

Nerves

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE NIGHT SKY

Shimmering stars, distant galaxies, and the full moon rule the blue night sky.

DOMUS (V.O.)

My Uncle Ernie always said, "If you want to fully experience life, experience all that is offered to you...then take a nap."

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

A quiet, earthy strip of homes in the suburban heart of Freehold Township, NJ. A modest town minutes away from everything essential for comfortable living and idealistic raising.

DOMUS (O.S.)

I only saw him a couple of times a year. Predominantly around the holidays. And he always had a different woman with him, a new haircut and amusing anecdotes that involved copious amounts of booze. He enjoyed his naps.

A car turns onto the street, moves down slowly...

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

The car cruises under the buzzing street lamps, past the burning porch lights and parade of trees, bushes, and shrubs that inhabit the front lawns.

DOMUS (O.S.)

High school is all about those life appropriate experiences. Where you have a choice. To take what is offered or to reject it. I haven't been offered anything new in months. I've remained stagnate.

The car leads us to, then passes --

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - HOUSE NO. 212 - NIGHT

A comely home equipped with a very inviting front porch. A light burns in an upstairs window.

DOMUS (O.S.)

I'm here, stuck in a spot and once I move a door will spring open leading the way to opportunities and offers. I know what that door is...but I don't want it opened. Not at this point in my life.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Across the street from 212 Sherwood Drive a '93 BMW is parked by the curb in full stealth mode.

DOMUS (O.S.)

Three years of high school gone by. I've done the studying, had the sex, and drank the alcohol. What haven't I done? Simple...

INT. DOMUS'S BMW - CONTINUOUS

DOMUS D. DEVILLE, 17, a charismatic, semi-good looking jokester is at the wheel addressing a hand-held tape recorder as if it's an actual person. He throws intermittent glances toward 212 Sherwood.

DOMUS

...Love. What is love? Do we even need it? When it hits you, you break down. When it rejects you, you die. Which is worse? Is there a difference? How do you avoid love? The best way I found is to pretend it doesn't exist. Why would one want to do that? 'Cause the famous literary works preached to us depict the act of falling in love as the ultimate tragedy in life. Romeo and Juliet for one. Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. -- I don't want to know love. Fear is all I know. What it all comes down to is this: Is the joy of it worthy of the inevitable pain?

A beat. He takes a look at himself in the rearview, a bit of shamed laughter escapes. Dom notices the clock on his car stereo reads 11:11.

He takes his middle and index finger to his lips, kisses them. Then he touches the clock, closes his eyes, and makes a wish. His eyes open. The light from the house vanishes.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

You're such a loser.

He clicks off the tape recorder, tosses it in the back, puts the car in gear and drives off...

DISSOLVE TO BLACK:

The everyday SOUNDS of a RESTAURANT fade up...

FADE IN ON:

INT. DUNGAREE DINER - NIGHT

An eloquent, yet contemporary Diner. Glass walls encase the place giving it an eerie, nighttime glow. The staff is never busy but always working on this slow September Sunday night.

DOMUS (O.S.)

"...I said a hip hop hippie to the hippie
do the hip hip hop and you don't stop..."

INT. DUNGAREE DINER - CORNER BOOTH - NIGHT

Three teens sit, post-meal, nursing bevs and hangin' out --

JACKSON, 17, tall, dark, handsome, intelligent, yet never sure of himself. KEVIN, 17, average, neat, carries a big heart. And Dom, a toothpick dangles between his lips as he sings SUGAR HILL GANGS "RAPPER'S DELIGHT"...mostly to himself.

DOMUS

"...the rockin' to the bang bang boogie
say up jump the boogie to the rhythm of
the boogie the beat --"

KEVIN

It's up to you, what do you want?

DOMUS

"-- now what you hear is not a test I'm
rappin' to the beat, and me, the groove
and my friends are gonna try to move your
feet."

JACKSON

It's not that easy. -- Dom, stop!

He complies.

DOMUS

Just look at from all angles...and
curves.

JACKSON

I don't want this to be a shallow decision.

KEVIN

It's important, you're right, it shouldn't be.

DOMUS

Then lets weigh the two down. Numero uno, Jane: Blonde, athletic, a real jumping bean with a Madonna-like inner sex child. A hyper girl is generally a horny girl. However, it's bone dry in the bank of common sense. Girlie number two, Lulu: A good egg with a fun little name and is sweet as tarts. Plus, she's got a lot of "extra credit" if you know what I mean and has Daddy Warbucks pampering her with whatever she craves, from expensive clothes, perfume, silk pink panties from Versace to imported, designer toothpaste. Although, I see that as a negative.

KEVIN

I'm with you on that.

JACKSON

How so?

DOMUS

You'll need the green to make her scream.

KEVIN

Something you my fellow merchant of Abercrombie and Fitch are severely lacking.

DOMUS

A vogue child. Rather have a gift from the wallet than a gift from the heart.

KEVIN

High maintenance.

DOMUS

(to Kevin)

Yeah, something you know all about --

Kevin dismisses the slight with an eyeroll.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

-- and with one Jane Miller the only thing you'd have to maintain...is your sanity. And erections.

JACKSON

Lu's not like that. If anything she's...medium maintenance. I don't know, maybe she is...but -- shit, maybe I'm overthinking it.

KEVIN

You keep saying there's something missing.

DOMUS

Without a doubt in my mind a little TLC is the drug you crave.

KEVIN

But the important thing is not to make any rash decisions. You don't want to destroy one friendship in return for a failed relationship that ends in heartache.

DOMUS

Which ultimately could result in both these girlie girls hating you.

KEVIN

You don't want that happening.

DOMUS

But hey, I'm no maven on the duties of the heart.

(re: Kevin)

And this poor bastard has been stuck in a rut the last two years with a girl he's in "love" with.

KEVIN

(ignoring Dom)

Look, just go home tonight and sleep on it. Believe me, if you think hard enough, the answer will surface itself.

DOMUS

Like an algebra equation.

Jackson takes in the advice, THEN: a COMMOTION across the Diner grabs his attention.

JACKSON
Check it out.

DOMUS
What?

Jackson gives the "look, but don't look" nod. They process this, and as nonchalant as possible, turn to grab a glimpse --

ACROSS THE DINER, where a young couple is breaking up. The boyfriend is angry, hurt. "Slut, whore, how could you, etc." She sits quietly, guilty.

JACKSON
I think she just broke up with him.

KEVIN
Or she came clean about cheating on him.

DOMUS
Either way...

Jacks exhales, stands up, pulls out his wallet.

JACKSON
Alright, as much as I enjoy this little repartee, therapy session...Think it's time for me to split.

DOMUS
(curious)
Oh yeah? You're taking off?

JACKSON
Yeah guys, thanks. I'll see ya tomorrow.

KEVIN
Bright and early.

JACKSON
Bright and early. -- Later.

Jackson drops five bucks on the table and walks away.

DOMUS
Late.

Dom pockets the five.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
Oh yeah, that kid's gone.

KEVIN

So what's the deal with you? How come you don't have a bird on your perch?

DOMUS

Don't get me started. But to put it bluntly, mine and societies standards are too high.

KEVIN

You have no standards. You'll sleep with whatever barks at you.

DOMUS

Good point. Then just societies standards.

KEVIN

Such as?

DOMUS

Hairy arms. If you're on a date at a restaurant the waitress is gonna notice and make some comment under her breath. It's either, "Wow that's much worse than mine" or "Wow what a nasty bitch and this guy sucks and I'm getting a dollar fifty tip." The worst part is if she finds a hair in her food, it's probably from her. It's downright repulsive. And society has yet to accept hairy arms so I can't be seen with a women who has a hairy...fill in the blank.

Kevin sips his water, humoring Dom's dissertation.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

And, on a more substantial note, most girls in high school are incapable of carrying on an intelligent conversation. A true, meaningful relationship cannot be based on just sex. It'll get boring. Unless the foreplay is good. Because that is what makes sex so much better my friend. Without it, sex is like a warm keg of beer. Sure it'll get the job done but it was flat, not living up to its invigorating and titillating capabilities.

(pause)

Foreplay has to be there in order to have a robust relationship with a women.

(pause)

(MORE)

DOMUS (CONT'D)

It is the seed that will turn your flowerpot of a sex life into a greenhouse of orgasm festivals. Thank you. Enjoy. Next please.

KEVIN

(firing back)

You and Belle, just friends?

DOMUS

Dude, don't even.

KEVIN

Why?

DOMUS

That is completely different.

KEVIN

How?

DOMUS

Christ man, how many times do I have to go over this?

KEVIN

Until you convince me that nothing is there.

DOMUS

(speech-like)

She is the standard. Guys line up at the bathroom door to flush her toilet. They should just take a state like South Dakota and fill it with all those who are obsessed with her and call it Wakedafuckup Dakota cause she's out of your league. But interestingly...women loathe her.

KEVIN

How so?

DOMUS

Have you ever noticed, wondered why she has no close female friends? Cause they are all beat next to her. Unnoticeable and unwanted when she's around.

KEVIN

You talk to her every day, give her rides to and from school, she's even cooked for you and you still haven't got the nerve to take it to the next level.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Guess you're cool with the "big brother" label you got.

DOMUS

I am.

KEVIN

Garbage. I thought her and Mike broke up when he hit the Italy scene. So it's high time you made your move. But, you're chicken.

DOMUS

That is how you see it. This is how I see it: If I profess lust for her I might scare her off and have her see how much of an obsessed loser I am and I'm just like all other guys in her gravitational pull. I don't wanna risk losing what I already have.

Dom's mood has turned more toward the subdued side.

KEVIN

You two are like brother and sister. It's unbelievable how much you two think alike.

Jackson inexplicably rejoins them.

DOMUS

Brother and sister, huh? You an enthusiast for incest now?

JACKSON

We ready to make for the exit or what?

DOMUS

(to Jackson)
Finally realized you didn't drive here?

KEVIN

You're not even dating these girls and they're already affecting you mentally.

JACKSON

What's wrong Dom? Did it start spreading?

DOMUS

Yeah, tell your Mom I want my money back.

KEVIN
(to Jackson)
Belle.

DOMUS
Discussions over. Now lets make like a
cop busting a hooker and get "the fuck"
out of here.

Dom drops his toothpick onto his plate and they get up.
Kevin and Dom drop a five spot on the table.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
(to Jackson)
You paying? I don't remember this being
a romantic night on the town on us or
anything.

JACKSON
Wait a sec. I know--

DOMUS
No, you know you don't know, no. Put in,
lets go.

Jacks just stares at Dom, he knows what's up.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
(looks away)
It's only five dollars.

Jacks holds his gaze. Dom breaks and begins to LAUGH.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
Shit. I hate you, man.

JACKSON
You're such a little girl, I feel bad for
you. Don't ever cheat on your girlfriend
'cause she would just have to flash you,
and you're telling her the whole shebang,
start to finish.

Dom coughs up the five.

DOMUS
Shebang? Jeez, next thing I know you'll
be saying "cool beans" and giving the
"thumbs up" accompanied with "right on"
and "Hey, let's blow this joint."

Jackson gives a "thumbs up" and the guys head to the exit.

They give a nod to the HOST at the register and head out, but not after Dom grabs a handful of complimentary toothpicks.

INT. DUNGAREE DINER - VESTIBULE - NIGHT

Dom holds the door open for the guys. A MAN walks up and Dom continues to hold the door as he enters, paying no mind to a dejected Domus.

EXT. DUNGAREE DINER - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dom catches up as they head for his BMW...

DOMUS
You believe that guy?

JACKSON
What about him?

DOMUS
He didn't say thank you.

KEVIN
And...?

DOMUS
And you hold a door open for someone you expect a little gratitude thrown your way. Especially from a guy.

JACKSON
Oh, well, thank you Domus. You are a true humanitarian. The world owes you.

DOMUS
Don't patronize me. I'm too old for that.

SUDDENLY: A red, tinted, low riding, 100% pimped out Honda Civic buzzes by. The guys observe as the fast & furious Honda flies out of the parking lot, onto the highway.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
Crazy bastard.

Left in the Honda's wake: A BRUNETTE stands with her head in her hands. The same gal the guys witnessed arguing with her boyfriend in the diner.

JACKSON
Check out the damsel.

KEVIN

Yeah...that's the girl at the table, with her boyfriend.

DOMUS

An astute observation.

Kevin makes a move in her direction...

JACKSON

Whoa, where you going?

KEVIN

I just want to see if she needs anything.

Dom continues to his car...

DOMUS

(with a wink and a nod)

Hey, get her number for me will ya? I love chicks who are on the rebound.

THEN: The Honda returns in a much slower fashion than its exit, stops next to the damsel. She gets in the set of tricked out wheels.

JACKSON

It's gotta be the car.

DOMUS

Can we go now?

EDDIE (O.S.)

Oh my god! Why isn't the livin' breathin' Three Stooges, yo.

The guys turn to a rapidly approaching: EDDIE, 16, a short, always buzzed, quasi-loser wearing MR. T. gold, saggy jeans, a bright yellow Yankees shirt and matching, tilted cap.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(lighting up a cigarette)

Harpo, Groucho, and Marco, what's up?

DOMUS

Those are Marx brothers.

KEVIN

Marco Marx?

DOMUS

Sail on, my friend.

EDDIE

Quite serendipitous that I ran into ya's.

DOMUS

Thus serendipity remains a mortal enemy.

EDDIE

Say what?

DOMUS

I know, what.

A beat.

EDDIE

Anywho's, been wantin' to hit you guys up. Heard some rumblin's 'bout a bash manana and I...I...want--

Eddie's attention diverts to two SLUTTY BLONDES walking up to the Diner. They hang outside.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

...wanna can of whipped cream and some pudding. Oh, shit.

DOMUS

Where's Bill Cosby when you need him?

EDDIE

Screw that pudding-popping fagot. Give me Betty Crocker, yo. Yum, yum I'll show you just why dessert is so much fun. I'll check ya clowns later.

KEVIN

Is that a threat?

DOMUS

Hope it's a promise.

Eddie struts over to the Blondes and before they light up a cigarette, viola: Eddie has his zippo burning...

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Keep the cage clean Canary boy!

The guys pack into the BMW. Kev in the back, Jackson in shotgun. Dom shifts and the BMW is off...Passes the Honda and HONKS the horn, just for fun.

I/E. DOMUS'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Flying down the road home. Kevin leans up front to talk...

KEVIN

Can we go back Dom. I wanted to--

DOMUS

What, talk to the missing Beastie Boy some more or see another couple say yes to just another few more weeks of misery with some good sex thrown in there before they realize that hey, maybe we aren't meant for each other. Maybe you should go back to Nick's house and continue fuckin' him because sweetie I got some news for you: I won't let you treat me like a piece of toilet paper anymore and perhaps I should have left your cheatin' ass in the parking lot two weeks ago.

A beat. Kevin is speechless.

KEVIN

Yeah.

He leans back in his seat.

DOMUS

I don't know how you do it. I mean, how is it that you and what's her name are still together?

KEVIN

Emily.

DOMUS

Her.

KEVIN

I don't know. I guess I really do love her.

DOMUS

Don't give me this love shit. It's high school. There's no room for love here.

KEVIN

How can you say that? You know shit about love.

DOMUS

I know the key ingredient and it's not worth it this early in life.

Curious, Jackson decides to join the conversation.

JACKSON

What might that key ingredient be?

DOMUS

Pain, hurt. It's all one big domino effect. Love comes from affection. Affection comes from desire. Desire comes from lust. Lust comes from obsession. Obsession turns into commitment. Commitment turns into relationships. Relationships lead to pain and a shoebox full of memories. The most powerful: pain. In high school that shoebox is indestructible. Anything put into it is impossible to take out. A broken heart will stay with you forever. You don't need that love shit.

The BMW comes to a stop, red light. Unbeknownst to Dom, Jackson eases the gear shift into neutral.

KEVIN

Why so bitter? High school is the most important time of your life. The way I see it, the bullshit you go through will make you who you are in life. It's the fundamental builder of character. How can you blow it off?

Dom shifts in his seat, uncomfortable. His stomach isn't agreeing with him.

JACKSON

You alright?

DOMUS

Yeah, fine. -- I...I don't know what that guy was thinking 'cause that chick back there had hairy arms.

KEVIN

She had long sleeves on.

Green light. Dom floors it, the engine REVS. He tries again, VROOM.

DOMUS
Son of a bitch.

The cars behind him HONK. Dom finally realizes and shifts into drive.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
That crap ain't kosher man. That's my transmission your messing with. I need that.

EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A simple little house in a simple little neighborhood. The BMW parks in the driveway. Domus runs into the house on a mission.

INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jackson and Kevin at the kitchen table. Pieces of mail and a few issues of the Asbury Park Press newspaper are scattered about.

KEVIN
(checks watch)
Damn. I gotta call Emily.

A TOILET FLUSHES (O.S.). Kevin gets up to use the phone. Dom enters, takes a seat, rummages the newspaper.

DOMUS
Hey, if you could use any celebrities bathroom, whose would it be?

JACKSON
I'm sorry, what?

DOMUS
Say you're desperate to take a shit, whose door would you hope to arrive at?

JACKSON
I don't know and I don't even want to think about it.
(regretting)
You got one in mind?

DOMUS
Martha Stewart. Think about it.

Jackson doesn't really want to. Kevin sits down.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
How's what's her name?

KEVIN
Voice mail. How's the stomach?

An envelope mixed with the mail steals Kev's attention. Dom grabs the comics.

DOMUS
Fine, just nerves.

JACKSON
(off envelope)
What's that?

KEVIN
It's...wow...it's the application. Early action to George Washington.

DOMUS
(eyes on newspaper)
College already?

JACKSON
G-dub, nice. High female to male ratio, iconic locale, Greeks aplenty...and a decent business program.

DOMUS
Fringe benefit.

KEVIN
Postponing the future is for those with musical talent or a rich Dad. I have neither. And If I get accepted, I want to start early, take summer courses.

JACKSON
Are you serious?

Kevin nods.

DOMUS
You've always been the one to get the worm, Kev.

JACKSON
What about Rutgers? It's in state, less than an hour away.

KEVIN

It's on the list, but George Washington is it. There's more there for me. It's where I want to be.

JACKSON

Fair enough. Good luck, man. Hope you get what you want.

KEVIN

What about you?

JACKSON

What about me?

DOMUS

Mr. 4.0 with his sure pick of the ivy litter. -- Did God owe your parents money? Seriously, you're too perfect.

KEVIN

The question is, will getting a girl this year affect your college plans?

JACKSON

You love Emily?

KEVIN

Without a doubt.

JACKSON

And yet you're about to apply for an accelerated future without her.

DOMUS

(reading the comics)
Fuckin' Garfield.

KEVIN

It's college, it's a progressive step. Not the end all be all to our relationship.

JACKSON

Right now, I agree. But I've never been in love. So I can't predict the side affects.

In that moment, Kevin and Jackson understand each other. They look to Dom.

KEVIN

Dom, any thoughts about your future?

JACKSON

Where will you be this time next year?

DOMUS

Shit, I don't know. But that's normal, right?

Kevin and Jackson look disappointed. Dom slowly joins them.

EXT. JERSEY SUBURBS - ESTABLISHING - EARLY MORNING

A shot of the east coast sun rising.

INT. DOM'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Alarm clock BUZZES, it's 8:09. Dom wakes in a tizzy, slams his hand down on the alarm, buries his head under the covers. A beat. The alarm clock BUZZES again. Dom roars up, tosses the alarm clock. It busts into a mirror, cracking it.

DOMUS

Shit.

Dom sits there shocked, dejected.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Perfect. The haunting remnants of my dream of Rush Limbaugh doing the Lambada with Bea Arthur at a benefit to raise money for bunion research on an empty Jersey Shore beach and a seven years bad luck. What kind of fucking day is this going to turn out to be?

(looks around)

Who am I talking to?

INT. JACKSON'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Jackson asleep, very much at peace, sunlight beams in through the window setting fire to his eyes as they flutter open. He leans up, sits on his bed side. A pensive beat...he exits. THEN: clouds roll in, extinguishing the morning sun.

EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Kevin waters plants on his front yard as Dom's BMW pulls in the driveway, HORN blazing. Jackson in the passenger seat.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - MORNING

Dom's BMW pulls into one of the many open spots in a parking area by a local beach.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - BOARDWALK - MORNING

A mild, breezy, cloudy day. Umbrellas and towels are scarce along the beach.

DOMUS (O.S.)

Tell me again why we had to get here so early.

Dom sports severe bed head, has a Mandeas beach bag, a rainbow colored beach chair and wears shades. Kevin, a beach chair in hand, towel around the shoulder. Jackson holds a huge blanket. They survey the empty beach.

KEVIN

To get a good spot.

DOMUS

I see.

KEVIN

Weatherman said plenty of sun and high temperatures.

A beat.

DOMUS

Had the weirdest freakin' dream last night.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - THE SPOT - MORNING

Dom and Kevin in their chairs, Jackson on his blanket.

DOMUS

I'm serious, just let me tell you about it.

KEVIN

No.

DOMUS

It was very unnerving.

JACKSON

I'm sure it was. And a revealing peek inside your subconscious is sure to give us nightmares. Please spare us.

DOMUS

God I hate the beach.

KEVIN

How could you hate the beach?

JACKSON

Because it's empty.

DOMUS

Like your sex life.

JACKSON

At least I'm not whipped worse than Seabiscuit over here.

KEVIN

You think I'm whipped?

Dom makes the WHHPSHH!, whip crack sound effect.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Yeah?

JACKSON

She owns you, we all see it. And Dom, don't even say anything. First off, you're whipped by a babe who isn't even your girlfriend. And secondly, who knows what kind of shit you got. Mister I'll screw anyone, anywhere, no matter what they look like.

DOMUS

When the lights are out they're whoever you want them to be. And there's no female with a collar around my neck, okay. Although I admit some girls I've been with should be wearing one.

KEVIN

Whipped? We'll see about that.

DOMUS

Where is she?

KEVIN

She's coming.

DOMUS

Sick of looking at granny Annie and grandpa Joe's skin falling off their bones. Or be forced to see nothing but you guys. I mean come on, I need some ladies--

Dom's cell phone RINGS. It's in his shoe, he checks the caller ID...smiles.

JACKSON AND KEVIN

Belle?

Yup. Dom answers it.

DOMUS

What's up?...Yeah?...I'm there right now...Them too.

INT. BELLE'S BEDROOM - INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

The SHADOWY SILHOUETTE of a perfect female figure talks on a phone as she moves about the bedroom, packing a bag.

BELLE (SILHOUETTE)

I'm waiting on Becky...Who else am I gonna go with?...She offered to drive, okay.

DOMUS

Why don't you give that Jane Miller a call. See what she's doing.

Domus gives Jackson a nod.

BELLE

Really, you think?

DOMUS

I insist, invite the young gal along.

Belle's DOORBELL RINGS and it rings a lot.

BELLE

Alright, but Beck's here now so I gotta go. -- Wait! Where you guys sitting?

DOMUS

Don't worry, you'll see us...Bye.

BELLE

I'll see ya.

END INTERCUTS

Dom ends the call, puts the phone back in his shoe.

DOMUS

The Mona Lisa is on the way.

JACKSON
Why did you ask her to invite Jane?

Dom's stomach GROWLS.

DOMUS
Uff, uh-oh...I'll, I'll be back.

He runs off. The WHHPSHH! comes via Jackson.

KEVIN
We're both whipped?

JACKSON
Yeah, but it's different. You're whipped because of the pussy, not because you are one.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - BOARDWALK - MORNING

Dom's stomach gives him fits as he moves down the boardwalk, past a main building with a huge hand clock on top: 10:01.

INT. BOARDWALK BATHROOM - SECONDS LATER - MORNING

An ELDER MAN combs his hair at the sink, WHISTLING & SINGING HANK WILLIAMS SR'S "I'M SO LONESOME I COULD CRY." He pauses, sniffs the air.

ELDER MAN
Good lord, you alright buddy? How about a courtesy flush?

DOMUS (O.S.)
I'm fine. It's just nerves.

ELDER MAN
Nerves? More like the spawn of Satan coming out of your ass.

DOMUS (O.S.)
Could you please not talk to me. This is a totally awkward situation.

The Elder Man shakes the water from his comb into the sink and leaves, continuing to WHISTLE & SING.

TOILET FLUSHES. Dom exits the stall, goes to the sink. Lets out a deep breath and looks at himself in the mirror, his hair is a mess.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
Eww.

He turns on the sink, uses his hands to desperately shape his hair into a presentable position. He's done, he's happy.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - MORNING

Dom walks back to "the spot," pauses as he sees --

LULU, 16, short, pretty, with a noticeably large chest on her small frame. MELISSA, 17, unattractive, a slightly disproportionate body to boot. And EMILY, 16, cute, innocent looking, but packs a punch. They settle in around the guys.

DOMUS

They have arrived.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - THE SPOT - MORNING

Dom rejoins the group.

DOMUS

What up ladies?

LULU

Hey Dom.

DOMUS

(eyeing Lulu's chest)

Lulu, good to see you brought your two friends with you. -- Melissa and Emily, hello.

Emily waves at him. Melissa, already seated, offers:

MELISSA

Ha-hey, Nostradomus is here. And he looks like he's been working out.

DOMUS

Ha-hey, Flagstein's here and now my day is officially grounds for suicide.

MELISSA

Ugh, you're such an asshole.

LULU

Really Dom, is a little maturity too much to ask?

JACKSON

Asking Dom to act mature is like milking a cow to get water.

Dom bends down, now face to face with Mel.

DOMUS

Sorry, it's a defense mechanism. Truth is I feel for you something fierce. You are so-damn-BE-U-TI-FULL. You're hot. Could you just stand over me for a half hour cause that's the only way I'm gonna get a tan today, babydoll.

Melissa smiles, grabs a handful of sand. She pours it on his head in an hourglass fashion. Dom smiles and takes it.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Is that what compliments get me? You know what sand does to the hair?

KEVIN AND EMILY

Emily struggles to get comfortable in her chair as she sets up next to Kevin.

EMILY

I can't believe you forced me out here on such a shitty day. I'd rather be at home watching the "Grease" marathon on AMC.

KEVIN

End of summer. We're obligated to get the most of the beach before the homeroom bell rings.

DOMUS (O.S)

(singing)

"Summer lovin' happened so fast..."

EMILY

Autumnal Equinox. One of two times of the year when the sun's position makes day and night equal in length. Which occurs around September 23rd. It marks the beginning of fall and the actual end of summer in the Northern hemisphere.

KEVIN

What?

EMILY

Nothing.

KEVIN

Look, whatever, why are you being such a killjoy?

EMILY

I'm only saying it the way it is. Eat it or beat it, boy.

KEVIN

What is that suppose to mean?

EMILY

I don't know...nothing. Sorry.

Emily eases back in her chair, closes her eyes.

KEVIN

No, Em, don't do gimme that, what's--

EMILY

Shhhhh....okay. Said I was sorry.

Kevin, simply put, is at a loss.

JACKSON AND LULU

On his blanket in mid-conversation. Lulu is speechless, struggling to comprehend what Jackson has just told her.

JACKSON

Think about it, I'm right.

LULU

You're saying non-alcoholic beer, decaffeinated coffee, and performing--

JACKSON

Performing...

LULU

...Performing oral sex: are all the same?

JACKSON

All you get is a bad taste in your mouth. Zero stimulation.

LULU

My coffee does need caffeine and beer is nothing without its mind altering agent, I'll give you that. But oral sex...come on, I'm gonna have to disagree.

DOMUS

Ding, ding, ding, X gets the square! Lulu is the champion. Give it here.

Domus and Lulu exchange a high five. They all share a LAUGH.

BELLE (O.S.)
Room for one more?

Everybody turns around --

REVEAL: Strikingly beautiful with perfect, even features, dirty blonde hair and a sinful young body is our girl Belle. She sports a T-shirt, gray sweat shorts and has a beach bag.

BELLE (CONT'D)
Hey guys.

The guys absorb the perfection that is Belle, the girls roll their eyes to each other.

BELLE (CONT'D)
Who pissed off the sun, seriously? This is pathetic.

JACKSON
You alone?

DOMUS
Where's Backseat Becky?

Belle settles in next to Dom.

BELLE
As soon as I mentioned you were here. She got nauseous.

DOMUS
What about Jane?

BELLE
Tuba lesson.

DOMUS
Is that right?

BELLE
Yup.

DOMUS
(a nod to Jackson)
...hmmm...

BELLE
You happen to know why Becky didn't want to see you?

DOMUS
I have ideas.

BELLE

Well I recall a night, not that far off,
at a party held by Cal Stevens in which
you, Domus D. Deville, in yet another
alcohol induced round of moral hazing,
wound up in the backseat of a Jeep
Cherokee with one Becky. Naked.

DOMUS

I was only half-naked.

BELLE

She was with three other guys that night.
Left a piece of clothing in every
backseat.

DOMUS

Is that why she only had on socks when I
got to her? Damn, I thought she was just
a light dresser.

Belle shakes her head at him as she undresses to her bathing
suit --

IT BEGINS: The descent of her shorts revealing long, trim
legs, with thighs built to perfection. The T-shirt comes
off, revealing capacious cleavage, full rounded breasts and a
flat, well-worked abdomen.

Dom watches intently. Belle catches it.

BELLE

What, is there a rip in my suit?

DOMUS

No, I...dropped something.

BELLE

What?

DOMUS

My jaw.

BELLE

Shutup.

Belle sits. Domus looks the beauty by his side up and down.

DOMUS

You want to go on a date?

Dom can't believe what just rolled of his tongue, it's too
late to take back. Belle plays it.

BELLE

What's in it for me?

Dom searches for a distraction, a recoil of some sort. He plunges into his colorful, oversized Mandeas bag and grabs...

DOMUS

These flippers, they're yours.

...Two HOT PINK FLIPPERS.

BELLE

Can I wear those on the proposed date?

DOMUS

You can wear your grandmother's shower cap for all I care. But look, here's the best part.

On the flippers, in small print: DO NOT USE IN BATHTUB.

BELLE

I'm dying to know why that's the best part?

DOMUS

I just thought it was funny that's all. Think about it. How often do you hear someone say, "I'm going to take a bath but where the hell are my flippers?!" Never. It's as ridiculous as putting directions on shampoo. If you find yourself standing in the shower holding a bottle of shampoo and thinking to yourself, "Now what?"...and if you have flippers on, just forget it. Grab the blowdryer and do your unborn children a favor.

Nothing but smiles glowing from Belle.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

So about our date?

BELLE

Parents are away. End of summer bash at my house tonight. Best I could do on such short notice.

DOMUS

See, I had already planned on crashing said event. It was gonna be a surprise.

BELLE

Dom, you showing up at my house is no surprise. Unless you brought a wet/dry vac and a pint of apple juice.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - WATER - MORNING

No activity. The waves are non-existent.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - BOARDWALK - MORNING

A few seagulls roam the empty boardwalk. According to the clock atop the main building it's: 11:11.

EXT. MANASQUAN BEACH - THE SPOT - MORNING

A gust of wind brings a healthy amount of sand into the hair, eyes, mouth, and bathing suits of everyone in the group.

MELISSA

Christ, you girls want to leave? There's no sun, the waves are that of a bathtub, water's probably freezing and I think I got sand in my...Nevermind, I'm going to the bathroom.

Melissa gets up. The group recovers from the mini sandstorm.

JACKSON AND LULU

JACKSON

(re: Melissa)

That girl is never getting laid.

LULU

Come on, be nice. She's got...something.

JACKSON

Her only hope is some poor drunken monkey who can't stand to piss. She's as far away from the game as possible.

LULU

What do you mean? What is this game you speak of?

JACKSON

The relationship game. I've put together a little theory on relationships.

LULU

Aristotle in swimtrunks.

JACKSON

Love at first sight, right: It's based on looks and looks alone. One dimensional attraction, one dimensional relationship. Love is an emotion that needs to be built up.

LULU

Still, people do believe love at first sight is possible.

JACKSON

Those relationships are based on the "in-looks" not the "in-common".

LULU

The opposite of what friends are.

JACKSON

Exactly, two good looking people who are physically attracted to each other but not any good at communicating with each other will not be friends, just "fuck buddies," which will last only a short while, thus, the relationship between them dissolves into nothing.

LULU

Two people who like each other for who they are inside may become friends. But, due to them having so much in common, a link could develop...leading them down the path of passion.

JACKSON

But because the incorruptible attraction of personality is much overlooked in the superficial society we live in today, such relationships usually remain nothing more than a missed opportunity. Victims of circumstance.

LULU

Either way, the woman will always want the man and the man will always want the woman. Friend or fuck.

JACKSON

You know...you amaze me, women.

LULU

I am an amazing person, man.

A beat. Their eyes flirt.

EMILY (O.S.)
Shit, Kevin. What's your problem?

KEVIN AND EMILY

Emily at high octane, Kevin stands his ground.

KEVIN
Why are you making more of this than it actually is?

EMILY
It's their anniversary! And they see you as a member of the family. It would be extremely fucked up of you to blow it off.

KEVIN
I'm not blowing anything. I just can't go.

EMILY
Fine, be that way. I don't care, whatever.

Emily stands, packs up her stuff.

KEVIN
Don't go and get all indifferent on me. You pinned this on me five minutes ago. I'm sorry I had previous commitments. I'm really sorry. I'll stop by before they leave, give my blessings, but I can't go with.

Emily is furious. Kevin looks at her, then looks away shaking his head.

EMILY
I told you three weeks ago. You're coming. Stop being so damn pigheaded and just do it. How hard is that?

KEVIN
I can't even remember what you told me three minutes ago.

Emily is about to burst, picks up her bag and chair.

EMILY
Well remember this...

KEVIN
I was kidding.

EMILY
...Forget you.

She takes off for the boardwalk, crossing paths with Melissa as she returns.

MELISSA
What's up with her?

LULU
Looks like we're outta here.

MELISSA
Finally.

Jackson stands, helps Lulu with her stuff. Melissa packs up. LAUGHTER (O.S.) erupts from --

DOM AND BELLE

Dom tells a story; gesticulating, enthusiastic. Keeping his audience of one thoroughly entertained.

DOMUS
So he's standing there in front of the toilet, pants down, holding the banana peel. - The banana is on the floor. - And he continues to cry out, "I didn't flush, I didn't flush. What happened? Where is it?"

Dom is so animated that he loses balance and falls off his beach chair. Belle has tears in her eyes. Dom lies half-covered in sand.

BELLE
What about the grapes?

DOMUS
The mysteries of life.

Belle smiles at Dom, appreciating him more and more. Dom looks away, unable to handle the looks he's getting from his one true desire. --

Meanwhile, the girls say their goodbyes.

MELISSA
Peace out cub scouts.

JACKSON
Later Mel.

LULU
Call me later, okay?

JACKSON
You bet.

LULU
Bye.

JACKSON
Bye.

BELLE
You girls coming over tonight?

Melissa, unsure, looks for help: Lulu gives a nod.

LULU
We'll bring our drinking shoes.

BELLE
Sweet, see you tonight.

MELISSA
Bye everyone.

The girls head for the boardwalk.

BELLE
How about you guys, when you calling it a day?

DOMUS
As soon as the sun comes out.

JACKSON
It is the last day of summer beach fun.

BELLE
That being said -- I'm gonna go.

Belle stands. Gets set for departure. Dom stands with her, slapping sand off of him.

DOMUS
Be sure to take some sand with you. It's free.

BELLE

So I'll see you guys around eight for the final pound of the summer?

JACKSON

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

KEVIN

Yeah, good times.

DOMUS

I'll be there at five.

BELLE

Perfect, you can help me set up.

DOMUS

Alright, but be sure to have dinner ready for me. I feel like chicken.

BELLE

Thanks for the flippers.

DOMUS

Careful. They're not a toy.

Belle smiles, heads to the boardwalk. Dom sits. He and Jackson watch her every step in dear admiration. THEN:

JACKSON

She wants you. Go for it.

DOMUS

No she doesn't.

JACKSON

Are you that blind?

DOMUS

Look, I'm beyond this. I don't need to get my heartbroken. And if I was in the permanent fling market I would be looking a little more in my price range.

KEVIN

The root of all evil.

JACKSON

Yeah, what was that about?

KEVIN

About me not wanting to spend a day in New York with her and her parents.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

They are probably two of the scariest people I have ever met. A day hanging with them is like a day in WWII Berlin.

DOMUS

What about the love?

KEVIN

It's there. She was in a bad mood to begin with because she didn't want to be here. We just need to talk. This can be fixed. No big deal...Right?

A beat. Dom stands, furiously patting down his shorts.

DOMUS

God damn motherfucking sand in my ass, balls, everywhere. The more I wipe off the more is left behind! Damn you sand! I now have a mortal enemy!

And on that note: the sun emerges from behind the clouds.

EXT. LULU'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

An impressive, opulent home in the Jersey 'burbs. A LEXUS LUXURY COUPE sits in the driveway. Jackson walks up to the front door and presses the DOORBELL.

INT. LULU'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lulu at her makeup table, blow-drying her hair. She wears an ivory colored bathrobe. She thinks she hears something and stops, waits a beat. The DOORBELL RINGS again. She gets up.

I/E. LULU'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Lulu peers through the side window next to the door: sees Jackson fixing his hair. She smiles, opens the door.

LULU

Hi.

JACKSON

Hey.

LULU

Ah, surprise. I was expecting a phone call not a house visit. Come on in.

Jackson enters.

JACKSON

There is something I wanted to get out in the open and I wanted to do it tete-a-tete, you know?

(re: robe)

You wearing that to Belle's party tonight?

LULU

Absolutely. The only problem is that I can't find the slippers to compliment it and wait till you see the hair curlers I got picked out.

JACKSON

I always tagged you as a fashion guru.

LULU

Always looking to make a statement. -- Make yourself at home, I'll be right back.

JACKSON

Sure, okay.

Lulu heads upstairs. Jackson investigates the house. It's immaculate, lavish, and very...WHITE & BRIGHT.

INT. LULU'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Big screen TV, wall to wall speakers, huge leather couch. Disturbingly, everything is WHITE. Jackson grabs a picture frame off the fireplace mantle.

INSERT PHOTO: A PICTURE OF FARRAH FAWCETT, SIGNED: "SAMMY, THANKS FOR THE GOOD LOOKS, EVERYTHING YOU DO REALLY COOKS, ALL THE LOVE, FARRAH FAWCETT.

Jackson puts the frame back. He tentatively sits on the white leather couch. It CRUNCHES, sounds as if no one has ever sat on it. He shifts, more CRUNCHES. Does his best to sit perfectly still.

Lulu reappears. Jackson springs up -- CRUNCH.

LULU

What's up?

JACKSON

How's Emily?

LULU

She was quiet, not one word the whole way home. She's a tough egg to crack. Kev?

JACKSON

Optimistic. I guess they just need to talk and everything will be cool.

LULU

Is this why you came over, to talk?

JACKSON

No, yeah...um -- Is your Dad a chef?

LULU

Was that a line or are you looking for a party catered?

JACKSON

No, neither, according to Farrah Fawcett he "really cooks".

LULU

Oh, that. He's a hair and make-up stylist, slash artist, slash cosmetic genius, and yes he is a multi-millionaire with kids who never see him. He's like the next Paul Mitchell and my Mom thinks he's a closet homosexual.

JACKSON

And you?

LULU

I'm not gay, but I think my brother might be. All he does is listen to 80's music and watch "E" for the "fashion."

JACKSON

Can we get outta this room. I feel like I'm in an insane asylum.

It's like their sharing brainwaves.

LULU

Follow me.

Lulu leads Jackson to...

LULU (CONT'D)

I affectionately refer to this house as the cuckoo's nest. But here --

...A WHITE DOOR.

LULU (CONT'D)

This is where one can find lucidity.

She opens the white door, they enter and --

PITCH BLACK.

THEN: the PITTER PATTTER of feet going down heavy carpeted stairs and the FLICK of a light switch, REVEALS --

INT. LULU'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Jackson takes it all in: Foosball table, pool table, poker table, coffee table, sectional black leather couch, 61" HDTV, home theater surround sound system and a mini bar. Lucidity.

LULU

This is where I spend most of my time.
Feels like my own home, far away from the
actual one upstairs. And Mom always keep
the bar loaded to the gills. -- Let us
sit.

Lulu sits, Jackson follows her. Lulu picks up a remote,
turns on the stereo. MUSIC IN: KENNY G "FOREVER IN LOVE."

LULU (CONT'D)

Now what do I owe this auspicious visit?
Tete-a-tete.

JACKSON

(off music)
Is this...What is this?

LULU

Kenny G.

JACKSON

Kenny G.?

LULU

I know what you're thinking, but the guy
is amazing. He can hold a note for nine
mintues without having to take a breath.
There's certain advantages to that type
of talent if you know what I mean.

JACKSON

Well...there's something I've been
meaning to tell you.

LULU

I think I know what this about.

JACKSON

You do? Well maybe we--

LULU

No no please, continue.

Jackson takes a beat as he formulates his words. He looks Lu in the eyes and he's ready:

JACKSON

You know how when you try to fall asleep, but you just can't. You close your eyes and tons of images and possibilities pass by the second. Keeping you thinking, confusing your thoughts, making you frustrated at the question you can't find the answer to. What do you want? Then, last night the images that constantly kept me awake stopped and fell on one picture. And that one picture really calmed me, you know. It answered my questions. It made me feel at peace and I slept. When I woke up I thought only about what I saw. You. And after today at the beach, I can only wonder...why are we just friends? And after the wondering came the wants. I want to know you on the highest of levels. I want to be the one you bitch to about your parents, friends, school...whatever. I want my shoulder to be the one you fall on when you're too tired to keep your head up. I want to hold your hand in the hallway on the way to class. I want you to tell me and give me everything that is you and I will be more than willing to be the one who makes everything...okay.

A pregnant beat, THEN:

LULU

Are you asking me out?

Nervous laughter escapes from Jackson.

JACKSON

No, I want to you to feed my dog while I go on vacation. Yes, I'm asking you to be my girlfriend.

Lulu searches for words.

LULU
You're a sweetheart.

JACKSON
Uh-oh. Is that the obligatory compliment
before the inevitable rejection?

LULU
(flustered)
Yes. I mean no, yes, no. Yes! Of course
I'll...yeah.

Jackson smiles ear to ear, he's happy, relieved. Lulu stares
at him, happy, anxious.

LULU (CONT'D)
Now I think this is the part where you
kiss me and we begin our on the surface
relationship.

Jackson leans in, slowly. He's nervous, as is Lulu. Their
lips meet. Soft, gentle. They break, stare at each other a
beat. Then things get hot 'n' heavy. A torrid make out
session ensues.

INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - BILLIARD ROOM - DAY

Kevin shoots some pool with his cell phone to his ear.

INT. EMILY'S ROOM - DAY

Emily on her bed, paints her toe nails. Her cell phone RINGS
next to her, checks the incoming number. She ignores it.

INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - BILLIARD ROOM - DAY

Kevin lines up a shot as he listens to Emily's outgoing
message. Disappointed. Angry.

KEVIN
Shit.

He lets his phone drop from the shoulder hold and takes a
shot -- Missed. The cue ball bounces around the table.

INT. EMILY'S ROOM - DAY

Emily blows her big toe dry. Happy with her work. She
glances at her cell phone: ONE MISSED CALL.

EMILY
Life goes on.

Emily concentrates on her nails. The most important things to her right now.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

In spite of the cloudy day that was, it's the clearest night of the year. Stars light up the sky. A line of cars go up and down the curb. It's party time!!

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement is like a small apartment: Bathroom, TV area, living room, and kitchen. A large cafeteria-like table sits in the center of the room. A foundation pole stands from floor to ceiling.

It's body to body, the MUSIC'S pumping, the cigarettes are lit, and the keg is tapped. Oddly, there's some Happy Birthday decor spattered about.

The following bits of dialogue are in a FLOATING STEDI-CAM STYLE following person to person. CAMERA falls on:

THREE GUYS, enjoying the atmosphere and some keg beer in mid-conversation --

JOHN
All girls are bitches. They want attention, they want to be pampered, me, me, me. It's all about them. I can't handle it. I'm seriously considering holding down only platonic male relationships for the rest of my life. I'll be a lot saner and less stressed. All I need is some chilled male conversation and a high speed internet connection and I'll be happy.

The two other guys, JEFF and RODRIEGO look at him...

JEFF
Good luck with that.

...And quickly get the hell away from him. FOLLOW JEFF and RODRIEGO TO:

THREE GIRLS, enjoying the atmosphere and drinks --

BETH

All guys are assholes. They use you for sex and when it's over they don't want to know you. If it turns out they do want a relationship, wake up bitch 'cause odds are you ain't the only girl spreading your legs or lips for him. They are lying, manipulating, greedy bastards. My options are closed. I'm seriously considering spending my life with a close female I can call a friend.

One girl, JANET, smiles. The other, DENISE, moves on.
FOLLOW DENISE TO:

A COUPLE MAKING OUT, RALPH and KERI. They're really down each others throats. THEN: Keri looks like she's about to vomit...CAMERA MOVES TO:

JIM and JEN bullshitting nearby --

JEN

Is it really her birthday?

JIM

Shit if I know.

JEN

Because I didn't bring a gift.

They're interrupted by the HURLING OF VOMIT (O.S.)

JIM

We got a puker.

JEN

Awe, nasty.

Keri runs past them, hand to her mouth. FOLLOW KERI TO:

SCOTT and PATTY, she drinks from a plastic cup. Scott sips from a bottle of Pete's Wicked Ale --

SCOTT

No question about it. The only true form of atmosphere is what you feel. Not what you are told. You can't pretend to see what I see. It will only blur your subconscious. All is based solely on machinations. Therefore the mollified secular ideologies you grew up with vanish.

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)

The hermetic teachings evolve into hyperbole and hence forcing you to accept the mind as the one and only true protagonist in this frugal, decadent society we have created. Everyone else is reciting platitudes. A tirade if you will.

PATTY

I just wanted to know how you liked going to the University of Connecticut.

SCOTT

Right.

Patty rolls her eyes, takes a sip, a Happy Birthday balloon floats past. FOLLOW BALLOON TO:

PETE, AARON, & SOME JOCKS -- POP! The balloon deflates in front of Pete. He and Aaron are the typical moose-headed jocks. 100% testosterone.

AARON

YOU READY, BABY! LET'S GO!

PETE

I'M READY! YEAH! YEAH! BRING IT!

A few deep breaths for Pete, the small crowd cheers, THEN: he smashes a full beer can on his forehead, it explodes.

AARON

YEAH, KID! THAT'S STILL FUNNY THE EIGHTIETH TIME!

PETE

WHOOOOOA!! Let's shotgun! Shotty-shotgun! WHOA-YEAH!

He tosses the mangled beer can. FOLLOW BEER CAN TO:

A KIDDY POOL, containing the ultimate party drink. The beer can lands with a mild splash, a plastic cup bobs next to the beer can. A HAND comes INTO FRAME, removes the beer can.

AARON(O.S.)

SHOTGUN!

The HAND reappears with an empty plastic cup, uses the floating cup as a ladle --

REVEAL Domus. He looks sharp, mildly sexy. He hands the cup to Jeff.

JEFF

What's in it?

Dom grabs from a stack of cups on a table by the pool and repeats the process. A tapped keg is off to the side.

DOMUS

Well we got some cough syrup, some milk of magnesium - MOM - everclear and some liquid estrogen. It's all part of my secret mission to turn all the guys in our high school into healthy fertile women so ultimately I become the manliest man in all the land.

JEFF

Is it gonna make me grow breasts?

Dom takes a beat, answers with earnest and a side of sarcasm.

DOMUS

God, I hope so.

JEFF

For real dude, what's in it? Shit's like 100 proof gatorade.

DOMUS

The ingredients to Uncle Ernie's Ultimate Topsy Topsy Tang is for a select group only. If this recipe ever got out my Uncle Ern would beat my ass to oblivion. Tradition is the one thing held sacred in our family. And one of those traditions is alcohol. We know all about it. Like Mr. Rogers knows what pair of shoes fits what occasion, we know what drink goes with what and when.

JEFF

Just tell me what's in it. This has to be at my graduation party.

Jeff chugs his cup. Refills.

DOMUS

I refuse to go commercial with this puppy. Do you have any idea how drunk I had to get my Uncle Ernie to spill his guts? He started calling me his little firefly and told me I had pretty eyes. I have the feeling one day soon I'll be telling that to a psychiatrist.

(MORE)

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Don't look a gift horse in the ass is what they say, you might get kicked in the head.

JANE, the athletic blonde with the Madonna-like inner sex child pops in with a cup in hand.

JANE

Hey, Dom!

DOMUS

Hey. We missed you at the beach.

JANE

(sips her cup)

This stuff is so good oh my god! It tastes kind of like Hawaiian Punch you know, but like, just after you licked a stamp, you know what I mean, oh my god can you believe you're a senior, holy cow, you excited? You must be, like looking ahead to college and everything. Have you seen Jacks, I thought he would've shown up by now, guess he's not here yet, anyway so...what's up?

Dom deciphers what he just heard, smiles at Jane, takes her cup --

DOMUS

Jackson will be here eventually. Don't you worry.

-- Fills it, hands it back to her.

JANE

Cool. Thank you.

DOMUS

Besides, I'm here. Your jumping jack buddy from gym class.

JANE

Oh my god, Jill just broke up with Gary, did you hear? Yeah, he like was cheating on her with Mary the last four weeks who was kind of like dating Bradley. And oh, Keri, the girl who has one breast bigger than the other, puked all over Ralph, anyway Jill's like totally freakin' out so I'm gonna go talk to her, but I'll definitely see you later.

DOMUS

Wait a sec.

Dom grabs a cup, fills it, hands it to Jane.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Tell Jill I'm sorry and I offer Uncle Ernie here to help cheer her up.

JANE

K.

DOMUS

See ya.

Jane leaves. Dom watches her pony tail sway.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Kevin and ERIC mired in a heated game of chess at the center table. Eric smokes a bowl. Kevin drinks beer from a bottle.

ERIC

You got nowhere to go man.

KEVIN

Two more moves and your done.

Kevin moves. Eric counters, then someone bumps the table and a full cup of beer spills into Eric's lap. He jumps up, rantin' and ravin'.

ERIC

Shit...my pants, man. I just got these...shit. Back to school summer sale spectacular at Sears, bro. Shit.

CAL, the perpetrator, offers Eric a joint.

CAL

Sorry dog. Here, take a hit.

Kevin takes the opportunity to adjust the pieces to his favor. Eric takes multiple hits...

ERIC

Hey, shit...you were in my homeroom right? You like, do homework there and shit, right? Tight J.

Eric sits back down. Kevin moves his Knight. Eric exhales, higher than high, he makes a move with a Pawn. He likes it. Kevin likes it more, moves his Queen:

KEVIN

Checkmate.

Kevin beams. Eric looks like he just now realized he was playing a legitimate game of chess.

ERIC

Shit.

He sparks his bowl, takes a hit.

KEVIN

Pay up.

ERIC

Who cares...? Shit, I'm fuckin' stoned bro.

Eric gives Kevin five bucks, gets up from the table and goes on his merry way.

DOMUS (O.S.)

Bobby Fischer you are not. You cheatin' bum.

Dom sits across from Kevin as he pockets his earnings.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Still no sign of Jacks or the bosomy Lulu.

KEVIN

Or Emily.

DOMUS

Jane's over there and the whole Jersey girl vibe she's throwin' me is kinda inspiring. I think I want her.

Kevin's mind is on Emily. Dom notices.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Yeah, well it's a party, mingle, get drunk. Who plays chess with all this hooch and booze around?

KEVIN

Made five bucks.

DOMUS

Great, you can buy me a sympathy card.
She'll be here and you guys can say
whatever it is you need to say to each
other. Just try not to cause a scene you
little attention whore.

KEVIN

Where's Belle?

DOMUS

Up at the round table. Getting her
groove on.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Belle, Melissa, MATT, JOE, DILL, and KYLE, who wears a
collared shirt with the collar forever popped, are huddled
around the kitchen table playing TEXAS HOLD 'EM.

The game's for real and Belle has it under her control. She
shuffles with eye popping speed and precision.

BELLE

Comin' at ya faster than Mexican food and
a bottle of Jose Cuervo, try not to
follow the deal cause you might go blind.

In a flash: Belle deals two cards to everyone, lays down the
flop.

BELLE (CONT'D)

This is gonna be the last hand of the
night ladies and gents 'cause I'm tired
of taking all your money and I got a
party to host.

(to Matt)

You're up first superstar.

MATT

Five bucks.

JOE

(folds)

The whole world's against me.

DILL

I'll see it.

MELISSA

I'm done. I need another drink and I
have to pee.

BELLE
Tough luck, Meliss.

Melissa exits the table, conspicuously eying Kyle.

KYLE
Call.

BELLE
I'm in.

The basement door opens and the SOUNDS OF A PARTY erupt and disappear as the door closes behind Melissa.

Belle lays down the turn card.

MATT
Ten.

DILL
Fuck that, I'm done. Getting shit deals
all night.

BELLE
Nothing personal, Dill.

KYLE
I'll call.

BELLE
As do I. -- Here comes the river.

Belle lays down the river.

It's the one she wanted. She conceals her emotion like a pro. Kyle on the other hand, hides nothing, he's happy with the draw. Matt basically has nothing.

MATT
Check.

KYLE
Belle?

BELLE
Yes Kyle.

KYLE
Loan me ten bucks.

BELLE
Why would I want to do that?

KYLE

I'll reimburse you after I takes this pot.

Confident, Belle is more than happy to accommodate.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Raising fourteen.

BELLE

Call. This is for the gold boys.

MATT

How much is in the pot now?

MIKE (O.S.)

Approximately ninety-two dollars.

Belle registers the voice, swings her head around, REVEAL --

MIKE, 19, a perfect physical compliment to Belle, stands behind her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hello Belle.

BELLE

Holy shit! Hey!

A surprised and flustered Belle stands, hugs Mike. The boys at the table share the same expression: "I wish that was me."

BELLE (CONT'D)

What are you doing back? I figured I wouldn't see you till Thanksgiving.

MIKE

Can we talk? I have something I need to tell you.

BELLE

Yeah, definitely.

MIKE

I missed you.

KYLE

Wait, you can't leave. Finish the hand Rain Man so I can get paid.

BELLE

What do you got?

Kyle shows his cards.

KYLE
Pair of Kings. Ace high.

Matt tosses his weak hand.

MATT
Fuuuuuck. Meeeee.

Belle, with a sinister grin, presents her cards.

BELLE
Got Queens. Three of them. Sorry junior.

Kyle, crestfallen, downs his drink.

KYLE
Well, fuck, happy birthday Belle.

BELLE
It's not my birthday. -- Join the rest of the party. Have fun you guys.

Mike and Belle exit the kitchen, head to an adjacent room. The SOUNDS OF A PARTY explode as Dom comes up, takes notice of the departing couple.

DOMUS
No! Oh, fuck no! What is that steroid of a hemorrhoid doing in town?

MATT
Think a better question would be why did he ever leave.

DILL
It's not fair. Girls who look like that should never pin themselves down to one guy. Spread the wealth.

DOMUS
She's perfect isn't she? Her only flaw is that she's easily brainwashed by that yambag with her right now.

MATT
Why is that? Didn't they break up?

Dom takes the seat vacated by Belle.

DOMUS

They did. And he was her first and was always good to her. Loyal as a lap dog. -- Why is he here?

MATT

Aren't you and her like best friends?

DOMUS

We spend quality time together in the sewing circle, yes. I even changed a flat tire for her once.

KYLE

Why don't you just make a move? Grab that ass and...go for it?

DOMUS

Why don't you? Or any of you poor bastards for that matter.

JOE

I already have a girlfriend.

MATT

I'm working on it.

DOMUS

You're working on it? By spending the last hour getting your wallet raped by her in a card game? She's never going to respect you guys. Be more productive with your time. Learn origami.

DILL

All this time you've spent with her, you never got in her pants?

DOMUS

Christ man, no. I got to be in her life and that's enough for me.

DILL

That's fucking sad man. Almost pathetic.

DOMUS

You're such a warm hearted soul. But I know what you're saying. I'm like a brother to her and that's all I'll ever be. I realize that.

KYLE

Regardless, I'd kill to be in your shoes.

DOMUS
 (re: Mike)
 Why is he here?

JOE
 It is a party.

A beat, Dom looks at the desperate souls before him.

DOMUS
 You know guys, fuck 'em. I'm just her friend. So I say we go downstairs, say hello to Uncle Ernie about ten or twelve times and get ourselves some ladies for the evening.

Inspired, the guys bounce up from their seats, head to the basement...SOUNDS OF A PARTY. Dom puts his arm around Kyle.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
 To tell you the truth Collar my good man, these shoes aren't all that comfortable. They leave blisters.

Dom stops at the top step, his stomach growls. He feels uneasy, nauseous. He takes a deep breath before heading into the fray. Door shuts, silencing the SOUNDS OF A PARTY.

JACKSON (O.S.)
 You did that?

Jackson and Lulu enter, he's got a spring in his step and a paper bag in his hand. Lulu hops up onto the counter as Jackson moves to the fridge.

LULU
 Oh it was the most intense moment of my life. I'm hurdling towards the ground and it's like, "shit I'm gonna die, I'm gonna die, this is it!" Life flashes before my eyes. Totally wishing I'd seen Paris before I go.

Jackson grabs a carton of Orange Juice from the fridge, leaves the door open as he moves the the kitchen counter.

LULU (CONT'D)
 And wham! You shoot back up and hang there in limbo while your senses try and register what the hell just happened.

Jackson opens a cabinet, removes a tumbler, there's a permanent smile painted on his face.

LULU (CONT'D)

You gotta do it. It's a life confirming
rush. Orgasmic even.

He pours the O.J. into the tumbler.

JACKSON

I don't know, babysitting's not for me.
Kids see me and freak out. They either
cry and turn away or crap themselves and
stare at me.

Lulu smiles as the Vodka is poured. Jackson looks to her:
She wants a little more.

LULU

That's incredibly charming but I was
talking about bungee jumping and how you
need to give it a whirl.

Jackson hands her the cup.

JACKSON

Oh, bungee jumping, it sounded like--

LULU

No it didn't.

Lulu takes a swig.

LULU (CONT'D)

Perfect.

JACKSON

Yes you are.

Lulu smiles, gives him a kiss.

LULU

Lets go down and join the party. I want
to get you dancing.

Jackson screws the top onto the Vodka and they head down to
the basement. THE SOUNDS OF A PARTY erupt, disappear.

The O.J. remains out and the fridge remains open. Curiously,
there is a wet/dry vac off to the side.

BELLE (O.S.)

...it wasn't entirely my fault.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Belle sits on the couch. Mike stands by the entertainment center. They're reminiscing.

BELLE

I was following that idiot Jeff.

MIKE

Hey, bottom line, you were going the wrong way down a major highway and almost killed us.

BELLE

No cars were coming.

MIKE

I never should of let you drive.

BELLE

That was a fun night. We had a lot of those.

MIKE

Remember the ski trip? Lake Placid.

BELLE

Barely. It was first time I drank. Lost total control.

MIKE

Yeah, but it was nice. Falling asleep, waking up together in the same bed.

Belle remembers. A beat.

BELLE

So do you want a beer or something?

MIKE

No, I really didn't come here for that. I just wanted to see you.

BELLE

Why are you here...to get to the point.

MIKE

It's my Dad.

Mike hesitates. Belle waits.

MIKE (CONT'D)

He had a heart attack.

BELLE

Oh my God. Shit is he, how is he? Where is he?

MIKE

He's home. He's fine. It happened a week ago. He now has to cut out nicotine and caffeine if wants to keep on living.

BELLE

So he's okay?

MIKE

Cranky, irritable and impossible to talk to, but okay.

BELLE

I should stop by. When are you going back to school?

MIKE

I don't know. I just left.

BELLE

You left?

MIKE

I hated it there. Going to art school in Italy was not my choice. I had it as an option, but not a choice. He was why I was there and when I heard what happened, "Boom, there it was:" an out. A way back home to the states. Back to familiarity. Back to you.

BELLE

I'll always be here for you, but we'll never be what we were. I thought you understood that.

MIKE

I not asking for that.

BELLE

Yes you are.

Mike is unable to find words. Rattled by Belle's maturity.

BELLE (CONT'D)

Mike, listen: I'm sorry about what's going on with your Dad and I'm sorry you left school. You shouldn't have.

(MORE)

BELLE (CONT'D)

My life has moved very quickly, a lot of shit has happened to me that I couldn't predict, you know that. You know what happened with my Mother...better than anyone. I've been forced to grow up unreasonably fast and there's been no time to think, only react. I love you and I always will but I had to move on. You left and I slowed down and concentrated on just, for the first time in my life, concentrated on being a High School girl.

MIKE

Wow.

BELLE

Don't get the wrong idea. I treasure the last three years with you and I carry them with me everyday. But I needed a change. You leaving gave me an out. I'm...we...are young and life only happens once. Take full advantage of Italy. Experience everything and use it to become who you are. Don't give up--

MIKE

No, just stop right there. Stop talking.

BELLE

What?

MIKE

I did not think it was possible for this week to get any worse. But there it is. The only girl I ever loved tells me her greatest moment was me leaving her life.

BELLE

Sit down.

MIKE

No, you're right. I should've moved on already. Have a nice life.

Mike storms off.

BELLE

Mike! Mike, that's not what I meant!
(to self)
Why is this happening?

She chases after him.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Mike is out the door. Belle follows in hot pursuit.

BELLE
Let me explain!

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Belle catches up to Mike, grabs his arm, turns him around.

MIKE
Alright then, explain.

BELLE
When we went out it was just you and me all day, everyday. You were all I needed. I experienced so many firsts with you and have zero regrets. You helped me evolve into the person I am now. When my Mom got sick, she...was very grateful for you being around. You inspired a lot of happiness when it was a hard feeling to come by. All I can say is thank you and I love you.

(a beat)

Then our time ran out and you left. For the first few months I was lost and utterly alone. I didn't know who I was or who my friends were. I hit the typical adolescent breakdown of: who am I? Where do I go? Am I a lesbian? What do I do about it? And I don't really have any answers yet. You know what I mean? You are in my heart for good. Don't ever forget that.

Belle is on the edge of tears. Mike sees this, he takes her in his arms.

MIKE
I'm sorry. Come here.

BELLE
I'm not telling you to leave. I'm just telling you what I should have fifteen months ago.

MIKE
You taught me how to cry, Belle. I will always love you for that.

He gives her a kiss on the forehead. They break.

BELLE
Goodbye Mike.

MIKE
Yeah...I'll see you.

Mike walks away from her. Belle leans against the front door, emotionally exhausted. THEN: the front door opens and Belle falls backwards OUT OF FRAME --

KEVIN (O.S.)
Oh shit!

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Kevin helps Belle up.

KEVIN
You alright?

BELLE
I'll live, thanks. But my ass is telling a different story.

KEVIN
Sorry. I heard Mike was here. Everything okay?

BELLE
Yeah, perfectly sound. And where the hell do you think your going so early? Don't tell me I'm out of beer.

KEVIN
The beer's hardly been touched, with Dom's swimming pool doing all the damage. -- She hasn't showed up yet.

Belle sees the worry in his eyes.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
I think I'm getting an ulcer.

BELLE
Don't tell me you guys are breaking up?

KEVIN
That's just it, I don't know what I'm doing. I have to see her. I'll know what to do as soon as she opens the door.

BELLE
How?

KEVIN

By the look on her face. It'll say what I need to know. -- You want to talk about Mike? I got time to stall.

BELLE

I really don't want to revisit that conversation anytime soon and more importantly I have a party I've been neglecting to accommodate.

KEVIN

Say no more.

Kevin nods, opens the door.

BELLE

Good luck.

KEVIN

Thanks.

Belle shuts the door behind Kevin and heads off...

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Belle comes down the steps, searching, finds Dom by the stereo perusing a crate of records. She walks his way.

BELLE

Hey.

DOMUS

You got some classic stuff here. Hank Williams, Al Jolsen, Elvis Pres and Cost, Sinatra, Sammy D.J, Don Hoe. Awe, wait a minute, "The Chipmunks Sing Christmas." A perennial classic.

BELLE

My Mom played it non-stop around Christmas till I was eight. Practically wore the needle down on the record player.

DOMUS

(sniffs a record)

I love the smell of vinyl in the morning.

Dom puts the record on the turntable.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Mike was here?

BELLE

Yes he was.

DOMUS

He come crying back?

BELLE

He had a family situation.

DOMUS

He proposed to you, didn't he?

BELLE

Yes, but when he went down on one knee he accidentally farted. Ruined the moment.

DOMUS

Seriously, what was up?

BELLE

Nothing. I probably won't see him again.

DOMUS

I don't believe you.

BELLE

That's your decision.

DOMUS

You sure you're stable?

Belle does not like where this conversation is at. She takes a beat, lets her surroundings reign her in.

BELLE

Help me get everyone's attention will you?

DOMUS

What Belle, you're drunk as shit on a barstool and not wearing any panties?!

Half the party stops. Belle rolls her eyes at Dom.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

And the transvestite hooker and donkey show you ordered are here?! A chick with a dick in the ass of an ass!?

The entire party stops. Belle, and everyone else, gives Dom a disgusted/confused look.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

(ashamed)

That was gross. I'm going to hell.

Dom skulks. Belle now has the floor.

BELLE

I just wanted to thank you guys for coming out, help ring in the school year. The time is only...

(she doesn't know)

Dom?

DOMUS

(checks his watch)

11:10 and 13 seconds.

Dom continues to quietly count the seconds.

BELLE

Not even midnight. Plenty of good drinking hours left. Just remember that I've got your keys so if you've touched any kind of substance, which it looks like all of you had, you must present your case to me if you want them back. All I ask is that you respect my house and keep it clean and in the toilet. The toilet is your friend.

Belle points off screen to --

INSERT BATHROOM DOOR, A SIGN READS: FLUSH, FLUSH AND DON'T FORGET TO FLUSH.

PETE

Happy motherfucking birthday Belle!
Wwoooooo!

BELLE

Thank you, but is not my birthday. So don't feel bad about not bringing me a present. Let the party resume.

The drinkin' and bullshitin' picks up where it left off.

DOMUS

...53, 54.

BELLE

Dom?

DOMUS
55, 56...

Belle sends a friendly right hook into Dom's shoulder.

DOMUS (CONT'D)
Owwwww!! Damn sweetie.

BELLE
Get the music going again.

DOMUS
Hold up. 11:11, make a wish.

BELLE
I thought you did that at 12:34 and 56
seconds? 1,2,3,4,5,6?

DOMUS
You can do whatever works for you, but
I've been a faithful wish maker to 11:11
since my mother tucked me in when I was
ten and introduced me to it. She made me
wish for a visit from Ed McMahon and
publishers clearing house.

BELLE
Any of your wishes ever come true?

DOMUS
Not a one.

BELLE
I admire your consistency, but why?

Dom closes his eyes and makes his wish. His eyes open.

DOMUS
Tradition. I'm a sucker for it. And I'm
starting to think my Mom belongs in a
mental hospital with some of her
household customs.

BELLE
Like what else?

DOMUS
Here, she taught me this one night after
she got a bottle of the Captain in her.

Dom starts the record player. MUSIC IN: THE CHIPMUNKS "WE
WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS."

Belle looks on with a smile as Dom begins to dance and lip sync to the Chipmunks.

The dance gets playfully dirty as he finds the foundation pole in the middle of the basement and starts his own ode to Elizabeth Berkley in "Showgirls" pole dance as the Chipmunks sing.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Down the street from Belle's. Cars fill the curb. Kevin on the sidewalk, staring at the house.

He moves to the side of the house where a second floor window is open. A light is on. He yells up to it.

KEVIN
Emily!...Em!

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emily on her bed, an IPOD feeds music into her ears as she reads a book: "THE PURPOSE OF YOUR LIFE: FINDING YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD USING SYNCHRONICITY, INTUITION, AND UNCOMMON SENSE" by Carol Adrienne.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In front of Kevin is a row of bushes with small rocks underlying them. He grabs a rock, chucks it at the window.

INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The rock flies through the window and hits the book in Emily's hand. She examines it, moves to the window.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kevin bent down, grabs a rock. He cocks, ready to fire--

EMILY
Throw it and I drop my mattress on your head.

KEVIN
How come you're not answering your phone?

EMILY
Didn't hear it ring.

KEVIN
Could you come to the front door?

EMILY

Why?

KEVIN

You know why. Come on, let's take a walk and talk?

EMILY

I'm ready for bed, Kevin.

KEVIN

Please. We need this.

A beat.

EMILY

Give me a minute.

Kevin waits, nerves take over as he observes the neighborhood and the stars...he's gazing.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The Chipmunks are still singing and Dom is still dancing, but now he's got an audience. One of whom is Jane. She's waving a dollar. Dom straddles the pole, leans over and takes the dollar from her with his teeth.

He continues to dance as the song ends with a healthy "...and a happy new year!" A smatter of APPLAUSE as he takes a bow.

DOMUS

Oh thank you, you are truly beautiful people. God bless the Chipmunks they sure know how to rock out the joint.

He grabs a cup of "Uncle Ernie's" from the center table.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Remember the one o'clock is nothing like the eleven o'clock so come again. And please, no change. It's cold and all that jingling can do some damage to my boys.

The PARTY MUSIC starts back up. Jane approaches Dom.

JANE

I never knew you were so talented, like you were really good and can I have my dollar back though, I'm like totally broke after my summer job ended.

DOMUS

Hey, I earned this dollar. You don't tip a waitress and then ask for it back the next time you see her do you?

JANE

Pleeeeeeeeeeease.

DOMUS

Fine. But you owe me. I gave you a free show. Remember that.

Dom hands her the dollar back.

JANE

Where did you learn to move like that? I mean like, I could probably show you a few things, I love to dance.

DOMUS

Yeah well, it's in my blood. And I bet there isn't a thing you could show me.

JANE

It's in your blood?

Dom takes a good swig of "Uncle Ernie's." Jane takes a sip of hers.

DOMUS

Well, back when my Grandfather died, it, you know left my Grandmother in kind of a bind. So she started dancing topless in a small town go-go bar to support her, my Mom, and my Uncle before she got a real job. But that took forever cause she had no real work skills except for shaking her booty and putting her heels behind her head. So she did that for like ten years.

JANE

Really?

DOMUS

Oh yeah, she's a born entertainer. It just came naturally to her and it's the same for me. I know she'd be proud of me. Hey, she had to make ends meet and I've always respected her for that.

JANE

You're like, totally full of it, aren't you?

Dom takes a second swig. Jane sips hers.

DOMUS

I never really questioned anything my Uncle Ernie told me. He said that she would come home with nothing but singles, stinking of Winston's, and she had freaky little booby tassels, you know those things? They would whirl around like a pinwheel. Anyway, that's what I was told and I really need a psychiatrist. Jesus Christ my family tree is messed up. It's like, please someone just chop it down cause the Deville name is rotting. Lets put an end to recycling, yeah!

Dom finishes his cup, he's completely kinetic. Jane sips. Dom yells to someone (O.S.).

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Hey Matty! What are you, looking for some meats and cheeses?

DOM'S POV: Matt in the kitchen area, looking in the fridge.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

(to Matt)

Unless your libido is in there, shut it! In-ter-act my friend!

(to Jane)

Yeah, I could totally see you in a strip club. -- You gonna finish that?

Dom takes her cup, swigs.

JANE

I'm like way too shy, no way.

DOMUS

You're so full of life, you got great rhythm, a great body, and you're so good with people. I'd pay to see you.

JANE

Are you kidding, I'm hideous. I can't even like, get a boyfriend.

Dom finishes her cup, smiles at Jane. She smiles back. Dom knows what he has to do.

DOMUS
I need another drink. You want one?

JANE
Okay.

THEN: Belle shows with a cup for Dom and another for Jane.

BELLE
Wha-la.

JANE
Oh my god Belle I'm having such a good time, your house rules. This is so much nicer than like my house you. I love the carpet down here. It feels like plush right? Hey are like Jackson and Lulu together or something cause they got here twenty minutes ago and haven't said one word to anybody, they're just sitting over there laughing at each other. Oh my god he like, kissed her.

JANE'S POV: Lulu and Jackson over in the living room area, canoodling on the couch.

DOMUS
Like, yeah I guess so.
(off cup)
This is beer.

BELLE
Yes it is. And I must say that was the sweetest rendition of I Wish you a Merry Christmas I have ever had the pleasure of witnessing.

Jane, visibly affected by Jackson's canoodling, checks out of the conversation.

DOMUS
Don't thank me, thank Alvin, Simon and Theodore. Why am I drinking beer?

BELLE
Ernie has left the building.

DOMUS
No way, already?!?

Panicked, Dom sprints to the --

INT. BELLE'S BASEMENT - KIDDY POOL - NIGHT

A tiny puddle remains. Littered with cigarette butts, garbage, snacks, etc. Dom stands over it, devastated.

DOMUS

Son of a bitch. Have you guys no respect for divine substance?

Eric enters, throws his cigarette in the pool.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

Hey, this ain't no trash can.

Dom throws the butt at Eric.

ERIC

Is it soup? 'Cause I like soup.

DOMUS

Yes, it's soup. Irish soup.

Eric is 100% wasted.

ERIC

You, have you seen my dog, man? I had my pitbull here and I can't find him.

DOMUS

There was a dog here?

ERIC

I was smoking and he was drinking from the pool over here and I was smoking and--

DOMUS

Your fucking dog drank my drink?

Eric busts out LAUGHING.

ERIC

Got you man. You're so bent, dude. I don't have no dog, son. But I get a lot of pussy cats.

The wasted LAUGHTER continues.

DOMUS

I'm gonna let that little joke slide because I like you and you smell like a Jamaican barbecue. Just get out of my face.

ERIC
 (still laughing)
 Here kitty, kitty, kitty...

Eric rejoins the fray. Belle saddles up to Dom.

BELLE
 Told you.

DOMUS
 Animals. Filthy animals.

BELLE
 I'm going upstairs to get something, come with me.

DOMUS
 Nah, I'm gonna stay down here. And I don't mean to be rude but you don't need to be riding my saddle all night long. Mingle. You're about to start senior year with these people and you hardly know them. Get to chattin' girl.

Whether Dom is aware of it or not, what he just said hurt Belle's feelings.

BELLE
 I'll be sure to put that advice in my front pocket, gracious me amigo. I'm getting my secret weapon. Hold down the reigns, will ya.

Belle leaves. Dom looks to his beer and takes a long, hard swig. It's no "Uncle Ernie's" but it'll do. He walks over to the --

INT. BELLE'S BASEMENT - LIVING ROOM AREA - NIGHT

Where Jackson and Lulu are currently liplocked.

DOMUS
 (deep voice)
 Get your hands off my daughter, punk!

JACKSON
 Wait your turn, sir.

LULU
 (laughing, very drunk)
 Hey Deville!

DOMUS
Is there something I should now about?

JACKSON
We're on.

DOMUS
That's what I thought.
(to Lulu)
Are you cool with this? You know he
still wears slippers to bed?

LULU
(laughing)
D. D. Deville.

DOMUS
How'd it go down, big man?

JACKSON
I went over her house and poured it out.
Let my heart do the talking.

DOMUS
What did she do?

JACKSON
She kissed me.

LULU
(singing)
"and then she kissed meeeee"

DOMUS
How much did she drink?

JACKSON
A half a screwdriver.

LULU
Three quarters. -- What kind of name is
Domus Deville?

DOMUS
My Mom wanted me to be a porn star so she
gave me a fitting name. It goes perfect
next to Dirk Diggler does it not?
Deville and Diggler attorneys at law in:
"Clitigation 7: They'll bang the truth
out of you." Too bad my Dad didn't hold
up his end of the bargain. Those genes
weren't big enough if you know what I
mean.

JACKSON
You need help.

DOMUS
I'm aware of this.

LULU
Nighty night.

Lulu lays out on the couch, kicks off her right shoe.

LULU (CONT'D)
Play with my hair. Action Jackson.

Jackson shakes his head and turns his attention to Lulu.

DOMUS
(quietly)
God bless you, J. Don't come crying to
me when she breaks your heart and clears
your bank...

Dom eyes the stairs. No sign of Belle. Looks to the happy
couch couple, then the stairs again...No Belle. THEN: Kyle
and Melissa come into view, making out as if they are the
only two in the room. Next to them: Beth, Janet and Matt
flirt. Dill fills Denise's cup, puts on his best moves...

Dom's feeling very lonely....Then his eyes find Jane fixing
her pony tail. Dom smiles to himself, finishes his beer.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Kevin and Emily walk along the sidewalk. Kevin, overtaken by
nerves, plays with a ring on his right hand.

EMILY
Why are you nervous?

KEVIN
I'm not nervous.

EMILY
You're lying.

KEVIN
I'm not nervous, I'm--

EMILY
Fiddling with your ring. And I know that
every time you get nervous you do that.
So don't stand here and lie to me.

KEVIN

What's going on with you...with us?

EMILY

What do you mean?

KEVIN

I think you'll agree that our most recent encounters haven't been all that pleasant.

EMILY

Agreed. We've been doing more fighting than fucking. Your point?

KEVIN

That right there. What was that? What's happened to you?

EMILY

Just tell me what you want to tell me.

KEVIN

I don't know what I want to tell you.

Emily, fed up, stops walking.

EMILY

Fine, whenever inspiration hits you and you're able to find the words to match your thoughts, I'll be in my room. Not holding my breath.

She walks back to her house. Kevin takes a desperate beat. THEN, he blurts it out:

KEVIN

I think we should break up.

Emily stops, sighs(relief?).

KEVIN (CONT'D)

It's obvious we have to do something here and I think breaking up or taking a break are both viable options.

He catches up to Emily and they resume walking.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

And I'm nervous because I'm not sure how you feel.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

If I say I wanna take a break, and you want to stay together and work this out, then I probably screwed up any chance of reconciliation. But if you agree--

EMILY

I agree Kevin. We should break up, and there is no more to it. That's it.

KEVIN

I can...honestly stand here and say I don't know where we went wrong, but I still want to know you, and sti--

EMILY

Open your eyes Kev. I Want. To. Break. Up. I don't love you. I'm tired of the same tired routine every weekend. I'm tired of being with you. I'm tired of putting up with you and your friends and your mundane crap. I want more, I'll welcome stability when I'm thirty not sixteen.

KEVIN

How long have you felt like this? Did you ever love me?

EMILY

That doesn't matter.

KEVIN

Fuck yeah it matters! If you tell me this came about a few days or weeks ago, fine whatever, it just faded but it was there. But if you felt like this for the last two years, I would feel so much hate toward you for wasting my time and...and using me, that I don't think I would know how to deal with it. So tell me. How long?

Emily can't say it. She doesn't have to. Her expression speaks volumes. Luckily for her --

EDDIE approaches.

EDDIE

Yo yo, is it only me or are the mother fucking stars just breathtaking and shit. I admire those cosmopolitans, they lucky. Know what I'm sayin'?

Kevin stares at Emily, waiting, he's about to cry.

KEVIN

Em, please. Tell me.

EDDIE

A yo, wheat thin, where's the party at?
I been up and down this block like five
times and can't find no house...

(looks at his hand)

Number 21 Zershwood. I need some ladies
and a cold glass of liquid gold, stat.
Know what I'm sayin'?

Kevin holds his stare, desperately waiting. Emily looks as if she's finally going to respond to him...but instead:

EMILY

(to Eddie)

Number 212, not 21. White house, red
mailbox, tons of cars. Didn't you notice
the cars?

Emily points the same way Eddie came from.

EDDIE

Yeah, yeah I walked by that house. I
just figured hey, it's a well-to-do-
neighborhood, they got a lot a money 'n'
a lot cars, you know what I'm sayin'.
See ya there.

Eddie sparks up a cigarette and he's off to the party.

KEVIN

Em, answer the question. Please. You
owe me.

That last line got her attention. She's ready to respond,
and with a hint of empathy in her voice she offers:

EMILY

Forget about me, Kevin. I'm sorry. I've
paid what I owed and now I'm moving on.

And with that, she's gone. Kevin breaks down.

KEVIN

Fuck you for that! I loved you!

Emily doesn't look back. Tears fall from Kevin's eyes.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The calm atmosphere suggests the night is coming to a close.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The party has taken on a more intimate tone. A few loyalists are still mingling, making the most of the final night of summer.

Dom and Jane are slow dancing together. Kyle and Melissa, still sloppy and all over each other, move next to them. Dill kicks it to Denise on the couch.

INT. BELLE'S BASEMENT - CENTER TABLE - NIGHT

Belle and Jackson play a game of chess.

BELLE

Is she passed out?

Belle drinks from a big bottle of JACK DANIELS.

JACKSON

Like a baby. I stuck her in your bedroom I think. I really don't see your Dad as having a poster of "Titanic" starring heartthrob Leonardo DiCaprio on his wall. And nineteen different pillows on the bed, what is that?

BELLE

So...you and Lulu?

JACKSON

Yup, me and Lulu. Told her how I felt and luckily the feelings were enthusiastically reciprocated. -- What do you think of her?

BELLE

I really don't know her. But she comes off as a likable person.

JACKSON

You don't think she's a spoiled rich bitch?

BELLE

First impression, spoiled rich, not a bitch. Her parents got money but I really don't think it consumes a girl like her.

JACKSON

Exactly, she's very self-induced. Real happy-go-lucky.

BELLE

She'll be good for you. I approve.

JACKSON

Thanks Belle, that helps.

BELLE

I think Kyle and Melissa are about to swallow each other.

THEIR POV: Kyle and Melissa make out, saliva rolling down his chin and all over his cheek. His collar is soaked.

JACKSON

Oh sweet baby Jesus. Put the women and children to bed because this is gonna get ugly.

BELLE

I say good for her. Let the girl get hers, you know.

JACKSON

Big dog's gotta eat.

BELLE

What about the other happy couple? Weren't you and Jane on the cusp of getting together?

JACKSON

Yeah we were, but I ultimately saw Lulu as the one I had a better friendship with. And friendship and a sexual relationship are one in the same in my book.

BELLE

Your book is in need of a lengthy editing process and a touch of reality.

JACKSON

Sooner or later the fact of two people being such good friends will end them up naked doing the horizontal bop.

BELLE

Friends having sex with friends. An excellent sitcom pitch.

JACKSON

I'm talking about close friends here, not the "Hey I copy homework from you in homeroom so I guess were friends kind of thing." The friendship that close, intimate friends have will lead them to sex.

BELLE

What about two close female friends or two best male friends? Will they eventually want each other?

JACKSON

You're trying to create a sort of paradox here aren't you?

Belle concentrates on the chess board. Jackson stares at her, intrigued by her silence towards the question. Finally:

BELLE

I feel as if there are small Leprechauns on my chest and my ass dancing and singing "La Vida Loca" while wearing only a glittered speedo. Because that's the only place guys look when they talk to me or walk by me.

Belle looks up from the board and catches the confused look thrown at her by Jackson, he quickly responds.

JACKSON

What about Deville over there? He's not like that. He respects, borderline fears you, he's--

BELLE

Forever fooling around with some random girl.

BELLE'S POV: Dom kisses Jane, breaks away, says something to her, she smiles and he kisses her again.

BELLE (CONT'D)

Like now.

Jackson witnesses the kiss. Pays no mind.

JACKSON

Still...I think you two are about to have sex any day now.

Belle almost chokes on her swig of JD.

BELLE

Excuse me?

JACKSON

What's it gonna be Belle? Two close-knit friends. One male. One female. Two people who I swear must have been separated at birth, can't get much closer without doing the old in and out routine.

Jackson makes a naughty hand gesture.

BELLE

So you condone incest then, if we were separated at birth?

JACKSON

See, that's the same sarcastic shit Dom would say. You guys belong together, admit it.

Belle and Jackson go silent as Dom and Jane walk past them, heading for the stairs.

Belle moves her Queen. Jackson counters. Belle takes a long, full swig, killing the bottle. She throws it into the kiddy pool and makes her final move.

BELLE

Checkmate.

Her Queen knocks down his King.

JACKSON

That did it. Thank you Belle, I'm about to pass out so if it's cool I'll spend the night in your room with Lu?

BELLE

Go ahead. I'll crash...somewhere.

JACKSON

(gets up)

Oh, have you seen Kev? He was on a hara kiri mission tonight.

BELLE

I saw him a while ago heading "towards the light."

JACKSON

Poor bastard. -- Well, If you want a relationship, I can't believe I have to tell you this, if you want Dom as a boyfriend, tell him. If a friend is it, then you have put my theory on the dance floor and stomped all over it. -- Good night.

BELLE

Night.

Jackson leaves. Belle focuses on the Queen that has knocked over the King. A CRASH (O.S.) grabs her attention --

Eric has passed out into the kiddie pool, Eddie stands over him LAUGHING his ass off. Belle smiles to herself. Looks back at the chess pieces.

BELLE (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you, girl?

Belle moves to the kiddie pool: Eric is laid out, face up.

EDDIE

Yo, this boy was talking about his pet goat drinking from the toilet and then whack! Down he goes like a hooker for five bucks and shit, know what I'm sayin'.

(puts his arm around her)

Ooh, babygirl did I ever tell you that you are the hottest thing since the Spice Girls? Your eyes are like translucent pools in which I drown, for real.

BELLE

Who let you in?

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jane and Dom on the hallway floor making out. Jane stops.

JANE

What are we doing?

DOM

I think kissing. But then again, I'm no expert.

JANE

Hey, guess what?

DOMUS
I already know.

JANE
No, like check this out.

Jane contorts both legs behind her head and then walks a few steps on her hands. Dom's jaw drops. Jane collapses, giggling madly.

DOMUS
That was the single, most amazing thing I have witnessed since "The Smurfs on Ice" when I was six.

JANE
I can like contort my body into twelve unnatural positions. The most on my gymnastics team.

DOMUS
I can recite and or sing every single line to the Sugar Hill Gang's "Rappers Delight."

JANE
Cool! Speaking of cool, did you know that cool whip and like oreo cookies, like...I'm like dotally trunk.

Dom gets up and heads to the bedroom across the hall, he stands in the doorway. Dom then looks past Jane as Jackson reaches the top of the steps, surveying the scene. He gives a disapproving look to Dom.

JANE (CONT'D)
(to Dom, oblivious of Jackson)
Oh my god I totally see like four or two or like four of you right now. Cool!
It's like my eyes are a circus funhouse mirror!

Dom ignores Jackson. Jane remains oblivious. Jackson disappears to the other end of the hall. Dom gets back to business:

DOMUS
Can you come to the one of me you find most attractive?

Jane crawls over to him. Growling the whole way. She's turned into a puppy dog. Dom waits, mesmerized by what he is seeing.

JANE

Ruff!

Jane gets to him, licks his hand. THEN: she attacks him.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane and Dom make out as they burst in, eventually hitting the bed, stopping their momentum. They break from each other and take a beat.

DOMUS

Good girl.

JANE

Are you going to remember this tomorrow?

DOMUS

I hope so, Lassie.

JANE

I want to dance!

Jane jumps up on the bed and performs her dance of seduction. She's drunk, awkward and bumbling. Dom watches, there's something about this girl he finds utterly charming. He smiles.

DOMUS

You were right. You got the goods, girl.
Really showing me some moves. Bullrush!!

Dom flies on the bed and tackles Jane. Her SCREAM segues into wild LAUGHTER. He's on top of her. They kiss.

DOMUS (CONT'D)

You sure about this?

JANE

Abosolutately. Jackson.

Dom reacts, "where did that come from?" He leers at Jane, blissfully unaware of her gaffe. Dom closes his eyes, disappointed. His eyes open and he gives Jane a soft kiss.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Belle dumps beer cups out in the sink. Throws the now empty cups in a garbage bag. She lays out the remaining sets of car keys on the round table and exits the kitchen.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Belle takes a seat on the couch, grabs the handmade quilt that hangs on top and lays down. Alone.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lulu passed out over the covers, Jackson can't take his eyes off his slumbering partner. He kisses her on the forehead.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - PARK - NIGHT

Kevin sits on a swing in a nearby neighborhood park, he drinks from a bottle of Wild Turkey. Sadness personified.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - SUNRISE - NEXT MORNING

Cups litter the lawn. Beth, Janet, and Matt shield their eyes from the sun as they head to their cars on the curb. The front door opens and Dill and Denise exit, happy.

THEN: Kyle flies past them on a get away mission. Melissa follows, all smiles. Kyle gives her a shallow wave, gets in his car and burns some rubber.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BELLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Jackson and Lulu lay like spoons. Harmonious and sweet.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dom and Jane get dressed. An eerie silence between them.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Dom takes his keys off the round table. He sees Belle asleep on the family room couch. Jane waits by the front door.

He takes a beat, staring at Belle as she sleeps. He looks over to Jane, and back to Belle. Regret washes over him.

INT. DOM'S BMW - MOVING - MORNING

Dom stares at the road ahead. Jane glances at Domus, wanting to say something...she looks away just as Dom eyeballs her.

DOMUS

You said a left onto Cannon?

JANE

Yeah. It's like, the third house on the right.

DOMUS
My right or your right?

JANE
(confused)
What?

DOMUS
I'm...joking.

JANE
Oh...

She lets out an embarrassed laugh.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - DOM'S BMW - MORNING

The BMW stops at the curb. The passenger door opens. Jane pauses before getting out.

JANE
Domus.

DOMUS
Yeah.

JANE
Thanks.

DOMUS
Don't mention it. It's the least I could do.

JANE
No like, I had fun last night. Thanks.

DOMUS
So did I.
(pause)
You know that--

JANE
Nothing happened. I remember. Like I said, thanks. Ruff!

They share an uncomfortable laugh.

DOMUS
Bye.

JANE
Bye.

She's gone. Dom can't help but smile to himself.

I/E. DOM'S BMW - SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - MOVING - MORNING

Dom drives, he notices Kevin walking along the sidewalk. Dom honks his horn, pulls up next to Kev.

DOMUS
Hey good looking.

KEVIN
What are you doing in these neck of the woods?

DOMUS
Being a good samaritan. Returned a stray dog to its owner. Get in, I'll drive your sloppy ass home.

KEVIN
You hungry?

DOMUS
Sure.

KEVIN
Because I could eat.

DOMUS
Alright, man. Let's get some breakfast.

INT. DUNGAREE DINER - MORNING

Breakfast time on a Tuesday. The Diner is scattered with regulars. ROSIE, 60s, gray-haired, energetic and enchanting is entertaining the counter crowd with her wit and charm.

INT. DUNGAREE DINER - FRONT WINDOW TABLE - MORNING

Kevin and Dom sit across from each other reading menus.

DOMUS
What are you getting?

KEVIN
Coffee and more coffee.

DOMUS
Where were you all night?

KEVIN
I went to Em's house.

DOMUS
How did it go down?

KEVIN
In an impressive blaze--

Rosie interrupts.

ROSIE
What can I get you boys this morning?

DOMUS
Hey Rosie.

ROSIE
Phew, what kind of night did you two have?

DOMUS
It was a night to forget my lady.

ROSIE
A good start on the road to recovery would be a hot cup of coffee and a hot shower.

KEVIN
I'll go with the French Toast and a cup of strong, strong coffee.

ROSIE
You got it sweetie. And how about you lover boy?

DOMUS
The hot shower sounds tempting but I left my loofah at home. So I'll manage with a cup of coffee and the toast, French.

ROSIE
You boys are in here all the time and always order the same damn thing.

DOMUS
Safe bets. It's impossible to screw up French Toast.

ROSIE
Yeah, well you just wait.

She grabs their menus.

KEVIN

Thanks Rosie.

ROSIE

And if you boys don't do something about the bouquet of odor, I might have to close off this section.

DOMUS

You don't rely on your tips to live do you?

ROSIE

My looks is all I need to get by, Romeo. I'll be back with the coffee.

Rosie leaves.

DOMUS

If I was only fifty maybe sixty years older. I would kill to take that to Wednesday bingo night.

KEVIN

She does have a lot of "positive" energy.

A beat.

DOMUS

You broke up?

KEVIN

More like she took her hand and stuck it in my chest, ripped out my heart, threw it on the ground, lit a match and walked away.

DOMUS

How many people here do you think have ever been hurt by a member of the opposite sex?

KEVIN

I don't know, all of them probably. Why?

DOMUS

That's right, even Rosie probably had her heart broken. It's normal, it's part of life. Look at us, were seventeen. We have a lot of living left. Being dumped happens to everyone. It isn't the end.

KEVIN

Do you want to know what she said?

DOMUS

No I don't.

KEVIN

Did you notice all the stars that were out last night? God damn it was a sweet night.

DOMUS

That's what she said, and you interpreted that as a thrash to the heart. What are you?

KEVIN

She never loved me. The last two years, all the emotions we shared together, not one of them was real. My first love played me for a sucker and that kills. You don't know how that feels and I can't begin to describe it to you. So don't give me this rap about being young. It's easy to say if you haven't been there and you're too scared to love anyone. Who cares if your seventeen. You're alive. And unless you're a pitiless bitch, you can feel. And right now, I feel like shit.

DOMUS

This girl tells you she used you, didn't love you, so you decide to tell me that I don't have the capacity to love. Is that accurate?

Rosie approaches with coffee, pours.

ROSIE

There you boys go again, thinking you know everything. It's funny, I never used to get headaches until I started listening to the mindless blabber blabber you teens spout out of your pie holes. -- Can I get you anything else?

DOMUS

Yes. I, we, could use your help.

ROSIE

You want help, ask a boy scout. You want a refill...

(MORE)

ROSIE (CONT'D)
(re: coffee pot)
...ask Rosie.

DOMUS
Tell us about life, madam.

ROSIE
Oh jeez, life...Three words -- birth,
sex, death. That's life boys, go get it.

DOMUS
Are you trying to get rid of us?

ROSIE
Maybe, maybe not. I figured you teens
think you know everything. What I have
to offer would be no help to you.

And Rosie is off.

KEVIN
She's right. We do think we know
everything.

DOMUS
Now I didn't need you to say that. It's
fun to act like you know everything when
you're scared shitless of the reality.
It makes life easier to deal with.

KEVIN
You mean it makes live easier to avoid.

DOMUS
What?

KEVIN
You're avoiding life, Domus.

DOMUS
You're ridiculous.

KEVIN
You're scared of change.

DOMUS
You're...You, I thought we were talking
about you.

KEVIN
What did you do last night?

DOMUS

I partied, I drank, made an ass out of myself and passed out.

KEVIN

Let me rephrase, who did you do last night?

DOMUS

What are you heading towards?

KEVIN

You love Belle and you're afraid to own up to it. You fool around with other girls in hopes of making her so jealous that she'll be the one who initiates intimacy. You satisfy yourself with blind, pointless, one night of lovin', while true love is just a phone call away. You lack nerve.

DOMUS

Awe, fuck you!

He gets the whole Diner's attention, Dom mimes, "I'm sorry."

DOMUS (CONT'D)

I fool around with other girls cause I'm young and I'm horny. Don't tell me about true love. Who's the Helen Keller here, you or me? Who's the one who got dumped and who's the one who got some last night?

Rosie comes with the French Toast.

ROSIE

That a boy.

(to Kevin)

And how 'bout you stanky, you get any tail?

KEVIN

No, I...can't believe you just asked me that. How old are you? I'm sure you got grandkids.

ROSIE

I'm old enough to know you shouldn't ask a woman of my age that question, number one.

(MORE)

ROSIE (CONT'D)

And number two, I have no biological kids to speak of but I do consider all the mouth breathers in this diner as my children. -- Yell if you need me.

Rosie turns away, Kevin yells:

KEVIN

Have you ever been in love!?

Rosie stops, as well as much of the Diner. Love is something she always thinks about but never speaks of. She's eager.

ROSIE

Perhaps.

KEVIN

You ever marry?

ROSIE

Alright. I'll tell you boys something. Maybe it'll help you.

Rosie sits down next to Dom, forcing him to slide down.

ROSIE (CONT'D)

Married when I was seventeen. Son of a bitch was my life. Had the looks, brains, money, and boy could he make Rosie hot under the sheets. He died three years after we got hitched. But I still remember his face, his voice, everything. I won't forget. And yes boys, I was deeper than deep in love with dear ol' Robert.

KEVIN

You every re-marry?

ROSIE

I spent the last fifty someodd years waiting tables, waiting for another Robert to take a seat in my section.

DOMUS

My Dad's name is Robert. He eats here quite often.

KEVIN

That's giving up.

ROSIE

Giving up?

KEVIN

Isn't it?

ROSIE

"We met, we live, and dear, we loved, then comes that fatal day, the love that felt so dear, fades far away. Tonight love hath one alone and lonesome, I love you still and always will, but that's the poison we have to pay." Hank Williams, suicide note, New Years, 1953. That same night, Robert left this world. Every time I hear Hank's music I hear Robert singing me to sleep.

(a beat)

I'm still in love with the dead bastard. Love is an impossible son of a bitch to figure out. The worst part about it is any fool can fall in it and spend the rest of their life trying to get back out.

KEVIN

There never will be another Robert will there?

ROSIE

I had the will to give him my heart. But I can't find the nerve to take it back.

Rosie smiles, as does Kevin.

ROSIE (CONT'D)

Call me pathetic, call me an old stubborn witch but that's it.

DOMUS

Will you go to the prom with me?

ROSIE

You couldn't handle the way I move, darling. -- Break's over.

Rosie gets up, walks away as the "HANK WILLIAMS WHISTLER" from the beach boardwalk bathroom walks right past her WHISTLING "LOVESICK BLUES." She doesn't notice. He sits down behind the guys. The whistling ceases.

DOMUS

I'm lying.

KEVIN

About what?

DOMUS

I didn't have sex with anybody last night. Almost, but something happened and I couldn't do it.

KEVIN

Did Dom's dill become ill and unable to stand still?

DOMUS

You've been dying to use that haven't you? Maya Angelou would be proud.

KEVIN

Who was it this time?

DOMUS

It was Jane.

KEVIN

Jane Miller?

DOMUS

The one and only.

KEVIN

Where was Belle?

DOMUS

I don't know. I wasn't thinking about her.

KEVIN

Listen to yourself.

DOMUS

Yes, listen to me. I spent the first two years of high school trying to get her to notice me, and I succeeded. Beyond my expectations. Now I can accurately call her my friend. And yes, fine, I love Belle, okay, as a friend. Loving her any other way is like loving your clothes, it won't get you anywhere but at least you'll look good.

KEVIN

That's exactly where you are, nowhere. What are you afraid of?

DOMUS

Petting zoos.

KEVIN

Stop avoiding life. You have no college plans, your last five girlfriends lasted about two hours each, every day you find a new way to convince yourself you can't love Belle, just stop. Your future is passing you by.

DOMUS

When did you turn into my guidance counselor?

KEVIN

I know you drive by her house at night.

DOMUS

I'm a staunch supporter of the neighborhood crime watch community, alright.

KEVIN

I know about the tape recorder in the backseat.

DOMUS

Shit. What do you know about it?

KEVIN

I know it helps you avoid taking a chance with Belle. You need to say those things to her. Not to yourself.

A beat. Dom knows Kevin's right.

DOMUS

I just want to be able to look at her and not be scared of how perfect she is and what I could be losing if she rejects me. -- Pretty pathetic isn't it?

KEVIN

Not at all.

Dom nods, Kevin takes a few bites of French Toast.

DOMUS

But as of this morning, I am officially a new man. Although you are a much bigger man than I because you had the capability and the balls to love that bitch without delay. It says a lot for your character and I respect you.

KEVIN

I have this strange feeling that my ass
is being kissed.

DOMUS

I don't have any money for breakfast.

KEVIN

Yeah, I'll pay. Don't worry.

DOMUS

You wanted to eat.

EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - MORNING

Dom drops Kevin off at the curb.

INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

Kevin enters, walks up the stairs.

INT. DOM'S BMW - MOVING - MORNING

Dom drives, pensive.

INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - KEVIN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin undresses. He stops and sits on the edge of the bed.
He's not okay. Every thought is still about her.

INT. DOM'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Dom stands in front of a mirror, post shower, wearing only a
towel. He's fixes himself up nice and pretty: shaved,
brushed, cologned...pretty.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Belle makes instant coffee for herself. Her hair is a bit
damp from a shower and she's unintentionally sexy as ever.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

Belle exits the front door with a cup of coffee. She takes a
seat on the swinging bench against the house.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BELLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Lulu snores painfully, Jackson tries to wake her.

JACKSON

(in between snores)

Hey...Lu...Lulu...Hey.

Jackson pinches her nose, Lulu stirs. He plays innocent.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Look who's awake.

LULU
Morning.

JACKSON
You should've told me you snored.

LULU
I don't snore.

JACKSON
Yeah right, I thought I was sleeping next to a chainsaw. You should get that checked out.

LULU
Well, your morning breath could make a litter box melt with jealousy. You should get that checked out.

Jackson smiles, produces a pack of gum from his pocket and offers Lulu a stick. They stare at each other as they chew their gum...Lulu blows a bubble. Satisfied that his breath has improved, Jackson leans over and kisses Lulu on the lips.

JACKSON
How's that?

LULU
Minty fresh.

Lulu gets up, fully clothed from last night minus one shoe. They half-assedly look around the room for her shoe.

JACKSON
You still should of warned me.

LULU
About the snoring? It's not like I can hear myself sleep, I apologize. You are the first guy I ever spent the night with.

JACKSON
And I am truly honored to be the first to hear the sound of a pig being run over by a lawnmower, but I was referring to the fact that you and alcohol aren't the best of friends.

They give up the search. Lulu removes the one remaining shoe, carries it as they exit the bedroom.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY/FOYER - MORNING

Jackson and Lulu walk down the stairs.

LULU
I'm a lightweight, I know.

JACKSON
I know six graders with a higher tolerance.

LULU
You get drunk with six graders?

JACKSON
You know what I'm saying.

LULU
If you ask me that's an advantage.

JACKSON
How you figure?

LULU
For it takes what, like eight, nine beers for you to get drunk. For me, three. Subtract the two and you get a difference of five or so and at two bucks a beer when the night comes to a close, I got ten more dollars than you do and the same buzz.

JACKSON
You know why that is?

LULU
The female liver breaks down alcohol slower. Leaving more of it in our blood stream. Which leads to feeling the affects quicker and hitting the bathroom slower.

JACKSON
You know what Lu?

LULU
Never met him.

JACKSON
I love you.

LULU

Don't give me that, you're just jealous.

Lulu opens the front door, exits. Jackson is thrown back emotionally. He eventually follows.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

Jackson joins Lulu, turns her around.

JACKSON

Whoa, what did you mean by that?

BELLE (O.S.)

Good morning to the new couple on my right.

Belle swings on the bench sipping her coffee. She glows in the sobering light of morning.

BELLE (CONT'D)

Sleep okay?

LULU

Hey, yeah thanks. It was really cool of you to let us use your bed.

BELLE

Mi casa, su casa.

LULU

I'm sorry we didn't get to talk, but I did have fun.

JACKSON

Yeah considering you were conscious for only about twenty minutes.

BELLE

Mission accomplished.

Jackson checks his pockets...

JACKSON

I lost my keys.

BELLE

Kitchen table.

JACKSON

On the kitchen table?

Belle nods, Jackson goes in the house.

BELLE

Think it's gonna work out?

LULU

I think this is going to be fun. I waited forever for him to ask me out and here I am...happy and extremely optimistic.

BELLE

Good for you.

LULU

What about you? I know we've neglected the "fiber" friendship, so I hope you don't mind me asking...are you happy?

BELLE

I'm one hundred percent perfect. Top of my game. Happy. And thank you...for asking.

LULU

Nobody hates you. Nobody really knows you. I guess they just want you to feel insecure about something. You got it all. You should be happy. -- Don't confuse animosity with jealousy.

Belle nods. The front door opens, Jackson returns. He puts his arms around Lulu from behind.

JACKSON

Lets get you home.

BELLE

See you guys at school.

LULU

What are you doing tonight?

BELLE

Cleaning my house.

LULU

My place. Come over. Me and the girls have a certain back to school tradition that only a few are privy to. And I extend an invitation to you. Come on, it's time we get this raft of friendship afloat. You in?

Belle knows she has no choice but to accept.

BELLE

Do I have to bring anything?

LULU

It would help us out a lot if you had access to some goat's blood.

An odd beat.

LULU (CONT'D)

Kidding. -- Just yourself and a change of clothes.

BELLE

Then I'm in.

LULU

Cool, see you later.

Jackson and Lulu turn to go.

JACKSON

Take care, Belle.

LULU

And let me know if you find my other shoe.

INT. JACKSON'S CAR - MOVING - MORNING

Jackson drives with one hand on the wheel, other around Lulu.

JACKSON

What did you mean when you told me that I don't love you?

LULU

When did that happen?

JACKSON

I said I loved you and you said I was jealous.

LULU

Oh, that. -- I thought we were talking about drinking idiosyncrasies.

JACKSON

I just wanted to tell you what I was feeling. How I'm feeling.

LULU

Jackson.

She pauses, waits for him to look at her and whole-heartedly means what she says...

LULU (CONT'D)
Thank you.

JACKSON
That's it? Thank you.

LULU
Well, yeah. For now.

JACKSON
Welcome.

More than anything, Jackson's embarrassed. Lulu notices.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

Dom's car parked by the curb.

DOMUS (O.S.)
What? Exactly what are you doing?

INT. DOMUS'S CAR - MORNING

He dictates into his tape recorder.

DOMUS
Tell her. Carpe diem. Only one year left of high school and you have enough regrets. Don't regret not doing this because you regret not doing it earlier and regret being regretful about all your future regrets.

Dom pauses, "what did I just say?" -- Dom ejects the tape, unspools it and throws it in the backseat. He notices the time on his stereo -- 11:11. He gets out.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

Belle swings on the bench, sips her coffee. Calmly waits as Dom approaches.

BELLE
Please tell me you came to help clean up.
I don't even know how to use a wet/dry vac.

Dom stands in front of her. Silent, staring. A beat.

BELLE (CONT'D)

What? What are you looking at?

Dom pulls her up and they share an epic kiss.

DOMUS

Please don't tell me that felt like kissing your brother?

BELLE

No...I needed that.

He moves his fingers along her face as he says:

DOMUS

Belle Shakespeare, there's something I need to tell you.

She grabs his hand from her face as she says:

BELLE

Alright, and...I need to tell you something as well.

EXT. LULU'S HOUSE - MORNING

Jackson walks Lulu to the front door.

JACKSON

You sure you don't want to go get something to eat?

LULU

I just want to pass out in my bed for a few more hours.

JACKSON

How about I cook? Silver dollars. You got any bisquick?

Lulu gives Jackson a kiss.

LULU

I will see you tomorrow.

JACKSON

Shit, that's right. School.

LULU

Senior year. The end of the beginning.

JACKSON

This may turn out to be one hell of a ride.

LULU

I do love roller coasters. -- Bye.

JACKSON

Bye.

Lulu turns to the door. A beat. She turns back around.

LULU

Do you know the exact moment when you fell in love with me?

JACKSON

Sort of. I loved you last week when we were just friends. But yesterday...I guess I fell in love with you because our friendship went up a notch. Sexually. And all my emotions became justified. So, I in actuality, fell in love with you when I got to see you naked.

LULU

Flattery beyond words.

A match made in heaven. Happiness oozes.

INT. BELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Dom at the sink filling a cup with water. He sees the fridge door open, walks over to it, grabs the handle and closes the door.

EXT. BELLE'S HOUSE - BACK DECK - MORNING

Belle sits on a beach chair. Dom comes out, hands her the water and sits.

BELLE

Thanks. I forgot how much I hate the taste of coffee.

Dom searches Belle's eyes...he's cocked locked and ready to rock:

DOMUS

Regardless of how both of our lives turn out, I will always remember you. The first time I saw you.

(MORE)

DOMUS (CONT'D)

The first words I said to you and most of all...the first time I made you laugh. Even when I'm ninety and I think my name is Judy and everyday is Cinco de Mayo as I wear depends wondering why my pet sasquatch stopped visiting me, I'll remember those moments. And as I sit here as someone with a chance of building on a passionate kiss that I believe has annulled any remnants of a hangover, I thank you. You are gorgeous and amazing and wonderful and you are the reason I get out of bed in the morning and go to that hell on earth known as high school. I can seriously say this is the most truthful moment in my life and my words are genuine and coming from someplace real. I am completely, utterly, in love with you Belle.

Dom's words have really touched Belle. Totally unexpected.

BELLE

Dom. I love you too. However...

Dom sinks. Not the response he wanted.

DOMUS

There it is.

BELLE

Don't jump ahead, let me say what I have to say.

Dom regains eye contact with her, listens...

BELLE (CONT'D)

I want to feel the same way for you that you do for me. I do. But, this past year I've had to come to terms with some things. Strange feelings and peculiar instincts arrived. I didn't know how they got there but I recognized and dealt with them accordingly to come to a conclusion. -- I'm reinventing myself.

DOMUS

Hand me a map because I'm not following you.

Belle takes a beat. Harboring a fear similar in proportion to the one Domus has recently conquered.

BELLE

Okay, here it is. What I want...is someone...more like me.

DOMUS

You can't be serious. We're great together. Like peanut butter and chocolate. Like Cheech and Chong. Like Scarface and his pile of coke. Like--

Belle puts her finger on Dom's lips, "Ssssshhhhh." Belle leans in, whispers into his ear. She leans back. Dom stares at her. Belle stares back. Dom finally reacts to her words:

DOMUS (CONT'D)

My, God! I just gave my heart to someone and she responds by telling me she's a... a Lesbian?!

BELLE

Please don't freak out. I really need you on this. You're the only one who knows.

DOMUS

Mike doesn't even know? More or less, how do you even know? This could just be the result of a bad breakfast burrito or something.

BELLE

How do you...know?

DOMUS

I look at you and I feel something--

BELLE

Electric?

DOMUS

I guess you can call it that, yeah.

And with a simple look from Belle, Dom gets it. This is for real. She's not joking.

BELLE

I trust you more than anyone. You're my best friend.

Regardless, Dom not's happy.

DOMUS

Fantastic. Now we can watch football half naked together and chat about babes we want to bang while drinking lite beer.

BELLE

(smiling)

Exactly.

DOMUS

No, I can't. I can't do it. I don't believe this. Telling you I love you was the hardest thing I've ever had to do in my life.

BELLE

I'm glad you did it. And so are you.

DOMUS

Not telling you would be the most painful memory to come with me out of high school. That and the front row viewing of Ms. Solomons' hairy butt crack after she dropped the chalk Sophomore year. -- What's next?

BELLE

I'll tell you what I think is next.

DOMUS

Please do because my world is spinning due to the news of the consummate Belle fancying herself a newly appointed member of the pink triangle.

BELLE

May I ask you to block any and all insensitive remarks entering your head from exiting your mouth? Okay?

DOMUS

Sorry, but this isn't the easiest thing in the world to comprehend. I'd rather be dissecting Geometric proofs at the moment. I thought I had it all figured out.

BELLE

Did you have fun at the party?

DOMUS

I did, actually. Surprisingly.

BELLE

Due me a favor and one for yourself.
Think about last night, think about this
morning, think about what you told me and
think about redirecting that. See what
door you end up at.

After some brief soul searching, Domus knows what she means.
As hard as this is to accept, he remains calm.

DOMUS

I'll forever be a shoulder and an ear for
you Belle.

BELLE

As will I.

A beat. Dom stands up.

DOMUS

What are you doing tonight?

BELLE

Believe it or not, hanging with Lulu and
the girls.

DOMUS

Call me when you get home?

BELLE

Sleeping over.

DOMUS

Ah, I don't even have to tell you to have
good time then. You'll be sleeping with
a bunch of girls.

BELLE

I'll call you anyway.

Dom nods. Belle stands, face to face with Dom. Belle
initiates a hug. They break and Dom walks away.

DOMUS

See you at school tomorrow.

Dom is gone. Belle smiles, excited about what's to come.

INT. DOM'S CAR - STREET CURB - MORNING

Dom sits at a curb we might have seen before. He gets out,
walks to the front door....

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

Freehold Boro High School. A bright, bittersweet first day of school morning.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT STEPS - MORNING

Kevin sits like a rock on the steps as students walk on and around him. Jackson walks up, sporting a backpack.

JACKSON

You didn't answer your phone last night.

KEVIN

I was busy.

JACKSON

What happened with what's her name?

KEVIN

Emily. And it was all bullshit.

JACKSON

What was bullshit?

KEVIN

Our relationship. She wanted someone to dance for her and I moved in perfect rhythm, step by step.

JACKSON

A real puppet on a string. Then why so down? Fuck her. Move on.

KEVIN

She never cared about me. She just wanted to have some fun with this ass sniffing jackball.

JACKSON

You cared about her. You're an upright guy and any girl who would treat you like shit is shit. They deserve shit. No one is going to treat her half as good as you did. You know that, I know that, and Emily is going to find that out. I guarantee in two weeks she's gonna call begging to have you back. She'll be saying, "Oh I love you, I loved the way I felt when I was around you, no one makes me feel as special as you did." And she's right, and also too fucking late. You moved on.

KEVIN
It hurts regardless.

JACKSON
Tell me why you loved her.

KEVIN
I couldn't help it. The moment she looked in my eyes, she took over. She was all I thought about. I thought, how could I make this girl happy? Because that is how I felt whenever I was around her. She told me she loved me and I believed her. That was what I wanted. Someone to love.

JACKSON
Yeah well, before you break out into song let me say that you're a fucking moron.

KEVIN
Go through it and see how you come out. Until then--

JACKSON
Until then I call them as I see them. You got something that separates you from the next.

KEVIN
What's that?

JACKSON
Heart.

KEVIN
Fuck it.

JACKSON
Life is one big etcha sketch and this girl shook you hard. You got a clean slate.

He's right. Kevin realizes this. Dom walks up with a bright blue one subject notebook and a pen in his ear.

DOMUS
Good morning! Such a lovely day, isn't it? Ideal for some high impact, intense education wouldn't you agree?

KEVIN
Not really.

DOMUS

Kev my man, you fill out your early
action app to G.W. yet?

Surprised by the question, Kevin takes a confused beat.

KEVIN

No, not yet.

DOMUS

You better get on that horse, cowboy.
Giddy up.

JACKSON

What's with the sudden interest in higher
learning?

DOMUS

I don't really know. I figured, there's
a lot of different types of people in
high school. Each with a different
agenda, different motives and different
emotions. Some of those agendas change
each year but all of them have a goal and
a purpose. There's a reason for
everything.

KEVIN

You finally came out to Belle?

JACKSON

And you now have plans beyond tomorrow?

DOMUS

I always had plans beyond tomorrow. Now
they got a direction.

KEVIN

Because now you got Belle.

DOMUS

Not so much.

JACKSON

And yet you're smiling like a mental
patient.

DOMUS

We're friends. And that's all we'll ever
be.

KEVIN

Bullshit.

THEN: Jane explodes onto the scene, lands a kiss on Dom's cheek.

JANE
Gothca!

DOMUS
Hey, pumpkin.

JANE
Hey guys. Hi Jacks.

Jackson waves, he's happy to see this. Kevin nods.

DOMUS
You look smashing today.

JANE
Oh my god this is so exciting, like I can't wait to see who's in my classes and what the new teachers are like, so cool. I like love school.

DOMUS
I just hope the chocolate chip cookies at lunch are still two for a dollar.

Emily walks up, stops. Her and Kevin exchange an awkward glance. A beat, she walks through the main doors.

JACKSON
(to Kevin)
Graduation will be here before you know it and she'll be gone for good.

KEVIN
I think I'll be alright.

JANE
(to Domus)
Hey is that your notebook?

DOMUS
Same one since Freshman year.

She grabs it. Takes the pen from his ear. Writes...

JACKSON
I'm going in. Find Lu.

KEVIN
I'll join you.

The guys say their brief goodbyes, Kevin and Jackson go up the stairs and through the main doors.

BELLE (O.S.)
Funny thing.

Belle walks up to Dom and Jane. 100% sexy.

BELLE (CONT'D)
I heard a rumor that one Domus Deville
and Jane Miller were...

Dom smiles at her, she stops. Jane hands over the notebook and pen.

JANE
Oh! Hey Belle.

BELLE
What's up, Jane.

JANE
I had so much fun at your party, it was
like the best part of my summer.
Awesome.

BELLE
Music to my ears.

JANE
And Dom, I like wrote something for you
on the cover of your notebook so you
won't forget about me, okay?

DOMUS
It would be near impossible to forget
you, my lady.

JANE
(blushing)
I'm gonna go to my homeroom now, it's
like on the other side of the school
which sucks and I don't wanna be late on
the first day. Total bad foot, right?

DOMUS
I agree.

JANE
See ya soon!

Jane hugs Dom and she's off.

JANE (CONT'D)

Bye Belle.

BELLE

Bye.

Jane is gone. A beat as Dom and Belle stare at each other. A single thought consumes Dom:

DOMUS

You know how long it's gonna take before I stop wanting to kiss you everytime I look at you?

BELLE

Domus...

DOMUS

I know. It's just--

BELLE.

What did Jane write on your notebook?

DOMUS

I don't know.

He looks at the notebook, smiles. Shows it to Belle: Covering the front of the notebook is a HUGE HEART, with "DOM + JANE 4 EVER" stenciled in the middle of it.

BELLE

You're a lucky man.

DOMUS

I'm something. -- Hey, how about I get to be the one who tells Mike about your new found same sex predilection?

Belle takes his pen, returns it to his ear. Then she takes his arm. The HOMEROOM BELL RINGS (O.S.)

BELLE

How about you escort me through those doors and we start our senior year.

DOMUS

I can do that.

They head up the steps to the main door. Domus opens the door for Belle, she nods a thank you, and he follows her in.

THE END.