Three Strikes, You're Out
FADE IN:

INT. LESKO HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: Wednesday, March 10, 2010

RICHARD LESKO, early 40's, lies in a fitful sleep. He tosses and turns in the big king sized bed.

The only light comes from a digital clock on the bedside table. The blue neon numbers change to "12:00 AM".

Richard's eyes flash open. He sits up abruptly, rubs his eyes.

RICHARD
Holy shit! God, what a fucking dream.

A toilet flushes, a door opens O.S., and candlelight spills out from the bathroom.

MONICA LESKO, early 40's, bleached blonde hair, enters.

MONICA
Honey? You OK? What's going on?

She blows out the candle, lies down beside him, and kisses his forehead.

RICHARD
It was so real...

MONICA
You're all sweaty. Bad dream?

Richard lies back down, stares at the ceiling.

RICHARD
Yeah, really bad dream. I swear, I thought it was really happening.

MONICA
Everything's OK now. You wanna tell me about it?

Richard closes his eyes.

RICHARD
It felt so real. I was right here...in bed by myself. I opened my eyes, and there were these three figures around me in black robes. No faces, just darkness.
MONICA
Creepy! What'd they say?

RICHARD
Nothing...not a sound. The one on the far end raised it's arm and this bony finger was pointing at me...kind of like it was scolding me. I tried to move, but couldn't, like I was frozen with fear. Then I woke up.

MONICA
Weird...have you been a naughty boy?

RICHARD
Funny...yeah, I skipped the gym today.

Richard kisses her again. They both close their eyes.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
I love you.

MONICA
No more bad dreams.

INT. LESKO HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: Thursday, March 11, 2010

Richard lies asleep in bed.

The digital clock changes to "12:00 AM".

His eyes dart open.

Three FIGURES in black robes surround the bed. Darkness emanates from where their faces should be. Each wags a bony finger in front of them.

Richard wakes up in a flash, profusely sweating. Monica wakes up next to him.

MONICA
Honey, what's wrong? The dream again?

Richard shakes, rubs his eyes.

RICHARD
Yep, same one. This time, all of them were scolding me. Shit, what's going on?

Monica comforts him with a hug and a kiss.
I don't know, but that actually reminds me...Lizzy's driving down from SLC next week. She's into dreams, you know. Maybe she can help.

Oh, Honey, no...

Richard, she's my sister, and...

Yeah, but she's a...

A what?

You know...a fucking witch.

Monica sits up in bed, glares over at Richard.

She's a Wiccan, not a witch.

What's the difference?

There's a difference, trust me. No more bad dreams. Tomorrow's our anniversary...only good thoughts, OK?

Richard smiles, kisses his wife deeply.

OK, Lizzy's not so bad, I guess.

The place is adorned with Christmas lights and decorations. Several dozen PARTYGOERS, all dressed to the hilt, mingle.

Monica sits at a table with three WOMEN and two MEN. There's an empty chair next to her. Smiles and laughter from all.

Richard stands at the other end of the patio with MARY, 27, drop dead gorgeous. Mary laughs, puts her hand on Richard's shoulder.
Monica and the others watch.

MONICA
So who's the hot new babe, Richard's drooling over?

MIKE, 35, sets his glass of wine down, turns to Monica.

MIKE
Well, that would be Mary...we all call her "The Mare". She just got hired a few weeks ago.

LISA, also 35, slaps Mike in the shoulder.

LISA
The Mare? What is that supposed to mean? You men...I swear.

Mike looks to LARRY, late 40's.

LARRY
Well...she's put together pretty well...and The Mare kind of rhymes with Mary...and...

All three women frown.

MONICA
So you've nicknamed her a horse?

Mike and Larry both laugh.

MIKE
Richard came up with it, actually. It's just a little joke. She likes it, actually.

MONICA
I bet she does. You guys are unbelievable.

Mike and Larry toast. The women don't join in.

MONICA (CONT'D)
How come nobody introduced her around?

LARRY
I think she's kind of shy.

The women laugh.

MONICA
Yeah, sure looks like it. I'll go introduce myself, then.
LISA
Go get 'em, kid!

Monica stands, picks up her wine, and heads over.

Mary drops her hand from Richard's shoulder, as Monica approaches.

RICHARD
Hey Honey, I wanted to introduce you to our newest Junior Sale Rep, Mary.

Mary holds out her hand.

MARY
Mrs. Lesko...hi! So nice to finally meet you. I've heard so many good things from Dick.

MONICA
Dick? You mean, Richard?

RICHARD
She calls me Dick...you know, less formal.

MONICA
Hi Mary, please, call me, Monica.

They shake hands...uncomfortably.

MARY
Monica, you look just like you did when you guys got married...only older and with blonde hair.
(beat)
I like it...you look good as a blonde.

Monica frowns.

MONICA
Well, thanks...I guess.

MARY
Dick's got pictures of you guys all over his office. It's so cute.

Richard shifts uneasily.

BOB EASTMAN, 60's, distinguished, approaches.

BOB
Everyone having fun?
(MORE)
BOB (CONT'D)
(beat)
Hi Monica, you're looking festive tonight.

Bob gives Monica a hug.

MONICA
Merry Christmas, Bob. Great party as always. We need to have you and Helen over for dinner. It's been way too long.

BOB
We'll definitely do that. (beat)
Don't mean to interrupt, but I need to steal Mary away for a few minutes...the other Regional Sales guys are here from out of state.

MARY
It was nice meeting you, Monica. You've got a great husband there.

Monica gives Richard the eye.

MONICA
Yep, sure do, huh...Dick?

INT. LESKO HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

SUPER: 1 month ago

Monica chops celery and carrots, tosses them into a big pot.

Richard enters through the garage door. His shirt is unbuttoned and his tie hangs loosely around his neck.

RICHARD
Mmm...something smells wonderful! What's cooking, hot stuff?

Monica gives him a hug and kiss, makes a funny face.

MONICA
Honey, what's that smell? You smell...like perfume.

Richard pulls away uneasily, a smile on his face.

RICHARD
Just showered at the gym after a five mile run...I must have grabbed
(MORE)
RICHARD (CONT'D)
one of your cast off bars of soap.
Do I smell pretty?

Monica puts her hands on her hips.

MONICA
You did, huh? That's the story?

RICHARD
Honey, c'mon...if I was stupid enough
to be cheating on you, don't you
think I'd at least try and cover my
tracks a bit better? Geez, Monica,
you know me better than that.

Monica gives him the eye, as he reaches into the fridge and
grabs a beer.

MONICA
You sure about that?

He takes a long swig, blurts out a giant belch.

RICHARD
Wow...excuse me! Final answer, Hun.
You know how much I love you. Those
days are long behind us. I promise
you...on our daughter's life. OK?

Monica comes closer and smells him again.

MONICA
Well, you do smell clean...and pretty.
OK, I'm sorry...once bitten, you
know?

RICHARD
I'm gonna go change. Want a glass
of wine?

Monica reaches over to the counter, holds up a wine glass,
half empty.

MONICA
Already started. Go get comfy.

INT. DILLARD'S DEPARTMENT STORE - COSMETICS DEPARTMENT - DAY
Monica walks up to the fragrance counter.
ASHLEY, 20's, cute, greets her with a smile.

ASHLEY
Hey, Mrs. Lesko. Good to see you.
MONICA
You too, Ash. How's business in these troubled times?

Ashley makes a face.

ASHLEY
Well, luckily for us, women need to smell good for their men, so business isn't too bad. Need a new bottle of Joy?

MONICA
No, Mr. Lesko takes care of that every year, and our anniversary is coming up next month. I was thinking about my daughter. Looking for something upscale, clean...trendy, maybe? Any suggestions?

Ashley reaches below the counter, pulls out four bottles.

ASHLEY
Hmmm, clean, upscale, trendy...I'd say one of these may work. Give 'em a whiff.

Ashley sprays each into the air and waves her hand. Monica sniffs the air.

MONICA
No, not thrilled with any of them. Anything else you'd recommend?

Ashley reaches below and pulls out one more bottle.

ASHLEY
Well, this one's a little more than trendy, but it is a nice scent. It's called "Attraction". It's about the same cost as your Joy, actually.

She sprays it into the air, waves her hand again.

MONICA
Yep, that's the one, Ash. I'll take it. You're a doll.

Monica's cell phone rings in her purse. She answers.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Hey there.
(beat)
Yep, I found it.
(MORE)
MONICA (CONT'D)
(beat)
Oh yeah, I'm sure. I'll call you when I get home.

INT. LESKO HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: Friday, March 12, 2010

Richard walks in from the hallway.

RICHARD
I can't believe how good your lobster thermadore is every year, Hun.

He stops, looks down at the bed. Red, silk pajamas are laid out, along with a fuzzy sleep mask. Silk restraints hang from the head and foot boards of the bed.

MONICA (O.S.)
I've got a little surprise for you.

Richard laughs.

RICHARD
I see that. Wow...

MONICA (O.S.)
Put on the PJ's and mask and I'll be right in...no peeking!

INT. LESKO HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Richard lies on the bed in the PJ's and sleep mask.

Monica enters, holding a pot of liquid with three candles burning. She sets it down on a dresser.

RICHARD
Honey?

MONICA
Yep. Are you ready?

Richard laughs nervously, as Monica slips his hands and feet into the silk restraints.

RICHARD
Wow, this is different. Be gentle.

MONICA
OK, I'm going to take off your eye mask, but don't peek yet...not till I tell you. Promise?
RICHARD
I promise.

She slips off the mask, and stands back at the foot of the bed.

MONICA
OK, open 'em up.

Richard opens his eyes...and SCREAMS!

Standing at the foot of the bed with Monica are the three hooded figures. The furthest one extends a bony hand, makes a fist.

Richard is visibly flattened against the bed, unable to move.

RICHARD
What the fuck? Monica, what's going on? Let me up, damnit!

Monica smiles.

MONICA
Surprise! You ready to play a little game, darling husband of mine?

Richard struggles, but can't move.

RICHARD
Is this some sort of joke? This isn't funny. Let me up!

MONICA
No, it's not meant to be funny, sweetest. Remember that old game show, Truth or Consequences? Well, I've updated it and modified it to include your favorite sport, baseball. Three strikes and you're out. All you have to do is answer three questions honestly, and you'll be fine, otherwise, there will be consequences.

Richard's eyes dart back and forth.

RICHARD
Monica, enough's enough. Stop it...now! What the fuck are those things?

Monica gestures to the three figures.
MONICA
These? These will serve as our referees...oh wait, referees are for football...I mean umpires.

(beat)
So, Dick, I've had this funny feeling that you've been less than honest with me lately. I'm going to ask you three questions, and each incorrect answer means you'll lose something very valuable to you. You've got one hand, one foot, and that pathetic excuse of a penis at risk here. We'll start with the hand, then the foot, and then...well, you know.

She motions to his crotch.

Richard strains to move, SCREAMS again.

RICHARD
Are you fucking mad? What is this?

MONICA
We're going to ignore all your probable infidelities over the years and just focus on the most recent. First question...have you used your hands to fondle The Mare's big, voluptuous breasts? Be honest now.

RICHARD
What? Mary at work? Of course not. No, never. I swear!

MONICA
Final answer?

RICHARD
I love you. I never touched her.

The figure furthest to the left wags a bony finger at Richard.

One of the candles snuffs itself out.

An electric blue flash emanates from Richard's left wrist, and his hand is gone. Smoke wafts up from the cauterized stump.

He SCREAMS in pain, thrashes about on the bed.

MONICA
Strike one. Batter up!

(MORE)
MONICA (CONT'D)
Next question...last month, when I said you smelled like perfume, you told me you ran at the gym and showered with my soap. Were you actually with The Mare that day?

RICHARD
Monica, stop this madness. I wasn't with her...ever. I swear!

The middle figure wags a bony finger, another candle goes out.

Richard SCREAMS as his left foot vanishes in an electric blue flash.

MONICA
No surprise there. I should probably come clean as well. I lied to you about Lizzy coming next week. She's already here and she's actually over at The Mare's right now and they're playing too. Isn't that apropos? Wonder how she's doing.

RICHARD
Monica, stop...please stop.

MONICA
Well, last question, Dick. Don't get this one wrong, or you're little friend won't be calling you Dick anymore...more like Dick-less.
(laughing)
Have you stuck that cock of yours inside that whore? Think it over, sweetest. Don't lie to me.

Sweat seeps out of Richard's forehead, as he continues to struggle with the invisible binds.

RICHARD
Monica, you're fucking crazy, you bitch! Fuck you! I never touched her! I swear on our daughter's life!

The third figure wags a bony finger. The final candle extinguishes itself. The room is plunged into blackness.

An electric blue flash briefly lights up the room.

Richard SCREAMS!

FADE OUT: