENRY
Of course.

CHERYL
I’m pregnant, Henry. I’m going to have a baby boy.

HENRY
Congratulations, Cheryl.

CHERYL
It’s not Franklin’s. It’s Roland’s. Franklin gave up thinking he could have children years ago. We both did. Most men can. But he can’t. If you see my point, Henry?

HENRY
I do, yes Cheryl.

CHERYL
It’s going to make him so happy. And he deserves that, Henry. Really he does. He always wanted a son. And as for Roland, that’s over, Henry. Completely over. I’m not giving up Roland without some regret. A lot of regret, actually, but...
Cheryl’s voice trails as Henry reflects.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Henry watches Hazel bowling.

Henry in the queue at the Pizza Place. He looks back at Hazel sitting with Ben.

Henry opens the door to Hazel when he first saw her.

Henry watches as Hazel kisses Ben goodnight.

Henry watches Hazel leave the house and walk to a taxi.

Henry and Hazel in the truck, laughing together.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. A COFFEE HOUSE(CONT’D) – DAY

Cheryl stands, pats Henry’s arm, as she leaves.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – KITCHEN – NIGHT

Henry is washing up. Ben sits at the table, drinking a coke.

BEN

Do you think Hazel looks exactly like Mom would look like, if she was alive?

HENRY

I don’t know Ben.

BEN

Be good to see her again, sometime, though. I mean, she is my aunt, isn’t she?

HENRY

What?

BEN

My Mom’s sister, Hazel. An aunt I can call an aunt, because she really is an aunt.

HENRY

Yeah, I guess she is, Ben. (realising it more) I guess she is.
EXT. THE STUDIO - DAY

Henry’s truck pulls outside.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry walks with Ben, who carries a sports bag. Henry looks through Iris’ window.

MYRA HORN(50s) sits in front of Iris. Henry recognises her. Iris sees Henry looking at her. Myra turns. Henry quickly back away from the door before Myra sees him.

Angela leaves Marcel’s office.

ANGELA
Oh Ben. My lovely boy Ben.

She opens her arms wide, and hugs him like a bear.

BEN
Not so hard, you’re hurting me.

Angela sees Henry over Ben’s shoulder and breaks her hold.

ANGELA
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi Angela.

ANGELA
See you Sunday, Henry.

BEN
Bye, Dad.

HENRY
Bye, Ben.

Henry walks past Iris’ office. Myra Horn has gone. Henry walks on, thinks, stops in his tracks, turns and goes back to the office. He knocks on the door and half opens it.

HENRY
Can I ask you something?

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY

Henry closes the door behind him.

HENRY
What do you do?
IRIS
I’m a private detective.

HENRY
Yeah. I thought you might be. I kind of figured that.
(looking at the poster)
Jack Nicholson. Jack, Jack...

IRIS
Jake Gittes. He was the detective character Jack Nicholson played in the film.

HENRY
Yeah, that’s right. With the
(pinch his nose)
the bloody nose.

IRIS
’JJG Enterprises’.

HENRY
Of course. And that lady?

IRIS
She’s a client. She suspects that her husband is having an affair.

HENRY
(smiling)
She suspects he’s having an affair, does she? Well, how about that.

IRIS
Between you and me, of course.

HENRY
Of course.

Henry leaves the office, smiling.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY
As Henry walks to the exit Ben walks to him.

BEN
Dad, are you going to be okay?

HENRY
Sure, Ben. I’ll be fine.

BEN
You’re not gonna do anything strange, like, I don’t know, role-play with dummies or anything?
HENRY
No, I’m not, Ben.

BEN
Are you sure, Dad?

HENRY
I’m sure, Ben.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT
Henry slaps after-shave on his face. He wears a smart dark suit, striped shirt, well-groomed and clean cut.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT
Henry stands in the middle of the room, neat and tidy. Flowers in a vase. Soft modern jazz music plays. He checks his shirt pocket. A pack of CONDOMS.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT
Henry opens the door to CHANTELLE(20s). Tall, long-haired blonde, wearing a Burberry macintosh, she carries a handbag.

CHANTELLE
I’m Chantelle.

HENRY
Hi Chantelle.

He holds the door open and just stares at her.

CHANTELLE
Are you going to invite me in?

HENRY
Sure. Come in. Can I take your coat?

She takes off her coat, revealing white underwear, stockings, suspenders. She hands the coat to him.

CHANTELLE
I’ll hang onto my bag.

HENRY
Okay.

She looks in the lounge.

CHANTELLE
Can I...
HENRY
Sure. Go in.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Chantelle leads the way. She looks around.

CHANTELLE
Nice.

HENRY
Thank you. I bought it from new. The house. It’s ten years old. I like it. It’s not too big. Not too small.

CHANTELLE
What do you want me to do for you, Henry?

Henry puts his hand on the CONDOMS in his pocket.

HENRY
I don’t know, really. It’s up to you.

CHANTELLE
Wrong Henry. The first thing you have to learn when you go with hookers is that all the options, the choices, the decisions are yours.

HENRY
Right.

CHANTELLE
You say. You pay. I play. Understand?

HENRY
Yes, yes, I do. I pay so...

CHANTELLE
I play. That’s right.

She strokes his face.

CHANTELLE
Now, what do you want from me, Henry?

HENRY
Well, sex I guess.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chantelle lies on the bed. Henry stands at the end of the bed, wearing his boxers.

HENRY
It’s a new bed.

CHANTELLE
Is it?

HENRY
The old one had...

She puts out a hand.

CHANTELLE
This is your first time with someone like me. Yes?

HENRY
Yes.

CHANTELLE
Take hold of my hand, Henry.

HENRY
Okay.

She takes his hand and runs it over her breast.

HENRY
Wow! That’s nice.

CHANTELLE
Come closer to the bed, Henry.

HENRY
Okay.

He does. She sits up and takes off his boxers. He lifts his head, ecstatic.

HENRY
Wow! That’s very nice.

SERIES OF SHOTS
HENRY’S BEDROOM

Henry has sex on the bed, on top of Chantelle.

Henry is blindfolded. Chantelle on top of him.

Henry sits on the side of the bed. Chantelle on top of him.

UPSTAIRS LANDING

Henry on top of Chantelle on the floor.
STAIRS/HALL

Henry chases Chantelle down the stairs, to the lounge.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Henry follows Chantelle, breathless.

HENRY
Can I... smack your bottom?

CHANTELLE
It’ll cost you a little more.

HENRY
That’s okay.

She lies on the floor. He smacks her bottom gently. Then harder. Then really hard.

CHANTELLE
Oh!

HENRY
Sorry.

CHANTELLE
Don’t say sorry. Never say sorry in sex.

He whacks her so hard that she SCREAMS.

CHANTELLE
Oh!

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

At the front door, Chantelle ties a knot in her raincoat.

CHANTELLE
I’m not just saying this for business, you understand. But I think you’d benefit from more sessions with me.

HENRY
You do?

CHANTELLE
I definitely do.

HENRY
Okay. Well. Thanks.
CHANTELLE
Bye, Henry.

HENRY
Bye, Chantelle.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - NIGHT
Mrs Brown is kneeling, weeding by torch light.

HENRY
Hi Mrs Brown.

Chantelle walks to a sports car parked outside.

MRS BROWN
Oh. Hi Henry. Getting the weeds early. Before they...
(looking at Chantelle)
...before they take a grip.

HENRY
Sure thing, Mrs Brown. You keep digging, Mrs Brown. You’re doing a really great job, Mrs Brown.
Night.

Henry closes the door, and lets out a LOUD JOYFUL SCREECH.

HENRY (O.S.)
YES YES! YES!

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT
Henry runs to the bed and jumps on it in SLOW MOTION.

INT. MARCEL’S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY
Ben sits eating waffles. Angela sits with him, wearing a bathrobe. She rubs Ben’s hair much to his irritation.

ANGELA
It’s going to be just the same as it was, except that I won’t be there, that’s all. I’ll still see you, take you places, do things with you.

BEN
You hardly ever did things with me.

ANGELA
I went to your school play.
That was three years ago.

Marcel appears, dressed in gym clothes, holding weights.

MARCEL
Ready, Ben?

BEN
Sure, Marcel.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Henry is asleep in bed. A satisfied smile.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Angela, Marcel, and Ben get out of Marcel’s car.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The DOORBELL RINGS. Henry wakes and jumps out of bed. He looks out of the window and sees Angela, Marcel and Ben walk towards the house.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Henry opens the door, tying a bathrobe.

ANGELA
You were a long time, Henry.

HENRY
Sorry, I overslept.

ANGELA
You never oversleep, Henry.

HENRY
I did. Hi Ben.

BEN
Hi Dad.

Ben edgily walks away from the group.

ANGELA
Ben, aren’t you going to give me a kiss? And thank your Mom for giving you a nice week-end?
MARCEL
That’s right.

Ben stops walking. Looks at Henry.

HENRY
Go on, Ben.

Ben reluctantly walks back. He kisses Angela.

BEN
Bye, Mom.

ANGELA
(hugging him hard)
My golden boy! I love you so much.

BEN
Mom, you’re hurting me.

Ben breaks from Angela.

BEN
Thanks for the go with the weights, Marcel.

MARCEL
That’s okay, Ben.
(flexing his muscles)
Get you big and strong like me. Full of muscle and power and spunk, ah?

ANGELA
(pushing Marcel)
Marcel!

Sorry.

MARCEL

Ben hurries up the stairs and away from things.

ANGELA
Ben told me he knew about his real Mom. Thanks for telling him, Henry.

HENRY
I should have said before.

ANGELA
He’s okay about it, Henry. Don’t blame yourself any more.

MARCEL
You can’t go back, Henry. What’s done’s done. Honesty’s the best policy. Every time.
HENRY
Yeah. Sure.

Marcel jokingly puts a hand on Henry’s throat.

MARCEL
Any news about the money, Henry?

HENRY
Yeah. You’ll have it quite soon.

Marcel releases his grip, looks at Angela.

MARCEL
That’s good, Henry.

ANGELA
Good, Henry.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING - DAY
Ben walks past Henry’s bedroom. He stops and looks inside.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY
Ben finds WHITE THONGS under the bed.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY
Henry sits at the table drinking coffee. Ben enters, his hands behind his back.

BEN
Dad...

HENRY
What Ben?

Ben holds out the thongs.

BEN
I found these under your bed.

Ben sits at the table.

BEN
Dad, are you sure you’re not both ways? You said you weren’t, and I believed you, but...

HENRY
I’m not both ways.
BEN
I mean, I’m okay now about finding out about my real Mom, and Angela going with Marcel. But I don’t want a Dad who’s both ways. I’d never live that down.

HENRY
I’m not both ways, Ben. I had a woman here.

BEN
A woman? What woman?

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

On a PC SCREEN on Henry’s desk, PHOTOS of Chantelle.

BEN
Wow! She’s so hot.

HENRY
Her name’s Chantelle.

BEN
And you went with her?

HENRY
I went with her. Yeah. Well, she came here.

Ben puts his arms around Henry’s neck.

BEN
That’s great, Dad! Really great!

Henry’s surprised by Ben’s affection.

HENRY
It is?

BEN
Sure.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Henry and Ben walk to Henry’s truck.

BEN
My Dad going with hookers, that’s really cool. The coolest thing ever. You wait till I tell my friends.
INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Ben looks proudly at Henry.

BEN
I mean, you’re my Dad, and I love you. But I never thought of you as being a real man, somehow.

HENRY
You didn’t?

BEN
No. Not really. Not a real man.

HENRY
You’ve never said that before, Ben.

BEN
No, I know. I’ve thought it though. Lots of times. My friends have said the same.

EXT. BEN’S SCHOOL - DAY

Henry’s truck pulls up outside. Ben gets out of the truck.

BEN
Bye, Dad.

HENRY
Bye, Ben.

Ben runs excitedly to TWO FRIENDS. Ben talks to them. They all look back at Henry as they walk away.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - STATIONARY - DAY

Henry reflects on what Ben said.

EXT. THE STUDIO - DAY

Henry’s truck stops outside of the Studio.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry strides purposefully towards Marcel’s office.
INT. THE STUDIO - MARCEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Angela is on the phone. Henry stares at her. Her attention is drawn away from her call because of his intense look.

ANGELA
(into phone)
Okay, fine. I’ll tell Marcel. I’m sure that’ll be okay. Bye.

Angela slowly puts the phone down and looks at Henry.

HENRY
Why didn’t you tell me you liked to be spanked?

ANGELA
(incredulous)
What did you say, Henry?

HENRY
I said why didn’t you tell me you liked to be spanked, instead of being unfaithful and letting Marcel spank you?

ANGELA
Henry, I don’t believe I’m hearing this.

HENRY
Why, Angela?

ANGELA
Because you’re not like that, Henry. It’s not in your nature. You wouldn’t do that sort of thing.

HENRY
How do you know?

ANGELA
I’ve been married to you for nine years. I think I’d know by now. Don’t you, Henry?

HENRY
You should have told me, Angela.

ANGELA
It wouldn’t have made any difference, Henry.

Angela makes for a filing cabinet, her back to him.

ANGELA
Now please, stop being silly. I have to get on.
Henry grabs her and forces her over the desk. He lifts up her skirt and smacks her backside very hard.

ANGELA
Ow! God Henry, what do you think you’re doing? Henry! Stop! Stop!

Marcel enters.

MARCEL
What the fuck’s going on?

Angela gets off the desk and adjusts her dress.

MARCEL
What the fuck’s going on?

Henry walks out of the office. Marcel looks at Angela.

ANGELA
He just came in and started spanking me.

MARCEL
Did you enjoy it?

ANGELA
(smiling)
Of course not.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry walks to JJG Enterprises. Marcel calls out.

MARCEL
What the fuck’s going on, Henry? You going off your fucking head or something?

INT. THE STUDIO- JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY

Henry enters, full of purpose, and leans over Iris’ desk. Iris touches the end of her glasses nervously.

HENRY
I worked at Horn’s Hardware, in accounts. But I was surplus to requirements. But it’s okay. I’m okay about it. I’m just fine.

He looks up at the Chinatown poster. She follows his look.
INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry leaves the office, smiling, wearing dark glasses, carrying a briefcase. He walks to the exit.

MARCEL
Henry. Wait! I want to talk to you.

HENRY
What is it, Marcel?

MARCEL
What’ve you got those glasses on for?

HENRY
I’m a private detective.

MARCEL
A what?

HENRY
I’m a private detective, Marcel.

MARCEL
(laughing)
A private detective. Crazy bastard. You’re off your head, Henry. You’ve been watching too much TV.

Henry walks away.

MARCEL
Hey, and what’s the meaning of smacking Angela’s arse? Perverted bastard! You want locking up!

EXT. HORN’S HARDWARE CAR PARK - DAY

Henry walks towards the store, wearing dark glasses.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY

Lance and Lane are playing cards. Monica sits at a PC, looking puzzled. April is behind her pointing at the screen.

APRIL
You put the order reference in there. And the customer name in there.

MONICA
I’ll never get this! Never!
INT. HORN’S HARDWARE- PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry strides towards Accounts.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY

Monica shakes her head, totally confused.

APRIL
And the customer address there. And whether the item’s going to be collected or not. You put ‘X’ for not and a ‘Y’ for yes. To be collected. Got it?

MONICA
(shaking her head)
No. No. I don’t understand.

Henry enters and approaches Monica’s desk.

HENRY
Hi, Monica.

APRIL
Hi Henry.

Henry takes out his camera.

MONICA
(looking at the screen)
Henry, I really don’t know what I’m doing. Digby, Mr Horn keeps saying I have to ‘keep at it’. But keep at what, that’s what I want to know?

HENRY
Look at me, Monica.

She does. Henry takes photographs of her.

MONICA
What are you doing, Henry?

APRIL
Henry. What are you doing here?

Henry takes her to one side.

HENRY
I’m a private detective, April. But don’t tell Monica. I want to keep it a secret.

APRIL
A private detective?
HENRY
It’s my new job. I just got it.
My first day.

APRIL
That’s sensational Henry.

Henry takes glasses out of his top pocket, puts them on, and takes them off.

APRIL
Oh Henry, I’ve got a funny sensation between my legs. What do you think that can be?

HENRY
No idea, April. Must get on.

He opens the door. April stands in his way and playfully.

APRIL
I split with Ryan. Did I tell you that? We split, Henry. Like we’re not together anymore. You could come round for a meal sometime, Henry, if you wanted to. You know where I live. I’m all on my own.

HENRY
I’ll bear that in mind, April. Bye.

He hastily leaves.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE- PASSAGeway - DAY

Digby Horn and Henry walk in opposite directions. They stop walking and stare, like gunslingers.

DIGBY
Henry, what are you doing here?

HENRY
Hi, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
And what have you got that camera for?

HENRY
Taking photographs, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
What photographs?

HENRY
In the line of duty, Mr Horn. In my new job.
DIGBY
What new job?

HENRY
How’s Mrs Horn, Mr Horn?

DIGBY
Mrs Horn’s fine, Henry. Thank you. What new job, Henry?

Monica comes rushing along the corridor, distraught.

MONICA
I don’t think I’m any good for accounts, Mr Horn. It’s all too confusing for me.

Digby puts his arms on her shoulders and walks away with her.

DIGBY
Come to my office, Monica. We can talk about it. Bye Henry.

HENRY
Bye, Mr Horn. Give Mrs Horn my best regards.

Henry walks past him. Digby turns and looks at him.

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY

Henry leans over Iris’ desk, down at the PHOTOS.

HENRY
Her name’s Monica. She works at Horn’s hardware, in accounts.

IRIS
And you think Henry, that the two of them are...

HENRY
I do. I saw a love bite on her neck, and I heard Mr Horn and Monica kissing in an aisle. And when he spoke to me he had lipstick on his face. He said it was Mrs Horn over-doing it about a birthday present he bought her. But that was a lie.

IRIS
That’s good, Henry. On your first day, too. Well done.

HENRY
Thanks, Iris.
IRIS
But it’s not enough. We have to
catch them in the act. Something
to prove that Mr Horn is having
an extra-marital relationship.

HENRY
Like having sex, and kissing, and...

IRIS
Exactly, Henry.

HENRY
Spanking?

IRIS
Quite. Spanking would be good.

She takes off and puts on her glasses.

IRIS
Spanking would be very good.

HENRY
I’ll do my best, Iris.

EXT. BEN’S SCHOOL - DAY

Ben with his TWO FRIENDS run to Henry’s truck. Ben opens
the door, and proudly shows Henry off.

BEN
This is my Dad.

FIRST BOY
Hi Mr Howe.

SECOND BOY
How many positions did you do it
in, Mr Howe?

FIRST BOY
Did she tie you to the bed and
blindfold you, Mr Howe?

SECOND BOY
How big were her tits Mr Howe?
Were they like melons?

HENRY
Get in, please, Ben.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Henry is cooking. Ben sits at the table, drinking a coke.
BEN
A private detective! Wow! What case are you on?

HENRY
I can’t tell you, Ben. I’m sworn to secrecy.

BEN
That’s great, Dad. Going with hookers, and being a private detective. Things just get better and better.

EXT. DENTAL SURGERY - CAR PARK - DAY

Henry gets out of the truck, wearing dark glasses. He strides to the entrance.

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - RECEPTION - DAY

Henry enters. He turns to the side and discreetly takes his glasses off. RACHEL(mid 20s) a big-busted blonde wearing a low-neckline dress is at reception.

RACHEL
Hello, can I help you?

Henry looks at Rachel’s exposed CLEAVAGE, as she checks out an appointments diary.

RACHEL
Henry Howe. Henry Howe. Let me see. Ah yes, here we are.

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - SURGERY - DAY

Henry’s mouth is wide open. Marty leans over him, inspecting his teeth.

MARTY
Teeth are in good shape, Henry.

Henry kind of nods. Marty keeps looking.

MARTY
Very good shape. You look after them well. Very well.

Marty releases his grip.

HENRY
Thanks Marty.
MARTY
Good man. Keep it up.

Marty goes to his files. Henry gets out of the chair.

MARTY
Everything okay with the family?

HENRY
Everything’s fine, Marty.

MARTY
Angela, Ben, both doing okay?

HENRY
Both doing fine thanks, Marty.

MARTY
Good. Good.

Marty shake’s Henry’s hand.

MARTY
See you in six, Henry.

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - RECEPTION - DAY

Rachel checks her appointments diary. Henry looks at her CLEAVAGE.

RACHEL
Let’s see if we can fit you in somewhere...August. August. August.

Marty stands at the door of his surgery.

MARTY
Okay, madam. Step this way, please.

STEFANIE (The YOUNG WOMAN at bowling) steps forward. Henry glances towards her. The door closes.

HENRY
What’s that lady’s name?

RACHEL
Mrs Stefanie Hunter. Why?

HENRY
No reason.

RACHEL
What about August 25?

HENRY
August 25 is fine, Rachel.
RACHEL
Four pm, Henry?

HENRY
Four pm’s fine, Rachel.

Rachel hands him a card. Henry glances towards the door. Sound of laughter. Henry walks to the door to leave. Rachel opens the door for him.

RACHEL
Locking the door. Lunch time. We all have to have our sustenance.

HENRY
Sure.

EXT. DENTAL SURGERY - DAY

At the back of the building, Henry comes across a small window to the surgery. He sees Marty embracing Stefanie. Henry takes photos of them. Rachel enters the room. The two women begin to strip. Henry continues taking photographs of them in imposing positions.

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY

Henry leans over Iris’ desk and shows her the PHOTOS.

HENRY
Conclusive evidence that Marty and Rachel, his receptionist, and Mrs Stefanie Hunter are...doing it.

IRIS
I’m just so impressed. You’re a natural.

HENRY
Thanks.

The Fat Man enters.

FAT MAN
There’s no shit paper in the can again lady. What kind of fucking place is this?

They look at him, confused.

FAT MAN
Sorry, lady. Wrong place.

The Fat man leaves.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ben and Henry eat chicken wings. A LETTER on the table.

INT. HAZEL’S APARTMENT - LOUNGE - DAY

Hazel, wearing a robe, sits at a table, writing a letter.

HAZEL (V.O.)
Hi Henry. Just thought I’d write to say it was great to meet you and Ben.

CUT BETWEEN HENRY AND HAZEL.

HENRY’S KITCHEN

Henry and Ben eating.

HAZEL (V.O.)
He’s a lovely young man. You must be very proud of him. I know I would be if I were his Mom.

HAZEL’S LOUNGE

Hazel writes.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I really do wish I’d broken it slowly. Written to you. Not just turned up.

HENRY’S KITCHEN

Henry and Ben eat ice creams.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I could tell you were upset, from the way you reacted. It must have brought back so many memories of Norma.

HAZEL’S LOUNGE

Hazel writes the letter. HUDSON(30s) dark-haired, athletic, enters wearing a robe. He kisses her neck and puts his arms around her.

HAZEL (V.O.)
When I arrived back, Hudson was waiting for me. He’s prepared to give up living in LA, to move back to New York with me.
A RESTAURANT

Hudson and Hazel eating.

HAZEL (V.O.)
He’s had an offer to make documentaries, in New York. It’s not being the independent filmmaker he wants to be, but he’s prepared to do it, to be with me.

HENRY’S KITCHEN

Ben puts the dishes in the sink.

HAZEL (V.O.)
He says he was only unfaithful to me once. And I believe him. Those were the issues I didn’t tell you about, Henry.

A RESTAURANT

Hazel and Hudson raise wine glasses to toast.

HENRY’S KITCHEN

Henry puts clothes in his washing machine.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I don’t know why I’m telling you this. We’ve only met once, but I feel I can, somehow. As if I’ve known you for a long time.

HAZEL’S BATHROOM

Hazel in the bath. Hudson is rubbing soap all over her.

HAZEL (V.O.)
Oh well, better go. Hudson’s taking me to a show on Broadway.

HAZEL’S BEDROOM

Hazel is looking in the mirror, and wears a classic black cocktail dress. She looks at Hudson via the mirror. He kisses her on the neck.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I love going to the theatre. I love the dressing up bit. Trying to look your best.

A THEATRE

Hudson and Hazel sit together, holding hands.
HAZEL (V.O.)
I’m prepared to give Hudson a second chance. I do think you have to give people a second chance. Don’t you, Henry?

HAZEL’S BEDROOM
Hudson and Hazel making love.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I really do love Hudson very much, Henry.

END CUT BETWEEN HAZEL AND HENRY.

HENRY’S HOUSE – KITCHEN – NIGHT
Henry irons Ben’s school things.

HAZEL (V.O.)
Sorry for writing and not ringing, Henry. I just like writing letters. And anyway, letters you can keep.

Ben comes up behind him wearing pyjamas.

BEN
Night, Dad.

HENRY
Night, Ben.

Ben kisses Henry.

BEN
You’re the best Dad in the world. And you are a real man. Even my friends think so.

HENRY
Thanks, Ben.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE – STUDY – NIGHT
Henry sits at his desk. He takes a deep breath, before taking out newspaper cuttings and documents from a drawer.


A PHOTO: Henry stands in the centre of a team of Home Depot store employees.

APPLAUSE over as Henry looks at the cuttings.
INT. A CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS AGO

A large gathering of people. HENRY walks on the stage. He shakes hands with a HOME DEPOT EXECUTIVE.

HOME DEPOT EXECUTIVE
Henry Howe, the youngest Home Depot Manager, and the most successful in the company’s history. Many congratulations.

HENRY
Thank you, sir.

HOME DEPOT EXECUTIVE
Henry, what do you put your success down to? Your inspiration?

He looks at NORMA in the audience.

HENRY
My wife, Norma. I’d be lost without her.

LOUD CHEERING and APPLAUSE.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - STUDY (CONT’D) - NIGHT

Henry smiles as he reflects. His cell phone rings.

HENRY
(onto phone)
Hello. Henry Howe.

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

April in a bath full of bubbles, using her cell.

APRIL
(onto phone)
I’m in the bath, Henry.

INTERCUT

APRIL
I’m naked in the bath, underneath a sea of tiny bubbles, popping and bursting everywhere around me.

HENRY
That’s good, April.

APRIL
You could come round and burst some if you want, Henry?
HENRY
No, thank you, April. It’s late, and I’ve got Ben and...

APRIL
Okay. Well, come round tomorrow for lunch, Henry. It’s my day off. I’ll make you some Canadian cheddar cheese sandwiches.

EXT. A LARGE HOME DEPOT STORE - CAR PARK - DAY
Henry pulls up in his truck.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - STATIONARY - DAY
Henry looks towards the store. The faint SOUND of VOICES. ‘Mr Howe, what shall I do, Mr Howe?’ ‘Mr Howe, the Women’s toilet’s not working. What shall I do, Mr Howe?’ etc, etc.

EXT. A LARGE HOME DEPOT STORE - CAR PARK - DAY
Henry drives off.

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT - HALL - DAY
April opens the door to Henry. April wears a bathrobe, her hair is wet, she holds a towel.

APRIL
Hi Henry.

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT - LOUNGE - DAY
April leads Henry through to the lounge. She dries her hair.

APRIL
I just had a shower, Henry.

HENRY
Yeah, I can see, April.

APRIL
I had a shower ’cause I wanted to be clean. And fresh. And new. Clean and fresh and new. For you. That rhymes, Henry.
HENRY
Sure does, April.

She kisses him on the lips briefly, and steps right back.

APRIL
I’ve always wanted to do that.

HENRY
You have?

APRIL
Ever since I joined accounts, three years ago. I’ve always wanted to...

She steps forward and does it again.

APRIL
...do that.

HENRY
Okay.

APRIL
I just did it again. How about that?

HENRY
That’s okay, April.

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT – KITCHEN – DAY

The table is amass with sandwiches and pickles.

APRIL
I didn’t know what pickles you liked in your Canadian cheddar sandwiches, so I bought all they had in the store.

HENRY
There’s a lot of sandwiches, April.

APRIL
I know, but I didn’t want you to go short, Henry. (with sexual intent) I wanted you to be full right up, and not be hungry when you left. I wanted to fill you up, Henry. So you’re overflowing.

Henry sits at the table, eating and drinking beer.

APRIL
Henry, take a guess what I’ve got on under this robe?
She opens it, revealing her naked. She closes the robe again.

    APRIL
    Have a guess. Go on, Henry. What do you think?

Henry’s too busy eating. April opens her robe, and closes it again. She almost leans against him.

    APRIL
    Henry, I want you to guess.

She opens the robe wide and keeps it open.

    HENRY
    This is some of the best Canadian cheddar I’ve ever tasted, April.

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY
Henry on top of April, having sex, April’s robe opened wide.

    APRIL
    Oh Henry! Oh Henry! Oh Henry!

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT - HALL - DAY
April slaps a wet kiss on Henry as he leaves.

    APRIL
    Oh Henry. You’re wonderful!

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - STATIONARY - DAY
Henry looks sideways towards April’s apartment block.

INT. APRIL’S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY
April inspects her red smacked arse in a wall mirror.

    APRIL
    Oh Henry. Look what you’ve done to me! You’re so bad!

EXT. A LARGE HOME DEPOT STORE - CAR PARK - DAY
Henry’s truck pulls up in the car park.
INT. HOME DEPOT STORE - DAY

Henry stands close to the check-outs, in the body of the store. People crash into each other, it’s so full.

INT. HOME DEPOT - OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS AGO

Henry sits behind a large desk, wearing a suit. EMPLOYEES line up to see him.

INT. HOME DEPOT STORE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Henry walks around the Store, smiling at the CHECK-OUT GIRLS, and the intense activity.

From a balcony, Henry looks at the sea of people below.

INT. HOME DEPOT STORE - DAY

Henry stands close to the check-outs, as before.

VALERIE (V.O.)

Mr Howe.

VALERIE (40s) a short squat lady packing shelves, sees him.

VALERIE

Mr Howe.

He doesn’t hear her. She walks up to him.

VALERIE

Mr Howe. Valerie Thomson... Well, Valerie Thomson that was, before I married Lucas. Valerie Shaw now.

Henry looks at her vacantly

VALERIE

Don’t say you don’t remember me, Mr Howe?

HENRY

I do, Valerie.

VALERIE

You gave me a job, here, Mr Howe. Nobody else would employ me, because of the alcohol thing, and the drugs. But you, you Mr Howe, you gave me a chance. You trusted in me, Mr Howe.

(MORE)
VALERIE (CONT’D)
And I’ve never looked back. I married Lucas. We have a son called Richard. And we’re so happy, Mr Howe.

HENRY
I’m glad, Valerie.

VALERIE
I’ll always remember your words, Mr Howe. ‘You’ve got to give people a chance.’ That’s what you said. I wrote a little note and put it on the wall. And whenever I get angry or upset with other people, I look at it, and think of what you said.

HENRY
That’s good, Valerie.

She hugs him strongly.

VALERIE
It’s great to see you, Mr Howe.

HENRY
It’s great to see you, Valerie.

A STORE MANAGER with TWO ASSISTANT MANAGERS walk close by.

VALERIE
That’s Mr Stiles. He took over from you. He’s not very nice. He doesn’t give people a chance. If they do something wrong, anything, he sacks them.

(beat)
Why did you leave, Mr Howe?

HENRY
It’s a long story, Valerie

Henry’s reflective, drowned in a sea of people and faces and noise. But his light shines through.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry storms towards ‘JJG Enterprises’. Marcel walks towards him.

MARCEL
Henry, I want to talk to you.

Henry ignores him and enters ‘JJG Enterprises’.
INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY

Iris puts the phone down.

IRIS
Henry, I thought you’d be on the case?

Henry sits. And in her face.

HENRY
Iris, ever since my wife Norma died, I’ve been cromotose.

IRIS
Cromotose. Don’t you mean...

HENRY
I mean cromotose, Iris.

IRIS
If I think you mean what you think you mean, you mean comatose?

HENRY
Cromotose, comatose, it doesn’t matter. I’ve been dead, Iris. Dead. When Norma died, I died. I realise that now. I died with her, Iris.

IRIS
You did?

HENRY
Yes, I did. But it’s not what she’d want.

IRIS
No?

HENRY
No. She’d want me to be alive. Be someone for me and for Ben. And she’s right. She’s absolutely right.

IRIS
That’s wonderful, Henry. But I’m not sure that...

HENRY
I went into Home Depot today. The biggest store in the area. Ten years ago I was the Manager. In charge of two hundred people. I bossed it. I ran it. Successfully ran it for three years.

(MORE)
HENRY (CONT’D)
Norma died. And I died. I gave up living. I became cromoti...I died. I just died. But I’m on my way back.

IRIS
You are?

HENRY
Yes I are. I mean I am. Bye Iris.

He opens the door.

IRIS
Henry, where are you going?

She takes off and puts on her glasses.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY
Henry storms towards the exit. Iris leans out of her office.

IRIS
Henry! Wait!

INT. THE STUDIO - JG ENTERPRISES - DAY
Iris takes a PHOTO out of her desk and looks at it.

INSERT PHOTO: Two people, man and woman, in their thirties holding hands walking towards the Motel.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - DIGBY HORN’S OFFICE - DAY
Digby is writing. Henry opens the door wide and enters.

DIGBY
Henry, what are you doing here?

Henry puts the PHOTOS of Monica on his desk.

HENRY
Your wife suspects you’re having an affair, Mr Horn. And whilst I have no hard evidence to prove it yet, I know, and you know, Mr Horn, that your wife’s suspicions are well founded. And it is my duty as a private detective...
DIGBY
Sit down, Henry, please, you’re making me nervous.

Henry sits.

DIGBY
This is your new job, Henry?

HENRY
Yes Mr Horn, it is.

DIGBY
Myra’s been to a detective agency?

HENRY
Yes, Mr Horn, she has.
(continuing)
And it is my duty as a private detective.

DIGBY
To find such hard evidence, Henry?

HENRY
Exactly Mr Horn. And believe me, I will leave no stone unturned until I find that hard evidence, where I see you, witness you having sex.

DIGBY
You won’t?

HENRY
No, I won’t. However, I’m going to give you a chance, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
What sort of chance, Henry?

HENRY
I want you to promise to be faithful and loyal to Mrs Horn. And the case will be closed.

DIGBY
That’s very generous of you, Henry.

Digby strokes his moustache, thoughtfully.

DIGBY
Very generous.

HENRY
I know it is, Mr Horn.

DIGBY
Very, very generous, Henry
HENRY
I know.

DIGBY
But...

HENRY
But what, Mr Horn?

DIGBY
I do love Myra very much, Henry. We’ve been married for twenty five years. And it would be sad if we, if we broke up. But...

HENRY
But what, Mr Horn?

DIGBY
The problem, is, Henry, I like younger women. I can’t help it. It’s not my fault. I didn’t ask to be attracted to younger women, Henry. But the fact is, I just am.

Henry picks up the photos.

HENRY
Your decision. Bye, Mr Horn.

Henry stands and walks to the door.

DIGBY
Henry. Wait!

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry smiles as he walks away. He puts his dark glasses on and CRASHES into a wall.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - DIGBY HORN’S OFFICE - DAY

Digby is on the phone, looking at the torn up PHOTOS.

DIGBY
(onto phone)
Hello. I wonder if I could order a large bunch of roses please. A mixture of colours.

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - RECEPTION - DAY

Henry storms in and marches straight to Marty’s surgery.
RACHEL
Excuse me, you can’t...

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - SURGERY - DAY

Henry throws back the door, and takes off his glasses. Mrs Brown happens to be in the chair, her mouth wide open.

MARTY
Henry, what are you doing here?

MRS BROWN
OH MY GOD! HE’S GOT A GUN!

Rachel comes up behind Henry.

RACHEL
I told him that you were....

Henry shuts the door in Rachel’s face, facing ahead. Mrs Brown gets up from the seat and runs towards the door.

MRS BROWN
KEEP HIM AWAY FROM ME! KEEP HIM AWAY!

She leaves.

HENRY
I need to speak to you, Marty.
In private.

Rachel enters.

RACHEL
What shall I do, call the police?

Marty’s the epitome of cool.

MARTY
No. No Rachel. Henry wants a chat, that’s all. Go back to the front desk, please.

Rachel hovers.

MARTY
It’s okay, Rachel.

She reluctantly leaves.

HENRY
I’m a private detective, Marty.
I changed jobs.
MARTY
Did you now? Well, it’s certainly a change from accounts in Horn’s Hardware, Henry.

HENRY
Your wife Rosa, suspects you are having an affair. And it is my job, Marty, as a private detective, to find things out.

Henry takes out PHOTOS, holds them up one by one, transfers them from one hand to the other, behind his back.

HENRY
Photos of you and Rachel, and Mrs Stefanie Hunter.

MARTY
I’m impressed, Henry.

Marty picks up the phone.

MARTY
(into phone)
Coffees, Rachel.
(to Henry)
Coffee Henry?

Henry shakes his head.

MARTY
(into phone)
Just one coffee...No, don’t worry. Everything’s okay.

Marty closes out the call.

MARTY
I want to tell you something, Henry. In confidence.

Marty puts his hand around Henry’s shoulder.

MARTY
Listen Henry.

HENRY
What Marty?

MARTY
My wife Rosa and I have not had sex for ten years. She hates sex, Henry. I love it.

HENRY
She does?
MARTY
Yes, she does, Henry.

HENRY
Spanking, too?

MARTY
What?

HENRY
Nothing.

INT. ROSA’S CAR - STATIONARY- DAY - FLASHBACK
Elaine and Rosa kiss hard on the lips.

MARTY (V.O.)
All she does, Henry, is paint. She paints one room. A month later she paints it again, in a different colour.

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - SURGERY(CONT’D) - DAY
Marty with his arms around Henry’s shoulder still.

MARTY
Sometimes the same colour. Sometimes the same room. Painting, painting, painting. That’s all she does.

HENRY
But no sex?

MARTY
No sex, Henry. I love sex. I can’t get enough of it. And as for the other women, I have no intention of stopping.

HENRY
You don’t?

MARTY
No Henry, I don’t. In fact I plan to become even more adventurous.

HENRY
You mean...

Marty goes to a drawer and takes out a cheque book.
MARTY

Henry turns around. Marty writes a cheque on his back.

MARTY
I’m going to give you this cheque. For those photos. And your word.

HENRY
You’re trying to blackmail me?

MARTY
Call it what you like, Henry.

Marty turns Henry around, and gives him a cheque.

HENRY
The cheque’s for $10,000!

MARTY
It doesn’t take a private detective to work that one out, Henry.

HENRY
You’re giving me $10,000 to keep quiet?

MARTY
And free dental treatment for you and your family for life.

Henry thrusts out a hand to shake.

HENRY
Okay. It’s a deal.

MARTY
Henry, the photos.

Henry hands him the photos. Henry goes to the door. Marty pulls the shutters down over the window.

MARTY
Bye, Henry. See you in six. Regards to Angela and Ben.

INT. DENTAL SURGERY - RECEPTION - DAY

Henry leaves the surgery, looking at the cheque.
MARTY
Bye, Henry.
(to Rachel)
Where’s Mrs Brown, Rachel?

Mrs Brown’s head appears from below the level of reception, next to a potted plant. She removes a DEAD LEAF.

MARTY
When you’re ready, Mrs Brown.

EXT. A MOTEL - DAY

ROBERT(late 30s) with SHELLEY(late 30s) hold hands and walk to the entrance. (The couple in the photo)

Iris pulls up in her car close by.

INT. IRIS’ CAR - STATIONARY - DAY

Iris watches Robert and Shelley walk to the entrance.

INT. THE STUDIO - J J G ENTERPRISES - DAY

Iris sits looking at PHOTOS of Shelley and Robert together. She slides the photos to one side as Henry enters.

IRIS
Henry!

Henry puts the dark glasses, the camera and the cheque on Iris’ desk.

HENRY
Marty James gave me a cheque to keep quiet. And Digby Horn said he was giving up having affairs and stay faithful to Myra. The cases are closed. I’ve countersigned the cheque.

Iris looks at the cheque.

IRIS
$10,000?

Henry walks to the door, to leave. Iris stands.

IRIS
Henry. Wait! You can’t just leave.
HENRY
You have to give people a chance. That’s what Norma said. And she’s right. Bye Iris.

Henry leaves. Iris looks lost.

INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY
Henry walks towards Marcel’s studio. Marcel is teaching a WOMAN to dance. Henry pushes open the swing doors.

INT. THE STUDIO - DANCE STUDIO - DAY
Henry holds up a cheque.

HENRY
Marcel. Is this what you wanted?

Marcel excuses himself to the Woman and walks to Henry.

MARCEL
(smiling)
Where’s the dark glasses, Henry?

Marcel takes the cheque.

MARCEL
Thanks, Henry.

HENRY
(formally)
I’ll get in touch with a lawyer. Have him draw papers up for Angela to sign the house over to me. The divorce can follow later. I want a receipt now, Marcel. If you don’t mind.

MARCEL
Sure, Henry.

INT. THE STUDIO - MARCEL’S OFFICE - DAY
Marcel hands Henry a receipt. Henry puts out a hand to shake.

HENRY
Bye, Marcel.

Henry makes for the door.
MARCEL
Really sorry about all this shit, Henry. You know, fucking Angela for...

HENRY
Five years?

MARCEL
Yeah. Sorry.

Henry opens the door.

MARCEL
If ever you want some Salsa lessons, they’re absolutely free Henry. Be a pleasure to teach you.

Henry looks at him.

MARCEL
I don’t know what it is about you Henry, but you’re different. Angela did you a favour.

HENRY
I didn’t see it at the time, Marcel. But yes, you’re right, she did. Bye Marcel.

MARCEL
Henry.

HENRY
Marcel?

MARCEL
Would you be into a three-some?

Henry gives Marcel a cold look of contempt and leaves.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE – DAY

Ben and Henry get out of the truck and walk to the house.

BEN
So what are you going to do, Dad, if you’re gonna stop being a private detective?

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE – HENRY’S OFFICE – DAY

Henry sits behind the desk, on the phone.
HENRY
(into phone)
I suggest we revise the hours of
the working week, Mr Horn... Digby.
Later on Fridays and Saturdays.
Earlier Mondays through
Wednesdays. And close on Sundays.

Henry looks at a series of GRAPHS.

HENRY
The analysis I’ve undertaken,
based on the last five years
accounts suggests the store would
be much more profitable by doing
what I propose, Mr Horn. Digby.

Henry lowers the phone. Looks ahead, smiling proudly.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - STORE - DAY

Henry walks around. Monica’s back at the check-out. A
CUSTOMER passes through.

MONICA
Hi Mr Howe.

HENRY
Monica.

MONICA
I’m so much happier back at
checkout, Mr Howe.

HENRY
Call me Henry, please. I’m glad,
Monica.

MONICA
Henry. There’s some things in
life you’re not cut out for. And
me being in accounts is one of them.

HENRY
I know exactly where you’re
coming from, Monica.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - WOMEN’S TOILET - DAY

A cubicle. Elaine and Rosa are kissing.
INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Henry walks past the Women’s toilet. Elaine and Rosa appear.

ROSA
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Rosa.

Elaine looks at him, embarrassed, and rushes off. Henry watches her leave. Turns to Rosa.

HENRY
Rosa, can you please not do that?

ROSA
What, Henry?

HENRY
Have sex in the women’s toilet of the store.

ROSA
How did you know we...
(backing down)
Okay Henry.

HENRY
If it happens again, I’ll have to officially warn Elaine. And I don’t want to do that, Rosa. Do it at some other store. But not at my store.

ROSA
Your store, Henry?

HENRY
My store, Rosa. I’m in charge here.

Henry walks away, his head held high.

INT. HORN’S HARDWARE - ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY

Henry sees Lance and Lane playing cards. Henry stands over them. He takes hold of the cards and throws them in the air.

HENRY
Back to work please.

MOMENTS LATER

Henry opens the door to the corridor. April’s in his face.
APRIL
Oh Henry, please let me make you some Canadian cheddar cheese sandwiches. I want to spread the butter so thickly and...

HENRY
Back to work, please, April.

Henry leaves. April swoons.

CUT BETWEEN HENRY AND HAZEL.

HENRY’S LOUNGE

Henry sits at a table writing a letter.

HENRY (V.O.)
Dear Hazel. Sorry it’s taken me so long to write a letter. It’s been three months since you were here. And lots of things have happened.

HORN’S HARDWARE STORE

Henry walks around the busy store.

HENRY (V.O.)
I’ve got a job back at Horn’s Hardware. But not as an accounts clerk. As the Manager.

Franklin and Cheryl look at the baby section, beds and prams, etc. Henry stops and chats to them. She points to her tummy. Franklin puts his hand on it.

Roland and Fatima look at the bed sections.

Franklin and Cheryl turn away from the children’s section and see Roland and Fatima. They all smile at each other courteously, and go on their way.

HAZEL’S LOUNGE

Hazel sits at a table, reading.

BEN’S BEDROOM

A PHOTO of Ben and Hazel on the wall. Ben looks at it.

HENRY (V.O.)
Ben keeps saying we should visit you. But I’ve been so busy.
A SPORTS COMPLEX

Marcel is teaching a YOUNG WOMAN exercises on a machine, smiling at her large breasts.

Angela, dressed in a track-suit, greets Ben. Henry waves to Marcel. Marcel waves back.

HENRY (V.O)
Angela and Marcel have given up teaching Salsa, and opened a gymnasium. They both seem happy.

A LAWYER’S

Marcel and Angela, and Henry, sit in front of a LAWYER. Angela signs papers.

HENRY (V.O.)
Angela signed the house over to me. And we’re well on with the divorce proceedings.

Marcel shakes hands with Henry. Angela shakes hands with Henry and kisses him.

HENRY’S DRIVE

Henry walks to his new truck. Ben carries a sports bag.

HENRY (V.O.)
Things are pretty much as they were before. Except they’re different. Because I’m different.

Franklin gets in his range Rover. Cheryl, at the door, wearing a bathrobe, and bigger by the day, waves to him.

Henry sees them, and waves to them. They wave back.

HENRY (V.O.)
I don’t know if you saw it on the news. But Rosa James, a neighbour of mine, won the lottery. A hundred million dollars.

DENTAL SURGERY

Rachel looks up at a TV SCREEN.

ON TV: Rosa stands at the door of her house, holding up a cheque, waving it to REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS who surround her.

Elaine runs forward and hugs her. They kiss openly on the lips.

Rosa and Elaine carry cases and walk to a waiting yellow taxi. Reporters and Photographers hound them, as they kiss.
Someone takes their cases so they can carry on kissing.
Right in the camera.

    ROSA
    FUCK YOU, MARTY!

Rachel turns off the TV, and looks towards Marty, who gives her a nod. She starts to strip off as she walks to the surgery.

HORN’S HARDWARE HENRY’S OFFICE
Henry walks proudly into his office, and sits.

    HENRY (V.O.)
    What you said, how you felt something was missing in your life. A void. And how, when you found out Norma was your identical twin, it all fitted somehow.

HAZEL’S LOUNGE
Hazel smiles as she reads the letter.

CEMETERY
Henry stands in front of Norma’s grave. Henry puts RED and WHITE ROSES on the grave.

    HENRY (V.O.)
    Well, I felt the same, about seeing you. As if Norma was alive through you. And her voice, I hear her voice again. All the time.

HAZEL’S LOUNGE
Hazel reads the letter.

    HENRY (V.O.)
    I think I’ve been in denial, Hazel. I think I’ve been living in the past ever since she died. Seeing you changed that.

HENRY’S BEDROOM
Henry in front of a mirror wearing a suit, he checks his tie.

    HENRY (V.O.)
    Hope you can read my handwriting. It’s a long time since I’ve written letters by hand. Not since Norma was alive. And I wrote love letters to her.
END CUT BETWEEN HAZEL AND HENRY.

EXT. DIGBY HORN’S HOUSE- REAR GARDEN - DAY

A large gathering of people spread out on the lawn, in groups, chatting, drinking. Henry stands alone. Myra and Digby approach Henry.

DIGBY
Henry, have you met my wife Myra?

MYRA
I think we met once. At the store.

HENRY
You’re right. We did.

Digby puts his arms around Henry.

DIGBY
Henry’s turned the fortunes of the store round, Myra. Best sales figures we’ve had for years. Profits 20% up on last year.

MYRA
That’s very good, Henry. Well done.

DIGBY
He virtually runs it for me now. Single-handed.

MYRA
And I get to see more of my husband. He was always working so late at that store. At one point I thought he was having an affair. Didn’t I, dear?

DIGBY
Yes, you did. As if I’d be unfaithful to you, Myra.

MYRA
As if. Excuse me, dear. There’s someone I want to speak to.

DIGBY
Of course, Myra.

Myra kisses him and leaves.

DIGBY
Thanks, Henry. For everything.

HENRY
No problem, Digby.
Digby looks towards Myra as she joins a group of people.

DIGBY
I never realised what a horny woman Myra Horn was, Henry. I'm more exhausted now than when I was doing it with Monica.

HENRY
Horny by name, horny by nature, ah, Digby.

DIGBY
Yes. That's right, Henry. I like that. Horny by name, horny by nature. Yes. Very good.

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY
Iris empties the contents of her desk.

EXT. DIGBY HORN’S HOUSE - REAR GARDEN (CONTD) - DAY
Digby and Henry.

DIGBY
(looking around)
Did you bring your son, Henry?

HENRY
Yes. No idea where he is, though.

Chantelle stands on her own, away from other people. Ben approaches her.

BEN
Excuse me. Aren't you Chantelle?

CHANTELLE
Yes. How did you know?

BEN
I saw your web page. My Dad showed me it.

CHANTELLE
Your Dad?

Ben looks towards Henry, speaking to Digby.

CHANTELLE
Henry’s your Dad?
BEN
Yes, he is.
(profoundly)
I don’t know what you did with him, but he’s different. And if anybody ever tries to put me off going with hookers, when I’m older, I’ll tell them about my Dad, and how different he is since he went with you.

CHANTELLE
Thanks. That’s quite a compliment.

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES(CONTD) - DAY
Iris removes the ‘JJG Enterprises’ sign from the door.

EXT. DIGBY HORN’S HOUSE - REAR GARDEN(CONTD) - DAY
Henry stands on his own drinking a beer. April walks to Henry, with her boyfriend RYAN(30s) scruffy and unshaven.

APRIL
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi April.

APRIL
This is Ryan. You met before.

RYAN
I remember you Henry. Yeah. You got gas from the gas station I work at, last week. I just had a dump, and I saw your truck move away from the pump.
(laughing)

HENRY
Very good, Ryan.

APRIL
Ryan and I are back together, Henry. We had our problems, but we, we got over them. Didn’t we Ryan?
RYAN
What? Just grab myself another beer. You want one, Henry?

HENRY
No, I’m fine, with this one.

Ryan moves away. April looks in Ryan’s direction. Ryan pinches a WOMAN’s backside and disappears into the crowd. April moves closer to Henry.

APRIL
You could come round when Ryan goes fishing, Henry.

HENRY
No thanks, April.

APRIL
Ryan wouldn’t have to find out. We can keep it a secret.

HENRY
No. That would be cheating, April.

Henry sees Chantelle.

HENRY
Excuse me, there’s someone I want to...

Henry approaches Chantelle.

HENRY
Chantelle.

Chantelle kisses him on the cheeks.

CHANTELLE
Henry, good to see you. How are you?

HENRY
Fine, Chantelle. What are you doing here?

CHANTELLE
Networking, Henry.

HENRY
Networking? You mean...

CHANTELLE
There’s someone here who wants my services, Henry. Take a guess who it is?

Henry scans the room. He looks towards Digby and Myra, talking to friends. Lane and Lance are talking together and look towards Chantelle.
HENRY
I have no idea.

CHANTELLE
Lovely to see you, Henry. You look very well. Brighter. More alive.

HENRY
Thanks, Chantelle. I feel more alive.

She twiddles with his tie.

CHANTELLE
My glass is empty, Henry. I need a refill. Excuse me.

She kisses him and leaves. Ben comes up to Henry, looking towards Chantelle as she takes a glass of wine from a Waiter.

BEN
She’s so hot. I wonder what the minimum age for going with her is?

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES (CONTD) - DAY
With a tear in her eye, Iris takes down the Chinatown poster.

EXT. DIGBY HORN’S HOUSE - REAR GARDEN (CONTD) - DAY
GUESTS gather and focus on Digby who stands on the porch, raising a glass.

DIGBY
I want you all to raise your glasses to one man. A man who I stupidly said was ‘surplus to requirements’ once. A man who I could not do without. A man who has made me open my eyes, and see things I never saw before.

He pulls Myra forward, and hugs her.

DIGBY
A toast to Henry Howe. The Manager of Horn’s Hardware. To Henry Howe.

Guests drink and applaud.

ALL
To Henry Howe.
BEN
Well done, Dad. I’m proud of you.

HENRY
Thanks Ben.

EXT. A HIGH ROAD - DAY
Henry drives his truck.

BEN (V.O.)
Are you going with Chantelle again, Dad?

HENRY (V.O.)
I don’t know, Ben.

BEN (V.O.)
You’ve got to have sex with someone.

BY THE STUDIO
Iris loads boxes and crates in the rear of her estate car.

INT. HENRY’S TRUCK - MOVING - DAY
Henry sees Iris loading her car.

EXT. THE STUDIO - DAY
Henry stops his truck in front of Iris’ car.

BEN (V.O.)
Why are we stopping, Dad?

Henry gets out of his truck. Iris walks to the Studio.

HENRY
Iris!

Iris stops. Very nervous. Henry approaches her.

HENRY
Iris, what are you doing?

Ben gets out of the truck.

BEN
Dad, I want a pee. Desperately.

IRIS
He can have a pee in the studio, if he wants.
INT. THE STUDIO - PASSAGEWAY - DAY
Ben runs like crazy down the passageway, and out of sight.

INT. THE STUDIO - JJG ENTERPRISES - DAY
Henry watches Iris roll the Chinatown poster up.

HENRY
Why Iris?

IRIS
You look very smart, Henry. And handsome. Where have you been, somewhere special?

HENRY
To a garden party...Iris, why are you shutting down the business?

Ben quickly arrives.

BEN
I’ve had a pee, Dad. We can go now.

HENRY
(looking at Iris)
Wait in the car, Ben.

Ben looks confused. But goes along with it.

BEN
Okay Dad.

Ben leaves.

HENRY
Well, Iris?

INT. A RESTAURANT - NIGHT
Henry sits with Iris. Soft music plays. It’s a cool place.

IRIS
I was married once, to a man called Robert. I loved him very much. More than I thought I could love anybody. He was unfaithful to me.

HENRY
I’m sorry.

IRIS
We divorced. He married her.
EXT. A MOTEL - DAY - FLASHBACK

Robert and Shelley hold hands and walk to the entrance.

IRIS (V.O.)
Robert and his wife run this Motel. Out of town.

INT. IRIS’ CAR - MOVING - DAY - FLASHBACK

Robert and Shelley enter the Motel.

IRIS (V.O.)
I see them on the way to work every day.

INT. A RESTAURANT(CONT’D) - NIGHT

IRIS
Robert wrote to me for five years, asking for my forgiveness, saying how sorry he was things had turned out the way they had.

HENRY
Is that why you started a private investigation agency?

IRIS
I think it had something to do with it, yes. I couldn’t do it, Henry. Forgive him. Until I thought about what you said.

The tension on Iris’ face goes. She smiles, relaxes.

IRIS
I’m okay about it now. I’m really okay about it.

HENRY
I’m glad.

IRIS
It’s time to move on.

EXT. A MOTEL - DAY - FLASHBACK

Robert and Shelley walk to the entrance.

IRIS
Robert!
Robert turns. Iris walks slowly to him. She shakes Shelley’s hand, and talks to Robert. He puts his arms around Iris and hugs him.

INT. A RESTAURANT(CONT’D) - NIGHT

Iris smiles at Henry.

IRIS
Thanks for that, Henry. You helped open my eyes.

CAPTION - ‘6 MONTHS LATER’

EXT. HENRY’S ROAD - DAY

Franklin and Cheryl walk away from their house with THOMAS, their new baby boy, in a pram. Henry is mowing his lawn.

CHERYL
Hi Henry.

FRANKLIN
Hi Henry.

Henry turns his mower off.

HENRY
Hi Cheryl. Hi Franklin.

FRANKLIN
I’m a proud man, Henry.

Franklin takes baby Thomas out of his pram.

FRANKLIN
Thomas Roland Brooks. Some name, ah Henry?

HENRY
Some name indeed, Franklin.

FRANKLIN
Looks the image of his Father, don’t you think?

Henry casts a look at Cheryl, who smiles tight-mouthed.

HENRY
Yes, he does, Franklin. The image of you.

Cheryl takes baby Thomas and puts him back in the pram.
CHERYL
Come on, dear, Henry wants to get on with his lawn.

FRANKLIN
Bye Henry.

CHERYL
Bye Henry.

HENRY
Bye, Cheryl. Franklin.

Franklin turns back to Henry.

FRANKLIN
Oh Henry, if ever you want a loan, you just have to say the word.

HENRY
Thanks Franklin.

FRANKLIN
Manager at Horn’s hardware. I’ve heard all about you, Henry. Well done. Good man.

LATER
Henry weeds his borders. TWO BLONDES (20s) get out of a car and walk towards Marty, in the garden.

MARTY
Hi Henry.

HENRY
Hi Marty.

Marty gives Henry the thumbs up, as the party disappear in Marty’s house.

CUT BETWEEN HAZEL AND HENRY

HENRY’S KITCHEN
Henry sits reading a letter.

HAZEL’S LOUNGE
Hazel sits writing.

HAZEL(V.O.)
Dear Henry. Thanks for your letter. It’s great to hear things are going so well for you. I’m so pleased. You deserve it.
A NEW YORK PARK

Hudson runs in shorts and T-Shirt. LORNA (20s) appears from a clump of trees and joins him. They kiss on the run.

Hazel comes out from behind a tree and sees them.

HAZEL (V.O.)
My news is not so good. Hudson’s involved with another woman.

HENRY’S KITCHEN

Henry sits reading the letter. Hr frowns.

HAZEL (V.O.)
He’s been distant for several weeks now. I recognised the signs.

A NEW YORK PARK

Hudson and Lorna walk holding hands.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I feel very upset. And badly let down.

HENRY’S KITCHEN

Henry reads.

INT. A THEATRE

Dressed casually, Hazel sits on her own, watching a play.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I loved him so much, Henry. And still do.

A RESTAURANT

Hudson raises his glass, and toasts Hazel.

HAZEL (V.O.)
He doesn’t know I know yet. I could let them carry on, and hope he gets over it.

Hazel talks to Hudson.

HAZEL (V.O.)
But I’ve decided to tell him that I know. And ask him to leave.

HAZEL’S BEDROOM

Hudson packs his case. Hazel watches.
HAZEL (V.O.)
It won’t be easy. Relationships never are. And I’ll have regrets about it. But I know it’s the right thing.

EXT. HAZEL’S APARTMENT BLOCK
Lorna gets out of a taxi. Hudson and Lorna kiss.

HAZEL’S BEDROOM
Hazel looks out of the window, as the taxi pulls away.

HAZEL (V.O.)
In six months he’ll be ringing me up, telling me how sorry he is, asking to come back. And how different it’s all going to be.

Hazel lies on the bed, crying.

HAZEL (V.O.)
I just have to try to stay strong. And say ‘no’ to him.

HENRY’S KITCHEN
Henry reads. Ben touches Henry’s arm.

HAZEL (V.O.)
Maybe I’ll come and visit you, Henry. We can go bowling and eat Pepperoni Pizza. I’d love to see you both again. Love Hazel.

END CUT BETWEEN HAZEL AND HENRY.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY
Ben sits down with Henry as he puts the letter down.

BEN
A letter from aunt Hazel, Dad?

HENRY
Yeah, that’s right.

BEN
How is she?

HENRY
She’s fine, Ben. She’s fine.
EXT. A PARK - DAY

Henry stands by a tree with Ben, looking at a carving.

BEN
'H H Loves N H'.

HENRY
I carved that the day she said 'yes' to me. Your Mom.

BEN
'H H loves N H?' What does that stand for?

HENRY
Norma Hart. That was her maiden name. She was the first woman I ever went with.

BEN
You mean you broke your virginity with her?

HENRY
Yeah. And her with me.

BEN
How old were you?

HENRY
Twenty one.

BEN
Twenty one! That’s old. I hope I break my virginity before that. When I’m fifteen, or something.

HENRY
Ben!

Hazel steps forward at their shoulders.

HAZEL
My initial’s are the same. Back to front. Norma Hart. Hazel Norman. ‘NH’ .’ HN’.

BEN
Hey. So they are. How about that.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

The table is laid for dinner. Ben and Hazel sit at the table. Henry leans out of the lounge door.
HENRY
(calling out)
Want a hand?

IRIS (O.S.)
No, it’s okay. I’ve just...

HENRY
What is it?

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Iris wears a party dress. Her hair is long and flowing. No glasses. She looks very different. She touches her eyes.

IRIS
I’ve got lenses in. They’re new. First time I’ve tried them, so...

HENRY
The dress. You look...

IRIS
Stupid?

HENRY

IRIS
Thank you.
(ref her eyes)
There. Fixed.

They smile at each other.

INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Hazel, Henry, Ben and Iris sit at a table. There is a strange air, as if all of them are deep in thought, thinking their own thoughts, but together. Glad to be where they all are.

EXT. HENRY’S HOUSE - DAY

Hazel opens the rear door of a yellow taxi. She turns and waves towards Ben and Henry at the door.
INT. HENRY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Henry is asleep in bed. The alarm clock goes. Henry stretches to turn it off, but Ben is there beside him, wearing a bathrobe.

HENRY
Thanks, Ben. You’re up early.

Ben sits on the side of the bed.

BEN
Happy Birthday, Dad.

HENRY
Thanks Ben.

BEN
I remembered.

HENRY
I told you when it was.

BEN
Yeah, but I remembered the date you told me when it was.

Ben hands him a present.

BEN
Here. A present.

HENRY
Thanks.

Henry opens it. Another MICKEY MOUSE ALARM CLOCK.

BEN
Just in case one breaks, Dad.

Henry looks at Ben. Henry hugs Ben to bits.

FADE OUT.