

# The Trouble With Jake

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES LANDSCAPE - DAY

A sea of cars sputters along a freeway. Horns honk. Massive midday sun blazing.

TITLE: *LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA*

Along the freeway a billboard proudly depicts a smiling surgeon in a traditional white coat. The caption reads: *Dr. Winston Hoyt. The Surgeon To The Stars!*

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A sign along the outside of the office reads *LOS ANGELES JOURNAL*.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE-UP of a fax machine as it expels a piece of paper. The hand of 29-year-old office manager SUSAN snags the fax from the tray.

SUSAN'S POV

The top of the fax paper flutters as Susan quickly walks down a busy hallway. People are glued to their computers in their cubicles.

The top of the fax states: *To Jake Adams, From the desk of Alissa Hoyt.*

A nearby television is on. A news woman speaks.

NEWS WOMAN

Where is James Farber? Is it a mere coincidence that the CEO of Carmel, California based Safenet Securities turns up missing at the same time that its investors find out they've lost millions in unrealized equities? Some think not.

JON, a 30 year old short and dumpy guy, peers over the faux wall.

JON

Hey, Susan. What's that?

SUSAN  
 (Walking by)  
 Relax spaz. Just a fax.

Jon jumps up from his desk and follows her.

JON  
 Who's it for?

SUSAN  
 Mind your business.

Jon runs in front of Susan so she has to stop. She appears annoyed. Jon smiles.

JON  
 z

Susan gasps and walks around Jon.

INT. CUBICLE - DAY

JAKE ADAMS is on the phone. He is an average guy. Kind, considerate, likeable. He looks at Susan as she rounds the corner to his cubicle.

JAKE  
 Thanks for the lead, Dave. I gotta go. Yeah, call ya later.

Jon peers adoringly over Susan's shoulder as she talks to Jake.

JAKE (cont'd)  
 (Surprised)  
 Susan. What's up?

SUSAN  
 Jon. Could you give us a second?

Jon dejectedly walks away, but still listens from a couple cubicles away.

JAKE  
 You'll be pleased to hear I just got some great leads on the Jacobson story.

SUSAN  
 You're off the Jacobson story.

JAKE  
What? Why?

SUSAN  
You ever heard of the Carmel  
connection?

JAKE  
You mean that financial company  
that swindled it's investors?

SUSAN  
Yeah. I just got a lead that they  
found the missing CEO hiding down  
in Tijuana.

Jake shifts uncomfortably in his seat.

JAKE  
And you want me to go down there?

SUSAN  
Right.

JAKE  
But I got engagement parties and  
everything this week.

She tosses the fax on his desk.

SUSAN  
Oh, you won't have to worry about  
that.

Susan turns to leave and Jake picks up the fax.

SUSAN (cont'd)  
Better pack up. You're leaving in  
the morning.

INT. OFFICE HALL - DAY

Jake and Jon walk down the hall quickly.

JON  
You're too nice, Jake. That's your  
problem.

JAKE  
But she's everything I want.  
Outgoing, smart. And beautiful.

JON  
 She broke up with you by fax.  
 Hello! By fax.

JAKE  
 It can't end like this. I'll  
 change. I'll do whatever.

SUSAN (O.S.)  
 Tijuana, Jake. Don't let me down.

Jake and Jon burst through the office door outside into the afternoon scuffle of the LA streets.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER

A serene waiting room with a couple patients. The sound of flutes mixed with gentle oceans come from hidden speakers.

ALISSA HOYT, a gorgeous young woman, enters the room. She scans the patients, then walks through the *employees only* door.

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Alissa comes into her father's office. DOCTOR WINSTON HOYT fills a syringe with a clear fluid.

DOCTOR HOYT  
 Oh, hello dear.

ALISSA  
 No one famous today, daddy?

DOCTOR HOYT  
 You should have been here earlier.  
 I lasered Joan River's neck.

ALISSA  
 Who cares about Joan Rivers?

DOCTOR HOYT  
 And I botoxed her daughter,  
 Melissa.

ALISSA  
 Really? What was she like? Was she  
 nice?

Alissa's cell phone rings to the sound of *rockabye baby*. She yanks it from her purse.

ALISSA (cont'd)  
Oh bother.

Doctor Hoyt caps the needle and walks toward the hallway.

DOCTOR HOYT  
(pointing to the syringe)  
Botox.

ALISSA  
(Into the phone)  
I guess you got a fax today?

INTERCUT BETWEEN JAKE'S CAR AND HOYT'S OFFICE

Jake weaves through traffic as he talks on his cell phone.

JAKE  
Where are you? I need to see you.

ALISSA  
It's over, Jake. Why can't you not see it?

JAKE  
But... I'll do anything. I love you.

ALISSA  
(beat)  
I figured you might say that.

JAKE  
What about our plans? Our two kids we were going to name Maggie and Forest?

ALISSA  
Forest?

JAKE  
I don't know what I'd do without you. What... What's wrong with me anyway?

Alissa sits down in her father's leather chair and looks at her nails. She pulls a novel from her purse. The cover reads "*A Woman Empowered*" by Sandra Compton.

ALISSA  
Nothing. Nothing's wrong with you.

JAKE  
Really? Then...

ALISSA  
No, I take that back. There is something wrong.

JAKE  
What is it? Anything. I can change whatever it is.

ALISSA  
(beat)  
I guess you're just too nice.

Nearly avoiding an accident on the road.

JAKE  
What does that mean? How can someone possibly be too nice?  
(beat)  
Isn't it generally a good thing to be nice?

ALISSA  
Oh hi daddy. I gotta go, Jake.  
Goodbye.

Jake looks at the phone. He bangs it against the dashboard several times.

JAKE  
Shit.

He throws the phone on the car's floor.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doctor Hoyt fills another syringe.

DOCTOR HOYT  
Next patient's Tom Cruise's manager.

He leaves the room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE HALLWAY- MOMENTS LATER

Alissa walks down the hall and looks into a room.

ALISSA'S POV LOOKING IN THE ROOM

NED, a handsome man in his fifties, mixes himself a drink. He wears a suit and tie. He's very slick, like a car salesman.

NED

Sweetie. Can I make you a highball?

Her cell phone rings again. She irritatingly grabs it from her purse. The display reads *JAKE*, but she presses a button and the ringing stops. She drops it back in the purse.

ALISSA (O.S.)

How about a seabreeze, Ned.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

He mixes the drink ice tongs. She looks down the hall and sneaks into Ned's office. She walks over to him and stops him from making the drinks.

ALISSA

I don't want the goddamn drink.

She starts unbuttoning his pants. He drops the tongs.

NED

(Whispering)

Your father's in the next room.

ALISSA

Then shut the fucking door and be quiet.

He runs over and shuts the door. He runs back to her as his pants fall to his knees.

NED

But this is the last time. My wife's getting suspicious.

ALISSA

Well goodie for her.

He pulls off her shirt while they fall behind the desk together.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

She pumps on Ned from the top position. She whimpers in ecstasy.

NED

Shh.

She continues pumping.

NED (cont'd)

(Between pumps)

I'm... Not... Leaving... My...  
Wife.

They climax together.

EXT. MONTANA - EVENING

Pristine mountains reign over the valley.

TITLE: *MISSOULA, MONTANA*

A lone bicyclist swerves around a curb and stops at a small apartment. He lifts the bike onto his shoulder and walks up a set of stairs and enters the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LORENZO sets his bike down in the hallway. He is a fit, handsome 28-year-old Puerto Rican guy with black hair pulled into a slick ponytail.

LORENZO

(Sexy Latino accent)

Babe?

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A sparsely decorated bedroom and a futon bed. A few unframed artsy pictures adorn the walls. SANDY COMPTON, more cute than pretty in a down-to-earth quirky way, sits on the bed reading. A glass of wine sits on the bedside table.

SANDY

Hey stud.

He puts his hands out as if taking a picture of her.

LORENZO

Sandra. How can you keep getting  
more beautiful each time I see you?

She puts down the mag.

SANDRA  
It's just the wine.

LORENZO  
No. It is not the wine. It is the  
you.

SANDRA  
The me?

He takes off his shirt and crawls onto the bed.

LORENZO  
Let us make love and then stay up  
all night looking at the stars.

She laughs out loud.

SANDRA  
I'm sorry, Lorenzo.

He stands up from the bed.

LORENZO  
I offer you love and you laugh?

Sandy jumps out of bed and follows him.

SANDRA  
No. I'm sorry. It's just that you  
occasionally sound a bit cheesy.

LORENZO  
I am not the cheesy.

She laughs again. And then tries to squelch it.

SANDRA  
Come on, Lorenzo. You're just too  
sensitive. Here...

She grabs him and kisses his chest, neck and lips. They fall  
back to the bed.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

The room is dark except for the light from the moon and stars  
coming through the window. They lie on the bed. Candles are  
lit. Incense burning.

SANDRA

I have to go to Tijuana in the morning.

LORENZO

What's going on in Tijuana?  
(Exaggerated Latino accent  
on *Tijuana*)

SANDRA

My publisher wants me to do some research for my next book. That's all.

LORENZO

You should go to Tibet to capture the plight of the monks in their ancient fortresses. Not Tijuana.

SANDRA

Hey, I want to do whatever it takes to keep selling my books.

He breathes in deeply and does a yoga pose in bed.

LORENZO

Really, you should join my yoga class. Your writing could become a spiritual quest. Like my life.

She looks at Lorenzo as he strikes a pose. She shakes her head and turns over in bed.

INT. LOS ANGELES - JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jake is asleep. His suitcase is packed and resting next to the door.

Sounds of a key scratching at the front door. The door opens and Alissa enters. Jake sits up in bed.

JAKE

Alissa?

Alissa walks to the foot of the bed and takes off her shirt to reveal a thin bra.

ALISSA

I missed you.

He rushes out of bed to embrace her.

JAKE  
Let's never break up again. It  
hurts too much.

He starts kissing her neck and breasts. She sniffs his hair.

ALISSA  
Have you showered?

JAKE  
Uh, well I figured you weren't  
going to be here so...

She backs away.

ALISSA  
You're not touching me with those  
dirty hands.

He lowers his head and goes into the bathroom.

She takes off the rest of her clothes and changes into a  
nightgown.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He walks out of the bathroom rubbing a towel through his wet  
hair. She opens the covers and he slides into bed and starts  
kissing her again.

ALISSA  
Wait. How about your teeth?

JAKE  
What about them?

ALISSA  
Did you brush them?

He continues kissing.

JAKE  
Yeah, a couple hours ago.

She pushes him back to the bathroom.

ALISSA  
I'm not kissing a stink mouth.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Foam-suds fall to the sink as he vigorously brushes.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He slides back in bed and they embrace. He removes a strap from her nightgown to reveal a breast.

ALISSA

Ouch!

She pushes him off again.

JAKE

What now?

She rubs his face with her hand.

ALISSA

You're hurting me with your whiskers. My skin is...

JAKE

Yeah, I know. Delicate.

ALISSA

A woman empowered would never put up with this torture.

JAKE

What?

ALISSA

Oh, you wouldn't understand. You're just a man.

JAKE

I'll shave. Right now. I'll go shave.

ALISSA

Whatever.

She falls back into the bed and pulls up the covers as he runs to the bathroom again.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Shaving cream coats his face.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He excitedly runs out of the bathroom, clean-shaven, brushed, showered. But she's now sound asleep. He sighs deeply, pauses, and then reluctantly gets into his side of the bed, which now has very little room. He turns off the light.

EXT. LAX AIRPORT - MORNING

Aerial view of LAX. Planes departing and arriving. Heavy traffic.

INT./EXT. JON'S CAR - MORNING

Jon drives the car while eating an apple. Jake sits in the passenger seat with his laptop briefcase on his knees.

They pull into terrible airport traffic.

JON

I think Susan wants me.

JAKE

She's our boss. You could lose your job if you keep messing with her. And besides, you're hideously ugly.

JON

Well, that was encouraging.

(beat)

What about you? Since Alissa came back, all's good, eh?

JAKE

Yeah, I guess.

JON

You need to dump her before she dumps you again. Seriously.

Jake looks out at the traffic.

JAKE

I can't. I love her too much.

JON

Christ.

A break in traffic. Jon pulls into a spot in front of the airport arrivals area.

JON (cont'd)

At least tell me your only staying with her because her Dad's rich.

JAKE

Jon, it's more than that. She's smart, outgoing, athletic, not to mention totally hot. She's everything I've always been looking for. The perfect combination.

JON

She walks all over you. Anyway, you got to go. Susan wants some leads about this Carmel connection guy tonight.

Jake gets out of the door, opens the trunk and snags his suitcase.

JAKE

Yeah, I'll get some goddamn leads. Where am I staying anyway?

Jon laughs as he pulls away from the curb.

JON

The Los Angeles Journal sends its employees only to the best.

Jon rides away laughing as Jake sucks in exhaust fumes.

EXT. TIJUANA, MEXICO - DAY

Currents of people pulse down an old Mexican street next to a dilapidated hotel called *HOTEL RIALTO*. Beggars, peddlers, throngs of children pass by as a dusty taxicab stops in front of the hotel.

The hotel next door is just as bad, *HOTEL DEL ORO*.

The driver gets out and opens the trunk. Jake squints in the sun and looks at the awful hotel.

CABBIE

La bonita Hotel Rialto.

JAKE

The best.

EXT. AIRPORT - MONTANA - DAY

A small airport lazily chugs along. A pickup truck pulls up to the departure area.

INT./EXT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Lorenzo's ponytail falls gently over his shoulder. He looks at himself in the rearview mirror. Sandy opens the passenger door.

SANDY  
I'm leaving.

LORENZO  
I wish I could go with you, Sandra.

SANDY  
Uh huh.

LORENZO  
But I've got my yoga students to teach. And it would be so hard to find a replacement for me. You know.

He leans over to kiss her cheek.

LORENZO (cont'd)  
Old Mexico. Ah, such raw beauty. Visit the spiritual ancient ruins and seek your true soul.

SANDY  
I don't think there's any ruins there.

LORENZO  
Where are you staying?

She looks at a piece of paper.

SANDY  
Um, Hotel Del Oro.

LORENZO  
Ah, Gold. Must be a special place. Del Oro. Del Oro.

She kisses his cheek and opens the door.

SANDY  
Good bye.

EXT. HOTEL RIALTO - LOBBY

The lobby is in complete disrepair from the cracked Mexican tiles to the walls with paint scaling off. A concierge, PEDRO, grabs Jake's bag.

JAKE  
Hey!

CONCIERGE  
No prolem, senior. From Los Angeles Journal, no?

JAKE  
Yeah.

CONCIERGE  
I show you to your room. Follow me.

Not impressed, Jake walks up the stairs behind the concierge.

INT. ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The hotel room is old, stale, musty. The door opens and Pedro throws the suitcase on the bed. The bed is so hard that it doesn't move at all from the weight of the case, and dust billows.

Jake looks around in awe. Pedro opens the curtain.

PEDRO  
The view makes it.

Jake looks out of the window at another building three feet away, The *HOTEL DEL ORO*.

JAKE  
That's some view.

Pedro holds out his hand, grinning an aluminum-toothed smile.

PEDRO  
Unless you need something else, senior?

Jake looks at his hand.

JAKE

Oh.

Jake reaches into his pocket for some coins.

JAKE (cont'd)

Here you go.

PEDRO

Gracias.

Pedro shuts the door behind him.

Jake looks around the room. He closes his eyes and falls backward onto the bed, which doesn't move at all. We hear a CRACK from his back. Jake screams in pain.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A taxicab stops in front of the hotels. Sandy steps out squinting in the sun. She looks at the hotels.

CABBIE

Bienvenido. Welcome to Tijuana.

He fetches her bag from the trunk. She trips over a crack in the sidewalk and falls.

SANDY

(Getting up)

Good God.

INT. HOTEL DEL ORO - LOBBY

The receptionist attempts to dial a phone number for Sandy, who waits patiently. The receptionist smiles and hands Sandy the phone.

RECEPTIONIST

Here you go, senorita.

SANDY

Thanks.

The receptionist turns back to her work and Sandy turns away. She cups her hand over the phone.

SANDY (cont'd)

Stan. Hey, I just wanted to let you guys know that I got to Tijuana okay.

The voice on the other end becomes louder and she holds the phone from her ear.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Tahiti? Are you telling me I'm  
supposed to be at the Del Oro in  
Tahiti? Jesus, Stan. I kind of  
wondered why this hotel is so...  
(quietly)  
Dirty.

The voice on the other end keeps blaring.

SANDY (cont'd)  
I didn't think you guys were this  
cheap. You should see this place.

The receptionist frowns.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Okay. Okay. I'll just leave on the  
next flight out of here. Sorry,  
Stan. I don't know how this could  
have happened.

INT. ROOM - DAY

Jake walks around his room in his boxer shorts slumped over like an old man. He holds his low back and grimaces.

Follow him into:

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

He turns on the sink and rusty water leaks out. He turns on the shower and a few grains of sand fall.

Follow him back to:

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

He limps over to the window and looks out to the *Hotel Del Oro*. Just then, one of the windows curtains opens up.

We see Sandy through the window giving the concierge a tip. But Jake doesn't see her because his bathroom sink spontaneously comes on at that exact moment.

He runs over to the bathroom and water sprays everywhere.

INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Jake stands at the reception desk at Hotel Rialto. The RECEPTIONIST speaks to the MANAGER.

MANAGER

We can get you into another room.  
No problem, señor.

JAKE

Great.

MANAGER

But we only have suites left. Just  
a little bit more expensive.

JAKE

But I thought I was your only  
customer. How can you only have  
suites left?

The manager and receptionist look at each other for a moment.

RECEPTIONIST

Big convention this weekend.

MANAGER

Why don't you walk around town  
while we get your new room ready.

INT. HOTEL DEL ORO - ROOM - DAY

Sandy tries the phone on the bedside table. It doesn't work.

She reaches for the phone-line and notices that the end of  
the cord is frayed and that there is actually no phone jack  
at all.

SANDY

What kind of place is this?

She opens the door and a suspicious looking GUY walks by. He  
winks at her and cracks a rotten smile.

GUY

Hola.

She quickly shuts the door and leans her back against it. She  
turns the padlock but it just keeps on turning and never  
locks.

SANDY

(beat)

I got to get outta here.

She slowly opens the door again and notices the hallway is empty. She darts down the hall to the stairs.

EXT. TIJUANA STREET - DAY

Peddlers shake their pots and pans. Vendors sell their fruits and vegetables. Children run around with chickletts. Beggars sit on the street and moan.

Jake grabs a hold of his wallet as he walks through the crowd. A restaurant waiter steps out of his establishment.

WAITER

Senor. My good friend. You hungry?

JAKE

No.

WAITER

The best seafood in Tijuana. The freshest lobster. The freshest fish.

Jake examines the dirty old building and frowns.

JAKE

Sorry, but it doesn't look so fresh to me.

He keeps walking.

WAITER

(In the distance)

Very fresh. Very fresh. Senor?

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sandra walks through the same streets a few steps behind Jake. The same waiter steps out.

WAITER

Senorita. All alone?

SANDY

No. Um, I'm with my husband.

The waiter looks around and laughs.

WAITER  
Then come back for dinner. I give  
you special deal.

Sandy quickens her pace. She holds her coin purse close.

A child runs up to her.

CHILD  
Senorita. Dollar. Un Dollar. Por  
favor?

She smiles at the child and gives her a dollar. Suddenly a  
mass of children and crippled beggars swarm around her.

SANDY  
Oh my god.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jake is caught up in a throng of beggars. He begins to  
hyperventilate anxiously in the hot sun.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Sandy fights her way out of a crowd, but does not see Jake.  
She's hyperventilating as well.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

HECTOR, a street-side vendor, sits calmly in a shady spot. On  
a table are several pictures depicting a resort called *Club  
Paradiso*. Beautiful a sandy beaches, large clean rooms with  
clean beds, workers with smiles.

HECTOR  
(Good English accent)  
Experience a piece of paradise.  
Your piece of paradise.

Jake's eyes look up to the sound of paradise. His feet move  
uncontrollably toward Hector.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Sandy is almost completely lost between a group of screaming  
children and several peddling elderly people. She hears  
Hector's speech about paradise and gravitates toward him.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Hector realizes that he has Jake's full attention. Jake looks at the pictures of paradise nearly drooling. Hector continues talking about the wonders of the resort.

HECTOR

...Timeshare. But we're offering a special deal only for today. One free day at Club Paradiso, all meals and drinks included. You might want to swim in the ocean and lay on our manicured beaches, or you might like to experience one of our five pools.

He shows Jake a picture of a hotel bedroom.

HECTOR (cont'd)

Look at these incredible rooms. Nothing is left out. Every detail has been completely thought out for our guests' maximum enjoyment.

Sandy squeezes through the crowd and stands behind Jake. Sandy looks over his shoulder as best she can.

HECTOR (cont'd)

And all you need to attend a half an hour presentation. No obligation. One full day. No obligation... Sir?

JAKE

(Vacantly)  
No obligation?

HECTOR

No sir. Just a half hour presentation. Can you do that?

JAKE

(Automatically)  
I can do that.

Hector places a piece of paper on the table and hands Jake a pen.

HECTOR

Just sign here.  
(beat)  
For both of you.

HECTOR(cont'd)

This offer's only available to  
married couples. You are married,  
aren't you?

Jake looks around and notices Sandy. Sandy looks around and  
for the first time notices Jake.

Jake puts his arm around Sandy's shoulders and she puts her  
arm around his waist.

JAKE  
Yes. Of course.

SANDY  
Of course, we're married.

They look at each other and smile. They look back at Hector,  
more confidently this time.

JAKE  
First honeymoon.

SANDY  
Second honeymoon.

Hector looks confused. Jake quickly signs the form.

JAKE  
Our second honeymoon feels like our  
first.

SANDY  
Be... Because we're so much in love  
it feels like our first.

Hector hesitatingly accepts the form.

HECTOR  
I see. Well, get your things and  
meet me back here in ten minutes.  
I'll drive you over to paradise.

Jake and Sandy look at each other amazed.

JAKE  
Paradise.

SANDY  
Paradise.

INT. HOTEL RIALTO - MOMENTS LATER

Jake runs in. The receptionist looks confused.

INT. HOTEL DEL ORO - CONTINUOUS

Sandy runs in as the receptionist frowns.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HOTELS - MOMENTS LATER

Jake and Sandy burst out of the Hotels at the same time with their bags in disarray. The concierge's try to help with the bags.

SANDY  
No thank you.

JAKE  
I can take it from here, thanks.

Jake and Sandy hobble down the street toward Hector's stand. Jake turns to Sandy.

JAKE (cont'd)  
I'm Jake.

SANDY  
I'm Sandy.

They drop their things and shake hands for a second. Their hands fit together comfortably.

A child tries to steal a bag they had dropped. They stop shaking and scare the child off, pick up the bags and hurry away.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Hector places the bags in the back of a minivan. He races over to open the passenger side door. Jake stands back and motions to Sandy.

JAKE  
After you.

Sandy smiles and steps back.

SANDY  
No. After you, honey.

Jake laughs.

JAKE  
No. I insist.

Hector lifts Sandy's hand and helps her in.

HECTOR  
In Mexico, beautiful ladies go  
first.

Sandy steps into the car.

INT./EXT. MINIVAN - LATER

Jake and Sandy's eyes are glued to the scene rolling outside as it shifts from abject poverty to a lush resort.

Hector glances in the rearview mirror at his passengers. Sandy notices and moves closer to Jake.

EXT. CLUB PARADISO - DAY

Tiled pathways lined with majestic palm trees surround this five-star resort. Sandy and Jake step out of the minivan.

Several workers help them along a path. One person gives them drinks in large pineapples. One person plays an acoustic guitar and sings a soft melody.

Follow them into:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The grand entrance is patterned after an ancient Mayan ruin. ANNA, the ever-cheery sales-woman, approaches them.

ANNA  
(Smiles)  
Bienvenido. Welcome. My name is  
Anna. I would like to congratulate  
you for making it to paradise.

She looks around the resort and smiles delightfully.

JAKE  
Thanks.

ANNA  
We'll have a short presentation in  
a couple hours. Until then, please,  
enjoy your resort.

Hotel workers descend upon them with beach towels and the like. Sandy and Jake accept everything with open arms.

EXT. POOLSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

The crystal clear pool sparkles as Sandy and Jake set-up their lounge chairs. Drinks in their hands.

SANDY  
This is pretty weird.

JAKE  
Yeah. I've heard about these things, but never actually got roped into one of them.

SANDY  
Me neither.

JAKE  
I'm actually down here on assignment.

SANDY  
I'm so not supposed to be here that I'm supposed to be in Tahiti.

JAKE  
Tahiti?

SANDY  
Long story. Where're you from?

JAKE  
LA. You?

SANDY  
Montana.

They lie back in their chairs.

JAKE  
Have you heard of the Carmel connection? Been on all the major news stations lately.

SANDY  
(Aghast)  
Oh my God. You're the guy.

JAKE  
No. I don't work for Safenet Securities. I'm a journalist with the Los Angeles Journal.

SANDY

Oh. Sorry.

JAKE

What do you do?

SANDY

Oh, it's nothing quite as important.

JAKE

Hey. How important is my job? I actually hate it.

SANDY  
(MORE)

At least you're getting paid for your writing.

JAKE

Yeah, I'm thankful for that. You?

She looks over her sunglasses out at the poolside.

SANDY

Oh, I'm a writer too.

JAKE

Really? Newspaper? Magazine? What?

SANDY

Books.

(beat)

You ever heard of *A Woman Empowered*?

Jake almost chokes on his drink.

JAKE

Compton? Sandra Compton? Is that you?

SANDY

Yep.

JAKE

My girlfriend loves your books.

SANDY

Girlfriend.

JAKE

Yeah. Actually I should go call her.

JAKE(cont'd)

And I got to track this guy down  
and get my story. I didn't know all  
this was going to happen.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Jake and Sandy are talking on separate phones.

SANDY

(In the phone)

It's me.

JAKE

(In his phone)

You're having the engagement party  
without me? Honey, no.

SANDY

You want to do what?

JAKE

Well, I guess if the caterers are  
ready to go...

SANDY

(Sincerely)

Uh, yeah. I think it'd be a great  
idea for you to write a book on  
yoga.

JAKE

I'll call ya tomorrow. Hey. I'm  
sorry I can't be there.

SANDY

Oh, your own yoga techniques. Well,  
whatever.

Jake hangs up the phone and sits down dejectedly.

SANDY (cont'd)

Yeah, okay. I'll call ya tomorrow  
about the flight outta here. Love  
ya, bye.

She hangs up and looks at Jake.

SANDY (cont'd)

What's wrong?

JAKE

It's ridiculous. You wouldn't  
believe it if I told you.

She sits down.

SANDY  
Try me.

EXT. ROOM - LATER

The presentation is about to start. Jake and Sandy are in the very back of the room, which is scattered with a few vacationers.

SANDY  
She sounds nice anyway.

JAKE  
Yeah, Alissa's actually the perfect girl for me. Fit, beautiful and smart.

SANDY  
Sounds perfect.

JAKE  
What about your boyfriend?

SANDY  
Lorenzo?

JAKE  
(Accent)  
Puerto Rican. Very romantic, eh?

SANDY  
He's actually very sensitive. I think a good match for me.

Anna steps in front of the room.

ANNA  
Welcome everyone. I'd like to congratulate all of you for making one of the most important decisions of your lives. Coming to paradise.

Jake and Sandy look at each other.

SANDY  
(Whispering)  
Most important decision of our lives? That's laying it on a bit thick, don't you think?

JAKE  
(Whispering)  
I can't believe we have to sit  
through this. My lead is due  
tonight. What am I going to do?

Anna speaks louder.

ANNA  
I'd like to start by showing you  
all a five-minute video on our  
gorgeous 30-acre facility.  
Hernando? Start the tape.

HERNANDO starts the tape.

JAKE  
(Whispering)  
I'm in trouble.

INT. ROOM - LATER

A hotel representative sits with each couple at individual  
tables. Jake and Sandy sit with Hernando.

HERNANDO  
I love this place so much I live  
here full time.

Anna sits with a middle-aged man and woman. The man has a  
bandage on his nose. Anna stands up and claps.

ANNA  
Ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to  
present our newest members, Robert  
and Lynn Calypso.

Everyone claps. Robert tries to hide behind Lynn. Jake gets  
an intense look in his eyes. He grabs Sandy's arm and looks  
at her.

JAKE  
(Whispering)  
Oh my God. I think that's the guy.

SANDY  
What guy?

JAKE  
James Farber, the Safenet  
Securities guy.

HERNANDO

Isn't that wonderful? They've made a very wise choice. And economical as well. Here, let me show you our forty-year plan.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Jake and Sandy walk down the beach. Jake looks toward the poolside area and squints. In the distance, Robert and Lynn Calypso drink a toast.

SANDY

Why would he be here? I mean, it's not very low profile.

JAKE

I'm saying I only think it's him. He's using a different name. But he looks so similar to James Farber.

SANDY

I wonder what's up with that nose bandage?

JAKE

Nose job. Face lift. I gotta contact my newspaper.

SANDY

I'm going to get a free massage.

Jake walks toward the hotel entrance.

JAKE

Meet up with ya later.

SANDY

Of course.

She watches as he walks away.

INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Jake talks on the lobby phone.

INTERCUT WITH SUSAN IN LA AT THE OFFICE

Susan sits at her desk with headphone strapped on.

SUSAN  
We can't print that.

JAKE  
Can't we just add the word  
*allegedly* in there somewhere?

SUSAN  
Damn it, Jake. Get me some solid  
leads. What the hell have you been  
doing down there anyway?

JAKE  
Just give me some more time, Susan.  
I'll get the story.

Jon looks through the door at Susan and admires her tough  
beauty. She turns away toward the back window.

SUSAN  
Yeah, you'll get the story alright.

INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Jake walks toward the poolside area looking around  
suspiciously. Anna walks by.

ANNA  
Mr. Adams. How do you like it here  
so far?

JAKE  
Fine. Great. Ah, it's fine and  
great.

ANNA  
We reworked some numbers for you  
and your wife. We're prepared to  
make you an offer you'd be loco to  
refuse.

JAKE  
Well, me and loco. We're a match.

She hands him a piece of paper.

ANNA  
In thirty minutes we'd like to meet  
with you again. What do you and  
Mrs. Adams like to drink?

He takes the paper.

JAKE  
I don't think we're interested  
right now, but thanks anyway.

He tries to walk away.

ANNA  
Okay. Okay. You'll get the bargain  
price. Our lowest ever.  
(Laughs)  
See you in a few minutes. And to  
drink?

He looks annoyed.

JAKE  
Just beer... I think.

EXT. POOLSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Jake creeps up to Robert and Lynn Calypso. He sits down on a  
chair in listening distance.

ROBERT  
My nose itches like hell.

LYNN  
Don't scratch it, honey.

ROBERT  
Damn. I gotta take a look at it.

LYNN  
Jim.  
(Whispering)  
I mean, Robert.

Startled, Jake opens his eyes. Robert looks all around and  
then at Lynn.

ROBERT  
(Whispering)  
Jesus. What the hell are you trying  
to do?

LYNN  
I slipped. Sorry.

Robert grabs her leg and stares at her.

ROBERT  
(Quietly)  
No more slips.

INT. ROOM - LATER

Jake and Sandy sit alone in the room with Anna and Hernando. Hernando twists the tops off a couple beers and squeezes lime into them. He hands them to Jake and Sandy.

ANNA  
How was your free massage?

Sandy smiles.

SANDY  
Soothing.

ANNA  
Did I mention that club members have a fifty percent discount on all activities, massages included?

JAKE  
Anna, it's just that...

ANNA  
Seventy five percent discount. Only for you two.

HERNANDO  
Anna!?

ANNA  
I like you guys. I think you'd be a perfect match for this resort.

SANDY  
You do?

JAKE  
(Nudging Sandy)  
Honey?

Anna opens a three ring binder filled with papers. She smiles at Jake and Sandy.

ANNA  
I mean, when I look at the two of you. You look so perfect together.

JAKE

Well I...

ANNA

This resort is really set up for people like you. It's so close to LA. So convenient.

She writes something in the notebook.

HERNANDO

(Laughing)

We might as well give it away for free, Anna?

ANNA

Our best deal yet.

Jake and Sandy look at the writing. Their eyes look surprised.

JAKE

My god.

He looks over at Sandy, who smiles.

JAKE (cont'd)

Will you excuse us for a moment?

INT. ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake and Sandy whisper in the corner while Anna and Hernando discuss figures in the notebook.

JAKE

What are you trying to do.

SANDY

I just think it's an incredible deal. Don't you?

JAKE

Yes, but you're forgetting a very important factor. We're not married. We don't even know each other.

SANDY

I feel like I've known you for a very long time.

JAKE  
We can't do this. It's crazy.

Anna stands up with a metal bucket filled with several more beers.

ANNA  
More beer?

INT. ROOM - LATER

Jake and Anna are drunk.

ANNA  
Hernando. Get the champagne.

HERNANDO  
Yes, ma'am.

Jake and Sandy hug and clink their beers together.

SANDY  
To us.

ANNA  
Congratulations, you lucky  
honeymooners. Your future children  
are going to absolutely adore this  
place too.

Jake and Sandy clink their beers together again.

JAKE  
To us and our children. Maggie and  
Forest.

Sandy doesn't drink.

SANDY  
Forest?

Hernando walks into the room and pops off the cork.

HERNANDO  
Champagne for everyone.

INT. LOBBY - LATER

Jake and Sandy walk slowly and crash on separate chairs.

JAKE  
What was in that beer?

SANDY  
They don't make it like that in  
Montana.

INT. LA - OFFICE - EVENING

Susan looks through the glass wall into the hall. Jon talks to a couple other employees. She watches him closely. She almost smiles.

Her phone rings.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE OFFICE AND JAKE ON THE LOBBY PHONE

SUSAN  
Yeah.

JAKE  
(Still drunk)  
Susan. I'm glad I caught you.

SUSAN  
Are you drunk?

Jake coughs away from the phone. He looks at Sandy who laughs.

JAKE  
That's preposernous. Pr...  
Preposterousness.

SUSAN  
Jesus Christ, Adams. You're wasted.

JAKE  
Now listen to me. I heard James  
Farber's wife call him Jim. Not  
Robert.

SUSAN  
Whoop-dee-do.

JAKE  
Don't you see what this means?

SUSAN  
We can get into alot of trouble  
printing shit like that.

JAKE

But it's true. Come on. Why did you send me here? Because I'm honest right?

Susan flips on the television in her office.

SUSAN

Well, I couldn't find honest Abe.

JAKE

I'll find out some more info tonight at dinner.

SUSAN

Talk to you in the morning then.

JAKE

Bye.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Susan hangs up the phone and watches television. The news woman speaks.

NEWS WOMAN

The Carmel Connection continues to baffle authorities. Is James Farber south of the border? News at eleven.

She clicks off the television and leaves the office.

EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT - EVENING

Evening settles as Jake and Sandy sit down to dinner. The maitre de places down two menus.

MAITRE DE

All entrées are complimentary.

JAKE

Really?

MAITRE DE

But of course.

The maitre de steps away from the table. Sandy and Jake laugh.

SANDY  
They're playing us, big time.

JAKE  
But we're liking it, bigger time.

EXT. RESTAURANT - LATER

The waiter removes their empty plates after dinner. Sandy sips on wine.

JAKE  
I feel weird.

SANDY  
Why?

JAKE  
Like this is almost cheating on Alissa. You know, being with you.

SANDY  
Yeah, me too.

They look out at the beautiful beach at night.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Maybe we should just call it a night. I'm leaving tomorrow morning anyway.

JAKE  
Yeah. Probably a good idea. I'll sleep on the couch. You can have the bed.

SANDY  
Really? That's so sweet. I'm not sure Lorenzo would have done that.

JAKE  
Alissa totally wouldn't have done it.

They stop themselves from talking more about it.

JAKE (cont'd)  
I should find Farber anyway.

SANDY  
Right, okay. It was great to meet you though.

JAKE  
Yeah, me too.

SANDY  
I'll probably be asleep when you  
get in. I'm a deep sleeper, so  
don't worry about making noise.

She gets up and places some cash on the table.

JAKE  
See ya.

SANDY  
Bye.

They shake hands and look at each other. They nervously stop shaking.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Good luck.

Jake looks at her as she walks away.

EXT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Jake hides behind a palm tree and peers at Robert and Lynn.

ROBERT  
We can't live in Tijuana forever.

LYNN  
No. You're right.

ROBERT  
How about Switzerland?

LYNN  
Too cold.

ROBERT  
Bahamas?

LYNN  
Too many tourists.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Sandy walks to the elevator and Anna appears.

ANNA  
Where's that husband of yours?

SANDY  
(Nervously)  
Um. He... He's coming up in a  
moment.

ANNA  
To your room? The night is young.  
Come on. We have to celebrate.

SANDY  
We do?

EXT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Jake hides behind the palm tree as Robert and Lynn Talk.

ANNA (O.S.)  
There he is.

Jake turns his head to see Anna and Sandy walking toward him.  
He steps away from the palm tree.

He meets Anna and Sandy halfway. Sandy has an apologetic look  
on her face.

JAKE  
What's going on?

SANDY  
Anna saw me in the lobby.

ANNA  
We have to celebrate.

JAKE  
Celebrate?

ANNA  
To your new time-share.

JAKE  
Right.

INT. DISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Salsa dancing couples twirl around Jake, Sandy, Anna and  
Hernando. Jake and Sandy are nearly drunk again.

HERNANDO  
Come on, Annalita. Dance with me.

Anna looks at Jake and Sandy.

ANNA  
Join us?

SANDY  
Not right now. But you go ahead.

ANNA  
All drinks on the house.

Anna and Hernando float onto the dance-floor.

SANDY  
I tried to go upstairs but she saw  
that I was alone.

JAKE  
That's okay. Free drinks. What the  
hell?

SANDY  
What the hell?

They clink their beers.

JAKE  
I can't believe you like beer.

SANDY  
Really?

JAKE  
I don't know any girls in LA who  
drink beer. Alissa wouldn't even  
think of it. She puked in my face  
after trying mine once. Ever since  
then, I haven't had one.

SANDY  
You haven't had beer since then?

JAKE  
God. I guess not.

He laughs.

JAKE (cont'd)  
I'm pathetic.

SANDY

No. That's a sweet thing to do for her. I just think you're a really nice guy. That's all.

JAKE

Nice like a floor mat.

SANDY

(Laughing)

Well, Lorenzo only drinks tea.

JAKE

Yeah, everyone in LA drinks green tea, chai tea, passion tea, kava-kava.

SANDY

Maybe Lorenzo should live in LA.

JAKE

These people drink so much calming blends that it's a wonder anyone has enough energy to even breathe.

They laugh.

SANDY

Yeah, I wonder how much spiritual tea you'd have to drink to transform into a Buddhist monk?

They laugh harder.

JAKE

Have you ever wondered why people who continually say "*keep it real*" are the most superficial non-real people in the world?

SANDY

Yes, I've totally wondered that.

JAKE

Everything needs to be kept real these days. Keep this real. Keep that real. I can't take all this reality.

SANDY

Me neither.

They open more beers.

JAKE

It's like ~~(MUSIC)~~ music. I mean, I don't mind it too much, but why is everything always happening at the break of dawn?

SANDY

A fair question.

JAKE

And when they say this person's in the house and that person's in the house. How big is this house? And exactly how many people can fit into it?

SANDY

Must be a big frickin house.

JAKE

Yeah. Same damn thing time and time again.

Sandy laughs so hard she can barely breathe.

JAKE (cont'd)

You don't seem like someone who would write about empowering women.

She wipes away tears.

SANDY

You kidding me? I just write it because it sells.

JAKE

What? You're as bad as me.

(beat)

You're not keeping it real at all.

Sandy places her beer on the counter. The bartender automatically places four more in front of them.

JAKE (cont'd)

So how'd you slide into women's fiction?

SANDY

I decided I wanted to start selling something, anything. So I started listening to women talk and complain and bitch.

SANDY(cont'd)

Basically it's about bitching. My books are for bitches.

Jake looks confused.

SANDY (cont'd)

Oh my god. You're girlfriend reads them. I'm so sorry. Not everyone's a bitch who reads my books.

JAKE

It's okay. Don't worry about it. Sometimes she can be a bit... Um, difficult.

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Alissa is spread-eagled on the bed while Ned is driving into her like a pig in heat.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Ned tears off Alissa's shirt and ravishes her. She yanks his hair forcefully.

INT./EXT. ALISSA'S CAR - EVENING

Alissa stops the car along the side of the road. She slips her hand between Ned's thighs and rubs. He pulls down her shoulder strap to reveal a breast. She hops over to his side on top of him.

BACK TO

INT. DISCO - CONTINUOUS

Jake places his beer down and rubs his eyes.

JAKE

But I still love her, you know.

SANDY

She must love you too.

JAKE

I guess we're getting married.

They look at each other for a moment. He looks away. Sandy pops the cap off another beer.

SANDY  
Hey. Here's to you. To your  
marriage.

He turns back toward her with his beer. They clink.

JAKE  
Thanks.

They drink.

SANDY  
I'm going to make a run for it now  
that Anna isn't looking.

JAKE  
Yeah, okay. Thanks. It was fun.

She stands up and looks at him.

SANDY  
Yes. It was fun. But whoo. I'm  
dizzy. And my flight's at eight  
thirty in the morning.

INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Sandy gets in the elevator and yawns.

EXT. POOLSIDE - NIGHT

Jake walks alone by the pool. He hears someone talking and turns to see Robert talking on a cell phone.

Jake slips behind a palm tree and slides down into the garden bed to listen.

ROBERT  
My face itches... Well, what am I  
supposed to do? ...Jesus, Winston.  
You never told me it'd itch so  
goddamn much.

JAKE  
(Whispers to himself)  
Winston?

ROBERT  
Yeah, yeah. Okay. Two more days and  
then I'll take off the bandages.

He presses a button and walks over to where Jake is laying in  
the gardens. He spots Jake and Jake pretends to be asleep.

ROBERT (cont'd)  
These drunks are frickin  
everywhere.

He walks into the hotel quickly.

Jake slips out of the garden and brushes off the dirt. He  
runs the other way.

Robert comes back with two hotel workers.

ROBERT (cont'd)  
I swear, he was right here.

INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Jake sneaks into the lobby from another door and presses the  
elevator button. He slips in and presses the *close* button.

Robert walks into the lobby and sees Jake just before the  
doors close. Robert recognizes him and points.

ROBERT  
Hey!

The doors close and Robert presses the *up* button several  
times.

ROBERT (cont'd)  
Shit!

INT. ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake opens the hotel room door and rushes in.

Follow him into:

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bedside light is on and Sandy is writing in her journal.  
The sliding glass door is open letting in the sounds of the  
ocean.

She looks up at Jake.

JAKE  
He saw me.

SANDY  
What?

JAKE  
(Pacing)  
The guy. He saw me.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Robert takes out his wallet and pays two hotel workers cash.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sandy sits up in bed.

JAKE  
He kind of caught me eavesdropping  
on him.

SANDY  
Kind of?

Jake paces nervously.

JAKE  
This guy's in some serious shit if  
he gets caught. He'll do anything  
to ensure his freedom.

A knock comes at the door. They look at each other.

JAKE (cont'd)  
How'd he find our room so quickly?

Jake leads her off the bed.

JAKE (cont'd)  
Open the door. Tell them something.

Follow them into:

INT. FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

He leads her to the door. More knocks.

SANDY  
(Whispering)  
What do I say?

JAKE  
(Whispering)  
Anything.

Jake hides in the closet.

SANDY  
Just a second.

She unlatches the door and opens it only a few inches to reveal the two hotel workers.

WORKER#1  
So sorry to bother you, Senorita.  
But there is an urgent message for  
your husband at the front desk.

SANDY  
Oh?

WORKER#1  
Please send him down right away.

SANDY  
Thank you so much. I'll tell him.

She closes the door.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Robert stands with two large Mexican guys. They stare at the elevator doors anxiously.

INT. STAIRCASE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Jake runs down the staircase quickly and quietly.

INT. LOBBY

The staircase door very quietly opens and Jake sees Robert with the two large Mexican guys, but they don't see them.

Jake shuts the door.

INT. STAIRCASE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Jake runs back up the stairs.

INT. ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake runs into the room to find Sandy.

SANDY  
(Whispering)  
What are you doing?

JAKE  
I gotta jump from the balcony.  
They're in the lobby waiting for  
me.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Robert looks at a hotel worker.

ROBERT  
You said he'd be right down.

EXT. FIRST FLOOR LEDGE - CONTINUOUS

A sliding glass door opens and Jake and Sandy rush onto the ledge. They look down.

SANDY  
You're kidding me.

JAKE  
The alternative isn't so pretty.  
Let me go alone. You should get  
outta this now.

She looks at him and pauses.

SANDY  
No. I'm in it with you.

He smiles. They hug. They look down again.

SANDY (cont'd)  
It's not that far to jump. And  
there's a soft lawn right below.

JAKE  
That's the spirit.

They jump at the same time, hit the ground and roll.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Robert and one of the guys opens the staircase door and runs upstairs. The other guy takes the elevator.

INT. ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The doors burst open. Robert and the two guys rush in and look through the room.

ROBERT  
Damn!

EXT. STREET SIDE - LATER

Jake talks on a pay phone while Sandy stays close to him in the unfamiliar neighborhood.

JAKE  
(To phone)  
United States, please... Yes, FBI,  
California.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Jake and Sandy walk along the street at night.

JAKE  
We should probably get away from  
the main road.

SANDY  
Yeah. Come on.

She leads him down a dark alley to a quiet parallel street.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

They walk along looking at the dilapidated Mexican dwellings along the back street.

JAKE  
I am so sorry about this.

SANDY

(Laughs)

No. It's okay. Actually, it's kind of fun.

JAKE

You're almost a convincing liar.

SANDY

How many people get the chance to run away from an infamous criminal through the streets of Mexico?

JAKE

Probably more than we could count.

They laugh.

SANDRA

I mean. Sometimes I just feel like doing something crazy like this, you know?

JAKE

I guess.

SANDY

Haven't you ever wanted just to let it all go? Be weird? Just be free?

JAKE

I should have never let you eat that shrimp cocktail. You're scaring me.

SANDY

No way. I feel great.

JAKE

Yeah?

SANDY

Sometimes I feel like just swearing out loud in public.

(beat)

Bitch!

He looks at her in shock.

JAKE

Fuck!

SANDY  
Eat me!

JAKE  
Spank me!

They laugh.

SANDY  
That right? Well, suck my cock!

Jake stops and looks up to the skies.

JAKE  
(Yelling)  
Mother fuckin asswhipe!

Lights go on in dwellings along the street. Windows open.

Jake and Sandy look at each other, burst out in stifled laughter and RUN AWAY.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

They slow down and stop running to catch their breath.

JAKE  
You're crazy.

SANDY  
Me? I don't think so.

They sit down on a sidewalk to rest.

They lie on their backs and look up at the moon and stars.

SANDY (cont'd)  
You ever think about all that space  
out there?

JAKE  
Sometimes. Well, now I guess.

SANDY  
I mean, can we ever know what's  
really out there?

JAKE  
You want to know what I think about  
it?

SANDY  
How can I pass this up?

JAKE  
I call it the dog, newspaper  
theory.

SANDY  
Okay?

JAKE  
Would you put a newspaper down and  
expect a dog to understand it?

SANDY  
No.

JAKE  
You know why? Because a dog's brain  
simply isn't wired for that sort of  
comprehension.

SANDRA  
(Hesitant)  
Okay?

JAKE  
It's the same thing with us. I  
think a human's brain simply isn't  
wired for the complex task of  
understanding the true nature of  
God and the universe. No matter how  
much we search, or we think we  
know, we can never know.

They look up.

EXT. STREET - LATER

They walk quietly. Sandy stops and a light glows in her eyes.  
She smiles.

JAKE  
What?

SANDY  
Oh my God. A Target!

Pull away to reveal:

EXT. TARGET STORE - CONTINUOUS

The store lights blaze like a Christmas tree.

SANDY (O.S.)

A Target in Tijuana? I love Target.

JAKE

I think it's still open.

SANDY

A 24 hour Target.

JAKE

A 24 hour Target.

INT. TARGET STORE - MOMENTS LATER

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Jake and Sandy walk through the *IN* doors with surprised looks on their faces. They scan the store wide-eyed.

B) Sandy looks at some toys in the isle. Jake slowly peeks at her from behind a display. He wears a toy cowboy hat and holster. He pretends to pop off a few rounds from his toy machine gun. She laughs.

C) Jake rests on a small couch with his feet up on a coffee table. Sandy pretends to be vacuuming. On her head she wears a rubber plastic shower cap.

She stops the vacuum, looks at Jake and motions for him to move his legs so she can vacuum under them. He raises his feet and she pushes through.

D) Jake wears a large hiking backpack and sunglasses. He hikes to a pre-set-up tent, takes off his sunglasses and pretends to wipe his brow.

Sandy peeks out from the tent. She's in a sleeping bag zipped up to her neck. A clerk walks by in the distance and squints at them.

E) Sandy tries on several clothing ensembles. Each time she steps out, Jake claps approvingly or shakes his head in disgust.

F) Jake pushes a shopping cart. Sandy sneaks up from behind and jumps on the cart. She turns around and smiles at him as they crash into a magazine rack.

G) The clerk escorts them out of the store. Sandy looks at her watch.

SANDY  
I gotta get to the airport!

EXT. THE SKY - DAY

A plane rockets through the sky.

INT. OFFICE HALL - DAY

Jake walks into the hall. Jon rushes over.

JON  
So much happened since you were gone.

JAKE  
I was only gone a for a couple days.

JON  
(Whispering)  
I slept with Susan.

Follow them down the hall to Susan's office.

JAKE  
What? How'd that happen?

JON  
Destiny. Pure destiny.  
(Whispering again)  
But don't say anything. She kind of doesn't want anyone to know at the office, you know.

Jake shakes his head in disbelief. Susan opens her door to let them in.

SUSAN  
Your story went in the paper today.

Follow them into her office.

JAKE  
Yeah, I saw it. You edited everything.

SUSAN  
Oh well. That's journalism for ya.

Jon eats a piece of candy from a container on her desk.

JON  
Um. Jelly beans.

SUSAN  
Thanks to your lead, the FBI's hot  
on his trails.

JON  
Hey, turn it up.

She turns up the volume to the television.

TELEVISION SCREEN

The news woman speaks.

NEWS WOMAN  
Breaking news from Mexico. Due to a  
lead from a journalist at the Los  
Angeles Journal the FBI is working  
with the Mexican police for the  
capture of James Farber.

BACK TO SCENE

Jon high-fives Jake. Susan hugs him.

INT. OFFICE HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Jon and Jake walk down the hall.

JAKE  
So how was my engagement party?

JON  
You should have been there. It was  
great.

JAKE  
I know I should have been there,  
you idiot. It was my engagement  
party.

JON  
She's got six months to make it up  
to you.

They walk out of the front door.

JON (cont'd)  
Six months until my best buddy gets  
hitched.

INT. MONTANA - FANCY RESTAURANT - EVENING

The clink of fine china surrounds Sandy and Lorenzo as they sit at a table looking at each other. Lorenzo wears a black turtleneck sweater.

SANDY  
This is such a nice place.

LORENZO  
Yes. It is.

SANDY  
Let's have wine.

He puts down the wine menu.

LORENZO  
It's a passion tea night for me.  
Care to join?

She puts down the wine menu.

SANDY  
Sure. Passion tea. What do you think would happen if you mixed relaxation tea with passion?

LORENZO  
What?

SANDY  
I wonder if you'd be so relaxed that you couldn't be passionate. Or so passionate that you couldn't relax. Or they'd just cancel each other out and you'd end up eating a gallon of ice cream in front of the TV.

She laughs.

LORENZO  
I suppose that being centered is a big joke to you.

He closes his eyes and does a yoga posture with his hands.

LORENZO (cont'd)  
Centered.

The waiter arrives. Lorenzo opens his eyes.

WAITER

May I bring you a fine wine? Or perhaps a strong cocktail from the bar?

LORENZO

We'll have your green passion tea with komucha.

The waiter looks surprised. He looks at Sandy, who just smiles.

WAITER

Of course. Thank you.

The waiter leaves. Lorenzo reaches over the table and takes her hand.

LORENZO

Sandra. You know I love you.

SANDY

Well I...

He places a finger to her mouth.

LORENZO

Shh. No need for you to talk. I feel this energy between us. I believe it's the life force emanating from and to the path of love.

SANDY

Life force?

He places his finger again to her lips.

LORENZO

Our spirits are connected to the life force. When I think about how similar we are.

(He gulps emotionally)

Well, the odds were amazing that we even met. But now here we are. Two artists. Two writers working toward a shared goal.

SANDY

Two writers?

LORENZO  
You've inspired me. I've been  
working on my book. And I thought  
your publisher might be  
interested...

She lets his hand go. He grabs it again.

LORENZO (cont'd)  
Forget the book. I love you,  
Sandra. Very much.

He gets down on one knee and brings out a ring box and opens  
it. She sits back in amazement.

SANDY  
Lorenzo!

LORENZO  
Marry me, Sandra? Make me the  
happiest man in the Montana.

She smiles nervously.

EXT. RESTAURANT - PATIO SEATING - DAY

Jake and Alissa are seated at an outside table. She looks  
down the street both ways.

JAKE  
What?

ALISSA  
Daddy's meeting us for lunch.

JAKE  
Ah.

She looks at Jake.

ALISSA  
And you look so handsome.

JAKE  
Wow. Thanks.

A scowl on her face.

ALISSA  
But sit up straight. No one likes a  
slouch.

JAKE

Oh.

The waitress approaches.

WAITRESS

Something to drink?

ALISSA

We're waiting for one more, maybe two.

The waitress places down two more menus.

WAITRESS

Something to drink in the meantime?

JAKE

Decaf for me.

ALISSA

Oh, how about Orange tea.

The waitress leaves.

ALISSA (cont'd)

Orange is the new green.

JAKE

I see.

ALISSA

You shouldn't drink decaffeinated coffee, Jake. You're supposed to be a man.

JAKE

I thought I was?

Alissa tears away from the table and stands up.

ALISSA

Daddy!

Dr. Winston Hoyt makes his entrance with a air of confidence that borders on regal. Ned joins him. Hoyt sports a fashionable top hat, of all things. As he sits down, Ned removes the hat for him.

HOYT

Thank you, Ned.

Ned sits down.

ALISSA  
Hi daddy. Ned.

NED  
Alissa.  
(beat)  
And Jake. The man of the hour.  
Sorry you missed your party. Truly  
spectacular.

JAKE  
So I've heard.

ALISSA  
Any famous patients today, daddy?

Dr. Hoyt picks up a menu and opens it.

HOYT  
You wouldn't believe me if I told  
you. Anyway, there's a little thing  
called doctor patient  
confidentiality.

JAKE  
Never stopped you before.

Everyone pauses uncomfortably. DR. Hoyt peers at Jake.

HOYT  
Exactly what are you implying? That  
I offer a disservice to my  
patients?

Alissa breaks in quickly.

ALISSA  
No! Of course not. Jake's just  
joking. Right sweetie.

JAKE  
Yeah. Of course. You kidding me?  
I'd send my own mom to you.

Dr. Hoyt laughs.

HOYT  
Your mother? Now that's an  
interesting topic of discussion.

The waitress brings the decaf and the tea.

WAITRESS  
Something to drink for you two?

HOYT  
Chai tea, please. Extra chai. Light  
on the tea. Splash of ginger and  
honey.

NED  
Ditto.

WAITRESS  
Excellent.

She smiles and leaves.

HOYT  
I did her eyes.

ALISSA  
Our waitress? An eye lift?

NED  
You should've seen her before the  
procedure.

Hoyt, Ned and Alissa laugh. Jake looks off in the distance.

Jake suddenly returns his attention to the table.

JAKE  
So, Winston.

Hoyt looks at Jake.

ALISSA  
(Whispering to Jake)  
Sweetie?

JAKE  
You ever work on any men?

HOYT  
(Uncomfortably)  
Of course.

Ned and Alissa smile.

JAKE  
Any guys recently?

HOYT  
A couple here and there. Why?

Alissa gives Jake a dirty look and kicks him under the table.

JAKE  
Just curious.

The waitress sets the drinks down.

HOYT  
(Holding drink)  
To my daughter's wedding.

They all drink, but Hoyt looks at Jake out of the corner of his eye.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Alissa and Jake walk down the street. He tries to hold hands with her.

ALISSA  
What are you doing?

JAKE  
Thought it might be nice to hold hands for once.

ALISSA  
We're getting married. We're not going steady.

Alissa stops Jake in front of a bakery.

Follow them into:

INT. BAKERY - CONTINUOUS

She walks up to the display case.

ALISSA  
Why did you give my father the 5th degree?

JAKE  
Isn't it the 3rd degree?

ALISSA  
(Sharply)  
Whatever.

JAKE

I wasn't. It's just that I might have some friends that are looking into cosmetic surgery. That's all.

ALISSA

Your friends are barbarians. I'm sure even daddy couldn't help them, especially Jon. I wish Ned was your best man. Your friends are such...

She looks at the baked goods and sees a cake she likes.

ALISSA (cont'd)

Bores.

JAKE

Jon's my best friend.

ALISSA

He's weird.

The bakery clerk approaches.

CLERK

May I help you?

Alissa fakes a smile.

ALISSA

We need a wedding cake.

CLERK

When are you guys getting married?

Alissa smiles and grabs Jake's arm.

ALISSA

two months.

Jake chokes.

INT. LOS ANGELES JOURNAL - JAKE'S OFFICE - DAY

Jake types at his computer and his phone rings. He picks up the phone.

JAKE

Jake Adams here.

INTERCUT JAKE AND HIS MOTHER AND FATHER ON SEPARATE  
TELEPHONES IN THEIR HOME IN KENTUCKY

OREN, Jake's father, is a large robust southern man. Jake's mother, Polly, is a short round southern woman. Oren sits in the living room and Polly sits in the kitchen, each with an out-dated telephone stuck to their ears.

POLLY

Jake?

JAKE

Hey mom.

POLLY

Your poppa and I been worried sick about you, son.

JAKE

That so?

POLLY

Tell him, Oren. Tell him that we worried we never even met your future wife and her family and we supposed to be there in a couple weeks.

OREN

I think y'all just did tell him.

JAKE

Mom. It's okay. The Hoyts are good people.

POLLY

But ain't they all wealthy like all them fancy Californians? How they gonna like us old-fashioned country folk from Kentucky?

JAKE

Don't worry about it. They'll like you guys just fine. Who wouldn't?

Susan walks in to Jake's cubicle and sighs loudly. Jake looks up and sees her.

JAKE (cont'd)

Mom. I gotta go.

POLLY

You so fast-paced these days,  
honey. Always gotta go here and  
there. I'm always telling your  
poppa y'all never got time for your  
poor old Ma. Ain't I always saying  
that, Oren? Dear?

OREN

She's always saying that.

Jake looks up apologetically to Susan.

JAKE

I'll call you guys back later.  
Okay?

POLLY

Goodbye then.

JAKE

Okay. Bye. Love you.

He hangs up and looks at Susan.

SUSAN

I can't wait to meet your mother.

Jake sighs and puts his head onto the desk.

JAKE

I'm scared. Alissa's never met  
them.

SUSAN

Relax. It's only a couple days.  
Anyway, I got your request for two  
weeks off.

JAKE

Well, yeah. Honeymoon. We're going  
to Greece.

She pulls out a chair and sits down.

SUSAN

I'm going to need a story on the  
Jim Farber case. You'd insinuated  
you knew more about his plastic  
surgery.

JAKE  
(Pleading)  
I... I can't say.

SUSAN  
(Angrily)  
Christ sake, Adams. You need two weeks, I need the story. I need it before the Times or the Tribune digs it up.

He leans back and pauses.

JAKE  
It's just a lead. That's all.

SUSAN  
Hey, we can use the word *allegedly*.

JAKE  
I'm sorry. I can't say.

She peers at him, and then quickly stands and storms out of the office.

Jake nervously runs his hands through his hair.

INT. OFFICE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Susan darts down the hall. Jon stands up from his cubicle. She looks at Jon and holds her hand up.

SUSAN  
Not now, Jon.

Jon frowns and sits back down.

EXT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLIFF - DAY

Lorenzo and Sandy are rock climbing about fifty feet up on the side of a rocky cliff. He's in the lead as she tries to keep up. She is attached to a thin rope which dangles behind him. He is an excellent, but impatient, climber.

SANDY  
Honey?

LORENZO  
Yes?

SANDY

Can you slow down a little bit?

He lets out an irritating sigh as he stops.

LORENZO

But I'm on a roll. I feel the energy of this rock. The thousands of years of formation. The enormous geological power of time. It's all beneath us, Sandra. Can you feel it?

She lets out a grunt as she tries to climb a difficult area. She looks up at him.

SANDY

(Rubbing her sore muscles)  
Yeah. I certainly feel something.

LORENZO

This is my heaven.

SANDY

(Looking down)  
Honey? Please don't talk about heaven when we're suspended fifty feet above the ground.

LORENZO

You ready to go?

He resumes climbing. She tries to keep up.

EXT. TOP OF ROCKY CLIFF - LATER

He flexes his muscles as he ties various lines together. His hair wisps in the wind. She rests on her back gasping for breath.

SANDY

Much... Harder... Than... It...  
Looks.

LORENZO

After we get married, I think we should go to Pakistan to climb.

SANDY

Pakistan?

LORENZO

It's amazing that I got you out of the house to do this today. You've barely been outside in weeks.

SANDY

I just finished my novel. You know that.

LORENZO

I just want to bring you to places you might never go.

SANDY

Pakistan. That's a place I might never go.

He strikes a yoga pose and closes his eyes. Wind blows around him.

LORENZO

My yoga book is nearly complete.

She hesitates.

SANDY

Thats... nice.

She sits up and looks at him blankly as he meditates. She looks at her watch.

SANDY (cont'd)

Hey, Yogi bear. We better get going. It's getting late.

He reluctantly breaks his pose and resumes setting up the equipment for their climb down.

SANDY (cont'd)

Dinner at my parents house tonight.

EXT. MONTANA - LARGE RANCH - EVENING

Lorenzo's pickup truck pulls up the gravel driveway of an immense cattle ranch in a rural area. A sign along the driveway reads *COMPTON CATTLE RANCH*.

The house is a large country cottage. The car stops and Sandy and Lorenzo get out.

INT. FRONT HALL - HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The interior is covered in rustic wood logs and dark wood accents. Large open rooms spill generously into others.

Sandy and Lorenzo enter.

SANDY  
Mom? Dad?

DOTTY (O.S.)  
We're in the kitchen.

Follow them into:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Bill and Dotty Compton are busy making dinner.

DOTTY  
How's our girl?

Dotty and Sandy hug.

SANDY  
Sore.

Sandy hugs her father from behind as he stirs something on the stove.

BILL  
How was rock climbing?

Lorenzo kicks in to gear, excitedly.

LORENZO  
Absolutely amazing.

SANDY  
Sore. Amazingly sore.

LORENZO  
The view from the top was simply gorgeous. One mountain after another.

DOTTY  
That sounds nice.

LORENZO  
Very spiritual for us.

Bill stops stirring for a moment. Dotty and Sandy look nervously at each other.

SANDY  
There were lots of spirits flying  
around up there. Everywhere I  
looked... Spirits.

Bill resumes stirring. Dotty chops some carrots.

DOTTY  
You can hardly go anywhere these  
days without them damn spirits  
harassing you.

Sandy gets a beer from the refrigerator and twists the cap off.

BILL  
I'll take one.

She gets two more, twists off the caps, and hands them to Bill and Dotty.

DOTTY  
Lorenzo?

SANDY  
What kind of tea you guys got?

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The table is set. Sandy, Lorenzo, Bill and Dotty sit down to eat. Bill raises his beer. The others follow. Lorenzo raises his tea cup.

BILL  
To your engagement.

SANDY  
Our engagement.

BILL  
Love is like dinner at Denny's. You  
don't plan to go. You just end up  
there.

Dotty laughs.

DOTTY  
To Sandy and Lorenzo. We wish you  
many years of bliss.

SANDY

Thanks.

They drink. Lorenzo sips.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

They lean back in their chairs talking and laughing.

LORENZO

You started a new feminist movement.

SANDY

I filled a void in the market.

DOTTY

Whatever you did, you made more money in two years than we've made running a two hundred acre ranch in ten.

BILL

What about your new novel, dear?

SANDY

Different. All I can say is, thank God, my publisher likes it.

DOTTY

Good for you.

LORENZO

She's quite a woman. An artist.

They drink more beer, now somewhat drunk.

SANDY

Whoo! I'm glad you're driving, honey. I think I'm drunk.

Lorenzo isn't amused.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Jake is uncomfortably stuffing himself inside a suit.

JAKE

Why is it so damn uncomfortable to be fashionable?

Alissa walks in from the bathroom. She's dressed in a tight, black little dress. She applies her lipstick.

ALISSA  
Because you look hot. Why ask why?

INT./EXT. JAKE'S CAR - EVENING

Jake nervously drives through evening LA traffic. Alissa looks out the window.

ALISSA  
I keep telling my self it's just the rehearsal dinner on the night before my wedding. But I can't relax. It's so exciting.

JAKE  
Good. I'm glad you're happy.

ALISSA  
So you think daddy will get along with your parents.

JAKE  
(Nervously)  
Of course. They're the salt of the earth.

ALISSA  
Daddy doesn't use salt.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Jake stops the car as the valet opens the passenger door. He helps Alissa out of the car. The valet nearly drools when he sees her.

Jake gets out and runs over to him and Alissa.

JAKE  
Just park the car, please.

VALET  
Uh huh.

Follow them into:

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

An expensive restaurant. Fine china. The upper crust of LA eat there.

JAKE'S POV

He walks through the front door and a maitre d' walks right up to them.

MAITRE D'

Ah, the bride and groom to be.

The maitre d' takes Alissa's arm and guides them through the restaurant. Jake walks behind.

MAITRE D' (cont'd)

Right this way.

Jake looks around as they walk through the restaurant to the back where a grand room awaits them.

Follow them into:

INT. BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

STILL JAKE'S POV

The maitre d' and Alissa enter the room first. People applaud at the very sight of her.

ALISSA

Thank you. Thank you all so very much.

Several tables are set up. We see Jake's hand wave to Jon. We then see his parents, Oren and Polly. They look like large out-of-place blobs. They wave.

POLLY

Oh my goodness! I never seen my son look so handsome. Come here, boy. Say hi to your poor momma and poppa.

Alissa looks at them and turns around to face Jake.

ALISSA

(Angry)

Those are your parents?

END JAKE'S POV

INT. BACK ROOM - LATER

Jake hugs his mother and father. Alissa hugs her own father. Her father stands with Ned and an attractive young woman. This woman is Winston Hoyt's third wife NAOMI.

JAKE  
Mom, dad. This is Alissa Hoyt, my  
fiance.

Alissa looks almost sickened as she goes to shake Polly's hand.

POLLY  
Oh, come here, girl.

Polly disregards the hand and hugs her.

POLLY (cont'd)  
You gonna be my daughter now. Such  
a sweet young thing.

ALISSA  
Charming.

Jake begins to sweat.

JAKE  
This is Alissa's father, Dr.  
Winston Hoyt and his wife Naomi.

Oren shakes his hand and stares at his top hat.

OREN  
That's a nice hat y'all got there,  
Mr. Hoyt.

JAKE  
(Whispers to Oren)  
That's doctor Hoyt, dad.

Polly shakes his hand and hugs Naomi.

POLLY  
Just like I was telling Jake's  
poppa earlier today. You California  
types are so fashionable. Aint that  
right Oren?

Winston doesn't know what to say.

JAKE  
Let's just sit down. Dinner's  
almost ready.

INT. MONTANA - COMPTON HOUSE - EVENING

Lorenzo stands by the fireplace and stares at the flames.  
Bill sits on the couch slicing the end off two large cigars.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sandy helps Dotty with the dirty dishes. They whisper their  
conversation.

SANDY  
I just can't believe it, mom. I  
can't believe I said yes.

DOTTY  
Honey? Then why did you say it?

SANDY  
I guess I just couldn't think of a  
good reason why not.

Dotty stops rinsing the dishes and takes her hand.

DOTTY  
He's a nice guy. But this is a very  
important decision, Sandy. If you  
have any thoughts that it might not  
work out...

Sandy turns away.

SANDY  
Mom. I'm in too deep. I can't hurt  
him. Not now.

DOTTY  
Come here.

They hug.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bill stands up with the two cigars.

BILL  
You want to go outside for a cigar.

Lorenzo turns around from the fireplace and smiles.

LORENZO

A cigar? I'm not really the cigar type. Too many toxins.

BILL

Toxins?

LORENZO

My body's in a state of dynamic balance. I can't push it over the edge.

BILL

I see.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - BACK ROOM - EVENING

People sit at their tables eating dinner. Ned clinks a fork on a glass and stands up looking at Alissa. Her face becomes flushed. Jake notices her face and looks at Ned.

NED

May I have your attention please. Yes, thank you everyone. My name's Ned. I've been Doctor Winston's office manager for almost twenty years. And I've known his wonderful daughter Alissa ever since she was a beautiful little girl.

He looks around the room.

NED (cont'd)

I just wanted to start the evening off by wishing her the very best of luck as she heads into matrimonial bliss. I look forward to many years of her.

He holds his drink in the air and drinks. Everyone drinks.

JAKE

(Whispering to Alissa)

Many years of you? What does that mean?

ALISSA

Shh! Can't you just enjoy the moment?

Her father then stands up as Ned sits down. He clears his throat.

HOYT

I am Doctor Winston Hoyt. Licensed plastic surgeon in the greater Los Angeles area and the father of the bride. Years and years of grueling work through medical school and in building an extremely successful medical practice has prepared me for many things. Even though my accomplishments have been abundant, none have prepared me for my own daughter's wedding. When I first met her husband to be, Jake, I was not impressed at all. Not one bit.

Jake sweats. Jon looks at him angrily.

HOYT (cont'd)

And now that I've met his parents, I think I know him more than ever.

Jake looks Embarrassed. He tries to sink down in his chair. Alissa pulls him back up.

ALISSA

(Whispers)

Act your age!

HOYT

Anyway, a toast. To my daughter.

Everyone drinks.

INT. MONTANA - COMPTON HOUSE - EVENING

Lorenzo continues gazing at the fireplace. Bill walks in the kitchen.

Follow him into:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He walks into the room with the two cigars.

BILL

Anyone care to join me on the patio for a cigar?

SANDY  
How about Lorenzo?

BILL  
His body is in a balance.

SANDY  
Of course.

DOTTY  
Why don't you have one, honey?

SANDY  
Yeah. Let me smoke one a them things.

He smiles and hands one to her.

EXT. PATIO - MOMENTS LATER

Bill flicks a lighter and lights Sandy's cigar for her. A flame wavers in the wind. He hands the glowing cigar to her and lights his.

SANDY  
Alright. Let me see what the big deal is with these things.

BILL  
Don't inhale. Just let the smoke wash around in your mouth and then blow it out.

SANDY  
Don't inhale? Is that what you guys do? How can you even call it smoking if you don't actually inhale?

BILL  
No one inhales. It's just the way you smoke a cigar.

SANDY  
So maybe Clinton wasn't really lying.

BILL  
Them weren't cigars he was smoking.

They laugh.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - BACK ROOM - EVENING

People mingle after dinner and listen to the smooth jazz band that plays on a small stage.

Jake talks with Jon and his parents. Alissa slinks away from Jake and approaches her father, Naomi and Ned.

JAKE  
I feel sick.

JON  
I do too. So guess what I brought?

Jon takes three cigars out of his pocket and a cutter.

OREN  
Cigars!

POLLY  
Oh no. It's boys time. Y'all gonna go smoke them stogies like men do.

JON  
Who wants one? Mr. Adams? Jake?

Jake takes one after Jon cuts it.

JAKE  
If Alissa doesn't see me.

Oren takes one.

OREN  
Don't mind her, son. Smoke if you want to.

Jon heads for the patio door.

JON  
Come on.

EXT. PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Oren, Jon and Jake lean against a rail looking out at a beautiful view of LA at night.

OREN  
Damn, Jon. Where y'all gettin such tasty stogies?

JON  
I've been saving them for a special occasion.

JAKE  
You, my friend, are special.

Jon searches his pockets.

JON  
I'm so special I forgot the goddamn lighter. I'll go inside and look around for some matches or something.

JAKE  
Okay. We'll be right here.

Jon exits.

JAKE (cont'd)  
Can you believe this, dad?

OREN  
Believe my son's gettin hitched? Of course I can. Believe your father-in-law's a son-of-a-bitch? Of course I can too.

JAKE  
Dad!?

OREN  
Son. Y'all need someone to make ya open yer eyes. These people's are fake as a plastic goose.

JAKE  
Plastic goose?

OREN  
Your momma and I worried you might get involved with some a these city slicker types.

JAKE  
But dad?

OREN  
It's your life, son. But I can have my opinion, can't I?

JAKE  
Of course. I cherish your opinion.

OREN  
Ever since you was a youngster,  
your momma and I knew you was  
different.

JAKE  
Different?

OREN  
You're very sensitive. You don't  
want to hurt anyone's feelings.  
You're a nice guy. Just like your  
poppa.

JAKE  
So.

INT. BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jon slips between people. He asks a few people for a match or  
a lighter, but no one has either.

Follow him into:

INT. BACK HALL - CONTINUOUS

He opens cupboards and drawers in his search. He walks  
further back into the hall looking up and down.

He hears a whimpering noise and stops to listen.

He walks further into the back hall. He quietly opens a  
couple doors.

JON'S POV

Through a half-opened door he scans an empty room. He still  
hears the whimpering sound, so he enters the room.

He walks around tables in the dark toward the sound.

EXT. PATIO - CONTINUOUS

OREN  
So, your momma and I are worried.  
Is that a crime? For parents to  
worry about they own son?

JAKE

I'm just confused I guess. I mean,  
when did you know that mom was the  
right one for you?

Oren looks out at LA with his oversized orbs for eyes.

OREN

I guess it was one night in  
Kentucky. We was walking from a  
little diner we used to eat at.  
Biscuits an' gravy. I can still  
smell them biscuits.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. KENTUCKY STREET - EVENING

A young Oren and Polly walk down the street together.

OREN (V.O.)

We was walking side by side on a  
warm Kentucky evenin'. The  
fireflies lit the woods like a  
forth of July show just put on  
specially for us.

Oren reaches his hand out and slides Polly's hand into his. A  
magic glow surrounds their hands.

OREN (V.O.) (cont'd)

Out of nowhere, I decided to take a  
chance and hold her hand. I don't  
know why. I just did. All's a  
sudden I got this surge within me I  
can only subscribe to happening  
because I was holding her hand.

Oren and Polly look at each other awestruck.

OREN (V.O.) (cont'd)

I know it sounds downright silly.  
But our hands fit together more  
perfectly than two pieces of a  
puzzle. I knew right then and there  
that your momma was gonna be mine  
forever. I just knew it.

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Jake looks at his father.

JAKE

How can it be that simple.

OREN

I guess what the mind and heart  
might not understand. The body  
knows.

EXT. MONTANA - COMPTON HOUSE - PATIO - EVENING

Sandy and Bill puff on their cigars. Sounds of the woods  
surround them.

SANDY

You like Lorenzo?

BILL

Honey, that's really your business.

SANDY

But, I... I don't know.

BILL

I don't know why you young people  
try to make things so goddamn  
complicated. I mean, when your mom  
and I were dating, things were much  
simpler.

SANDY

Really?

BILL

Of course. I knew the first time we  
were together that she was right  
for me.

SANDY

(Jealous)

How? How could you know something  
like that?

BILL

I don't know. Maybe it was the  
wine. The beer. Maybe it was the  
night. But I got my own theory.

SANDY  
What? Tell me.

BILL  
Well, I remember looking down the very first time we held hands. It was like magic the way they fit together. Like two pieces of a puzzle. A perfect fit.

SANDY  
Damn. That's simple.

BILL  
And so it should be.

Sandy looks out at the expanse of the acreage and hugs her father.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - BACK HALL - EVENING

JON'S POV

After making his way through the dark back room, he comes to a closet. This is where the whimpering sounds are coming from.

His hand reaches out and slowly opens the closet door. Through the half-opened door we see Ned pounding into Alissa. She whimpers.

JON  
Oh my god!

She opens her eyes and PUSHES Ned off of her. Ned falls back into a table and crashes on the floor.

ALISSA  
Get the fuck off me?

NED  
Alissa?

JON  
What the hell is going on here?

She pulls her dress onto her perfect naked body.

ALISSA  
Nothing.

NED  
Nothing?

JON  
Is that all you can say? Nothing?

ALISSA  
Something?

Jon tears himself away from the scene and runs into the hall. He looks back at them. Alissa looks at Jon and flips him off.

ALISSA (cont'd)  
I knew I didn't like you. You barbarian. You freak.

Jon runs out of the room.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Oren and Jake smoke their unlit cigars. Jon runs out looking very stressed out.

JAKE  
You get the matches?

JON  
Jake! You'll never believe what I just stumbled upon.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - BACK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake storms into the crowded room. He looks desperate. He walks directly up to Alissa, who is still adjusting her brassiere. She looks arrogantly at him.

ALISSA  
What do you want?

JAKE  
How could you do this to me?

ALISSA  
You're going to believe that cretin over me, the girl you love?

She reaches back and yanks her zipper the rest of the way up.

JAKE  
For God's sake.

ALISSA  
Jon's been trying to break us up from day one. He's just a jealous little ...person. Jealous that his best friend is getting married.

JAKE  
I don't think so. Not this time, Alissa. You're not going to pull that shit on me again.

Winston Hoyt walks over.

HOYT  
Ned. Bring me my top hat. I will not stay here and listen to him talk to my daughter this way.

JAKE  
Forget the damn hat. Your days are numbered Doctor Winston Hoyt. You see, I've got the inside on a little under-the-table plastic surgery that you did.

HOYT  
Rubbish.

JAKE  
Rubbish? I don't think so.

Oren and Polly Adams approach them. Jake looks at them and notices that they are holding hands.

He looks at Alissa.

JAKE (cont'd)  
What the hell was I thinking? I was really going to marry you, Alissa.

HOYT  
Who wouldn't? She's beautiful.

JAKE  
Beauty fades in the light of the truth. And the truth is, you're a bitch.

The crowd gasps. Ned steps up. Jon tries to stand up to Ned, but he's much more meek and he steps away.

JAKE (cont'd)  
Goodbye.

As Jake walks out, Oren yells out.

OREN  
Y'all LA people's are crazy.  
Looney, I say.

Jake pulls off his tie and discards it wildly on the floor as he steps out the door.

INT./EXT. LORENZO'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Lorenzo and Sandy drive in complete silence. She looks out of the window at the scenery.

She looks at his hand on the stick shift lever. She slowly places her hand on top of his.

Lorenzo shakes her hand off and raises his hand to scratch his ear. She takes her hand back and looks back out the window. She takes a big breath.

SANDY  
Stop the car.

LORENZO  
What?

She looks at him as tears hang in her eyes.

SANDY  
I want out.

He keeps on driving, ignoring her request.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Did you hear me?

LORENZO  
You didn't finish the sentence. You want out of what? The car? Your pants? What?

SANDY  
Please. Just let me out.

He continues driving.

LORENZO  
I can't do that.

SANDY  
What? Why?

LORENZO  
My book is...

SANDY  
Oh my god. How could I be so  
goddamn stupid? You don't want me.  
You just want to use me to get your  
book published. Is that it?

LORENZO  
No, I... I love you too.

She grabs the steering wheel and the car swerves out of control.

SANDY  
Stop the goddamn car, Lorenzo.

He regains control of the steering and veers off.

LORENZO  
Okay. Okay. What are you going to  
do? Walk home from here?

The car stops and she gets out. She slams the door.

SANDY  
(Crying)  
Goodbye, Lorenzo.

She walks back toward her parents' house.

Lorenzo slams his hands into the steering wheel with wild-eyed intensity.

LORENZO  
Damnit!

EXT. LA STREET - NIGHT

Jake walks down the street in a desperate rage. He looks up to the sky.

JAKE'S POV

He sees the tops of trees and buildings swirl as he turns around in circles.

END JAKE'S POV

EXT. MONTANA STREET - NIGHT

Sandy pulls her arms around herself to keep warm as she walks along the side of the vacant street. A deer crosses, turns and looks at her for a moment, and then runs off into the forest.

EXT. LA STREET - NIGHT

He walks past a Target store. The lights shine in his eyes. He's so consumed he doesn't notice the store.

A big sign in the window of Target reads *THE "GET HAPPY" SALE IS ON NOW.*

INT. COMPTON HOUSE - NIGHT

Sandy opens the door and wearily walks into the house.

A light goes on in the hall and Bill steps out in his pajamas.

BILL

Honey? What happened?

She stops and stretches out her arms.

SANDY

Oh, daddy.

He walks to her and hugs her as she cries.

BILL

It's alright. Everything's going to be alright.

EXT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jon walks up to the door and knocks several times.

JON

Come on, Jake. It's been three days. You gotta come out soon or you'll start to mildew.

Jon walks away.

EXT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jon knocks on the door again.

JON  
I think I can smell something  
rotting in there. Pew.

He pinches his nose.

JON (cont'd)  
It's been almost two weeks. Come  
on.

He tries to look through the view hole.

JON (cont'd)  
I've got no friends. Please. I need  
you.

EXT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Jon and Susan, holding hands, walk up to the door. Jon  
knocks.

JON  
Three weeks and all's not well.  
There's no more Seinfeld reruns.  
Are there? Are there some episodes  
I haven't seen? Huh?

Susan knocks.

SUSAN  
Jake? It's Susan.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jake looks up from the muted television.

SUSAN (O.S.)  
She's not worth it.

He turns off the remote, closes his eyes and takes a big  
breath.

JON (O.S.)  
Totally not worth it.

SUSAN (O.S.)  
Doctor Hoyt's been arrested thanks  
to you.

JON (O.S.)  
And, thanks to your leads, James  
Farber is behind bars too.

Jake stands up and walks to the door.

EXT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

JAKE (O.S.)  
I thought she was everything.

Jon and Susan look at Jake excitedly.

JON  
Nobody can be everything.

Jon looks at Susan and smiles coyly.

JON (cont'd)  
(Whispers to Susan)  
Except you, honey.

The door slowly opens and Jake adjusts his eyes to the light.  
Jon and Susan hug him.

JON (cont'd)  
My only friend is back. Yes!

INT. COMPTON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The phone rings. Sandy sits on the couch in her sweat pants  
watching television.

DOTTY (O.S.)  
Sandy. It's for you.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sandy enters and looks at her mother as she takes the phone.

SANDY  
This is Sandy Compton.

She listens and smiles.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Thank you, Stan. Yeah, I'll be  
there.

She hangs up.

DOTTY  
Well? What'd they say?

SANDY  
I start my book-signing tour in two  
days. Down in LA.

They hug.

EXT. LA STREET - DAY

Jake and Jon walk down a busy business street.

JON  
So how come you never told me about  
her before now?

JAKE  
What could I say? I was engaged to  
Alissa at the time.

JON  
Jake. You can still look at other  
women. Christ, I think I'm walking  
with Mr. Rodgers.

JAKE  
That's just who I am, I guess.

They walk past a bookstore and we see Sandy's new book in the  
display case. It is entitled *ONE NIGHT IN TIJUANA, By Sandra  
Compton*.

A sign reads, *BOOK-SIGNING BY THE AUTHOR TOMORROW MORNING*.

Neither Jake nor Jon see the display as they walk by.

EXT. LA STREET - EVENING

Jake walks alone down the street with a cup of coffee. He  
once again walks by the bookstore and doesn't notice the  
display.

EXT. LA STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Jake stops after taking a drink from the coffee. He grimaces and spits it out.

JAKE

Gross.

He turns around and walks back.

EXT. LA STREET - CONTINUOUS

He walks past the bookstore again and doesn't notice the display.

INT. STARBUCK'S COFFEE - MOMENTS LATER

Jake walks in and waits in line. He finally gets to the front.

BARISTA

May I help you?

JAKE

I'm sorry, but I think there's vanilla in my coffee. Just plain decaf with cream.

BARISTA

No problem. Sorry about that.

JAKE

If people want a sweet drink, why do they get coffee? Why not a chocolate milkshake from McDonald's?

The barista laughs as she pours his decaf.

EXT. LA STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Jake walks past the bookstore one more time. A sales-woman turns the *OPEN* sign to *CLOSED* from inside the shop. This catches Jake's attention and he finally sees Sandy's book and the display.

He runs up to the window and looks at the book, *ONE NIGHT IN TIJUANA*.

He bangs on the glass and the sales-woman looks at him from across the glass.

JAKE  
I need that book!

The sales-woman shakes her head.

SALES-WOMAN  
(From inside the window)  
We're closed.

He runs over to the door knob and tries it, but it's locked.

JAKE  
Please.

He takes out his wallet and holds money up to the glass.

JAKE (cont'd)  
Money! See! I got money!

The sales-woman smiles and opens the door.

SALES-WOMAN  
You promise to shop here all the time?

JAKE  
Of course. I'll be back tomorrow.

She lets him in.

SALES-WOMAN  
But only during regular business hours.

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Jake sits up in bed reading the book.
- B) He sits at his desk reading.
- C) He sits in the front room reading by TV light.
- D) He's back in bed reading. He's nearly done by now.
- E) Early morning light shines on Jake as he sleeps on the book.

EXT. BOOK STORE - MORNING

A line of people squeeze into the book store.

INT. BOOK STORE - CONTINUOUS

Sandy sits on a chair in front of the crowded room. Several copies of her book are stacked up like bricks. People file through as she signs their copies. A short woman places her book on the table.

SHORTY

I've already read it, Ms. Compton.  
It's wonderful, but so different  
from your other books.

SANDY

Yeah, I felt it was time for a  
change.

SHORTY

Was your goal to piss off the  
feminists?

Sandy is shocked. And then she smiles. She signs the book and hands it back to her.

SANDY

No. I just fell in love. That's  
all.

SHORTY

Your words reflected it.

People place their books on the table.

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

F) With a start, Jake wakes up. He looks at the clock and panics.

JAKE

Damn!

THE SONG ENTITLED "COMFORTABLE" BY JOHN MAYER PLAYS

STREET

Jake runs down the sidewalk, across streets, dangerously dodging parked and moving cars. He holds the book like a baton.

BOOK STORE

Sandy packs up her briefcase and leaves the store.

STREET

Sandy walks down the street alone.

BOOK STORE

Jake bursts through the door.

Jake runs in the back to an empty "book-signing" area. He approaches the saleswoman who points outside to where Sandy had left moments before. He runs out of the store.

STREET

Sandy hails a cab. A cab can't pull to the curb because of the dense traffic. The cabbie shrugs his shoulders and passes her up.

STREET

Jake runs through the streets.

JAKE

Sandy!

He sees her getting into a cab.

JAKE (cont'd)

Sandy!

There's too much traffic and pedestrians for her to hear him. She gets in the back of the cab.

Jake sprints with all his might as the cab fights through a sea of cars.

The cabbie finds a stretch of empty road and steps on it. Jake yells in desperation.

Sandy hears the hell and turns to see him running toward them.

SANDY  
Oh my God! Stop! ...Please.

Jake looks up and notices that she sees him. He smiles at her. She gets out of the cab in the middle of the street.

SANDY (cont'd)  
Jake!

JAKE  
Sandy!

There's too many people and too much traffic to get any closer. He opens the book to the last page.

JAKE (cont'd)  
I didn't get married.

She laughs.

SANDY  
Really? Neither did I.

He laughs. The crowd finally notices their connection. Everyone looks at Jake. Jake looks around nervously.

JAKE  
I've really missed you.

The sidewalk bystanders remain quiet.

SANDY  
Me too.

JAKE  
I...

A tall woman from the crowd speaks up.

TALL WOMAN  
You what? Come on, Jake. You can't stop now.

JAKE  
Alright. If this is where it has to happen. I guess this is it.

Sandy moves to the curb. She and Jake are separated by a dense packing of people on the sidewalk.

JAKE (cont'd)

I thought I was okay. I totally thought my life was really going to be great. But you know what? My whole world changed about six months ago... ever since I met you. You showed me that I don't need to be clever all the time or to everything all the time. You showed me that it's okay to drink too many beers and to swear at the top of my lungs. I guess what I want to say is that it isn't that I was incapable of love, it was just that I was loving the wrong person... And by the way, I've got a stack of letters from our time-share that need both our signatures.

SANDY

Really?

JAKE

Sandy. I thought I might never see you again, and that's a crime because I... There's a distinct possibility that I might love you.

The crowd turns to Sandy for a reply.

SANDY

There's a good chance that I might love you too.

The crowd cheers and parts just enough for Jake to run to her.

They hold hands. They look at their touching hands. They kiss.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.