PRINCESS
(A Love Story)

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WGA REGISTERED: #1218050

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Based on a true story.

THE WORDS DISAPPEAR AND WE...

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING


The sun burns but does nothing to curb the cold morning air felt by the trees, the grass, the squirrels and the...

THREE KIDS on SKATEBOARDS rolling down Sherwood performing various simple tricks as...

They are passed by an OLD CAR. It HONKS, causing one of the kids in mid-ollie to lose balance and WIPE OUT. The kids react, LAUGHTER mostly.

The OLD CAR rolls down the street...

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE/SHERWOOD DRIVE - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

Equipped with a 2 car garage, 4 bedrooms, 2 bath, finished basement, friendly well-to-do neighbors and plenty of property that could use the services of a rake. -- Who wouldn't want to live here?

Pumpkins from Halloween sit on the front steps. A reliable, low maintenance CAR is parked in the driveway. Somewhere, an American Flag tries not to freeze.

SUBTITLES FADE UP:


A Sunday.

THE SUBTITLES DISAPPEAR, AS:

The OLD CAR rolls to the curb and the ULTRA-THICK SUNDAY NEWSPAPER gets tossed up the driveway...

A LOUD BOOM! RESEMBLING A GUNSHOT, syncs with the landing of the paper --

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - PINK BEDROOM - MORNING

Pink and pretty. Fit for a Teenage Princess.
VERONICA, 17, in bed, her EYES JUMP OPEN...perhaps from the "Loud Boom." But more likely the BUZZING ALARM CLOCK is responsible. It's 7:12. She silences it. Sits up in bed. And with that bit of movement a POUNDING HEADACHE presents itself. She fights off the initial pulse and with a few deep breaths Veronica calms herself...waking up is not what she wants to be doing right now, but -- she throws the covers off and slowly rises.

-- Veronica: beautiful without having to try and when she does try her beauty goes unmatched by every other girl in her High School. Intellectually mature for her age, but combining that with her emotional immaturity can and has led to some bad decisions in her adolescent life. --

Her first order of business is to make the bed: perfect, tight. Like a hotel maid.

Number two: She removes a bottle of PERFUME from the vanity -- Hitting every corner of the room with a shot, and the bed with a couple of direct hits. The PERFUME is placed in its exact original position.

Third: A DRAWER is slid open. A substantial sized PHOTO ALBUM is laid to rest. The cover is glittered/bedazzled -- it feels custom made.

Finally: She exits, pulling the door closed.

CUT TO BLACK:

START MAIN TITLES.

FADE UP ON:

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

The SHOWER RUNS in the background as Veronica stares in the mirror. She's a mess; hungover, tired, beaten, a hint of anger...She sees so much in that reflection, but not herself. She opens the medicine cabinet...

VERONICA (V.O.)

The time has come when one makes that definitive statement after a night of hard drinking --

...Removes a TYLENOL BOTTLE, takes two. Cups some water to her mouth from the faucet and swallows 'em down. Back to studying her reflection:
VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
-- I'm never drinking again.

She moves to the shower to check the water temp. It'll do, so Veronica starts to remove her bathrobe, but stops, heads for the door...and SHUTS IT IN THE CAMERA'S FACE.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON a Coffee Maker as the digital time reads 7:29 -- 7:30. It comes to life, starts to brew.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON Veronica showering, eyes closed. Hot water pouring over her...It feels like a baptism.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON the Coffee Maker. Now six cups full of black gold.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica enters, wearing her bathrobe, head wrapped in a towel. She moves to her closet. Scans...bends...fishes --

VERONICA (V.O.)
You might be asking, "Young lady, if you're hungover, tired, and have a shitload of studying to do, where is it you are going this early on a Sunday?"

She rises with a particular OUTFIT in hand, tosses it to the bed.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Well, I figured --

She eyes the OUTFIT for a beat.

-- We are now well aware that this is not the pink pretty bedroom she woke up in. This is Veronica's room: resembling the domain of an isolated college grad student, not an isolated High School student. --

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON the Coffee Maker resting quietly. Then; the pot is lifted as...

Veronica prepares her morning coffee.
VERONICA (V.O.)
There's this moment when you wake up and
realize what day it is. But it doesn't
matter because you know today is going to
be just like yesterday --

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - LATER

Veronica reads the Sunday Newspaper and sips her coffee. Her
hair is still a bit damp. She's wearing the outfit fished
from her closet: her Sunday best.

VERONICA (V.O.)
-- The only thing that changes is your
clothes and the weather. Unless you live
in Arizona or Alaska. Me? I reside in
the grand ol' state of New Jersey where
the temperature is about as predictable
as the lotto jackpot numbers --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - MORNING

The front door opens and Veronica comes out. It's a cold
morning, her breath follows her as she walks to the driveway.

VERONICA (V.O.)
But what do you do about it? Usually,
I'd go back to sleep. But not today.
Today feels different for some reason.
So, I'm going to church.

Veronica gets in her reliable, low maintenance CAR.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Haven't been there since my eighth grade
graduation --

INT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

She settles in. Puts the key in the ignition, turns...but
nothing happens.

VERONICA (V.O.)
-- And I have this intense feeling that
I've already filled out and signed my
application for eternal damnation in that
cozy little cove called hell.

She turns the key again and again and...nothing. She pouts,
annoyed and confused. She pops the hood.
EXT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Veronica stares down her engine. No idea what she's looking at. She SLAMS the hood down. -- "What to do next?"

VERONICA (V.O.)
Seems church has been thwarted.

She retreats to her bed.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica, now a lump under her warm blankets. Her church clothes collect new wrinkles by the foot of the bed.

END MAIN TITLES.

CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

VERONICA (V.O.)
Rudyard Kipling. God Damn Rudyard Kipling. "If."

FLASH IN ON:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A printed copy of the Rudyard Kipling poem "IF" sits atop a notebook on the scattered/busy/unorganized desk of Veronica.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Why the hell do they make us memorize "If" in High School? What's it even about?

Veronica, still a bump under the blankets, oblivious as the DOOR to her bedroom gingerly opens.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Some 19th century British poets' ethos and personal philosophy about being a successful human being?

She shifts under the blankets as a SHADOW passes over her. Someone else is now in the room.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I fail to see any relevance to me and my life. Guess that's why I put this inane assignment off to the last minute.
A restless roll over brings her head out from the layer of blankets. A tired sigh, then her eyes open --

QUICK REVEAL OF WES, 18, looming over Ronnie.

WES
BOO-bie!!

VERONICA
JESUS-HOLY-CRAPPING-SHIT!!

She buries herself under the blankets. Embarrassed. Frightened. Annoyed.

Wes stands over Veronica holding a NOTE. He's a tall, alright looking kid who wears his personality on his sleeve. Forthright, honest, caring, accessible, he's a good friend to have.

WES
What is that, catholic tourette's?

VERONICA
That is so not right!

WES
Rise and shine, sunshine! The day awaits!

VERONICA
So not right!

WES
Yeah, yeah, I know. But it happened.

Veronica leans up, still wrapped in blankets. Wes sits on the bed next to her.

VERONICA
You're such a toolbag.

WES
Awww, look at you all wrapped in your blankies. My little pig in a blanky. I totally cherish you in this moment.

Veronica eyes Wes, something's building inside her...

WES (CONT'D)
(indicating)
You got an eye boogie.

Veronica unleashes: PUNCHING his arm incessantly.
WES (CONT'D)
Hey, hey stop! Okay stop!

Little by little, embarrassment and fear evacuate Ronnie with every strike.

WES (CONT'D)
Stop! I bruise very easily!

She adheres.

VERONICA
Yes I know. You're a delicate little peach! -- How'd you get in?

WES
Door was unlocked.

VERONICA
Bullshit.

One last punch, SMACK! -- That'll leave a mark.

WES
(fighting the pain)
Found this. Was on the door.

Wes hands Veronica the HANDWRITTEN NOTE.

VERONICA
(reading)
"Free white woman upstairs." -- This a joke?

WES
Sounds like a bargain. Don't know anyone who would pass up a free white woman. Albeit, she's slightly used and has been known to bite.

VERONICA
At least I'm house broken.

WES
So you say.

VERONICA
This is ridiculous.

WES
Made me laugh.
VERONICA
The word "hambone" makes you laugh. You're a child.

WES
It's a fun word to say! HAMBONE! Come on, say it with me, "hambone!"

Veronica drops the note and lays back down.

VERONICA
I'm sleeping. Go away.

WES
Let us pretend that you are awake. What is it that Veronica would be doing?

VERONICA
Veronica has to memorize "If" for Mr. Bright's English class and provide analytical examples comparing it to me and my current station in life.

WES
That it?

VERONICA
Physics test Tuesday. Newton's Laws; Inertia, Conservation, Gravitation, blah, blah, not worried about that. I can handle Newton but Kipling...he's just a moralizing ass.

WES
Least he's not Shakespeare.

Veronica leans up. Annoyed a bit at Wes.

VERONICA
Shakespeare I get. Shakespeare speaks to me. -- "Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets--"

Wes can't help but roll his eyes and wish he never mentioned Willy Shakes.

WES
--I see, I see, very exciting stuff here. But before you bore me to death, let's get something to eat.

VERONICA
I'm broke.
WES
On me.

Veronica throws the covers off her and onto Wes. Gets out of bed and immediately preps for the exit.

VERONICA
I'm not one to turn down a free meal. But we have to take your car. Mine won't start.

WES
Really?

VERONICA
Not making it up.

WES
Put gas in it?

VERONICA
Ten bucks yesterday.

WES
Premium?

VERONICA
Does it matter?

WES
I...don't...know.

Veronica bends down and picks up the note.

VERONICA
Did you really find this on the front door?

WES
Yeah. Also noticed you people have pumpkins left over from Halloween. Kinda gross. Could be attracting a Yeti or Sasquatch --

VERONICA
...Handwriting's familiar....

WES
-- or other Neanderthal creatures. Such as your dear boy Tommy.
The look in Veronica's eyes tells us she's ready to go another round with his arm as the punching bag. Instead, she pushes the note into his chest and leaves the room.

Wes follows, smirking. The door shuts.

**EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING**

An OLD CAR, similar to the one in the opening scene, is inconspicuously parked by the curb, blending right in.

The driver side window rolls down and a well-smoked CIGARETTE falls out, still burning.

**INT. OLD CAR - MORNING**

The cigarette lighter POPS and the MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL uses it to ignite another cancer stick. We never get a look at who it is, thanks mostly to a hooded sweatshirt, only how he's been living...in this car.

Littered everywhere are fast food containers, coffee cups, crumpled newspapers/magazines and the ash tray is at full capacity.

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**THE THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD POV OF THE MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL reveals that he's involved in a stakeout of...**

**VERONICA'S HOUSE.** Which is a good three or four houses down. Veronica and Wes exit the front door and walk to her car in the driveway.

The man behind the wheel takes a sip of coffee, or whatever is in that styrofoam cup, and a hearty drag from his smoke.

**EXT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING**

Wes and Veronica stare down her engine....totally clueless.

**WES**
Start her up. Let Wes see what happens.

**VERONICA**
Nothing happens.

**WES**
I want to see nothing happen. Show me nothing happening.

Against her will, Veronica finally offers:

**VERONICA**
Fine.
INT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Veronica gets in, turns the key.

    WES (O.S.)
    You try it?

    VERONICA
    Yes I did!

    WES (O.S.)
    Fire again, girl. And give it some gas.

Veronica rolls her eyes, does as she's told...still nothing.

    WES (V.O.) (CONT'D)
    Again!

She's had enough. Frustrated, she gets out.

EXT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Wes buried in the hood, unaware of Veronica's return.

    WES
    You try it!?

    VERONICA
    It's freakin' dead!

Wes JUMPS --

    WES
    Holycrapjesuschristgod!

    VERONICA
    What is that, Catholic Tourette's?

    WES
    I am two seconds away from beating your ass!

    VERONICA
    (rubbing his head)
    You couldn't beat an egg, my little Wesypoo.

    WES
    Granted, but I do frighten easily and it causes me to lose control of certain...things. You remember Great Adventure?
VERONICA
The tea cup ride!?

WES
One spin! All it took!

VERONICA
What the hell is wrong with my car?

MR. FARLEY (O.S.)
It's the battery.

Simultaneously: Veronica and Wes look off camera to --

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S FRONT LAWN - MORNING

MR. FARLEY, 70s, Veronica's neighbor. He's either descending into senility or incredibly aware of himself and his place in society that he chooses to amuse himself in his dealings with today's youth. -- Who knows?

He's all bundled up, RAKING A SPOT of his lawn.

MR. FARLEY
Sounds' if your battery's dead. Get yourself pair of jumper cables. Spark her up.

Simultaneously: Veronica and Wes look down at the engine.

WES
(like he's discovered gold) Hey, it's missing!

CLOSE ON the empty spot where the battery should be.

MR. FARLEY
That's not all that's missing...

VERONICA
Who steals a battery?

WES
Sasquatch.

They throw down the hood, move down the driveway to Wes's CAR.

VERONICA
Thanks for the heads up Mr. Farley. P to D, gas, brake, steer: that's the extent of our car knowledge.
MR. FARLEY
...Mmmhmm....

WES
So, how you doing there old timer?

Mr. Farley ponders a tick, leans on his rake...Then;

MR. FARLEY
Well...toilets' been my number one enemy, no feeling in my left leg most the time and when it does catch a twinge: means rain. Takes me two hours to get outta bed just to do nothin' all day. Not had myself an erection in years. Let alone a reason to. I pray every mornin' for the good lord to take me. End my pain. But here I am. Waiting for the sun to go down.

That stopped both Wes and Veronica in their tracks. Wes offers:

WES
Well, least you're optimistic.

MR. FARLEY
(resumes raking)
Eh, what'da you know...about pain.

That last part was barely audible to both Wes and Veronica.

WES
I know a much easier and time effective way to do get your yard done.

MR. FARLEY
And I know twelve different ways to kill a man with a rake. You wanna swap stories?

Veronica smiles. Mr. Farley catches it. Her smile just made his day....

VERONICA
Bye, Mr. Farley.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - STREET CURB - MORNING

At Wes's CAR...

WES
So where do you want to go to eat?
VERONICA
It's your dime, your call.

WES
No preference?

VERONICA
Whatever's good for a hangover.

WES
Grease and gratuitous nudity always sets me straight.

They get in and WE MOVE INTO A CLOSE UP of his rear license plate and --

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - WES'S CAR - MORNING

WE PULL BACK from the license plate, REVEALING A NEW LOCATION:

We're in the PARKING LOT of a local DINER.

WES (O.S.)
Wait a minute --

INT. WES'S CAR - DINER PARKING LOT - MORNING

Wes puts the car in park, kills the engine.

WES
-- I know you weren't at homecoming last night so...where were you?

VERONICA
Home alone.

WES
Did you fend off burglars and save Christmas?

VERONICA
I de-prioritized my priorities.

WES
And so you...?

VERONICA
Inevitably found myself with a case of acute nostalgia and Corona. So I indulged.
WES
That explains it.

VERONICA
Explains what?

WES
Your death-like appearance. This is when make-up becomes a cosmetic necessity.

VERONICA
(opening car door)
Eat me.

Veronica gets out of the car. Wes smiles, follows suit.

INT. DINER - MORNING

A cozy little eatery decorated with welcoming familiarity encompassing a dinner table like atmosphere.

Veronica and Wes are seated, food already in front of them. Wes spreads some dressing over his salad. Veronica takes a bite out of her beef-laden sandwich...it doesn't sit well.

WES
I got into it this morning with my parents.

She's done after one bite, rests her head on her hand. Wes devours his salad.

VERONICA
Really? Least your parents talk to you. I'm jealous.

WES
When they due back?

VERONICA
Sometime today I guess. They didn't really tell me.

The parental figures are not an easy topic for Veronica. Wes knows this...even if it wasn't written on her tired face.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
So what was this mornings' topic of discussion?

WES
Me and the Colonel are on opposite viewing ends of the scope.
VERONICA
The Colonel? Who are you Elvis Presley? -- What scope?

WES
The future.

VERONICA
...Okay...

WES
I can't actually see mine.

VERONICA
Same here. It's perfectly normal.

WES
I don't believe that about you.

VERONICA
Alright, I see it. But have chosen to ignore it.

WES
Why wait? Get your shit together now.

VERONICA
You want a stool sample? I'm well aware of the fact that I should be medicated and in therapy.

WES
Have you even given college a single thought?

VERONICA
Not a serious one.

WES
You're sure to have your pick of the ivy litter, Ms. Mensa. I despise that about you, you know.

VERONICA
I'm blessed, I'm aware. But I'd still prefer college to remain an intangible presence in my life...Until graduation at least.
WES
Okay, you're right. The year just started and you have plenty of time before your whimsical perspectives bite you in the ass.

VERONICA
Who says you have to go to college right away? I'll graduate, take some time off, do some traveling, learn a second language...cure cancer, maybe build an ark.

WES
For what purpose? What's to gain from postponing college?

VERONICA
Worldly experience and human knowledge.

WES
Isn't that why sororities exist?

VERONICA
Cute.

WES
It sounds like a waste of time.

VERONICA
Maybe, but it's my time. I can do with it as it so suits me.

WES
That's a selfish statement.

VERONICA
No it wasn't.

WES
Then what was it?

VERONICA
Building an ark is neither selfish nor a waste of time.

WES
That's not what--

VERONICA
(interrupts)
(MORE)
VERONICA (CONT'D)
Can we leave me alone and talk about you
and why you had a spat with your folks!
Por favor!

WES
No! Okay, no!

VERONICA
I hate you. I really hate you.

WES
You love me.

VERONICA
No...I hate you.

Suddenly; a war erupts in Veronica's stomach. Alcohol vs.
her one bite of sustenance.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You and Rachel have a good time at the
dance last night?

WES
We didn't go.

VERONICA
Why not?

She's hurting. Tasting last nights Coronas with every
breath.

WES
Really wasn't up for it.

VERONICA
So what'd you do?

WES
Home by eight. Bed by nine.

VERONICA
You should of called. I would of let you
come over and take full advantage of me
in my inebriated state.

WES
Oh, how charming.

Without warning, Veronica BURPS --

WES (CONT'D)
And classy.
VERONICA

Shit.

She puts her hand over her mouth, holding something in.

WES

You alright there?

Her face a porcelain white. Beads of sweat on her forehead.

VERONICA

I gotta...

She excuses herself.

INT. DINER - LADIES ROOM - MORNING

Veronica closes the stall door behind her. CAMERA stays outside. And in a matter of seconds: the unmistakable sound of PUKING fills the ladies room.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Wes picks aimlessly at this salad. Then; TWO HANDSOME MALES, 20s, walk past him. His lingering eyes follow the dudes as they make for the exit. Wes thinks certain thoughts to himself...

INT. DINER - LADIES ROOM - MORNING

Toilet FLUSHES. Veronica vacates the stall, exuding the remnants of a pukefest from her eyes/nose...

AT THE SINK -- She sniffs as she wipes her eyes dry, rinses out her mouth, and does her best to avoid seeing her reflection in the mirror.

She exits the ladies room.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Wes watches Veronica drop some half'n'half and sweet'n'low into a cup of coffee. A beat. Then:

WES

Do you believe in destiny?

VERONICA

(exhausted)

Do I believe in destiny?

WES

In the broadest sense of the term, yeah.
Veronica looks up from her coffee to study her friend: He's sincere in his inquiry. She obliges.

VERONICA
I do. But mainly to feel better about and or justify my actions.

WES
So buying stock in destiny is good for you or...?

VERONICA
Are you really asking me this?

WES
Looks that way.

VERONICA
Depends. It's not always sentimental-lovey-dovey chance meetings of two future lovers or that kind of bullshit. Destiny abides by laws. Primarily the law of human nature?

WES
So what do you think destiny has in store for you?

VERONICA
My future is very much like those leaves of lettuce in your salad. My shape, my life span, my function in society, all those things are already written in stone. I'm living a predisposed existence. For better or for worse? So be it.

WES
So there's nothing you or I can do to change any of it?

VERONICA
Well, you can try to ignore it. That's a legitimate attempt to cheat fate.

WES
How do I ignore it?

VERONICA
...You Just Don't Look...for we are helpless in the face of destiny.

Veronica and Wes soak that statement in.
VERONICA (CONT'D)
This coffee's weak.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - STREET CURB - MORNING

Mr. Farley is seen in the b.g. raking as Wes's CAR enters frame. Parks in front of Veronica's house.

INT. WES'S CAR - STREET CURB - MORNING

Wes shifts his automatic transmission to park.

VERONICA
You going home?

WES
I really don't want to.

VERONICA
You should talk to your parents again. Work out whatever issues you guys are currently reading.

WES
So should you.

VERONICA
I'm not talking to your parents.

WES
Why do your parents hate you again?

VERONICA
Past indiscretions.

WES
Sure it's nothing an honest, heartfelt apology can't fix.

VERONICA
Doubtful.

WES
Have you ever tried?

Not wanting to continue her part of this -- Veronica abruptly opens her door, exits.

WES (CONT'D)
Ronnie!

Her door shuts. Wes follows.
EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Wes catches up to Veronica...

WES
Hold on a sec! Last night...Rachel told me something.

VERONICA
What, she pregnant?

WES
No. -- Shit....Maybe. Shit, why'd you say that? She could be. That might help explain the current situation.

VERONICA
Forget it, forget it. What current situation?

WES
She loves me.

VERONICA
So?

WES
I don't love her.

VERONICA
And the real problem here is?

WES
What, that's it. I feel nothing for her. We've dated for almost ten months and I still feel nothing for her.

VERONICA
There's a very simple solution to this very simple problem: You Break Up With Her. She's sixteen, she'll get over it.

WES
But then what?

VERONICA
Wes, there is something you need to realize about yourself that almost everyone sees but you. Take off the blinders, look in the mirror, and ask yourself...What do I feel? Why do I feel this? And who am I? Really.
WES
What are you getting at?

VERONICA
Go home, Wes. Talk to your parents again and most importantly: talk to yourself.

WES
Was planning on playing with myself. Never tried talking too. But --

VERONICA
You know what I mean.

WES
Do I?

VERONICA
You do.
(sarcastic)
"Face your destiny."

WES
What about you?

VERONICA
I'm gonna get some more sleep.

WES
No, what about you and your problem?

Veronica's body sinks. Utterly annoyed. She walks away from him with anger growing in her belly....

VERONICA
Deal with your shit. And I'll talk to you later.

Wes watches her walk to the front door. A trace of disappointment on his mug.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Oh, and Wes!

WES
Yes, dear.

VERONICA
You know why you don't care about Rachel?! You know why your future is so damn clouded?!...Because you're gay! Women don't do it for you.
WES
What are -- no!

VERONICA
Recognize, deal, benefit!

WES
What! How could you--

VERONICA
Quick, Britney Spears or Christina Aguilera?

WES
Madonna!

VERONICA
Take a look in the mirror Wesy.

Veronica opens and disappears through her front door.

Wes takes an introspective beat...retreats to his car.

Mr. Farley continues to rake.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
"If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you."

FLASH IN ON:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica returns to her bed.

VERONICA (V.O.)
"If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, but make allowance for their doubting too."

INT. OLD CAR - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

POV THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, staking out Veronica's house.

VERONICA (V.O.)
"If you can wait and not be tired by waiting, or being lied about, don't deal in lies --
Smoke rises up from the ash tray as we see: A TEENAGED MALE INTRUDER walking up Veronica's driveway...

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM – MORNING

Veronica in bed, eyes shut.

VERONICA (V.O.)
-- Or being hated, don't give way to hating --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE – FRONT DOOR – MORNING

The INTRUDER creeps up to the front door.
CLOSE ON the door knob as he turns it, enters the house.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE – FOYER – MORNING

We now get a solid look of the INTRUDER. And we're not disappointed. Meet --

TOMMY, 17, gifted with the physical features of an Abercrombie model and the charisma of a true playboy primed to con you out of your life savings.

VERONICA (V.O.)
-- And yet don't look to good, nor talk to wise."

He shuts the door behind him. Surveys his surroundings briefly, then heads up the stairs.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM – MORNING

CLOSE ON Veronica in bed, eyes shut. Muffled TALKING/LAUGHING causes her eyes to stir. She's curious. She's up.

She swings her legs around to the floor, landing on the "free white woman upstairs" NOTE, picks it up.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY – MORNING

Veronica peers out her doorway, notices Tommy down the hall engaged in conversation with someone behind an open door.

TOMMY
...Alright you little son a bitch...

Acknowledging the presence of Tommy, Veronica now opens her door all the way. Awaits her turn.
TOMMY (CONT'D)
This shit better be better than the last batch. I never got diarrhea from weed before. -- Late.

Tommy closes the door. Notices Veronica. He looks at her with genuine warmth and giddiness.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Hey.

Veronica presents him with the NOTE.

VERONICA
Is this you?

Tommy, walking towards her, gives the NOTE a glance.

TOMMY
Not my style, babe.

VERONICA
You steal my car battery?

TOMMY
Who steals a battery?

VERONICA
Alright, Tommy. You let yourself in, you can let yourself out.

TOMMY
"I'm good, how are you?"

VERONICA
I don't need to see you today.

Veronica turns her back to him. He scurries up, gives her a hug from behind and kisses her neck.

TOMMY
I missed you.

They move to --

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter, embraced...

VERONICA
It's only been two days.
TOMMY
You missed homecoming last night.

VERONICA
I didn't miss it. I just wasn't there.

Veronica looks over her shoulder to Tommy, judging by the exchanging glances a kiss on the lips is expected, but instead:

She breaks, moves to her desk. Disappointed, Tommy hangs back.

TOMMY
I got homecoming King.

VERONICA
All hail.

Veronica sits, tosses the note into the garbage. Tommy goes through her dresser drawers.

TOMMY
And you'll never guess what I did after the dance.

VERONICA
You took my relentless advice and joined A.A.? -- Assholes Anonymous?

He grabs a BRA from the drawer, puts it on over his shirt.

TOMMY
Aren't you a big, bright ball of beaming sunshine this morning. Bend over so I can remove that rhino from your ass and maybe you'll be a little easier of a person to talk to.

Veronica turns in her chair, looks at Tommy. Attempts to lighten up a bit:

VERONICA
Now that's hot. You own that bra babe, and -- Shit, why did you pick that one?

TOMMY
I don't know. It was the first one I saw. Why?

VERONICA
Because...it's...
Veronica turns away from Tommy.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
...not mine.

An uneasy, yet familiar, wave of realization passes over him.

TOMMY
You wear her clothes?

VERONICA
She is my exact size.

Tommy snaps the bra off.

TOMMY
Maybe up here, yeah, but...you do fill out your jeans better than she did. A little more bump in your rump there baby doll.

VERONICA
Are there any more compliments you want to throw my way?

TOMMY
No, that about...rounds 'em out.

VERONICA
Got some bad news for you. I know why you're here and it's not going to happen.

TOMMY
Why not?

Her eyes turn to Tommy and with complete and total manipulation she says:

VERONICA
I can't do it anymore.

TOMMY
Can't or won't?

VERONICA
Same difference.

TOMMY
What are you, kicking me to the proverbial curb? You don't wanna do that.
VERONICA
Tell me why.

TOMMY
Because...I love you and you love me--

Veronica rolls her eyes and chair in unison.

VERONICA
--People say things they don't mean so they can get what they want. And they don't think about what it does to the person they say it to. Love is one of those things. So please don't ever say it to me again. -- Unless you mean it.

TOMMY
No, I do, I mean it. Stop denying it, and take it for what it's worth.

VERONICA
Oh really? Please, tell me: What did you do last night after the dance, King Tommy?

TOMMY
Shit, nevermind. Forget I even mentioned it.

VERONICA
No. Why? You afraid to tell me now? Perhaps you saying it will make you realize just how much you "love me?"

Tommy, helpless, remits:

TOMMY
We...post-homecoming, Cal Stevens had a bunch of people over --

VERONICA
...Naturally...

TOMMY
-- Are you angry?

VERONICA
What'd you do?

TOMMY
You know Chelsea Campbell?
VERONICA
No you didn't.

TOMMY
I did.

VERONICA
What exactly?

TOMMY
You want positions?

VERONICA
Forget it.

TOMMY
What's the big deal? She knew what she was getting into. And...it's not like I give a shit about her.

Veronica knows that and deep down, she takes comfort in it.

VERONICA
Why then?

TOMMY
Why what?

VERONICA
Your consistent desire to pick up any poor or desperate drama-obsessed-shallow-sexy-piece-of-Highschool-trash lying drunk on the floor with a hole to be filled, insisting that you, my dear boy Tommy, are just the size eight printed silk couture attire needed to fill said hole.

TOMMY
God, you are angry.

VERONICA
No, currently curious.

TOMMY
I think that's...well, because of you.

VERONICA
Me?

TOMMY
You manipulated me once...upon a time.
VERONICA
I did not manipulate you. Shutup.

TOMMY
You at least...seduced me.

VERONICA
You made a choice.

TOMMY
You're right...okay, and now I, we, have to live with that. Any way we can.

VERONICA
Did I hear regret in that statement? Because it sounds to me that--

TOMMY
I'm sorry...sorry.

VERONICA
I don't need this. Now I'm officially pissed off.

TOMMY
What do you want me to do?

VERONICA
Leave.

TOMMY
Stop, said I was sorry...This is complicated...I don't know what you're really thinking sometimes. One day you can't let me go, and then, like today, you don't want me at all. What is it?

Veronica can only placate:

VERONICA
You know I need you.

TOMMY
I need you too. And...yes, Ronnie, I Love You...but, what about you?

VERONICA
I loathe me.

TOMMY
No...Me. Do you love me?
She denies him a verbal response, offers a look that appeases the situation. She rises...

VERONICA
Why Chelsea? She's seeing someone. And that someone just so happens to be living in a house just beyond my backyard. Your exploits are getting closer to home and I don't feel safe.

She playfully SMACKS Tommy over the head.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
So stop it! Alright.

TOMMY
I'll try. I promise.

He crosses his heart with his fingers.

VERONICA
Good. Now seriously, go home. I got shit to do.

TOMMY
I don't wanna go home. I know my Mom is going to put my ass to work. Fall cleaning and shit. Can't I stay here? Out of your way.

Tommy grabs her hand.

VERONICA
Fine, hang out in the basement. I don't know when my parents will be home and the last thing I need is for them to see you lounging about.

TOMMY
You got snacks?

He kisses her hand.

VERONICA
In the kitchen. Take whatever you want. You always do.

They kiss on the lips...sweet and soft.

TOMMY
Thanks babe.
Tommy turns, she SMACKS his ass as he goes. She almost lets a smile out as Tommy exits, the DOOR SHUTS behind him.

Her attention shifts to the floor and the BRA Tommy tried on for size.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Alright, here's the deal -- I have a sister. A twin sister. An identical twin sister: Alison.

She picks up the BRA, stuffs it in a drawer.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The genesis of my parents' meeting and falling into love was set to the soundtrack of one Elvis Costello.

Veronica moves to her desk, grabs her copy of "IF" and a notebook. Goes to her bed.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
So we were aptly named. "Veronica," "Alison." Good tunes. As for my older brother, well, he didn't get off so easy: Elvis. Gotta love my parents devotion to romanticism.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Tommy grabs two zip lock bags from a cabinet. One full of pretzels. One full of potato chips.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Alison ran away seven months ago. That's all we know. And my parents marriage has been deteriorating ever since.

Tommy opens the fridge, grabs some dip for the chips.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
That's why they're in the Catskills on a weekend marriage retreat to try and save it.

Tommy opens the freezer, intrigued by something...a 3/4 full bottle of VODKA.

He thinks a beat..."why not?"

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica in bed with "IF," a pen, notebook, and a blanket.
VERONICA (V.O.)
They mainly blame me for Alison leaving.
One could say that's just an excuse to help them deal with their own shoddy parenting. But it's the truth --

Unable to focus, Veronica tosses her homework to the floor and buries herself under the covers.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
So her letter said. I won't go into the specifics of said letter because...well, I just don't want to, okay.

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - MORNING

Tommy disappears through the Basement Door --

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING

A second-hand furnished domestic hang out spot. Tommy comes stomping down the steps. He plops down on the couch. Gets situated.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Tommy and I have been sleeping together for about seven months now.

Tommy pours a shot of Vodka into a paper cup, grabs a remote control, turns on the TV.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I can go on and on, on the subject of Tommy. But -- Man, my life just doesn't make sense anymore.

He downs the shot. Opens up the bag of pretzels.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And that excuse, "I'm only seventeen, it's not suppose to make sense" is getting kind of stale.

He takes a bite. They could be stale. Doesn't matter. He lets out a deep sigh as he kicks back, relaxes on this cold November Sunday.

The SOUND of someone KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCKING on a door rises.

INT. BACK DOOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

A large silhouetted FIGURE is KNOCKING/BANGING on the back door -- BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG!
INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica, warm and cozy under her comforter. -- BANG, BANG! She stirs slightly, frustration oozing out from under the blankets.

BANG, BANG, BANG! The blankets fly off and Veronica's up and out of the room.

INT. BACK DOOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica opens the back door to --

ERIC, 17, a lovable loser, a bit overweight but it's mostly just baby fat. He looks like he wants to explode, but you couldn't tell with what. Anger? Tears? He's all over the emotional map. A PLASTIC BAG is in his hand.

There's a subtle tension in the air. Then: Eric reaches into the PLASTIC BAG, holds up a PHOTO to Veronica's face.

CLOSE ON PHOTO: A cheesy shot of Eric and his girlfriend CHELSEA CAMPBELL. He's happy as a game show host, she's as happy as the game show contestant who came in second.

ERIC
Remember this? This was us, her and me, Juliet and Romeo. Look at this!

Veronica responds with a lukewarm nod.

ERIC (CONT'D)
We were happy! We were in love! Where did it go! Do you know!? Do you know?!

VERONICA
That...I don't.

ERIC
Young love in full blossom! Happy! Smiling! Laughing! It felt good!

VERONICA
(walking away)
Come on in, big guy. Let us talk.

Eric closes the door behind him. Follows Veronica.

En route to the living room, Veronica passes the BASEMENT DOOR, and for nothing more than peace of mind: LOCKS IT.
INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica enters, sits on a recliner. Eric follows.

VERONICA
So...your relationship with Chelsea is currently a bubbling pot of turmoil.

ERIC
To say the least.

VERONICA
Sit.

Eric puts the plastic bag on the coffee table, removes his jacket and sits on the couch.

ERIC
It felt destined to last forever. The spiritual and emotional unity of two young souls in love. It was powerful, it was cosmic, it's...it's gone.

VERONICA
I admit your intoxicated like runs of P.D.A. at school were nauseating, but it looked genuine. I observed from a distance mind you. I break out with hives if I get too close to public displays of affection.

ERIC
Really?

VERONICA
No, not really. -- It's a "wish I could have that thing" thing. Jealousy. -- Never mind. Give me the dirt.

ERIC
Oh, it's pretty simple: she cheated. Cheated. That little bitch, whom I loved with all my...cheated on me and-

VERONICA
She told you this?

ERIC
I didn't believe it. It's one of those things that just happens and you say, "I don't believe that just happened!", but it did.

(MORE)
ERIC (CONT'D)
Like a bomb dropped right on my lap and
kaboom! Nothing's the same. It's all
different. Like this...

He snatches a tissue box from the table.

ERIC (CONT'D)
...tissue box, does not look the same as
it did yesterday. This cardboard is all
distorted and befuddling. I want to
vomit.

VERONICA
So you've abandoned all hope of a
reconciliation?

ERIC
Hells yes! She slept with someone else!
ABC, 123! Close the book, go to sleep,
fairy-tale's over!

Eric tosses the tissue box like a kid having a hissy fit.

VERONICA
Do you know who it was?

ERIC
Who?

VERONICA
The other participant in Chelsea's
adulterous sex romp.

ERIC
I do not. And I...I didn't even think to
ask. -- But if I ever do find out, I am
gonna go to town on that bastard's balls.

A beat as Veronica visualizes Eric's threat.

VERONICA
Yeah well, you never know, it could very
well have been a she.

The thought of Chelsea being a lesbian never crossed his
mind. It crushes him. Tears are imminent.

ERIC
Oh, jeez.

With the pity level now off the charts, Veronica gets off the
recliner, moves to Eric.
VERONICA
I'm sorry big guy. You don't deserve this.

ERIC
Maybe I do. Maybe it's all my fault. Maybe I should've been a better boyfriend.

VERONICA
Eric, you're the epitome of a great boyfriend. You're caring, loyal, fun, and you have tremendous heart. A lot of guys don't, most just have...well, balls and no heart.

ERIC
Maybe that was the problem. Maybe I wasn't man enough for her. -- I'm a sissy. A little, big, fat, sissy baby who needs a change! Where's babies diapers!? -- It was my fault, I drove her away.

VERONICA
Eric, listen to me: as far as cheating goes, the only person who falls under blame is the one who committed it. You're an innocent victim.

ERIC
She was so calm and easy about it. Like she was telling me how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. "Take two slices of bread, jelly, peanut butter, and a knife, spread evenly, then rub up and down the NAKED TORSO OF SOME OTHER GUY!" -- Or girl. No remorse!

VERONICA
Maybe it was for the best.

Like a child falling to his mother for comfort, Eric lays his head down in Veronica's lap. She goes with it...

ERIC
It doesn't feel like "for the best." It feels like my life is meaningless now.

VERONICA
Don't do that. You have the right to be bitter and melancholy, but don't go jumping off any ledges over this.
ERIC
I'm nothing without her --

VERONICA
Don't Do That To Yourself!

ERIC
-- And it's chillingly clear that I'm nothing to her as well.

VERONICA
Relationships in high school come and go. Some end fondly others just end. It sucks and it hurts but it's not the apocalypse. And unless you can give me one unrelenting, undeniable sentiment about how Chelsea confirms your existence. I encourage you to shut up.

A beat. All Eric can do is respond with absolute honesty:

ERIC
I'm in love with her. Simple as that.

VERONICA
And love blinds you. Who knows what you're not seeing because you have in your head this unfounded notion that the sun won't rise or set without Chelsea by your side. It's foolish...

Eric removes his head from her lap.

ERIC
You ever been cheated on?

VERONICA
No, I never-I...haven't even had a boyfriend since the sixth grade. He dumped me for a red-headed junior high chick with longer legs, bigger boobs and was a cheerleader. One of those top-of-the-pyramid-type-bitches.

ERIC
There's this overwhelming sense of unimportance. To be passed over, thrown away...for what?

VERONICA
(low, almost to herself)
Someone else.
ERIC
Precisely.

Veronica, now practically lost in her own thoughts/drama, turns her attention to the PLASTIC BAG.

VERONICA
You'll be fine, Eric. It's okay to have a broken heart. Just don't fixate on the one who did it to you and keep your eyes and your self open for the girl who can mend it.

The contents of which are revealed as: FOUR DVD'S, CHOCOLATE BARS, AND A HANDBFUL OF PHOTOS OF ERIC & CHELSEA.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(re: DVD's)
"Say Anything." "When Harry Met Sally." "Untamed Heart." And..."Funny Farm?"

The DOORBELL RINGS.

ERIC
It was an impulse buy, right by the counter. Three ninety-nine, you believe that?

VERONICA
You gotta get your mind off of Chelsea.

ERIC
You want to go bowling?!

She does not, thankfully: THE DOORBELL RINGS again.

VERONICA
I'll be right back.

She leaves. Eric grabs a chocolate bar and flips through an issue of GLAMOUR MAGAZINE that was on the coffee table.

ERIC
...Chelsea...

I/E. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FOYER/FRONT DOOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica opens the door, greeted by --

BARKER, 16, a short pest who looks and acts like a "Mini-Eminem." He does his thang...
BARKER
Oh, sweet, sweet Ronny, my goodness do
you look all hot and juicy, I'll like to
lick you up and down starting at the
tootsie and ending up at the puss--

THE DOOR SHUTS.  Cutting Barker off.

THE DOORBELL RINGS.  Veronica opens the door.

VERONICA
Don't talk! -- Elvis ain't here, and he
won't be here all day. So just go home.

BARKER
Naw, baby dear, I called his ass five
minutes ago, I know he's here.

VERONICA
And what did he tell you?

BARKER
That he don't want to deal to me. Ain't
givin' shit for free. I'm broke, but I
ain't no joke. I'll pay the man as soon
as I can. Come on, sweet Ronnie baby,
let me in...then let me in!

VERONICA
Better luck next time, junior.

THE DOOR SHUTS.  CAMERA STAYS OUTSIDE as Barker stands there
bummin', staring at the front door.

BARKER
Damn! Why don't no-body take me serious?
I'll be back!

CAMERA PANS AWAY from Barker as he exits, annoyed, and PUSHES
IN ON the BASEMENT WINDOW...

INT. BASEMENT - EARLY AFTERNOON

Intense MOANS/GROANS/BAD SOUNDTRACK MUSIC: all the makings of
a classy porno are heard as WE PULL BACK from the BASEMENT
WINDOW and find...

Tommy on the couch eating pretzels, eyes glued to a PORNO
MOVIE on the TV.

CAMERA THEN BOOMS UP, away from Tommy, as he downs a shot of
Vodka from the paper cup...
INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

CAMERA PANS UP from the floor to Eric on the couch, skimming through GLAMOUR, looking like he wants to die.

VERONICA (O.S.)
Sorry about that.

Veronica sits next to him. Eyes the cover of GLAMOUR...

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You find the dress that flatters your body the most yet?

No response from Eric. Then; a total act of randomness:

ERIC
I wrote a little poem.

The mag is TOSSED and he pulls a well-folded piece of paper from his front pant pocket.

VERONICA
(cautious/concerned)
Oh...awesome...

He unfolds it, which seems to take forever. Veronica watches...waits.

ERIC
I felt compelled to document certain moments about last night.

VERONICA
(fearing torture)
Good. Healthy. Love to hear it.

Eric takes a beat before delivering his deliberate, emotional poetry reading. Veronica sweats it out.

ERIC
(in dribs and drabs)
Nothing is something. Something is nothing. Everything is everything. And...anything is everything I wanted to tell you how I felt. But I forgot the words when you walked out the door. But anyway, I don't care that I care that nothing is something that I got and something is nothing we have and everything--

She's putting an end to this.
VERONICA
--It's beautiful, it's real, it's honest. Is there an abridged version?

ERIC
It's double-sided. A broken heart bleeds.

VERONICA
That's good Eric, vent. You have a lot on your mind and it can only benefit you to let it out. -- And I have an ass load of work to do for English class so--

ERIC
Mr. Bright?

VERONICA
Sadly.

ERIC
He's such a hardass. And a perv.

VERONICA
Totally. And unfortunately I'm on his bad side so even if I do wear a skirt and rock some cleavage tomorrow I'll still be without a reprieve. -- You and your love lorn thoughts are more than welcome to hang on my couch. Just remember: progress.

Veronica nudges Eric, trying to be playful. He nods. She rises.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Yell if you need me, big guy.

ERIC
K. Thanks Ron, you rock.

Veronica leaves, Eric produces a pen and writes...

ERIC (CONT'D)
(struggling)
My...heart burns...like...a hot can of worms....My soul yearns...like the butter churns.

A PHONE RINGS.
INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM – AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON Veronica's RINGING PHONE. She enters, answers it...

VERONICA
Hello...Hi...I'm alright, how are you?...Why?...No, no...No, this isn't right!...That's not right!...This is totally unprofessional...It wasn't me...It was probably that new girl with the, the tatoos and dozen piercings. Self-mutilation don't come cheap you know...Someone's gotta pay for it...Don't do this, come on...You can't do this...FINE!...I never liked your fat ass anyway.

Veronica hangs her phone up. Now irate, unsure where/how to channel her anger.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Shittles!

She exits.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY – AFTERNOON

Calming, Veronica stands outside Elvis's bedroom door, performs a "SECRET KNOCK."

VERONICA
Hey Elvis, be a pal and loan me twenty bucks.
(silence)
Barker was here, I told him you weren't.
(silence)
So who are you here for?
(silence)
Alright, so can I borrow the--

A $20 BILL slides out from under the door.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Thanks, brother.

She grabs it.

INT. LIVING ROOM – AFTERNOON

Veronica enters, clearly agitated, plops down on the floor in front of Eric.
ERIC  
Something wrong?

VERONICA  
I got fired.

ERIC  
No way. From Vans?

Veronica nods.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
That sucks. Why?

VERONICA  
I've been accused of stealing and found guilty without trial.

ERIC  
Did you?

VERONICA  
Did I what?

ERIC  
Steal?

VERONICA  
Yeah, but I never thought I'd get caught.

ERIC  
How much did you steal?

Veronica takes a beat, mentally calculates.

VERONICA  
$692.90. But I'm sure they have no idea about that particular figure.

Eric, speechless for a moment, finally offers an escape:

ERIC  
I'll put a movie in. -- "Say Anything?"

VERONICA  
Sure.

Eric grabs it and heads to the TV.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
You hungry?
ERIC
Always.

VERONICA
I'll order a pizza.

Veronica gets up.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S FRONT LAWN - AFTERNOON

Mr. Farley raking another SPOT on his yard. He's close to the curb as:

A CAR SPEEDS ACROSS FRAME --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - STREET CURB - AFTERNOON

The speeding CAR slams on the brakes and ends up with one wheel up on the curb.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

"Say Anything" plays. Eric sits on the couch, staring at the TV, he can't sit still, a ball of potential energy.

Veronica sits on the floor, bored. Staring at her feet.

VERONICA
I'm wearing two different kinds of socks today.

ERIC
On purpose?

VERONICA
One's black and the other is white.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Lunch time.

Veronica gets up and THE CAMERA FOLLOWS BEHIND HER through the Living Room...

...Past the KITCHEN as she removes the $20 from her pocket...

...Moving down the HALL, eventually arriving at...
INT. FOYER - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

CAMERA SWINGS AWAY from Veronica as she opens the front door...

HOLDS ON A PICTURE FRAME hanging on the wall. It's a montage of precious moments starring the once happy Taylor family: Mom, Dad, Elvis, Veronica & Alison.

VERONICA (O.S.)
Hi, thanks...Whoa wait, wait, wait! What is this? This isn't what I wanted...Yeah, that's my address but that's not what...Plain...Yeah plain, what's wrong with just plain?...What law says I need a topping?...No I will not just pick it off. Get your act together and bring back what I ordered...Thank you.

CAMERA SWINGS as the door shuts and FOLLOWS Veronica back to...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...She prepares herself a cup of coffee, moves to the...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Veronica enters with her coffee in hand, finds the room empty. Eric has vanished.

VERONICA
Eric? Eric!

Veronica shakes her head, rolls her eyes.

She exits.

INT. BASEMENT - AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON VODKA being poured into a paper cup. Tommy downs the shot.

He eyes the stairs as he recoils from the bitter taste. Tommy rises.

He walks up the steps and tries the basement door: it's locked. He's trapped.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Veronica walks down the hall, opens her bedroom door --
INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM – AFTERNOON

Veronica shuts the door and immediately slips off her WHITE SOCK, tosses it aside and opens a dresser drawer. She produces a BLACK SOCK, slips it on. Now they match.

She picks up "IF" and her Notebook off the floor, hops into bed and throws the blankets over her.

CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

VERONICA (V.O.)
"If you can dream, and not make dreams your master --

FADE IN ON:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM – DAY

Veronica wrapped safely in her blankets. Her eyes wide, focused, staring just past the CAMERA LENS.

VERONICA (V.O.)
-- "If you can think, and not make thoughts your aim. If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster, and treat those two imposters just the same.

Veronica throws her blankets off, leaves her room.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
-- God, I can't even bear the sound of my own thoughts anymore.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM – DAY

Veronica enters her bathroom, stops dead in her tracks. A beat.

VERONICA
You need help? Forget what to do next?

REVEAL Eric perched atop the toilet seat, lid down. Totally lost in thought. Looks as if he's been crying.

ERIC
This bathroom, right here...This is where we first kissed.

VERONICA
You and Chelsea hooked up in my bathroom?
ERIC
Happened during the New Year's Eve party. We were only talking up to that point, nothing serious yet. Then it happened. She laughed, I smiled, our eyes met and didn't know how to separate. A move had to be made. We came in here for some privacy. And I kissed her.

VERONICA
See, since day one your relationships' been in the crapper.

Eric eeks out a smile.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Yay, you can smile. That's good.

His smile extends a bit further.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Now come on, get up and get out, I gotta go.

ERIC
I want you to know. You are helping.

VERONICA
Good, but what I'm not doing is peeing, so if you'll excuse me...

ERIC
--Yup, 'nuff said.

He rises and before he exits, much to Veronica's surprise, he gives her a big hug.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Thank you.

VERONICA
Don't mention it.

She gives his back a friendly slap or two. Eric releases with tears on the horizon.

ERIC
I'll see ya.

VERONICA
Duly noted.

Eric's gone. Veronica shuts the door.
EXT. VERONICA'S/MR. FARLEY'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The sun has shifted, the wind has picked up. The OLD CAR drives past in SLOW-MOTION as leaves swirl. Mr. Farley continues his raking odyssey.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Tommy and the porno marathon continues. Remote control in one hand, paper cup shot glass in the other, totally relaxed.

A beat. Tommy senses that he's being watched. And he is --

REVEAL Veronica, surveying the scene.

VERONICA

Comfy?

TOMMY

Hey. Yeah, I was, a...helping myself, like you said.

VERONICA

Why are you drinking?

TOMMY

I don't know. Why'd you lock me in here?

VERONICA

Because Eric was upstairs.

TOMMY

Who's that?

VERONICA

Eric Ginn.

TOMMY

Oh, cool. What's the big deal?

VERONICA

I offer the same: Eric Ginn.

TOMMY

What, I like Eric. He's good people. Sensitive, real...touchy feely. I admire that.

VERONICA

He's also Chelsea Campbell's ex-boyfriend thanks to you.
TOMMY
I did him a favor. That chick was trying
to ditch him since school started. He
wouldn't listen to her. She needed to do
something that would force him to listen.

VERONICA
What are you saying?

TOMMY
All I'm saying, all I did was...provide a
service, a utility...I'm the gas company
alright. -- I did nothing wrong.

Veronica studies Tommy. He feels her eyes, waits...She
accepts his reasoning, moves on --

VERONICA
(re: TV, porn)
Biological research? Taking notes I
hope.

TOMMY
Your Dad has a nice library of quality
porn down here.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

VERONICA
It's my Mom's. -- And exactly what
differentiates quality porn from sub-par
porn?

The DOORBELL RINGS again.

TOMMY
Believable situations and or
performances.

Veronica turns to go.

VERONICA
You mean believable orgasms...

TOMMY
Noo, I mean -- Wait! Where you going?

VERONICA
(walking away)
Doorbell Tommy.

A third DOORBELL RING brings us to --
I/E. FOYER/Front door - Day

Veronica opens the door, finds no one there to greet her, just a handwritten in black marker NOTE taped to the door.

THE NOTE: "FILLEAN AN FEALL AR AN BHFEALLAIRE."

Veronica digests it for a moment, then RIPS it down. The door shuts.

INT. BASEMENT - Day

Veronica plops down next to Tommy, tosses the NOTE on his lap. He gives it a passive glance.

   TOMMY
   What is that, Hebrew?

   VERONICA
   It's Latin.

   TOMMY
   You know Latin?

   VERONICA
   I'm a genius Tommy. I know everything.

   TOMMY
   What's it say?

   VERONICA
   (perfect pronunciation)
   "Fillean an feall ar an bhfeallaire."

   TOMMY
   In English babe.

   VERONICA
   The treachery returns to the betrayer.

   TOMMY
   What goes around comes around?

   VERONICA
   Exactly. That's the second one today. You're my man, do something.

   TOMMY
   It's not addressed to you per se. Per se? Is that Latin?

The DOORBELL RINGS. Veronica and Tommy exchange a look.
TOMMY (CONT'D)

Want me to get it?

A beat, then: Veronica sprints off, flies up the stairs --

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR – DAY

Veronica bursts through, continuing her dash to --

INT. FOYER/Front Door – Day

-- The DOORBELL RINGS. Veronica opens the door. It now FILLS THE FRAME, blocking our view of the conversation.

VERONICA (O.S.)
Great, it's you...yeah how much?...No, no he said twelve fifty, not fifteen twelve...well, then you're not getting a tip...fine...Here...Can I have my change?...four bucks...yeah...Have a nice day.

Door shuts, reveals Veronica with a BOX OF PIZZA. She exits FRAME. A beat.

VERONICA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch!

INT. BASEMENT – DAY

Veronica, Tommy, and a box of pizza.

TOMMY

What’s the matter with it?

VERONICA

Sausage! I waited like two hours for this pizza and they still screwed it up.

TOMMY

So pick it off.

VERONICA

How dare you.

TOMMY

What?

VERONICA

If I pick then I admit defeat and they have won. I will not be beaten.

Tommy grabs a slice.
TOMMY
Correct me if I'm wrong, but you're insane.

VERONICA
Nope, still tinkering on the edge...

Veronica kicks back, puts her feet up, rests her head.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
And...never eating today.

TOMMY
There's pretzels.

Tommy picks up the VCR remote.

VERONICA
Think the last time my Mom bought pretzels was in 1997. No thanks. -- What are you doing?

TOMMY
Fast forwarding.

VERONICA
Why are you fast forwarding?

TOMMY
To move it forward, faster.

VERONICA
You seriously have problems.

TOMMY
Do not.

VERONICA
My dear Tommy, you're watching a porno movie and fast forwarding through the sex to get to the story.

TOMMY
I want to know what happens.

VERONICA
Eighteen and you're already desensitized to sex.

TOMMY
Maybe, but I don't take it for granted.
VERONICA
That. Is bullshit.

TOMMY
No, I'm serious.

VERONICA
Last night. Ring a bell?

TOMMY
Does that keep coming up....

VERONICA
You had sex with her, correct? Or was it a hotly contested game of Connect Four that got misinterpreted?

TOMMY
Yeah, we had...you know, but it's -- irrelevant.

VERONICA
Irrelevant?

TOMMY
Time spent with girls like Chelsea Campbell is like time spent masturbating. However, when you and me are together, the experience is...amazing, it's real. Something worth fighting for, you know.

VERONICA
Right...you make me feel so "special."

TOMMY
You're not believing me?

A beat. She searches Tommy...wanting to believe him.

VERONICA
Shutup and tell me what this trash you're subjecting me to is about.

TOMMY
This guy, Kurt, lost all his rent money at a hand of poker, so he called his Uncle for help. His Uncle said sure, but with one string attached --

VERONICA
-- They use the house to shoot a porn movie?
TOMMY
A classy porn movie. One on one straight lovin'. No outside devices, i.e: a carrot. No bondage, midgets, and third input is kept to a "heat of the moment" minimum.

VERONICA
Relatable morality. Porn is turning a corner.

TOMMY
Porn has many avenues, don't get it wrong. -- But now Kurt's blonde hot ass sister shows up with her husband, they own the house, and along with the bible toting neighbors they--

VERONICA
Want to shut the whole production down.

TOMMY
It puts our main character in a debilitating moral dilemma.

A beat, as they stare at the boob tube.

VERONICA
The smell of sausage is killing me.

Veronica leans up, closes the lid to the Pizza Box. Tommy can't help but smile as she cozies up to him.

TOMMY
You do anything last night?

VERONICA
Got drunk.

TOMMY
Alone?

VERONICA
In a roundabout way.

TOMMY
That's not normal.

VERONICA
I'm an angry, lonely, disaffected youth who had no where to go and a six pack of Corona on ice. What do you want?
TOMMY
Homecoming, babe.

VERONICA
I couldn't go to that dance.

TOMMY
Why not?

VERONICA
Because everyone hates me. And if I showed up and stood in that crowded gym, with the banners, streamers, and the blaring, vomit inducing, savvy hip hop: it would've been a waste of time.

(sarcastic)
Despite my overwhelming sense of school spirit.

TOMMY
I was there. We could of had fun. I'm honing my Wango Tango for prom.

VERONICA
When fun becomes a goal and not a given, all appeal is lost.

TOMMY
Seriously...it's Homecoming and you're a senior. Loosen up, babe.

VERONICA
No one would of talked to or acknowledged me and my existence as a human being.

TOMMY
Where is all this negativity coming from?

VERONICA
My daily observations.

TOMMY
Like...?

VERONICA
Like when I walk down the halls.

TOMMY
I'm sure this is just you blowing things out of proportion.
VERONICA
You know how when you cross paths with someone they usually veer slightly to avoid a hip or shoulder bump? I don't get that veer anymore. I get a shove and a "go to hell" glance.

Tommy pours a shot of Vodka.

TOMMY
How long has this been going on?

Veronica takes a beat. Regains control of the conversation:

VERONICA
Did you mean what you said?

TOMMY
What I say? Rewind/Remind me.

Tommy downs the shot.

VERONICA
That you love me.

He recoils, responds with naked/embarrassed honesty:

TOMMY
What, yeah...come on, you know it...goes beyond love. -- I admire you, think about you all the time...I don't want to sound cliched or boring Ronnie, but...when I close my eyes, whenever I dream, when I'm...with you...alone, or...I see nothing but you. Your face. It's--

VERONICA
You see my face?

TOMMY
Yeah Ron--

VERONICA
Or you see Alison?

That was a punch to Tommy's stomach. He's stung.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(anxious)
Please answer me, this is important. Did you love my sister?
TOMMY
I don't...I cared, I don't, don't think, no...no.

VERONICA
But you're positive you love me?

TOMMY
You're scaring me -- Yes! You guys are identical twins who are completely different.

VERONICA
Why?

TOMMY
Why what?

VERONICA
Why are you sure you love me and not her? You were with her for over a year.

TOMMY
-- I don't know--

VERONICA
--She loved you Tommy. She lived and died by you.

TOMMY
I don't know! You were...desire. I mean, you always came out on top. Al played second chair to all your accomplishments.

VERONICA
Even you.

TOMMY
You were the one I always wanted.

VERONICA
You don't miss her?

Tommy takes a long, hard look at Veronica. She matches his glare. He can only respond with honesty:

TOMMY
I have you. I'm not missing a thing.

He leans in, wanting nothing more than to kiss her, but -- THE DOORBELL RINGS.
VERONICA

Hold that thought.

She gets up, exits. Tommy resumes the movie, pours another shot of Vodka. He's suddenly very self-conscious.

TOMMY

Shit.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Veronica, en route to the front door -- stops dead in her tracks.

VERONICA

Hey.

REVEAL Eric, he has returned to the couch.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Where did you go?

ERIC

After the bathroom debacle I went for a walk. Flush my head, so to speak.

VERONICA

What's that on your face?

A SMUDGE OF DIRT is on his cheek. He wipes at it.

ERIC

Oh, I was playing in a pile of leaves down the street with the Ferguson kids. Things got a little down and dirty.

The DOORBELL RINGS. A bemused Veronica instructs:

VERONICA

I gotta get that. Don't move.

She leaves. Eric pulls a LEAF out from the backside of his pants.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Veronica opens the front door to...BRIE, 18, cute, confident, fearless. A true adversary who only lacks the presence Veronica possesses.

They stare at each other as tension blows in with the wind.
BRIE
You gonna invite me in?

VERONICA
Who are you and why should I invite you in?

BRIE
I'm Brie.

VERONICA
You're a cheese?

BRIE
Brienne Evegan.

VERONICA
That suppose to mean something to me?

A beat. Guess not.

BRIE
I'm here to see Elvis, alright.

Veronica opens the door further, inviting Brie in. She steps inside. Veronica shuts the door.

VERONICA
He's upstairs. You know what door?

BRIE
Yes I do. Thanks.

Brie stares at Veronica as if she wants to say something. Veronica raises her eyebrows, impatient/annoyed.

Brie offers a smile, and makes her way up the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM – DAY

Veronica enters the KITCHEN, prepares a much needed cup of coffee.

A subdued Eric sits on the couch in the LIVING ROOM.

INTERCUT, as they speak from their respective rooms to each other.

ERIC
What happened to the pizza?

VERONICA
Oh...I didn't have any money.
ERIC
Did the delivery guy show up?

VERONICA
Yeah, it was an embarrassing moment and I'm sure it'll be one of many wounding justifications for me being in therapy one day. -- You thirsty, want some coffee?

ERIC
Nah, coffee ain't my cup of tea. I prefer a juice. Or yoo-hoo? Got any yoo-hoo?

VERONICA
I'm sure we don't, sorry.

Her coffee now ready for consumption, Veronica, again, LOCKS THE BASEMENT DOOR as she leaves the kitchen and moves to the...

LIVING ROOM. She sips her coffee as she stands by Eric.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You feeling any better?

ERIC
I feel neglected. Like an uneaten chicken wing on Rosie O'Donnell's dinner plate.

VERONICA
That's some...deep thoughts Eric.

ERIC
Hey, so what do you think? What came first, the chicken or the egg?

VERONICA
What?

ERIC
The chicken or the egg? What came first?

VERONICA
I don't know. It's one of those questions that doesn't have one pronounced, definitive, concrete answer.

ERIC
Give it a try.
VERONICA
No, not today.

ERIC
Please, Ronnie. Throw me a philosophical bone marinated in insight and theory. I'm grieving here.

VERONICA
Alright, alright.

She sits next to Eric on the couch. Gulping her coffee.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Well...you have to look at it with two different points of view here: One as the creationist and one as the evolutionist.

ERIC
Uh-huh, naturally.

VERONICA
If you believe God created man and God created the animals then obviously he created the chicken first. And the egg came from the chicken -- just like Adam and Eve. They came from God. But their offspring, those incestuous eggs that were spawn forth, came from them.

Eric is all ears, he calculates her words.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
On the other hand, if you're an evolutionist you believe one species came from another one through some DNA mutation. Therefore, some animal that hatched eggs, eventually hatched an evolved...something that resembles a chicken. Loaded with protein and low in carbs, thus giving birth to the Atkins diet and a perpetual paradigm on cause and effect.

Eric nods.

ERIC
So it was the chicken?
VERONICA
I didn't say that. It all depends on your own personal philosophies about creation. God or Darwin: The Battle Royale.

Eric takes a beat, he reverts to the depressed/lovelorn soul that showed up earlier.

ERIC
Chelsea liked to live in the moment. She dismissed philosophy. Said it was like a map of many roads that went from nowhere, leading to nothing. Like high school and ...love.

VERONICA
You know that's total bullshit, right?

ERIC
It's going to be hard...to go to school tomorrow knowing...knowing I have nothing. I...I want to cry, okay! Cry, is that--because all I'm use to is now...she decided to leave.

Veronica swigs her coffee, wishing it was 180 proof.

VERONICA
...Keep talking Eric --

ERIC
(with tears lurking)
I cooked for Chelsea...A lot. I liked cooking, it impressed her. She was my little chicky-baby, she...hated chicken!

Veronica empathizes with Eric's condition, but is lost on a cure.

ERIC (CONT'D)
But I did make her eggs once. On our six month anniversary. She said they were runny, but ate the whole breakfa--

Veronica interjects: hoping...

VERONICA
--You know...there's an old proverb that says, "He who wants eggs must endure the clucking of the hen."
ERIC
(intrigued)
Really?

VERONICA
I don't lie.

Eric digests that statement. It agrees with him.

ERIC
That's genius.

VERONICA
It is?

ERIC
Yes.

VERONICA
It is.

ERIC
You're right! You are so...That makes perfect sense!

VERONICA
Thanks...Wait, what?

He explains:

ERIC
I am the he. And Chelsea is the hen.
And the eggs...is love.

VERONICA
Is that good?

Eric, ecstatic, a smile so bright you'd go blind.

ERIC
It's perfect! It's exactly what I needed to hear.

He stands, Veronica looks up to him, utterly clueless.

VERONICA
Hold on.

Veronica grasps for comprehension.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Tell me how I cheered you up.
ERIC
"He who wants eggs must endure the clucking of the hen."

VERONICA
Yes I know.

ERIC
Think about it.

VERONICA
Eric, I don't--

He sits back down.

ERIC
Think about it.

Veronica's aching head formulates...

VERONICA
Alright. -- You desire a fulfilling, healthy relationship which results in an overabundance of...eggs. And Chelsea, represents this hen...who clucks. Generating an annoyance, a complication.

ERIC
Yes. But --

VERONICA
But...

Veronica regards the smiling Eric, notices the PLASTIC BAG FULL OF PHOTOS and suddenly: it makes sense to her. She finishes her coffee and her thought --

VERONICA (CONT'D)
But, you really love Chelsea and would do anything for her, logic be damned. And now here you sit, on the frying pan of desperation, hopelessly starved.

ERIC
...For eggs.

VERONICA
Right.

They sit for a beat. Eric, feeling good. Veronica, feeling oddly pensive.
INT. BACK DOOR - DAY

They walk to the back door, Eric has his PLASTIC BAG FULL OF PHOTOS/DVD'S in hand.

VERONICA
What are you gonna do now? How are you processing this in regards to Chelsea?

ERIC
Easy. If you're gonna put all your eggs in one basket, make sure the bottom doesn't fall out on you.

VERONICA
No Humpty Dumpty's?

ERIC
Precisely. You'd want to avoid his fate.

VERONICA
Along with most of our nursery rhyme heroes, ironically.

Eric offers the PLASTIC BAG.

ERIC
Could you throw this away for me?

VERONICA
No. Hang on to them. You never know what memory you're going to need to be reminded of. For better or worse.

Eric nods, gives Veronica one of his patented bear hugs.

ERIC
Thanks.

VERONICA
Anytime, big guy.

They break, Veronica breathes. The back door opens --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - BACK DOOR - DAY

Eric exits. He takes a moment...to DANCE.

INT. BACK DOOR - DAY

CLOSE ON the back door as Veronica LOCKS it --
INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR – DAY

CLOSE ON the basement door as Veronica UNLOCKS it --

INT. BASEMENT – LATE DAY

Tommy downs a shot of Vodka. Veronica sits next to him. A porn movie plays out on the TV in front of them.

   TOMMY
   Who was it?

   VERONICA
   Who was what?

   TOMMY
   Who was at the door?

   VERONICA
   Some chick for my brother that distinctly resembled a homeless nymphomaniac.

   TOMMY
   Was it Brie? Brienne Evegan?

   VERONICA
   I think that's what she said her name was.

   TOMMY
   She a hottie. Got a nice pair of porno lips.

   VERONICA
   Porno lips?--

   TOMMY
   --Thick, full, generous.

   VERONICA
   Do you ever think anything you don't say?

   TOMMY
   You know why she's seeing him right?

   VERONICA
   You mean seeing as in dating?

   TOMMY
   She's a big fan of E...Ecstasy.

   VERONICA
   I'm down with the abbreviated lingo.
TOMMY
And Elvis is always holding. Boys got everything. He's quite the entrepreneur.
Your parents must be proud.

VERONICA
They bring it up at every family gathering. I'm sure this Thanksgiving will be no different. It's a nice moment right before Dad carves the turkey -- Mom raises her glass in a toast to acknowledge her son as the most successful drug pusher to teens in the county.

TOMMY
You ever try it?

VERONICA
I hate giving toasts.

Tommy turns off the TV, grabs a different remote, turns on the STEREO. Music plays. It's a whole new atmosphere.

TOMMY
E?

VERONICA
I'm a drinker.

TOMMY
You're more than that. You smoke weed.

VERONICA
So?

TOMMY
So try E with me.

VERONICA
I have limits.

TOMMY
You'll sleep with me, drink yourself stupid, and hit the bong like a hippie at a Phish show, but you won't do E with me. Not even once?

VERONICA
Someone has been paying attention.

Tommy pours a fresh shot of Vodka, but he doesn't take it.
TOMMY
Who are you again?

VERONICA
Just a high school girl searching for an identity. -- How many times have you done it?

TOMMY
Only a couple. It's like a prolonged orgasm. Not only that, but it allows you to open up, feel at peace with ...everything. It is happiness.

VERONICA
Happiness in a pill? Such a scary society we reside in.

TOMMY
You really should try it. All the bad is good and all the good is better.

VERONICA
That's only temporary. The side effects aren't.

TOMMY
What side effects? Would I develop a third testicle?

VERONICA
Ecstasy forces your brain cells to release all the stored serotonin at once. Which is why you feel that sensation of so called euphoria.

TOMMY
An appealing alternative to the mundane. -- What's the damage

Tommy reaches into his pant pocket, pretends to listen...

VERONICA
The neurochemical reaction it causes in your brain yields to serious bouts of, ironically, depression. It also burns permanent holes in your brain. Lucky for you it's...not your most important organ.

...Tommy presents a YELLOW SMILING TAB of E to Ronnie.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
What is that?
TOMMY
A Preparation-H suppository.

VERONICA
Well, then, shove it up your ass.

Tommy snuggles up to Veronica, turns on the charm...

TOMMY
Oh, cheer up babe. Take it. I miss seeing you smile...I miss hearing you laugh. I bought it for you...for us. Take it.

Veronica takes the pill, inspects it. Does she want to? Probably: That would make Tommy happy. Will she? Hell no: She flicks it away.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
--What are you--?

CLOSE ON Tommy's paper cup as the E tab dives into the Vodka.

Tommy, blind to this development, is disappointed.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
You're hopeless.

VERONICA
Sound like my guidance counselor. "I have the ability but lack the mobility."

TOMMY
Yeah, yeah, blah, blah, bitch, bitch. Come on, let's get naked.

VERONICA
Keep it down, boy. I got homework to do. You can either go home now or continue to stay down here and...whatever.

Veronica stands. Tommy scans the surrounding area for the E tab.

TOMMY
I can't go home. Tommy's in no condition to clean. -- Where's the tab?

He falls to the floor, searching.

VERONICA
Your pathetic display of need is breaking my heart.
TOMMY
Did you see where it went?

She walks away from him.

VERONICA
No.

TOMMY
Can't find it.

VERONICA
Try praying to Saint Thomas.

TOMMY
Could you get your brother to replace that one? Shit ain't cheap.

Veronica moves up the steps...

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Ronnie?!

The BASEMENT DOOR OPENS and SHUTS. Tommy laments, and with his searching eyes on the floor, he swigs the shot of Vodka.

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR – LATE DAY

Veronica takes an exhausted beat, leans up against the basement door.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Princess. My parental figures always referred to Alison as Princess. They saw how we were.

She moves to the fridge, grabs a CAN OF SODA.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
How she needed to feel different. How she needed to feel special. I was fine with that.

Veronica pulls the tab on the can and PSSS HH! -- IT EXPLODES! Soda sprays all over her shirt, cascades down her hand to the kitchen floor.

Veronica remains unfazed. This is just how her day is going. She rips off some paper towels and cleans up the mess.
INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM – LATE DAY

Veronica enters, takes off her soda soaked shirt, throws it to the floor as she opens her closet...

VERONICA (V.O.)
Singling her out as the little Princess in the house was the best they could do. It seemed to work. She liked being called Princess.

She stares into her closet for a beat, lost in thought.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
She was a straight C student who struggled, I float by with A's. Perpetually bored.

Veronica extracts a long sleeved shirt, and tediously puts it on.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
She had a gaggle of friends and was a big player in the drama club. Me? Yeah, everyone hates me. She shaved her legs with an electric razor, I used a lady bic. She dated Tommy and I...well --

Veronica spots her notebook and copy of "IF" on the floor. She picks them up, sits on the side of the bed.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
-- She might of been Princess but I reigned as the unspoken Queen. And I did legitimately feel sorry for Alison sometimes...Sometimes...

The DOORBELL RINGS. -- Veronica rolls her eyes, sinks.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Did that just happen? I've been hearing that thing all freakin' day. It resonates in my head. Like a radio jingle--

The DOORBELL RINGS again.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Shitballs!

Veronica storms out, shuts the door.
I/E. FOYER/FRONT DOOR - LATE DAY

Veronica opens the door to find -- WES, head down, finger on the doorbell.

VERONICA
Ring it again and I brake off your finger and insert it way up into your ass.

Wes removes his finger from the button, looks up -- REVEALING A HUGE WELT under his right eye. He's not comfortable.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Oh my god!

WES
Yes. It hurts!

He makes his way into the house. Veronica shuts the door behind him.

INT. BASEMENT - LATE DAY

Tommy stares at the TV, remote in hand, incessantly flipping through regularly scheduled programming. SUDDENLY: He leans up. Something unexpected is happening to him.

TOMMY
Oh shit.

Tommy's swimming in Vodka and now rolling on E.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
This is going to be a looooong day.

INT. KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

Wes sits on the counter. Veronica removes something from the fridge and walks over to him.

WES
You were right.

She hands him a RIB EYE STEAK.

WES (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Wes soothes his swollen eye.

WES (CONT'D)
(re: steak)
Cold.
VERONICA
Don't be a baby. -- About?

WES
Everything. Rachel. Me.

VERONICA
So you are...?

WES
Yes, I'm...I am...

Veronica knows what he wants to say, she spares him --

VERONICA
Single?

Wes smiles, nods.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
How'd it go? Breaking the news to Rachel?

WES
Well...unpleasant.

Wes cringes. He adjusts the steak as he recalls and WE --

FLASH ON:

INT. ANONYMOUS LIVING ROOM - DAY

Wes sits, completely vulnerable/desperate, looking up as an unseen RACHEL looms over him. He sips soda through a straw.

WES
...I am! I'm being honest with you, please listen. I need you to understand. It's not your fault. It's me, and I'm sorry, okay. You're great, you're wonderful, you're you. And I love you but --

Wes takes a sip, looks up to Rachel and what feels like the hundreth time in this one-way conversation, he says:

WES (CONT'D)
I am Gay. Okay! I am ga--

WHACK! Rachel's RIGHT HAND connects with his right eye.

BACK TO:
INT. KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

Wes continues to recount. Veronica sympathizes.

WES
Then she threw whatever was in grabbing distance at me.

FLASH ON:

INT. ANONYMOUS LIVING ROOM - DAY

A red-eyed Wes stands in a corner, deflecting flying objects hurled his way by an unseen Rachel.

WES
-- Stop...hold on...calm down...Ow, that burned, what was that? --

He ducks out of frame as a POTTED PLANT soars past, SMASHING into the wall behind him.

BACK TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

A beat. Wes flashes a concerned glance to Veronica with his good eye and offers:

WES
Then she threw a bunch of names at me.

Veronica moves to the fridge.

VERONICA
Barbaric obscenities?

She opens the fridge door, searches.

WES
Names of guys she hooked up with while we dated.

VERONICA
I'm sure she felt completely inadequate, could you blame her?

WES
One was your dear boy Tommy.

Veronica had anticipated that. Does her best to move past it:
VERONICA
Yeah, well, she was out to hurt you.
Wouldn't put much stock into it.
(looks to Wes)
There really isn't anything to eat in here.

Wes subtly indicates the steak he's been holding to his face.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I, in no way, planned on cooking. -- You want Chinese? Got leftovers.

WES
Leftover from when?

VERONICA
Last night.

WES
That'll do. Heat me up.

Veronica grabs two Chinese Food containers from the fridge. -- Nukes them in the microwave. -- -- They wait...

VERONICA
Rachel...was never much of a feminine creature, so if you think about it, you two dating was kinda apropos.

WES
I, humbly, beg your pardon.

VERONICA
She plays catcher for the varsity softball team.

WES
She's athletic and you're jealous.

VERONICA
She has a moustache Wes.

WES
She has a strong French Italian background. It's not her fault.

VERONICA
Still, she could've of cared, she could've naired. Legs, arms, stomach--
-- You're exaggerating.

Sasquatch Wes.

Stop being insensitive, bitch.

I just call them as I see them.

Is that what you did this morning? When you told me to look in the mirror and see my gay self.

I admit it was a boisterous attempt at forcing you to deal with those little voices and strange attractions you've been harboring. But I sensed you were on the edge, so I pushed.

The microwave DINGS.

And I thank you. But I've actually known who I was for a while now.

Veronica removes the containers. Opens a drawer and fishes out two forks.

Really?

Yeah.

Then why the act?

Veronica hands Wes a container. He picks at his pork fried rice, while she ignores her's, unable to eat.

Never got comfortable. We were always on the move. Been to six high schools in five states over the last four years. And by the way, Wyoming? There's a reason why it's forgotten as one of the fifty states. Ninety-percent dirt.
VERONICA
Do you feel comfortable now?

WES
Here with you, absolutely. I love you Ronnie. You're probably the best friend I ever had and I really wanted to come out to you. But was never sure on how you'd react to it.

VERONICA
Why tell Rachel?

WES
I always thought college would be my time to shine. Steady environment. Larger community. Path to my future.

VERONICA
She's pregnant isn't she?

WES
College might no longer be an option.

VERONICA
Why, you decide to join the army?

WES
Turns out Mom has a gambling problem and spent most of last year in Atlantic City. Blowing my college fund on craps and no limit poker. She has an aggressive personality.

VERONICA
You're lying.

He is not.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You're not lying.

WES
Looks like I'll be spending a few years in...Community College.

VERONICA
Oh my god Wes. Damn, I'm sorry.

WES
It happened.

Wes slides off the counter, moves to the kitchen table.
Sometimes you forget your parents are human too. Which makes the reminder that much more harsh.

Veronica watches him as he takes a seat the table, impressed by his composure.

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S HOUSE - MAGIC HOUR

Mr. Farley and his rake, propped up against the porch. He's enjoying a CIGAR as the sun goes down, ending his day.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MAGIC HOUR

Street lamps and porch lights burn up the neighborhood as the OLD CAR moves down the street.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - OLD CAR - MAGIC HOUR

The OLD CAR comes to a stop at the curb, underneath a street lamp. The engine killed, headlights extinguish.

INT. OLD CAR - MAGIC HOUR

A cigarette is lit. Smoke fills the front seat. The man behind the wheel brings a NOTEBOOK to his lap. He methodically takes pen to paper.

INT. BASEMENT - MAGIC HOUR

The majority of light comes via the muted TV. Tommy is on the couch, sweating, smiling, gone...enjoying the ride.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The day is officially gone. The moon now rules the sky.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

AT THE TABLE, Wes scrapes the bottom of the container. Veronica, her food ignored, finishes the Sunday Jumble.

WES
You talk to Tommy today?

VERONICA
Yeah. He's in the basement.

Wes pauses, surprised/intrigued.

WES
Seriously?
VERONICA
Tommy showed up this morning. Decided to
down shots of Vodka and watch porn.

WES
And?

VERONICA
There's no and.

WES
There has to be an and.

VERONICA
And Veronica's not in the mood to deal
with a drunk and hormonally erect Tommy.
Not today at least.

WES
Then why put up with it?

VERONICA
He says he loves me.

WES
That's unfortunate. -- What do you say?

Veronica looks up from her jumble, bothered.

VERONICA
I say thank you and give him a juice box
and a cookie.

Wes eyes Veronica, demanding honesty.

WES
Are you in love with Tommy?

Veronica knows she has to answer that question, but first:

VERONICA
(re: Chinese food)
You done with that?

WES
Every bite. Yes.

Veronica grabs his container and heads for the sink.

Wes watches her as she cleans some dishes...
VERONICA
Okay -- prior to today Veronica had this haunting premonition that Tommy saw her as Alison and not Veronica and still loves Alison but uses Alison's cheap designer imposter sister to fill the emotional void created by her absence and to lend a consistent hand to the preservation of the sexual tenderness that Alison and Tommy shared with one other. Bottom line, Veronica always felt: used. And was copacetic as long as she remained: happy. Content.

WES
You no longer feel that way?

VERONICA
Now Veronica thinks she's falling in love and needs confirmation that Tommy is legitimately into her. Not who she aesthetically resembles.

Wes wants to help, formulates an idea...

WES
Tommy's in the basement?

VERONICA
Right.

WES
And drunk?

VERONICA
Like shit on a bar stool.

WES
I see...

VERONICA
(alarmed)
Why, what? What are you thinking?

Wes gets up, grabs Veronica's hand and leads her to --

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - NIGHT

Wes and Veronica in front of the basement door.

WES
Can I go down?
VERONICA
For what purpose?

WES
I don't know. Put my homosexuality to task.

VERONICA
You want to seduce the guy I just told you I'm possibly in love with?

WES
More or less.

VERONICA
Don't you think you need to mourn your hetero-self a bit longer.

Veronica has pegged Wes's motives all wrong. He retorts:

WES
My intentions are purely beneficial to you and your state of mind.

VERONICA
This is sick.

WES
Relax, Sir Walter Raleigh. Nothing inappropriate is going to happen. That's stupid. I will merely try and talk to the lad and get some answers for you.

Veronica doesn't take her eyes off of Wes. Still unsure.

WES (CONT'D)
Look, two of the most honest moments in one's life is when drunk and when found naked and wet.

VERONICA
Alright, alright. Shutup.

She opens the door.

WES
Destiny awaits --

VERONICA
--Just go.

Wes YELPS as Veronica PUSHES him in, shuts/locks the door.
VERONICA (CONT'D)
I need new friends.

Veronica exits.

WES (O.S.)
I heard that.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica at her desk, staring at her copy of "IF". She puts the printout down and writes purposely in her notebook.

VERONICA (V.O.)
"If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken, twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools. Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken. And stoop, and build them up with worn out tools."

The DOORBELL RINGS -- Shooting Veronica in the back. She slumps in her chair...The DOORBELL RINGS again.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(rising)
I need a butler.

Upon leaving her room, she shuts off the light, closes the door.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The porch light pops on. The front door opens and Veronica finds nothing. Not even a note. All is quiet on Sherwood Drive.

She investigates a bit further...and there it is:

REVEAL VERONICA'S CAR -- Decorated with a DOZEN EGGS, one of the PUMPKINS from the front porch, and the words SLUT and WHORE appear in the windows via white shoe polish.

Veronica digests it: par for the course.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Veronica takes a GARDEN HOSE to her car. Blasting away the yolk, pumpkin seeds, and slander. She looks dazed, tired.

VERONICA (V.O.)
You ever actually take the time to observe the suburbs at night?
(MORE)
The flickering blue light of the television glowing in living rooms as husbands and wives relax after a nice family dinner. The kids upstairs doing homework, dog asleep in the corner, garbage is by the curb and things are just...perfect. Sublime. Heavenly. It's so god damn eerie. And my house is painfully out of its element here. Or maybe my house is the element but the template is misunderstood. Perhaps normality has evolved and the walls of these quaint suburban homes house nothing but landmarks of fully functioning families of dysfunction.

Veronica drops the hose. A stark realization hits her:

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I need food.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT
Veronica at the kitchen table, primed to force herself into eating her Chinese Food, THEN --

BRIE (O.S.)
Hey Ronnie.

BRIE takes a seat across from her.

Veronica drops her fork. Spitefully acknowledges her guest:

VERONICA
Hi.

BRIE
You know Chinese food really isn't good for you.

VERONICA
I know it's full of protein and low in fat.

BRIE
All that cholesterol and sodium is bound to kill you.

VERONICA
Just about anything in society will kill you these days. And I don't want to go out on an empty stomach.
BRIE
It's your funeral.

VERONICA
Leave me alone, alright. I'm hungry and trying to stuff my face while you on the other hand are taking a break from just...getting stuffed. Bully for you.

Brie, all smiles, genuinely responds with:

BRIE
How are you?

VERONICA
I'll be better tomorrow. Or when you leave. Whatever comes first.

BRIE
You really have to be a bitch all the time?

VERONICA
Look, whoever you are: get out of my house.

BRIE
Don't remember me, do you?

VERONICA
I remember letting you in the door three hours ago and now regretting to take into consideration the fact that you could be a Jehovah's witness type A personality who would be near impossible to exterminate from the premises.

BRIE
God, you have changed.

VERONICA
I've changed? When did you even know me? Who are you?

BRIE
Brienne Evegan. We had Chemistry together freshman year. Mrs. Fox. Second period.

VERONICA
No bells are ringing up here.
BRIE
We were lab partners for christ sake.

Veronica does remember, but won't give her the satisfaction.

VERONICA
I am truly sorry for not being able to recall every irrelevant character in the movie that is my life. There's a lot of extras forced to do their own makeup and who have nothing to say.

BRIE
You know...the last year and a half I continuously stuck up for you. Never an unkind word passed these lips. But, shit if all the girls in our high school aren't right about the kind of person you are. If you possessed even half the charm your sister had, or was even half the human being: You could be someone worth knowing. But instead, you walk around the halls thinking your shit don't stink and make damn sure everyone gets a strong whiff of your ego and condescension. Because you are Veronica Taylor: the girl who gets anything she wants and has nothing that she deserves.

VERONICA
First off, I know my shit stinks and I've accepted that. Secondly, Who the...do you think you are!? What makes you so god damn special that you can come in here and judge me, criticize me, tell me what I am. So we sat together two years ago in Chem class, big deal. Forget what you heard. You don't know me. You're just someone who comes by and bangs my drug dealing brother.

BRIE
You don't know him either do you?

VERONICA
I know enough not to get involved.

BRIE
You know that he misses you? That he's full of shame and regret.

VERONICA
What are you, his publicist?
BRIE
I'm just his girlfriend.

VERONICA
Really?

BRIE
Yeah.

VERONICA
You guys in love?

BRIE
We are.

VERONICA
(sincerely)
Good. I'm happy for you. Both.

A beat. Veronica picks at her Chinese food. Brie had an agenda, she gets back to it:

BRIE
I know all about your sister. About the note she left. About why she left.

VERONICA
What did I ever do to you? We had a nice little moment, then you go ahead and verbally fart in my general direction.

BRIE
Tell me about Alison.

Veronica chuckles, reaching her wits end.

VERONICA
As much as I'd love to continue this little congenial exchange between old acquaintances, I'm, unfortunately, going to have to insist that you leave. Now.

BRIE
If you really want me to go, I'll go. I do have better things to do. -- But when was the last time you talked to a girl your age? When was the last time someone at school gave you the time of day or even regarded your existence?

Veronica stares at Brie, intrigued.

The DOORBELL RINGS.
VERONICA
Don't move.

Veronica exits. The Chinese food catches Brie's eye.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The door is open and no one is there. Veronica checks for a note...nope. Veronica takes a look at the DRIVEWAY and NOTICES:

HER CAR. The front tire has been SLASHED. No air remains.

VERONICA
Jesus! What next?

BARKER (O.S.)
Ronnie baby, you're so fine, I'll drink you down like a wine --

Veronica turns as Barker rapidly approaches from the side of the house.

BARKER (CONT'D)
-- take my time, and make you scream so good, it should be a crime. -- Hey sweetie, Elvis in the building yet?

VERONICA
You ring my doorbell?

BARKER
I'm lookin' for Elvis. Borrowed some money from my Moms, so I'm legit, wanna pick up some fly shit.

Veronica turns, heads back inside.

VERONICA
He'll call you.

The FRONT DOOR SLAMS on Barker.

BARKER
Gimme five minutes baby to turn your life around. -- Damn!

Barker retreats and the CAMERA MOVES AWAY FROM him...and PUSHES IN ON THE BASEMENT WINDOW..."MUSIC" bleeds out.
INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR – NIGHT

"MUSIC" bleeds as the CAMERA MOVES AWAY from the basement door to the...

KITCHEN TABLE, where Brie is conspicuously chewing as Veronica enters behind her, listening...to the bleeding "MUSIC."

BRIE
(hiding a mouthful of food)
Someone in your basement?

VERONICA
(curious)
Back is a sec.

INT. BASEMENT – NIGHT

CLOSE ON A COLORFUL DISCO BALL STROBE LIGHT rotating on a table. The once bleeding "MUSIC" is now in full effect. It is "HEART AND SOUL" by Ella Fitzgerald.

Veronica comes down the steps. There's a slight hesitation in her step. She reaches bottom, takes a few deliberate paces forward and notices --

Wes and Tommy SLOW DANCING. More like: Wes holding Tommy up.

They don't notice as Veronica takes in the scene for a beat, then retreats upstairs.

INT. KITCHEN – NIGHT

Veronica breezes past Brie, eating her Chinese food.

INT. STORAGE CLOSET – NIGHT

Veronica searches through a closet in the hall. Extracts a POLAROID CAMERA.

INT. KITCHEN – NIGHT

Veronica stops to offer an explanation to Brie, but can't find the words...she goes to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT – NIGHT

Tommy and Wes, dancing. "HEART AND SOUL" continues...

VERONICA (O.S.)
Hey! Fred and Grace!
Wes and a completely wasted Tommy turn to face -- VERONICA, with the Polaroid Camera ready to fire.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Smile!

WES
Wait, wait! Hold on!

Wes positions himself and Tommy into a fitting pose for the moment.

WES (CONT'D)
Fire at will.

She CLICKS. The Camera WHIRS and spits out the POLAROID.

Tommy's eyes open as a result of the FLASH.

Veronica holds the POLAROID in her hand. Waits for it to develop. She's actually enjoying this.

VERONICA
Quite an ambiance you've conjured up here. The King and Queen of the alternative lifestyle prom share a dance.

WES
We were only talking.

VERONICA
Really? You didn't try and make out with my boyfriend?

WES
I'm not a psycho, come on. This is new to me. Baby steps.

VERONICA
Crawl before you can walk across the gay carpet.

WES
Cute.

VERONICA
You get any answers?

WES
He's been a drunken useless mess. Thought I'd make him feel at ease with some soulful, yet gentle rocking.
VERONICA
Ella Fitzgerald?

WES
Your Mom has a kick ass record collection.

VERONICA
It's my Dad's.

Veronica glances at the POLAROID, smirks, hands it to Wes. He digs the image. Has an idea for it:

WES
Two words...Year Book.

VERONICA
Yearbook's one word.

WES
I'm keeping this.

A half-conscious Tommy pipes up.

TOMMY
What's with the Grandma music? -- What time is it?

WES
Time for you to start thinking up excuses for why you won't be in school tomorrow.

VERONICA
It's almost nine, babe.

WES
(whispering in Tommy's ear)
Excuse number one: up super late 'cause Wes Jacobs taught me how to be a High School God amongst boys by sho--

TOMMY
--I gotta get home, take the trash out.

VERONICA
...Wes...?

WES
(in Tommy's ear)
By showing me that saccharine tongues and schmaltzy melodies enlarge the member and sweeten the soul if used properly.
VERONICA
Stop it!

WES
Subliminal learning!

VERONICA
What you're saying doesn't even make sense!

TOMMY
Sunday's garbage night. Mom is gonna be pissed if I don't...garbage cans...

A beat. Veronica looks to Wes.

VERONICA
Can you take him home? Please.

WES
Yeah. I can do that.

THEN: Tommy looks at Veronica. His eyes open. Meeting hers. He smiles.

TOMMY
Ah, it's you.

Veronica returns the smile.

VERONICA
It's me alright.

TOMMY
Alison. -- Where've you been? I missed you.

Veronica seems unfazed by the faux pas. Wes seems concerned.

VERONICA
Ha, ha. That's not funny, Tommy, and I'm not in the mood. So let's just--

Tommy steps toward Veronica.

TOMMY
Alison. Why'd you leave?

VERONICA
Tommy, stop! I know you can hear me in there. Play nice and maybe we'll have sex tonight, okay!
TOMMY
No...we never...I feel...dreaming. Is this real?

WES
Total hallucination.

Tommy moves to HUG Veronica.

TOMMY
Alison...Come here...

Veronica rejects the hug. Tommy FALLS to the floor.

Veronica can't pretend anymore, she's pissed, hurt. Anger boils over.

VERONICA
Man...shit! Screw you Tommy! Asshole!


WES
Whoa, hey! Let's not beat the boy to a pulp.

Veronica backs off, seething. Wes helps Tommy up.

WES (CONT'D)
Sure it's not the first time he got wasted and mistook you for your identical twin. Who just happens to be his ex.

TOMMY
...who kicked me? Shit hurts...

Veronica burns a hole through Tommy with her stare.

WES
And I think he's on something more than Vodka. Ignore it.

VERONICA
No! No, Wes! I'm gonna get me some answers!

Veronica SNAPS her fingers in front of Tommy's face, desperately seeking his focus.
VERONICA (CONT'D)
Hey! Tommy! Asshole! Look at me! Right here, look into my eyes! Who do you see?! What do you feel?!

Tommy does his best to abide.

TOMMY
...sorry. Sorry I hurt you...I need you.

VERONICA
Do you love me?! Say my name! Do you love me?!

TOMMY
...sorry...

Veronica, beyond desperate, grabs Tommy by the collar.

VERONICA
Say my name god dammit, please! Look at me and say my name!

Tommy caresses Veronica's hair, moves his hand to her cheek. Soft, innocent. He looks her in the eyes:

TOMMY
...Princess...

Veronica's heart falls to her ankles.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
..I love you Princess, I do...

Veronica gives up. She can't win here.

VERONICA
And she loved you.

She lets go of Tommy, gives Wes a nod and he drags him away.

A beat. Veronica refusing to cry. Refusing to be beaten.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Brie eating Veronica's Chinese food. A RUCKUS grabs her attention as --

WES AND TOMMY emerge from the basement. Wes shoots her a friendly nod, moves on.
INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Veronica sits on the arm of the couch, eyes shut, willing/wishing this day was all a dream.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Wes carries Tommy across the yard. A bag of weed falls from Tommy to the cold ground.

I/E. WES'S CAR - SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Wes plops Tommy down in the passenger seat, shuts the door. He walks around to the driver side. Enters.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Wes's car drives off into the suburban night...Somewhere...the OLD CAR is seen.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Veronica's eyes still closed. A beat. They open. She checks her surroundings, realizes: this is not a dream. This day is happening.

As if she's been shot out of a canon: Veronica JUMPS off the couch, FLIES up the steps --

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica surfaces. She's on a mission.

BRIE
You okay? I saw--

VERONICA
--So, Brie...

Veronica sits.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Aside from my massive ego and legion of scholastic accomplishments, tell me: what is the quintessential reason for me being shunned and falsified by all the girls in our high school?

BRIE
Easy...he just left.

VERONICA
Wes?
Veronica exhales a beat, having anticipated the answer. Now that she's heard it, she wants to scream.

VERONICA
Why?

BRIE
Because everyone wants him. He has this unique quality that no matter what he says or does you still look at him and just want to grab him and rip off his pants and...

VERONICA
Rub the magic lamp.

BRIE
Exactly.

VERONICA
I know this. I know everyone wanted Tommy. I know he chose Alison. I know that he loved her and that no one could turn his head, make him sway.

BRIE
You did. And you still do.

VERONICA
And now I'm seen as the school whore? That's bullshit.

BRIE
It's not like you try and stagger away from the stigma that everyone has tagged you with.

VERONICA
You're right. But everyone should be thanking me. Not hating me.

BRIE
How do you see that?

VERONICA
'Cause now Tommy will hook up with anyone who can come up with a good enough reason for him to do so.
BRIE
And how does that make you feel?

VERONICA
He always comes home to me.

BRIE
You love him?

Veronica attempts to relate her motives/her reasons, to Brie in the only way she really knows how:

VERONICA
You ever read Macbeth?

BRIE
Cliff Notes. Shakespeare's language is way to cryptic for my taste.

A beat, "How dare she badmouth Shakespeare!" CAMERA STAYS, MOVES IN ON Veronica during the following monologue --

VERONICA
Macbeth wanted to be King of Scotland, but more so, that is what his wife, Lady Macbeth desired. So they plotted and killed the only man standing in their way of the throne: Duncan. Macbeth got to be King. And during his kingship he was plagued by numerous enemies who despised his aggressive behavior. He wanted it all. And then there was Lady Macbeth, who was systematically going mad. Consumed with guilt concerning the murder of Duncan. She slept-walked, she had hallucinations, she eventually...went all-together Koo-koo for Cocoa Puffs. Killed herself. Perpetual blood on the hands. Propelling Macbeth into a deep depression. He eventually lost his throne. And ultimately, his life.

Brie, not getting it. Or not caring.

BRIE
What is your point?

Veronica simplifies.

VERONICA
If I sever this relationship with Tommy it will cause more damage than repair. To both of us.
BRIE
You're using each other? And aware of it?

VERONICA
We're swimming in reverie, trying not to drown. And it's the healthiest thing I got going for me.

Brie stands up. She tried.

BRIE
Wonderful. Best of luck to you then --

VERONICA
Thank you.

Brie stops, not looking at Veronica as she offers a final thought to the world:

BRIE
But motivations fueled by guilt are not and can not be the least bit genuine. But what do I know? I'm just a girl who comes by and bangs your drug dealing brother.


VERONICA
...Rude...

She's angry, but expected nothing less.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

All is quiet. A light in Veronica's bedroom window burns.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica in her bed, stares straight ahead. Her copy of "IF" face down on her chest. Notebook in her lap.

VERONICA (V.O.)
"If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew to serve your turn long after they are gone, and hold on when there is nothing in you except the will which says to them Hold On!"...Can you believe this shit is a quarter of our semester grade?
There's a KNOCK on her door. It opens and Wes enters, hands behind his back.

Veronica barely looks at him as he stands by her desk.

   WES
   Brought something for you.

   VERONICA
   Is it a certain someone's head on a pike?

   WES
   Have you ever had a pet?

   VERONICA
   We all did at some point. Elvis had a gerbil, Cyclops: dead. Sucked up by the vacuum. Al had a cat, Lucky: dead. Hit by car. Me: had a turtle named Uncle Jesse.

   WES
   What happened to him?

   VERONICA
   Ran away.

   WES
   Well...

Wes reveals what he's been hiding behind his back --

A small FISH BOWL complete with a small FISH making the rounds inside. She gives it a glance.

   WES (CONT'D)
   Meet the new member of the family.

Wes puts the FISH BOWL and a container of fish food on her desk.

   WES (CONT'D)
   They say watching fish can reduce anxiety, stress, and blood pressure.

   VERONICA
   Right after Lucky died Al got a goldfish from our Grandmother. King Midas.

   WES
   Let me guess: found belly up the next morning.
VERONICA
Two weeks. Natural causes, but homicide was never ruled out. No subsequent pets were introduced...as ordered by PETA.

WES
Do you miss her?

VERONICA
I neglected to form a tight bond. Goldfish have a short-term memory that lasts only three seconds. I don't have that type of commitment.

Wes smiles. He genuinely loves this girl and wants to help.

WES
Alison. Do you miss her?

VERONICA
At times.

WES
Where do you think she is?

VERONICA
She's in this house. Continuously haunting me.

WES
Are you mad at her?

Veronica sets her homework aside, sits up her bed, knees to her chin.

VERONICA
Goddamn. This day has been relentless. Did a memo go out? Veronica Taylor, 160 Sherwood Drive, in dire need of psychoanalysis, come one come all, bring cake and uncensored adamant thoughts and opinions regarding her state of mind.

WES
I'm only trying to understand why you can't make peace with yourself. Move on.

Veronica glares at Wes. He holds his ground, challenging her. With a sudden burst of energy: Veronica moves off her bed and to her CLOSET.

Wes watches, uncertain.
She opens the closet, reaches up into the corner and produces a SHOEBOX.

VERONICA
You know my neighbor Mr. Farley?

WES
...sure...

And on that, Veronica's gone. Leaving an addled Wes behind.

WES (CONT'D)
(to the fish)
Stay.

He follows after her.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - PINK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica sits on the edge of the bed fit for a teenage princess, SHOEBOX in hand. Wes eventually enters a room he's never seen before.

VERONICA
In January, Mr. Farley's wife died. I went to the funeral despite not knowing a thing about her. Except her address.

Veronica opens the SHOEBOX. The contents: pictures, notes, letters and a few trinkets. Certain memories.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
She only came out of the house like three times a year. And when she did, she would yell at the grass. Accused 'em of being communists, spreading hay fever, and teenage pregnancy. -- But that's it. That was the only thing I could remember. Her cursing the lawn. I know her existence went deeper, but that's what she was to me. A joke without a punchline. Alison was able to see a tragedy. She saw what Mr. Farley felt. Complete loss. Lost. Despite never having the actual experience, she knew. Heightened emotion was both her gift and her curse. During the ceremony, she cried everytime she looked at him. Me, all I could think about was my own funeral.

Veronica is nothing but emotion. Her pain is subtle, yet evident.
WES
That's normal.

Veronica removes a folded piece of paper from the shoebox.
She unfolds it. Slowly.

VERONICA
How I'd want it to be an event. Live music, huge dance floor, flashing lights, and a grand send off, July 4th Governor's Island style. I'd want people to say, "You know Veronica Taylor?" "Not really." "But I heard her funeral was kick ass." "Great show, man, had to be there." It'd be like Woodstock, '69, peace, love and understanding. A true liberation of the soul.

She offers the paper to Wes.

WES
What's this?

VERONICA
Alison's runaway note.

Wes takes the note, scans it. He offers it back to Veronica.

WES
I don't want to read this.

She ignores the offer.

VERONICA
Read it and maybe you'll understand.

WES
I already understand.
(re: note)
"It is a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Veronica appreciated the Shakespeare. Wes knows that. He places the note on the bed.

WES (CONT'D)
I never really got to know your sister, from what I gather...she's a fucking baby who ran away when things got difficult.

Without warning, Veronica is on the verge of tears.
WES (CONT'D)
And if you would s--

VERONICA
--Me...Me! I'm the reason she left. I'm the reason she's not here. I'm the reason why Tommy's so...lost! I'm the reason why my Mom and Dad feel constant pangs of hate when in each other's field of gravity! I represent a documented fact that they are failures as parents! I offer misery! I'm sad, puerile, I'm pitiful!...and so god damn depressed.

A flood of tears want to flow from Veronica's eyes. The dam doesn't break, but it's leaking.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
And so...angry at who I was and what I've become. I've literally reached a point where I don't want to live but I don't want to die either. I'm scared and I all I can think of doing is curling up into a ball and hiding in the dark until everyone forgets who I am! -- I want to be able to start over.

WES
You can.

VERONICA
I can't! I can't stop --

WES
Stop what? Hating yourself?

Veronica answers that question with her swollen eyes.

VERONICA
The sad truth of the matter is that I have always hated myself and it has rendered me completely, miserably, numb. And I can't fully expect you to understand.

Veronica wipes her eyes. Embarrassed. Wes sits next to her on the bed.

WES
I understand what it feels like to be ashamed of who you are or what you've done. You know that.

(MORE)
WES (CONT'D)
It's okay as long as you're not hurting yourself in the process by dwelling on past events and clinging to chaotic relationships. Because there's not going to be any room left to find happiness. Time to move on.

A beat.

VERONICA
You make it sound it so simple.

WES
Cause it is. You open up! You bury it! Burn it!

Wes pleads to Veronica:

WES (CONT'D)
Break it off with Tommy! Completely! Apologize to your parents! Show that you do love them and say how proud you are of them! Go buy a dime bag from your brother! Roll a couple of joints, blast some Petty or Marley and shoot the stoned shit with him! Reminisce! Then: you join the yearbook staff and inspire upper and underclassmen for years to come with your insightful thoughts and ideas on the High School experience! And here --

Wes grabs the NOTE, CRUMPLES it into a ball.

Veronica sits still as Wes opens the window and tosses the NOTE out of it.

INSERT: NOTE LANDING ON THE FRONT LAWN.

VERONICA
That was drastic.

WES
You might be next.

A beat, Veronica digests what Wes has just done for her.

VERONICA
I hate you.

WES
You love me.

VERONICA
No...I Hate You.
WES
Well, alright...I can live with that.

Veronica presents her whites. And it's a true smile filled with unfiltered joy. Wes smiles back at her.

VERONICA
Hey...You want to make out?

Wes can only shake his head in response, "That's my Ronnie," And:

WES
That's my cue.

VERONICA
-- Just a little?

He moves to the bedroom door.

WES
You need a ride to school tomorrow?

VERONICA
No. I think I'll walk.

Wes hangs by the door, observing the moment.

WES
Bye Veronica.

Veronica looks over her shoulder to Wes.

VERONICA
Bye Wes.

He goes, ending an overly poignant moment.

Veronica peruses the "Taylor family memories" she has hidden away in that shoebox.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD/SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Wes walks across the front yard to his car. THEN: TIRES SCREECH and the OLD CAR SPEEDS past. Wes watches the car move down Sherwood Drive, continues on to his ride home away from this house, this day.
EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Barker comes struttin' across the lawn. SUDDENLY: He stops, looks down, and is beyond flabbergasted as he picks up Tommy's fallen bag of weed. He sniffs it just to make sure: Score! -- He takes the bag and runs.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica at her desk, writing feverishly in a notebook. "If" is close by.

IN QUICK SUCCESSION: Veronica puts her pen down. Rips a page out of her notebook. Folds it up. Stuffs it in an ENVELOPE. Licks it, sealing the deal.

She gets up.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica enters, props the ENVELOPE up against the centerpiece of the kitchen table.

It's addressed to "MOM & DAD." She leaves.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Veronica climbs up the steps -- the DOORBELL RINGS. Her body sinks, and in a zombie-like state, she reverses direction.

I/E. FOYER/FRON T DOOR - NIGHT

Veronica opens the front door, slightly relieved by who it is.

VERONICA

Hi.

REVEAL ERIC, he looks cold.

ERIC

Can I come in? It's a bit chilly around here.

VERONICA

Sure, what's up?

Veronica lets Eric in. Shuts the door.

ERIC

Oh... I don't know. I was...walking over here to see if you wanted to get a late dinner or such, and...
VERONICA
And what? What's wrong?

ERIC
What's wrong? I'll tell you what's wrong. -- You're wrong! You hypocritical bitch!

VERONICA
I'm a what?

ERIC
A bitch!

VERONICA
A what!?

ERIC
A bitch!

VERONICA
Say it again!

ERIC
How could you!?...How could be so maniacal and...bovine!?

VERONICA
Bovine, really!? -- Eric, please tell me what this about?

ERIC
I know about Tommy.

VERONICA
Chelsea told you, okay. That explains your anger but...I don't see how I'm the bitch here.

ERIC
Oh, you don't?

VERONICA
No, I don't.

ERIC
You don't?!

VERONICA
I don't! -- Are you on drugs!? Seriously!?
ERIC

The only thing I'm high on is rage. And you. You're high!...high on my shit list. You're a bad person, Veronica! And I'm pissed!

VERONICA

Eric! What the hell is this!? Think before you speak, don't say something else you're going to regret.

ERIC

I already regret plenty, thank you very much. I regret feeling sorry for you after Al left. I regret the time I lost trying to help you. I regret being your friend--

VERONICA

--Why? What? Where is this coming from?

ERIC

You're guilty, just like Chelsea. You were so sick of seeing Alison happy for once that you sought out and destroyed her source of happiness. She had someone who cared about her, and you, you...Ruined Everything.

VERONICA

Where are you getting this? This isn't true! You know me!

ERIC

No. I was the only one who didn't.

Eric pulls ALISON'S NOTE out his pocket. He holds it in front of her.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Ever hear of a trash can? You should, because that is what you are...trash.

Eric, with a smug look on his face, reads from the note.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(reading)
"Veronica is a cancer. A disease infecting whoever she wants with her words, looks, and actions. She exists only to please herself."
VERONICA
...Eric...

ERIC
(reading)
"You have taken the sole reason for my existence from me. My first and only love, Tommy. You have screwed my perfect existence and countless others in our High School. You've probably convinced him that he loves you. How proud you must be."

(Looking at Veronica)
You are a bad, sad human being. And you disgust me.

Eric throws the NOTE at Veronica.

ERIC (CONT'D)
That's it.

Eric opens, SLAMS the door.

Veronica, in a state of shock, bends down to pick up the NOTE, chases after Eric --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Eric disappears along the side of the house. Veronica stands alone on the front steps. Alison's NOTE burns in her hand. She looks at it, then looks to her vandalized car.

Her face reads the culmination of the days events.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Veronica stares at her reflection in the mirror. This is Veronica finally looking at Veronica. And she's disgusted. -- She's experiencing a true moment of clarity, allowing her to see her future, not her past.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Rehabilitation.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica at her desk, writing in a notebook. Her fish to her right. Copy of "IF" to her left.

VERONICA (V.O.)
It works for some of us. Whether it's in psycho therapy, drug rehab, prison reform or religious synagogues.

(MORE)
Like it or not, everyone goes through an unexpected growth period.

EXT. VERONICA'S DRIVEWAY/SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Veronica drags a garbage can to the curb.

VERONICA (V.O.)
You come out different. Your view is skewed. For better or worse. They condition you to see other people's point of views. Mostly: their view of you.

AT THE CURB -- Veronica lifts the lid to the garbage can, shoves Alison's NOTE inside, replaces the lid.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Veronica stands outside Elvis's door, performs the SECRET KNOCK. A deep breath.

VERONICA (V.O.)
I see that I've been callow in dealing with everyone in my life since...since anytime worth remembering.

She opens the door, enters with purpose.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Veronica's "MOM AND DAD" ENVELOPE ON THE TABLE.

VERONICA (V.O.)
And because of that, I only wanted to say...I was sorry.

A HAND enters frame, snatching up the ENVELOPE.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's dark. Veronica sits upright in her bed, a bundle of nervous energy. There is a KNOCK at her door.

VERONICA (V.O.)
The term sorry is a lot like the term love. The majority of its usage is out of obligation or selfishness. Rarely do you mean it, or better yet, feel it in every bone of your body when you say it to someone.

Veronica's MOM and DAD have entered her room. They stand in front of their little girl. Veronica, full of fear, loneliness, and regret, smiles at them.
Her Mom HUGS her. Tight. Meaningful. -- They break.

    VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
    God damn if I wasn't sorry for what I've done. I wanted my parents back. And I know they wanted a daughter back.

Veronica and her Dad exchange a look, understanding each other.

    VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
    I wasn't their little Princess, but I was their daughter.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Veronica's copy of "IF" and her completed written assignment on her desk.

    VERONICA (V.O.)
    "If you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run, yours is the Earth and everything that's in it."

Veronica in bed, comfortably under her blankets.

    VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
    "And which is more, you'll be a Man my son." -- "If" by Rudyard Kipling. Piece of cake.

Her door slightly open, this day officially over, her future now a possibility...Veronica closes her eyes, falls asleep.

    DISSOLVE TO BLACK:

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE/VERONICA'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

The SUN on its way up. It's unbearably bright.

An OLD CAR stutters to the curb, drops the Monday NEWSPAPER by the driveway, moves on to the next subscriber.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica in bed, eyes open, staring at the ALARM CLOCK: 6:39.

    VERONICA (V.O.)
    There's this moment when you wake up and realize what day it is.
A pregnant beat, THEN: 6:40 hits and the ALARM CLOCK BUZZES. Veronica immediately silences it.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CON'T'D)
But it doesn't matter because you know today is going to be just like yesterday.

She throws the covers off, hops out of bed.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

Veronica at the sink brushing her teeth, water runs.

VERONICA (V.O.)
The only thing that changes is your clothes and the weather.

She spits, takes a beat to look at herself in the mirror.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CON'T'D)
God that statement feels so foreign to me right now.

She's never looked as happy as she does right now.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica on her bed, ready for school, stuffs her notebook inside her backpack. She springboards up. More than eager to start the day.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Veronica, Mom, and Dad are seated around the kitchen table eating breakfast, sipping coffee, reading the newspaper, etc.

They're all happy...it's a good morning in deed.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Now this was huge. You might be thinking "big deal, they're eating together, that means shit." I guess the best way to explain this to you is...well, I can't. Because when you lose something that you took for granted...yeah, you miss it, but you're also consumed with self-loathing and misdirected anger because you wish you would of paid more attention to it when you had it. I miss my sister. I missed Elvis. I missed my parents. And this tiny, stupid little meal we are having makes me smile. And I will never forget what it tastes like.
TIME DISSOLVES AS: Dad says goodbye, heads for work -- Next, Mom's turn: leaving Veronica alone in the kitchen -- She finishes the Jumble -- Rinses out the dishes.

INT. FOYER - MORNING

Veronica puts on her backpack, opens the door, exits.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MORNING

The front door shuts behind Veronica. There is a PIECE OF PAPER attached to it. Veronica didn't see it. Or did she?

A gust of wind blows. The PAPER FLAPS against the door, demanding Veronica's attention. She turns, takes notice of:

ALISON'S WRINKLED RUNAWAY NOTE taped to the door. Veronica, a mass of confusion, takes the letter down.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Veronica walks down the sidewalk, reading the NOTE.

INT. OLD CAR - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

WE ARE WATCHING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD as Veronica walks away from us. The key in the ignition is turned by the MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL and the OLD CAR RUMBLES to life.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Veronica stops, now aware of the OLD CAR down the street. She takes her backpack off, unzips it, about to put the NOTE in WHEN --

The OLD CAR ROARS up, SLAMS ON THE BRAKES!

It idles adjacent to Veronica for a tension filled beat.

The passenger window rolls down.

Veronica, frozen in fear drenched confusion, stares at the OLD CAR.

The OLD CAR remains silent.

Veronica bends down to get a look at the driver.

The OLD CAR remains silent.

Veronica's backpack falls to the ground, the NOTE is still in her hand.
CLOSE ON Veronica as a calm comes over her as she sticks her head in the car. She smiles, about to speak WHEN SUDDENLY --

The NOTE is ripped from her hand.

Veronica looks up, shocked, as she is now --

Staring down the BARREL OF A GUN.

VERONICA

No way!

ABRUPT CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

AN UNCOMFORTABLE AMOUNT OF SILENCE...

THEN --

A CAR ENGINE REVS...

THEN --

A SINGLE GUN SHOT!...

THEN --

THE CALMING SOUNDS OF THE SUBURBS...

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Veronica's backpack lays by the curb.

INT. VERONICA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

It's empty. The dishes are clean. The Monday newspaper is neatly stacked on the table.

INT. VERONICA'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

It's dark, cold.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dark, cold.

EXT. UNKNOWN FIELD - OLD CAR - MORNING

The OLD CAR parked in an empty lot. A corn field not in harvest this time of year.
The driver side door opens and ALISON exits. She wears a GREY HOODED SWEATSHIRT and has BLACK GLOVES on. A CIGARETTE burns between her fingers.

Her features are identical to Veronica in every way. The main thing that tells us that this is not the Veronica that left for school this morning is her hair: it's BRAIDED into CORNROWS.

She finishes her CIG and quickly pulls the SWEATSHIRT HOOD over her head, shuts the door and moves to the...

TRUNK. Alison pops it open, removes a RED DUFFEL BAG.

She gets back into the OLD CAR. --

FROM A DISTANCE WE SEE Alison in the front seat removing her sweatshirt. A lifeless body sits in the passenger seat. Veronica.

INT. OLD CAR - UNKNOWN FIELD - MORNING

In the PASSENGER SEAT, Veronica, dead. Now dressed in Alison's clothes.

-- Alison positions the GUN in her sisters hand. -- She turns the REARVIEW MIRROR towards the passenger seat. -- Tapes a "SUICIDE NOTE" to the glove box.

EXT. UNKNOWN FIELD - MORNING

Alison, dressed in what Veronica was wearing to school plus a BLUE WOOL CAP on her head, walks away from the OLD CAR. She has the RED DUFFEL BAG with her.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Alison picks up Veronica's backpack, slings it over her shoulder.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The door opens and Alison walks in. She looks around the room, taking it all in. To her: this is a dream come true. A start of a new life.

She drops the backpack to the floor, moves to the closet, where she hides away the RED DUFFEL BAG.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

Alison in front of the mirror, takes off her BLUE WOOL CAP, revealing her cornrowed braids.
She begins the process of removing them...

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Alison enters, now a spitting image of the Veronica that left for school this morning.

She taps the fish bowl, smiles at her little friend, drops some food his way.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - MORNING

Alison holds the RUNAWAY NOTE, there's blood on it. She sparks up her lighter and BURNS the note, reducing it to nothing but black ash that blows away in the wind.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Alison opens the trunk to Veronica's car, removes the spare tire.

She replaces the flat. Forever remaining cool, calm, and collected.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Veronica's car hood is up, Alison replaces the battery. She looks up for a moment and WAVES, politely acknowledging --

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Mr. Farley as he steps down his front porch and grabs his rake. He cranks out a nod in response to the wave.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Alison throws down the hood. She gets in the car. Starts it up. Backs out of the driveway.

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - STREET CURB - DAY

Veronica's car parks by the curb. The driver's side door opens.

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Alison at the front door. She's scared, nervous. She wants to knock but fear keeps getting the best of her.

Eventually, she musters up enough courage and RINGS the DOORBELL. She instinctively takes a step back, waits...

She's a ball of nervous energy. A second seems like an hour.
She goes to ring again -- BUT: The door opens, a hungover Tommy greets her.

    TOMMY
    ...hey...

Alison is speechless. She's bursting inside. With a smile on her face and a tear in her eye:

    ALISON
    ...hi...

    TOMMY
    I owe you an apology.

Alison doesn't hear a word he says. She just leaps into his arms. An epic sized HUG ensues.

    ALISON
    I love you...I love you...

    TOMMY
    I love you too, babe.

    ALISON
    That's all I want to say...and hear...

She HUGS him tighter. Making the most of the moment.

INT. TOMMY'S BEDROOM - DAY

There's a litter of clothes on the floor leading to Tommy's bed WHERE --

He and Alison lay under the covers, post coitus. Alison appears to be asleep. Tommy is staring at her. Studying.

Her eyes open, meeting Tommy's...they smile. Kiss.

CLOSE ON Alison. Happy as one can possibly be at any moment, ever.

    ALISON (V.O.)
    They use to call me Princess, but my name was Alison. Alison Taylor --

Alison affectionately runs her finger down Tommy's cheek. He grabs her hand, holds it...holds it...kisses it...
EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE – DAY

Alison moves down the walkway to Veronica's car. She removes a pack of cigarettes from her back pocket. One stick remains and it's upside down. The lucky one.

ALISON (V.O.)
I'll be found dead in a vehicle not far from here. Teenage suicide.

Alison lights the lucky cig. Inhales it: slow, deliberate.

ALISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
There's a note. It will explain everything...tragic.

She exhales. It feels like SLOW-MOTION...

I/E. VERONICA'S CAR – DAY

Alison gets in, starts the engine up.

ALISON (V.O.)
The amazing irony here is that I died, my sister died. So...who's really alive?

She takes a long drag off her cig. Drops it out the window. Last one she'll ever have.

ALISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Well, I guess I'll see what I can get away with.

Alison looks at her reflection in the rear-view mirror, fusses with her hair a bit, smiles. THEN --

She sees VERONICA IN THE BACKSEAT. Their eyes meet.

Alison whips her head around: The backseat is empty. She checks the rear-view: nothing. She takes a beat, composes.

ALISON (CONT'D)
(smiling)
Bitch.

ELVIS COSTELLO'S "VERONICA" starts up, it plays on as -- Alison shifts, P to D, accelerates.

Veronica's car drives away from Tommy's house...

SUBTITLES FADE UP:

"TO BE CONTINUED..."