

THE PROPOSAL

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FADE IN:

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

The sun peeks over the horizon. There's a stunning view of Central Park from this apartment, but whoever lives here isn't watching.
As we wander through expensive furniture, a steady THUMP, THUMP, THUMP echoes through the apartment. Eventually, we see MARGARET MILLS (37) running on a treadmill, watching "The O.C." on Tivo, and reading a manuscript. She sprints as the clock on her treadmill goes to zero. As she hits a button to stop the treadmill...

INT. WOMAN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

A hand knocks an alarm clock off a table to shut it up. RICHARD PAXTON (26) wakes up on pink sheets and looks around to figure out where he is. There are multiple framed pictures of the same model on the walls. Richard looks at the clock and gets up quickly when he sees it is 6:16 AM. Unfortunately for him, he is very hung over.

RICHARD

Where are my clothes?
A blob beneath the sheets next to him answers. SIMONE is the

model on the walls and is really, really hot.

SIMONE

In the kitchen. I think. Can I make you some coffee?

RICHARD

Sorry, I gotta go. I'm late.

Richard hurries to the kitchen. Socks are on the butcher block next to an empty champagne bottle. Shoes in the sink. He finds his pants on the floor and puts them on.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Have you seen my belt?

Simone looks around and sees it tied to her headboard.

SIMONE

In here.

She unties the complicated knot. Richard comes back half dressed. He swallows a little throwup.

RICHARD

Baby, I just can't do this anymore.

2.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Margaret puts on a black suit jacket. Definitely not off the rack. She makes sure she looks perfect in the mirror, and moves off.

INT. WOMAN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Reflected in the mirror above Simone's bed, Richard hurriedly gets dressed as he talks.

RICHARD

You're just too much for me. And I'm just another guy too wrapped up in his job.

SIMONE

Fine. Whatever. Just go.
Richard sits down on the bed and locks eyes with Simone.

RICHARD

Let's not end it like that. It's been an
amazing three and a half weeks. Thank you.
And you should know that you have the nicest
ass I've ever been with.

SIMONE

(TOUCHED)

You mean it?

RICHARD

I do. It's magnificent.

SIMONE

I work really hard on it.

RICHARD

I know you do.
Simone smiles and begins to seductively pull the sheets off
her
naked body. Richard shakes his head "no" and smiles.
RICHARD (cont'd)
I really gotta go.

INT. MARGARET'S KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

CRUNCH. Margaret eats a bowl of Kashi and soy milk while
standing and reading a manuscript. Her eyes remain glued
to her
reading as she rinses out her bowl and puts it in the
dishwasher.
Her apartment is very quiet.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - MORNING

HONK! A cab blares its horn at Richard as he runs across
the
street. His suit is ruffled and he checks his watch.

3.

INT. MARGARET'S LOBBY - MORNING

exit
her CELL
at
DING! The elevator opens and Margaret strides towards the
and the DOORMAN (60). Before Margaret gets to the door,
PHONE RINGS. She checks the caller ID and excitedly points
her phone as she lets it ring.

MARGARET

(to phone)
I knew you would call! Now come on, tell me
what I want to hear. Give it to me.

DOORMAN

You have to put it by your mouth so people
can hear you.

MARGARET

walks out
You should get paid extra for being so darn
funny.
Margaret straightens her jacket, answers the phone, and
the door.
MARGARET (cont'd)
This is Margaret.

INT. SKYSCRAPER LOBBY - MORNING

Richard bursts into the skyscraper and runs into a
Starbucks.

INT. STARBUCKS - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Barista,
Two coffees lie in wait for Richard. JILLIAN, a lovely
smiles as he hurries to the counter.

JILLIAN

You're running late today.

RICHARD

Jillian, you are the best.

JILLIAN

If you think I'm good at this, you should
use that coffee cup sometime.

As he runs out the door, Richard glances at his cup and smiles at Jillian's name and phone number written in Sharpie.

RICHARD

See ya tomorrow.

INT. SKYSCRAPER LOBBY - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors ahead of Richard begin to close.

RICHARD

4.

Mercifully, a hand reaches out and stops the doors. Inside the packed elevator, Richard's CO-WORKERS look sleepy. One particularly frustrated co-worker confronts Richard.

CO-WORKER #1

How long is she gonna make us come in by seven?

RICHARD

She doesn't exactly consult with me on these things.

CO-WORKER #1

Well this sucks ass.

RICHARD

Welcome to my nightmare.
The doors close as...

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - MORNING

Margaret crosses the street and talks on the phone.

MARGARET

You've been thinking about our talk because I'm right. Everyone does publicity. Roth, McCourt, Russo. Hell, Chabon practically whores himself. Know what they have in common? A Pulitzer.

(off answer)

Yes, I know you haven't done it in twenty years, but that's how long it's been since you've written a book this good.

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - MORNING

Richard bursts out of the elevator and passes a clock reading 6:56 and a sign that announces "Royce Publishing." He hauls ass through a sea of cubicles. Along the way, grumpy employees begrudgingly nod their good mornings. At his desk, he pulls a tie out of a drawer and puts it on without looking in the mirror. Noticing his wrinkled suit, he pulls out a SPRAY BOTTLE out of the same drawer, sprays it all over his body, and then on his head to help mat down a tricky cowlick. Satisfied, he hurries into a nearby corner office.

INT. SKYSCRAPER LOBBY - MORNING

Margaret walks into the lobby and continues talking. Employees avoid her and pile into the elevator.

5.

MARGARET

I'm not pushing so you'll sell more books, I'm pushing because it'll be a crime if the world doesn't hear that you wrote a genius piece of literature. Do the publicity. Margaret waits for an answer and smiles when she hears

"yes."

MARGARET (cont'd)

You're making the right decision! Great news. Going into an elevator, think I'm going to lose you...

Margaret hangs up. Never give them a chance to change their

mind.

INT. MARGARET'S OFFICE - MORNING

Richard races to Margaret's computer and turns it on. He
picks up papers strewn about the room. He goes back to the
computer, and opens computer programs.

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - RECEPTION - MORNING

Margaret exits the elevator and receives an enthusiastic...

RECEPTIONIST

Good morning!

Margaret quickly walks by and gives only the slightest nod.

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - MORNING

Margaret walks through the cubicles and nods hello to her
staff, who all look busy on the phone. When she turns the corner,
they stop their "conversations" in mid sentence and hang up.

INT. MARGARET'S OFFICE - MORNING

Richard stares at the printer as a sheet of paper comes out.
A clock above the door reads 7:00 AM. The paper clears the
printer and Richard grabs it quickly.

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - MORNING

Margaret opens the door to her office, and finds Richard
standing at attention with papers in one hand and coffee in the
other. Her office looks perfect.

RICHARD

You've got a conference call in thirty, a
staff meeting at nine, and your immigration
lawyer sent some papers for you to sign.

MARGARET

Cancel the call, move the meeting to eight,

(MORE)

6.

MARGARET (cont'd)
(big news)
I got Frank to do publicity.

RICHARD
Nice job.

MARGARET
When I want your praise, I'll ask for it.
Is Bob here?

RICHARD
I'm sure. You want him on the phone?

MARGARET
We're going to his office. Grab your pad.
Richard calmly backs out of the office...

INT. RICHARD'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

... but once he's out of Margaret's sight he runs to his
computer
and sends an instant message to the office "The Banshee is
headed
to Bob's office."

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - MORNING

As the message pops up on computers, the quiet office jumps
to
life as everyone in a cubicle picks up their phone and
resumes
their imaginary conversations.

INT. RICHARD'S DESK - MORNING

Margaret comes out to Richard's desk. She notices his
coffee cup
with Jillian's number on it. She takes special notice of
the
hearts that dot the "I's" in Jillian.

MARGARET

That's cute. You gonna call her today?

RICHARD

What?

Richard doesn't know what Margaret is talking about, until she nods at the cup. He's embarrassed.

MARGARET

Are you bored here? Do you need little distractions like that to get you through the day?

RICHARD

Uh...

MARGARET

You have another late night out?

RICHARD

7.

worried Margaret starts walking. Richard quickly catches up, because he doesn't know where she's going with this.

MARGARET

I'm firing on all cylinders and you've got hearts on your coffee cup, wicked bed head, and a wrinkled suit that you wore yesterday.

RICHARD

Oh. Well, it won't be wrinkled for long.

MARGARET

You'll magically unwrinkle?

RICHARD

Yes.

MARGARET

You have magic pants?

RICHARD

No. I've sprayed them with stuff that will take care of the wrinkles.

MARGARET

Does this work on more than just your pants?

RICHARD

Anything that's wrinkled.

MARGARET

Buy me some.

RICHARD

Will do.

Richard makes a note. Margaret stops to make her point.

MARGARET

I don't care what or who you do on your own time, but when you walk through that door you represent me, and I will not have your personal life affect you at work. If you want me to think of promoting you to editor, I need you sharp, focused and professional. Got it?

RICHARD

Got it.

MARGARET

Great. Now you're just a prop in here, so don't say a word.

8.

INT. BOB'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Margaret and Richard enter Bob's office, which is decorated with beautiful antiques and first edition books. But unlike Margaret's office, this one isn't in the corner. Margaret nods at Richard to shut the door. BOB (42) wears a prim bow tie, circular tortoise shell glasses, and the air of superiority.

MARGARET

Hey, Bob.

BOB

Ah. Our fearless leader and her liege.
Margaret smiles.

MARGARET

I'm lettin' you go, Bob.

BOB

Pardon?

MARGARET

You're fired.

BOB

What? What are you talking about?

MARGARET

This isn't working out.

BOB

You can't...

MARGARET

I asked you repeatedly to get Frank to do
publicity. You said it was impossible.

BOB

It is. He doesn't do publicity.

MARGARET

I just talked to him. He's in.

BOB

But...

MARGARET

No more buts, Bob. I've been chief for a
month and a half, and this is the third time
you've dropped the ball. You didn't even
call to ask him.

BOB

9.

MARGARET

All you had to do to was pick up the phone.
That's it. Now I'll give you two months to
find a new job, and then you can say you
resigned. I won't tell a soul, my lips are
sealed.
Margaret nods at Richard and he opens the door.

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - CONTINUOUS

straight
Margaret and Richard walk a few steps. Margaret looks
ahead and whispers to Richard.

MARGARET

chair
What's he doing?
Richard turns around and takes a peek. Bob gets out of his
and comes to his door.

RICHARD

He's up and about to pop.

MARGARET

Oh Bob, don't do it...

BOB

YOU POISONOUS BITCH! YOU CAN'T FIRE ME!

turns
calm.
The office stops. This is going to be good. Margaret
around with a disappointed look on her face. She's deadly

MARGARET

What are you doing? I gave you a civilized
way out of this.

BOB

This is because I'm your competition.
Because I threaten you!

MARGARET

Oh, Bob. You could never threaten me. I'm
firing you because you're lazy, entitled and
incompetent. I'm firing you because you
don't work hard. So if you know what's good

for you, you'll shut up, take off that ridiculous bow tie, find a bar and get drunk. Because if you say one more word, Richard here is going to call security and have you thrown out on your ass. Are we perfectly clear?

Bob nods.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Good. Now I've got work to do, so if you'll

10.

Margaret and Richard walk away and speak in hushed tones.

MARGARET (cont'd)

We need to call his authors and explain what happened. And get Frank's publicity schedule figured out pronto.

RICHARD

No problem. I'll just cancel my trip this weekend.

MARGARET

I gave you the weekend off?

RICHARD

It was my Grandma's ninetieth birthday. But no big deal. You were right before, I need to stay focused. Professional.

INT. RICHARD'S DESK - DAY

Richard is on the phone with his mom explaining why he can't
come home this weekend. He sounds like an annoyed teenager.

RICHARD

Well tell gammy that I'm sorry.

(waiting to speak)

Mom, she's making me work this weekend.

It's not like I volunteered.

(waiting to speak)

I'm sure dad is pissed.

Margaret comes to Richard's desk. He tries to wrap it up.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I have to go. Yeah. No, I'm not going to do that! No. Sorta. Mom! No. Bye.
Richard hangs up the phone.
RICHARD (cont'd)
Sorry about that. Damage control.

MARGARET

She tell you to quit?

RICHARD

No. No.
(off Margaret's look)
Um. Yes? But as I've explained to them, after three years together, you're the only person on the planet who can make me editor, so that's the way it is.
Richard's phone rings and he picks it up.

11.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Your 10:55 is here. Mr. Gilbertson?

MARGARET

Who is this guy?

RICHARD

He said you knew each other. You weren't sure so you told me to set a meeting. We rescheduled on him four times.

MARGARET

Go get him. But he's out of here in five minutes, we've got work to do.
Margaret leaves and goes into her office.

RICHARD

(to himself)
I'll charge up the cattle prod.

INT. MARGARET'S OFFICE - DAY

Margaret reads as MR. GILBERTSON (48) sits down. He's an intense

up. man in a bad suit. He sits in silence until Margaret looks

MR. GILBERTSON

Margaret. Good to see you. I know how busy you are. Congrats on the promotion. Read about it in P-W.

MARGARET

Yeah. Well, those announcements are silly, aren't they? Like everyone who needs to know doesn't know already. Margaret has been trying to figure out how she knows this

man,

but now gives up.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Have to admit, I can't place where we know each other from.

Gilbertson smiles. He didn't expect her to remember.

MR. GILBERTSON

Three years ago? We worked together.

MARGARET

Don't have it...

MR. GILBERTSON

Remember "Dandelion's Desire?" Margaret gets excited.

12.

MARGARET

Oh my God, you read that manuscript with me? That book is legend. Without a doubt the worst ever written.

MR. GILBERTSON

You think?

MARGARET

It was a fever dream!
900 offensive and
pointless pages, with like 30 characters,

who all had some weird disability. The paraplegic pornographer, and the stuttering scientist? Oh! And there was the asthmatic alien chapter -- written entirely in his alien language.

MR. GILBERTSON

I believe there was a glossary...
Margaret laughs, caught up in the memory.

MARGARET

Did you see the pass letter I wrote him?

MR. GILBERTSON

(QUOTING)

"Your grammar is impeccable, but please do not confuse superior form with writing ability. Save your skills for the office newsletter, you sir, are no writer."
A beat. Margaret says matter of fact...

MARGARET

You wrote the book.

MR. GILBERTSON

I did.

MARGARET

You're Dante Dickens?

MR. GILBERTSON

One of my nom de plumes.
Gilbertson paces. Margaret stays seated, at a loss.

MARGARET

I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings. You obviously were spending a lot of time writing, I just thought you should channel all that passion into something else.
Gilbertson smiles as he pulls a BADGE from his coat pocket.

MR. GILBERTSON

Ms. Mills, I'm with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and I'm deporting you to Canada.

MARGARET

Excuse me? What? This is a mistake. I've lived here since 1981. I'm applying for citizenship.

MR. GILBERTSON

You need citizenship now? After the big promotion?

MARGARET

Yes. And all the papers are in. Gilbertson pulls out a stack of papers and throws them down.

MR. GILBERTSON

Well, my office is going to reject your paperwork on Monday, while we investigate whether your behavior is well disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States. We must protect our sovereignty.

MARGARET

I'm a threat to the sovereignty of the United States?

MR. GILBERTSON

Yes, and unfortunately my investigation will take awhile, so you'll be deported while your case winds through the system.
(as if he doesn't know)
Will it affect you at work if you aren't allowed to enter the U.S. for the next two to three years?

MARGARET

"Affect me at work?" I'll lose my job!

MR. GILBERTSON

(mock sympathy)
Ahhhh. That's a shame. Too bad we can't work something out.
Margaret stops looking at her file. It all becomes clear.

MARGARET

Oh, no. No, no, no. I won't do it.

MR. GILBERTSON

Do what, Ms. Mills?

MARGARET

14.

Gilbertson smiles. She's quick.

MR. GILBERTSON

I've edited it down. It's better.

MARGARET

Well then, get it published at another house.

MR. GILBERTSON

They all just don't get me.

MARGARET

All?

MR. GILBERTSON

Well not all. Two hundred fifty, two hundred sixty-one. Ish.

MARGARET

I'll be fired and laughed out of the industry if I publish that book.

MR. GILBERTSON

I'm at the end of my rope, Ms. Mills. I'm an author. Not some bureaucrat who brings a lunchable to work everyday and lives in his brother's garage. You're the last stop, and I'm desperate.

MARGARET

I will never publish your book. Ever.

MR. GILBERTSON

There's no need to make this difficult. I don't turn in your file until Monday...

MARGARET

This is blackmail. I'll go to your boss.

MR. GILBERTSON

I've spent two years preparing for this day.
Don't you think I've thought of that?
Now Margaret is pacing, while Gilbertson happily looks on.
Suddenly, the door opens and Richard bursts in, acting like

there

is an "emergency" so Margaret can end the meeting.

RICHARD

Excuse me, Ms. Mills, risk management needs
you right away.

The sight of Richard inspires Margaret. She turns to
Gilbertson

with a wicked grin on her face.

15.

MARGARET

Know what, Dante? I'm not going anywhere!
We're getting married!
Richard has no idea what Margaret is talking about.

RICHARD

Who's getting married?

MARGARET

We are!

RICHARD

You and him?

MARGARET

Stop playing around, honey.
Margaret is all smiles. Richard is very confused.
MARGARET (cont'd)

Mr. Gilbertson is from the INS. I told him
about us. About us getting married.

MR. GILBERTSON

You are marrying your male secretary?

RICHARD

Assistant.

MR. GILBERTSON

You are marrying your male assistant?

MARGARET

(matter of fact)

We're in love. We tried to fight it. When it's right, it's right.

MR. GILBERTSON

And this has nothing to do with my visit here today?

MARGARET

Nope. True love. Got it bad.

MR. GILBERTSON

(to Richard)

You. Is this true? Are you marrying this... woman?

Margaret comes over to Richard and holds his hand.

MARGARET

Of course we are.

MR. GILBERTSON

16.

Painfully long beat where Richard doesn't answer. Margaret squeezes Richard's hand hard.

RICHARD

Uh-huh.

Margaret smiles and snuggles up to Richard so he can put his

arm

around her. Richard is truly afraid.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(more of a question)

I'm, uh, marrying my boss?

Margaret turns and puckers her lips to let Richard know that she's ready for a kiss. The two slowly begin to come

together.

Just as their dry lips are about to touch, Richard chickens

out

and kisses the hair on the top of her head.

MR. GILBERTSON

Five years in prison and a two hundred and fifty thousand dollar fine.

MARGARET

What?

MR. GILBERTSON

If I prove you're lying, you go to federal prison for five years.

Gilbertson takes out a pad and takes notes.

MR. GILBERTSON (cont'd)

(to Richard)

You. Do you know what you're getting yourself into? We're going to put you in a room and ask you every detail that a real couple would know about each other. Do you even know her favorite color?

Richard doesn't answer. Margaret encourages him on with a
thinly veiled threat.

MARGARET

C'mon. Answer. You don't have a choice. Richard doesn't want to do this, but relents.

RICHARD

Plum.

MR. GILBERTSON

You mean purple?

RICHARD

No. Plum is "smokier" than purple.

17.

MR. GILBERTSON

Favorite flower?

RICHARD

Tulips. But only when they're in season.

MR. GILBERTSON

Childhood pet name?

RICHARD

Miss Mittens.

MARGARET

Are we done here?

MR. GILBERTSON

Who knows you're getting married?

Margaret interrupts.

MARGARET

No one. With us working together we decided it would be too much of a scandal if anyone knew.

MR. GILBERTSON

Have you at least told your family?

MARGARET

(EXCITED)

My parents are dead!

MR. GILBERTSON

How convenient. So you're not telling anyone that you are getting married?

RICHARD

Nope.

Gilbertson smiles and puts down his pad.

MR. GILBERTSON

Pathetic. Four questions and I've got enough to send you to prison...

MARGARET

We're telling his family this weekend.

RICHARD

We are?

MARGARET

Yes. We are. We're surprising them...
(trying to remember)
...at his Grandma's 90th birthday party.

18.

MR. GILBERTSON

And where's that going to be?

MARGARET

(no idea)

At Richard's parent's house.

MR. GILBERTSON

And where's that located?

MARGARET

(still no idea)

In his hometown.

RICHARD

Sitka.

MR. GILBERTSON

Is that on Long Island?

Only Richard has the answer. Margaret tries to cover.

MARGARET

Why don't you tell him?

RICHARD

Alaska.

MR. GILBERTSON

You're going to Alaska this weekend?

MARGARET

(Alaska???)

Yes. Of course we're going to Alaska.

That's where Richard is from.

Gilbertson begins to walk around. He's getting worked up.

MR. GILBERTSON

You think you can beat me with this B-S story? Forcing your secretary...

RICHARD

Assistant.

MR. GILBERTSON

...assistant to marry you and then

conveniently telling his family for the first time this weekend?

MARGARET

I'm sorry, Dante. Did you not prepare for that?

Margaret puts her arm around Richard and waits in silence.

19.

Enraged, but with no recourse for now, Gilbertson checks his appointment book and writes down some information.

MR. GILBERTSON

The INS will see you both in ten days for your official interview. Your stories better match up on every account.

Mr. Gilbertson gets right up in Margaret's face as he gives her the piece of paper.

MR. GILBERTSON (cont'd)

Cross all your T's and dot your I's with this ruse, Ms. Mills.

MARGARET

There are no "T's" or "I's" in "Love" Mr. Gilbertson.

Gilbertson leaves and shuts the door hard. Margaret goes back to her desk like this is all in a days work.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Why are you from Alaska? Sweet Jesus, that's inconvenient. So here's what's going to happen. We'll play boyfriend and girlfriend this weekend for your parents and that should be enough for this INS interview.

Richard doesn't react. Margaret doesn't notice.

MARGARET (cont'd)

So you need to figure out the travel, schedule a justice of the peace for next week, and get my lawyer on the phone. Margaret takes a sip of her coffee and makes a face.

MARGARET (cont'd)

But first, run down and get me another

coffee from your girlfriend, this is cold.
Margaret holds out her coffee cup. Richard doesn't move.
MARGARET (cont'd)
Hello? Richard? Richard!
Richard says his first words since Gilbertson left.

RICHARD

I quit.
Richard leaves Margaret's office. She still has her coffee
outstretched in her hand.

cup

20.

INT. ROYCE PUBLISHING - CONTINUOUS

Richard powers through the office. Co-workers take notice
Margaret is following him.

that

MARGARET

Richard, come back here.
Margaret tries not to make a scene.
MARGARET (cont'd)
Richard. Richard.
Richard pushes the elevator button in front of reception.
MARGARET (cont'd)
Come back to the office!
Richard can't take it. He gets up in Margaret's face.

RICHARD

You shut up. You just lost your "I get to
tell Richard what to do" privileges.

MARGARET

Well, we need to talk.

RICHARD

You want to talk with me? Fine. Grab your
broom and let's go.
Margaret is dumbstruck. The receptionist is shocked. The
elevator arrives and Richard gets in. Margaret follows. As
doors close, Richard shouts out to the receptionist.

the

RICHARD (cont'd)
Watch my phones!

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Richard and Margaret walk in silence through the park.
Richard
finally speaks.

RICHARD
Your plan is psychotic.

MARGARET
Well I'd rather poke my eyes out than play
pretend girlfriend, but this is the big
time. Sometimes you need to sack up.

RICHARD
Aren't Canadians supposed to be nice?

MARGARET
You wanna be an editor? You need to make

21.

RICHARD
OK. Fine. Then if we "make this happen"?
You're promoting me to editor.

MARGARET
I'm doing what?

RICHARD
We go to Alaska and lie to my family? I
risk going to jail? Well, you're making me
editor for that. I mean, did you think I'd
do this out of the kindness of my heart?

MARGARET
You work for me!

RICHARD
You know, during my employee orientation,
the HR rep didn't mention anything about me

marrying you.

MARGARET

Look, I came to this town alone and with nothing. I've worked my ass off for fifteen years and this guy wants to ruin me because he wrote the shittiest book of all time? No way.

RICHARD

Nice story Little Orphan Annie, but that sounds like your problem. Not mine. Margaret is stuck. Richard really does have the upper

hand.

MARGARET

Fine. You take me to Alaska this weekend, and I'll make you editor. Deal? Margaret puts out her hand to shake, Richard takes it. MARGARET (cont'd) And I'm not sleeping on your parent's hide-a-bed, we're staying in a hotel. Do they even have hotels in Alaska?

RICHARD

No. But they have huts. Teepees really. And you have to poop in a bucket. But otherwise, just like the Four Seasons. But with bears.

EXT. PLANE TO SEATTLE - DAY

A commercial jet TAKES OFF and leaves New York City behind.

22.

INT. PLANE TO SEATTLE - DAY

Richard and Margaret sit in First Class and work on their tops. Richard looks up.

RICHARD

Um. Shouldn't we talk about what we're

lap

going to say to my parents?
Margaret doesn't look up, annoyed with the question.

MARGARET

Are you done with the press release?

RICHARD

Almost.

MARGARET

(PATRONIZING)

Well let's finish big people business before
mommy and daddy talk. Okay?
Dejected, Richard goes back to work.

INT. SEATTLE AIRPORT - DAY

As they change planes in Seattle, Margaret walks quickly and
talks on the phone. Still the assistant, Richard lags
behind,
weighed down by both their bags.
Up ahead at the gate, a GATE ATTENDANT (Female, 50's)
ANNOUNCES
final boarding to Sitka. Margaret gets off her phone.

MARGARET

So what do I need to know up there? Bullet
points.

RICHARD

I told 'em we've been dating for six months.
We've kept it a secret from everyone...
(under his breath)
...and that you're a naughty minx in the
sack.

Richard and Margaret make it to the attendant at the gate.
Margaret is not amused by Richard's attempt at humor.

MARGARET

(VENOMOUS)

Don't make me hate you.
Margaret hands her boarding pass to the attendant and
breezes
through. The attendant gives Richard a look.

RICHARD

Bringing her home to meet my folks. She's

23.

pass. Tangled in the bags, Richard struggles to find his boarding

The impatient attendant is getting frustrated.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I've got it here. Sorry. Guess I'm a little flustered too. Haven't been home for awhile, hope they like her!

The gate attendant smiles.

GATE ATTENDANT

(heard it all)

I don't care, sir.

Richard finds his boarding pass and hands it over.

RICHARD

OK then. You're a sweet lady. Thanks.

Richard hustles to the plane as they shut the doors.

INT. PLANE TO ALASKA - DAY

HANDSOME Margaret takes her seat and sits next to a well dressed

catches MAN who is READING A BOOK. She notices the title and he

her stare. Margaret explains.

MARGARET

I'm sorry, I hate it when people stare at what I'm reading. It's just... I worked on that book.

HANDSOME MAN

You wrote it?

MARGARET

Edited it. It was one of my favorites.

HANDSOME MAN

Well you did a good job. It's great.

MARGARET

You don't see many guys with that book. You, uh, read a lot of love stories about Roman concubines?

HANDSOME MAN

My ex-girlfriend gave it to me. I travel a lot for work. I'll read anything...

MARGARET

(SUSPICIOUS)

Ex-girlfriend, huh?

24.

HANDSOME MAN

(smiling, embarrassed)

OK, you got me. I'm a closet romantic. But let's keep that between us.

Margaret smiles and makes the "my lips are sealed" motion.

Just

then, Richard lumbers onto the plane with the bags.

MARGARET

There you are. Give me my lap top.

Richard untangles the bags and gives Margaret her computer

bag.

RICHARD

(re: book)

Hey, he's reading...

MARGARET

I know, Richard.

Richard turns around and puts the bags in the overhead compartment. The Handsome Man turns to Margaret.

HANDSOME MAN

Did you two want to sit together?

MARGARET

Sit together with who?

The Handsome man nods at Richard.

HANDSOME MAN

Your boyfriend?

Margaret points to Richard indignantly.

MARGARET

You mean him?

The Handsome man nods. Margaret tries to set the record straight.

MARGARET (cont'd)

No. No. No. He's my assistant.

HANDSOME MAN

You're bringing your assistant all the way to Alaska?

Richard smiles, happy that Margaret has to answer.

RICHARD

Oh, you can tell him the truth.

MARGARET

Well, he's... indispensable.

25.

The Handsome man isn't buying it.

MARGARET (cont'd)

And gay. Takes care of me everywhere I go.

Call him my queen mother. Aren't you my indispensable gay queen mother?

Margaret shoots Richard a nasty look. He has to go along.

RICHARD

That's me.

Richard turns to close the overhead compartment.

HANDSOME MAN

You're awfully nice to fly him first class.

Margaret nods her head and agrees. It sucks to be Richard.

EXT. AERIAL OF SITKA - DAY

We see the natural beauty of South Eastern Alaska. Sitka is an island the size of Maui. Only an eight mile stretch of coast is inhabited, the rest is complete wilderness. At the center of the island is a mountain with smaller hills around it. The coast is

dotted with fishing boats. Gorgeous.

INT. JETWAY - DAY

they
As they
Margaret and the Handsome Man chat like old friends while
walk off the plane. Richard follows with all the bags.
all walk out of the jetway they see...

INT. AIRPORT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

MARGARET!!!
New
30
sweet
he
A big banner that reads: CONGRATULATIONS RICHARD AND
with wedding bells and a graphic showing the journey from
York to Sitka. The banner is being held up by a group of
PEOPLE with excited looks on their faces.
Richard's mom DEBBIE (60) is front and center. She's a
lady who cooked Richard a hot breakfast every morning until
left the house.
GRANDMA ANNIE (89) also waits. She's lived a long time and
doesn't have a lot of time to screw around.
When they see Richard, they SCREAM. Margaret's face drops.

ALL

say
There he is!!! Where's Margaret?
Richard blanches white. Margaret looks back with eyes that
"What the hell is going on?"

26.

HANDSOME MAN

(noting banner)
That's sweet.
Richard goes over to the group. Margaret keeps walking.

RICHARD

What are you guys doing here? What's with
the sign?

DEBBIE

So you're "just dating," huh? I can't believe you didn't tell us!

RICHARD

Didn't tell you what?

ANNIE

We're not saying anything until you let us meet Margaret. Now, where's our girl?
Richard looks around. Margaret keeps her head down and tries to avoid eye contact.

RICHARD

Uh. Margaret? You need to come over here. Like now. Honey.
The Handsome Man sees Richard with the banner people, calling for Margaret to come over. Margaret winces.

MARGARET

I have to go now.

HANDSOME MAN

(putting it together)
What kind of sick shit is this?
Margaret nods. This would be a tough one to explain.

MARGARET

Have a great life.
Margaret walks toward the group. Richard puts out his hand and silently pleads for Margaret to hold it. At the last second, she takes it.

RICHARD

Everyone, this is Margaret.

GRANDMA ANNIE

It's nice to meet you. Now, do you prefer being called Margaret, or the Dragon Lady? We've heard it both ways.
Everyone laughs.

27.

DEBBIE

Annie!

GRANDMA ANNIE

It's not like he hasn't told her that he used to call her the Dragon Lady. They're getting married.

RICHARD

(real "casual")

Now, ah, where did you hear that? The whole "getting married" thing?

DEBBIE

Oh, that man from the government. Gilbert-something. Said he was checking up on you two. Said it was technicality, because Margaret was from Canada.

RICHARD

What, ah, did you tell him?

DEBBIE

Well for one thing, that you were in a lot of trouble for not telling us that you two were getting married!

RICHARD

No. Really. What did you say?

DEBBIE

Just that you were coming up here this weekend. That we hadn't seen you in a while, and that we'd heard about Margaret for years, but that we'd never met her. Debbie turns to Margaret and takes both of her hands.

DEBBIE (CONT'D (cont'd)

The way that Richard talked about you? I'll admit, I didn't see this coming.

MARGARET

Me neither.

Debbie picks up some of the bags and starts walking toward the exit. Everyone else follows her lead.

ON THE MOVE

DEBBIE

So why all the silly secrecy?

RICHARD

It wasn't a secret. We didn't tell anyone.

28.

DEBBIE

Well, is your family just anyone?

RICHARD

No, I didn't mean...

DEBBIE

I should be mad at you two. But, but... I'm just so excited!

MARGARET

(re: group)

Uh, is everyone coming to our hotel?

GRANDMA ANNIE

Oh, we cancelled your reservation. You're part of the family now. Family doesn't stay at a hotel. Also, we've got another little surprise for you two.

MARGARET

Surprise? Another surprise?

RICHARD

She's not good with surprises.

MARGARET

I'm really not good with surprises.

EXT. SITKA AIRPORT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Debbie stops. Sitka Airport is very small, so they are already outside by all the cars parked in the loading zone. Debbie and Annie excitedly look at each other.

DEBBIE

Well you two...

GRANDMA ANNIE

...you're getting married this weekend!

MARGARET

RICHARD

What?

What?

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

The whole kit and caboodle.

you

Margaret gives both these women a look that says "what are talking about?"

DEBBIE

When Gilber-something told us you were getting married...

GRANDMA ANNIE

29.

DEBBIE

...God rest their souls...

GRANDMA ANNIE

...or friends...

DEBBIE

...we decided to give you a wedding.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Engagement party tonight...

DEBBIE

...and the wedding tomorrow at midnight.

Debbie and Annie wait to see what Margaret thinks.

MARGARET

Are you witches?

GRANDMA ANNIE

Just quaint. During the solstice it's good luck. It's an Alaskan thing.

DEBBIE

We've planned everything.
Margaret isn't sold, so Grandma Annie goes for the clincher.

GRANDMA ANNIE

I'm old, Margaret. I don't have much time left. Richard lives so far away, and I never see him. Now I find out he's getting married, and I have a chance to see my one grandchild's wedding day. It's a dream come true for me. A dream come true. Please let me see Richard get married before I die.
Please.

say.
Long beat. Richard doesn't know what Margaret is going to

Finally,
Margaret doesn't know what Margaret is going to say.
she goes to speak, but can only get out... two big thumbs
up.

The crowd cheers.

EXT. SITKA - DAY

A procession of cars makes its way through town.

INT. PICKUP - DAY

smiles.
Debbie and Grandma sit in the front of the truck, all
Margaret and Richard sit as far away from each other as
possible
in the backseat of the extended cab.

30.

out
gives
Margaret tries to get Richard's attention, but he's looking
the window. Finally she pinches him and Richard jumps. He
Margaret a "what did you do that for" look.

MARGARET

(MOUTHING)

The Dragon Lady!?
Richard shrugs.

GRANDMA ANNIE

To tell you the truth, we had a lot of the plans made already for my birthday. Just a few changes here and there, and we made this weekend a wedding.
Margaret stares at Richard.

MARGARET

I'm a lucky woman.
Margaret does her best to smile.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

The cars park in a lot in the middle of nowhere, near a
small dock. Everyone gets out of the cars and starts walking to
the ocean. Margaret is confused.

MARGARET

I'm not getting out of this car until you tell me where we're going.

RICHARD

Come on, it'll be OK. I promise.
Richard points to a small island about a mile away.

EXT. YACHT - DAY

Everyone rides on a 75 foot yacht. Lots of polished wood
and chrome. Someone passes out beers on board, and the mood is
festive. Margaret takes a look around at the surreal
scene.

MARGARET

Who are you people?
Richard lets Margaret wonder.

EXT. PAXTON DOCK - DAY

The ship docks and we get our first glimpse of the Paxton
Estate.
It sits above the rest of the wooded island and is as
tasteful as
a 15 bedroom Alaskan mansion can be.

bear

Richard's father, GEOFFREY (60) waits on the dock. He is a

31.

GEOFFREY

So you must be Margaret. We've heard a lot about you. All of it bad.

practical Margaret tentatively walks off the yacht in her none to

sling backs.

GEOFFREY (cont'd)

I mean, I almost shit myself when I heard he was marrying the devil woman.

MARGARET

I thought it was the dragon lady?

GEOFFREY

Either way.

RICHARD

Hey dad.

Richard shakes his father's hand. It's a little stiff.

GEOFFREY

Welcome home. Good to see â€~ya.

RICHARD

You too.

GEOFFREY

Been a while.

RICHARD

Yeah. You'd think you could make it to the airport to mark the occasion.

Grandma Annie interrupts.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Help him with the bags Geoffrey.

(to Richard and Margaret)

Let's get you two settled.

As Richard and Margaret move towards the house, Annie shoots

Geoffrey a look that says "be nice".

INT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

it
first
The house is decked out in sheik Alaskan decor. Somehow,
makes bear heads and deer antlers look good. Everything is
class. Margaret is a little awe struck.

DEBBIE

We'll show you around later.

MARGARET

Uh huh.

32.

jumps
Out of nowhere, a small HUSKY PUPPY startles Margaret and
on her.

DEBBIE

the
small
Balzac! Down! No!
Debbie pulls the dog off of Margaret and pushes him toward
kitchen. Margaret tries to take it in stride and make
talk.

MARGARET

What a great name. Balzac's "Lost
Illusions" is one of my favorite novels.

DEBBIE

that
Oh. Well, this Balzac's got epididymitis.
Debbie makes two big circles with her pointer fingers to
illustrate how Balzac really got his name.
Not understanding, Margaret looks over at Balzac as he walks
away. Off her shocked reaction, we understand right away
this puppy Husky is an anatomic marvel.
DEBBIE (cont'd)
No one on the island wanted him when he was
born. We figured he deserved a home.

GEOFFREY

And don't let him outside, or the eagles will snatch him.

RICHARD

C'mon dad...

GEOFFREY

I mean it. They come out of that rehabilitation center mean. And hungry.

RICHARD

Don't listen to him, Margaret.

INT. PAXTON ESTATE UPSTAIRS - DAY

Debbie opens a door for Richard and Margaret.

DEBBIE

You'll be sleeping here.

INT. MARGARET'S ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The room is beautiful, right out of Architectural Digest.

DEBBIE

Bathroom is there, all the towels are in the armoire by the bed. Just let me know if you

33.

MARGARET

Thank you. Where's Richard's room?

DEBBIE

Oh, we took down his "shrine" years ago. And don't worry, I'm under no illusion that you two haven't slept in the same bed before. Richard can sleep here too.

MARGARET

Oh, let's not upset Grandma Annie.

DEBBIE

It was her idea. Anything to help get her a great grandchild.
Richard shrugs his shoulders behind his mother.

MARGARET

Great. You know, I've gotten used to his breathing at night.

DEBBIE

I thought so dear.
Debbie leaves and shuts the door. Margaret reverts back to
her old self.

MARGARET

I'm about 15 seconds from bitch.

RICHARD

Calm down.

MARGARET

What is going on here?

RICHARD

Hell if I know.

MARGARET

You had no idea they knew about us getting married?

RICHARD

You think I'd bring you here if I did?

MARGARET

Well, we just gotta tell 'em.

RICHARD

Tell 'em what?

MARGARET

Tell 'em the truth. About us.

RICHARD

Wrong answer. No way.

MARGARET

What do you mean no way? This is crazy.

RICHARD

No, crazy was lying to the federal officer.

MARGARET

Well I don't like this.

RICHARD

Well I'm not making my Gammy an accomplice to a Class C felony! For one second could you not be so selfish?

MARGARET

Selfish?

RICHARD

Yeah, you know, that thing you do where you only worry about yourself every second of every day?

MARGARET

How is it selfish to tell the truth?

RICHARD

Look. We're awful, awful people. In the last forty eight hours, we've lied to... everyone. We need to protect the people downstairs. We can't ask these good, decent, not awful people to lie for us. Let's keep the darkside to ourselves. Margaret takes a second to make up her mind.

MARGARET

Fine. But if we do this, you need to stop lying to me.

RICHARD

What've I lied to you about?

MARGARET

Why did you tell me that you were poor?

RICHARD

I never said that.

MARGARET

Well, you never told me you were rich.

RICHARD

When does that come up?

35.

MARGARET

I don't know, how about, "Hi, my name is Richard, I'm an Alaskan titan of industry."

RICHARD

Well, maybe I didn't tell you because you would have fired me if you knew.

MARGARET

No I wouldn't.

RICHARD

Come on! You're always yammering on about your scrappy childhood, and how you fought for those soccer scholarships, and how the rich kids made fun of you in prep school for working in the kitchen. You're totally anti-rich.

MARGARET

I'm not anti-rich.

RICHARD

Oh yes you are! And you know what makes it worse? You have money!

MARGARET

I earned...

RICHARD

...every penny I have. Blah, blah, blah. You need new material.

MARGARET

Hey. Watch it. You're still my assistant.

RICHARD

You were going to promote me anyway.

MARGARET

Sure of that?

RICHARD

Nope. Not at all.

Margaret takes a look at herself in the mirror.

MARGARET

Well, come on. If we're going to do this,
we might as well put on a show.

INT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

Downstairs, the engagement party is in full swing. The starched wait staff stands out in the crowd, because the raucous party-goers are all dressed in flannel, T-shirts and baseball hats.

36.

Ponytails rule for the women, and almost all the men have shaggy hair and beards. No dress code here. Like the house, the party is first class. Ice sculptures melt, champagne is served on silver trays, and the buffet overflows with salmon and king crab. Margaret works the crowd like a pro and holds court with some WELL WISHERS, Richard's parents, and Balzac.

MARGARET

I went to Union college in upstate New York.
It's a small liberal arts school that no one
has ever heard of.
Richard comes to the group and hands Margaret a drink.
MARGARET (cont'd)
(looks at glass)
Lime?

RICHARD

Be right back.

Richard leaves to fetch lime wedges. Geoffrey elbows
Debbie in the side, "What was that?"

WELL WISHER #1

How long have you been with your company?

MARGARET

Since I graduated college.

Richard comes back with the lime. Margaret takes it and
doesn't say thank you.

RICHARD

She's been there since she was nineteen.

GEOFFREY

Nineteen? Wow. That's how long?

MARGARET

Oh, who's counting...

Geoffrey could let it go, but wants to push her.

GEOFFREY

No. How many years is that? Exactly.

Margaret gives Geoffrey the slightest look.

MARGARET

Well, let me see. That would be sixteen or
seventeen years. Exactly.

37.

GEOFFREY

I was never good with big numbers. That
makes you... thirty six now?

MARGARET

Just turned thirty seven. Born on May 20th.
I'm a Taurus.

Geoffrey and Margaret give each other a smile.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(to Richard)
I need some protein.

RICHARD

There's some salmon.
Margaret shakes her head no.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Crab?

Margaret nods yes. Richard steps away to find a waiter.
Geoffrey watches his son do Margaret's bidding.

GEOFFREY

Keep him on a short leash, huh? Does he
roll over when you whistle?
Debbie hits Geoffrey.

DEBBIE

He's just being a good host.
Richard comes right back with a waiter in tow. For
Geoffrey's
benefit, Margaret makes a point to thank Richard.

MARGARET

Thank you, honey. You're being so sweet.
Richard is surprised, but remembers they're a couple.

RICHARD

Uh, sure. Honey.

WELL WISHER #2

So you just got some big promotion?

MARGARET

I'm editor in chief, now.
Richard tenderly puts his arm around Margaret.

RICHARD

(BEAMING)

I'm so proud of my girl.

38.

From behind them, a melodic, ethereal VOICE interrupts.

VOICE (O.S.)

Editor in chief? You're marrying up,
Richard.

Everyone turns around to find GERTRUDE THURMAN (26). She

is

Grace Kelly in Patagonia and Timberland. Adding insult to
injury, she doesn't have eyeliner on.

RICHARD

Gert!?

Richard snaps his arm back, hitting Margaret in the head,

and

spilling her tonic water on her shirt. He doesn't notice

what

he's done, and leaves Margaret. She's peeved.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(FLUSTERED)

What are you? What are you doing here?

GERTRUDE

Your dad made me come.

RICHARD

From Chicago?

Gertrude laughs. The group watches these two see each for

the

first time in years. There is instant chemistry, and

Richard has

forgotten about Margaret completely.

GERTRUDE

No. I live here now.

RICHARD

You what?

GERTRUDE

I moved back about six months ago. I'm
teaching second grade. At Baranof.

RICHARD

Did your husband move up here too?

GERTRUDE

Uh, no. I, ah, got divorced.

RICHARD

Oh my God. I'm sorry.

GERTRUDE

Me too. But hey, we're being rude, I wanna

meet the bride.
Gertrude leaves Richard and goes to Margaret.

39.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)
Hi, I'm Gertrude. But call me Gert.

MARGARET
You're a Gertrude?

GERTRUDE
A family name from hell.

MARGARET
I'm sure it's been a curse.

GEOFFREY
Gert and Richard were quite the item in high school.
Gertrude instantly dismisses Geoffrey's reminiscence.

GERTRUDE
Oh Please. Ancient history.

GEOFFREY
Feels like yesterday to me.

GERTRUDE
(ignoring Geoffrey)
So tell me everything. I hear it wasn't exactly love at first sight?

MARGARET
Not exactly...

GRANDMA ANNIE
Now Richard, what I want to know is how you proposed.
This grabs the group's full attention. Everyone loves to
hear a story like this.

RICHARD
Well...

Richard hasn't recovered from seeing Gertrude.
RICHARD (cont'd)
Uh, uh, um, I...

GEOFFREY

Yeah. How did you pop the question?
Richard is a deer in the headlights. This is getting ugly.
Margaret sees that Richard is going to crumble, and steps

in.

MARGARET

Can I tell this one, honey?

40.

RICHARD

Uh. Sure.

MARGARET

I'm an early, early riser and go for a run everyday. Well, it was our six month anniversary and I was out for my normal jog in the park, when who do I see in a horse drawn carriage, wearing a tux, and waiting for me halfway through my run? Richard! So I ran up to the carriage and asked him what was going on, and he put his finger to his lips and says, "shhhh." So there I am in my jogging clothes, next to the most handsome mute in the world - have you seen him in a tux? - riding like a sweaty princess and smiling ear to ear. Couple minutes later, we arrive at Tavern on the Green. Best part, we're the only people in the place because Richard got them to open up early. Well, we go to our table, sit down, and just as the sun starts to peek above the trees, this beautiful man gets down on one knee, and says "I didn't want one more sunrise to go by without you knowing that you are the light of my life, and that I would be the luckiest man in the world if you would be my wife. Margaret Mary Mills, will you marry me?"

The group is silent, waiting for the clincher.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I said yes.

The group gives a collective "ahh". Grandma Annie takes

both

Margaret and Richard by the hand.

GRANDMA ANNIE

You are a good boy Richard, and you make me very proud. I love you Richy.

RICHARD

I love you too, Grandma.

Grandma hugs the couple. Everyone smiles except Geoffrey

and

Gertrude.

GEOFFREY

So did this happen before or after the INS agent came sniffing around?

DEBBIE

What is wrong with you? I'm sorry Margaret. Margaret doesn't miss a beat.

41.

MARGARET

Oh please. I'd wonder too. Honestly, my lawyers have been dealing with all of this. When you told us at the airport it was the first time I'd heard about it. I'm so embarrassed.

DEBBIE

Don't be, dear. Geoffrey's just an ass. While Debbie apologizes, Margaret gives Richard a little

wink

that says "I've got this under control". The moment is interrupted when Richard pulls out a RINGING CELL PHONE.

He

takes a step back and answers quietly so no one can hear.

RICHARD

Margaret Mill's phone.

(off answer)

One second please.

Richard comes back to the group and hands Margaret the phone.

RICHARD (cont'd)

It's our friend, Frank.

Richard's tone let's Margaret know there's a problem.

MARGARET

Excuse me, I'll just be a second.

Margaret takes the phone and exits out French glass doors that

doesn't lead to the backyard. She leaves the door open, and notice Balzac follow her outside.

EXT. PAXTON BACKYARD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Margaret goes far from the house so no one can hear.

Balzac follows her all the way, but Margaret doesn't see him.

MARGARET

Don't be a cliché, Frank. Don't be the wishy washy writer who changes his mind every two seconds.

Margaret notices Balzac, but ignores him. The dog starts YAPPING

barking. to get attention. She walks away, but Balzac continues

the Annoyed, she gets down face to face with the puppy and puts

phone against her chest so Frank doesn't hear.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(to Balzac)

Sit and be quiet!

Balzac sits and pouts. Margaret walks away and puts the phone

back to her ear.

42.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I fired Bob because he didn't have your best

interest in mind. Our job is to help you succeed. He wasn't doing that. Margaret continues to listen to her writer whine, when she notices an EAGLE soaring in circles above her and Balzac.

Not

sure what to think, she looks back at Balzac and sees him peacefully sit in the grass. She then looks up and sees that the eagle is gone.

Margaret

shakes her head, looks back at Balzac when -- WHOOSH! The eagle snatches Balzac by the scruff of the

neck, and

takes off. Margaret jumps. There is no one to help, so she chases after the dog and

eagle.

She stays calm on the phone.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Could you hold on just a second?

hits the

With no other option, Margaret throws her cell phone and

and

eagle suspended 20 feet above her. The eagle drops Balzac

Margaret catches him. Balzac looks frightened.

phone

Tucking Balzac away like a furry football, she runs to her

and picks it up.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(NONCHALANT)

Sorry, dropped my phone.

in

Margaret looks up and sees that the eagle has resumed flying

and get

circles above her. She decides to wrap up the call quick

back to the house.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Frank, I don't want to sell you on anything.

But know this. This book is your legacy...

Balzac

Margaret looks up and sees the eagle dive towards her and

again. She runs.

MARGARET (cont'd)

... and-I-think-you-should-be-the-one-to

introduce-your-legacy-to-the-world. Call me-

tomorrow-with-your-decision. My-phone is-

always-on. Talk-to-you-soon.

eagle

The eagle bears down on them with talons out. Just as the

phone

is about to strike, Margaret sticks out her hand with the

to fend back the eagle. To her surprise, the eagle grabs Margaret's phone and flies off. Margaret freaks.

MARGARET (cont'd)

43.

the Panicked, she takes Balzac in both hands and puts him up to eagle as an offering.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Take the dog! Take the dog!

INT. PAXTON ESTATE

Inside, the elegant party carries on.

DEBBIE

Where's Margaret? We need to go.

RICHARD

Go where?

DEBBIE

It's a surprise. Girls are going into town. And the boys stay here. I told you, we've planned everything.

RICHARD

Um. She's outside.
Debbie and Richard turn around and look out a picture window.

They see Margaret running with Balzac above her head.

DEBBIE

Oh that's sweet, she's playing with my Balzac.

EXT. PAXTON BACKYARD - DAY

the The eagle is long gone, but Margaret is still running with dog trying to bait it back.

MARGARET

This is a delicious dog, Mr. Eagle. C'mon, bring back the phone.
Richard calls out from the house.

RICHARD

What are you doing?

MARGARET

The eagle took my phone!

RICHARD

Are you drunk?

MARGARET

Your dad was right! The eagle tried to take the dog, so I saved it, then it came back and took my phone.

44.

RICHARD

Did the dingo eat your baby, too?

MARGARET

Frank's going to call me on that phone. I need it!

RICHARD

Relax. I've got your information backed up on the laptop. I'll just get you a new phone and switch the number. No problem.

MARGARET

Oh.

RICHARD

Now come on. You're going somewhere with my mom and the girls.

MARGARET

I'm not going anywhere.

RICHARD

You want a new phone? You're going.

EXT. PIONEER BAR - DAY

pictures
The Pioneer bar is a classic Alaskan bar, decorated with
of every fishing vessel that has made Sitka its home.
But tonight estrogen rules, as all the patrons are women
CHEERING
for an oiled, toned, and BEARDED MAN in a tiny thong who
gyrates
to the beat of Prince's "Sexy Motherfucker." On stage with
the
dancer, Margaret tries to not look miserable in her NOVELTY
BACHELORETTE PARTY WEDDING VEIL WITH DEVIL HORNS.

DEBBIE

Work it Hank!

GERTRUDE

Is that a salmon down your pants?
The room laughs as Hank works his crotch millimeters away
from
Margaret's face. Margaret remains straight faced.

MARGARET

Definitely not a salmon.
The women encourage Hank on as he moves Margaret's hands to
his
wiggling ass and gives her a feel. She can't help but give
and
embarrassed smile. Finally, the song ends and Hank goes
into the
splits. Thrilled, the room gives him a standing ovation.
Margaret plays along and gives Hank a kiss on the cheek.
She
begins to get off the stage, but Hank takes her by the hand.

45.

HANK

Ah, ah, ah. I was just the warm up.
Hank sits Margaret down, and blindfolds her with a scarf.

MARGARET

What's going on?

GRANDMA ANNIE

Just sit there dear.

MC

Don't be shy ladies, tip well and often,
show Hank how much you appreciate his
assets! And now... Ramone!

The room goes silent as a middle aged RAMONE comes on to the
stage. He has a pot belly, threadbare thong and a thin
mustache.

Ramone's dance has a Latin theme to it, and he's very good
at it.

Margaret is oblivious.

MARGARET

What's that smell?

Margaret finally takes off her blindfold, and finds Ramone
about

an inch away from her face.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(belly laugh)

Ahhh!!!

Margaret falls out of her chair and her scream frightens
Ramone.

After the initial scare he composes himself and wags his
finger
at her naughty behavior.

RAMONE

You are a naughty devil.

Ramone goes to work another part of the stage, and when he
turns,

Margaret jumps off the stage and joins the ladies.

MARGARET

Good lord.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Ramone was the only male dancer on the
island for years. No one has the heart to
tell him to hang it up.

MARGARET

Want me to do it?

GRANDMA ANNIE

Thank you dear, but let's keep it our
secret.

46.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - SHORELINE - DAY

Snow capped mountains watch 20 MEN in short sleeves hit golf balls into the ocean. Green pontoon rafts bob in the water, made up to look like golf greens. Golf balls are stacked in pyramid formations at every hitting area. Richard comes down from the house to join the group. Geoffrey jokes with MR. MAGUIRE (60's, good natured) as they hit balls.

GEOFFREY

...yeah, Debbie found these eco-balls that dissolve in the water.

MAGUIRE

How does she come up with this shit?

GEOFFREY

She just does. I stopped trying to figure out how. Geoffrey and Mr. Maguire see Richard coming their way. Mr. Maguire yells at Richard like the old family friend he is.

MAGUIRE

(JOKING)

I'm mad at you, son!

RICHARD

Why's that, Mr. Maguire?

MAGUIRE

You fly up here and don't call me?

RICHARD

Sorry â€˜bout that.

MAGUIRE

What good is me owning an airline if I can't give you free tickets?

RICHARD

You're right. Don't know what I was thinking...

MAGUIRE

Damn, straight. Don't let it happen again!
(hands Richard a golf club)

Here, you take over. This game is for pussies, I'm getting a drink.

Mr. Maguire leaves, and Richard and Geoffrey are left alone

with

one another for the first time. Things are awkward between father and son, and Richard begins hitting balls to avoid conversation. Geoffrey finally makes small talk.

47.

GEOFFREY

Maguire's stepping down in January. He's, uh, handing things over to Matty.

Richard gives his dad a look. He knows where this is

going.

RICHARD

That's great for them.

GEOFFREY

So. How's work with you?

RICHARD

Good. Busy. You know.

GEOFFREY

I do. I do. Hey, did I tell you that we're opening a little office in Japan?

RICHARD

Congratulations.

GEOFFREY

We're not just a mom and pop operation anymore. We're going global.

RICHARD

Uh-huh.

Geoffrey stops hitting golf balls for a second. He's been thinking about this moment for a long time.

GEOFFREY

I could really use your help.

RICHARD

Dad. Please. I'm in New York. Margaret's in New York. We have jobs.

GEOFFREY

I know. I know. It's just...

RICHARD

(CHALLENGING)

It's just what?

GEOFFREY

You're only a secretary.
This pisses Richard off immediately.

RICHARD

Again with the secretary thing! I've told you, I'm an assistant!

48.

GEOFFREY

Just because you call yourself an "assistant" doesn't mean you're not really just a secretary.

RICHARD

Well if I'm "just a secretary", why would you want me up here anyway? Sounds like you're doing great without me.

GEOFFREY

It's not like that and you know it.

RICHARD

Then how is it? Explain it to me.
Geoffrey looks around to see if anyone is listening.

GEOFFREY

Last week, a man stuck his finger up my
butt...

RICHARD

This man was a doctor?

GEOFFREY

...and it got me thinking about you.

RICHARD

I'm not sure this is coming out right.

GEOFFREY

Just shut up for a second, okay? I want you
to have what I built. But I'm running out
of time to show you things.

RICHARD

Stop being so dramatic.

GEOFFREY

I'm not being...
(takes a hard line)
I need you to stop dicking around down there
and get serious.

RICHARD

So this is all about what you want?

GEOFFREY

That's not what I said.

RICHARD

And me in New York with Margaret? That
isn't serious?

49.

GEOFFREY

One day the woman is the Antichrist, and the
next day she's the love of your life? How
is that serious?

RICHARD

Things change, dad.

GEOFFREY

(INDIGNANT)

Things change?

RICHARD

Things change.

GEOFFREY

Things change?

RICHARD

Yes. Things change.

GEOFFREY

Things change. That's your explanation?
Know what I think? I think you banged your
boss and fell in love, that's what I think.
Some sorta mommy complex.

RICHARD

Nice, dad. We gotta have these Cosby
moments more often. This is great.
Richard drops his club and walks back to the house.

EXT. PIONEER BAR - DAY

on a
hanging Margaret steps outside to have a moment to herself. She's
patio overlooking the ocean. It is late, but the sun is
just over the horizon.

GERTRUDE

They can be a little overwhelming, but
they're great people.

MARGARET

What? I'm just working on my tan.
(off Gertrude's look)
It's been a long day.
Margaret looks inside and sees that the party is still
raging.

GERTRUDE

Around the solstice they don't watch the
clock. Pretty much party 'til they fall
over.

MARGARET

50.

GERTRUDE

I actually missed it when I was in the states.

MARGARET

Chicago, right?

GERTRUDE

Yeah. Since college.

MARGARET

And now you're back?

GERTRUDE

Six months now. Call me crazy, but I love it. Think I'm back for good.

MARGARET

Really? I don't know. Don't you miss...

GERTRUDE

Neimans? Starbucks? Escalators?

Margaret laughs. She likes this woman.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

Yeah. I miss it. Believe me, growing up I never thought I'd end up divorced and back here teaching at my old elementary school. That was always Richard's plan.

MARGARET

For you to get divorced?

GERTRUDE

(smiles, remembering)

No. I was going to teach, he was going to run his dad's business. He was like a little old man. Had it all worked out.

MARGARET

Are we talking about the same guy?

GERTRUDE

What do you mean?

MARGARET

Well, Richard's such a player.

Gertrude looks confused.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I mean he was a total player. Before we started dating. Six months ago.

GERTRUDE

51.

MARGARET

That surprises you?

GERTRUDE

Did he ever tell you why we broke up?

MARGARET

We don't really talk much about stuff like that.

GERTRUDE

Oh. Well I should shut up...

MARGARET

No, no. Please. I mean, we are getting married. I want to know these things. Gertrude looks down a little embarrassed.

GERTRUDE

He proposed to me. When we were seniors. Margaret laughs.

MARGARET

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to... He proposed to you in high school?

GERTRUDE

He bought this sweet little ring, and got

down on his knee. It was so cute.

MARGARET

You must have...

GERTRUDE

... freaked out? Oh you bet. I broke up with him on the spot.

MARGARET

I would hope so.

GERTRUDE

After getting rejected the first time, I can't imagine how hard it was for him to get up the courage to ask you.

Gertrude is Margaret just smiles, feeling guilty about lying when

being so honest with her.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

Anyway. The idea that my little old man could be a player... It's just not the Richard I knew. Good thing you're making an honest man of him again.

52.

beer in Gertrude toasts Margaret and knocks back the rest of her

one swig. She has a hard time finishing it off.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

Well I'm empty. I'm going to go get another. I think I hear Ramone wrapping up, let's get back to the girls.

MARGARET

I'll be right in.

inside. Margaret smiles and turns to the ocean. Gertrude goes

Then, to herself, Margaret silently whispers.

MARGARET (cont'd)

We are awful people.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

THWACK! An axe slams down and splits a log in two. Hands quickly place another log down and THWACK! We pull back to find Richard playing the role of executioner. He's still mad after talking to his dad, and is taking it out on the firewood. Rage Against the Machine plays on his iPod and he's in his own world. Behind him, the girls return to the island on the family yacht. Their mood is light, and they chat amongst themselves. Debbie's mood deflates when she sees Richard.

DEBBIE

(SHOUTING)

Richard! Honey! Is everything OK? With his back to the girls and the iPod on, Richard doesn't hear or see the girls. Annie shakes her head. Something is up.

INT. PAXTON ESTATE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Geoffrey pets Balzac as he watches SportsCenter on a sixty inch plasma television. The ladies arrive and Annie and Debbie step in front of the TV, blocking his view. Margaret watches from the door, not sure what is going on.

GEOFFREY

Excuse me? I'm watching that.

ANNIE

Why is Richard chopping wood?

DEBBIE

And don't play dumb. What did you do? Geoffrey is uncomfortable answering in front of Margaret.

53.

GEOFFREY

Nothing. I didn't do anything... will you please move.

The showdown intensifies. Margaret excuses herself.

MARGARET

I am so tired.

mad. Balzac GROWLS when he hears Margaret's voice. He's still

Margaret just smiles.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Think I'm going to take a shower and clean off Ramone's bubble gum body oil. Thanks for a great night.

Once Annie and Debbie smile graciously and wish her good night.

He she's gone, they turn their death stare back to Geoffrey.

looks genuinely unnerved.

GEOFFREY

Stop looking at me like that!

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

quite through Richard continues to listen to his iPod, and has worked up a sweat. He's stacks the last log, takes off his soaked shirt, and gets a whiff of himself. Ew. He stinks.

INT. MARGARET'S ROOM - DAY

room and Margaret walks into the private bathroom attached to her shuts the door. We hear her turn on the shower.

INT. PAXTON ESTATE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

and the Been Geoffrey defends himself to Debbie and Annie with great conviction. Richard walks right by the fighting trio, but doesn't notice anyone. He continues to listen to his iPod his attention is focused on the controls, as he looks for playlist "Songs I Shouldn't Like" and Charlene's hit "I've to Paradise, But I Haven't Been to Me."

INT. MARGARET'S ROOM - DAY

IN THE BATHROOM

reaches
decorative
Margaret turns off the shower, pulls back the curtain and
for a towel. All she finds is a miniature unabsorbent
hand towel. Shit.

IN THE BEDROOM

been
ain't
Richard enters the room smiling as Charlene sings "...I've
undressed by kings and I've seen some things that a woman

54.

IN THE BATHROOM

because she
Margaret's ears perk up. The bathroom is a disaster
has dripped water everywhere looking for a towel.

MARGARET

Richard, is that you?

IN THE BEDROOM

Richard opens the armoire next to the bed and pulls out an
incredibly absorbent Egyptian cotton towel.

IN THE BATHROOM

Richard
waiting
Margaret cracks the door open to see what the sound was.
isn't there, but she sees the armoire open and the towels
for her. How did she miss that?

MARGARET

startles
Richard, are you...
Then out of nowhere, Balzac (he followed Richard in)
Margaret.

BALZAC

Yap, yap, yap, yap, yap!

foot Margaret slips on the wet floor and falls on her ass. Her
kicks the door open as she retreats from the vengeful puppy.

ON THE BEDROOM'S DECK

on Richard is oblivious as he hangs his wet clothes over a rail
is in the deck attached to the room. He makes sure that no one
the yard, pulls down his shorts, and hangs them up as well.

IN THE BATHROOM

Margaret Naked, wet, and starting to get a little pissed off,
towel manages to pull herself up by the toilet. She wants a
badly, but Balzac guards the doorway. She tries reason.

MARGARET

grabs I'm sorry bout the eagle. But I saved you.
Balzac won't listen to reason and barks angrily. Margaret
the ceramic top of the toilet tank to protect herself.

ON THE BEDROOM DECK

is Richard calmly turns around and sees that the bathroom door
open. That's weird.

55.

IN THE BATHROOM

bat, Margaret holds the top of the toilet tank like a baseball
continues ready to strike. Balzac will not be intimidated, and
knows to growl and not let her out of the bathroom. Margaret
Then that she can't hit a dog, and looks for another way out.
she spots the bathroom mat.

IN THE BEDROOM

Richard saunters towards the bathroom, wearing only his iPod.

IN THE BATHROOM

Balzac puts a paw onto the bath mat.
Margaret slowly puts back the toilet top.
Balzac gets to the center of the bath mat, and Margaret pulls hard, sliding the bath mat and Balzac to the back of the bathroom. With Balzac out of the way, she runs out, closes the door behind her and...

IN THE BEDROOM

WHAM! Margaret crashes into Richard and they fall to the floor.
It takes a second for them to realize that they are holding each other buck naked.

MARGARET

RICHARD
Aaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Aaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
The two quickly separate and spastically try to cover up.
A rapid fire back and forth ensues.

MARGARET

RICHARD
Why are you naked?
Why are you wet?

MARGARET

RICHARD
Don't look at me!
You tackled me!

MARGARET

RICHARD
It was the dog!
You're blaming the dog again?

MARGARET

Will you just hand me a towel!
Richard looks for a towel, but forgets he's naked. When he looks under the bed, Margaret shrieks and covers her eyes..
MARGARET (cont'd)
You're flashing brain!
Richard quickly changes positions. Out of desperation, he pulls

way, the entire comforter off the bed. He throws it Margaret's
and she wraps herself in it.

56.

MARGARET (cont'd)

You can cover up any time!

Richard cups the beans and franks and backs up to his
clothes by the window.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Explain yourself!

RICHARD

I didn't know you were home! I was outside
chopping wood!

MARGARET

You didn't hear me?

RICHARD

I had my iPod on!

(CONFUSED)

Why did you jump me?

Richard reaches his clothes and pulls on his shorts.

MARGARET

I didn't jump you.

(off Richard's look)

I didn't mean to jump you. I didn't know
you were here.

RICHARD

You didn't see me?

MARGARET

I was running from the dog!

Richard looks at Margaret suspiciously.

RICHARD

Wait. Were you tryin' to seduce me?

MARGARET

Oh please! Don't flatter yourself.

RICHARD

Mmm-Hmmm.

MARGARET

Go take a shower. You stink.

RICHARD

Fine. But don't come sneaking in there. You're still my boss. That'd be sexual harassment.

57.

Richard goes to the bathroom and shuts the door. Margaret takes a breath, but is startled when the door suddenly opens back up again. Richard has Balzac cradled in his arms and scratches his neck. He gently puts him outside their room. RICHARD (cont'd) There you go, buddy. Go on and play before she makes a coat out of you. Richard shuts the door and goes into the bathroom. Without looking back, Richard gets the final shot. RICHARD (cont'd) Puppy hater.

LATER

Richard grabs all the pillows, cushions and blankets he can find to create himself makeshift bed on the floor. Margaret turns out the lights, leaving the room still bright with the sun still shining outside. She gets into her bed.

MARGARET

I'm never gonna to get to sleep. Richard pushes a button and motorized metal blinds come down outside the window. The sunlight is instantly blocked out and the room is pitch black. MARGARET (cont'd)

two

Oh. Well. Thanks.
Richard settles into his pathetic excuse for a bed. The
silently lie awake and stare at the dark ceiling.

RICHARD

It was kinda weird seeing you naked.

MARGARET

Can we not talk about this?

RICHARD

I'm just saying. It was weird.

MARGARET

It wasn't weird.

RICHARD

How was that not weird?

MARGARET

Because we're... like teammates.

RICHARD

We're like teammates?

58.

MARGARET

We are teammates. And teammates see each other naked in the locker room. All the time. It's not a big deal.

RICHARD

Well, if we're teammates can I sleep in the bed?

MARGARET

Good night, Richard.
The two lay awake in silence for another beat.

RICHARD

Margaret?

MARGARET

Yes?

RICHARD

Don't take this the wrong way.

MARGARET

Okay...

RICHARD

You're a very beautiful woman.

Margaret smiles with her head turned away from Richard.

MARGARET

Get some sleep Richard, big day tomorrow.

INT. PAXTON ESTATE - OFFICE - DAY

into
gigantic
area code

Not a creature is stirring, except for Geoffrey who creeps
his office. He shuts the door softly and goes to his
oak desk. He finds a phone number with a New York City
on a piece of paper. He dials.

GEOFFREY

Yes. Mr. Gilbertson? My name is Geoffrey
Paxton...

the

Only the animal trophies that adorn Geoffrey's office hear
rest of the conversation.

INT. MARGARET'S ROOM - DAY

floor
long,

Margaret wakes up. She looks over to Richard asleep on the
with a blanket and a pillow. She stares maybe a beat too
before there is a KNOCK on the door.

MARGARET

Who is it?

59.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

It's me dear. I made you two breakfast in bed. Can I come in?

MARGARET

(STALLING)

Uh, sure. Just a second.
Margaret can't yell at Richard, so she throws a model wooden sailboat to wake him up. She hits him in the head.

RICHARD

What the...

MARGARET

(MOUTHING)

Your mother.
Richard jumps up and replaces cushions and hides signs of his makeshift bed. He finishes quickly, hops in the bed, and puts his arm around Margaret.

RICHARD

Come on in mom!
Debbie enters with a tray of pastries, fruit and coffee.
RICHARD (cont'd)
Ah mom, you made your cinnamon rolls.

DEBBIE

Well, it's your special day.
Debbie smiles, puts down the tray on a bedside table and sits on the edge of the bed. She is buzzing with excitement.
DEBBIE (cont'd)
You two need your energy, so eat up. We've got your dress fitting, have to get the house ready, and then your wedding.

RICHARD

I gotta run into town to get Margaret a new phone.

DEBBIE

Will you pick up some champagne while you're there?

RICHARD

No problem.

DEBBIE

And don't be gone for too long. Lots of work to be done!

60.

MARGARET

You don't have to go to all this trouble. Really. Debbie sweetly looks back at Margaret.

DEBBIE

Don't be silly. This is the biggest day of your life. You are coming into this family, and when it's family, it's no trouble. If your parents were with us, they would do the exact same. Debbie leaves and Margaret smiles as the door closes.

Richard

jumps out of bed and goes to the food.

MARGARET

(TOUCHED)

Your mom is just so sweet. I haven't had someone make me breakfast in bed since I was a little kid. Richard takes a huge bite of cinnamon roll.

RICHARD

(mouth full)

I wish she hadn't. I mean she almost caught us. Damn, that was close. Like a pig in shit, Richard continues to dig in and doesn't pay attention to Margaret.

MARGARET

You just take all this for granted? Your family, this house... Richard takes another big bite and turns to Margaret.

RICHARD

(mouth full)
I'm sorry, what? You gotta try these.
Margaret looks at Richard with disgust.

MARGARET

Why are you doing this to them?

RICHARD

Huh?

MARGARET

Why am I here? You didn't have to bring me here.

RICHARD

You made me bring you here! You told me I

61.

MARGARET

I didn't make you do anything. You could of said no.

RICHARD

And what? Start over at the bottom again?
No way.

MARGARET

I get why a not rich person would do this.
But you've got everything. It doesn't make any sense.

RICHARD

Know what? This is none of your business.

MARGARET

I wish it wasn't my business. But unfortunately, it has become my business, because I made a deal with someone I thought I could trust.
Richard stares at Margaret for a beat. He's exasperated.

RICHARD

You wanna know why you're here? I'll show

you why you're here.

MARGARET

Fine.

RICHARD

We leave in a half hour.

MARGARET

I'll be ready in 20 minutes.

Margaret angrily takes a bite of a cinnamon roll and slams

it

down on the plate. She goes to her suitcase and looks for clothes. A beat passes, and she comes back to the rolls.

MARGARET (cont'd)

These are really good.

She takes a cinnamon roll and leaves.

EXT. PAXTON DOCK - DAY

Richard and Margaret board the yacht. They wear athletic clothes and running shoes.

EXT. BOAT - DAY

Richard drives the yacht and Margaret sits by herself.

62.

EXT. PAXTON SEAFOODS PIER - DAY

Richard docks the boat at the Paxton Seafood pier. Located in the town's harbor, the packing plant consists of three large warehouses, and buzzes with activity. Fishing boats line the pier, unload their fish, and forklifts take the fish to be processed. Everything is clean and organized. Richard and Margaret walk down the pier. He points to the SEALS that swim everywhere and eat fish scraps. Damn, they're cute.

BEK

Richard waves hello to WORKERS. An elderly Phillipino man,
BEK, yells at them as he walks into a warehouse.

BEK BEK

Hey, Richard! That the lucky lady?

RICHARD

Yes sir, it is!

BEK BEK

(to Margaret)

You look much younger than everyone says.

MARGARET

That's great to hear.

RICHARD

See ya on the line, Bek Bek.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Richard opens a locker and points. We don't see at what.

RICHARD

Put this on. I'll meet you outside.

MARGARET

But I don't...

RICHARD

Ah. Put it on.

EXT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

She's
fishing

Margaret opens the door with a sour look on her face.
wearing large green hip waders with suspenders, rubber
boots, and gloves.

MARGARET

Is this really necessary?

RICHARD

her

You'll thank me later.

Richard walks towards the warehouse. Margaret follows in

63.

INT. SLIME LINE - DAY

different
waves
Inside one of the brightly lit warehouses, workers at stations process the fish that come off the boats. At the top of the line, Bek Bek is HANDCUFFED to the head decapitator machine. He happily feeds whole salmon into a guillotine, where the heads are chopped off. He awkwardly when he sees Margaret and Richard.

MARGARET

Why is he handcuffed to the machine?

RICHARD

So his hands don't go too far. So he doesn't...
Richard makes a chopping motion. Margaret winces.

MARGARET

where
long
they are
puller
Nice.
From the decapitator, fish are fed into the gut puller, their bellies are slit and the intestines are pulled out.
MARGARET (cont'd)
You know, I shouldn't be here. I was a vegetarian for six months in college.
Richard leads Margaret to the end of slime line, where a line of 20 workers give the fish a final cleaning before frozen. With great speed, they take the fish from the gut puller line and clean out all the left over intestines.

WORKER

There he is! Big city boy come to show us how its done.

RICHARD

Ah, it's been a while.

WORKER

C'mon. Show her how we do it.

RICHARD

Okay, okay.

Richard and Margaret go to the end of the line. Richard
expertly

demonstrates with a knife.

RICHARD (cont'd)

You grab a fish, but be gentle, cause you
don't want to bruise it. Open her up, tilt
the knife, and then pull with the grain of
the fish. Two quick stokes to clear the
organs attached to the spine.

64.

Margaret looks nauseous. Richard enjoys her discomfort.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Then use the tip of the knife to squeeze the
blood out of the vein. Then send her down
the line.

Richard guts another fish with precision and speed before
offering a knife to Margaret.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Wanna try it?

Margaret doesn't say anything. All the other workers
watch.

RICHARD (cont'd)

If it's too gross for you...

MARGARET

Gimme that.

Up to the challenge, she takes the knife and grabs a fish.
Margaret puts the knife in and keeps as much distance as
possible
between her and the salmon.

RICHARD

I did this for five summers. Dad wanted me
to earn my stripes before I took over.

MARGARET

Is that why you're still pissed at him?

RICHARD

Nah, I loved it here.

MARGARET

(re: fish guts)
You loved this?

RICHARD

The slime line? Hell no. Nobody loves the
slime line. I loved this place. The
people. Growing up, running this place was
all I wanted.
Margaret scrapes a huge glop of guts out of a fish.

MARGARET

(DISGUSTED)

You wanted this?

RICHARD

I wanted to run this place. It was
comfortable here. It was what I knew.
(re: fish)
Don't forget the spine.

65.

MARGARET

I wasn't gonna forget.
Margaret squeezes the blood out of the vein, sends the fish
on its way, and grabs another fish with more confidence.

RICHARD

But then things changed. And it wasn't so
comfortable anymore.

MARGARET

What kind of things changed?

RICHARD

Stuff.

MARGARET

(as if she didn't know)
You mean, like, Gertrude?

RICHARD

Yeah...

Richard stops, he can tell Margaret knows something.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Oh my god. She told you didn't she?

MARGARET

(INNOCENT)

Told me what?

Richard is embarrassed. He turns away.

RICHARD

About the... you know.

MARGARET

The creepy teenage proposal?

RICHARD

Ah, shit!

MARGARET

You were a freak by the way.

RICHARD

OK, get it all out.

MARGARET

And she was right to break up with you.

RICHARD

You done?

Margaret nods yes.

66.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I know now that it was the right thing, but it screwed me up for a little while.

MARGARET

For a little while? Don't sell yourself short.

RICHARD

When Gert crushed my heart into little pieces, a life up here didn't seem so great anymore.

MARGARET

So you moved to the open arms of New York City?

RICHARD

At first it was about getting as far away from this place as possible, but then I fell in love with it.

MARGARET

With scheduling my pilates?

RICHARD

With editing. See, as an only kid I'd always read a lot, but until I worked for you I didn't love it. I mean, when I realized that we could find the next Cuckoo's Nest, or Catch 22, or...

MARGARET

(with reverence)
...To Kill a Mockingbird. It's all about To Kill a Mockingbird.

RICHARD

Exactly! We could find the next To Kill a Mockingbird. God damn, how great is that? Margaret smiles. She never knew that Richard had this kind

of

passion for the job.

RICHARD (cont'd)

So when I tell my folks that I want to spend my life finding books? My dad goes ape shit.

"How dare you forsake your family... you'll come crawling back to us... you're nothing without our help." I left that night and we didn't talk for a year. Haven't been back here since.

MARGARET

So we're "getting married" so you can give daddy the finger?

67.

RICHARD

No.

Margaret gives Richard a disbelieving look.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Sorta. OK, Yes. Coming back here with you... I get the promotion and I get to show off. You're editor in chief. You make a good prop.

MARGARET

(SMILING)

I guess that's a compliment.

RICHARD

So now you know I'm a petty asshole. Am I trustworthy again?

MARGARET

Oh yeah, we're good. By the way, you're more screwed up than I am, Paxton.

RICHARD

Yeah. Thanks.

MARGARET

One more question...

RICHARD

Yes, everyone at work thinks you're a lesbian.

MARGARET

That wasn't my question.

RICHARD

I know. Just lashing out.
Margaret smiles.

MARGARET

Can we stop gutting fish? I need my phone.

INT. SITKA GENERAL STORE - DAY

Richard and Margaret enter the well appointed general store, filled with food, booze and electronics. A mini Wal Mart.

RICHARD

Hey Ramone.

RAMONE

Hey Richard. Hola mi amo.

Margaret recognizes Ramone, the male dancer from last night.

68.

MARGARET

(EMBARRASSED)

Hey.

They walk a few steps, and before Margaret can say a word.

MARGARET (cont'd)

You know him?

RICHARD

He was my shop teacher.

MARGARET

Of course he was. How many people are on
this island?

They start to fill their cart with cases of champagne.

RICHARD

Like eight thousand? Depends on the time of
the year.

MARGARET

Feels smaller.

With the cart full they head to the checkout.

RICHARD

(to Ramone)

You got the phone I called about?

RAMONE

Charged up, ready to go, number changed.

Ramone throws Richard a phone.

RICHARD

Thanks, Ramone.

RAMONE

No problem.

Ramone gives Margaret a flirty wave. She awkwardly waves
back.

Richard pushes the cart out the front door and does not pay.
Margaret is confused.

EXT. SITKA GENERAL STORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Richard keeps pushing the cart, Margaret catches up.

MARGARET

Why's Ramone letting you steal his stuff?

RICHARD

It's our stuff.

69.

Richard points to the "Paxton General Store" sign.

MARGARET

That must have been handy in High School.

RICHARD

You have no idea.

MARGARET

Should you leave the cart?

RICHARD

It's our cart. I didn't know you were such
a prude.

MARGARET

I've come to realize that being my assistant
gave you more access to my life than I ever
imagined, but there are a few things you
don't know about me.

RICHARD

I doubt it. When I started, you were still
wearing those Ugg boot things.

MARGARET

(deadly serious)

I told you never to talk about that.

RICHARD

I'm just saying it's been a long time. I know it all.

Margaret turns on her new phone. It searches for a signal.

MARGARET

(up to the challenge)

Did you know I took disco lessons in the sixth grade?

RICHARD

Where?

MARGARET

The Y.

RICHARD

Margaret 1, Richard 0.

MARGARET

Uh, my first concert was Kool and the Gang.

RICHARD

At Woodstock?

70.

MARGARET

I won tickets on the radio and saw them at the fair.

RICHARD

What'd they sing again?

MARGARET

You know.

(SINGING)

Cherish the love we have, we should cherish
the life we live...

Richard shakes his head.
MARGARET (cont'd)
Well they were good.

RICHARD

You had a lot of soul there, Canada.

MARGARET

I really like "The O.C.". Not fake, ha, ha
isn't it funny I like this trash. I really
like it.

RICHARD

Wow. I'm getting shut out here.

MARGARET

Allergic to pine nuts.

RICHARD

Knew that.

MARGARET

Afraid of penguins.

RICHARD

Huh.

MARGARET

Haven't slept with a man in a year and a
half.

RICHARD

Holy shit! You are a lesbian!

nasty
A MOTHER walking by with her 7 year old gives Richard a
look.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(to mother)

My bad.

faster.
The mother walks on. Margaret is mortified and walks

MARGARET

Kool and the Gang gets nothing, but that gets a Holy shit? I've been busy!

RICHARD

That's a really long time.

MARGARET

That hurts coming from Mr. Magic Pants.

RICHARD

I knew it had been slow going, but I figured there was a booty call in there somewhere.

MARGARET

Yeah, well, I'm not good at that.

RICHARD

I find that hard to believe.

MARGARET

No, not that. I'm great at that. Aces. Top notch.

RICHARD

I'll have to take your word for it.

MARGARET

Yes. You will.

RICHARD

How, exactly, do you define top notch?

Margaret is smiling as she listens to a message on her phone. In an instant, she's all business.

MARGARET

I need a computer and the internet. Now.

INT. FISHERMAN'S NET INTERNET CAFE - DAY

Designed to attract tourists, the Fisherman's Net is awash in bad nautical props and fishing gear. A bored TEENAGE CLERK in a PIRATE OUTFIT greets Margaret and Richard.

PIRATE

Aye lassie, welcome to the cyber seas. Our T-1 line is faster than a clipper ship in a hurricane, but for now ye be needing to scrawl your mark on this sign up sheet.

Margaret looks and sees that all the computers are taken.

72.

MARGARET

No, no, no. I need on now. I've got a Booker prize winning author demanding I send him an e-mail in the next forty five minutes explaining why he should stay with a publishing house that "makes" him do publicity.

The Pirate looks at Margaret like she's speaking Chinese.

PIRATE

Arrgh...

MARGARET

Listen to me asshole...

The Pirate looks around to make sure his boss can't hear.

PIRATE

Look lady. You gonna put your name down on the list or not?

Margaret is about to throttle the Pirate, when Richard pulls her back.

RICHARD

C'mon. I got an idea.

Margaret Richard leads Margaret to the door. As they are leaving shouts out.

MARGARET

I didn't know there were a lot of pirates in Alaska!

INT. BARANOFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - OFFICE - DAY

Margaret sits at a computer, furiously opening her e-mail. Richard has brought her to his elementary school, where he and his old principal, MRS. WHITING, stand over Margaret.

MRS. WHITING

I'm so excited about the wedding!

RICHARD

Thanks for letting us use your computer.

MRS. WHITING

No problem.

(to Margaret)

So what flowers are you going with?

Margaret turns around annoyed, but manages to keep her cool.

MARGARET

I'm sorry, but could I have a minute alone

73.

MRS. WHITING

Oh. Sure.

RICHARD

Show me around will you Mrs. Whiting? It's been years.

INT. BARANOFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - HALL - DAY

Richard and Mrs. Whiting walk around the elementary school.

MRS. WHITING

Do you think she'll be long? I've got work to do.

RICHARD

She'll be out of there in two shakes.

Out of the corner of his eye, Richard catches Gertrude teaching a

class of second graders. He stops transfixed.

MRS. WHITING

(re: Gertrude)

We are so lucky to have her. Mr. Megher really left us shorthanded when he ran off in the middle of the school year. He's living out in the forest now with his

wolves. Full time.
Richard hasn't heard anything that Mrs. Whiting has said.
He's hypnotized by Gertrude. She looks happy teaching these
kids, and they hang on her every word.

MRS. WHITING (cont'd)
Will you excuse me? The bell is about to
ring, I need to get ready for recess.

RICHARD

(not paying attention)
Uh, sure.
Mrs. Whiting leaves. Richard goes to the door and Gertrude
sees him. Good lord can that woman smile. She waves him in.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The kids all turn to see Richard when he opens the door.

GERTRUDE

Class, this is my old friend Richard.

CLASS

(all together)
Hi Richard!

74.

GERTRUDE

Richard and I used to be in this very same
classroom together. We even had your old
teacher, Mr. Megher.

CHILD #1

Mr. Megher smelled like farty eggs!
The class giggles.

GERTRUDE

That's not a nice thing to say, Patrick.
The BELL RINGS. One girl gets up. Gertrude eyeballs her.
GERTRUDE (cont'd)
Marcia?

CHILD #2

Sorry.

The child sits back down. Gertrude waits a beat.

GERTRUDE

OK, everyone is excused for recess.

directs All the kids pop up and head to the door. Mrs. Whiting
traffic outside. Richard makes his way to Gertrude.

RICHARD

Patrick's right. He did smell like eggs.

GERTRUDE

It's still not a nice thing to say. And
actually, Mr. Megher smelled like wet dog
and...

(makes smoking pot motion)

...Matanuska Thunderfuck. But let's keep
that between us.

INT. BARANOFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - OFFICE - DAY

Margaret reads over her e-mail to Frank.

MARGARET

(READING)

I give you my word as an editor and a
friend...

The door opens suddenly, and Margaret SHOUTS.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(STERN)

Five more minutes! Please!

75.

Margaret turns to find a PIG TAILED GIRL in the doorway.
Terrified. She SHRIEKS and runs off. Margaret wants to
apologize, but needs to keep working.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(WEAKLY)

Sorry.

INT. BARANOFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

They

Gertrude and Richard wipe down the chalk boards together.
are very comfortable together and have an easy rapport.

RICHARD

Remember when Mr. Megher made us do this
after school for a week?

GERTRUDE

That was your fault.

RICHARD

Was not!

GERTRUDE

You tried to kiss me. A girl has to defend
herself.

RICHARD

C'mon!

(Tom Cruise ala Top Gun)

I had the shot. I took it.

Gertrude rolls her eyes. She's heard this a hundred times.

GERTRUDE

No Top Gun. Please.

RICHARD

What? You loved my Top Gun.

GERTRUDE

No. You loved your Top Gun. I just smiled
and laughed like a good girlfriend.

RICHARD

That's right. Ice... man. I am dangerous.

Richard clicks his teeth together, trying to mimic Tom

Cruise.

Gertrude is not impressed.

GERTRUDE

(LAUGHING)

Really. Stop.

RICHARD

That cuts deep. I'll have you know that

76.

Talk of Margaret immediately shuts Gertrude down.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(noticing her change in mood)

Uh, is something wrong?

GERTRUDE

No. Nothing's wrong.

RICHARD

It's been awhile, but I can still tell when something's wrong with you.

Gertrude doesn't want to say anything.

RICHARD (cont'd)

What is it? You know I hate it when you get all quiet.

GERTRUDE

I wish there was a better way to say this.

RICHARD

Better way to say what?

GERTRUDE

I made a huge mistake. With you. Breaking up with you. I'm sorry.

RICHARD

Are you apologizing for high school?

GERTRUDE

Yes.

RICHARD

Oh, thank God. I thought this was like, something big.

GERTRUDE

This is something big.

RICHARD

I coulda used this about five years ago, but I'm all good now, promise. Thank you for saying that, though.

pulls Gertrude sees that Richard isn't getting her point. She
herself together.

GERTRUDE

I think...
(looking down)
I want you back.

RICHARD

77.

GERTRUDE

(more to herself)
Oh God, he's making me say it again.
(looking at Richard)
I want you back. Like... we should be
together. All the time.

RICHARD

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Rewind.

GERTRUDE

I know this isn't the best time to bring
this up.

RICHARD

(RHETORICAL)

My wedding day isn't the best time for you
to bring up the idea of us dating?
Richard's reaction stings, and Gertrude begins to well up.
Bringing this up is very hard for her.

GERTRUDE

I'm not talking about dating! You should
move back here. We can have the life you
always talked about in High School. I'm
ready for that now.

RICHARD

Why are you doing this?

GERTRUDE

I know that the timing here sucks. But we are meant to be together. I know it. I think you know it too...

RICHARD

No, I don't. I don't know it.

Richard begins to pace. Not sure what to say. Every time he opens his mouth, he can't find the words. Then, from the door, an interruption.

MARGARET

Hey guys.

nothing but Holy shit. Did Margaret hear anything? Her face gives away. Gertrude and Richard act like nothing just happened, look guilty as hell.

GERTRUDE

Oh. Hey Margaret.

RICHARD

Uh, you all done?

78.

MARGARET

Yeah. We'll see what he says.

RICHARD

Great. Great.

MARGARET

You ready to get back to the house?

RICHARD

Uh. Yeah. Uh-huh.

MARGARET

Well let's go. See you at the wedding, Gertrude. Gertrude just smiles.

GERTRUDE

Yeah. See you at the wedding.

EXT. PAXTON DOCK - DAY

Richard and Margaret unload champagne. Richard is still
thinking about Gertrude and wanting to be alone.

MARGARET

So, what did you and Gertrude talk about?
Richard lies.

RICHARD

Nothing. About her school. The kids and
stuff. Apparently my second grade teacher
was a pot head.

MARGARET

That was it? I was gone for awhile...

RICHARD

(cuts her off)
Yeah. That was it. You know, I can do
this. You should really go try on the dress
for my mom.

MARGARET

I was going to go for a run first, it's been
three days since I got out, I'm feeling
crazy.

RICHARD

(could care less)
Whatever.
Margaret isn't accustomed to Richard talking to her this
way, but doesn't push it.

79.

EXT. PAXTON TRAIL - DAY

running Margaret runs at a fast pace deep in the woods. She's
she's hard, muttering to herself, and working out the aggression
her accumulated over the last thirty six hours. She's lost in
own world, until she sees smoke, and slows to a stop.

MARGARET

What now?

Margaret follows the smoke, and hears a mysterious DRUMBEAT.

She

soon discovers a tremendous bonfire by the water, and a

SHAMAN

dancing around it. He is dressed in a loin cloth, and

wears a

carved bear's head mask and tribal make up. His belly

shakes as

he spastically moves around the fire. The Shaman sings a

song

that sounds centuries old.

SHAMAN

Yai...takuju magaluam Ut uksu lingm ik

pifiksailiriju m lk tuakjuk qangani

takujumagaluam Ut gangalan uarm.

Margaret hides behind a tree and stares at this man in a
trance.

He begins to yell at the fire and scream at the top of his
lungs.

Exhausted, he stops and catches his breath. He yells out
again.

SHAMAN (cont'd)

Margaret, welcome!

She looks around. Maybe another Margaret is in the
vicinity.

SHAMAN (cont'd)

Come to me, Margaret of New York.

Nope, that's her. She carefully steps out into the
clearing.

SHAMAN (cont'd)

It is I, father Paxton.

Sure enough, Geoffrey is beneath all the make-up.

MARGARET

What, ah, are you doing?

GEOFFREY

My shaman Kevin told me to get out here and
clear my head. As you know, things have
been a little crazy around here. You should
join me.

MARGARET

Ya know, I've got to get back.

GEOFFREY

You closed minded southerners amuse me.
Never willing to leave the nest and try

80.

MARGARET

I'm a big fan of the nest.
Geoffrey throws sand into the fire and it blazes higher.

GEOFFREY

Dance with me! You besmirch my ways if you
deny my circle.
Worried she's going to really piss him off, Margaret
relents.

MARGARET

OK, OK. I "accept your circle."
Geoffrey smiles and throws more sand into the fire.

GEOFFREY

Clear your mind and follow me.
Geoffrey begins dancing slowly, contorting his body.
Margaret follows, always a half step behind, and can't get into it.
After a few moments, Margaret stops.

MARGARET

I'm gonna head back.

GEOFFREY

We're not done.

MARGARET

I think I am.
Margaret begins to leave. Geoffrey calls after her.

GEOFFREY

Margaret?

Margaret stops and turns around.
GEOFFREY (cont'd)
I'm sorry we got off on the wrong foot. But
I'm making an effort here. Don't leave now.
Much to her chagrin, Margaret stays. Geoffrey is pleased.

GEOFFREY (cont'd)

Thank you.

(switching gears)

Yai...takuju magaluam Ut uksu lingm ik

pifiksailiriju m lk...

Geoffrey throws more sand on the fire to make it go higher

and

speeds up the dance. Margaret is getting better, but it is

still

painfully awkward.

81.

GEOFFREY (cont'd)

...tuakjuk qangani takujumagaluum Ut

qangalan uarm.

Geoffrey speeds up the dance.

GEOFFREY (cont'd)

Now you.

MARGARET

Me what?

GEOFFREY

Chant.

MARGARET

Chant what?

GEOFFREY

Whatever comes out, just chant. It is the
way. You'll feel better.

MARGARET

I can't...

GEOFFREY

Close your eyes. Chant.

Margaret and Geoffrey keep dancing. Margaret closes her

eyes,

but can't figure out what to say.
GEOFFREY (cont'd)
Chant!

MARGARET

I don't know any chants!

GEOFFREY

Chant!

MARGARET

(GUTTERAL)

Too...

Looking at Margaret, it's surprising she can make such a low noise.

MARGARET (cont'd)

...ooo...

GEOFFREY

Chant!

The drum beat continues.

MARGARET

82.

They continue to dance, Margaret is getting into it.

MARGARET (cont'd)

...to the wall...

More sand. More fire.

MARGARET (cont'd)

...to sweat drop down my balls...

Geoffrey stops dancing. What did she say?

MARGARET (cont'd)

...to all these bitches crawl...

Margaret's eyes are closed, she doesn't realize that she's

broken

out into a â€˜Lil John song. She continues to dance.

MARGARET (cont'd)

...To all skee skee motherfucker...

Geoffrey takes the bear head mask off.

MARGARET (cont'd)

...all skee skee got damn...

From the trees, the moment is broken when Debbie shouts out.

DEBBIE

Geoffrey!
Margaret stops chanting â€ˆLil John.

GEOFFREY

Oh Debbie, I didn't do anything.
Margaret sees Debbie and Grandma Annie in the clearing.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Is she singing about balls?

MARGARET

He told me I had to chant!

GRANDMA ANNIE

Oh, you poor dear. Geoffrey, you can't do
this!
(to Margaret)
He's an eighth Tlingit, dear.

DEBBIE

He does this to keep in touch with "his
people".

83.

GEOFFREY

Don't make fun of my heritage! And it was
helping. Don't you feel better? I feel
better.

DEBBIE

Come on sweetie, we need to get you cleaned
up. You've got a dress to try on. And
Geoffrey, put that fire out and come in and
help us with this wedding.
Geoffrey turns off the boom box that was hidden in the trees
and
the drum beat stops.

GEOFFREY

Fine.
With a fire extinguisher, the bonfire comes to an end.

INT. PAXTON MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Debbie and Annie wait outside a bathroom door in a massive
master bedroom. They talk to Margaret through the door.

DEBBIE

I am so excited. Aren't you excited?

GRANDMA ANNIE

This was my dress from 1929. My mother made
it by hand. Amazing how things come back
into style. How does it fit?
Margaret speaks through the door.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Just buttoning up here.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Drum roll!
Grandma and Debbie enthusiastically make drum roll sounds.
Margaret opens the door and smiles. She's unsure of
herself, but
looks fantastic. The dress fits great, except...
GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)
Your boobs are bigger than mine ever were.

MARGARET

Yeah, it's a little snug.

DEBBIE

Come over here.
Debbie leads Margaret to a mirror. Grandma Annie follows.

84.

MARGARET

(ADMITTING)

It's a lovely dress.
Debbie looks at Margaret, and spontaneously begins crying.

DEBBIE

(through the tears)
You're so beautiful, and such a great match
for my Richard. I know I've just met you,
but a mother can tell. When he looks at
you, I can tell he's in love. I'm so happy
I get to share your day.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Debbie, please. We've got work to do.

DEBBIE

You're right.
Debbie collects herself, then starts crying again.

GRANDMA ANNIE

You go work downstairs, I'll finish this.
Debbie tries to calm down, but can't.
GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

Go!

Debbie nods in agreement. Smiling from ear to ear, she
leaves in

tears. Margaret and Annie watch her go.

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

Had to get rid of her before I gave you
this. Don't think she woulda recovered.

Grandma Annie comes from behind and puts her arms around
Margaret's neck. When she is done, a stunning blue
necklace lays

on Margaret's neck.

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

You needed something blue. It's silly, but
I didn't want to take any chances.

MARGARET

It's beautiful.

GRANDMA ANNIE

It's hematite. Alaska diamonds. The blue
ones like this are very rare. My great
grandfather gave it to my great grandmother
when they were married. They were quite a
scandal, you know. He was Russian and she
was Tlingit.

(MORE)

85.

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

Back then, you had to get approval from every person in the tribe before you got married. It almost broke them up.

MARGARET

How'd they stay together?

GRANDMA ANNIE

Don't know. But I'm sure happy they did, none of us would be here if they hadn't. Grandma and Margaret admire the necklace in the mirror.

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

I want you to have it.

stealing This is awful news for Margaret. She might as well be from Annie.

MARGARET

No, no, no. I can't. Really.

GRANDMA ANNIE

I don't want to hear it. It's yours.

Grandmothers like to give their stuff away to their grandchildren. Makes us feel like we'll always be a part of your life, even after we're gone. Take it.

time Margaret puts her hand to the necklace, and for the first feels like a complete and total fraud.

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

Are you feeling all right, dear?

reply. Margaret doesn't speak. Annie patiently waits for her

MARGARET

Well. Thing is...

Margaret deliberates spilling her guts to Annie, but can't.

MARGARET (cont'd)

...the dress is just a little tight.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Oh, don't worry about that. We've got these seams by the arm, this'll be easy.

Annie marks up the dress with tailor's chalk.

GRANDMA ANNIE (cont'd)

We can fix this no problem.

wrong. Margaret smiles, but knows that Annie couldn't be more

86.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

Richard helps WORKERS build a stage for the band. He's
still in a foul mood when Margaret interrupts in a panic.

MARGARET

We need to talk.

RICHARD

I'm a little busy.

MARGARET

Well I'm freaking out. I need to get away
from here. From everyone. Now.

RICHARD

Go for another run.

MARGARET

No! I did that. It did not help.

RICHARD

I'm a little tired of you making demands and
me just jumping...

MARGARET

(re: wedding stuff)
We're not going to need any of this if I
don't get out of here.

RICHARD

OK, high maintenance. Let's go.

EXT. PAXTON SPEED BOAT - DAY

Unlike the bulky yacht, this boat is built for speed and
maneuverability. Richard starts her up.

MARGARET

Move over, I'm driving.

Margaret cuts in front of Richard and grabs the wheel.

RICHARD

You don't know where we're going.
Margaret opens up the throttle and they are off.

MARGARET

It doesn't matter.

ON THE OPEN OCEAN

the
Margaret and Richard leave everyone behind and take off for
horizon.

87.

As they jet up the coast away from civilization, the green
trees,
blue water and wildlife (bears, puffins, moose) that inhabit
the
coastline have a calming effect on both of them. In
Alaska, it
doesn't take long to leave humanity behind.
Eventually, the boat travels through a channel with steep
mountain walls on either side. Although it is still warm
out, an
icy beach can be seen straight ahead.

MARGARET (cont'd)
Where are we?

RICHARD

The north pole. Congratulations, we made
it.
(off Margaret's look)
It's a glacier. Tracy's Arm. You better
let me take it from here.

MARGARET

I'm fine.

RICHARD

Oh. OK. So like me, you've navigated a lot
of glacier fields? And not died?
Margaret reluctantly moves aside and lets Richard steer.
RICHARD (cont'd)

Lady, you've got issues.

MARGARET

Yeah. I'm a control freak. Fine.

RICHARD

It doesn't stop there.

MARGARET

This coming from the sociopath.

RICHARD

Oh, please.

MARGARET

I'd never bring me here.

RICHARD

You drove!

MARGARET

I mean to Alaska.

RICHARD

Are you kidding me?

Richard pulls next to the glacier and turns off the engine.

88.

MARGARET

You're sick. Doing this to them.

RICHARD

I explained to you...

MARGARET

They love you. Do you get that?

RICHARD

Of course.

MARGARET

And you're still willing to lie to them?

RICHARD

Like you didn't know.

MARGARET

Didn't know what?

RICHARD

That we were going to lie to them.

MARGARET

I didn't know!

RICHARD

Well that makes you either stupid, or ignorant.

MARGARET

You think I'm stupid?

RICHARD

No, but what's behind door number two...

MARGARET

(SCREAMS)

I forgot! OK? I forgot!

RICHARD

Forgot what?

MARGARET

What it was like!

RICHARD

What what was like?

MARGARET

To have a family! I forgot what it was like to have a family. I've been on my own since I was thirteen, and I'd forgot what it was like to have people that love you, and make you breakfast, and give you necklaces...

Suddenly, Margaret has a hard time speaking and is short of breath. She goes to the side of the speed boat.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I'm going to take a walk.

RICHARD

We need to head back...

MARGARET

Alone. I need alone time.

RICHARD

What?

Margaret looks at Richard with a scared and confused look.

MARGARET

I'm, uh, about to lose my shit. Big time.

I need a second.

RICHARD

But...

MARGARET

(PANICKED)

Stop right there!

Richard puts up his hands in surrender and stays put.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I'm going to be over there. Away from you.

Just sit down, turn around, and act like
you're not here.

Richard goes to speak, but Margaret motions for him to sit

down

and turn around. He does. Margaret gets off the boat and

walks

away from him on the glacier.

ON THE GLACIER

Margaret tries diaphragmatic breathing to calm down.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(manic, to herself)

You can do this. Couple more hours, and
then you'll never see these people again.

Eventually you'll write a letter.

Apologize. Send the necklace back.

RICHARD

(from the boat)

Margaret!

MARGARET

No talking!

90.

RICHARD

(from the boat)

Watch your step, OK? It can be dangerous.

MARGARET

Again, you're not supposed to be...

Margaret doesn't finish her sentence.

ON THE BOAT

Richard sits with his back turned to Margaret, waiting for
her reply. He doesn't hear anything. That's weird.

RICHARD

(back still turned)

Margaret?

Richard turns around and looks for Margaret. He doesn't
see her.

He gets out of the boat and goes onto the glacier, walking
in the direction he last saw Margaret.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Margaret? I know I'm breaking "the rules"
here, but where are you?

He takes one more step before he hears...

MARGARET (O.S.)

(YELLING)

Richard!!!!!!! Help!!!!!!!

Richard still can't see her, but runs in the direction of
her

voice. He soon rounds a mound of ice and sees that --
Margaret's been swallowed by the ice. Her upper torso
sticks out

of the glacier, held up by her arms. Her eyes are wide,
and

she's almost hyperventilating. It's a bizarre sight.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Oh, thank God!

Richard tries to control himself, but BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

Margaret is really scared.
MARGARET (cont'd)
Wh-, wh-, why are you laughing?

RICHARD

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Just relax. I'll get you out of there. You've broken through an ice bridge. It happens all the time. No biggie.

MARGARET

Don't do that.

91.

RICHARD

Don't do what?

MARGARET

The thing that doctors do in E.R. when they tell the gunshot victim who is bleeding to death that they're going to be OK. Don't do that!

RICHARD

It's not like that. Really. We do need to be careful here though, I don't want us both to fall in. Stay still, OK?

MARGARET

Uh-huh.

Richard is ten feet away from Margaret now. He's checking
the ice to see if it is stable. He slowly walks her way.

RICHARD

So, I'm going to walk up to you and very slowly pull you out. OK?

MARGARET

I'm really cold.

RICHARD

Yeah, that's normal when you're surrounded

by ice.

MARGARET

(makes sense)

OK.

up to Richard stands over a stuck Margaret, whose head just comes his knee. He calmly looks down on her.

RICHARD

So I'm going to pull you up by your armpits. I'm probably going to touch boob. But don't freak out.

slowly Margaret shakes her head yes. Richard reaches down and lifts her out of the ice. Margaret doesn't say a word.

RICHARD (cont'd)

When I get you all the way out, I need you to hold onto me. I'm going to carry you over there.

He's Margaret nods yes as she puts her arms around Richard. strong, so it isn't difficult for him to slowly carry her "over the threshold" style, away from the hole in the ice. He speaks once they're safe.

92.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I've, uh, never done that before.

MARGARET

You said it was "no biggie".

RICHARD

Yeah. Well. You OK?

MARGARET

Yeah. I'm fine.

Richard smiles. Margaret smiles back.

fits Richard walks very comfortably with her in his arms. She

just right. Margaret looks up to Richard gratefully.
MARGARET (cont'd)

(SMILING)

You shouldn't of laughed at me.

RICHARD

You woulda laughed at me.

MARGARET

Yeah. While I was getting my camera.
The two stare at each other for a beat. There's a real
spark.

They might kiss.

RICHARD

Gertrude wants me back.
Whoah. Not what she was expecting. She looks down.

MARGARET

And?

RICHARD

Well. It seemed like you were having...
second thoughts.

MARGARET

Yeah. I was.

RICHARD

Maybe we should do it. Come clean.

MARGARET

Put me down.
Richard puts Margaret down near the boat. She tries to
regain

her composure.

MARGARET (cont'd)

You wanna call it off?

93.

RICHARD

If you do.

MARGARET

Fine. It's over. We'll tell them when we get back.

ON THE BOAT

her. Margaret sits hunched over with a blanket wrapped around Richard drives the boat. They don't talk.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

above Richard and Margaret walk towards the house, which looms getting in a them as they prepare to deliver the news that they aren't married. The front door opens, and Geoffrey comes outside in a hurry. He's clearly been waiting.

GEOFFREY

Come with me.

RICHARD

Where's mom, dad? We all need to talk.

GEOFFREY

do. Not now. C'mon. Richard and Margaret look at each other, not sure what to do. Geoffrey storms off and they follow.

EXT. PAXTON GUESTHOUSE - DAY

Richard, Margaret and Geoffrey arrive at the door to the guesthouse. Geoffrey stops before they go in.

GEOFFREY

(to Richard)
I haven't told your mother about any of this, and I don't plan to.
(to Margaret)
I was really beginning to like you. Sorry about this.
Geoffrey opens the door and goes inside.

INSIDE THE GUESTHOUSE

the The guesthouse has been converted into a squash court. In the middle of the court, a man patiently sits on a metal folding chair. It's Gilbertson. He smiles.

MR. GILBERTSON

Hey there kids. Good to see ya!

94.

RICHARD

(to Dad)

What did you do?

Geoffrey doesn't answer. He's not proud of himself.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(getting angry)

What did you do, dad?!

GEOFFREY

I called him yesterday. He told me that you were lying, and that he was going to catch you. That he was going to send you to prison.

MR. GILBERTSON

(to Richard)

We made a deal and dad here flew me up. Now you tell the truth, and get off scott free. It's like it never happened for you.

RICHARD

You made a deal with him? On my behalf?

GEOFFREY

You were making a mistake...

RICHARD

That's none of your business.

MARGARET

It's fine.

RICHARD

The hell it is. It is not fine!

MR. GILBERTSON

Oh quack, quack, quack. Just tell me what really happened, and I'll be on my way. No one gets hurt, we all get what we want.

Margaret takes Richard's hand.

MARGARET

It's OK. Tell him.

RICHARD

(to Geoffrey)

You do not get to make this decision. This is my decision.

(to Gilbertson)

The truth is... I've been working for Margaret for three years. Six months ago we started dating. I recently asked her to marry me, and she said yes. See you both at

95.

GEOFFREY

What are you doing, Richard?

RICHARD

(grabs Margaret's hand)

Come on, we gotta get ready.

Margaret and Richard storm out of the squash court.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The couple walks briskly to the house.

RICHARD

What was I thinking? They act like they're nice, but really, they're evil.

MARGARET

He's only doing it because he loves you.

RICHARD

Are you defending him? Are you defending the king dick?

MARGARET

Just stop. Think about this.

RICHARD

Oh, I've thought about it. And know what I think? I think you saved my life. Thank you, Margaret. Getting married to you is the best thing that's ever happened to me. Without this, I might've ended up back here. Up at the house, Debbie opens the door.

DEBBIE

There you are! You two almost gave me a heart attack. C'mon, get dressed!

RICHARD

Coming mom!
(to Margaret)
Time to sack up.
Richard winks and goes inside. Margaret follows, not sure.

THE WEDDING MONTAGE

-- Chairs are set up outside.
-- Guests arrive via boat.
-- Richard stands on the deck, wearing his tuxedo.

Gertrude

hello

arrives for the wedding, and they lock eyes. Richard waves and mouths "Sorry." He goes back inside.

96.

dressed

mirror

him.

-- Geoffrey sits in his bedroom and watches TV. He's not for the wedding yet. Debbie shakes her head at him in the as she puts on her ear rings.
-- Gilbertson eats every hors d'oeuvre that's offered to

INT. MARGARET'S ROOM - DAY

Margaret

amazing.

Grandma knocks on the door and comes inside. We see from head to toe. The dress, veil and flowers look

GRANDMA ANNIE

If I were one to brag, I'd say that dress is

perfect.

MARGARET

Matches the shoes.

Margaret pulls up the dress to reveal running sneakers.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Those'll be your best friend. Wedding shoes
stink. You ready?

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

With the ocean in the background, 200 GUESTS sit in white
chairs.
Richard stands under a gazebo, and smiles at his mother in
the
front row. He ignores Geoffrey.
Gertrude sits nearby, next to Gilbertson.
From the gazebo, Richard nods at a GROUP OF CELLO PLAYERS,
who
begin playing from downloaded sheet music that reads "Kool
and
the Gang, Cherish". Heads turn with the start of the
music, to
see Annie walk Margaret down the aisle.
When Margaret recognizes the song, she smiles.

MARGARET

(mouthing to Richard)

Nice song.

Richard shrugs his shoulders.

GRANDMA ANNIE

Is that your song, dear?

MARGARET

I guess so.

Margaret and Annie stop at the end of the aisle. Looking
up,
Margaret sees the justice of the peace, Ramone.
(Yes, the same
guy from the liquor store and the strip club.)

RAMONE

97.

GRANDMA ANNIE

It's me, Ramone.

They

Margaret gives Annie a kiss, and then turns to Richard.

whisper while they walk up to Ramone.

RICHARD

You look gorgeous.

MARGARET

(SMILING)

You look disgusting.

RICHARD

So, is this what you dreamed of when you were a little girl?

MARGARET

Oh, you bet.

They make it to the Gazebo, where Ramone awaits.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Ramone.

RAMONE

(QUIETLY)

Mi amo.

(To the crowd)

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments. To give recognition to the beauty, honesty, and unselfish ways...

Margaret looks at Richard on the word "unselfish," but he's looking straight ahead, determined to get through this.

RAMONE (cont'd)

...of Richard and Margaret's true love...

"True Love" gets Margaret as well, although no one in the audience notices.

RAMONE (cont'd)

...before their family and friends.

"Family and Friends" gets a reaction out of Gertrude and Geoffrey. She purses her lips. He holds on to his chair

in

order to keep himself seated.

RAMONE (cont'd)

For it is family and friends who taught Richard and Margaret to love, so it is only right that family and friends all celebrate

that love here today.

98.

RAMONE (cont'd)

And if there is anyone who has cause why
this couple should not be united in marriage
and love, they must speak now or forever
hold their peace.

Gilbertson stays quiet. Geoffrey takes a tug from a flask.
Ramone is about to continue, but something gets his
attention.

He's not sure what to do.

RAMONE (cont'd)

Mi amo, do you have a question?

We reveal that Margaret has her hand halfway up, eyes
squinted
shut like the new kid in class not sure of herself.

MARGARET

No.

RAMONE

Then why is your hand up?

MARGARET

I have something to say. It's not a
question though.

RAMONE

Can it wait 'til after?

MARGARET

Uh. Um. No.

RICHARD

What are you doing?

Margaret gathers herself and turns around to the crowd.
They
stare back, unsure what to make of this foreigner.

MARGARET

Hey there, folks. Thanks for coming out.
I've got a little announcement to make about
the "wedding."

RICHARD

Don't do this.

Margaret smiles and squeezes Richard's hand.

MARGARET

Not sure the best way to tell you all this.

But, uh... I made Richard marry me. This is all a sham.

Gilbertson victoriously pumps his fist in the air.

99.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I was going to get kicked out of the country -- so I told Richard that I would destroy his career if he didn't marry me.

RICHARD

Now wait...

MARGARET

Richard. Please. Let me finish.

(to the Paxton family)

Richard wanted to stop this when we got off the plane, but I wouldn't let him. Don't blame him. This is all my fault.

(to Ramone)

Could you get the band started? And give these people something to drink.

(to Gilbertson)

And you. Meet me at your dingy in ten, you're taking me to the airport.

MR. GILBERTSON

You got it!

walks Margaret nods, hands Richard the bouquet, and confidently

gets back up the aisle with all eyes on her. She stops when she

to Gertrude and leans down.

MARGARET

Take care of him.

GERTRUDE

Promise.

Margaret walks back into the house. Alone.

INT. MARGARET'S ROOM - DAY

Margaret's wedding dress is laid out on the bed. Her bag
is packed. Richard knocks and comes in. Margaret is on the
phone.

MARGARET

(unenthusiastically to phone)

Uh-huh. Yeah. That's great Frank. Good
news. Talk to you on Monday.

Margaret hangs up.

RICHARD

So Frank's back in?

Margaret nods distractedly. Getting Frank to do the
publicity tour doesn't mean much right now.

MARGARET

Yup. He's in. For now.

100.

RICHARD

Maybe this'll be your Mockingbird?

MARGARET

Yeah. Right.

Margaret starts collecting her bags.

RICHARD

Great exit back there.

MARGARET

Thanks. Fun weekend.

RICHARD

Same old, same old, around here.

MARGARET

Wasn't sure if your mom would want me to strip the sheets, so I just left them.

RICHARD

I'll let her know.

(BEAT)

Why did you tell them all that?

MARGARET

It was getting too messy. We weren't going to be able to keep it up.

RICHARD

Don't start lying to me now.
Margaret stops for a moment.

MARGARET

I heard you and Gertrude at the school. I think she meant what she said. She's a great girl, you should stay. It's the right thing. You're perfect for each other.

RICHARD

But... but what about you? What are you gonna do?
Margaret wants to keep the conversation short.

MARGARET

Don't worry about me. I'll survive.

RICHARD

So what? This is it?

MARGARET

Yup. This is it.

101.

Richard. Margaret walks to the door, but stops. She turns to
Despite her best effort to act cold, she can't help herself.
MARGARET (cont'd)

(SINCERE)

Have an amazing life, OK? You're a good person. You deserve it.
She puts out her hand, and Richard shakes it. It's electric, but
Margaret denies it.
MARGARET (cont'd)
Goodbye, Richard.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

Margaret walks down to the dock carrying her suitcase. She can hear that the party is in full swing and smiles.

EXT. BOAT - DAY

Gilbertson drives his little speedboat and Margaret holds her suitcase tight. It's choppy, and the outboard motor is loud.
The two have to yell to talk.

MR. GILBERTSON

I want you to say the words.

MARGARET

I'm not doing great in the dignity department, can we not do this right now?

MR. GILBERTSON

Say it.
Margaret closes her eyes. Hating that it's come to this.

MARGARET

I'll publish your book.
Gilbertson smiles.

MR. GILBERTSON

Now was that so hard?

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

Richard sits by himself and finishes a beer by the shore. Gertrude walks up to him, looking fabulous, with two more beers.

GERTRUDE

So here's the deal. I'm going to have a million questions for you tomorrow...
Gertrude sits down next to Richard.

102.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

...but for now I thought we'd just sit here
and drink beer. OK?

Richard nods. Gertrude hands him a beer.

RICHARD

Thanks.

Richard thanks her with a kiss on the cheek. Then,
realizing where and who he is with, he puts his beer down. He turns
to Gertrude again with a determined look, gives her a kiss on
the lips, then follows it up with an even bigger kiss.
When they finish, Gertrude is grinning, eyes closed.
Richard looks worried. Something is wrong.

GERTRUDE

You have been practicing.

RICHARD

Waddya mean?

GERTRUDE

Well. Margaret told me that you, uh, turned
into bit of a man whore down there.

Richard looks down. A bit ashamed. Gertrude makes light.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

You're gonna have to put that in check if
you move back. Cause me and Beth Cable are
the only two real options up here... and
I'll kick that bitch's ass.

Richard gives her a polite smile. He's not really in the
mood to joke. Gertrude notices.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

So no jokes yet? Too soon?

RICHARD

I'm sorry. I'm just a little... confused.

GERTRUDE

That kiss didn't seem "confused."

Richard takes a beat to collect himself.

RICHARD

You're amazing, Gert. And I've thought about being with you for a long time. A long time. When you said those things at the school? I've dreamed about hearing you say those things.

(MORE)

103.

RICHARD

(cont'd)

But as crazy as this seems. I know now... that we're just not meant to be.

Gertrude pulls back like she's been punched.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Thing is... when I said goodbye to Margaret? I felt sick. For the three years we worked together, I wanted to be as far away from her as possible. But now that she's gone? I'm just really... sad. I want her with me. What is that?

The question hangs in the air.

GERTRUDE

I don't know.

RICHARD

I think I have to find out.

GERTRUDE

Find out what?

RICHARD

If she feels the same way.

Gertrude begins to tear up, but won't let herself cry.

GERTRUDE

Well. OK then. What's a girl gonna do?

(voice cracking)

I guess you want who you want.

Gertrude gives a melancholy smile.

RICHARD

I'm so sorry.

(BEAT)

But, I gotta go.

GERTRUDE

Uh-huh.

Richard gets up.

RICHARD

Are you OK?

GERTRUDE

I'm fine. Really. Go.

Gertrude nods her approval and Richard runs off to the party.

104.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - PARTY - DAY

Debbie, Geoffrey and Annie sit at a table next to the bar, dumbstruck looks on their faces. Ramone mixes drinks and flips bottles. Richard runs up to them all, looking excited.

GEOFFREY

What are you so God damn happy about?

RICHARD

What? Oh. Well, I'm, uh, going to see Margaret.

GEOFFREY

What?!

DEBBIE

She violated you. We should report her.

RICHARD

Who you gonna report her to, mom?

DEBBIE

Oh my God. He's got the Stockholm syndrome.

RICHARD

I don't have the Stockholm syndrome. And she didn't violate me.

DEBBIE

What is going on, Richard?
Richard slows down and explains to his mom.

RICHARD

I'm sorry I lied to you. That was an awful thing to do. But it took this weekend for me to see how funny, and screwed up and perfect Margaret is for me. I think she's... the one.

DEBBIE

But you already thought she was the one.

RICHARD

No, I didn't. Not until she left.

DEBBIE

Really? Does she think that too?

RICHARD

I don't know. I've got to get to the airport to find out.
Debbie doesn't say anything, then breaks into a smile.

105.

DEBBIE

(so romantic)
He's going to stop her from leaving! At the airport!

RICHARD

But I gotta hurry. Her plane leaves any second. I might not make it.

DEBBIE

(so romantic)
He's not sure he's going to make it!

GEOFFREY

Are you buying this horse shit?

DEBBIE

Oh, Geoffrey!

RICHARD

I don't have time to explain this to you.

GEOFFREY

Well then make some god-damn time. Cause I won't let you throw your life away for some woman.

RICHARD

I don't care.

GEOFFREY

Excuse me?

RICHARD

I don't care. I love you and want you to understand. But I'm not asking your permission here. I'm doing this.

GEOFFREY

Oh, really?

From behind them, Annie stands up and shouts.

ANNIE

Boys! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!

But suddenly, a look of panic flashes across Annie's face.

She

grabs the table to steady herself, but pulls the table

cloth,

causing a loud crash. Geoffrey and Richard run over.

GEOFFREY

Mom, are you OK?

ANNIE

I'm having a... I need to go to the hospital. Fast.

106.

INT. PLANE - DAY

finds
the
Margaret and Gilbertson board the jet together. Margaret
her seat in first class and discovers the Handsome Man from
flight before sitting nearby.

HANDSOME MAN

(re: Gilbertson)
Is this another gay assistant?
Margaret doesn't say anything and takes her seat.

EXT. PAXTON ESTATE - DAY

They
all pile into a large chopper and fly off.
TWO COAST GUARDSMAN carry Annie on a gurney to their waiting
helicopter. Geoffrey, Richard, and Debbie follow behind.

INT. COAST GUARD HELICOPTER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

hand.
An oxygen mask covers Annie's face. Geoffrey holds her
Annie motions for Geoffrey to come closer and he leans down.
Geoffrey sits up and shouts over the helicopter noise.

GEOFFREY

three
through
Richard! She has something she wants to say
to us!
Richard leans down, and joins Geoffrey and Annie. Their
heads are very close together. Annie speaks to them both
the oxygen mask.

ANNIE

Listen to me. You two need to stop
fighting. You'll never see eye to eye, but
you're family. If this doesn't stop, one
day you'll regret it.
(to Geoffrey)
Promise me you'll stand by Richard, even if
you don't agree with him.

GEOFFREY

I... I promise.

ANNIE

And Richard. Promise you'll work harder to be a part of this family.

RICHARD

I promise, Grandma.

ANNIE

OK, then.

Annie closes her eyes. She looks peaceful. A moment passes.

107.

Then suddenly Annie takes off her mask, sits up, and yells to the pilot.

ANNIE (cont'd)

(as if nothing happened)

I'm feeling much better. I don't need to go to the hospital. Take us to the airport, please.

Richard and Geoffrey are confused. Stunned even.

GEOFFREY

What... what is going on?
(so the Coast Guard can't hear)
Did you fake a heart attack?

ANNIE

We didn't have time for your squabbling, and I knew a helicopter would be the quickest way to the airport. It seemed like the best way.

RICHARD

The best way?

ANNIE

And remember, you two promised me that you're going to get along. I wasn't kidding about that.

COAST GUARD PILOT

Ma'am, I'm not authorized to take you to the airport...

ANNIE

(to pilot)

Larry Ferris! Don't make me call your mother!

INT. PLANE - DAY

Gilbertson talks non-stop. Margaret is in hell.

MR. GILBERTSON

...I want my book launch to be special. I'm thinking we throw a soiree at the Nevsky Monastery. In St. Petersburg? Margaret stares at him blankly.

MR. GILBERTSON (cont'd)

(as if she should know)

Where Dostoyevsky is buried? Hello? I thought you were a professional... Margaret closes her eyes to numb the pain.

108.

EXT. SITKA AIRPORT - DAY

follows The helicopter lands, and Richard jumps out. His family as they run to the control tower.

INT. AIRPORT TOWER - DAY

only CHUCK has an easy job. Jets fly into Sitka, but there are about six flights a day. He is half awake as he radios Margaret's flight. Reggae music plays in the background.

CHUCK

Flight 1601, you're clear for takeoff.

PILOT (O.S.)

Roger that, Chuck.

as

The PHONE RINGS in the tower. Chuck picks up. Intercut
necessary, with Richard running on a cell phone.

CHUCK

Tower. Talk to me.

RICHARD

Hey Chuck, it's Richard.

CHUCK

Hey man. Heard about your lady bailing.
How often does this happen to you?

RICHARD

Need you to do me a solid, brother. I gotta
see my girl and she's on that flight. Could
you stop it for me?

CHUCK

No can do brohan. Need a good reason for
the FAA holes. Lose my jobby job if I
delivered that favor.

RICHARD

Oh, c'mon Chuck!

INT. PLANE - DAY

The plane rattles as it gains speed for takeoff. Margaret
studies the safety pamphlet, trying to ignore Gilbertson.

MR. GILBERTSON

...so next topic. Celebrities. Let's
invite the Bill Clinton's and leave out the
Paris Hilton's, OK?
Gilbertson smiles as he looks out the window and sees the
plane
leave Sitka.

109.

EXT. TOWER - DAY

Richard and his family stand outside the tower and watch Margaret's plane take off.

RICHARD

Well. That's it. Once she gets back to New York, it'll be like this never happened. Richard looks defeated. Geoffrey sees how sad his son is, and takes a deep breath.

GEOFFREY

So, you know I think you shouldn't be with Margaret, right?

RICHARD

You've made that crystal clear.

GEOFFREY

Good.
(looks at Annie)
Well, consider this me keeping my promise. Geoffrey pulls out his cell phone and hits a button. He

waits

for an answer.
GEOFFREY (cont'd)
(to phone)
Hey! Maguire! Yeah, yeah, yeah, her running out was something. But that's what I'm calling about. I've got a favor to ask you, â€˜bout one of your planes...

INT. PLANE - DAY

Gilbertson continues to talk. Margaret is in a stupor.

MR. GILBERTSON

...you know those two hundred pages I took out? I'm going to put them back...
A flight attendant comes to Margaret and interrupts.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Ms. Mills? Would you come with me?
Margaret is excited to get away from Gilbertson.

MARGARET

Yes, of course.
She unbuckles her seat belt, about to get out of her seat.

MR. GILBERTSON

What's this about?

110.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

(never done this before)

There's someone on the radio for you.

The flight attendant points to the Flight Attendant CB
located at

the front of the plane, outside the cockpit.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (cont'd)

Uh, a Richard Paxton?

Margaret shakes her head and re-buckles her seat belt.

MARGARET

Tell him I'm not here.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - DAY

Richard and his family are huddled around the radio in the
tower.

Chuck sits nearby.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)

(from radio)

I'm sorry. She won't come talk to you.

RICHARD

Shit! She's never going to pick up...

CHUCK

(to Richard)

Know what, home slice? Cut this chica
loose. You remember Beth Cable? She'd
totally be into you...

Suddenly, Richard has an idea. He picks up the hand mic.

RICHARD

Excuse me Miss Flight Attendant, could you
ask the captain to do me one more favor...

CUT TO:

INT. PLANE - DAY

DING! The captain comes on over the loudspeaker.

CAPTAIN

(over plane loudspeaker)

Welcome to flight 1601 to Seattle, this is your captain. We've reached our cruising altitude of 30,000 feet. Flight time'll be three hours and thirty minutes. And Margaret? Richard has something he'd like to say to you.

111.

RICHARD (O.S.)

(over loudspeaker)

Uh, hey Margaret. And cause I'm on the loudspeaker, hey everyone on the plane. The other passengers look around to try and figure out who's Margaret. Meanwhile, Margaret looks down and acts like she doesn't know either.

RICHARD (O.S.) (cont'd)

(over loudspeaker)

This certainly isn't how I wanted to do this. I mean, I'm not really into the whole baring your soul in front of strangers thing, but I figure it's now or never. So here goes.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - DAY

Richard puts down the hand mic for a second to gain composure.

His family encourages him on.

CHUCK

You're doing great, man.

Richard pushes the button down on the hand mike.

RICHARD

I know you're used to being on your own. And that you're comfortable with your life the way it is. And that in a million years

you wouldn't have thought that we should be together. I know, because I felt the exact same way.

CUT TO:

INT. PLANE - DAY

Every passenger is enraptured by the words coming out of the loudspeaker. The flight attendants, the Handsome Man, everyone.

RICHARD (O.S.)

(over loudspeaker)

And you know what else I know? I know that I'm tired of being alone. And I think you're tired of being alone too. So come on. Talk to me. Please.

The Handsome Man turns to Margaret.

HANDSOME MAN

(with genuine concern)

Do you really feel like you're alone?

112.

MARGARET

Oh, good lord.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - DAY

Richard and his family stare at the radio, waiting to see if there is going to be an answer. Chuck crosses his fingers.

MARGARET (O.S.)

(from radio)

What the hell are you doing?

Everyone in the tower smiles. They're making progress.

RICHARD

We need to talk.

the (Intercut as necessary. Margaret stands at the front of plane with the passengers watching.)

MARGARET

About what?

RICHARD

Have you ever thought there might be a reason we've been together for the last three years?

MARGARET

As boss and assistant.

RICHARD

Things change, Margaret.

MARGARET

(INCREDULOUS)

Things change?

RICHARD

Yeah, things change.

MARGARET

Is that the best you got?

Geoffrey hits Richard, as if to say "see, that's what I said."

Richard composes himself.

RICHARD

Now, tell me the truth. When you left, were you relieved or sad that we didn't have an excuse to be together anymore?

Geoffrey gives Richard the thumbs up. That was a good one.

113.

MARGARET

What's your point?

RICHARD

Because I am sick that you left. And if you feel sick too, then why shouldn't we just be together?

She wants Margaret goes to answer, but stops. Richard is right. to go back. Even the passengers on the plane can see it. Gilbertson panics.

MR. GILBERTSON

Are you thinking about going back to him? Margaret doesn't answer.

MR. GILBERTSON (cont'd)

trying We have a deal! You can't back out now! The flight attendant steps in, annoyed that Gilbertson is to break up Richard and Margaret.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Sir, you need to sit down.

MR. GILBERTSON

I will do no such thing.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Sir, I'm ordering you to return to your seat.

Other passengers yell "sit down asshole" at Gilbertson.

MR. GILBERTSON

Who said that?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Sir, this is your third and final warning!

MR. GILBERTSON

Listen sweetheart...

(he pokes the flight attendant)

I'm a federal officer, so why don't you get me another cocktail and mind your own...

BUZZ! ZAP!

400,000 Volts of electricity surge through Gilbertson. He twitches violently and crashes to the floor.

Behind him, The Handsome Man holds a stun gun and a badge.

HANDSOME MAN

Well, I'm a federal Air Marshall. And you're under arrest for disobeying a crew member, assault, and possible intoxication.

114.

The Handsome Man pulls out flex cuffs, zips them around Gilbertson's wrists, and throws him in the bathroom. He

then

takes the CB from Margaret and speaks to the passengers.

HANDSOME MAN (cont'd)

Sorry everybody, but protocol says we need to get this unruly passenger off the plane ASAP. Sitka's the closest airport, so if it's OK with you, I'm gonna have the captain turn this bird around.

There are wild cheers from the passengers. Margaret blushes.

HANDSOME MAN (cont'd)

(winks at Margaret)

Told you I was a romantic.

EXT. SITKA AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

Flight 1601 glides to a safe landing. Richard and his family wait on the tarmac, and the plane taxis to them. A truck drives stairs to the front door of the plane and the door opens. Margaret steps out. Richard walks up the steps.

MARGARET

This wasn't supposed to happen.
Richard looks Margaret in the eye.

RICHARD

But it did.
Margaret looks down. A little embarrassed.

MARGARET

I'm not the kind of girl who gets saved.
Richard smiles, and without warning, Margaret grabs him, and plants a long, deep, and wet kiss on him.
The long kiss is interrupted by the Handsome Man and Gilbertson.

HANDSOME MAN

Uh, sorry, but excuse us.
The Handsome Man leads a handcuffed and still dazed Gilbertson down the steps.

MARGARET

(to Gilbertson)

Hey! Do you think getting arrested might affect you at work?

Gilbertson has no retort.

115.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Oh, and I'm not going to be able to publish your book after all.

MR. GILBERTSON

So you are getting married this weekend?

MARGARET

(SMILING)

Absolutely not. But who knows?

(looking at Richard)

We might by the time you get out of jail.

Gilbertson makes a "go to hell" face and shuffles off.

Margaret turns back to Richard. All smiles.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I've got some explaining to do.

Margaret and Richard walk down the steps and stand in front

of

Richard's family.

MARGARET (cont'd)

(to Debbie)

Hi. I'm Margaret. I've known your son for years, but we've just recently begun to see each other romantically.

(to Geoffrey)

I want to get to know you all, and spend some real time up here in Alaska.

(to Annie)

I'm not sure when you are going to see him get married, but I promise as long as I'm with him, he'll be happy.

Passengers cram up to the plane windows to see what will

happen.

GRANDMA ANNIE

That's all we ever wanted.
Grandma Annie gives Margaret and Richard a big hug. Debbie
joins in. Then Geoffrey. Passengers cheer.

CUT TO:

EXT. PAXTON ISLAND - DANCEFLOOR - DAY

The party is in full swing.
Balzac chases his balls.
Ramone slides onstage and SINGS with the band. He has a
beautiful voice.
Debbie and Geoffrey cut a rug. They've done this before.

116.

Gertrude and Annie chat and laugh at a nearby table. The
Handsome Man brings Gertrude a drink. Grandma Annie winks
and leaves these two alone.
Margaret and Richard dance. All smiles, even though they
aren't very good.
And as everyone dances, we track up the tallest tree on the
island, to an eagle's nest at the very top. Inside the
nest,
Margaret's three eaglets chirp along to the music, snuggled up to
phone.

THE END