

Possible Side Effects

By Tim Robbins

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FADE IN:

BUZZ (V.O.)
Perceptions are real. They color
what we see...what we believe...how
we behave. They can be
managed...to motivate behavior...to
create positive business results.

A GRAND HALLUCINATION:

Lab equipment dances across a prairie wind. Fields of tall grass being compressed by covered wagons. Men with scythes, cut a path. Vials of different colored liquid merge in test tubes. Kinetic collisions of molecules, microscopic visions of kinesis, the romantic, peaceful blend and commingling of cells. An Indian Shaman appears in the microscopic vision, then an advertisement for Sarsaparilla, a howl at the moon, a group around an ailing woman, a sick infant, a laying on of hands, more molecules. Words fade in and out of the visions. They are drug names of the past fifty years that were useless, ineffective.

INT. BUZZ HUNT'S RESEARCH LABORATORY - NIGHT

BUZZ HUNT, an eccentric looking man in his mid thirties works meticulously, his face an inch from a test tube, his hand holding a small vial of liquid. Incongruously for the setting, a very old American Indian in full medicine man garb stands nonchalantly watching Buzz. This is the SHAMAN.

BUZZ (V.O.)
My name is Buzz Hunt. I see pretty
interesting things when I work. I
work in the darkest night, away
from phones and florescents.

BUZZ
24 milliliters mn, hk 23, drip drip
drip. One eighth prolaset, two
thirds bx, drip drip work. I'm
getting close Kialo. This feels
right.

SHAMAN
I've heard this before.

BUZZ
What?

SHAMAN
One eighth proloset. You tried it
before.

BUZZ
Not with the b x.

SHAMAN
Yes with the b x. Three times ago.

BUZZ (V.O.)

You have manifested in your current form to represent doubt. You appeal as if to be memory, real memory, but I have never tried the proloset with the bx. Never. You are doubt. And gone.

And the Shaman is gone. He takes a small glass slide containing a drop of his mixture, and puts it into his microscope. He puts a CD in a player...The Shaman reappears.

SHAMAN

You always play music when you're in doubt.

BUZZ

Ridiculous. I put it on to think, to dance, to shower, to fuck. Get the hell out of here worm. Be gone!!!!

He starts hurling things at where he believes the Shaman is, then goes back to the lab table, looks in the microscope. Pulls away. Looks again.

BUZZ

It's ready.

He walks excitedly to his computer. On the screen is a flashing alert. Buzz looks at it curiously. Clicks.

INT. HUNT HOUSE BEDROOM - DAWN

It is early morning. MAXIMILIAN HUNT, forty, handsome, the picture of corporate stewardship, riding the dream of success all the way to a heart attack - is making love to his wife, AMY -beautiful, intelligent, great wife and ally. Early morning passion. Suddenly the phone rings..Neither want to abandon the mission, a few more rings, and as they continue:

MAX

Did Libby come home?

AMY

Yes.

MAX

You saw her come in?

AMY

Yes.

MAX

What time?

AMY

Two.

MAX

What if she snuck out again?

AMY
Answer it.

Max picks up the phone.

MAX
Hello?

BUZZ (O.S.)
I've hit gold.

MAX
What? Buzz?

BUZZ (O.S.)
I've hit gold. Got a new one for
you.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY - DAWN

Buzz sits in front of a computer monitor.

MAX (O.S.)
Are you tripping?

BUZZ
Irrelevant. You need to get up. I'm
the good news. New products, new
innovations. New profits. The bad
news is on your doorstep. Go to
your doorstep.

He hangs up.

INT. HUNT HOUSE BEDROOM - DAWN

AMY
Who was that?

MAX
Buzz, talking in cryptograms.
Sorry.

AMY
Does he ever sleep?

MAX
Not at night.

Max moves toward her.

AMY
I have to get up anyway.

Max kisses her.

MAX
We were starting the day right.

AMY
I've got rounds at eight.

4.

He moves his hand to her breast.

AMY

Max.

MAX

Better than a cup of coffee.

AMY

I would hope so.

This makes Max laugh. They begin to kiss. Their bodies start to move together. Just when it starts to get good, the phone rings. Max answers.

MAX

I have kids you know. They need their sleep.

BUZZ (O.S.)

Do you have it yet?

MAX

What?

BUZZ (O.S.)

The paper. Get it.

MAX

You're a fucking maniac.

A pause.

AMY

What's the matter?

MAX

Buzz. He hung up.

Max gets out of bed, groaning.

AMY

Where are you going?

MAX

I'll be right back.

AMY

I'm getting up.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY - DAWN

Buzz is now talking to a different hallucination. The man is middle aged and is dressed in the style of a late nineteenth century medicine show barker, derby hat, vest, suspenders, handlebar moustache. This is DR. SASS.

BUZZ

Problem is the flim flam doesn't sell any more.

SASS
It sells. It's just a different
flim flam.

BUZZ
The worst could happen to you is
you get run out of town. Didn't
have an awful lot of law suits, did
you?

SASS
Never was a run out of town.
Welcomed in, with laurel wreaths.
Welcome back Dr. Sassafras. We've
missed you so. Couldn't wait to get
their hands on my elixir.

BUZZ
They were addicted Doc. They were
junkies.

Buzz notices something on the computer screen.

SASS
Nonsense, my elixir cured all ills.

BUZZ
Holy Moses, this is big. (to Sass)
It was an opium buzz. They were
hooked on opium.

SASS
Cures cancer, weakness of the
liver, arrythmia of the heart,
hyper activity, general malaise,
hysteria, constipation....

BUZZ
It made em feel good. But it was
opium.

Buzz dials the phone, an old rotary.

EXT. FRONT DOOR, HUNT HOUSE - DAWN

Max opens the door, looks down and picks up the newspaper. A
headline reads, "*Wonderdrug Suspected in Recent Patient
Deaths*". His jaw drops. The phone rings inside the house. Max
goes inside, paper in hand.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - DAWN

Max answers the phone.

MAX
Yeah?

BUZZ (O.S.)
Did you know this was coming down?

MAX
It's news to me.

BUZZ (O.S.)
I knew this was a bad idea. What did I say?

MAX
You didn't say shit.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY - DAWN

BUZZ
I said you can't copy crap. If you copy crap you get crap.

MAX (O.S.)
Who'd you say that to, Dr. Sarsaparilla?

BUZZ
I said it to you. And I told you I didn't want that piece of shit drug anywhere near my lab.

MAX (O.S.)
You got anything constructive to say?

BUZZ
What kind of tests did you do any way? Did you test? Or did you just pay some Dr. Cash Brain to rubber stamp your cash cow?

MAX (O.S.)
Why don't you leave the business to the relatively sane, you paranoid fuck. You just keep working on the perspiration project.

BUZZ
I'm working fast food antidote. Cure to McDonalds. And it's broken through. And fuck you.

He hangs up.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - DAWN

Max presses a button on the portable phone and hangs up. Lets out a huge sigh. The world is crashing down. He gets on a treadmill and starts to run.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY - DAWN

Buzz cleans up his counter space where he has been conducting experiments.

BUZZ
What a fucking idiot. My fucking brother. I swear he's adopted. You and me, we're the same. We're in the same business.

(MORE)

BUZZ (cont'd)
Selling pleasure, making life
easier curing life's little ills.
You make a lot of money, doc?

SASS
Enough to get by. Got to buy more
opium to make the product, but I
have a nice suit.

BUZZ
Yeah, me too. I have a nice suit
too. But my brother he has too many
nice suits. He's a filthy fucker.

A loud bell. Buzz reacts.

BUZZ
Fuck. Fuckers.

The bell again. A pounding on a metal gate. A distant voice.
Buzz, now alone, moves nervously toward a metal gate.

BUZZ
What is it? Who is it?

The pounding on the gate.

VOICE(O.S.)
Larry. It's me. Open up.

BUZZ
You're not supposed to be here.
You're not supposed to come here.

VOICE (O.S.)
Did you see the paper, Larry? Open
up.

BUZZ
For Crissakes.

Buzz reaches down, unlocks and opens the metal gate. He
hurries the man inside looking behind him out into the street
suspiciously. SILAS HUNT, Buzz and Max's brother enters. He
is handsome and healthy looking, perhaps the only sane, drug
free member of the Hunt family.

BUZZ
Jesus, Silas. You want to blow the
lid off the pop stand?

SILAS
I was coming in the morning anyway.

BUZZ
That's the morning Silas. This is
night slash early morning. You
never come at night slash early
morning. No one does.

SILAS
Are you tripping?

BUZZ
Inconsequential. Irrelevant. What do you want?

SILAS
Did you read the paper?

BUZZ
I saw it on line.

SILAS
We're in the shit.

BUZZ
It was that fucking Uni Lab. I told him it was a two bit Yes-man lab.

SILAS
Actually, I told him that. Did you talk to him?

BUZZ
I woke him up.

SILAS
What did he say?

BUZZ
What's he going to say? He's probably jogging by now.

Buzz gives Silas a package.

BUZZ
Here's your drugs. Does Gramps get all this?

SILAS
The free clinic also.

BUZZ
You're the fucking Saint of New York. You make me sick.

SILAS
You're the saint.

BUZZ
Of hell. Take your drugs and scram. I've got work to do.

INT. MARNIE HUNT LUXURY APARTMENT - DAWN

MARNIE HUNT, the matriarch of the Hunt clan is running frantically through her apartment. She is still in nightclothes, very elegant, and slightly hungover. She yells at her servant, MELVA who is looking for something.

MARNIE
I had it when I got in. It's got to be somewhere, check the pockets of my jacket, no my purse.

9.

MELVA
Which purse?

MARNIE
This is a disaster. The Dior, no the Hermes, What the hell was I wearing? It was a museum ball, something glittery, no chenille, no it was a fucking dinner for AIDS. It was blue silk, the purse was...where the hell was I?

MELVA
Found it.

MARNIE
Give it. How do I? Max's number. Which is the contacts button? Godammit Melva, dial my fucking son.

Melva takes the phone, presses two buttons and hands the phone back to Marnie.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - DAWN

Max is running full speed on his treadmill. His phone rings.

MAX
Yeah? Mom. Yeah, it's bullshit, Mom. Unfounded. Outrageous. Mendacious. We had FDA approval, clinical trials, the works.

MARNIE (O.S.)
It's a rather disagreeable way to start the morning.

MAX
It's going to go away, Mom.

INT. MARNIE HUNT LUXURY APARTMENT - DAWN

MARNIE
I'm coming in this afternoon. I want to hear from the lawyers.

MAX (O.S.)
It's not a good day for that, Mom.

MARNIE
Or I'll call an emergency board meeting. What do you think sweetie? Maybe just the lawyers? OK then. At 4. Be there. And remember we have the Heal the Children benefit tonight at the Waldorf.

She hangs up. To Melva:

MARNIE
 I'm going to need modest,
 professional. The Lauren Navy,
 epaulets, embroidered lapel. And
 I'll take the LaCroix for tonight.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - DAWN

Max increases his pace on the treadmill. On the television a news report on the drug scandal.

MAX
 Cocksucker. Motherfucking
 cocksucker.

A woman dressed in a maid's outfit enters. This is FRANCINE.

FRANCINE
 Mr. Hunt. Breakfast.

As Max gets off the treadmill and begins to leave the camera finds the television he has been watching. It is a morning show and a reporter is interviewing a LAWYER and a woman in her early forties, MRS. COLLINS. They are doing a remote from a suburban house.

LAWYER
 (on TV)
 There is a real human cost paid for
 this negligence....

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

We are close on ALMA COLLINS, a waif like tomboyish 12 year old girl with a strange haircut and an intense demeanor. She watches the television. On the television we see the lawyer continue his rant.

LAWYER
 (on TV)
Zebuloxx has taken this Mrs.
 Collins' husband from her
 prematurely, has left three
 children fatherless. These are not
 abstractions to be spun away by
 Hunt Pharmaceutical press releases.
 This is criminal involvement in the
 death of Mr. Collins.

Alma turns in disgust from the interview, gathers a bag and we follow her as she walks into a kitchen.

REPORTER
 (on TV)
 Mrs. Collins, did your husband have
 any history of heart problems?

Alma finds a purse on the counter and takes some money from it. The television is on in the kitchen too and we see two kids BEN, 10 and Charles, 8, eating cereal and watching.

MRS. COLLINS

(on TV)

No ma'am. He was 39 years old when he had the heart attack. He was in great shape. He was taking Zebuloxx to reduce cholesterol. He had only been taking it for a month.

ALMA

Hey. We're famous. And all it took was Dad dying.

Alma walks out of the kitchen into the living room where we see a TELEVISION CREW and the Lawyer, Mrs. Collins and the Reporter conducting the interview we have just been watching. Alma walks around the equipment and out the front door.

LAWYER (O.S.)

Hunt Pharmaceutical has developed a dangerous drug, distorted the clinical trials, leaned on the FDA for approval, threatened scientists that have spoken out against the drug and now I am sure they will claim innocence.

Ben catches up with his sister and grabs her arm.

BEN

Where are you going?

ALMA

Out.

She exits the house, Ben following.

EXT. COLLINS HOUSE - DAY

As we follow the two kids we see the remote television van parked in the driveway and curious neighbors milling about. Alma gets on her bicycle.

BEN

Can I come?

ALMA

No. Leave me alone.

BEN

Where are you going?

ALMA

The library. I got work to do.

She takes off on her bike.

INT. HUNT PHARMACY - DAY

An old school pharmacy in a poor neighborhood, complete with soda counter and old signage. It is as if we have been dropped back into the 1940s. The store is cluttered and quaint, a reminder of a simpler time.

IGNATIIOUS HUNT, the elder scion of the Hunt family stands behind the counter opening the box that Silas has brought for him. Ignatious is in his eighties, a kind and simple man.

IGNATIIOUS

I hope he labelled them this time.
I couldn't tell the difference
between the antibiotics and the
antihistamines last time.

SILAS

I told him to label before he got
stoned.

Ignatious examines the contents.

IGNATIIOUS

Oh good. I'm out of these.

He continues to unpack the box.

SILAS

I saw this coming, Gramps. I
remember that drug coming out of
testing. All of the results looked
good. Too good. It was a bullshit
lab. I should have looked more
carefully.

IGNATIIOUS

You think they dummied the results?

SILAS

He subcontracted the clinical
trials from a sympathetic lab.

A pause.

IGNATIIOUS

Could also be a crap lawsuit. Give
me that other box.

SILAS

That's not for you. That's for the
free clinic.

IGNATIIOUS

You're going to steal my business.

SILAS

What are you talking about? You
don't charge people anyway.

IGNATIIOUS

I soak em for as much as they got.
I'm ruthless kid.

SILAS

Yeah right. See you gramps. Car
comes at 6 to get you. Black tie,
remember?

IGNATIIOUS

Let me know about the bloodletting.
And keep your head up.

SILAS

Will do.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Max, having just showered walks into the room. His wife sits at the table sipping coffee, reading the paper. She is dressed in doctor's scrubs, looking pulled together and professional, a stark contrast from the vixen we met earlier.

AMY

I saw the paper.

MAX

It'll be a busy day.

A pause.

AMY

Is there any truth to it?

MAX

No, honey. Another legal hassle.

AMY

But bigger.

MAX

Well yes, a bit.

AMY

Front page bigger.

MAX

Yes.

A pause.

AMY

But there's no merit to it?

MAX

Merit?

AMY

I mean there's no...

MAX

I already told you it's bullshit.
Merit-less.

AMY

OK.

A long pause.

AMY

So there's no connection between
Zebuloxx and the heart attacks?

MAX
People have heart attacks every
day, darling.

Another pause.

AMY
Just don't give yourself one.

A pause.

AMY
Libby told me she doesn't want to
work with you.

MAX
She won't be working with me.

AMY
What exactly will she be doing?

MAX
She'll be interning with one of our
reps. They go to doctors offices,
talk to them about our product,
give them our studies, med journal
recommendations. Interesting stuff.

AMY
She's gonna hate it.

MAX
That's too bad. It's time for her
to make a living. Kids! Breakfast!

AMY
I've got to go. My shift starts in
fifteen minutes.

MAX
Don't you want to see the kids?

AMY
I saw them all day yesterday.
Picked Chip up at school early. He
said his medication was off and he
needed to come home. Libby had an
argument with her girlfriend last
night. Pretty dramatic. I've got to
go.

MAX
Save some lives.

The kids come in. CHIP, 15, and LIBBY, 19, look like your
normal suburban teenagers. They are anything but normal.

CHIP
Bye mom.

AMY
Bye sweetie. There is a health
shake for you with psyllium husks.
It should help with anxiety.

CHIP
I take my drugs for that.

AMY
This is a supplement to that. A natural substitute. Maybe if it works we can stop taking the drugs.

MAX
It's Mother Nature. In our presence.

AMY
Ha Ha.

LIBBY
You working all day?

AMY
Yes honey. I'll be on my cell if you need me. Did you take your supplements?

LIBBY
You don't call back.

AMY
Not right away sometimes. I don't want to get into this. Here, take these.

She hands her a dose of vitamins, and a glass of water.

CHIP
I need my mommy. I'm nineteen and I need my mommy.

LIBBY
Shut up hop head.

MAX
Both of you shut it.

AMY
Chip that's unnecessary. Libby, sometimes I have patients and I can't call you right back.

LIBBY
Patience with what?

AMY
Patients with a 'T'.

LIBBY
Whatever Mom, I understand. Go to work.

AMY
Libby.

LIBBY
It's OK. It's fine. Mom, I don't want to work for Daddy.

AMY
Tell your daddy that. I've got to go.

CHIP
See ya doctor.

AMY
Not Doctor yet. But soon.

She leaves.

LIBBY
Kiss ass.

MAX
Eat you Eggs Florentine.

LIBBY
Dad, I don't want to work for you.

MAX
You won't be working for me. You'll be working for Alexandra.

LIBBY
Who's that?

MAX
She's the rep that will be taking you around, showing you the ropes. You won't even see me.

LIBBY
I still don't want to do it.

MAX
Well tough. Make the best of it because that's your summer job.

LIBBY
Why do I have to work?

The doorbell rings.

MAX
Because that's what makes the world go around. You're nineteen and we love you very much and because we love you we feel obliged to prepare you for real life. Enough. Eat.

CHIP
Did Mom tell you I had to come home from school?

MAX
Yes. Something about your meds.

CHIP
I think I took one too many yesterday morning.

MAX
Why did you do that?

CHIP
I was distracted. Anyway, it turned out good. I wrote a song when I got home.

MAX
Good. Take your pills.

CHIP
Yup.

Chip picks them up and it looks like he puts them in his mouth. We see however that he has put them in his pocket. He drinks a gulp of orange juice and pretends to swallow the pills. Francine the housekeeper enters.

FRANCINE
Miss Libby. Your friend is here.

Libby acts with revulsion.

LIBBY
Jesus!

She gets up and goes to the door. We follow.

LIBBY
What do you want?

At the door is DONATELLA, a beautiful woman, mid twenties. She has flowers in her hand.

DONATELLA
I came to apologize.

LIBBY
You think you can just come over here with flowers and I'll forget what you said last night.

DONATELLA
I was wrong. I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?

And Libby jumps at her with her mouth, kissing her passionately.

INT. HARLEM FREE CINIC - DAY

Silas watches as a middle aged black woman, MARCELLA, opens the box of drugs.

MARCELLA
There's a nasty strep going around. You got some anti-bies in here for me?

SILAS
Yeah, it's called Amoxicilbrion. That's it there.

MARCELLA

And we're out of Cebrox or whatever that penicillin drug you got is.

SILAS

Cebrox.

MARCELLA

Lots of STDs floating around. It's spring.

SILAS

Spring has sprung.

MARCELLA

I don't know what the fucking mystery is with these teenagers. We hand out more condoms than seconds in the day. Can't they take the fucking time to put them on?

SILAS

The heat of the moment. Not a lot of intelligence in that moment.

MARCELLA

Any anti-depressants? I could use a couple.

SILAS

I'll work on it.

MARCELLA

What do you get from this darling? You know this is illegal don't you? What is this? Altruism? Guilt?

SILAS

I just look forward to seeing you.

MARCELLA

Uh huh.

SILAS

And I think it's incumbent on me to try and reduce my family's profit margin. I'm the middle child you know. I have anger issues.

MARCELLA

What's the drug for that?

SILAS

I would never take it.

He turns to leave. Stops. Turns.

SILAS

Hey, Marcella. You got a fancy dress?

MARCELLA

Yeah.

SILAS

Want to see my world? There's a really boring fund-raiser tonight at the Waldorf.

MARCELLA

You asking me on a date?

SILAS

Could be.

MARCELLA

I'll think about it.

SILAS

Pick you up at six?

MARCELLA

Maybe.

EXT. SUBURBAN TOWN - DAY

Alma Collins rides along the street and stops at a newspaper stand. She buys three different papers, and stuffs them into her bag. An unsettling looking sight, this pre-pubescent girl has a look of rigid determination on her face.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY

Libby Hunt walking with ALEXANDRA, a drop dead gorgeous woman dressed in a high mini and very fashionable matching jacket that is open enough to reveal a stunning cleavage. Don't get me wrong. She's smart as a whip.

ALEXANDRA

We are the front line, the face of Hunt Pharmaceuticals. We are the ones that get the products out into the market.

She walks into a deli.

INT. DELICATESSEN - DAY

Alexandra and Libby on line at the counter.

ALEXANDRA

Here's what we know about our first stop today: He's a decile seven in blood pressure meds, meaning he writes lots of scrips. Unfortunately only ten percent of them are for our blood pressure meds.

LIBBY

How do you know that?

ALEXANDRA

Information companies buy records from pharmacies, cull the data. We buy it from them.

LIBBY

That's creepy.

The reach the front of the line.

ALEXANDRA

I need an Everything Bagel with smoked sockeye, and a dollop of beluga caviar on top. A touch of onions.

LIBBY

We're eating?

ALEXANDRA

It's for the doctor. His favorite. We come bearing gifts. Always a good idea. Can you run across to the Starbucks and get a caramel macchiato with two percent? A little nutmeg sprinkle on top.

INT. OFFICE OF MAX HUNT - DAY

Max talks to the lead attorney at Hunt Pharma, CAL FETTERDEN. Cal is oily and slick, the necessary advisor lacking a moral bottom line.

FETTERDEN

In the suit they're alleging certain tests results were concealed. They are claiming wrongful death based on negligence.

MAX

Worst case scenario?

FETTERDEN

Scenario One. A conviction for willful neglect. Fines could exceed 400 million.

MAX

Yuck. Scenario two?

FETTERDEN

Individual culpability. A rogue element in the company acting on his own without the company's knowledge. The fines would be substantially less but someone's going to jail.

MAX

Who?

FETTERDEN

Who can you spare?

MAX

How long is the jail time?

FETTERDEN

I think we could get the time down to six months, a year for criminal negligence. This absolves the company of any responsibility, saves the company's name.

MAX

Someone to take the fall.

FETTERDEN

And save the company.

MAX

But whoever that is, is ruined.

FETTERDEN

But potentially rich.

MAX

How would we do that? How do we pay someone off without there being a record of that?

FETTERDEN

It has to be someone in the family.

MAX

One of my brothers.

FETTERDEN

Yes.

MAX

Or mom.

FETTERDEN

Not her.

MAX

Or me.

FETTERDEN

Yes.

MAX

Well it can't be me. You can't have the CEO go down. And it can't be Silas. He hates me and he has too much integrity and he would never agree. You're talking about Buzz. That's impossible. He is our R&D.

FETTERDEN

You don't need R&D. No one has R&D in house anyway.

MAX

It's what sets us apart.

FETTERDEN

You can get better, cheaper research from university labs, government labs.

MAX

That's why we're in trouble. Uni-Lab! Buzz didn't have anything to do with this crap drug's development. Buzz makes us money winners.

FETTERDEN

He's a lunatic, Max. He's unstable, an accident waiting to happen. Do you realize the damage it would do the company if anyone were to look into what happens in his lab? Hallucinogenic orgies with hookers and college girls? I'm surprised it hasn't already been exposed.

MAX

He has pretty loyal girlfriends.

FETTERDEN

You cannot afford this fine. The company's stock will plummet.

MAX

Buzz had nothing to do with that drug. He fought against it. That's on record. And he keeps copies. It wouldn't work.

FETTERDEN

Be that as it may you should consider all options open for consideration. I've contacted Red Corpliani. He works with a firm in Houston that deals with crisis management. With your approval I believe it would be in our best interest for him to address the braintrust today regarding this situation.

MAX

Red Corpliani? Wow. You don't fuck around, do you Cal?

FETTERDEN

He's expensive. But he's worth it.

INT. SUBURBAN LIBRARY - DAY

Alma walks in amongst the stacks of books and makes her way to an information desk.

ALMA

Do you have the internet here? I have some research I have to do for a school project.

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICAL OFFICES - DAY

An elevator opens and Buzz Hunt, looking like he's been through an all night hurricane of mental anguish and revelation exits tentatively into the hallway, moving oddly along the walls as if to walk in the middle of the hall would compromise him in some way. His unkempt clothing and hair are out of place in this corporate environment. He sidles up to and past the reception desk.

BUZZ
Going to brotherman.

And he continues his odd journey down another hallway and to a door which he opens and goes through where he encounters another receptionist.

BUZZ
Going in now.

RECEPTIONIST
Mr. Hunt. Mr. Hunt is in a meeting.

And the door opens. Cal Fetterden exiting Max's office.

BUZZ
Oh look who's here. When trouble comes the assassins are called in.

Max is behind Cal.

MAX
Larry, that's unnecessary.

FETTERDEN
Hello Buzz. How's our greatest potential liability doing?

BUZZ
Seems to me I no longer hold that title. You must have shit your pants this morning Cal.

MAX
Enough you two.

BUZZ
(to receptionist)
We need Silas in here pronto.

RECEPTIONIST
Shall I Mr. Hunt?

BUZZ
A gathering of the tribe.

MAX
Yes. Have him come in.

BUZZ
Is Mom here?

MAX
She'll be in later.

BUZZ
Mr. Fetterden. Lovely to see you as
always. Now leave.

Fetterden with a derisive snort, turns and goes. Max and Buzz
enter Max's office.

INT. OFFICE OF MAX HUNT - DAY

Buzz enters walking along the periphery of the office.

BUZZ
Have I told you I love what you've
done with the curtains.

MAX
Are you stoned?

BUZZ
No sir. Are you? What are you on?

MAX
What are you talking about?

BUZZ
What does Hunt Pharma recommend for
people facing indictment?

MAX
Fuck you. I'm not facing
indictment.

BUZZ
I'm actually concerned for you.
What are you going to do?

MAX
Why are you here?

BUZZ
Camucol. Had the breakthrough last
night.

MAX
Camucol. Which one is that?

BUZZ
For indigestion from Fast Food
Products. Small amount of
antibiotic prevents mild invasive e-
coli. Try to stay with me Bro.
This is a pharmaceutical company.

MAX
I told you I want you to
concentrate on the perspiration
drug.

BUZZ
Fuck perspiration.

MAX

There's no money in indigestion. E coli, botulism, intestinal parasites are short-lived in nature. People get sick they take the pill, they get well, no more pill.

BUZZ

Right, It's known as successful treatment.

MAX

People who have sweaty palms have them their entire life. Like high blood pressure, depression, or limp dicks, it's the gift that keeps on giving. Now are you going to do what I'm asking or do I have to bring someone else in?

BUZZ

It's a manufactured ailment.

MAX

Easy for you to say. You can shake hands without the shame of sweaty palms. Just do it Larry.

Buzz grumbles.

MAX

We're going ahead on Fee Vi. Have a marketing meeting on it in fifteen minutes.

BUZZ

What's Fee Vi?

MAX

The name marketing came up with for the female viagra you're developing.

BUZZ

Brilliant. Fee Vi. Wow, that's fucking genius. They actually get paid to come up with that?

MAX

We're going ahead full boar, developing an ad campaign.

BUZZ

You got approval?

MAX

No, but we will.

BUZZ

They've done a Pharmacology on it?

MAX
They will. Why, is there something
I should know?

BUZZ
We have another test. Then I'll
tell you.

MAX
When's the test?

BUZZ
Tonight.

MAX
Tonight is our Heal the Children
benefit at the Waldorf.

BUZZ
Not for me.

MAX
I want to come by the test.

BUZZ
This is science, not pornography.

MAX
This is my business.

BUZZ
Mine too.

MAX
You're an asshole.

BUZZ
So are you.

MAX
Fine. I thought you'd be excited.

BUZZ
You don't have approval, you don't
have a copyright, why should I be
excited?

MAX
It's going to happen. We're
spending money.

BUZZ
That's your business.

A knock on the door.

RECEPTIONIST
Mr. Hunt, Mr. Hunt is here.

MAX
Send him in.

Silas enters.

MAX

Hey Silas. Come on in.

SILAS

What's the plan?

MAX

We're meeting with the lawyers at four. Mom's coming in.

SILAS

This is bad.

MAX

It won't be a problem. It's a minor glitch.

BUZZ

Then why is Mom coming in?

MAX

This stuff happens all the time. The lawyers will deal with it.

BUZZ

If you say so.

SILAS

This stuff doesn't happen all the time, Max. This is serious. I've been trying to reach your fellas at Uni-lab all morning. No one's answering.

MAX

My fellas? Why are they my fellas?

SILAS

I told you I had problems with that lab. You were the one that fast tracked the drug.

MAX

I didn't do anything. The company went ahead with it. That's you, that's me, that's Buzz, that's Mom. We're all in this together.

SILAS

You were the one that went with Uni-lab.

BUZZ

Is there something you're not telling us?

MAX

What are you talking about?

BUZZ

Ever since you were a kid you would get this nervous little tic every time you lie. You're doing it now.

MAX

No I'm not.

BUZZ

Your upper lip will be sweating soon. I know you bro.

SILAS

Max, we have to look at all the correspondence with Uni-lab. If we're all in this together we have to all see everything.

MAX

Are you accusing me of something you little shit? If you are, come out and say it. I can still kick your ass you know. Say it and I'll kick your ass you little fuck.

A knock on the door.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Mr. Hunt. Mr. Hunt. Your marketing meeting.

SILAS

I'll do it. You've got other things to worry about.

MAX

No I don't.

SILAS

I'll deal with it. It's my department.

MAX

I'm doing the meeting, Silas. Buzz, get out of here.

BUZZ

Stop bossing me around, bro.

MAX

I'm the CEO. That's what CEOs do with people that work underneath them, they boss them around. It's called leadership. Oh and the other thing CEOs do with underlings is fire their fucking asses when they get fucking cheeky and disrespectful so get the fuck out of my office before I fucking fire you.

INT. SUBURBAN LIBRARY - DAY

Alma waits her turn as all the computers are taken. She seems so alone and so sad. A man finishes up. She sits down at the computer. She takes out her cell phone and dials.

ALMA

Did you get it?..... Do you know them?.....I'll meet you there.

INT. DOCTORS WAITING ROOM - DAY

Alexandra and Libby wait. Across from them an anxious woman sits tapping her foot. She gets up and goes to the nurse.

WOMAN

I'm sorry. I don't have much time. I have to get back to my kid. I think I have a flu or something and my neighbor is watching my boy but he said he couldn't stay very long. I hate to be a pest but I think I need an antibiotic or something, a shot maybe, I don't want to give it to my baby....

NURSE

The doctor will see you in a moment. Ladies, the doctor will see you now.

We follow them into the office. The Doctor is an older man and his demeanor with Alexandra is kind of inappropriately flirtacious. This is DR. MINGUS. Libby looks on with a perverse curiosity.

DOCTOR

Alexandra, my dear, how are you?

ALEXANDRA

Dr. Mingus. You look tan.

MINGUS

Nevis. And you look as healthy as always. And who is this lovely vision?

ALEXANDRA

This is Libby Hunt. Libby, this Dr. Mingus.

LIBBY

Hello.

MINGUS

Libby Hunt, it's a pleasure. Hunt. Any relation?

LIBBY

No. None at all.

ALEXANDRA

We brought you a little present.

Alexandra gives the good doctor his bagel.

MINGUS

Is that from Maggie's?

ALEXANDRA
It's devilishly caloric.

MINGUS
Delicious. Thank you, my dear. So
what's new in your part of the
world?

ALEXANDRA
I've got some goodies, some new
beauties, some old standbys and
some experimental wonders.

From her bag Alexandra removes samples of Hunt Pharmaceutical
drugs.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Chip Hunt walks with his friend AMOS amidst the chaos of a
high school hallway between classes.

CHIP
Yo, I wrote a new song. Wanna
ditch?

AMOS
I got a math test.

CHIP
After that?

AMOS
I don't know.

CHIP
Are you a rock star or a pussy?

AMOS
Fuck off.

CHIP
It's a kick ass song.

AMOS
Let's do it after school.

CHIP
It's June. They don't expect us in
school.

AMOS
You got pot?

CHIP
Better. Hash.

AMOS
I'll see you in 50.

CHIP
Cool.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Amy Hunt is doing rounds with the attending physician, DOCTOR BANNER. He is a handsome All American African American, an articulate, smart and self assured man of thirty five. Amy is a bit of a fish out of water, with other interns who are half her age. They are standing at a bedside.

BANNER

How are you feeling today Miss Walletsky?

WALLETSKY

I'm doing alright. Who are all these people?

BANNER

They are interns. We're doing rounds discussing the various patients, the reason they're here, whether they are progressing or regressing.

WALLETSKY

What am I?

BANNER

You tell me.

WALLETSKY

Every day we die a little bit more.

Banner is checking her chart.

BANNER

Mild arrhythmia, intestinal blockage. Admitted Tuesday with acute anxiety and intestinal pain. Mr. Donleavy?

DONLEAVY

Check for kidney malfunction, x-ray, die and catscan.

BANNER

Why the x-ray?

DONLEAVY

Would indicate if there is any blockage and where.

BANNER

So would the cat scan. Ms. Hunt?

AMY

Was there any indication of pulmonary distress? Pain in the legs, arms?

BANNER

No.

AMY
Pulse?

BANNER
Heightened.

AMY
Temperature?

BANNER
Normal.

AMY
Sweaty? Clammy?

BANNER
No. Hutchinson?

HUTCHINSON
X-Ray. If blockage; enema,
colonostomy. Check for polyps,
tumor in colon.

WALLETSKY
I knew it was a tumor.

BANNER
Ms Walletsky. We're just looking
for things to rule out. The
likelihood of you having a tumor is
just about zero. Thanks for your
time ma'am.

We follow the doctor and his charges walking into the
hallway.

BANNER
Ms. Walletsky is what a hundred
tears ago would have been diagnosed
as a hysteric. More recently a
hypochondriac. Today she's a cash
cow. Mr. Donleavy and Mr.
Hutchinson, you ordered up about
15,000 dollars in tests, each. Good
for business, but completely
unnecessary. Time folks, time.
Everybody's in a rush to solve the
worst possible scenario. Slow down.
Is this really an emergency?
Imagine you're in a cabin a hundred
miles from the hospital. It's
raining and you're going by horse.
Do you travel with your patient
tonight or do you wait til
tomorrow? Be vigilant. Admit them.
Take their vitals. Check in on
them. But the morning might bring a
new story, a different patient.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Mingus eats his bagel and looks longingly at Alexandra.

ALEXANDRA

You write plenty of prescriptions for hypertension. Pfizer gets a big share of them. Novartis gets a big share of them. And we are the little piggie that goes wee wee wee all the way home.

MINGUS

Darling, sometimes there are contraindications with Paxinor.

ALEXANDRA

And sometimes there aren't. Yes?

MINGUS

Sometimes. I'll try to use it more.

ALEXANDRA

Systolic over one ten, diastolic over seventy.

MINGUS

That might be a little low to prescribe anything.

ALEXANDRA

If they're not hypertensive they may be pre-hypertensive. In which case Paxinor can be of benefit.

Close up on her lips.

MINGUS

Mmmmm. Yes, I suppose.

INT. SUBURBAN LIBRARY - DAY

Alma sits in front of a computer in a cavernous room, an intense, concentrated look on her young, strange face. On the screen we see: *the Hunt Pharmaceutical logo*, Click: *a picture of Max*. Click: *a picture of Silas*. Click: *a picture of Marnie*. Click: *an address of the corporate headquarters in Manhattan*. We see Alma taking it in. She presses another button and we hear the printer whirring into action. A LIBRARIAN approaches.

LIBRARIAN

Did you find what you are looking for?

Alma quickly logs off.

ALMA

Yes ma'am.

LIBRARIAN

You know this is reserved for research. This is not for You Tube.

ALMA

Oh. It isn't? Cause I was like searching for JTs new video and it was like so not coming up.

LIBRARIAN

There are people waiting to use the computer.

ALMA

Whatever.

Alma takes the printed pages and leaves.

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICALS CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

We are close on a storyboard of a open mouthed woman with bedroom eyes who looks like she is giving a blowjob to a prescription bottle that says "FEE-VI". We pull out to reveal CALLIE WAYWARD, a beautiful, sexy, sharply dressed professional. She addresses a table of men, Maximilian Hunt, Silas Hunt and some of his marketing team, including a closeted overcompensating TOM CAULDRON, and corporate jock, BINGO CHANCE. They all look somewhat stunned.

CALLIE

What do you think?

The men stammer a bit, unsure of how to proceed.

CALLIE

It's a joke, guys.

They laugh.

CALLIE

Had you for a second didn't I?

BINGO

I was going to say that sucks.

Laughter.

CAULDRON

"Fee Vie". For oral sex!

No reaction.

CALLIE

This next approach is my favorite.

She reveals another storyboard and we see flashes of the different frames as she describes:

CALLIE

You start on a moment of rejection, a woman spurning the advances of her mate. Cut to the man at the bar with several other men, a sports bar, watching a tedious match of curling. Mopey music, no fun. Cut to bedroom.

(MORE)

CALLIE (cont'd)
Enter the fairy dust, happy, sexy
music and you see the woman
accepting the advances of the man.
Cut to the bar and, it's empty.
Announcer says, "Fee Vie" Bad for
bars, good for you."

MAX
Good good. I like it.

BINGO
What are the ages of the couple?

CALLIE
What do you want them to be?

BINGO
35 and a half.

CALLIE
Done.

CAULDRON
I'm a little concerned with the
sexuality of the woman.

CALLIE
Naturally, aren't we all?

CAULDRON
But....oh that's funny. No. Our
focus groups have clearly expressed
concerns about sexually aggressive
women.

CALLIE
Were these exclusively women in
these focus groups?

CAULDRON
Mixed.

CALLIE
But this is a product for women.

SILAS
Exactly. I think you're missing
something here Callie. This
commercial seems to be all about
pleasing the man. Men will be
happier if women take Fee-Vie.

BINGO
Men write the checks. Our research
also found that women would not
take the drug secretly. We have to
appeal to men as well.

MAX
What man wouldn't want his woman
horny all the time?

CALLIE
Do you have any data on that?

Laughter.

CAULDRON

There are some men that view long term sexual relations as an obligation, not a necessity.

A slight, awkward pause.

SILAS

My point is we are coming at this from a typically male perspective. I'd like to see what happens if we approach this from a woman's point of view. How does this drug empower the woman? How does this make her more attractive, more independent. And how is that sexy? How is that irresistibly erotic? Scary for the guys maybe but perhaps exactly what we need to sell this product to it's core consumer, women 30- 60.

MAX

I disagree. I think we have to rethink the direction, yes, but we need it to be a little more obscure and male oriented in visual imagery. We need something subtle orally, something that only women understand, some code word, some innuendo, mysterious and telling but oblique. Visually something in browns and reds, nothing pink or mauve or frilly, strong imagery, emboldened, but safe, with subtle even subliminal oral feminine code words.

He doesn't know what he's talking about. A verbal masturbatory display for the benefit of Callie. Silas looks at Max in disbelief and consternation.

CALLIE

Will do.

INT. DOCTORS WAITING ROOM - DAY

Alexandra and Libby leave the doctor's office. Dr. Mingus has cream cheese on his mouth.

MINGUS

Nice meeting you Libby. I hope you like the job. You couldn't have a better mentor than Alexandra here. She's the best. You're the best, darling.

A cheek kiss and a kind of gross hug.

ALEXANDRA

Til next time my darling.

As they leave we see the sick woman from earlier still waiting.

INT. MAX HUNT' OFFICE - DAY

The meeting over, Callie sits casually on a couch as Max brings her a coffee. There is an unmistakable sexual chemistry between them.

CALLIE
What is the purpose of this drug?
What is your dream?

MAX
To make money.

CALLIE
I can't put that in an ad.

MAX
Naturally. This drug is about
reviving the sexuality of women.
It's about prolonging that
beautiful dreamy sex draped passion
of our twenties. That euphoria,
that irrational, independent, id
drenched trollop, that knows what
she wants and gets it. Problem is
we can't show that.

CALLIE
Maybe we can. There are ways. Do
you like your women that way?

MAX
What way?

CALLIE
Sex drenched ids?

He smiles.

MAX
I used to.

A pause.

CALLIE
Will your wife use it?

MAX
The drug? I doubt it. She's become
something of a homeopath.

CALLIE
Too bad.

MAX
How about you?

CALLIE
What?

MAX
Will you use it?

CALLIE
I can't wait.

Uh oh.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Alexandra and Libby walk in midtown Manhattan.

LIBBY
So why didn't you just blow him?

ALEXANDRA
What?

LIBBY
I mean, you were, like, flirting
with him.

ALEXANDRA
He's a nice guy. We're selling,
dear. I gave him what he wants. He
gives us what we want.

LIBBY
You have to flirt with him so he'll
prescribe our drugs?

ALEXANDRA
I didn't flirt with him.

LIBBY
Yes you did.

ALEXANDRA
I sold him on our product. It's OK
to be nice to people, Libby.

LIBBY
He was like all giddy and silly
over you. I think I saw a boner in
his pants.

Alexandra laughs.

LIBBY
I mean don't get me wrong. I'm not
a prude or anything, I like sex, I
like sex a lot and I don't mind
that you're sexy, it's just, he was
kind of ancient and gross.

ALEXANDRA
Yes he was. Listen. A woman doesn't
have to apologize for her
sensuality. How men perceive things
is their problem. I'm there to sell
Hunt Pharmaceutical products. I
know that. He knows that.

(MORE)

ALEXANDRA (cont'd)

I have no intention of fucking anyone for a sale. There's a world of difference between selling with a smile and actually fucking.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Alma rides in the sketchier part of town, that other side of the tracks area that exists in most towns. She is near a large building, a high school, and rides into a parking lot. She sees something up ahead. It's a kid in the shadows of the bleachers at the ball field. She rides toward him cautiously.

As she approaches we hear his voice.

KID

You got the money?

ALMA

Yeah.

KID

Go to the dugout and wait there.

And the kid runs away leaving Alma alone and scared.

INT. THE HUNT HOUSE - DAY

Chip sits with a guitar and plays his new song for Amos. The song is forceful and not whiny. There is a palpable anger in the song and a melodic beauty. This kid is talented.

CHIP

I'm walking slow, feeling numb
To all the pain you keep me from
I won't run I won't fly I won't
Live that unwanted life
That makes you cry
That makes you hide
That makes you see the underside
Still the words rage in my heart
And I hate your scared soul
That hides me from my life

INT. BALL FIELD DUGOUT - DAY

As the song continues underneath, we see Alma sitting in the dugout, looking nervously around as the noise from a train screeches in the distance.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Amy and the other interns are having lunch in the cafeteria.

HUTCHINSON

I just don't get the hundred miles away from the hospital metaphor. What is he, a Luddite?

DONLEAVY
Really. And thanks for the tip on
how to make less money.

HUTCHINSON
There's restraint and then there's
restraint.

Amy's phone rings.

AMY
Hello.

DONLEAVY
A hundred years of medical
advancement in diagnostics and
we're supposed to ride a horse and
buggy in the pouring rain.

HUTCHINSON
I think it was just a horse. No
buggy.

AMY
OK. Thanks for calling. I'll get
into it.

She hangs up.

DONLEAVY
What's up Dr. Mom?

AMY
He ditched school again.

She dials.

DONLEAVY
Uh oh.

AMY
He's having a hard time. (into
phone) Chip. Hi. It's mom. I just
got a call from your school. Call
me as soon as you get this.

HUTCHINSON
Try texting. Kids like it better.

AMY
How do you do it?

HUTCHINSON
Surrounded by Luddites.

He takes her phone and begins to show her.

EXT. BALLFIELD - DAY

A group of dangerous looking kids approach Alma who sits dutifully in the dugout. They stare at each other for a moment, this group of tough teenagers and this little white girl.

ALMA
Yo. You got it?

TOUGH #1
You Alma?

ALMA
Yeah.

TOUGH #1
Maybe we got it and maybe we don't.

TOUGH #2
Why you need it?

ALMA
Just need it, that's all.

TOUGH #3
You got money?

ALMA
Yeah.

TOUGH #3
You got 200?

ALMA
Maybe.

TOUGH #3
We need see the money now. And if
you got it now and you ain't
packing you one dumb ass white
girl.

The others laugh.

TOUGH #3
How old you, anyway? Five?

Alma reaches in her pocket. The boys flinch, they back up,
one reaches in his pocket. Alma pulls out a newspaper
clipping, shows them the headline about the Zebuloxx case.

ALMA
That's my dad that died.

TOUGH #1
Yeah, so?

ALMA
So someone's going to pay.

TOUGH #1
Yo we got the Terminator here.
Fucking Scarface, Charles Bronson
motherfucker.

The kids laugh.

ALMA
You rob me. I'll find you too.

That's even funnier as the teens lose it, laughing.

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICALS CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The braintrust has gathered for an emergency meeting. Max is there along with Silas, Marnie, Cal Fetterden and assorted others.

MAX

There are several options on which direction to take this. I think that's what we are supposed to talk about today. I've got Red Corpliani waiting outside. He should have some good advice.

MARNIE

The politician?

MAX

Ex-politician, mom. He works with a high powered Houston law firm. They specialize in crisis management.

MARNIE

Well bring him in.

MAX

He'll be in, in a minute. We have to talk internally first.

MARNIE

Max. Stop talking. Let's get this started.

SECRETARY

Mr. Hunt. Your wifw is on the line. Says it's urgent.

MARNIE

Not now Max.

MAX

One minute.

Max goes to a more private area and picks up the phone.

MAX

Hey honey, I'm just about to start this legal meeting.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Amy stands in a busy hall cell phone to ear.

AMY

It's Chip. He ditched school again.

MAX (O.S.)

Where is he?

AMY
I don't know. I tried calling his
cell, but no answer.

MAX (O.S.)
Shit.

AMY
I called home. No one's there.

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICALS CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY
Max is getting more agitated.

MAX
You should head home.

AMY
I can't. I'm at the hospital.

MAX
Oh, right. The hospital.

A pause.

AMY (O.S.)
What?

Another pause.

MAX
I don't know, honey. Do you think
that if he had a parent around he'd
be acting out like this?

AMY (O.S.)
What are you getting at?

MAX
A constant presence. Nothing. Never
mind. I'm in the middle of a
fucking forest fire.

MARNIE
Let's go Max.

MAX
I've got to go.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

AMY
A constant presence? And that would
be me?

MAX (O.S.)
Never mind.

AMY
When was the last time you were
home in the evening?

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICALS CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

MAX

I didn't mean that. That just came out wrong. I've got a bit of a crisis on my hands. I have a legal meeting that is starting right now that may determine our future. Hello? Hello?

She has hung up on him. He hangs up the phone.

MAX.

Chip disappeared from school.

MARNIE

I'm sure he'll be fine. Children disappear all the time. Let's start everyone.

The din evaporates. Silence. Stillness.

MARNIE

Mr. Fetterden. I assume you have been meeting with the lawyers this morning and have some recommendations?

FETTERDEN

Yes ma'am.

MARNIE

Is there any merit to the lawsuit? Do we settle or fight?

FETTERDEN

Well there is no merit as far as we know. That could change if there is some science out there we are unaware of. Regardless of that, under no conditions or circumstances is there a scenario where we settle. This is war and we're going to take them down in court.

SILAS

Why? Why not settle?

FETTERDEN

Because it will open the door for other lawsuits, more widows claiming their husbands died due to the drug. More orphans. Etc. etc. etc. until we are facing a class action lawsuit with hundreds of claimants. Not being Pfizer or Merck or Eli Lilly, if you're faced with a payout of class action proportions, you'll in all likelihood have to declare bankruptcy. We have to go to trial with this.

(MORE)

FETTERDEN (cont'd)

I suggest we take an aggressive approach with our defense, play hardball with the accusers. We've hired Red Corpliani to advise on coping strategies.

Silas interrupts.

SILAS

Let's back up. Why did this happen? How culpable are we?

MAX

We are not culpable. If there is a connection between the drug and the heart attack it is a lab mistake. Faulty procedures. Inadequate testing.

SILAS

Why didn't we do anything about it at the time?

MAX

We didn't know. They sent us the results. We believed the results. So did the FDA.

SILAS

Is that the way it went? Or did we ask for the results we wanted which they obliged us with?

MAX

What are you implying?

SILAS

What are the paper trails on this? Intra-office communication regarding the laboratory? E-mails to the lab requesting a speedy trial? Anything that can implicate us in negligence? Or, on the other hand is there any communication that absolves us, that suggests we acted responsibly, that the lab results were discussed, questioned?

MAX

I'm sure we have a good paper trail on this Silas. We always have good paper trails. We always act responsibly. This is a lab fuck up. Plain and simple.

SILAS

They work for us. We are still responsible. You've got to know that they are covering their ass as we speak.

(MORE)

SILAS (cont'd)

If there was any communication from this company to the lab that suggests any malfeasance on our part, you've got to know that those e-mails or memos or phone calls will be used against us.

MAX

Well you tell me. You're in charge of quality control.

SILAS

That lab is your deal Max.

MARNIE

Boys, boys. Calm down.

SILAS

I wanted to call it the Yes Max lab.

MAX

Bullshit.

Max lunges after Silas and is restrained by lawyers.

MARNIE

Stop it!! Stop!!! Godammit!. Are you out of your minds? This is a time to circle the wagons boys. This is a crisis, this is a time for solidarity, one of those moments when blood is all that matters. So you need to put aside your fraternal pathologies, leave your inner eight year old brats behind and start acting like men, like brothers. Got it?

The boys nod.

MARNIE

Bring in Mr. Corpliani.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Alma rides her bike at full speed. We follow her as she goes through a red light, hops a sidewalk pedalling furiously, jumps off the bike, locks it as fast as she can, runs up a stair as a train arrives. She runs over the overpass dodging people, hurries down the stairs and onto the platform and into the train just as the doors close.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

Libby and Alexandra sit waiting. DR. HAMEL, sixties, serious, completely professional, enters.

HAMEL

I have about three minutes. What can I do for you?

ALEXANDRA

Well, let's see if I can get all this out in three minutes.

She reaches into her bag.

ALEXANDRA

I have some travel alarm clocks.

HAMEL

I have a travel alarm clock. I don't need any pens or memo pads or keychains. You're here to pitch Hobutol?

ALEXANDRA

Well, pitch? I wouldn't say pitch. We have, in addition to some samples, copies of a study....

HAMEL

Why should I prescribe Hobutol when Gospetuten works fine?

ALEXANDRA

Well, recent studies show that Hobutol is a better more efficient version of Gospetuten.

HAMEL

Who conducted the studies?

ALEXANDRA

There's Dr. Gordon Jenkins of the University of Maryland, Dr. Jerzy Gregorek of the Krakow Institute...

HAMEL

Let me guess. Two doctors you paid a few grand to put their names on a couple of articles you guys wrote.

ALEXANDRA

I understand your skepticism but I can assure you that both doctors conducted independent analysis...

HAMEL

There's nothing wrong with Gospetuten. It's been effective for years. And safe. This is just a copy cat drug you guys developed to cut into Gospetuten's business.

Libby stands up and, hands on the doctor's desk, she leans forward giving him a view of her braless breasts. She affects a sexy child voice, Shirley Temple meets Tracy Lords.

LIBBY

Why are you such a gwumpypuss?

Dr. Hamel looks at her with a certain weariness and consternation.

LIBBY
All we are twying to do is to do
our wittle job.

The doctor looks at Alexandra with a look of exasperation.

LIBBY
Does the gwumpy doctor need a
backwub?

HAMEL
OK. That's enough.

ALEXANDRA
Libby.

Libby is crawling over the desk towards the doctor.

LIBBY
Or a wittle wap dance?

ALEXANDRA
Libby. Stop it! Get off that desk.

INT. HUNT HOUSE CHIP'S ROOM- DAY

The TV is on to Bret Michaels 'Rock of Love' with the sound off as Amos waits for Chip to prepare a chillum. He heats up tobacco and hashish.

AMOS
How's it go?

CHIP
O ma na shivaya.

AMOS
O ma na shivaya.

Chip dumps the mixture in, takes a small cloth, puts it over the mouthpiece as Amos sparks a lighter. Chip touches the chillum to his forehead.

CHIP
O ma na shivaya.

Amos lights the chillum. Chip draws deeply sending a cloud of smoke into the room. The phone rings. Chip ignores it. He passes the chillum to Amos.

AMOS
Oh na ma...what's the other one?

CHIP
(exhales)
Bom Shankhar.

AMOS
Bom Shankhar. Bom fucking Shankhar
har har.

Chip lights the chillum for Amos. More smoke as someone in the house answers the phone. Amos passes the chillum back, giggling.

CHIP
Shit. Ssssh.

A knock on the door.

FRANCINE (O.S.)
Chip?

Chip signals Amos not to say anything. Amos stoned and distracted, sets the cloth on fire.

FRANCINE (O.S.)
Mr. Chip? Something burning, Mr.
Chip? You in there?

Chip and Amos fight valiantly to suppress their giggles. We hear Francine try the door but it is locked.

INT. HUNT HOUSE HALLWAY- DAY

Francine sees smoke coming out from under the door.

FRANCINE
Oh my God. Oh my God.

She runs off.

INT. HUNT HOUSE CHIP'S ROOM - DAY

Chip finally exhales, collapses on the floor, laughing.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - DAY

Alma sits as the train barrels along. She looks out the window at the houses passing by, imagining all the happy lives of families that live there. Slowly she opens her bag which sits on her lap. She looks in it and sees: THE GUN. She puts her hand on the handle and slowly places her finger on the trigger. Then:

CONDUCTER
Ticket?

Alma is startled. Takes her hand out of the bag and reaches in her pockets looking for her money.

ALMA
I don't have one. I had to run for
the train. I can buy one. I can buy
one right?

CONDUCTER
Where you headed?

ALMA
New York.

CONDUCTER
Fifteen dollars.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - LATE AFTERNOON

Over the following we see twenty couples checking into a desk with a sign that says "Hunt Pharmaceuticals". They vary in age, but most are in their thirties and forties, not particularly glamorous or interesting.

BUZZ (V.O.)
I want to thank you and your partners for participating in our experimental trial for Hunt Pharmaceutical's new drug, Fee Vie. As you know it is a female sexual enhancement drug that we hope will provide women with their own answer to male erectile dysfunction. We will be giving some of you the drug and some of you placebos and we will be monitoring your behavior from a control room located on the second floor of the hotel. Each of your rooms has been outfitted with a camera that will send a live feed into the control room.

INT. HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Buzz stands addressing about forty volunteers.

BUZZ
I know that sounds a little creepy but it is necessary for us to observe in order to understand how the drug functions.

VOLUNTEER
Can we get copies of the tape?

BUZZ
There will be no taped record of the evenings events. The only record of the test will be our notes which will remain strictly confidential. You have all been chosen for this trial because of a lack of sexual activity in your relationships. I remind you that you are under no obligation to have sexual relations. The only obligation you have is to take the drug and spend the evening in the hotel room with your spouse. If you want to watch TV and go to sleep that is your choice. You should not feel compelled to do otherwise. Any questions?

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICALS CONFERENCE ROOM - SUNSET

RED CORPLIANI, former politician, high powered lawyer, stands addressing the braintrust.

CORPLIANI

Your company is under attack. You must recognize that what you are facing is not a benevolent enemy. In preparing your defense you mustn't get weak in the knees. You need to find out everything you can about Mr. Collins. His lifestyle, past drug use, infidelities, financial status, how much debt was he carrying, has he ever cheated on his tax returns, his wife, anything and everything that could have led to this heart attack. It is often useful to be able to threaten a widow and her children with public humiliation.

SILAS

I'm sorry. Is that really a road we want to go down?

CORPLIANI

This lawsuit isn't about malfeasance, it's about the ability of a company to survive an attack on its core values. Look at your company. Have pride in your company. What does it do? It provides an irreplaceable service to its customers. It heals the sick. It provides life where there would be certain death. It puts people back on their feet. It makes the lame walk and the blind see. It heals. It gives health. It gives life. It gives hope where there had been none.

There is a pause and then Red softly continues.

CORPLIANI

There can be no more important service you could possibly be providing. And how are you being treated? Like criminals. An overzealous litigator, a man I know personally, believe me, he looks to create crime wherever there is profit for him. This latter day Eugene Debs suckers some ambitious gold digger to bring suit before the whole world and, bing, zang, zoom here we are.

(MORE)

CORPLIANI (cont'd)

Even if there is legitimacy to the individuals claim, is it worth bringing down the great and benevolent work of a company whose purpose it is to heal? To cure? To give life? Of course not.

Marnie is smitten. Max is too.

EXT. HUNT HOUSE - SUNSET

An ambulance and a police car pull into the driveway of the suburban dream house. Paramedics exit their vehicle and hurry toward the front door.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - SUNSET

Chip Hunt sits cross legged rigidly upright, a yoga position of sorts. A serene smile across his lips, his eyes closed, but focussed, headphones covering his ears. He is listening to early punk band Fear's "New York's Alright, (If You Like Saxophones)"

INT. HUNT HOUSE - SUNSET

The paramedics hurry up the stairs toward Chip's room. Francine leads the way.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - SUNSET

Chip slowly opens his eyes. A look of complete contentment covers his face. He is, for the first time that we have seen him, the perfect teenager.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - SUNSET

Coming down the hallway Francine comes to the door which.....surprisingly.....opens. The three enter the room to see.....a healthy teenager, listening to music.

CHIP

Hey! What the heck? What is this?
Jeez, I'm in my boxers. Can you
please knock?

We see the paramedics, looking embarrassed. We see Francine, who looks a little pissed off.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - SUNSET

A train unloads commuters in an upscale suburban station. Donatella sits behind the wheel of a waiting car. Libby sees her, waves and gets into the car. They look at each other. A polite cheek peck. Donatella presses play on her stereo. It's clearly a song that is Libby's favorite. She squeals and starts to dance in her seat. Donatella dances with her as she takes off out of the parking lot and into the night.

DONATELLA
 (shouting over the music)
 How was it?

LIBBY
 (shouting)
 It was hell of hells!

DONATELLA
 (shouting)
 You're so sexy!

LIBBY
 You are!

DONATELLA
 Did you get me anything?

Libby reaches in her bag and pulls out some drug samples.

LIBBY
 Party!!!!

INT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICALS CONFERENCE ROOM - SUNSET

As Silas talks, Max is looking at his phone.

SILAS
 You want to talk about something
 that will hurt us, that will kill
 our stock price? Lack of trust. A
 public perception of us as a
 company that spins away its
 problems and doesn't care about the
 health of its customers. That is
 the death of Hunt Pharmaceutical.

We see Max texting, Marnie listening intently, and Cal Fetterden making notes.

SILAS
 It is our responsibility as a
 company to recommend an independent
 internal investigation. Yes, Mr.
 Corpliani, we do provide an
 important service, but that service
 is dependent upon trust. And if our
 investigation finds culpability in
 this matter, I recommend that we
 avoid a protracted legal battle and
 settle immediately.

Looks amongst the lawyers. Max and Fetterden.

MARNIE
 Well put Silas. How would we do
 that?

MAX.
 Excuse me but I don't think it's a
 great idea to have outsiders
 snooping around our files.

SILAS

They will take oaths of secrecy.
This is for our purposes, alone.
Their findings are brought to us
exclusively. An internal inquiry.

MAX.

What's to prevent them from leaking
information?

SILAS

You act like someone with something
to hide.

MAX.

You act like someone with something
up his sleeve.

MARNIE

Boys. Enough. Max. I think for the
sake of propriety and to be
responsible to our board of
directors an internal inquiry is in
order. Concurrently I feel strongly
that we set the wheels in motion
immediately to protect the
integrity and stability of Hunt
Pharma. I agree with Mr. Corpliani
that we are under attack and
appropriate measures must be taken.

To Secretary:

MARNIE

Is my girl here?

SECRETARY

Yes ma'am.

MARNIE

I have twenty minutes to get ready
for our event tonight. I'm kicking
you out. Meeting over. I trust I
will see you all there. Mr.
Corpliani, I insist you come and be
my guest at the lead table.

CORPLIANI

Will do, Mrs. Hunt.

The lawyers disperse as Marnie's 'girl' enters the room with
a gown in hand. Max approaches Marnie.

MAX

Mom. I've got to get home. I'm a
little worried about Chip.

He dials his cell phone.

MARNIE

Nonsense, Max. Amy's got it under
control. Your secretary checked.
He's home. He's fine.

Max waits while the phone rings.

MARNIE

She won't answer your call, Max.
She's going to make you sweat, it's
a woman's prerogative.

Max waits.

MARNIE

Is Mr. Corpliani single?

MAX

No I think he's married, mom.

MARNIE

He's quite vital.

MAX

Yeah, in a bulldog way. (into
phone) Yeah. It's me. Just checking
on Chip.

He ends the call.

EXT. HUNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Amy arrives and quickly goes inside.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Amy comes in to find Chip eating dinner alone at the dining
room table.

CHIP

Hi mom. How was work?

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Buzz sits with his research assistants, young intelligent
college students. Intercut with the following we see on video
monitors, twenty couples in their hotel rooms in the early
stage of the experiment. Nothing much is happening. Idle
conversation, boredom, couples watching television. Some of
the monitors are marked 'Placebo'.

BUZZ

And here we have the malaise of
modern marriage, children. Twenty
couples who can't stand the sight
of each other. Bored to pieces with
the irrational and impossible
concept of monogamy. Relentlessly
faithful to a concept, paralyzed by
libidinal guilt. They believe in
their monogamy because to not
believe in it would be to bring
about the absolute destruction of
western civilization. A fucking
hurricane of misery.

(MORE)

BUZZ (cont'd)

Their homes would be levelled their children left to be raised as orphans. Deep inside these husbands and wives is an irrational belief that once a penis and vagina come together in marriage that these two organs must be intrinsically linked forever and ever amen. And should the penis wander into a different vagina, or if the vagina finds another penis to hold then that is a sin of such magnitude that tectonic plates must be shifted, floods of tears must be shed, dishes must be thrown, lawyers must be hired and hell must be visited upon the lives of the children. So these sheep live terrified of their own nature. And they begin to resent themselves, and worse, the other, for keeping them from their nature. And so their sexual encounters become obligatory, boring, sacramental, sacred and small. And repetitive. So that is our mission with this pharmacology, here tonight. To lift up the barren and the bored and to make them fuck like teenage bunnies again, and to stay fucking married! We are here, children, on a mission to do nothing less than save western civilization! We are protecting the institution of marriage tonight, kids! We might be the last line of defense! Soldier On!

EXT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICAL HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

On a quiet New York City street, a shadowy figure approaches, looking first down at its hand then up at the building. It is Alma Collins. She nervously checks the address in her hand again, then the building. This is it. She looks up at the building and sees only a couple of lights on. She feels in her pocket and we see, hidden there, a gun.

INT. HUNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Amy, alone in the living room studying medical texts. In the distance we hear a lone guitar coming from Chip's room. Libby comes in the front door with Donatella.

AMY

Hi Sweetie. How was work? Oh, hi Donatella.

DONATELLA

Hello Mrs. Hunt.

AMY

So how was it?

LIBBY

Well, my college education didn't really come into play much.

AMY

That's often true of first jobs out of college. What was it like?

LIBBY

Gross. But kind of fun in a sick way.

AMY

Well that's good, I guess. What do you mean sick?

LIBBY

Kind of like a sociological, anthropological exploration into the curious behavior of heterosexuals. How was your day?

AMY

I'm worried about your brother.

LIBBY

Why?

AMY

He cut class again today. Francine, saw smoke, freaked out and called the paramedics.

LIBBY

Francine needs a drug education course. Pot's not going to kill him.

AMY

I don't think it reacts well with his anti-depressants.

LIBBY

I don't think he's taking them. I think he's playing you.

A pause.

LIBBY

You should send him away to a military school. He needs discipline.

AMY

Thanks for the advice. I've got to get back to the hospital. Will you check in on your brother?

LIBBY

Yeah mom. I'll see you in the morning.

EXT. HUNT PHARMACEUTICAL HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A car exits the garage. A quick glimpse of Max driving, Alma sees his face. Looks down at the picture she has from the library computer. That's him! She runs after the car. At the corner she hails a cab and jumps in.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA- NIGHT

Heal the Children fund-raiser. A glitzy fund-raising event that only the elite Manhattanite can do. Self serving in it's glamour and expense, the charity and the money raised for it are almost secondary. The real purpose of these events is to live guiltlessly in one's wealth. Silas and Ignatious mill about.

SILAS

It was a compromise. I'm Plan B. I get my internal investigation but they get their Corpliani Plan. Plan A. Aggressive PR. Go after the accusers. Discredit the facts. By the time my investigation bears any fruit we'll be so deep in Plan A, Plan B will be irrelevant,

IGNATIIOUS

Not necessarily. The truth is never irrelevant.

SILAS

Maybe not irrelevant but often impotent.

IGNATIIOUS

Don't be a pussy. It's a long fight. This is the first round.

A woman approaches Silas. This is Marcella, the free clinic worker we met earlier.

MARCELLA

That bathroom is bigger than our clinic.

SILAS

You alright?

MARCELLA

Yeah, I'm alright. This is a fancy world you're in Silas.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

Max and Marnie are met by Max's assistant. Ainsley.

AINSLEY

Mr. Hunt. You should know that Kenneth Masterson is here.

MAX
Who's that Ainsley?

AINSLEY
He's the New York Times reporter
that broke the story this morning.
I understand he wants follow up. I
told him there would be no comment.

MAX
Where is he?

AINSLEY
Karen is shadowing him.

MAX
Where?

AINSLEY
There.

Ainsley points out a waving KAREN, who points to a hunched up
man in a grey suit, thirties. This is MASTERSON. Marnie sees
Red Corpliani by the bar holding court.

MARNIE
Maxie. Martini.

Max, the dutiful son, follows his mother to the bar. As he
leaves we see Alma watching him. She seems out of place in
this environment. She follows Max. Max has his eye on the
N.Y. Times reporter. They have come upon Ignateous, Silas and
Marcella.

SILAS
Mom, you look terrific.

MARNIE
Thank you, angel.

She walks right by Ignateous and Marcella.

SILAS
Mom, this is my friend, Marcella...

But she is gone.

MAX
Hey Gramps.

They embrace.

IGNATIOUS
Hey Max.

MAX
Did she make eye contact, Gramps?

IGNATIOUS
No son. How are you holding up?

MAX
Been a rough day.

IGNATIUS
This'll be tough, son. Keep an
honest heart.

MAX
Times like this I miss dad. Wish he
was here.

IGNATIUS
Me too.

A pause.

MAX
Well, Mom's about to pounce. Love
you.

IGNATIUS
Love you too kid.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

On the monitors we see a couple dancing.

BUZZ
We have movement. Let me hear the
audio on six.

One of the technicians switches on a speaker. We hear a
romantic tune.

BUZZ
They're dancing.

The couple separates and start to sway freely, floating their
arms in a kind of hippy dippy way...

INT. HUNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Libby and Donatella are grinding up pills into powder form
and cutting them into lines.

DONATELLA
She completely ignored me. It was
like I wasn't there.

LIBBY
She said hello to you.

DONATELLA
Yeah and then it was like she was
trying to will me to leave.

LIBBY
You're paranoid.

DONATELLA
I think she thinks that if she
ignores me then her daughter can't
be a lesbian.

LIBBY
I think this is a derivative of
Ritalin.

DONATELLA
What do you mean, you think?

LIBBY
Go on line. Check it out if you're
so scared.

Donatella goes to the computer.

DONATELLA
You have to be smart about this
stuff, you bitch. I'm not taking
your rich ignorant ass to the
emergency room. What's it called?

LIBBY
Rollulin.

DONATELLA
Rollulin?

LIBBY
R-o-l-l-u-l-i-n.

Donatella types it into the computer. Presses search. Reads.

DONATELLA
Do you think you are a lesbian?

LIBBY
Right now I am. I'm 19.

DONATELLA
What does that mean?

LIBBY
Come on. Don't start this again.

DONATELLA
No what does that mean?

LIBBY
It means I'm 19. I like you. I love
you. I love having sex with you but
I'm fucking 19. So I barely know
whether I'm an adult or not. I just
had my first day of work. Am I a
professional pharmaceutical
salesperson? I don't fucking know.
I've been with you for six months.
Am I a lesbian? That's a big
question. Today I am.

DONATELLA
So you would have sex with a guy?

LIBBY
Not today. Not now.

DONATELLA
What about tomorrow?

LIBBY
C'mon. What are you talking about?

DONATELLA
With Alex?

LIBBY
Who?

DONATELLA
Alex, the guy you work with.

A pause.

LIBBY
He's gay, Donatella.

DONATELLA
Really gay?

LIBBY
Are we going to fight or fuck? What does the research say?

Donatella looks at the computer screen.

DONATELLA
Ritalin derivative.

LIBBY
Yay!

Libby leans in and... she's on her way.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Amy knocks on the office door of Dr. Banner.

BANNER
Come in.

Amy enters. She is nervous. This isn't easy.

AMY
Dr. Banner, if I could, I wonder if I might have some of your time. I'm wondering about a drug.

BANNER
Zebuloxx.

AMY
Yes.

BANNER
I read the paper. Mrs. Hunt, you don't want my opinion.

AMY

I do. That's why I'm here.

BANNER

You're not going to like it.

AMY

Go ahead.

BANNER

Yeah. Your husband's in a ton of trouble. That stuff is poison.

A pause as Amy collects her thoughts.

AMY

I'm sorry. How is that possible?

BANNER

Simply? Greed.

AMY

Certainly there was some effectiveness.

BANNER

Yeah. Less stomach damage, that was the sell. But I heard complaints from the start. Increased blood pressure. Agitation. It should have been pulled off the shelves immediately. Instead your husband's company countered with a publicity campaign. Said it was safe. Encouraged doctors to prescribe it. Probably bullied the FDA. I don't know how responsible your husband is but I hope for your sake he's been hoodwinked by an over ambitious development director, or that he is a feckless kind of administrator, who let something slip by him, because if he's culpable in the deception, he'll be doing time.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

We start close on Max, sweat on his forehead. Now seated at a table with Marnie and Corpliani, his focus seems to be elsewhere. We see what he is looking at: Masterson, the New York Times reporter slowly making his way towards him. Over this we hear:

CORPLIANI

How many Senators do you have the ear of?

MARNIE

Not enough Mr. Corpliani. I'd like to have all of their ears.

CORPLIANI

Well access is everything. This is how the majors got where they are. Access. Personal relationships. But you have to be willing to help them out. Coddle them. Even the ones who you don't agree with politically.

MARNIE

I have no politics, Mr. Corpliani. Only a desire for unfettered expansion.

CORPLIANI

My kind of woman.

They laugh. Max, still with his eye on the approaching reporter, gets up.

MAX

Mom, I'll be back.

Max heads away from the reporter headed towards the restrooms. On the edge of the room, we see Alma start to move, watching Max like a hawk. Skirting between tables, Max runs into Callie Wayward, the sexy advertising executive from earlier today.

MAX

Well hello.

CALLIE

What a pleasant surprise.

MAX

I'm headed over...

CALLIE

So am I.

They pass by Silas' table, who notices the two.

SILAS

The danger is that we are too far into the business of 'lifestyle' medications. This is where we lose our way. We're supposed to be healing illnesses, not creating new ones.

IGNATIUS

My idealistic fool.

MARCELLA

You're healing darling. You're finding a way. It's all about how you take what you're given, whether you hold onto it or whether you give.

SILAS

Gramps. Go say hi to Mom so we can leave.

IGNATIUS

She should come here.

SILAS

She's doing business. She's not moving.

IGNATIUS

We would have nothing to say.

SILAS

Then go up to her and say nothing so we can go. Otherwise she'll make a big deal about how you snubbed her.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

Max walks with Callie. We see Alma in the shadows.

CALLIE

You know, considering how much pressure you are under, I have to say I find it kind of admirable and more than a little sexy that you have the presence and focus to not wither and whine. You keep your day going, carry out your objectives. There's not a lot of men that have a strong enough will to overcome that kind of adversity.

MAX

I'm carrying on because I've got nothing to worry about. It's a frivolous lawsuit.

CALLIE

Are you bored with this party?

MAX

Yes.

CALLIE

I have a room.

Max looks at the party, the potential of altercation with the N.Y. Times, the family tension, and takes the leap.

MAX

I'm following you.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

The monitors have become quite active. There is movement, clenching, disrobing, laughing, dancing, groping and...in the placebo monitors, nothing. We see Buzz making notes.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

We see Callie discreetly leaving the party, Max following. They approach a bank of elevators. Alma follows. Alma reaches for her gun, takes it out of her pocket, keeping it hidden behind her back. The elevator door opens. Max and Callie get in. Just as the doors are about to close, Alma gets in.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Alma looks at Max. They make eye contact. Something weird. A moment of awkwardness. Alma looks like she is about to do something. A ping. The doors open. Max and Callie get off. Alma turns toward them raises the gun, aims it at Max's back puts her finger on the trigger, but does not fire. The doors close.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

Silas and Ignatious and Marcella walk towards the exit.

IGNATIIOUS

You ever heard the name Harold C. Watkins?

SILAS

Harold C. Watkins?

IGNATIIOUS

Chief chemist at Massengill, summer 1937, develops a sweetened version of a new antibiotic called Sulfanilimide Elixir. Some people want their medicine to be candy, you know? Problem was that his sweetener, diethylene glycol, was poison. 107 people died, most of them children, before the feds got it out of circulation. Watkins killed himself. It was such a colossally fatal mistake that the government finally passed the law that said new drugs have to be tested and approved before they wind up in patients tummies.

SILAS

What about Massengill?

IGNATIIOUS

Sam Massengill was a tough fucker. He wasn't going down for this. Used his press connections, spent money on PR, went on a counter attack; said that the drug had been tested extensively before it was shipped, persuaded doctors to say, 'cause of death is unknown', 'regrettable, but not the drug', blah de blah, got off with a fine, 250 bucks per dead kid.

(MORE)

IGNATIOUS (cont'd)
He made out alright after that. Got into feminine hygiene. Made a killing.

SILAS
He sure did.

A pause. They exit the hall.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Things are starting to get out of hand. In the monitors a flurry of activity. It's like Sodom and Gomorrah. Couples fucking and sucking all over their rooms, on the floor, on the desks, standing, sitting, sideways, upside down, every imaginary position. It's the Kama Sutra come to life. We see Buzz's gleeful face.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA ROOM - NIGHT

Max and Callie are taking off each others clothes.

CALLIE
So how committed are to Fee-Vi as a name?

MAX
It tested well.

CALLIE
It tested alright. The response curve for eighteen to twenty five was flat.

MAX
Our main demographic is over forty.

CALLIE
Over forty wants to be eighteen to twenty five.

MAX
You have a name you like better?

They kiss.

CALLIE
I like Freevia....

Another kiss.

CALLIE
Or Abandora...evokes abandon. Fondelene because it evokes...

MAX
Fondling.

CALLIE
Liticia evokes...the clitoris...

MAX

Uh huh.

CALLIE

Oleandra, the letter O.

MAX

O?

CALLIE

Think of a woman's lips when she says it. O.

She kisses his neck.

CALLIE

And the shape of the pill?

MAX

The shape.

CALLIE

Should be a triangle.

MAX

OK.

CALLIE

A small...tight...pink...triangle.

MAX

You're a genius.

They kiss passionately and fall onto the bed.

EXT. PARK AVENUE - NIGHT

People mill about on the sidewalk, waiting for their cars.

IGNATIOUS

Great thing about America. If you're rich and well connected enough you can get away with murder. There is no consequence for failure, no shame for incompetence. The truly successful soldier on, blindly forward, no reflection, no doubt, no moral nagging to weigh them down. From the time they're babies they won't be slowed down to clean up the mess they make. What mess? There are others to do the cleaning. They possess the mantle of their forefathers and their journey is predetermined by God and littered with corpses. Forward, always forward.

A car pulls up.

SILAS

This is you guys.

IGNATIUS
You're not coming?

SILAS
I'm going to go back up.

IGNATIUS
Well good night.

SILAS
Good night Gramps.

There is an awkward moment and Ignatious awkwardly gets into the car.

MARCELLA
Good night Silas.

SILAS
Good night, Marcella.

An awkward pause.

SILAS
I guess as dates go, it wasn't all that thrilling.

MARCELLA
I've had worse.

SILAS
Thanks for coming.

He kisses her. And then....a kiss, loving, tender, passionate and full of meaning. Then:

MARCELLA
That's gonna lead to trouble.

SILAS
Let's hope.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

Marnie Hunt dances to an old standard with Red Corpliani. They dance politely, not a sexual dance, simply the age old mating ritual of money and American politics.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

The standard continues as we see a montage of black and white wide angle shots of the various hotel rooms and the absolute carnal lust happening within. The music starts to distort and electrify as the Bacchanal escalates.

BUZZ
Success!!!! It's the revolution baby!! God bless us one and all!!!

EXT. WALDORF ASTORIA - NIGHT

Silas walks around the corner from the front entrance. He walks into the shadows, slows down. A man approaches him. It is the reporter from the N.Y. Times, Kenneth Masterson.

MASTERSON
What else do you have?

SILAS
I have a series of memos. About a test gone bad. The only copy. The rest were shredded.

MASTERSON
That'll be helpful.

SILAS
They'll be on your desk in the morning.

Silas walks away. As he does we pull out to find a person huddled over, head down, sitting on some steps. It is Alma, in tears.

EXT. WALDORF ASTORIA BALCONY - NIGHT

Max strolls out on the balcony overlooking Manhattan, A spectacular view. A sheet covers his naked body. He holds his cell phone, dials.

MAX
(into phone)
The option you talked about earlier today? One of us going down? I need a tech guy. I need to go inside someone's computer. Plant some e-mails. Do you have a man?We can trust him?.....Let's get it done.

We are left with Max. Alone.

THE END