

**SPANGLISH**

by

James L. Brooks

**SHOOTING DRAFT**

**FADE IN:**

**1 INT. BEDROOM - MEDIUM CLOSE - MALE FORM - LATE AFTERNOON 1**

A shape fills the lower portion of the screen. It is a man's back..... a perfect back... good dark color, slim, muscular. LATIN MUSIC PLAYS... a song.... if you understood the words you would hear love confronted and considered in a very specific way...We are in a Mexico City suburb. The day is hot; small beads of sweat are seen on the man's back, the first indication that we are in slow motion..Perfect red fingernails come into view...and now a woman's hand goes beautifully to work...part sensual back scratch, part massage. The hand cups bits of the man's back, a strong thumb probes his spine, a long finger teases the very top of his ass in a cute finger-pirouette and then continues down -- and, as the hand rises once more to the top of his back for another trip down his upper body...

MAIN TITLES BEGIN: Full titles, minute after minute of titles with some key dissolves helping us to represent some 30 minutes of time passage as the hand continues to scratch and rub, the man making sounds of pleasure. The hand is getting tired. Flirtatious no more, this is getting to be work...The unseen woman shakes the hand vigorously, the man says a single sound urging her to continue, the exhausted hand complies, then stops, then the unseen woman changes hands as TITLES CONTINUE.....The new hand, wearing a wedding ring, goes to work then it too stops to rest..the man says something in Spanish...important for us because it will establish that there will be no subtitles and yet we understand perfectly that he is asking her to continue. She replies in Spanish lightheartedly, with a small and pretty laugh, that her hands are tired. We understand. The man tells her to continue. She continues, the rub now desultory and resentful. She stops for another rest. The man wants more and grabs forcibly at her hand -- his own hand coming into view

for the first time. She says, in Spanish, with no particular anger, "you said you would never push me around again. If you do, I will somehow break your arm so you can rub your own back as high as you want." (NOTE: All Spanish dialogue will be worked hard to provide something extra for the Spanish speaking..working in tidbits or extra exposition, jokes etc.) For now, the man's tone changes, placating her to continue. Even as she resumes the massage they begin to have a domestic argument in Spanish. This is no longer a massage we envy. This back rub, going as it does from sex and hope to discord and alienation, will be our only full direct knowledge of their marriage.

**2 INT./EXT. BEDROOM / DUSTY ROAD - OTHER ANGLE**

**2**

Showing us the room and beyond, through the window, a school bus stopping at the corner on a dusty road. We now see the full figure of the woman's back as she looks up with excitement and stops rubbing with the word,

**2.**

"Cristina." When the man protests her stopping she indicates they should both run and meet their daughter. He waves her off. Stunned by his disinterest, she runs from the room.....

**3 EXT. DUSTY ROAD - THE BUS**

**3**

As CRISTINA, six years old and adorable, waits patiently to step down. She sees her mother and grins and waves excitedly, digging into her little pack to pull out an English book which she displays with pride. Now she steps down from the bus and, as she walks TOWARD CAMERA, narration begins. The voice is of a girl eleven years older than the child we see.

**NARRATOR**

To Princeton University's Director of Admissions: In considering me for a scholarship you have asked for, and have every reason to expect, an essay from me about myself. And, as a clever high

school graduate, I of course realize the subtext of this essay about who I am and why I want to enter Princeton, is actually to make clear to you why you should have me. I have gotten tips, from friends who have preceded me to college, that being a Latina, with my grades, list of activities and relative poverty, I am as good as in if I simply do the dance and work in a word like "bipolarization" every so often. And while I love dances -- this dance of self is one I am afraid to master.

(young girl looks off and lights up)  
I prefer to write about my mother.

**4 INT. / EXT. HOUSE - SCHOOL GIRL'S POV - MOM**

**4**

A drop-dead gorgeous Latin woman in her early 20's. As mother and daughter move inside, a car pulls up with an ominous man getting out. He nods in another direction calling our attention to a police car parked off the street. The woman does not notice - instead shepherding the child to her father. The woman makes a big fuss over the text books the child has..this is one supportive mom..again she is disbelieving that her husband shows no interest, especially when the child seems briefly hurt. The woman's husband looks from the window and sees the ominous man coming. The woman now does everything humanly possible to distract the child so she does not see what is transpiring.

**NARRATOR**

For my mother, that afternoon eleven years ago was a watershed not because of my father's

**(MORE)**

**3.**

NARRATOR (cont'd)  
imprisonment but because it was my first day at school....

This room is directly across from the husband's room. The woman looks up to see her husband open the suitcase to show the man a huge store of Mont Blanc pens and high-end watches. The man gives her husband some money..all the time the woman is chattering to distract the girl. Looking off --the woman grows wide-eyed as she sees her husband count some money. The undercover cop begins shouting orders. The woman raises her voice to cover the argument in the next room which puzzles her daughter.

**NARRATOR**

There was never any pretense that the gorgeous, vital, clever, temperamental animal that was my mother ever for a heartbeat considered having any life of her own. She ignored all her needs and was alive only for me. It was terrific.

(a long beat)

At the time.

**ON MOM.**

As she watches her daughter chew a cookie. Her daughter begins to tell about her day, her young mother taking on a glow we have not yet seen. And all the while she eyes the action in the next room. Her husband makes a break for the window. The other man points a gun at the ceiling preparing to fire a warning shot. The woman moves ever so quickly to a shelf of her favorite dishes, all the while talking to her daughter, making much over the kid's new school books. It is an impressive charade.

**FULL SHOT - TAKING IN BOTH ROOMS.**

And just as the cop shoots at the ceiling, in perfect timing, she upsets the dishes, the resulting noise covering the shot.. The woman asks her daughter what she learned today..the daughter says she was taught a little English. Mother is impressed as she watches the cop move her husband toward the front door where other police await. Her daughter starts to follow her gaze and she distracts her..brandishing the Spanish/English book and asking her to say something.

Standing proudly, smoothing her skirt.

**CLOSE UP GIRL.**

**4.**

As she clears her throat and says directly into camera.

**GIRL**

Hi.

The girl and woman are enormously excited over this word even though, outside, her life's mate is being loaded into the back of a police car. (Note: Mexican police DO NOT duck the perpetrator's head WHEN LOADING THEM IN THE BACK SEAT..they just allow the concussion.) It seems the mother will save her child the trauma of her father being carted off; but the police turn on their siren and the girl turns to see her father as the car pulls away. The child is stricken. A tear starts to form in her eye. Her mother acts quickly. We are about to see powerful emotion reversed by sheer force of will..the mother leans down, gives three quick kisses - power pecks - to the girl's cheeks and then an admonition in Spanish.

**MOTHER**

Una lágrima...sola una sola...Haz  
la mejor possible.

**NARRATOR**

"One tear..only one...so make it a  
good one." This was my mother's  
instruction to me.

**ON CHILD.**

Baffled by the edict..

**ON MOTHER.**

Holding up one finger. That's it..one tear..she means it.

**ON CHILD..**

As she complies..one great tear forming and falling..Her mother's thumb wipes it away..But now her eyes well with more tears..her mother gestures she must have strength and resolve..and so she does..a toss of her pretty little head...the eyes clear.

**7 INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

**7**

As the mother, lying in bed with her daughter loses her own fight with tears..managing with difficulty to keep her convulsive sobs silent since her daughter and she are intertwined like pretzels.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**8 INT. GIRL'S ROOM - DAY**

**8**

The girl works on her lesson plan..She is a study in beauty. Her mother's daughter. Across the small hallway her mother greets and deals with friends and family in a:

**5.**

**9 SERIES OF SHOTS**

**9**

As the girl works..her dress changing as the days change while different visitors listen hard to her mother across the hall.

**NARRATOR**

My mother dealt with our considerable problems of survival by talking..Always she discovered her own best thoughts by sifting

through her own words.  
The mother stops talking in mid-sentence, realizing she has just solved something and makes a note.

10 INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - THE TWO OF THEM IN BED - NIGHT 10

**NARRATOR**

Each night my mother promised me a wonderful life.. Each night I looked for a new expressive way to tell my mother how much I loved her.

The child is ardent..clutching at her heart...kissing her mother.. Holding her mother's face, talking directly into her eyes. The mother, enormously pleased, is nonetheless thrown by the extremes of it.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

I just played and did my lessons and every time I looked up my mother was in the process of saving us.

11 INT. / EXT. MONTAGE - VARIOUS SHOTS 11

Her mother selling keepsakes..counting money..Friends and relatives bringing food, clothing - toys.

**NARRATOR**

Desperation in her hands was our weapon.

**ON MOTHER..**

We see her totally intimidating a priest.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

With this weapon she had her marriage annulled - usually impossible for the poor - and somehow convinced an associate of my father's to transport two Mexicans North in style.

## 12 INT. SMALL AIRPLANE - MAGIC HOUR

12

The mother and daughter seating themselves. The mother is enormously nervous with the prospect of flight. She sits, the daughter ignores an empty seat and goes on her lap, mother hugging daughter, daughter hugging the hug.

**AMERICAN PILOT**

(to girl)  
How you doing?

**GIRL**

(accented English)  
Hi. How are you? I am fine..  
(she checks her book of  
English synonyms)  
..happy, merry, joyful, glad,  
contented, frisky.  
As they taxi.

**AMERICAN PILOT**

(to mother)  
Are you her mother, sister..what?  
The mother says, "solo español"---"only Spanish." The daughter starts to chatter excitedly about the imminent flight. Her mother quiets her firmly in order to pray for their safety.. As the plane continues to taxi...We HEAR the mother's prayer in Spanish. She then nudges her daughter..who, with this gentlest of prods, repeats the same prayer.

## 13 EXT. AERIAL SHOT..

13

The plane crossing the Rio Grande.

**NARRATOR**

My mother's prayer for us, which she made me repeat exactly, represented a stunning look into

our future. "Please God, let only  
the bad things change."

**14 INT. SMALL PLANE - CLOSE ON THE TWO FEMALES..**

**14**

Use this image if ever you want to strike a coin depicting  
the moment of no return. The child aglow with happy  
anticipation..the adult brave and enormously anxious.

**OTHER ANGLE.**

The pilot taken with the mother's looks.

**AMERICAN PILOT**

How can I reach you? Address?  
Telephone? Por favor. Por favor.

**7.**

He glances over..this is not lechery, it is art  
appreciation..an errant but decent man awed by the creature  
he is drawn to..

**NARRATOR**

My mother had redefined her own  
passions. Blaming herself for the  
father she gave me, she would never  
again be lured by a man's rough  
edges..She had decided that  
goodness would be her catnip.

**ON MOTHER..**

As she feels him looking at her and turns. With some  
affection and regret, she shakes her head, "no."

**THE PILOT.**

As he mouths the word "ouch."

**15 EXT. FIELD - NIGHT...**

**15**

Plane landing on a dirt and grass strip...

**16 EXT. FIELD - LATER - NIGHT - ON MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.. 16**

Standing on the tarmac..Latin flavored music suddenly gives way to a Texas country harmonica riff..The child tries to comfort her apprehensive mother with the one wondrous fact she finds so thrilling.

**GIRL**

(exulting)

Texas...

The mother hurries her along in the direction of distant lights.

**GIRL (CONT'D)**

(more emphatically)

Texas.

**17 EXT. ELEVATED HIGH SHOT...HIGHWAY 17**

The two of them waiting, small figures.

**GIRL**

Mamá, Texas..

She raises her fingers like pistols. Shoots, blows in them and reholsters them.

**18 EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK 18**

Bus traveling the highway. The child looks out sadly.

8.

**GIRL**

Adios, Texas.

**TRANSITION TO:**

**19 EXT. NORTH VALLEY STREET - EARLY EVENING 19**

As they disembark...the mother studying a slip of paper...fearing she has made the mistake of a lifetime. The child fascinated by all.

**NARRATOR**

At the time, I was oblivious to my mother's anguish. She loved and lived to talk. Now, as if by a witch's spell, words were no longer her bridge but her barrier. In a very real sense she feared she had left herself behind.

**ON THE TWO FEMALES.**

The mother sees something. Joy returns.

**HER POV.**

A street full of stores with SIGNS IN SPANISH..She begins walking the street asking passers-by for directions in Spanish and is answered..her step lightens..she beams with relief. So far so very, very good.

**20 EXT. APT. COMPLEX - DAY - FIVE MONTHS LATER.. 20**

An iron gate in front..small courtyard ringed by a second floor horseshoe of apartments.

**NARRATOR**

We moved into a place managed by my mother's aunt. My mother worked two jobs in two local stores paying a total of 450 dollars a week...

**21 INT. APT. - DAY 21**

As the mother enters.

**NARRATOR**

..just ever so barely enough.

**22 INT. APT. - KITCHEN - CLOSER SHOT.. 22**

Cristina taking a newspaper from her book bag and seriously pondering - then circling grocery coupons.

**ANGLE ON KITCHEN AREA.**

9.

Cristina taking a snack from the refrigerator..smiling at the note her mother left...lighting a burner and melting cheese on a tortilla.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

But we were fine. We had it down.  
If only I could have stayed six.  
The CAMERA MOVES QUICKLY from the child to:

**23 EXT. APT. COMPLEX - ELEVATED SHOT - SIX YEARS LATER. 23**

The courtyard is lit with colored lights and candles..a wedding reception is in progress -

**EXTREME CLOSE UP - THE BRIDE.**

Gorgeous round and full cheeks stretched into a deep, explosive smile.  
BACK TO SCENE... music plays and we focus on Cristina, now nearing 12 years of age..dancing with her mother and some other smaller children.. The mother eyes the muscular back of a Great Looking Man...who turns, and quickly oozes quality sex appeal. She is turned on..They talk in Spanish...him saying something hushed like, "I have been afraid to talk to you. I need oxygen when I look at you." She indicates the six children she is dancing with and offers to include him in some ring around the rosey dance...He indicates the magic of just the two of them...She quickly leads her little flock away..

**OTHER ANGLE..**

A reed-thin FOURTEEN YEAR OLD BOY is staring at them...at first the mother thinks this is adorable...the child eyeing

her as if he were a man..she indicates he should join the rest of the children for a dance..

**MOVING WITH THE BOY..**

As he steps forward and it becomes clear it is Cristina he is interested in... Before the mom can do anything about it, he asks Cristina to dance and she readily accepts.

**ON CRISTINA..**

Satellite virginitities falling with alarming speed..the first time held by a male, the first time held close, the first sexy (albeit touchingly awkward) gaze from half-closed male eyes which utterly confuses Cristina. He begins to grind his hips into his dancing partner.

**ON HER MOTHER.**

Not confused. It is exactly as if she sees her daughter about to be run down by a car..only this time the thing to do is scare the car.

10.

She runs toward the boy -- he sees the force of nature coming his way and makes a break but she gets him and actually lifts him and throws him to the sidelines. Then pats him on the head maternally and goes back to Cristina.

**CRISTINA.**

Somewhat proud of her mom as the boy leaves the scene.

**NARRATOR**

That quickly it was clear she could no longer work two jobs and leave me to my own at night. The following morning she did something about it. A boy I never saw again had changed our lives.

**24 INT. BUS - DAY 24**

The mother and her aunt, MONICA, take their seats..the bus is filled with domestics..the mother, nervous, looks over to see and greet... THE BRIDE from last night's wedding.

**25 INT. BUS - DAY - 90 MINUTES LATER. 25**

**BRIDE**

(to mom)  
Este es Stone Canyon.

**26 EXT. STONE CANYON - DAY 26**

MUSIC CHANGE..as they disembark and start walking, joining the busload of domestics into the canyon and up the hill....they walk past a perfect country club fairway. Grand trees from either side meet each other high over the road.

**ON OUR GAL..AS THEY WALK**

She sees the stuff...the dream that makes you migrate. She is not awed..she is jazzed. To her aunt she does the Latin version of OH.....MY...GOD!!!!!!!!!!!!...At regular intervals in the background, one black SUV after another has a mother taking kids home from school.

**27 EXT. ATTRACTIVE HOME SECURITY GATE - DAY 27**

Monica presses the security intercom. The gate swings open.

**28 EXT. HOUSE - DAY. 28**

In the foreground an expanse of turned up dirt...and huge rolls of sod ready to be laid down. A catering truck stands in the driveway.

**29 INT. / EXT. HOUSE - GREAT KITCHEN / POOL - DAY 29**

They enter..lots of glass French doors STAND OPEN to lawn, pool and pool house. They look off.

### **THEIR POV.**

DEBORAH NORWICH CLASKY, a cool beauty in her mid 30's, sits dominating this three generation portrait of the Good Life. She is wearing a straw hat and killer Hawaiian shirt..She is a perfect dresser; meaning her clothes seem to say she doesn't care, while every article is a true and gifted find. She is drinking from a tumbler which is also of the "don't hold your breath while you try to find something as terrific" variety. She is flanked by her mother, EVELYN, 60, who is drinking from a stemmed glass with two olives and her 14 year old overweight daughter, BERNICE..who is reading, her grandmother idly holding her hand..In the immediate area more rolls of sod wait to be laid.

### **THE TWO LATINAS.**

As they stand inside the kitchen not sure what to do next. Then Deborah gestures that they should join her at the pool..as they start out..

### **THEIR EXIT.**

Boink..three stooges retro..those French doors were not open after all. Monica hits first. The women at the pool react. Deborah and Bernice running. Evelyn momentarily attempts to join the rush.. she half rises and then thinks better of it..too late in the day for sudden movements.

### **KITCHEN DOORWAY.**

#### **BERNICE**

Gee whiz in heaven...How are you?  
Please?

#### **DEBORAH**

(a bit hyper)  
Don't worry..I'm not mad...I was looking for decoration to put on the glass so people would stop walking into it and instead of taking what they had in stock, which was awful, I special ordered. I'll design something myself which I should have done in the fi...

Our heroine, seeing the blood flow from her aunt's nose, gestures that Monica needs help not conversation.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

..and what difference does that make when your nose is bleeding. Shut up, Deborah.

**BERNICE**

Now you got it, Mom.

12.

Deborah grabs at paper towels, gets an ice pack from the freezer and then grabs some cash from a bowl in the kitchen..She has, moment to moment, the enormous desire to feel loved that only the seriously hard to love can experience.

**DEBORAH**

Here, take these.  
(second thought)  
Was that strange to give you money..I just felt badly that..

**MONICA**

It's okay.  
She pockets the cash.

30 **EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY**

30

Moments later. As the group arrives at the outdoor table. Evelyn makes half-hearted incomplete gestures of shaking hands, nodding, indicating a seat...each simple act a test which she fails -- every gesture a bit too late and then some..simply too much for her to manage with the drinks under her belt. In the background workers roll out sod, the yard becoming more beautiful even as we look.

**MONICA**

She is my niece. She and her daughter live in the apartment I manage. Yolanda, who worked for you, lived there before she went back home. That's how I heard about the job.

**DEBORAH**

So who am I interviewing?

**MONICA**

Her.

**DEBORAH**

(forcefully)

You're gorgeous.

On our gal..as she, not understanding the word, smiles and nods.

**MONICA**

(translating sotto)

Vistosos.

Our gal thrown. Not knowing how now to react.

**EVELYN**

She doesn't mean it as a compliment. It's more of an accusation.

13.

**DEBORAH**

This is my daughter Bernice and this is my mother, Evelyn Norwich..

**BERNICE**

(rising)

Excuse me...Glad you're okay.

(then to other Latina)

Good luck.

Our gal smiles back in appreciation.

**DEBORAH**

No, stay..this involves you.

**BERNICE**

I wouldn't want some kid around for my interview. You understand, Mom.

**EVELYN**

(to Bernice)

Strength of character..empathy..big heart..taste for futility - God I love you.

She eyes with disapproval her mother's empty glass.

**DEBORAH**

**MOTHER!**

(then to Bernice)

Stop. It's just a conversation - not an interview. Please sit.

(to visitors)

Don't you want to get out of the sun?

She indicates a shaded seat. Deborah is protected by hat, umbrella, sun glasses while her guest sits bareheaded enjoying the rays and indicates she is fine. Underneath Deborah's surface is a Russian roulette of deeply felt emotions..at this moment she is earnest and vulnerable.

**DEBORAH (TO OUR GAL) (CONT'D)**

You guys want some lemonade?

(they demur)

Let's just talk. I have two children. My husband works nights..he's a chef and has his own place.

**MONICA**

Do you work?

**DEBORAH**

I helped run a commercial design company until ten months ago when

**14.**

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

it was downsized to zip. Okay. I have two children. I like the house to be like me in that I'm very loose and meticulous at the same time. It's all about first names and closeness here but I care about the place, you know. It's what they used to call homemaker..

The two visitors exchange a wide-eyed look. Which Deborah sees and understands.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(to Monica)

I'm not leaving time for you to translate.

Monica says, in Spanish, "this woman is very strange. The only thing I understand is she has two kids." Deborah leans into Monica. Face to face, tender but unblinking..

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Too bad for you that it just never occurred to you to check on how much Spanish I know.

**MONICA**

(a solid beat of

humiliation then)  
I'm sorry what I say about  
you...don't hold it against her.

**BERNICE**

Mom!!

**DEBORAH**

I don't speak any Spanish. But I'm  
not an idiot - I talk for an hour  
and you say two words. What did you  
say?

Monica squirms - unusual for her.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Never mind. You got your nose  
bopped. I got my feelings hurt.  
Onward.

As Monica paraphrases what has happened, her translation is  
DIALED DOWN for the:

**NARRATOR**

(as Deborah continues  
talking)

I will major in linguistics and  
make sociology my sub-  
concentration. Because it has been  
my experience that the barriers of

**(MORE)**

15.

NARRATOR (cont'd)  
language are more than we dare  
admit. That, as much as we  
translate, finally we will never  
understand each other. My mother's  
name, for example, beautiful in  
Spanish, becomes leaden and awful  
when pronounced by a non-Latin.

**DEBORAH (IN THE CLEAR)**

What's your name? Llamo? One of my  
five Spanish words..

**OUR GAL**

Flor Moreno.  
She pronounces Flor in the Latin way...lots of RRRR's with a  
curling of the tongue sound at the end.

**DEBORAH**

Flor.  
She pronounces it flat like the "floor" we walk  
on...throughout the following each of the women sticks to  
their pronunciation as indicated by the extra "r's.

**FLOR**

(correcting)  
Florrrrrr.

**DEBORAH**

Flor.

**FLOR**

(correcting)  
Florrrrrr.

**DEBORAH**

Flor.

**FLOR**

(correcting)  
Florrrrrr.

**DEBORAH**

Flor.

**FLOR**

(trying)  
Florrrrrr.

**DEBORAH**

Flor..what I walk on?

**MONICA AND EVELYN**

Florrrrrr.

16.

**FLOR**

Florrrrrr.

**BERNICE**

It means flower, right?

**MONICA**

Yes. Flower. Florrrrrr.

**EVELYN**

Florrrrrr.

**FLOR**

Florrrrrr.

Deborah is beginning to feel criticized...she takes a beat..eyes everyone with some hostility.

**DEBORAH**

(directly to Flor)

Is there some school of the ear I'm  
flunking out of right now?

Flor says to Monica, in Spanish, a tip to pronounce her name.  
Monica warns Flor to leave it rest..since Deborah is becoming  
clearly and strangely pissed..

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

What did she say?

**CLOSE ON FLOR...**

She feels the tension but, so far in her life, her own irrepressible personality has served her - so she moves forward with surprising and quiet confidence and assurance. She tells her aunt to repeat her words so that now, for the first time, she is, through Monica, talking directly to Deborah.

**MONICA**

(translating)

She says..If you curl your tongue  
and let it be loose you will have  
it..that it's hard for Americans..  
She says it's great that you try so  
hard. Many people wouldn't bother.

**DEBORAH**

(an emotional  
pronouncement/her  
greatest accolade)

She gets me....

She smiles at Flor, who returns the smile.

17.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

You want some lemonade? Take some  
lemonade.

She pours some for Flor and Monica. Then she closes her eyes  
and pauses in utter dedication to a final effort:

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Florrrrrr.

It is perfect..Flor grins at Deborah's victory...claps her  
hands together.

**FLOR**

(a Spanish word)

Sublime.

Deborah feels relief..free for a moment from the dark corridors of self-criticism..She is lighter, prettier, innocent..Wholly and completely attractive.

**DEBORAH**

Whew, dense but stubborn, right?

Thanks.

(an important declaration)

What you just did with me is just what kids need..patience and encouragement. Alright, money...

Bernice rises like a shot to take off..

**BERNICE**

Goodbye, really..

(to Flor)

Look forward to seeing you.

As she leaves.

**DEBORAH**

(absently to Bernie)

Love you...

(then with not a monoseconds break)

... the job is six days a week, seven to seven..the kids and all housekeeping, how much a week would you like?

Monica translates..Flor, embarrassed a bit by the directness, ducks the question..saying in Spanish -- "whatever you say.."

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

No.. This is an important question..if you ask for too little it means you don't value

yourself..too much and you're  
taking advantage.

(after Monica translates)

So?

Flor is dumbstruck by the challenge of this pop quiz but not  
without some native wit and style to maneuver around it.

**FLOR**

(extremely heavy accent)

One thousand dollars.

Deborah falls for it until Flor laughs..others join...Deborah  
now a big smile, snort of a laugh, putting her hand to her  
face and shaking her head.

**OTHER ANGLE..**

As Monica uses Deborah's reaction time to, in mid-laugh,  
flash four fingers to Flor..

**ON EVELYN.**

Catching the gesture and secretly indicating to Monica they  
should go for six.

**MONICA**

(firmly)

Six hundred dollars.

Flor shoots her a look of fear...a tense beat.

**DEBORAH**

Welcome to the family..

Deborah kisses her..sort of on the mouth. In the midst of  
Flor's delight she is thrown by Deborah's kiss...it is the  
first of many borders to be violated.

**31 EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY.**

**31**

As Flor and Monica exit and can finally show their full joy.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**32 EXT. STONE CANYON - EVENING.**

**32**

JOHN CLASKY driving a smallish SUV. He is an upbeat,

talented, successful man with an ego as balanced as a high-end watch; who loves his wife, kids and job. In other words, watch out, John.

**33 EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - EVENING. 33**

As John pulls into the driveway next to a catering truck and exits his SUV carrying a large wrapped tray..

19.

**34 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - EVENING. 34**

As John moves quickly through the downstairs, he puts the tray on a counter where food servers are working.

**JOHN**

I brought some dessert.  
As he moves on, we see in the background the workers unwrap and react to a fantastic concoction. A caterer (who we may notice looks at him like royalty) falls in beside him and whispers to him.

**CATERER**

She came down to check on the party  
and realized the gardeners hadn't  
finished rolling the sod.

**35 INT. / EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT 35**

**JOHN'S POV - DEBORAH AND TWO FEMALE CATERERS.**

Deborah is wearing a party dress. They are rolling out the last huge cylinder of sod, completing the now beautifully manicured backyard. It is hard manual labor involving physical strength. The female caterers are complaining that it's too heavy but Deborah is undeterred.

**DEBORAH**

(to catering women)  
We can do it. Come on.  
She falls over the roll..getting filthy..but it gives and they gain momentum...one of the catering women falling down, one losing pace.. Deborah,however, gains the upper hand. Yet, even while succeeding, she remonstrates herself.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(great exertion)  
Why... do... I... care.. so..  
much.. about.... CRAP?  
And now she wins.. the cylinder of grass rolls all the way out and she jumps on the seam in victory. She is dirty, spent and triumphant..the components for a solid sexual experience..and, in truth, as the exhausted caterers half-heartedly applaud the bizarre victory, she has gotten off. She looks with mother's pride at the lawn. Then sees John.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Can you believe they left without finishing?  
As she looks at her handiwork - John looks at her..A grin..half laugh.. He loves the dame.

20.

**DEBORAH (BREATHLESS) (CONT'D)**

Looks great, huh?.... You're not looking.

**JOHN**

I was getting a kick looking at you look at it.  
Not the answer she wanted..

**DEBORAH**

I better get dressed again in case anybody's just a half hour late.  
She hits a switch at the door and the backyard area is now fully illuminated -- set up for a dinner party for 20 or so....all details thought about and done to a "T". This is the outdoor lighting nobody nails..the twinkling of a half acre..the path to the pool like a runway to heaven. As she looks at it all she has a wistful moment.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(a replenishing sigh)

Okay..We're okay here.

(then)

Why can't everything be like sod?  
There's no wait, no dung, nothing you have to do right and yet it's perfect. It covers up all your dirt and makes things immediately pretty..then, the miracle, if you just give it time, it roots and you can't tell it from the real thing.

(a look to her husband)

No reaction. Nothing to say.

**JOHN**

Huh? Oh sure..I, uh..Well, no, I don't have anything particular to say.

**DEBORAH**

Oh, John why don't you just take out a knife and kill me all together.

Somewhat crushed, she prepares to exit.

**JOHN**

How'd you get there..Hey, wait a minute..Deb..stop..come on.

(she turns)

I'd like to figure this one out.  
What would have been the great thing for me to say after you said the sod sentence?..Really.

**DEBORAH**

That's actually a good question.

**JOHN**

There you go. I surprise sometimes.

**DEBORAH**

I would have liked, if after I  
compared the sod to life, if you  
had said, "Exactly!"

She turns to leave.

**JOHN**

Yeah. But to say that and mean it  
I'd have to think the same way you  
do.

**DEBORAH**

(some sense of mischief)  
It's worth a try...I had something  
else to tell you...it'll come to  
me..

**36 INT. OLIVE GARDEN TYPE RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

**36**

Standing in a nicely decorated middle class restaurant,  
Cristina, totally bilingual, speaks to the American hostess  
with a pronounced and charming accent as her mother, standing  
beside her, bounces with energy and joy.

**CRISTINA**

Could we have a table for two,  
please?

Flor says something to her in Spanish..the daughter waves it  
off and when the mother persists, she translates.

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

We're celebrating.

**HOSTESS**

Smoking or non-smoking?  
Before her daughter can translate.

**FLOR**

Dancing!  
The hostess laughs..They are seated at the two ends of a  
banquette and each automatically picks up her place setting  
and "scootches" closely together. Cristina picks up a menu  
and points to the prices.

**CRISTINA**

Wow, expensive..

22.

Flor scoffs -- says she's making six hundred dollars a  
week..then looks at the prices and does a take. The hostess  
returns --- Cristina points to the menu.

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

This is just for the starter?  
Flor, encouraging her daughter's spirit of adventure, places  
her hand over the prices in the menu.

**HOSTESS**

Uh-huh..And those men would like to  
buy you a drink.  
The daughter translates...the hostess points out the early  
30's, well dressed, quite nice looking businessmen. Flor  
addresses the men who are several tables away. Cristina  
moves uncomfortably but responds to her mother's nudge to  
translate.

**CRISTINA**

(to men)  
This is very embarrassing but--  
"what's wrong with you? I'm with  
my daughter for God's sake!"  
Then hostess, Flor and finally Cristina laugh. Cristina  
relishes getting back to ordering from the menu...in a moment  
that is a bit noteworthy..

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

And I would like to begin with the  
Jumbo Shrimp.

**37 EXT. STONE CANYON - DAY - 6:30 A.M.**

**37**

Flor smiling..enjoying the canyon..as she walks the mile plus  
from the bus stop to work..one of a straggly line of  
domestics. Deborah jogs into view.

**DEBORAH**

Hi, Flor..See you up there.  
Deborah runs past..She is clearly upset..She is also more  
than a stay-in-shape jogger. She is an athletic woman fueled  
by an ever flickering pilot light of anxiety. This makes her  
seriously quick. She is highly aware of passing  
everybody..She needs to pass everybody..Her voice trails  
behind her as she announces to all as she approaches.."left,  
please," "left," "left."

**38 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - DAY**

**38**

John enters his son's room..GEORGIE, age 9.

**23.**

**JOHN**

Okay...think SERIOUSLY about  
getting up. You don't have to get  
up yet but are you thinking  
seriously about it?

**GEORGIE**

Yes.

**JOHN**

Okay.

**39 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY.**

**39**

Bernice is making French Toast, doing something novel with the filling and the last cooking process. Some great idea which will have us making a mental note to try it at home.

**40 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS DAY - DAY**

**40**

John opens Georgie's door again.

**GEORGIE**

Now?

**JOHN**

Yes..actual up..  
Georgie gets up..

**GEORGIE**

Morning, Dad.

**JOHN**

Yeah, good morning.

**GEORGIE**

You as mad at me as Mom 'cause of  
what happened?  
John pauses..aware his answer will have repercussions but  
integrity wins.

**JOHN**

No, Georgie, I'm not.

**GEORGIE**

Are you mad at me?

**JOHN**

Uh...okay, no..

**41 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - KITCHEN DOORWAY - DAY**

**41**

As Flor enters from outside.

**BERNICE**

Morning, good to see you.

**24.**

**FLOR**

Morning. Good too.  
She notices the French Toast.

**BERNICE**

Try some.  
She demurs. Bernice holds out one slice on a spatula, indicating Flor should just tear a piece off which she does...One taste and she marvels -- her mouth dropping open at this kid's ability to make something mundane special..Bernice laughs.

**BERNICE (CONT'D)**

Thanks.  
Her mother enters on her way upstairs. She is thoughtful, tense and sweaty - her run having failed to exorcise her current demon. She greets Flor and then shakes her head, making a vain attempt to communicate her troubled mood to Flor in some sort of sisterhood based on life being a fucker.

**DEBORAH**

Tough day.  
Bernice prepares a plate for her mom while, in the b.g., a GOLDEN RETRIEVER named CHUM approaches Flor from behind with a ball in its mouth. Flor is checking out the kitchen...

what's in each drawer, etc .....Deborah is impressed by the self-starter display and indicates same to Bernice.

**BERNICE**

I had an idea for a breakthrough in French toast so I made breakfast. I don't want to be teased about it.. No sarcasm. No tough love. Just try it and if by any chance you have a positive reaction...

**DEBORAH**

Right..mean ol' me. I can't play right now. I have to do something about your brother.

**BERNICE**

I had an idea for a recipe. When has that happened? I got up early to do this. At least taste it, for God's sakes!

She does..

**DEBORAH**

Oh, it's good...oh God, it's rich --  
Oh God, it's good.

25.

**DEBORAH**

(sudden alarm)

By the way, you could do without this.

The approval rug pulled out from under her, Bernice looks at her mother. But Deborah is unaware of having hurt her daughter because her attention has been diverted so that Deborah AND THE CAMERA LOSE FOCUS ON BERNICE as the teenager,

distraught, moves from the room.

**DEBORAH (TO FLOR) (CONT'D)**

NO..NO! FLOR!....Never do fetch.  
Chum is nudging Flor with the ball and Flor was about to accommodate him by taking it before Deborah's warning shout stopped her in mid-sentence.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

I mean it, NEVER!  
ON Flor's stunned reaction to the outburst.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

I'm not mad. I'm thinking of you.  
This is me being nice..  
Then using her hands to demonstrate.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Just no taking ball from dog.  
(broadly)  
Trust me on that one.  
CLOSE UP ON Chum going nuts with Deborah's hand passing in front of his face ignoring how urgently he offers the ball.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

You and me. We are fine. Just a tip.  
(she gives her waist a little squeeze)  
Girlfriends.  
(Flor is totally confused)  
Could you make some coffee? Cafe?

**FLOR**

Yes.  
Deborah directs her to the most complicated cappuccino machine Italian overpriced artists ever devised.

**42 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - MASTER BATHROOM - DAY**

**42**

Deb in the shower...you have never seen so many shampoos, conditioners and bath balms...never seen so huge a sponge..such fluffy towels.

Skylight over the shower allows a beam of God's warmth. There is a fireplace in the bathroom. The only significance of this being that these people have a fireplace in their bathroom. The woman who made it all happen is putting in a contact lens..She is upset. We see that she has one blue eye and one brown.

**JOHN**

This isn't an argument, honey.

**DEBORAH**

Yes. Yes it is. So stop being so maniacally calm.

**JOHN**

(emphatically)

No..it's not. Because I understand your side.

**DEBORAH**

I can't be wrong about that too.  
This is a fight. We're having a fight. Yo, I feel anger.

Deborah turns from the sink revealing one brown eye and one blue. She blinks, realizes one lens is not in and turns back to the sink.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Can I have a moment?  
John exits into the..

**43 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

**43**

As John awaits his wife...a beat and she enters with two blue eyes. Even though she is attempting reason and self-control her voice is filled with tension and goes from loud to borderline yelling.

**DEBORAH**

Okay..Let's get someplace here.

**44 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 44**

As Flor works methodically - orienting herself..she is able to hear their totally foreign words and though their volume registers on her a bit - basically she remains blithe. Loading a dishwasher, memorizing where everything is..

**45 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY 45**

**BACK TO SCENE:**

**DEBORAH**

You, mister, are crazy making..I can't take this calm thing you've

27.

**DEBORAH**

started doing. It's like this is your way of letting me know there's something deeply wrong with me because I'm not calm.

**JOHN**

(calmly)  
Let's not go all over the place..Can't we...

**DEBORAH**

(shouted burst)  
If you're going to talk to me please have the decency to raise

your voice.

**JOHN**

(a beat then sudden  
urgency and change of  
tone)

Let's make a break for it.

**DEBORAH**

What are you talking about?

He signals her with his eyes and head and then takes a large but tentative step away from the spot where he was standing...then additional faster steps. He gestures with enormous energy for her to follow him to his new spot in the room. She eyes him suspiciously.

**JOHN**

Just for a second.

She walks to him...he puts an arm around her shoulder. And gestures back to where they were standing. He talks in an almost hushed, conspiratorial voice.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

We don't have to be those people.  
Nobody's watching. They've been  
masquerading as us for a while  
here..I'll distract them - you make  
a break for it and I'll meet you  
outside.

**DEBORAH**

You're ridiculing me because I care  
about this.

**JOHN**

(firmly)

No. I'm not. I mean this..let's get  
away from those two in case they're  
as miserable as they look..

**JOHN**

(urging..like a Southern  
coach)

Come on, baby.

He is looking at her with wit and conviction..trying to  
squirt lighter fluid at the flame of their love. Deborah  
looks up at him..intimacy of a different sort.

**DEBORAH**

Let me ask you a question..let me  
change the subject..Forget for a  
moment that you won't support me  
with Georgie..

**JOHN**

(reasonably)

Well, I don't think...

She makes a noise of frustration to stop him..It  
is rendered still and intimidated by her conduct  
"man" enough for his jaw to set...to pause for a  
looks her straight in the eye..And walks back to  
they occupied previously.

works. John  
but he is  
beat as he  
the spot

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Go ahead.

**DEBORAH**

Here's the question. It's been on  
my mind more and more. Do you do  
that calm thing for the purpose of  
infuriating me?

**JOHN**

(genuinely puzzled)

What? Why would ...

(on her exasperated look)

Why would anyone do something to  
someone they love for the purpose  
of messing them up?

**DEBORAH**

(unconvinced/distant)

Okay.

He hates that look of isolation on her face..He needs to make her feel better.

**JOHN**

Deb, since high school we've been able to read each other...take advantage of it..The answer to the question is,"absolutely not." Now take a look and tell me if you believe me.

29.

She looks at him..with a finger motion he directs her gaze to his eyes..

CLOSE on JOHN'S EYES.

Open, smiling, trusting. Trying to get a laugh out of her.

**CLOSE ON DEBORAH'S EYES.**

Studying, questioning, probing, doubting, exhausted...

**DEBORAH**

I don't.. believe you. I think you just want me to feel badly about myself..Sorry, honey.

**46 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

**46**

John enters - not seeing Flor - goes to the Sparkletts water container and fills a cup...He is shaken..

**JOHN**

(to himself)

Great God in heaven save me.

Boy meets girl.

**FLOR**

Hi.  
He turns with a start to see Flor smiling at him. Gorgeous squared. His first word is inadvertent.

**JOHN**

Whoa...whoa...I didn't know Deborah had found someone... You work here? You're going to help with the house and kids?

**FLOR**

Solo español.

**JOHN**

You work here and you don't speak any English at all?  
The sound of feet on the stairs..Deborah and Georgie enter.

**DEBORAH**

All she has to do is dial 9-1-1 and press two for Spanish.  
(even before she enters)  
Flor...John.  
(to John enunciating the name)  
This is Flor.

30.

**JOHN**

(pronouncing it perfectly)  
Hi, Flor.  
Deborah reacts, grabs some coffee and pushes Georgie along.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

(to Deborah)  
Look, I'll take Georgie to school.

**DEBORAH**

No. I'm doing it..show Flor the ropes.  
Flor is trying to figure out what's expected of her then Deborah gestures impatiently for her to fall into step and come with her.

**47 EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY**

**47**

The biggest, baddest, BLACKEST SUV..there is some subtle custom work so the vehicle impacts us in ways we cannot quite fathom. Deborah is wiping away a tear as she gets in and shares a woman to woman moment with Flor.

**DEBORAH**

Fuckin' hombres, huh?  
She sniffles. Flor nods uncertainly. A small voice from the back seat..Georgie..

**GEORGIE**

I just didn't want to sing last night.

**DEBORAH'S VOICE**

(hurt)  
Yeah. Well you said you would..You said you wanted to. I asked you five times. Then when I have the whole party paying attention you refused.  
As she puts the car in gear...Georgie sings insanely well. But he's just two lines into an old blues standard:

**DEBORAH**

It doesn't do any good now,  
Georgie.  
She presses a button on her dash and a glass partition comes up between front and back seat thereby cutting him off in mid-song. Flor is utterly baffled by the notion of putting a divider between parent and child. But Deborah is calling for her to pay attention to the car's navigation screen.. a Spanish voice says, "route guidance system starting."

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

I've programmed it for Spanish..  
 Look, it will take you anywhere and  
 then back home. If you figured out  
 how to make coffee on that thing  
 it's all downhill.

The MALE SPANISH VOICE talks about imminent left turns. Flor is thrown by the amount of oddness..All the while Georgie is singing his little heart out in the back seat. Flor, amused by the boy, suppresses a smile...maybe the first time in her life she's had to suppress joy. But Deborah never misses anything.

**DEBORAH (TO FLOR) (CONT'D)**

This is stop gap..You, kiddo,  
 you're going to have to learn  
 English.

**48 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON**

**48**

John cooking...the theory that nobody's sexier than when they are seen doing what they do best applies here.. In the BACKGROUND John's number two, PETER, the Sous Chef, being bossy and anal as he organizes his cooking and GWEN, who spends most nights trying not to show her enormous affection for John. At the moment, John's work is a strange mixture of art and cloddishness.....the hands blur with expertise...but he keeps dropping items.....each time a Latin kitchen worker, ALEX, 20, dives on the spillage..At one point they bump.

**JOHN**

Sorry...

**PETER**

(sharply to Alex)

Not the best place to stand, fella.

**JOHN**

(to Alex)  
No. It's me. You're the new  
helper, huh..

**ALEX**

I didn't mean to...

**JOHN**

No..no..it's okay. It's me being  
bugged.  
Two people head for John almost simultaneously. PEG, an arty  
looking woman in her late 50's..wild, scraggly gray hair,  
enters lugging an ice chest and the maitre d'.

**PEG**

You are going to be so happy..  
The Maitre D' enters.

32.

**MAITRE D'**

I have something very important to  
tell you.  
John makes a no-brainer of a decision pointing to the woman  
who promised happiness. She hefts her ice chest up on the  
counter.

**PEG**

Perfect cod this is John -- John,  
perfect cod..Best one I've seen all  
season and he was swimming twenty  
minutes ago.  
The fish is that special, a sentence that kicks out for a

writer, the right brush stroke for an artist. You get it..

**JOHN**

Knockout.

(to Alex)

You want to learn something? You  
want to pack it away?

The kid nods.. he picks up the fish.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Cradle it...Put it in the cooler  
but not on its side.. In the same  
position it swims.

(important added thought)

And check the ice pack..make sure  
it can drain away..if it can't the  
chlorine can hurt the flesh. Do all  
that and nobody can put a fish in  
the fridge better than you...and  
that's a solid start.. First day  
and you already did something  
perfect.

**KID**

(smiling)

Yes, I understand.

**MAITRE D'**

Please. Now?

**JOHN**

Oh, sorry..I forgot.

He whispers in John's ear..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Damn.. "ohhhh damn."

**PETER**

What, buddy, what?

**JOHN**

Victor spotted a food critic..

**PETER**

From?

**VICTOR**

The New York Times..I'll bet they sent her out just for us.

(hands John a slip)

Here's what she ordered.

**PETER**

Look, if you're nervous take a walk..

**JOHN**

I don't need a walk.

**GWEN**

I'll walk with you..I know a breathing thing.

**JOHN**

What do you think I'm worried about... how I'll cook? That's not the problem..

(looks at slip/then to Alex)

The lady wants fish. Get the fish. He starts to prepare for cooking.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I worked in a kitchen once in New York that got four stars. It was like a line formed for the chance to become an asshole. People's

accents changed. The heart went out of the place. You understand.

**PETER**

No.

**GWEN**

(w/barely understated  
passion)

I agree with everything you've said. I admire you for your feelings. I hope to adopt them as my own....

**ON JOHN.**

As he works..Let's be clear here...this is that sequence that either kicks out or doesn't..no food channel..no simple knife stuff..something casually brilliant..meticulous...smart and gifted as he prepares the critic's meal.

**34.**

He is talking quickly..almost to himself.

**JOHN**

I don't know what to root for.. the thought of one star makes me nauseous..but with four there's no place to go but, "Oh my God, they took away a star."

(musing)

Three..three and a half. That's what you want..No. Wrong! Three and a half you feel disappointed that you just missed out on four. You know what you want? Three and a quarter..

(a eureka moment)

That would be perfect!!

(getting off on it)  
It would mean you're good..but  
you're not good enough to feel  
disappointed that you just missed  
out on excellent..but nothing truly  
bad happened, you still got your  
three and a quarter stars. Which  
encourages you to try and  
improve..And you still get enough  
respect so that you can get good  
people to work with you..Business  
is good but not crazy. You're right  
there underneath the radar where  
you get to mind your own business.  
That's a solid life.

He tastes a sliver of the food dish he is preparing.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

(with professional honesty  
and some regret)  
Aw, man..this is amazing. No three  
and a quarter here.

**49 INT. CLASKY KITCHEN - DAY.**

**49**

Evelyn, having a glass of white wine and a sandwich, is  
talking to Bernice in the kitchen also including Flor though  
she is only catching a word here or there..

**EVELYN**

Well, I'm in the vitamin section  
and this little hip hop  
girl..what's her name..Grammys -  
adorable -- big voice..subtle  
phrasing...oh, she's famous..the  
kids know her...oh - little blue  
shoes..darn me.

Flor looks concerned over Evelyn's displeasure with herself,  
a fact picked up by the older woman...It is actually a small

but resonant good-natured, affectionate moment between the lush and the Latina.

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

God Bless the language barrier, it  
keeps you from being bored with me.  
Spoken to directly like this, Flor is confused..

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

Anyway, she said, "aren't you  
Evelyn Wright?" First of all, that  
she recognized me from the old  
covers and then she .... Oh, please  
her name..it makes the story so  
much better...She said,  
(genuinely stirred)  
"Whenever I think everything is.."  
(aside)  
Pardon my French..pardon her French  
(back to quote)  
"a mother hmmmhmmm...I put on one  
of your records.."

**BERNICE**

Awwww. How sweet....  
Evelyn looks transparently vulnerable for a second. Flor  
reacts. Bernie squeezes her grandmother's hand..Flor smiles.

**EVELYN**

Just such a lovely thing to come  
from the blue....  
Deborah enters, carrying a load of packages. With lightning  
speed, her eye picks out...the glass her mother is drinking  
from.

**DEBORAH**

Oh, Mother...It's not even noon.

**EVELYN**

(defensively)  
It's almost two o'clock.

**DEBORAH**

God, where is this day going...Flor

could you come with me?

**BERNICE**

Grandma, tell Mom what happened.

**EVELYN**

(very deliberately)

No.

36.

Deborah leads the way out...but Flor stops before following her out to give Evelyn a gesture of support and appreciation.

50 **INT. BERNIE'S ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

50

John is in Bernie's room - helping her with her homework. They lay at right angles to each other..He is testing her.

**JOHN**

This is going to work.

**BERNICE**

I don't know anything.

**JOHN**

Free your mind...the president whose policies many consider responsible for the Great Depression...

**BERNICE**

I don't know...

**JOHN**

Name a vacuum cleaner..

**BERNICE**

Okay. Yes..thanks.

**JOHN**

And this vacuum whooshed all this money out of everyone's pockets.

**BERNICE**

Got it. I no longer know nothing.

**JOHN**

And Hoover was followed in office by..

**BERNICE**

I'm just drawing blanks. I'm embarrassed. It's my own fault I spent my time on math, which I'm lucky if I don't flunk anyway and..

**JOHN**

The guy we are looking for is not a ruse..

**BERNICE**

What's ruse mean?

**JOHN**

Phony. So this president was not a ruse..He was the real thing.

**JOHN**

(she looks at him blankly)  
Ruse??

**BERNICE**

(enjoying her father's  
absurdity)  
Rusevelt..If I'd ever heard of the  
word before - that would lock it  
in..It's so stupid it might work  
anyway...  
Deborah enters followed by Flor. They are carrying several  
boxes of clothes...

**DEBORAH**

Surprise new clothes..  
Bernie gasps..As she looks at a sweater..

**BERNICE**

What'd I do right?

**DEBORAH**

Warehouse sale..  
Bernice tries on the sweater over her T-shirt..and mirth  
ends..The sweater is tight...Bernice picks up a blouse and  
then skirt and checks the size.

**ON FLOR AND JOHN.**

As they are COUPLED BY THE CAMERA ANGLE as each catches on  
and is dumbfounded.

**ON BERNICE..**

Whose style, wit and grace should not have to be used to  
deflect such trauma. But so be it, as, though mightily stung:

**BERNICE**

Thanks, mom..I'm glad you didn't  
get here a little earlier or else I  
wouldn't be able to tell you that  
your gift is a ruse. Please, excuse  
me..  
She exits to her bathroom.

Flor one step behind John and Deborah who are moving quickly down the stairs...John pissed..Deborah feeling the futility of anyone understanding her point even as she makes it.

38.

**DEBORAH**

She's right between the two sizes..I thought about it..what am I supposed to do encourage her...what is it? - DENIAL? Or motivate her to get herself in shape.

Flor tries to slide by..Something surreptitious in her behavior..Deborah suddenly turns to Flor.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Flor..

She holds out her hand in a "we women understand" gesture. Flor does not waver..just meets her eyes.

**FLOR**

Me puedo ir?..go..can go?

**DEBORAH**

(a bit nonplussed)  
Sure. Go.

**JOHN**

I'll drive you to the bus stop.  
And that fast they are gone.

52 **EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY**

52

As John gets in his seat..then sees Flor approaching the door and hops out to open her door...apologizing as he goes.

**JOHN**

Sorry. I'm cracking.  
As he moves back to his side of the vehicle.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

(a shout)  
Shiiiiiiiit!  
Flor hears this from inside and nods in agreement.

**53 INT. JOHN'S CAR - EARLY EVENING..**

**53**

As they drive down the canyon. He is wildly frustrated. Even if Flor were not there, he would be talking to himself anyway, in the manner of bag ladies and all of us.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I am running out of excuses for the lady of the house.  
Flor doesn't understand his words...yet fully agrees. But then John takes rein of his emotions.

**39.**

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

But you know, you gotta watch out for the times you think you're absolutely right..But, man, Bernice has finals tomorrow. She didn't need this one..And just that look on her face when she got the gifts--  
(now his voice cracks; he grows wet-eyed)  
--like for a second she thought all her problems with her mother had been solved...

Flor is flabbergasted..she peeks to see if he is actually crying. At first her heart is touched by John but then there

is distinct disapproval (a real roll of the eyes) that the macho meter can read that low. He looks at her and she faces front quickly.

**NARRATOR**

My mother did not understand her male boss. His heart was good and he was rare in not flirting with her. But they were starkly different. Privacy and dignity were the same word to my mother. Naturally, when she found herself sitting next to a man who cried over his child's hurt she had no idea how to process the event.

Meanwhile, he has stopped for traffic near the end of the canyon. Flor takes the opportunity to bolt.

**FLOR**

Gracias.

She opens the door and starts to get out though the car is still rolling a bit...

**JOHN**

What are you doing? Let me take you all the way.

Reluctantly she re-enters the car..It rolls another ten feet to her bus stop and she gets out again.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

How weird was this ride? Sorry.

**FLOR**

No es nada.

He doesn't quite know what that means...indicates same in a little helpless gesture..

As Flor is dropped off...the goodbye awkward.

**NARRATOR**

The job was taxing her. She had no  
template for confusion let alone  
frustration.

While waiting for the bus, Flor suddenly turns and runs a few  
yards...and then back..and waves off the looks from her  
colleagues - many of whom are overweight..many of them  
adorable. All puzzled for the moment as they watch Flor  
unsuccessfully try to shake off her day.

As Flor enters -- kisses her daughter..distraught and  
distracted. She walks immediately to the refrigerator and  
takes out a chocolate cake and a bottle of milk...she cuts a  
huge slice of cake and puts it in front of her startled  
daughter..in Spanish riding her on being too thin..the  
daughter gestures at her mother's own slim figure.

**NARRATOR**

It was so unusual for my mother to  
ask my help that I realized  
immediately she was losing her  
battle to be uninvolved with the  
Claskys.

Flor asks her daughter how to say something in English.

**CRISTINA**

Try it on.

Flor asks again in Spanish...trying to find a precise  
phrase.. The nuance important to her.

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

Please try it on?

Flor knows the word "please"..it's not what she wants...what  
she wants is a way to say, "try it on" in a manner which is  
not a request..or order, but is, rather, friendly and caring.  
Her daughter works on the problem.

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

Just try it on?



**NARRATOR**

This is one of the cultural differences between us which I wish to explore academically at Princeton. American women, I believe, actually feel the same as Hispanic women about weight.

**58 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - EXTREME EARLY MORNING 58**

The house asleep. Flor walks carefully up the steps.

**NARRATOR**

....a desire for the comfort of fullness.

**59 INT. BERNIE'S ROOM - FIRST LIGHT 59**

Bernie asleep on the bed...Kleenex abounds...the solid sleep earned by a few hours of sobbing. She looks touchingly pretty and decidedly round. Flor looks for, finds and carries out the new clothes Deborah had given her daughter.

**NARRATOR**

And, when that desire is suppressed for style and deprivation allowed to rule...

42.

**60 EXT. STREET - STEEP INCLINE 60**

**ANGLE ON DEBORAH & KILLER HILL:**

Two young athletic men and one woman considerably ahead of her on the steep incline.

**DEBORAH**

Left..left..

**ON RUNNERS.**

They turn and look confused at Deborah who is so far behind them she has no need to pass..They turn away. Deborah struggles to turn it on and does so...huffing to just behind them where she utters one more strained:

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Left.  
And then passes.

**NARRATOR**

...dieting, exercising American women become afraid of everything associated with being curvaceous, such as wantonness, lustfulness, sex, food, motherhood..all that is good in life.

**61 INT. CLASKY MAID'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING. 61**

Flor at work on a sewing machine..opening seams, moving buttons, even steaming where the buttons have been changed..etc.

**62 INT. BERNIE'S ROOM - MORNING 62**

Flor is in the room...having put the altered clothes back in place..Bernie's alarm clock rings..She wakes and sees Flor.

**BERNICE**

Hey..buenas dias, Flor..  
Flor holds up the new clothes and indicates that they are beautiful.

**BERNICE (CONT'D)**

(ruefully)  
Yes..Well, taste she has..  
Bernie starts her morning routine..her back to us when:

**FLOR**

(damn good English)  
Just try it on.

Bernie, though her back is to us, does a "take" then turns grinning.

**BERNICE**

Hey!!!! When did you learn to...

**FLOR**

(cutting her off)  
Just try it on..

**BERNICE**

Too tight..it doesn't fit.  
Flor clearly doesn't understand..

**FLOR**

Just try it on..Hey?!  
Flor extends a blouse and skirt.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

Just..

**BERNICE**

Okay. I'll show you..  
She steps behind a closet door to try the clothes on,  
muttering pessimistically before she does so. CAMERA STAYS ON

**FLOR..**

**BERNICE (O.C.) (CONT'D)**

Lovely way to start the day.  
World's most trim Mexican learns  
her first sentence and uses it to

watch me grrrrunt my way into...  
And then....silence...Bernie, open mouthed, steps out wearing  
the clothes which fit like a glove. Flor beams..then laughs  
at Bernie's reaction as she keeps checking the waist and  
looks into the mirror.

**INTO MIRROR.**

To see Bernie in the foreground as Flor looks on..nods  
approval and leaves.

**ON BERNIE..**

The fit of the clothes is as mystifying as it is nice..she  
picks up another shirt..checks the size tag and then studies  
it a bit.

**CLOSE UP SHIRT..**

As Bernie's fingers find the barely visible holes where the  
buttons have previously been.

44.

**63 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

63

Flor at work..Chum, ball in mouth, comes to her and nudges  
her.

**FLOR**

(to dog)

Lo siento. No.

Chum, momentarily depressed, walks away..Bernie enters. She  
is a bit overwhelmed -- her voice breaking a bit even with  
one word.

**BERNICE**

Hey..

Flor turns..Bernie moves to embrace her.

64 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

64

As John comes down the stairs..He looks apprehensive..From the den comes the sound of singing..it stops him from going out the front door as he turns to check it out.

65 INT. DEN - DAY..

65

John finds Evelyn and Georgie in their night clothes. They are singing an old song...something like "LUSH LIFE" - something preposterous for a nine year-old boy..but you can't knock the quality of the voices..world class. They see him and stop.

**EVELYN**

Every time he has a nightmare, I teach him one of my old songs. That way the nightmares have a purpose.

**GEORGIE**

But I don't have to sing it for anyone.

**JOHN**

Right. You're clear on that..

**GEORGIE**

How many did you sell of this song?

**EVELYN**

(embarrassed in front of John)  
He likes to know that stuff.

**JOHN**

(to Georgie)  
She was huge.

**EVELYN**

Seventy-six thousand..which is  
great for a jazz album.  
They resume harmonizing. As John leaves, the song lyric  
making some comment on:

**66 EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY**

**66**

As John, growing tense, walks toward the front gate..Chum  
proffers a ball and accepts defeat as he bends down to pick  
up the New York Times. John's body chemistry launches a  
surprise attack...anxiety and dread...He takes his newspaper  
to a wire bench in the front driveway..He finds the  
section..opens to the page..and just like that his life  
changes forevermore.

**67 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY.**

**67**

John enters..Georgie is going up the stairs..Flor putting out  
breakfast food.

**EVELYN**

You okay?

**JOHN**

(strangely)  
I am okay.  
(to Flor)  
Deborah around?

**FLOR**

She run.  
John nods and heads upstairs.

**67A**

**67A INT. CLASKY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - BERNIE'S ROOM - DAY**

He looks in Bernie's room. She is loading her backpack for  
school..

**JOHN**

Hey, honey.

**BERNICE**

What's wrong?

**JOHN**

No..nothing...just that..  
Georgie enters the scene..

**GEORGIE**

A kid offered me a trade..Let me  
show you.

**JOHN**

Yeah..

**46.**

He starts to follow him to his room.

**BERNICE**

Dad!!! He can wait.

**JOHN**

No..It's okay..

**BERNICE**

Let him wait..Yours is obviously  
important.

**GEORGIE**

You don't even know how important  
the trade is..

**JOHN**

Let me just do Georgie.... Here.  
He hands her the newspaper...

**68 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - GEORGIE'S ROOM**

**68**

We MOVE with John and Georgie to Georgie's room where he goes to his collectibles..He holds up a card..

**GEORGIE**

He says he'll give me any three silvers for him.

**JOHN**

I don't know...This is the one you started with..You really want to give up your first card?

Note: this is an involved discussion on both their parts..NOTHING in John thinks it is trivial.

**GEORGIE**

I know..that's why I needed you.

**JOHN**

..this is your favorite..

**GEORGIE**

I think he'd go higher.

**JOHN**

But it's not numbers..it's.....  
They are interrupted by a never quite heard before sound of exultation..

**69 INT. KITCHEN - DAY**

**69**

Flor and Evelyn jolted..they exit to follow the sound..

As they enter holding the paper. She has been smacked in the heart by gleeful and prideful emotions...It is disorienting for her to experience the rush of pleasure.

**JOHN**

For God's sake..why did you...

**BERNICE**

WHY?!?! CRAZY FATHER, WHY?!?! Why aren't YOU screaming?..

**JOHN**

I'm getting there..just the stunned thing has to get dealt with...

**BERNICE**

(reading from newspaper)  
John Clasky, who at 25 made his mark on the New York restaurant scene when JAMMED lived up to and survived its silly name, has re-emerged as a young and confident veteran taking chances with his combinations in so subtle a manner.."

**GEORGIE**

If he gave me six...

**JOHN**

(catching her excitement)  
Wait a minute, your sister's talking.  
Evelyn indicates to Flor that the good news is about John..and so she studies him a bit..

**BERNICE**

"...beginning with the succession of appetizers, each one with its

own stunning and fully realized agenda, is constantly yet casually daring."

(emotional and earnest  
aside)

Ah, Dad...this is so great...

(to others)

Now here's the thing...

She tears up...Evelyn rubs Bernie's back..looks at Flor and taps her heart...Flor indicates she should leave and does. Bernice continues reading with a lovely sense of mission and moment. John is taken with his daughter's delivery.

48.

**BERNICE (CONT'D)**

"Eating at this perfect smaller, passionate restaurant inspires one's own abandonment of caution. To wit: John Clasky is the best chef in the United States."

**JOHN**

(genuinely enthusiastic)  
Look how great you read it.

**BERNICE**

(massive irony)  
Perfect, Dad.  
Evelyn and Bernice hug him..

**EVELYN**

John..John...Oh, my God you even look different to me....

**JOHN**

What are you talking about?

**BERNICE**

I wonder what mom will do?

**71 INT. BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON 71**

Deborah is ripping John's clothes off..buttons fly..shreds of cloth..John is laughing - happy.

**JOHN**

What is this?

**DEBORAH**

I don't know.  
She rips at her own clothes and then exclaims in passion.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Oooohhch!

**72 EXT. NORTH VALLEY - DAY. 72**

Flor walks to the news stand - as if to buy something -- changes her mind and LEAVES THE FRAME only to RETURN A HALF-BEAT LATER where she reads to the dealer from a note.

**FLOR**

(heavily accented)  
New York Times..

**73 INT. FLOR'S APT. - NIGHT... 73**

Cristina, standing, translating the review into Spanish for her mother...as she comes to the last sentence.

**49.**

**CRISTINA**

Wow..."John Clasky es el mejor chef  
en Los Estados Unidos..

**FLOR**

(easily)  
Ah, bravo...

**74 INT. CLASKY MASTER BEDROOM - DAY.**

**74**

The Claskys are engaged in sex. John's brief sounds are exuberant..they shift position so that Deborah is on top BRINGING DEBORAH INTO A CLOSE SINGLE. Suddenly her smile fades - she hits the skids.

**DEBORAH**

Oh, damn it --- what am I going to do? Everything seems so surely pointless...

**ON JOHN.**

This IS WEIRD. And then the small, distinctive sound of Deb's climax...then, in a relatively small voice.

**DEBORAH'S VOICE**

Okay here...okay there...good,  
good, good.  
She falls off him...an arm across her eyes, lying on her back down the bed from him...

**ON JOHN.**

Puzzling over what just happened..a few false starts forming his thought...then finally..hesitantly...

**JOHN**

Hey, Deb?

**DEBORAH**

(from the vortex of  
depression)  
Yeah?  
He scoots to her side.

**JOHN**

You know, I guess I got used to you  
getting a little blue after  
intercourse...But DURING..??

**DEBORAH**

Something else I do wrong.  
She grabs something and starts walking toward the bedroom.

50.

**JOHN**

You've gotta stop walking away.

**DEBORAH**

(turning)  
If I stay, I will say awful things  
to you that I might not even  
mean..You pick.

**JOHN**

See ya.  
She exits to the bathroom.

**75 INT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY.**

**75**

Very upset as he drives. Then comes to the red light at the  
end of the street and sees Flor walking with others. An  
awkward beat as he waits for the light to change and they  
acknowledge each other..the light remains red..she confers  
with another woman.

**FLOR**

(to woman)  
Yo leï la crítica buena.  
The woman tells Flor how to say it in English.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

(parroting woman)  
I read your good review.  
He nods..still the light doesn't change.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

It's nice.  
The light changes.

**JOHN**

Not so far...How you doing?  
The light has changed - cars are beeping..she is about to let  
him go off but realizes he will wait for her answer.

**FLOR**

I do fine.  
He nods and drives off.

**76 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY**

**76**

As he enters....the phone is going off the hook..As he passes  
the maitre d's desk. Their conversation is strangely hushed  
and very, very quick.

**51.**

**VICTOR**

Should I stop answering? We're  
booked for two months solid.

**JOHN**

No, no, no, no, no....I want to  
keep some walk-in business..I want  
this to stay neighborhood.

**VICTOR**

Impossible. There would be riots..You should hear the desperation in their voices..Best day of my life.

**JOHN**

We'll serve a full menu at the bar then.

**VICTOR**

Then where do I put the people waiting for a table? It won't work.

**JOHN**

Do this for me.

**VICTOR**

There's no way.

**JOHN**

Do this for me or I'll set my hair on fire and start punching myself in the face.

**VICTOR**

Huh?

**JOHN**

Yeah..you're right...that was an unusual way for me to make myself understood..But you'll do the bar thing?

**VICTOR**

Yes, of course, John..

77 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

77

**PETER**

I need to talk to you.

**JOHN**

Ah, man..Okay.  
They walk into the cooling room.

52.

78 INT. RESTAURANT - COOLING ROOM - DAY

78

Again there is a kind of strange rapidity to the conversation sparked by John..

**JOHN**

What's up? What's wrong?

**PETER**

I've gotten a fantastic offer for my own place..Everybody wants to back me since the paper came out.

**JOHN**

What's your reaction?

**PETER**

Honestly? Because I've had this very unusual reaction.

**JOHN**

Yeah.

**PETER**

I've had a hard on almost all day and it won't go away. Like I'm riding on the back seat of a bus with bad shocks and every other passenger is a gorgeous woman with a yellow sports top whose leaning

over. It's like every dream I ever had and some even I didn't have the balls to dream..

**JOHN**

So you're considering taking it?...

(he looks at him)

Okay, here's the thing. I can't lose you and still keep the hours I'm keeping. I can't do my life unless I can hold onto you.

(sudden thought)

I think I just gave you an incredible bargaining position.

**79 INT. CLASKY BEDROOM - NIGHT**

**79**

As John and Deborah lay next to each other.

**DEBORAH**

So you gave away twenty percent of the restaurant without talking to me about it.

**JOHN**

Yeah. If I didn't do it - I'd have been coming home just to sleep.

**53.**

**DEBORAH**

(trying to make livid more attractive)

Remember the other day when you asked me the perfect response to something I said?...I'm asking you now..what would you like my response to be to your giving away

twenty percent of the business  
without asking me?

**JOHN**

(with great enthusiasm)  
"You're ma man!"

**DEBORAH**

Okay! So that would be???

**JOHN**

My dream response from you, yes.

**DEBORAH**

(measured)  
I'm not quite there..Actually, I  
just had this flash that the reason  
women in the old days used to faint  
was to avoid doing acts of violence  
against men.

(a beat then)  
And I was all worried about  
figuring out the timing just to  
talk to you about renting a place  
for the summer.

**JOHN**

Well, I think you got your timing.

**80 EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY**

**80**

A man is parked at the gate in an open convertible..He is  
great looking...We HEAR Deborah's excited voice over the gate  
speaker...

**DEBORAH**

Be right out...

**81 EXT. CLASKY DRIVEWAY - DAY..**

**81**

As Deborah calls behind her as she opens the door...

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Mom, you want to come?..the  
realtor's here..Okay, see you

later.  
She clicks the gate open and walks to the man..perfect 40  
year old great looking surfer sort..Deborah does the very  
slightest of "takes" at his looks..As she gets in..

54.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Hi.

**REALTOR**

I'm Mike..there's one great rental  
that just came on..so we're  
starting at the top..  
As they pull away...

**82 EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY..**

**82**

Deborah's hair whips across her face...it's bothersome.

**DEBORAH**

I'll never be one of those girls  
whose hair blows perfectly in a  
convertible.

**REALTOR**

Move your seat forward..  
Puzzled, she uses the electric lever and the seat budes  
forward..

**REALTOR (CONT'D)**

A little more..just..good.  
The Realtor uses his switches and raises his window a  
bit..her window a bit less and monkeys the position of the  
half windows in back...Deborah turns around checking out the  
odd tweaking and then faces forward. Her hair blows perfectly  
and beautifully behind her...

**DEBORAH**

Oh, you must be trouble.  
On his small laugh...

**83 EXT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - DAY.**

**83**

As they move toward the house...seeing the beach beyond.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Gorgeous, huh..Pretty, fabulous,  
beautiful. What word is the same in  
Spanish?

**FLOR**

Fabuloso.

**DEBORAH**

(taking it as a  
compliment)  
Thanks.

**55.**

**84 INT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - DAY.**

**84**

As Deborah, Flor and Evelyn enter. They carry boxes of stuff.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

I don't care if it's a rental..this  
place is getting a fixing.  
She leads Flor to a small bedroom.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(to Flor with gestures)  
This will be yours..

Flor doesn't understand..certainly doesn't want to.

**EVELYN**

Did you ask her if she could live  
in?

**DEBORAH**

Come on...there's no buses from her  
to here. There's no question.  
Double come on...

Deborah uses her hand as if weighing something momentous like  
the law vs. the bible then with heavy sarcasm.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

The Barrio - Carbon Beach..The  
Barrio - Carbon Beach. What to do?  
(to Flor)

Don't worry. I'm putting nicer  
stuff in here too.

When Flor gives no indication of anything - just standing,  
somewhat stupefied..Deborah takes her by the hand and leads  
her out.

**85 EXT. CLASKY - BEACH RENTAL - DAY**

**85**

As they move through a little courtyard area toward the  
street.

**DEBORAH**

You must learn English. Why won't  
she learn English? I'm going to  
have to learn, "you must learn  
English," in Spanish.

**EVELYN**

I think Flor is perfect and we  
should do all we can to keep her  
from changing.

**DEBORAH**

Gee, you took the words right out  
of my mouthay.

86 EXT. PCH - DAY

86

As she leads Flor along the highway side of Carbon Beach - passing houses until she sees a Hispanic man washing someone's car in a driveway. Evelyn is many steps back.

**DEBORAH**

Oh, good. Do you speak English?

**HISPANIC MAN**

Yes, I do.

**DEBORAH**

Would you translate for me?  
He looks at Flor..my God.

**HISPANIC MAN**

Sure...forever.  
He speaks to her in Spanish..a lavish, poetic compliment.  
Flor, in full control, says, in Spanish.."Would you please just find out what she wants." Evelyn joins them.

**DEBORAH**

Wait till I say something before  
you start in..

(he looks at her)

I rented a house here for the  
summer and now she must sleep at  
the house because of the bus  
schedule.

He translates along with Deborah's speech.

**ON FLOR.**

Stricken. She turns to Deborah.

**FLOR**

No.. Sorry.

**DEBORAH**

What? Why?  
Flor talks briefly in Spanish.

**HISPANIC MAN**

She can't because of her daughter.

**DEBORAH**

You have a daughter? You have a  
whole daughter you haven't  
mentioned..How old?

**FLOR**

Twelve.

57.

**DEBORAH**

(to Evelyn)  
It's a little crazy that I don't  
know that.  
The man translates.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(to man)  
Don't translate asides.  
The man says in Spanish to Flor.."You work for her?"--Flor  
answers, "just tell her that I can't live here." Deborah  
doesn't like that the man has initiated more conversation.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Hey!

**HISPANIC MAN**

She can't live here. Her daughter.

**DEBORAH**

Okay..

(beat then big decision)

Her daughter can also live with us  
for the summer..

The man tells Flor..she answers directly to Deborah..

**FLOR**

(big decision)

No, sorry.

**DEBORAH**

Why?

The man asks Flor who speaks in Spanish..

**HISPANIC MAN**

I don't know. She just doesn't want  
to.

**DEBORAH**

Will you please just tell me what  
she said.

**HISPANIC MAN**

She said, "I just don't want to."

**EVELYN**

If she didn't tell us about her  
child she has to have a deep sense  
of privacy. We can figure out how  
she can still live at home. Hell, I  
don't mind driving her at night.

**DEBORAH**

Let's spare the world you on the  
roads.

(to Flor)

Well, what do we do?

The Hispanic man translates the last sentence. Deborah and Flor stare at each other..Deborah's next words are somber and have enough body language to transcend the need for translation...the jig is up.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(big decision)

I'm sorry, my friend, this is what  
I need. It's just for the summer. I  
don't want to lose you. But ....

Flor indicates there is no need to translate. A beat.

**FLOR**

(enormous decision)

Yo vivo aquí.

**HISPANIC MAN**

She'll live here.

The man says something in Spanish to Flor as she starts to walk away and she is thrown enough by the statement to actually stumble as she looks back at him...then, before Deborah can admonish him.

**HISPANIC MAN (CONT'D)**

I said, "God protect you from that  
boss."

**87 EXT. FLOR'S APT. COMPLEX - DAY**

**87**

As Cristina, trying to suppress her grin, skips quickly down the stairs moving towards a truck from John's restaurant. Flor follows tight lipped - resolved. They each carry many clothes on wire hangers. A group of girls on the balcony literally cheer Cristina on.

**BALCONY GIRLS**

(accented)

**MAL-----I-----BU!**

Cristina grins hugely back at them.

**88 INT. MALIBU TUNNEL - DAY 88**

The two women in the truck and then..

**89 INT. TRUCK - DAY. 89**

As the truck leaves the tunnel and all is cliffs, sand, and waves..Cristina taking it in, unaware that her mother's eyes never leave her.

59.

She gasps frequently..MAJOR GIANT ORGANIC GASPS OF WONDER AND PLEASURE..This is awe as an active physical exercise. The MOVING SHOT dramatizes the crossroads of the mother-daughter relationship as the TWO SHOT finds Flor becoming first blurred then lost as we focus on Cristina exclaiming over each new sight.

**NARRATOR**

(over this incidental  
dialogue)

The first time one sees natural beauty which is owned by others confounds the senses.. I had never imagined the word "money" could be associated with anything but the anxiety of not having enough. I didn't know God had a toy store for the rich.

**90 EXT. CLASKY BEACH HOUSE - STREET SIDE - DAY 90**

The truck in the driveway..the women walking through a front door into a court yard.

**91 EXT. CLASKY BEACH HOUSE - BEACH SIDE - DAY 91**

Georgie, in a swim suit, talking to CHUM in the manner of people trying to excite dogs.

**GEORGIE**

Who wants to go swimming?..Yes, who  
wants to go swimming?

The dog goes crazy with excitement -- then, droll for a nine year old, Georgie turns to his grandmother (who is sunning herself and reading) and addresses her in precisely the same way. Evelyn has a drink in hand..

**GEORGIE (CONT'D)**

(to grandmother)  
Who wants to go swimming?..Huh..

**EVELYN**

Not now..But I promise I'll go in  
the summer after next.  
John enters the scene..

**JOHN**

You want to go swimming?

**GEORGIE**

Oh yeah, you're off.

**JOHN**

What do you think, wet suits?

60.

**GEORGIE**

Wet suits are for wimps..

**JOHN**

Yeah, you're right..let me get  
mine..  
Georgie laughs..

**GEORGIE**

(to Dad)  
You're good.

**92 INT./EXT. HALLWAY / PATIO - DAY**

**92**

Behind Flor and Cristina as they move toward the Claskys and their destiny....Flor behind her daughter.

**REVERSE - CLOSE ON CRISTINA.**

As her eyes pop on seeing the Clasky beach house.

**VERY CLOSE ON DEBORAH**

As her eyes pop on seeing the stunning twelve year-old enter her home, haloed by the sun. Again, Flor less distinct in the background.

Bernice, just outside the open patio door, is putting on a shirt over her bathing suit as she looks at Cristina and emits a small, prescient moan.

**DEBORAH**

(to Flor)  
Look at this child..Flor, you could  
make a fortune at surrogate  
pregnancy....  
Flor looks to her daughter for some understanding of what  
Deborah said..

**FLOR**

Que?  
Cristina is as nonplussed by the remark as her mother.

**JOHN**

Hi. I'm John..It's good to see you.  
(to Flor indicating  
Cristina)  
Great..

**DEBORAH**

(to Cristina)  
Hi. This is my daughter,  
Bernice..I'm Deborah..And out  
there...are Georgie and.

61.

As she turns to gesture toward her mother and son, Evelyn has almost reached them ..

**EVELYN**

I'm so glad to meet you. I'm a fan  
of your mother's.

**CRISTINA**

I'm Cristina.  
As all acknowledge each other Deborah tugs at Bernie's top  
which is half tucked in.

**BERNICE**

(kidding around but right  
on)  
No comparisons, please, no  
comparisons.  
Evelyn shoves her granddaughter for the self-  
deprecation..Flor says something to her daughter in Spanish.

**CRISTINA**

My mother says it's best if we get  
out of the way and put our things  
away.

**JOHN**

Have you ever been to the beach  
here?

**CRISTINA**

I've never been anyplace but Mexico  
and Texas.....before today.  
John goes to a big toy box and opens it up..it is filled with  
beach paddles, Frisbees and boogie boards.

**JOHN**

Here's the most important place in  
the house..grab this stuff whenever  
you want.

**CRISTINA**

(delighted)  
Thank you..thank you so much.

**DEBORAH**

Very little accent?

**FLOR**

(suspiciously)  
Que?

**CRISTINA**

(to Flor)  
Sin acento.

62.

Her mom, not crazy about the lack of accent to begin with,  
nods.

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

(to Deborah)  
Thank you..there's an A.P. total  
fluency class where they work you  
pretty hard at sounding American.  
Flor doesn't want her daughter to have an extended  
conversation with Deborah of which she doesn't understand a

word.

**FLOR**

Cristina..

**DEBORAH**

Right. Settle in..

**CRISTINA**

Thank you. I am thrilled to be here.

**93 INT. MAID'S ROOM - AFTERNOON 93**

Deborah has re-decorated the room with casual brilliance...Flor is tense..distraught...her daughter giddy...excited over the sheets, the tv, the pile of towels..a chaise..She goes to work on her mother to go swimming....wanting her to appreciate the fun element of being here...the spirit of the kid such that Flor relents....

**94 EXT. BEACH - EVENING 94**

Flor and Cristina, two sea nymphs, lit by the floodlights from the beach homes.

**OTHER ANGLE.**

John and Georgie in the waves..body surfing...they get to shore...John sees the two females..dashing in the water in their bathing suits..He remains hidden in a very shallow wave as they run in...then once they are in he starts taking off his wet suit hurriedly...

**ON JOHN..**

As he suffers the cold -- Georgie enjoying every moment.

**95 EXT. CLASKY BEACH RENTAL - DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT 95**

Wave lights still shining..On a dune sits Cristina, looking out.

**96 INT. MASTER BEDROOM 96**

As Deborah steps out on the deck and sees Cristina.

**DEBORAH**

(in a loud whisper)  
Hey, Cristina...hey...hey..What are  
you doing up?  
Cristina looks around -- then up..

**CRISTINA**

Oh, hi..so beautiful..I was just  
excited.

**DEBORAH**

I know..Would you believe I had to  
talk my husband into this?  
(no reply/then more  
pointedly)  
Would you believe I had to talk my  
husband into it?...do you hear me?

**CRISTINA**

Yes...I just ..  
(awash..a shy laugh)  
I didn't know what to say?

**DEBORAH**

(still calling down)  
Do you want to come with me? -- I'm  
going to the flea market.

**CRISTINA**

I don't know what that...

**DEBORAH**

It's the Rose Bowl... miles, actual  
miles, of great things for sale for  
God's sake...We can have brunch in

Pasadena.

**CRISTINA**

I don't want to wake my mother so early.

**DEBORAH**

I'll leave her a note...I'll

**97 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - MORNING - TWO HOURS LATER**

**97**

As Flor wakes..looks around.

**FLOR**

Cristina?  
She goes to Cristina's bed...atop the bed is a note. She picks it up.

**INSERT..THE NOTE**

Dear Flor,

**64.**

I decided to steal your daughter for a bit.

**LOVE,**

**DEBORAH**

With great energy born of bottled fury, Flor begins to go through her daughter's things...finding her backpack and extracting a Spanish/English dictionary.

**INSERT DICTIONARY.**

As her finger points to:

"Steal...robar"

And then she flips some pages feverishly..Her finger

indicating:  
"daughter .... hija"

98 EXT. PCH - EARLY AFTERNOON.

98

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Stop thanking me. I love having the company.

**CRISTINA**

It was an adventure which I'll remember.

**DEBORAH**

Your English is genius. Do you dream in Spanish or English?

**CRISTINA**

Just recently I've had a dream in English.

**DEBORAH**

What was it?

**CRISTINA**

I am so sorry. I -- uh..I'd ..I uh, can't tell ..This is so uncomfortable.

**DEBORAH**

You could have just said you didn't remember.

**CRISTINA**

I, uh, guess so..but I do.

**DEBORAH**

Look who's sensational.

99      **EXT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - DAY.**

99

Evelyn is sitting on the patio making sangria..Flor enters.  
She is pissed.

**EVELYN**

What's wrong?  
She shows her the letter. Evelyn reads it and hands it  
back..She is about to offer something..Flor waves it off and  
enters the house..John comes in from the beach with his  
kids..boogie boards...Evelyn hands him the letter..

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

She's wild-eyed over this..  
John moves after Flor as Bernie reads the letter..

**BERNICE**

Aw, shit..  
(then quickly)  
Sorry about the word, Georgie.

**GEORGIE**

It's okay.

**BERNICE**

You want to know what happened?

**GEORGIE**

No thank you.

100      **INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

100

John enters..

**JOHN**

Hey, Flor..

She turns..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I'm sorry..very sorry..  
He indicates his watch -- then holds his fingers together.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

They should be back soon..  
Flor starts to cry. She sits in a chair..He sits not far from her.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Hey, Flor..  
Embarrassed, she says, in Spanish, to please leave her alone..she turns from him..He walks to the wet bar and gets a bottle of water...pours some..Her crying soft in the

**66.**

background...He walks to her, sits near her and offers her the glass of water which she takes.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Deborah made a mistake. I understand how you feel...Do you understand me at all, generally? Is simpático the word?  
He pats her on the back..She looks at him..

**CLOSE ON FLOR..**

Is he coming on?..

**HER POV..**

His kind eyes.

**FULL SHOT..**

This is real eye contact..two vaguely humiliated people finding real company for an instant. Without thought, she duplicates his gesture and pats his back.

**FLOR**

Simpático, yes.  
And when he seeks to add another pat, he misses, because she is out of her chair..(This is as intimate as John has been with another woman since he was married..) He calls out to stop her.

**JOHN**

Un momento, huh?  
She stops and turns to him.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I'm really sorry this is happening.  
I just want you to know that. I am  
real sorry.  
He taps his heart as an indication of sincerity -- then a flash of worry that he has inadvertently come on to her.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I didn't mean..  
He makes a gesture of ardent love..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I meant..  
Makes a person to person innocent gesture..She finds herself smiling.

67.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Well, the good thing about being an idiot is that every once in a while you cheer people up..Got to get to work.

**CAMERA STAYS WITH FLOR**

As he exits...thinks about John's demeanor, smiles again, shakes it off as her mind fills with concern for Cristina.

**101 EXT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - SUNSET. 101**

Deborah's SUV loaded at the curb..She and Cristina begin to carry things in...(NOTE: Cristina's hair has been restyled.)

**102 INT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - DAY 102**

Evelyn, Bernie and Flor are gathered in the living room. All staring at her.

**DEBORAH**

What? Something bad happen?

**ON CRISTINA..**

Enormously anxious on reading her mother's mood.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Cristina, tell your mother I just played around with your hair..she can put it back..no hurt feelings.

**CRISTINA**

Not right now.  
Flor puts an arm around her shoulder, leading her off and speaking to her forcefully in Spanish.

**DEBORAH**

What? --

**EVELYN**

You can't just take someone else's.....

**DEBORAH**

Nuh-uh, Mom..don't go there..or I'll go there and you know where "there" is.

Evelyn stops on a dime. She leaves. Deborah crosses to Bernice, who is highly concerned about Flor, and puts an arm around her. A pleasant surprise..

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Can you believe what Flor is making  
this into..Shoot me if I ever get  
that hard to deal with.

Bernice, unseen by Mom, does a long, muted, mock scream.

**103 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - EVENING**

**103**

MUSIC IN: Action, purpose, energy.. Flor is dictating in Spanish as Cristina writes it down in English on a pad. Cristina enormously uncomfortable.

**INSERT - THE PAD.**

The pad, in effect, lends subtitles to Flor's words. Cristina winces with the words she records even while punctuating perfectly.

**PAD WRITING**

You cannot take my child without my  
permission..And, if you had asked  
me I would not have given  
permission. Is this why you did not  
ask? Because you knew this. You  
have no rights over my private  
life.

**ON FLOR..**

Reaching a decisive conclusion.

**PAD**

If you have any disagreement with  
this, I no longer wish to work  
here.

**ON CRISTINA'S LOOK**

This is awful news.

**ON FLOR.**

For a decisive nod of affirmation. She adjusts her daughter's hair to the way it was, takes the note and exits.

**104 INT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 104**

Flor enters in something of a fury and holds the letter out to Deborah, who hates being cornered in this manner. She actually places her hands behind her so as to avoid the note.

**DEBORAH**

What's this?

Flor shakes the letter at her.

**OTHER ANGLE..**

**69.**

Showing Cristina hidden but looking on... like a stage prompter in the wings.

**FLOR**

For you.

**DEBORAH**

From?

Flor with enormous emphasis stabs her finger at her own chest.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

You are not yourself...This was written in anger. You sleep on it and then if you still want me to

have it -- fine..I don't think you  
will once calm and rational thought  
returns. Just sleep on it.

Deborah exits to a bathroom and closes the door...leaving  
Flor in the hall with the letter..Cristina reveals herself  
and explains the situation to her mother. The last word we  
hear before scene's end is "mañana."

105 INT. CLASKY RENTED BEACH HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

105

Deborah surreptitiously finishing putting on her running  
clothes and is making for the door when the alarm clock goes  
off and John awakens.

**JOHN**

She didn't even want us to know she  
had a daughter - then, on the first  
day, you take the kid without  
asking. I think that's...

**DEBORAH**

(starting to lose it)  
What!?! Insensitive? Elitist?  
Irresponsible? Perverse? Dizzy?

**JOHN**

(slow and emphatic)  
Dumb.  
She looks at him...He has been atypical...Her immediate  
emotional cocktail is panic, fury and deep, deep hurt. Her  
words are slow...her voice ragged...

**DEBORAH**

When is anyone in this damn house  
or this damn life going to consider  
my feelings? I just tried to make  
a lovely kid feel welcome. There's  
no reason to rake it over...I let  
it go..and gave Flor the room to  
let it go. Which I'm sure she has!  
It's over!! So get on board.

She opens the door and almost runs into Flor who is standing immediately in her way holding the letter.

**FLOR**

I slept.

**106 INT. CLASKY BEACH RENTAL - DEN - DAY**

**106**

Deborah stands over Cristina, who is writing in Spanish a note Deborah is dictating. As John passes through the room.

**DEBORAH**

I am deeply and sincerely sorry to have upset you. Especially in light of the deep connection, as women, I believe us to have.

**EVELYN**

(sotto to John)

And to think I was worried about Flor living here with her kid?

**107 EXT. CLASKY BEACH RENTAL - PATIO**

**107**

John is talking to all three kids in an effort to lift the overall atmosphere. IN THE BACKGROUND we see Deborah handing Flor her letter..Cristina taking sidelong glances...relieved to see them shake hands (Flor engaging), hug (Flor reluctant).

**JOHN**

So here's the idea..I want to make a serving platter for serving fish using sea glass like this..

He holds out some sea glass.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I used to hunt for this stuff every free minute when I apprenticed in Italy. This is bits of broken glass that the ocean sand blasts over the years..great looking, huh? So you

guys go hunting and I'll pay 50 cents for any piece, a dollar for anything as big as this and five dollars for any color that isn't brown, clear or green.

**GEORGIE**

Do we have to do this?

**BERNICE**

(to Georgie)

Oh, come on...

Georgie and Bernice start off..

71.

**JOHN**

Come on, Cristina - go get em.

Her eyes widen and off she runs, intoxicated with being included and having the chance to make money.

**108 EXT. BEACH - DAY - VARIOUS SHOTS 108**

The kids combing through pebbles.  
Georgie becoming bored and stopping..  
Bernie stopping.

**109 EXT. BEACH - SAME SCENE - SUNSET.. 109**

Lots of people on their decks..hot-tubbing, sunning, partying..rich people forming New Yorker cartoons in the background as Cristina continues to doggedly collect her sea glass. At one point, she comes upon a teenage couple making out near a mass of pebbles, and politely asks them to roll over so she can search the area.

**110 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - PRE-DAWN 110**

Cristina arising..

111 EXT. BEACH - PRE-DAWN.. 111

Cristina collecting sea glass.

112 EXT. BEACH - SAME SCENE - NIGHT. 112

Illuminated by the surf lights of the beach homes, Cristina plugs away.

DISSOLVE TO:

113 EXT. CLASKY'S RENTED BEACH HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON. 113

John exits his door and steps to his car..as he is about to get in..

CRISTINA'S VOICE

Excuse me.

He looks up and steps around to where she is...there is a battered wood table along the side of the house.

JOHN

Hi..what's doing?

She overturns a large bucket and a small mountain of sea glass spills on the table.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm broke.

72.

CRISTINA

(feeling horrible)

No..you don't have to pay..I'm sorry. Don't worry, please.

**JOHN**

No. I'm kidding..Instead of a platter -- I'll just build a sea glass building and serve fish inside... Great, Cristina..Why don't you count it and..

**CRISTINA**

I have... Many times..I didn't sleep. I counted.

**JOHN**

So what's the damage...total?  
Her eyes locked on his.

**CRISTINA**

(dead serious)  
It depends on whether you consider these four a color other than green, brown or clear..  
She takes them from her pocket.

**JOHN**

Well, this one is borderline.

**CRISTINA**

I agree.

**JOHN**

Oh my God, you found a blue..Nobody finds a blue..You know how a blue happens? I mean, before the ocean blasts it for 30-40 years. Somebody had to throw away an old Milk of Magnesia bottle. You know what Milk of Magnesia is?

**CRISTINA**

Unfortunately.  
He smiles broadly. The kid's a trip. He likes her.

**JOHN**

So how much for the whole deal?

**CRISTINA**

(unable to look at him)  
Eleven hundred and one dollar.  
He reacts..then..

73.

**JOHN**

Okay. We'll finish dealing with it  
when I get home from work.  
She gasps..

**114 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - ONE A.M. 114**

Flor asleep -- Cristina awake, alert..footsteps. She hears  
John enter. She moves slowly so as not to awaken Flor.

**115 INT. HALLWAY - ONE A.M. 115**

As she enters from the back room and sees that John is  
walking into the kitchen. Her eye goes to the hall table on  
which there sits a fat envelope with her name on it.

**116 INT. CLASKY BEDROOM - ONE A.M. 116**

John enters the bedroom to find a note from Deb that she will  
be late. He is disappointed.

**117 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT - ON CRISTINA 117**

Not aware of being observed..opens the envelope and takes out  
a thick wad of cash..almost swoons..as she goes about hiding  
it..she is jolted by her mother's whispered incredulity...

**FLOR**

Cristina..  
She turns...the wad of money in her hand..

118 INT. POCKET KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

118

The best chef in America has just fixed himself a snack as a salve to his spirits. It's a little like Dagwood Bumstead as a culinary genius..This is a snack we will remember and copy...John is approaching a perfect moment...and this is a guy who appreciates simple pleasures to the fullest...

119 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

119

He carries the brilliant snack to the living room and is just about to take his first bite when he hears emotional Spanish voices approaching. He looks up.

**ANGLE ON FLOR AND CRISTINA**

As they enter. Cristina translating her mother's words.

**CRISTINA**

My mother wishes me to represent exactly what she says, nothing else.

74.

And so, for the remainder of the scene, Flor will speak in Spanish and Cristina will not only translate but render her mother's emotion, sometimes including body language. It is not only a translation but a reenactment.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

May I talk to you?

**JOHN**

You mean your mother....  
Cristina nods...not comfortable breaking the rule of only speaking for her mother...She faces him, her back to Flor.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

(looking at Flor)  
Sure you can talk to me..  
Cristina begins translating as her mother speaks in Spanish..

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

I don't have to sleep first?

**JOHN**

What's wrong?  
Flor waves the money..Cristina waves an empty hand as she speaks for her mother.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

Did you give this money to my daughter?

**JOHN**

I made this little deal..with all the kids to...

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

(interrupting)  
Please..  
Flor advances on him past her daughter so Cristina now translates from the background.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR (CONT'D)**

You don't tell or ask the mother when you give a child a fortune for looking on the beach for stones..what is the word for this..

**JOHN**

Sea glass?  
On hearing the translation of "sea glass" an exasperated Flor turns so that her back is to John as Cristina admonishes him.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

No..not a name for the stones..a  
name for the act..what you did..

**ON FLOR..**

As she spits out the word to her daughter.

**FLOR**

Engreido.

**ON JOHN..**

As his eyes shift to Cristina fearing the word he will hear.

**JOHN**

Oh, no..engreido's going to be  
rough.

**ON CRISTINA..**

Reluctantly taking the emotional stance of her mother to  
deliver the word.

**CRISTINA**

(briefly being herself)  
It's hard to translate.  
She takes half a beat..finds the word and now spits it out.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

Smug.  
John gets up and takes a conciliatory step toward Flor so  
that now Cristina is in the middle looking up at them as she  
translates for John

**JOHN**

I had no idea it would amount to  
that kind of money..I thought ---  
sort of tops fifty dollars.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

Fifty dollars is a lot of money..

**JOHN**

Okay. Right.

He has no idea where to take it from here -- the two females look as he searches for the right thing to say..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

(sighing to himself)

Ah, shit..

That fast Cristina translates.. Before Flor can react. John talks directly to Flor..quiet,compassionate, a bit beaten.

76.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I'm sorry....I get why you are upset. It might not look it but I am good at getting things. Doing something about it is something else..I was going to talk to you before I actually gave her the money..but maybe I should have checked before I started the whole thing.

(he smiles/they don't)

I know what it's like when you feel your kid is being messed with..I get the message. It won't happen again. It's late..I'm sure we'd all like...

Flor lets it out...her daughter hard pressed to keep up.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

To what..sleep? If this was small enough to be helped by some little apology, I would be a fool to bring it up..I need to say more no matter

what the result. I need to be impolite. You leave someone else's child alone. It's simple, no? It is too easy for children to feel contradictions..It encourages questioning their parents..and that makes them less safe. Your wife takes her for rides and changes her hair..You give her money. Here..

(this next sentence Cristina translates with alarm and adds her own question mark.)

Take back the money??????????????

Flor hands John the envelope under her daughter's wrenching gaze. They begin to exit..but Flor turns inadvertently bumping into her daughter. Her voice softens.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR (CONT'D)**

I did not mean to be angry to you - only emotional..

They turn to leave. John speaks with sudden volume and muscle.

**JOHN**

What about hypocritical?

Cristina turns back..confused..her mother asks her for a translation and she complies.. Flor then wearing the same confused expression.

77.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Yeah, you heard me. It's not like you didn't do the same thing...

**FLOR**

(hard on the translation)

No!

**JOHN**

Oh, yes. So go lecture yourself..you won't need a translator for that one...I mean what am I lately... A recycling bin?..just anyone dump in your garbage and hope I make something useful out of it...

Flor is confused and getting pissed but he is moving now and pointing a finger at her.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Yes, you did the same thing...you think I didn't know about altering those outfits for Bernie..She tells me her stuff....So, am I missing something? Is there a real difference between that and what you are complaining about?

Cristina waits for a comeback from her mother to translate..but doesn't get one..Instead her mother is a bit mortified and considerably humbled..the pie smack into the face.

**FLOR**

Sin diferencia. Yo interferì.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

No difference. I interfered.

**JOHN**

Okay.....I'm still not sure I did the right thing keeping it to myself. It felt disloyal to Deborah..but my daughter really needed someone to be kind to her right then..so..so.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

I am very embarrassed. You are very right. Hypocrisy..yes.

**JOHN**

(something strikes him, he  
softens, disoriented)  
I'll tell you, it's pretty wild to  
say something and have the other  
person just concede the point. I'm  
dazed here.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

I will leave whenever it is good  
for you and...

**JOHN**

No..no..come on, man..

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

But how can I work for you after we  
talk like this?

**JOHN**

You can't quit even if you want to  
and you know why.

**FLOR**

No..

**JOHN**

Yes, you do..  
Flor is worried as John looks right at her..Is he coming on?

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Because then Cristina will blame  
herself for costing you the  
job...and that guilt...I don't know

if you know about guilt..  
Cristina doesn't have to check with her mother on this one.

**CRISTINA**

Culpa, guilt, sì. We know. We are  
Catholics.

**FLOR**

(after her daughter's  
translation)  
Culpa, si..Por Dios, Si.

**CRISTINA**

(on her own)  
We know.

**FLOR**

(big nod)  
We know.  
John gestures that there is nothing to be done. Flor nods.

79.

**JOHN**

So, welcome back.  
She smiles..gets up..extends her hand..they shake.

**FLOR**

Good night, Mr. Clasky..

**CRISTINA**

Good night As they exit..their  
backs to John, daughter following  
mother...Flor speaks to her  
daughter.

**FLOR**

(an aside)  
No te puedo tener haciendo esto por  
mi. Ahora tengo que aprender  
inglÈs.

**CRISTINA AS FLOR**

(over her shoulder to John  
as they move)  
I can't have you doing this for me.  
I must learn English now.

**FLOR**

No, dije eso por ti - no por John.  
That translates to "No, I meant that for you, not John." But  
Cristina does not translate the line. Nor..

**JOHN**

You have a wonderful mother.

**FLOR**

Que?

**CRISTINA**

Nada.

120 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

120

A Spanish commercial for learning English in a hurry is on  
television..Flor on the phone ordering it..

**NARRATOR**

Learning English would cost five  
hundred and ninety nine dollars  
down and 15 monthly payments of one  
hundred and ten dollars...which  
represents 48 percent  
interest..Mexicans marketing  
Mexicans. But not a penny was  
wasted.

121    **EXT. MAIL BOX - DAY**    121

As Flor takes a package from the box.

**NARRATOR**

My mother showed an extraordinary  
facility for learning the language.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

122    **INT. BEACH HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY**    122

Flor listening to the tapes as she does laundry.

**NARRATOR**

..as well as a totally committed,  
obsessive work ethic, which blocked  
out all else..She was her  
daughter's mother.

As Flor silently mouths some English while listening to a  
tape, Chum nudges her with a ball and, without thinking, she  
takes it from his mouth and tosses it..Realizing, with alarm,  
a beat too late that she has broken the rule.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

123    **EXT. BEACH - LATE AT NIGHT**    123

Flor sitting on the sand...listening to her  
tapes..continually forced by Chum's obsessive persistence to  
throw him the ball.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

124    **EXT. BEACH HOUSE - LATE NIGHT**    124

As John arrives...He bumps the walls on entering.

As John enters the house, clearly drunk. There is the sound of skittering paws as CHUM approaches.

**JOHN**

(cheering)

Hey, boy, I can use some up  
company.

But Chum feverishly digs his snout against a nearby piece of furniture and retrieves a tennis ball and rockets away. John follows, weaving a bit.

As John enters the room to find CHUM proffering the ball to Flor who is watching one of video language tapes. She tosses the ball without a look or a thought..then starts when she sees John standing there. He cheers, seeing her predicament.

81.

When she speaks English, at this point, her words are halting.

**JOHN**

You gotta do something about  
Chum..Your arm's going to go.

She waves it off and hurries to get her tape and get out of his way. Chum complicates the task, proffering the ball. Flor wearily throws it.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Don't you sleep anymore?

**FLOR**

No..You get more if you keep at it.

**JOHN**

You're doing fantastic.

**FLOR**

Now I am like a three year-old.  
Your wife go out.

**JOHN**

She say where?

**FLOR**

No.  
(on his reaction)  
Sorry.

**JOHN**

Listen..I just forgot she was going  
out..don't be a smart ass.

(jolted by his own remark)

Uh-oh..well, you and I communicate  
mostly in apologies anyway..I'm  
sorry. I should be whipped. I  
should be stoned- it's been a while  
- I meant to say, I think, don't be  
smart, don't be kind, don't be  
sensitive, don't be beautiful. I  
meant to say, "hi, Flor, good night  
Flor..that show you're watching is  
going to be a hit."

He staggers out. Flor watches his lonely back for a beat and  
then urgently gestures Chum to join him. Chum is reluctant,  
but relenting, runs and accompanies his appreciative master.  
Flor, now alone, finds herself staring at a framed picture of  
John in the den. He is younger and smiling. She studies the  
picture and then blinks when she realizes her own emotion and  
purposefully goes back to her lessons.

82.

Cristina and Bernice waiting in line at the Mexican fast food place on P.C.H. with the towering signature Mexican male figure on its roof. Deborah is parked curbside in the SUV.

**BERNICE**

How'd you get your mother to let you go with my mother?

**CRISTINA**

Well, your mother just said she could use my help on a few errands while you're in class...  
Bernice nods. Then unconsciously moans.

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

What?

**BERNICE**

No. Just that I hate summer school.

**CRISTINA**

Why do you go then?

**BERNICE**

(looks at her)  
I'm not sure I can explain to you the concept of not doing well in a class..in this case math...and the system kind of insists on the illusion that you've learned math -- so they make you go to summer school..It helps them avoid facing that they have failed in their mission.

**CRISTINA**

What do you mean they failed?

**BERNICE**

Joking.

**CRISTINA**

Oh. I see. Forgive me, I don't have

a real sense of humor.

**BERNICE**

(looking skyward)  
Thank you, God.  
(on Cristina's reaction)  
Joking...

**CRISTINA**

The joke is?

83.

As they get in the car..Bernice doing a little stutter step offering Cristina the front seat..Cristina demurs.

128 INT. SUV - DAY.

128

As they get in..Deborah privy to the conversation now.

**BERNICE**

That you're better at everything  
than I am...and I was thanking God  
for there being this one thing  
where I might have my nose in  
front.

Deborah can't think of what single thing Bernice could possibly feel superior about. She is genuinely puzzled.

**DEBORAH**

And that thing is???  
Bernice deeply resents the question..She turns to her mother.

**BERNICE**

Sexual experience..  
Cristina laughs.

**BERNICE (CONT'D)**

(ruefully to self)  
That one even she knows is funny.  
Cristina gives Bernice an appreciative push from behind.  
Deborah, for some reason, feels she deserves credit for their  
connection.

**DEBORAH**

Look at you girls.

**129 INT. BEACH BEDROOM - DAY**

**129**

Deb working an outfit..her mother eyeing her..

**DEBORAH**

Cristina's already read, on her  
own, everything on Bernice's summer  
reading list..And she's two grades  
behind..Imagine if she went to  
Bernice's school..And they'd kill  
to give her a scholarship.

**EVELYN**

Talk to Flor...

**DEBORAH**

(sarcastic)  
Yeah..she's so open to new things.

**84.**

**130 EXT. GORGEOUS PRIVATE SCHOOL -DAY.**

**130**

Deborah and Cristina standing in a grass bordered parking  
lot...Deborah, feigning upset, tearing into her bag but her  
focus is elsewhere as she periodically looks off. She is  
clearly stalling.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Can't find my keys..  
Another woman, ARLENE FOLSOM, calls to her..

**ARLENE**

Deborah...

**DEBORAH**

(acting surprised)  
Hi, Arlene..  
(to Cristina)  
Come on.  
They walk to greet Arlene.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Hi. This is Cristina..the girl I'm  
always raving about..This is Arlene  
Folsom..the school director.

**ARLENE**

Hi..

**CRISTINA**

(Barbara Boxer couldn't do  
it better)  
Hello..a pleasure to meet you, Ms.  
Folsom. I couldn't believe how  
beautiful the grounds were as we  
drove in. I just think the balance  
of the buildings to open ground is  
so wonderful and must have been  
very difficult to achieve.  
Deborah smiles with pride at the elegant first impression  
Cristina is making..all are grinning...the two adults  
suspiciously so...sharing their delight.

**ARLENE**

Would you like a little tour?

**MOVING CAMERA..**

First showing Cristina in foreground and her POV of this Drop  
Dead Gorgeous Rich Kids School in the background and then we  
MOVE CLOSER ON CRISTINA. We see lust in her reaction.

**NARRATOR**

The experience was literally mind boggling. My mind did boggle. My cranial cells stunned. Even if I had enough sense of wonder to imagine such a school existed; my sense of fairness made it unthinkable that any school could offer this much more than my own..

**131 INT. BEACH LIVING ROOM - DAY****131**

This is the last day of the summer rental - many packed cartons on the floor. Deborah, Flor and Cristina engaged in a momentous conversation..(NOTE: Throughout the following, and quite beside the point, we see Flor periodically make the motion of throwing the ball. But we do not cut to Chum, rather we just hear his claws skittering after the ball as we maintain focus on the momentous conversation.)

**DEBORAH**

Nuh-uh, Flor you are not pinning this one on me. I've got to finish packing up.

**FLOR**

(no longer sure of herself  
or anything)  
I just don't....Out of space this school wants her to go for free?

**DEBORAH**

We ran into the school head. They want diversity...Cristina knocked her out...I had nothing to do with it. By the way, the scholarship is

worth twenty thousand dollars. And  
early registration is tomorrow.

**FLOR**

It is too far from our home.

**DEBORAH**

You could move in with us in town.

**FLOR**

Never, thank you...

**DEBORAH**

Okay, then don't..By the way..the  
phrase is "NO, thank you."

**132 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT**

**132**

Flor has her earphones on listening to her English tapes..but  
she is enormously upset as she watches her daughter  
passionately pray in English..soon taking off the ear phones.

**86.**

**CRISTINA**

Please, dear God..Enter my mother's  
heart and make her understand what  
this school would mean.

**FLOR**

Alright. I look.

**CRISTINA**

Amen.

**133 EXT. L.A. PUBLIC SCHOOL - FLOR AT CRISTINA'S SCHOOL - DAY 133**

Summer session - L.A. public school..ninety percent Hispanic. Through Flor's POV, the place is seen not as crowded and worn but as vibrant with community.

**134 EXT. PRIVATE SCHOOL - FLOR AT BERNICE'S SCHOOL - DAY 134**

Highly anxious and out of place, she sees the upper-scale students..five percent Latino...No brochure can do it justice. Overwhelmed by the implications, Flor's eyes tear.

**135 INT. FLOR'S ROOM - LATE NIGHT 135**

Cristina sleeps. Flor sits on her bed - no thought of sleep.

**136 INT. BEACH HOUSE - LATE NIGHT 136**

John enters, home from work ... as he passes Flor's door it opens and she steps out. Before she can continue on, she sees Evelyn at the foot of the stairs, carrying a glass of port.

**EVELYN**

Hi, Flor, want some port?

**FLOR**

No, thank you, Evelyn.

**EVELYN**

(going up stairs)  
Thanks for never judging me..Love you. Love everybody. That's what's killing me.. Sleep well.

**EVELYN'S POV.**

She sees Flor approach John. Evelyn looks thoughtful.

**137 INT. DEN - LATE NIGHT 137**

John is about to pour himself a stiff drink. Flor startles him.

**FLOR**

May I talk with you?

**JOHN**

Me?

(she nods)

Deborah will be home soon. I just talked to her.

**FLOR**

I need real talk..Is it okay?  
John does not answer immediately. The brief pause is noted.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

No?

**JOHN**

Sure.

**FLOR**

Outside? Private?

**JOHN**

Sure.....

(as they exit to beach  
with a nervous laugh)

You have me a little worried...

He glances back, hoping to have his fears assuaged, they are not.

**138 EXT. BEACH - NIGHT**

**138**

He sits..she stands, gorgeous..The wind gusts periodically blowing her dress against her body. He tries not to notice.

**FLOR**

You know about Cristina and your great school?

**JOHN**

Oh, it's happened. Is it driving you nuts?

**FLOR**

Yes, nuts. I have no idea what to do. Such an important thing.

**JOHN**

Yeah.

**FLOR**

It's a good school?

**JOHN**

Tops. It's tops.

**FLOR**

So you like it?

88.

**JOHN**

No. I hate the damn school. But that's because they keep sending my daughter home anxiety-ridden, mostly over geometry..I mean you "get" Bernice..In a decent world her school should let her know how great she is, right?

**FLOR**

Very right.

**JOHN**

So, don't ask me..I'm worried about my own kid there.

**FLOR**

You don't have to worry about Bernice. Nothing is going to change that heart.

He looks at her..Out of nowhere overwhelmed by someone echoing and affirming his deepest most private thoughts about his daughter..It is odd..being this deeply touched before he knows what hit him..He makes little adjustments until the moment passes..

**JOHN**

Um.....yeah..thanks...

(then)

It's great to hear someone else say that out loud..Hard to explain.

**FLOR**

I "get" it.

**JOHN**

(a beat..then deeply, with core feelings, a lament)

Ah, man..

**FLOR**

(caring)

It will be okay.

**JOHN**

No, I was thinking about you..

**FLOR**

(instantly alarmed)

Your, "Ah, man" was for me? You think I am in trouble with Cristina?

**JOHN**

It's just tough to be sane.

**(MORE)**

89.

JOHN (cont'd)

To know you're not just making something out of nothing. That when you think you're at some crossroads - you are.

**FLOR**

(she takes this in/nods)

....I never know a man who can put himself in my place like you do. How do you become that man?

**JOHN**

I don't know...You introduce two Jews in the desert and wait five thousand years. Then, bingo, somebody else who can see trouble coming but can't do anything about it.

**FLOR**

I don't understand.

**JOHN**

That's okay.

**FLOR**

I want to.

**JOHN**

Nothing. I don't know what I'm  
talking about..  
A sustained gust of wind which celebrates her shape in a way  
which cannot be ignored.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Will you sit down.. Get out of the  
damn wind.  
She sits. It helps.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

So you going to send her?

**FLOR**

I don't know. But it does not feel  
good. I think if she goes there it  
will be one of two things..either  
she will be odd...or she will make  
herself the same as them.

**JOHN**

(in wonderment)  
That is EXACTLY the way I felt  
about Bernice going there..Exactly.

**(MORE)**

90.

JOHN (cont'd)  
I wasn't able to think it that  
clearly...But that's how I felt. So

between odd and the same...you  
gotta root for odd, don't you?

**FLOR**

Yes, you gotta.  
Camera begins to pull back...early in the move John's words  
stop the movement.

**JOHN**

This was a crummy summer.  
Flor nods ruefully..then suddenly off a glance at him.

**FLOR**

Not all crummy.  
Suddenly there is a bit of danger..she rises quickly,  
changing mode.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

Thank you, good night. I go sleep.

**JOHN**

Good night..Hey?  
She turns..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

You speaking English...It's, uh..

**FLOR**

What?

**JOHN**

Nothing. Just.... Nice meeting you.  
She gulps and exits...as the CAMERA PULLS BACK..ending the  
summer at the rented house...as we transition to....

**139 EXT. BIG BLUE BUS IN MOTION - MORNING. 139**

Through the unusual center window we see Flor and Cristina.  
Flor, at this moment, is assimilating against every fiber in  
her body. Cristina is excited, certain her life is taking an  
incandescent turn. Quite a contrast.

**140 EXT. STONE CANYON AND SUNSET - MORNING 140**

As the bus stops...Bernice is across the street, along with some other kids and Deborah, who is wearing her running clothes..Flor and Cristina exit the bus...

91.

**BERNICE**

(calling)

You just made it...I was getting worried..

Deborah has a backpack loaded with books which she hands to Cristina..

**DEBORAH**

I picked up your books yesterday..

(by way of explanation to Flor)

This is one of Bernie's old..ancient backpacks.

Cristina taking it...

**CRISTINA**

Oh, thank you..

As she shoulders it and almost falls over..

**CRISTINA (CONT'D)**

(impressed with the heft)

This is a great school.

**DEBORAH**

(to Cristina)

I got you a little first-day-at-a-new-school present...

A school bus appears and heads toward them putting a certain deadline pressure on the transaction.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

It's from me and....Bernice.  
(to Flor)  
Okay? It is a big day.  
Flor's uncertain reaction is taken as a yes.

**BERNICE**

(dry)  
What did we get her?  
Deborah hands Cristina a locket..then, noting Flor's  
expression.

**DEBORAH**

(to Cristina)  
It's from ALL of us. Your mother  
too.

**FLOR**

(to Cristina)  
It's not from me...

92.

Deborah does a good-natured "TAKE" accepting Flor's reaction as if it were an eccentricity..As Cristina and Bernice board the bus, Cristina generally says goodbye to both women, thereby depriving Flor of her own moment of passage with her daughter.

**DEBORAH**

Have a great year, girls..  
(for Flor)  
This is so great. It fills your  
heart, doesn't it?  
Deborah turns and sees Flor has already started doggedly up  
the hill..

Walking up the hill, blinking in disbelief at her own fury..Deborah in the background feeling a bit abandoned..Flor keeps walking toward the camera..

**NARRATOR**

There is a terrible crisis which comes when your own personality is not equal to the challenge you face. When being who you are no longer works.

Deborah has started to jog. As she approaches Flor, she calls for a clear path well in advance.

**DEBORAH**

Left...left.

Flor does not alter course though she does start to walk faster...

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Left...left...

Deborah is close behind now.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

**LEFT!**

Suddenly, Flor breaks into a run..She is lithe and quick.

**ON DEBORAH...**

A blink of confusion...then something resembling innate satisfaction as she quickens her gait and...the Race is on.

**ANGLE AS DEBORAH DRAWS ABREAST OF FLOR.**

Strangely, she is interpreting this as closeness. She is genuinely warm.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(to Flor)  
Why am I not surprised you're  
competitive?  
Deborah looks up the street at a delivery truck.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Oh, they're delivering my table.  
Flor stays on task ..forces her stride. She just needs to win  
so very much..that's all..to her current surprise, that's  
everything...

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

You are fast.. Better pace yourself  
though..  
Flor, even more upset and provoked by the words now lets it  
all out...

**ON DEBORAH..**

Realizing she may not be a certain winner...she is concerned  
as she goes after the rabbit.

**OTHER ANGLE.**

Showing the delivery truck as finish line in the distance...

**VARIOUS SHOTS..**

Flor fueled by desperation. Deborah, relentlessly gaining,  
exhilarated.

**THE FINISH..**

Decidedly anti-climactic..Deborah draws even -- passes her--  
arrives at the house with a large margin of victory.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(calling back)  
I love you for trying.

142 **EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY**

142

She exits into her home.

**ON FLOR..**

Bent over, hands on knees, sweaty, gasping for breath. Flor finally straightens up and, there being no other course, continues her walk up the hill, to work.

**NARRATOR**

When people exist under one roof, a tiny society forms..the stuff of

**(MORE)**

**94 .**

NARRATOR (cont'd)  
novelas: masters and servants  
unconsciously dancing in lock step  
so that, when things go wrong,  
traumas converge.

**143 INT. CLASKY HOME - NIGHT...**

**143**

As John moves past Evelyn on his way to work. She looks at him a little wild-eyed as they both stand in the doorway. Straining a bit for breath.

**JOHN**

You feel okay?

**EVELYN**

No. I've given up drinking.  
(he looks at her/she sadly  
nods affirmation)  
I had to do it John..I need every  
brain cell to watch out for all of  
us..given the current climate.  
Anyway. John, I think you're great  
and I'm going to act accordingly.

**JOHN**

(totally confused)  
Good deal.

**EVELYN**

Let's hope.

**144 INT. FLOR'S APT. - LATE AFTERNOON 144**

Flor cooking alongside Monica --- a table is set for ten..A banner proclaiming BIENVENIDA, MAMÁ.

**NARRATOR**

My great Aunt Monica had finally managed to get her mother to Los Angeles and my mother was making a party.

**145 INT./EXT. DEBORAH'S CAR / CLASKY HOME - DAY 145**

Bernice sitting amidst Cristina and two other golden girls as they arrive at the Clasky home.

**NARRATOR**

I was with my friends who had helped me understand real optimism. As they pull in the driveway. Cristina and her friends exit the car and squeal loudly at each other with the excitement of having it all. Bernice exits last. She is not squealing.

95.

**146 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - NIGHT 146**

As Deb finishes dialing a call..Cristina looking on...her two friends watching a movie in the family room. A clock prominently reads nine p.m.

**DEBORAH**

(into phone)  
Flor? Deb..Look, sorry to call you

so late, but they're still studying  
and I'm going out but I promised to  
get her back so if you want me to  
cut off the school work,  
fine...whatever you want me to do.  
Well, okay..you think about it..  
(she holds on to give Flor  
time)  
And hey, if you're tired, or want  
to play, let her sleep here and  
I'll get her back there tomorrow.  
You still want to think about it?  
Okay..

She hangs up...and exchanges a mischievous look with  
Cristina.

**147 INT. FLOR'S APT. - NIGHT**

**147**

As Flor hangs up..

**NARRATOR**

Though it is possible to judge  
harshly my conduct toward my mother  
in my first year at school; almost  
all professional literature excuses  
my behavior as developmental, since  
I was entering an age where  
rebellion and narcissism were to be  
expected. And I was being mentored.

Monica and her newly arrived mother are there along with the  
bride from an earlier scene and some of the girls who saw  
Cristina off to Malibu..Women cooking in the kitchen..She  
tells the girls, in Spanish, that Cristina may not make it.  
They are disappointed...Flor thinks - then says something to  
Monica who nods in agreement. Flor exits.

**148 EXT./INT. CLASKY FRONT DRIVEWAY..NIGHT**

**148**

As Evelyn stands there...a little in the shadows..

**HER POV...**

Deborah somewhat dolled up moving through the interior of the  
house..

As Deborah leaves the house in a hurry.

**EVELYN**

(calling out)

Wait!

Deborah turns, startled.

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

I need to talk to you privately,  
honey.

**DEBORAH**

"Honey?"-- Can't now, Mom...I'm  
late..I was looking all over for  
you...keep an eye on the kids. You  
know my secret cell number.

**EVELYN**

Just give me a moment to talk  
here..

**DEBORAH**

What is it? Are you buzzed?

**EVELYN**

No. I gave up drinking weeks ago.

(on Deborah's reaction)

Yes. Nobody noticed -- which shows  
I probably conducted myself pretty  
well as a drunk. But duty called  
and I'm sober so may I say just one  
thing.

**DEBORAH**

One thing..go ahead...

**EVELYN**

Thanks..Deborah, you're going to lose your husband and you'll never find someone as good. There will only be men who you know are cheap and shallow and have no real warmth in their souls. You may have gotten by on those surfaces once but now you've been spoiled by a good man and you can no longer glide on such thin ice. If you do not act quickly you will soon cement an awful fate for yourself. A life, with no hope of repair, which has already begun to turn desperate and dumb. That's it. Drive safely.

She grabs a deep breath and then turns and walks to the house.

97.

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

(to herself)

If we're out of coffee, it's over for me.

Suddenly a sharp horn is heard..Evelyn jumps..then turns to see her daughter calling to her from the driver's seat of the

**SUV..**

**DEBORAH**

You've done it again, Mom, made me hate myself..One of the things I can count on..

**EVELYN**

Honey, lately your low self-esteem is just good common sense.

Deborah considers that last thought for a long beat before she drives off..

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**150 EXT. STONE CANYON - LATE NIGHT... 150**

Flor walking from the beginning of the hill.....She looks off to see John's vehicle approaching..She brightens..

**ON JOHN..**

Who doesn't see her..We can see his car's digital clock reading 11:30.

**ON FLOR..**

As he drives past her.

**151 INT. CLASKY HOME - NIGHT... 151**

As John enters..Evelyn, in an adjoining room, moves to intercept him.

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

John, better wait a minute.  
But John hears Deb's crying from upstairs..

**JOHN**

(concerned)  
What the hell's wrong?

**EVELYN**

Nothing. In all futility, can I  
urge you not to go up there.  
But he is already moving quickly up the stairs..As he turns  
at the top of the stairs WE SEE THE DOOR CLOSE TO BERNICE'S

**ROOM.**

ON EVELYN..

EVELYN (CONT'D)

(to herself)  
Denouement.

152 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT...

152

John enters the room on the double...passes Deborah without knowing it..(she is partially obscured by the drape or some such). As he passes....camera HOLDS ON DEBORAH..she is a mess...goopy tear stains..seeing him and his concern brings her grief to a higher ground...a sinner humbled by goodness..a trembling lip of childlike vulnerability...

JOHN

Deb..Deb?..where are you?  
He is about to leave the room...she is about to let him but an instinct leads her astray once more.

DEBORAH

Here I am.

JOHN

Baby, what?

DEBORAH

"Baby?" Stay there, John...Sit down..I suddenly get what I have to do...I just have to get the guts.

JOHN

Is it absolutely necessary to make it this...this scary..can you just say it?

DEBORAH

Not so easy.

**JOHN**

(tender/ready for the big  
healing)  
Yeah..come on..it's me. We can  
talk.

**DEBORAH**

Do I ever hope so...I've been  
seeing another man for the last  
eleven weeks and it was nothing and  
I ended it tonight..At first it was  
just keeping an eye on the real  
estate market..Then it was...what?  
Me being insecure and looking for  
some ridiculous vali...

**ON JOHN...**

99.

A shock victim..he holds up a hand to stop her..

**JOHN**

Go -- hold on...hold on...I'm  
missing what you're saying..You  
can't just keep talking and expect  
me to follow it when you start the  
way you did.....

**DEBORAH**

Just what did you hear?

**JOHN**

Well there was the crack in the  
planet. That was noisy...  
She looks at him...a solid beat...

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

There's an actual noise in my  
head.....no kidding..  
Briefly he does the noise...

**DEBORAH**

(slowly)  
I met him about...  
John holds up a hand to stop her...he needs to gather himself  
to hear this..She waits...and waits...as he waits he grows  
flushed and stunned with dread. Finally a word..

**JOHN**

You..  
She takes that as a cue to start..

**DEBORAH**

I met him..  
He puts up his hand..

**JOHN**

If you talk that fast...I'll never  
hear you..there's a lot going  
through my mind....Have you said  
yet whether you slept with him?

**DEBORAH**

So far I've just been talking about  
a flirtation because the really  
important thing for you to know...

**JOHN**

Have you said yet whether you've  
had sex with someone else? Because  
I really am missing most of your  
words. So help me out here..

**DEBORAH**

I've been trying to explain that  
for the first ten weeks there was  
almost nothing to ...

**JOHN**

(sincerely checking but  
wild)  
You still haven't said, right?

**DEBORAH**

Is this your way of...

**JOHN**

This is my way of...this is my way  
of asking you whether..  
He stops... staggering on the threshold of a diminished  
future.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Oh man, once I ask it...give me a  
second.

(several beats then some  
conversational good  
manners for keeping her  
waiting)

I'm just trying to figure out  
whether there's any way to avoid  
knowing..no, damn

(quickly closing this  
argument with himself)

There's not...

(to her)

Okay, you're on..real short answer,  
huh? Have you had sex with  
another..

**DEBORAH**

I know you're very angry?

**JOHN**

(considering/then  
repressed answer)  
Ahhhh...I'm getting there, yes.

**DEBORAH**

(softly)  
John?  
(on his look)  
I think if you let me tell you the  
full everything of this we'd be in  
a position to deal with it  
better..because eleven weeks ago  
when...

101.

**JOHN**

You don't believe that I miss your  
words..I get three or four  
tops...and then just see your mouth  
moving with nothing coming out and  
then I spin out and there's this  
noise...But there's no way to miss  
a "yes" or "no."

**DEBORAH**

(blurts)  
Yes..

**JOHN**

(core simple/eight years  
old)  
Really?

**DEBORAH**

(this gets her)  
I made up my mind that I would

answer every question you had..I'll  
answer anything and everything and  
more.

**JOHN**

(perplexed)  
What other questions could there  
be?

**DEBORAH**

Are you really that much nicer than  
me?

**JOHN**

Well, you don't set the bar real  
high.  
He get up and starts to exit..

**DEBORAH**

No. Please, please, please..I  
think if you listen to exactly what  
happened and then do whatever you  
need to...we'll..just let me tell  
you everything..  
The doorbell rings...it's quite late...Deborah wondering  
what's up..she looks out the window.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

Oh, it's just Flor.

**153 EXT. STONE CANYON NIGHT..**

**153**

As Flor enters the Clasky House...

**102.**

**154 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - LATE NIGHT**

**154**

Flor sees Evelyn in the living room.

**EVELYN**

What are you doing here?

**FLOR**

I want Cristina. I want to talk to Mrs. Clasky. I want to quit.

**EVELYN**

I don't think you can do any of it right this minute..

**FLOR**

Oh, yes..Where's Cristina?

**155 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

**155**

Deborah can barely look at him...

**DEBORAH**

...then, when I was driving back tonight after I ended the whole yuck thing..I was feeling human. I'm done with what's his name..a relief... ..and now it can be like it never happened and then I thought that the only hope was that I own that it did happen and that I take my medicine here..because if I'm walking around with what I did and you don't know what I did..there is a real limit to how close we can be..you're with me and I'm this person who has this bad secret and we aren't really on the same page ever again..so the reason I took this chance in telling -- is because I want us to be good..I want us to be close. I want to feel like you're not nuts to be in love with me..So what I think is we should talk till we pass out .. Talk till we're so sick of each other that there's nothing left to do but take the first step out of

hell..So please let's not leave  
this room until you've heard and  
said everything..please say, okay..  
She awaits his answer..He has heard barely a few words..

**JOHN**

What?

103.

**DEBORAH**

John..

**JOHN**

I've got to get out of  
here..because you keep talking.  
(as she starts to follow  
him)  
Stay put!  
She does. Just before he exits.

**DEBORAH**

You've got to say something.

**JOHN**

You are a terrible wife.  
He exits.

156 **INT. MAID'S ROOM - NIGHT...**

156

Evelyn stands in the doorway with Flor..they are looking at  
Cristina and her two friends sleeping together.

**EVELYN**

I don't think you want to wake her  
when you're this upset and the

other kids are right there and...  
Flor makes a noise of frustration and retreats from the room.

157 INT. ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT

157

As they arrive at the interior entrance, John comes down the stairs just as Flor opens the front door.

JOHN

Where you going?

FLOR

I'm leaving....I have finally..

JOHN

Me too..I'll drive you.

FLOR

No.

JOHN

Yes..come on...it's past midnight here.

FLOR

If you truly don't know why I say "no" let me at last say the reason. At least that will be a relief. Have you no idea that I....

104.

Before she can there is the sound of scratching toes on the floor and a ball comes into lower frame with a dog's snout..Flor loses her thought and tosses the ball.

OTHER ANGLE.

As Chum, now the only happy creature in the house, fetches it and returns.

**JOHN**

Look I have to get out of here  
right now..

**FLOR**

Go..  
John exits to driveway...Flor makes one last toss..these  
tosses have not made a dent in her anger and frustration.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

Goodbye, Chum.  
Another toss and Flor follows John out the door.

**ON CHUM.**

No longer happy. He has lost his only easy mark. He stares at  
the closed door..the ball drops from his mouth to the floor.

**158 EXT. CLASKY DRIVEWAY - NIGHT...**

**158**

John is at the car but Flor heads for the gate.

**JOHN**

(as decisive as we've seen  
him)  
I'm taking you.

**FLOR**

(with anger)  
Why?!?

**JOHN**

Because if I don't -- I'll worry  
about you and I can't handle that  
right now, okay?  
Flor emits a crooning sound.

**FLOR**

Ahhhhh.  
(stunned and worried)  
I never made that sound over a man

before..

105.

Flor shudders at her own sappiness as John opens the passenger door for her...very much into his own torture he nonetheless grabs her arm and guides her up and in..she catches and appreciates his automatic gracious manners while he is clearly fucked up...She is impatient with his solicitousness almost slapping his hands away as he makes sure her skirt doesn't get crushed in the door..The frustration roiling in her.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

Please!?! Mandilón.

**OTHER ANGLE..**

Deborah watching them...

**HER POV.**

Her cuckolded husband closing the door behind her gorgeous, soon-to-be ex-housekeeper.

**CLOSE ON DEBORAH..**

She trembles under the force of imminent justice.

159 **INT. JOHN'S CAR - LATE NIGHT**

159

Two pissed-off people..jaws set...breathing labored..As the car starts and Flor looks back, she lets out a guttural and explosive shout...

**FLOR**

(a quick and mighty vent)

Arrchhhhhyeeeeiii!

For John, the first clear thing he has heard in a while..

**JOHN**

Yes! Exactly! Well put! Teach me  
that word sometime. I can really  
use it.

She nods..there is almost a moment of relaxation..then the  
anger fires an immediate need..She leans across the seat to  
deliver an urgent message to him. The words come out  
exponentially too forcefully.

**FLOR**

I quit this job!  
His spontaneous and forceful reaction surprises her..

**JOHN**

I quit this job!!!!  
As he turns onto Sunset.

106.

**FLOR**

That's the bus stop.

**JOHN**

I'll take you home.

**FLOR**

No. Drop me at a bus.

**JOHN**

Oh, shut up and stop telling me  
what to do.

**FLOR**

Okay...then let's do something  
besides driving me home where my

daughter isn't.

**JOHN**

Okay..we'll do something.

**FLOR**

And I'm supposed to figure out what because I'm a housekeeper and you don't have to think.

**JOHN**

Oh, don't do the class thing, man..You don't know where I come from.

**FLOR**

Alright, I know. But I can't be responsible no more for making sure nothing happens. That's another terrible job I quit.

**JOHN**

What are you talking about? I take responsibility for anything within a block. You have nothing to worry about. That's my job.

**FLOR**

Excellent. So you're going to figure out what we do, right?

**JOHN**

Yes. Okay. Big man figure out!

**FLOR**

Stop there.  
She points to a mall..He looks at her and pulls in.

160 EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - LATE NIGHT. 160

As she leaves the car and goes into a drug store. John, sober faced, looks at Flor making an attractive and zestful beeline toward an Hispanic market. This could be where it hits him that he's on a date...If so..it's too late to duck..

161 INT. MEXICAN MARKET - LATE NIGHT. 161

As Flor enters the market..She calls to the young shop girl as Marine medics for morphine.

FLOR (CONT'D)

Maquillaje!

CUT TO:

The shop girl directs her to the make-up counter where she starts shopping..lip gloss, blush, eye stuff..She starts applying it at the check out counter.

162 EXT. OUTDOOR MALL - LATE NIGHT 162

As she runs back to the car.

163 INT. JOHN'S VEHICLE - 163

As she enters, there is a fury to her which he almost matches.

FLOR

This is me when I'm not working..  
You have never seen me!

JOHN

Well, you look familiar.

FLOR

So,  
(parodying him)  
"man," where we heading?

**JOHN**

I don't think I can handle public..

**FLOR**

Yes, no...lots of people right now  
is..

**JOHN**

I know.

**FLOR**

You were going to figure this out!

**JOHN**

My place!

108.

164 INT. JOHN'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT...

164

As they enter the main restaurant...

**FLOR**

I've never seen your place. Very  
perfect.  
He heads for the kitchen.

**JOHN**

I'm going to cook, Beautiful.  
(on a dime correction)  
I'm going to cook beautifully.

**FLOR**

Hey..please..

He turns.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

We both were not normal because we are angry and we act like we are angry with each other and we are not..I am not. I am glad to be with you. It feels comfortable to be with you. If I just left the job and never spoke with you it would have been sin. You understand?

**JOHN**

Ummmmmmmmmm...Yes.

He stands next to her and, for want of a better physical expression, pats her on her back..She eyes him, almost critical about the lame extent of his aggression....He can't quite look at her...He pats her again..

**REAR ANGLE..THE PAT ON THE BACK.**

The pat is becoming a rub..he cups her back..slides his hand..she responds just a bit..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I think I'm inventing a horrible new way of making out..

**FLOR**

Not so horrible.....

His hand keeps going..he now hugs her to him even though they both still face front.. like a loving couple on a walk to the market. His hand squeezes her shoulder.

**JOHN**

My hand is the only sane part of my body..every other part wants to jump off a cliff.

**FLOR**

(digging this/almost  
growing a sense of humor)  
If the other hand could cheer up,  
you could lift me up and carry me  
off.

He laughs. He takes his hand from around her. It is a bit awkward.

**JOHN**

I don't know how to handle that  
one. I think I already broke my  
record for smooth.

**FLOR**

I don't understand.

**JOHN**

It's me. I'm not making sense. But  
I can get you fed.

He goes to the kitchen. She begins to explore a little. She goes to a cabinet and opens it to find a CD player. She digs in her purse and takes out a CD.

**165 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - NIGHT 165**

As John starts cooking up a storm...there is some velocity to his cooking...he still seethes. Then reacts as Spanish Music starts to play. He clears his throat as if he must make a speech. Then does so again..some vocal spasm paying tribute to the increasingly intoxicating tension he feels.

**166 INT. RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - NIGHT... 166**

Flor is lighting the candle at each of the twenty tables.

**167 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - NIGHT... 167**

He is cooking..He is talking to himself.

**JOHN**

Nothing to be nervous about. You  
are not on a date...

(calls out)  
Hey, Flor?

**FLOR'S VOICE (O.S.)**

Yes, John.

**JOHN**

What are you doing?  
She enters the room...dancing a bit..

**110.**

**FLOR**

Just lighting candles and picking  
music.

(notices his cooking)

Oooh.

She gets up on one of the counters and sits there, her feet  
dangling...sings along a bit in Spanish. He is uncomfortable  
anew. The nervousness mounting.

**JOHN**

You want a drink?

She considers the question totally..He is busy cooking..not  
realizing how weighty she considers his question...finally  
aware she has not answered and looks at her..

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Huh?

She regards him levelly..then makes her decision.

**FLOR**

No.

He gets out a bottle of vodka.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

I, uh...don't think you should  
either.

**JOHN**

Then excuse me, because if I had  
the equipment I'd inject the vodka.  
He starts to pour.

**FLOR**

Wait!  
(he stops)  
I think it is so important that we  
are each clear-headed.  
He looks at her..a beat...he puts the vodka away. Flor  
beams..we have not seen her smile like this for quite some  
time.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

It is very good that you did not  
ask, "why?"

**JOHN**

(quietly)  
Keep things real, right?

**FLOR**

(impressed)  
I wouldn't have put it so well.

111.

168 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - HALF HOUR LATER - NIGHT

168

They sit at a small table in the kitchen..finishing the  
greatest late-night meal in the history of Western man.

**FLOR**

I will remember every  
taste..forever.

**JOHN**

Tell you the truth..I wanted a shot  
at cooking for you.  
(shy/his heart)  
I'm very glad you liked it.

**FLOR**

It's something watching you.  
He looks up at her...she has not been seen like this for a  
very long time, if ever.. lit up by a man.

**JOHN**

Well, if it's anything at your end  
imagine over here...scratch  
that..the last thing you want to  
hear is somebody going off on your  
looks.

**FLOR**

Don't be crazy. Tell me every  
detail.

**JOHN**

Okay, Flor, yes I will...They  
should name a gender after  
you..Looking at you doesn't do  
it..Staring is the only thing that  
makes sense..and trying not to  
blink so you don't miss anything.  
She squeals with laughter..He laughs a little himself and in  
so doing loses his courage..He looks down at his  
hands..shyness again belting him a good one..Still looking  
down.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Look..forgive me..I'm.....It's just  
that you are drop-dead, crazy-  
gorgeous..so much so that I am  
really considering looking at you  
again before we finish up here.

**FLOR**

Soon, please.  
And now he looks at her.

**CLOSE ON FLOR..**

112.

Utterly open...utterly optimistic...the half second before  
being swept away.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

Right now....immediately..we have  
to dance or kiss.  
He stands. She stands..He kids just a bit, clowning at  
weighing the two options and then:

**HIS POV..**

Her face..

**JOHN**

No contest.  
They kiss.

**FLOR**

You sure you're not Mexican.

**JOHN**

(smiling/he likes this)  
What do you mean?

**FLOR**

I meant you talk like a Spanish  
song.

**JOHN**

You kiss like a Spanish fly..  
(on her confusion)  
Joking around. I don't know what  
I'm talking about...

**FLOR**

Yes you do.  
She breaks and heads for the dining room. John has a moment  
to consider.. He does not have his wits about him..a  
condition every bit as fearsome as liberating.

**169 INT. RESTAURANT - DINING ROOM. 169**

As Flor rummages for another CD, enjoying every minute. She  
places the disk in the player and exits.

**170 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN. 170**

As she returns...

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

This song...You see what a good  
thing to tell you how you talk like  
a Mexican song.

**113.**

She begins to translate the lyrics.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

When I kiss you, entire oceans rush  
through my veins..  
(he is wildly  
uncomfortable)  
Gardens of flowers blossom in my  
body.

He starts to make a comic gesture of awkwardness to get past  
the event..she shakes her head at him..driving the words --

pointing emphatically..she will not have her poetry laughed at..

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

And you wander along my fertile  
soil, picking its ripe fruit..A  
nightingale undresses on my  
tongue..And under its wings..

He laughs. She stops cold. Looks down..though just seconds long, this still constitutes the first depression of her life.

**JOHN**

I'm sorry. I don't know what I just  
took out of you but tell me how to  
get it back in there..I'm sorry.  
Flor..I'm sorry.

**CLOSE ON HER..**

The downcast eyes rise to see him..

**FLOR**

Then respect this.  
He looks at her...they kiss..It is a kiss without an author.  
God at the controls. They break. There is a beat then..

**JOHN**

Here's something I never asked  
anyone..Did nightingales undress on  
your tongue?  
Flor looks at him with enormous warmth. Her arms looped  
around his neck..aware of the music.

**FLOR**

Did they on yours?

**JOHN**

(a long beat of  
reflection/then sincere  
and surprised)  
Yeah...



**FLOR**

Like happy?

**JOHN**

Like happy.

**FLOR**

You think that will last?

**JOHN**

It's already gone.

**FLOR**

I understand what you mean.

**JOHN**

I don't understand what I mean.

115.

**FLOR**

That it's getting late. That  
responsibilities have entered your  
brain. Don't hide that from me.  
And really, one large reason we are  
here is because you respect me as a  
mother and I respect you as a  
father..

He is looking at her...she is disconcerted.

**JOHN**

You're a great and wild mother.

**FLOR**

You are a beautiful father.  
She looks at him..they kiss...tenderness..heat...intimacy.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

When Cristina was young, I would say I want to take any man who wants me to the park and I will tell whether I want him from the way he is with Cristina. I wish you had been in the park then.

(a beat)

Any reaction?

John considering and then the answer comes to him.

**JOHN**

Exactly!..

**FLOR**

You know, I always think about when you...Oh, there's no point. I talk too much...

(a bit of emotion)

...because I don't know if we ever talk again.

**JOHN**

Hey, hey..How do you get there?  
Wait.

**FLOR**

Yes you do. Be honest.

**JOHN**

I'm being honest.

(indicates their bodies)

Look at us - I think I call it honesty.

**FLOR**

What are we going to do -- go home,  
let our hearts go back in our  
bodies, see each other a few more  
times. Make a tragedy out of us..  
She kisses him again...starts to cry....looks at him..emits a  
small cooing sound.

**FLOR (CONT'D)**

Ahhhhhhh.  
(sudden energy)  
There are some mistakes you cannot  
risk when you have kids...Please,  
are you ready to go?

**JOHN**

(urgently)  
No. I'm not. No.  
(then)  
Stay put for a second. Stay here.  
Once our feet touch that floor, I'm  
going to get too many brain cells  
back. So don't be in such a hurry.  
That floor, Flor, is going to eat  
us alive.  
(she settles back/he is  
energized)  
So you think it was a mistake up to  
now.  
(she nods "yes")  
That's rough.  
She nods again..trying to gut things out...but as her foot  
touches the floor, she must say one last thing to him.

**FLOR**

The mistake....I love it.

173 INT. CLASKY HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT.

173

Deborah's face is bleached from crying...the tear ducts of  
her now brown eyes are parched dry..Evelyn sits eyeing her as  
she looks through the window at the pre-dawn emptiness of  
Stone Canyon. In her current shape she would give pause to a

staff worker at Promises..a shock victim walking through the rubble after the bomb has dropped. Deborah's voice is scratchy when she speaks.

**DEBORAH**

Tell me again why I can't call him  
on the cell.

**EVELYN**

Besides that he turned it off?

**DEBORAH**

Yes.

117.

**EVELYN**

Forty messages start to look needy.

**DEBORAH**

Mother, you're enjoying this.

**EVELYN**

No..Definitely not in the way you  
think.

**DEBORAH**

(staggered)  
You are enjoying it?!?

**EVELYN**

(rising/honest)  
I am enjoying actually being of use  
to my daughter. I am enjoying the

fact that I really know how to advise you and the miracle that you are so deeply disoriented that you are gobbling up everything I say. Deborah nods in agreement -- then looks at her mother in a somewhat new way..as if Evelyn were an actual person instead of an upsetting extension of herself.

**DEBORAH**

(vulnerable)  
There's one thing I'd like to say to you about you and me.

**EVELYN**

You don't have to.

**DEBORAH**

I want to.

**EVELYN**

Okay.

**DEBORAH**

(quite vulnerable and appealing)  
You were an alcoholic and wildly promiscuous woman during my formative years so that I am in this fix because of you. It is your fault. I just needed..  
(gestures heart to heart)  
..that moment for us.

**EVELYN**

You have a solid point, dear. But right now the lessons of my life are coming in handy for you.

**DEBORAH**

There's a car coming....  
Evelyn moves to her.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

It's him...he's got to tell me  
everything..  
Evelyn shakes her head "no."

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(wild-eyed)  
Yes!

**EVELYN**

Do you know that right now you are  
your own worst enemy..that you  
can't trust one thought in your  
brain?

**DEBORAH**

Duh.

**EVELYN**

Then trust me and only allow  
yourself to say one thing to  
him..One thing..."I'm so glad  
you're back."

**DEBORAH**

Huh?

**EVELYN**

Yes.

**DEBORAH**

(babbling)  
But I've got to know whether he  
touched her - where he touched her -  
how he touched her - if they broke

a sweat --- what they said - who made the first move - how they left it -- if anyone loves anyone or has an intention of making contact in the future - what she wore - how he felt afterwards - whether anyone mentioned me..

(a wail)

..whether they held hands when they left..

The distinct sound of a door opening and closing from downstairs.

119.

**EVELYN**

Just those words I said. If you want a prayer of coming out of this.

**DEBORAH**

I know you're right..But..

**EVELYN**

But what?

**DEBORAH**

(a small voice)

I forgot the sentence you said I should say.

**EVELYN**

"I'm so glad you're back."

**DEBORAH**

Okay..do I have to wait here?

**EVELYN**

No..he may not come up here..go to him.

**DEBORAH**

Why wouldn't he come up here?

**EVELYN**

Just go.

**DEBORAH**

Do I need a little makeup?

**EVELYN**

You need a hose but you don't have the time. It's fine that you look like that. It's genuine..You can use genuine.

**DEBORAH**

Thank you, mom.  
She takes a breath exits...

**174 INT. STAIRWELL 174**

She pauses at the top of the stairs..a breath..then unable to help herself runs down them at breakneck speed.

**175 INT. DOWNSTAIRS.. 175**

John turning a light on when Deborah bursts into the room.

**120.**

**DEBORAH**

I'm so glad to see you  
    (correcting self)  
    ..that you're back.  
John looks up at her - not knowing what to say...he is  
thrown. His demeanor has changed...deeper..serious..

**JOHN**

It's late, Deborah.  
The wrong words start to form..she stops herself..

**DEBORAH**

Well, I just wanted to say.. what I  
said..  
She is on the stairway..he turns to go in the opposite  
direction.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

(way too loud)  
Uhhhh..  
He turns back to her...she stops herself from straying into  
untried words but gestures whether he is coming upstairs to  
bed.

**JOHN**

(a beat then)  
I can't sleep upstairs with you..  
Just can't for now.  
This rocks her..panicked she grabs at her life preserver.

**DEBORAH**

I'm just so glad you're back.  
Deborah's suddenly classy demeanor provides just the barest  
of footings for them...He looks at her directly for the first  
time since she told him.

**JOHN**

Yeah..okay.  
She nods..then goes back up the stairs..

**176 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

**176**

Evelyn, who has been standing close to the doorway, stands  
clear to let her enter. As Deborah flies in wildly vulnerable  
- her breath racing.

**DEBORAH**

I am literally choking on unsaid words..seriously. If this were a restaurant ten people would have their knuckles in my sternum.

121.

**EVELYN**

The fact that you didn't just make things worse should fill you with hope..

In her current state, she has to process that one..and does. Her breath slows.

177 **INT. MAID'S ROOM - NIGHT...**

177

The first time we've seen this room since Flor was working the sewing machine...John enters. He is down, longing and finality make for a brutal cocktail..He rubs his head and sits near the sewing machine..He glances over and sees Flor's Spanish/English dictionary..There is a knock on the door.

**JOHN**

Deb, I'm done tonight. I don't think we can jam anything else in.

**BERNICE'S VOICE**

It's me, Dad.  
He springs from the bed and opens the door.

**JOHN**

What's up, honey?

**BERNICE**

Just thought I'd check that you

were back and okay and all.

**JOHN**

(feigning innocence)  
Because?

**BERNICE**

Mom was crying for six hours straight and Grandma was in with her all that time mostly saying, "he'll be back..he'll be back." I've got to get back to Georgie.

**JOHN**

I just hate that you had that kind of a night.

**BERNICE**

It's good for me to worry about something that really matters instead of the stupid stuff that's usually on my mind...

**JOHN**

Like?

122.

**BERNICE**

(a big grin)  
Surviving.

**JOHN**

You're fantastic, Bernie...I love you.

**BERNICE**

It's a slant...

(pause then)

Hey..I know there's a lot you went through but I knew all along that Grandma was right about you coming back..I mean totally knew it so I wasn't that worried. But still I...

(some emotion out of hiding)

I really appreciate it, Dad.  
Thanks....Stop staring at me..what?  
You don't know what to say?

**JOHN**

Right. I don't know what to say.

**BERNICE**

Just what you taught me..You're welcome.

**JOHN**

You're welcome.

They kiss.

**178 EXT. STONE CANYON - MORNING. 178**

Flor purposefully walking up the hill..

**179 INT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY. 179**

As Flor enters...walks through a few empty rooms..then once in the kitchen she sees the children and Evelyn are swimming in the pool...she opens the glass door Monica bumped into on interview day.

**180 EXT. CLASKY POOL - DAY. 180**

Evelyn, Bernice and Georgie are in the pool..Cristina, wearing a bathing suit, is on a chaise reading...

**CRISTINA**

Hey, mom...Is it okay if we don't leave right away?

The others call greetings..save Evelyn who studies the situation and gets out of the pool..Flor is awkward..no idea

how to handle this...so she goes direct.

123.

**FLOR**

No...

(as Cristina begins to  
protest)

No..and we must say "goodbye." I  
don't work here anymore.

She then talks Spanish to Cristina..admonishing her not to  
embarrass them..something about Flor being prepared to go  
nuts all over her daughter if she hurts their dignity...but  
it is said with total calm.

**GEORGIE**

Do I have to get out?

**FLOR**

No, Georgie..Stay. I think you are  
a wonderful boy..be good..like you  
are. There are no monsters.

**GEORGIE**

Thanks..thanks. Okay.

Bernice climbs out of the pool. Meanwhile, a flabbergasted  
Cristina is staring at her mom who gives quiet two and three  
word proddings in Spanish.

**BERNICE**

(severely to Georgie)  
I can't believe you didn't get out.

**GEORGIE**

Flor said.

**BERNICE**

(to Flor)  
I don't want to get you wet.

**FLOR**

Get me wet.

**BERNICE**

(rushing to hug her)  
Thanks.  
Bernice hugs her. Evelyn hugs Cristina..

**EVELYN**

You...are...a...trip.

**FLOR**

(to Bernice)  
You're a beauty. Amazing girl.

124.

Despite herself, Bernice starts to cry..moans to herself over the display...Now, in the background, we hear a subliminal human voice. Incrementally it will grow louder and be recognizable as Deborah calling Flor from the master bedroom window..Bit by bit, the others will become aware of this as Flor ignores it...Bernice goes to embrace Cristina.

**BERNICE**

My last chance to have some of you  
rub off on me..  
(Cristina doesn't  
understand)  
I'm sorry you're so sad but this  
could have been so much worse.

**CRISTINA**

(from her depths)

How?

And now Deborah calling "Flor" is getting hard to ignore but Flor manages..

**EVELYN**

(to Cristina)

Why don't you run upstairs and say  
goodbye to Deborah?

Flor flashes a look of thanks.

**FLOR**

I'll be in front.

Upset, Cristina runs off. She kisses Bernice..and walks  
toward the house. As she passes under the bedroom..

**DEBORAH**

Please come see me.

And then a crying Cristina appears on the deck. Flor glances  
up and keeps moving underneath the deck where she faintly  
hears the beginning of their exchange

**DEBORAH'S VOICE**

It's okay, honey..we'll see each  
other at school..I'm going to keep  
an eye on you..I will.

Flor enters the house...

**181 INT. KITCHEN - DAY.**

**181**

She stands waiting..walks to the hallway and cranes her head  
to see into rooms, wondering if John is there. Finally, as  
she passes the stairwell, she sees Cristina on an upper  
landing and says, in Spanish, that Cristina should get her  
things and meet her out front. Cristina, agitated, moves off  
to comply...then Deborah appears in the same spot.

**DEBORAH**

Please stick your head in here for  
a minute.  
Flor nods and starts up the stairs...

**182 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

**182**

Deborah holds open the door while Flor walks inside..then  
closes it.

**DEBORAH**

What's with avoiding me, am I this  
horrible person?  
As Flor just looks at her.

**DEBORAH (CONT'D)**

I know. It's a ridiculous question  
but sometimes I'm ridi...

**FLOR**

No. It's a good question. A fine  
question. Complicated.  
(beat then)  
I was just thinking to answer.

**DEBORAH**

Oh stop. Come on. Weren't we  
close?

**FLOR**

(like a shot)  
No.

**DEBORAH**

(truly hurt)  
Well, I'm very, very disappointed  
to hear that. It makes me feel like  
a fool.

**FLOR**

(compassion forces a  
crumb)

We weren't close..but we were  
connected...in a bad way.

**DEBORAH**

(strangely soothed)  
You know something, I think we're  
saying the same thing...Look as  
long as we're doing closure..What  
did you and my husband, John, do  
last night?

Flor pauses for less of a beat than we would have imagined.

**FLOR**

I can only tell you what I did.

126.

**DEBORAH**

That will be sufficient.

**FLOR**

(these are tender  
feelings)  
I became sure of what an incredibly  
lucky woman you are and I must make  
myself not envy you which is hard.  
No, it's not hard. It's impossible.  
Now please..I am exhausted.

**DEBORAH**

Same here - believe me.  
Deborah would hug..but it's only an eighth of a gesture  
because Flor has turned to exit, calling for her daughter to  
hurry as she goes.

**FLOR**

Cristina, apúrate.

183 EXT. CLASKY HOUSE - DAY

183

As she exits the house and moves to the gate where she punches in the exit code...

**ANGLE ON GATE**

As it swings open to reveal John...

184 EXT. STREET - DAY.

184

As she moves alongside him and the gate closes behind her.

**JOHN**

I was hanging out here waiting.

Can't give you guys a lift?

Flor shakes her head "no." She looks away for a beat so the next thing she does is a considered action. She leans forward and kisses him on the lips. John looks at her.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

This is killer.

(on her confusion)

Incredibly hard.

**FLOR**

Yes, Cari..

The gate opens and a sniffing Cristina is holding an armful of loot.

**JOHN**

(reading Flor)

Let her have it..party favors.

127.

She nods..bites back some emotion and turns from him.

**FLOR**

Cristina..

**CRISTINA**

Goodbye, Mr. Clasky..I am very  
sorry we will not see each other as  
frequently.

She offers her hand, which John shakes while patting her on  
the back.

**FLOR**

Yes.

They turn and begin walking down the street.

**SHOT - STONE CANYON**

The women walking toward camera, John briefly in the  
background...As they begin their walk Flor begins talking in  
Spanish.

**NARRATOR**

The first minute we were alone, my  
mother told me that I would no  
longer go to the private school.

**CRISTINA**

No. No..You can't. I won't be able  
to forgive you..It will be the end.  
I won't let you.

And then Cristina moves her hysterics to Spanish as she stops  
walking and her mother takes her hand and pulls her along  
with enormous dedication. CAMERA BEGINS A PULL BACK.  
Cristina dropping presents..picking them up..one of them left  
by the wayside..People noticing..Cristina's conduct violating  
tacit zoning laws.

**CLOSER SHOT..**

So we can see their faces in the struggle.

**185 EXT. BUS STOP..**

**185**

As they wait...Flor talks sharply to Cristina to control  
herself.

**NARRATOR**

My mother changed our lives once more. This time because she saw in me, to her great alarm, a character flaw of some size. She has taught me to be a watch dog of my character, to control my ambition. I am not quite there.

128.

One last yelp from Cristina as the bus arrives.

186 INT. BUS - DAY.

186

Almost empty - it's Saturday. Mother and daughter sit together by the giant window in the center of the bus. Cristina eyes her mother who is bearing her own heartbreak with stoic dignity. The girl is becoming less inconsolable and more in need of mothering.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

For that reason should you choose to grant me your scholarship my mother, at my request, will be relocating to the New York Metropolitan Area so that she can stay close during my time at Princeton.

Cristina moves closer to Flor, who senses it immediately and wraps her in her arms.. kisses her head.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

I hope my essay has done her justice. I love her with all my heart.