KINGLE ALLER

VERONICA'S CLOSET

working title)
PILOT

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FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

TEASER

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. RONNIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

CLOSE ON A TELEVISION. ON IT, AN INTERVIEW IS IN PROGRESS. KATIE COURIC IS INTERVIEWING VERONICA WELLS. RONNIE (TO HER FRIENDS) IS PROMOTING HER LATEST BOOK.

KATIE COURIC (ON T.V.)

So how did it happen? One day,
you're a lingerie designer on
Seventh Avenue, and the next day -RONNIE (ON T.V.)

Twelve years later.

KATIE COURIC (ON T.V.)

-- you've got the stores and the catalogue and the self-help tapes --

RONNIE (ON T.V.)

And the book.

KATIE COURIC (ON T.V.)

(SMILING) Yes, the book. Would you like to talk about the book?

RONNIE (ON T.V.)

(NONCHALANT) If you want.

SHE HOLDS THE BOOK. MEANWHILE, WE <u>PULL BACK</u> TO REVEAL THAT THE T.V. IS IN ROMNIE'S ELEGANT-BUT-WARM MANHATTAN APARTMENT. HER HUSBAND <u>BRYCE</u> IS WATCHING THE INTERVIEW. BRYCE IS IN HIS FORTIES, HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE AND EXTREMELY CHARMING.

ONCE A SUCCESSFUL FASHION DESIGNER HIMSELF, HE IS NOW CONTENT TO LIVE HIS LIFE AS MR. VERONICA WELLS. HE'S NORMAN MAINE FROM "A STAR IS BORN", ONLY HE DIDN'T HAVE THE DIGNITY TO KILL HIMSELF.

BRYCE

(CALLING OFF) Ronnie, honey,
you're missing it!

KATIE COURIC (ON T.V.)

Now, in the book, you say that any marriage can be a great romance.

RONNIE (ON T.V.)

Absolutely. Of course, I'm pretty spoiled. I have the perfect husband.

BRYCE

(CALLING OFF) Thank you very much!

RONNIE (ON T.V.)

But I truly believe that if there's love and respect, then any marriage can be a fairy tale marriage.

JUST THEN, RONNIE ENTERS. SHE IS HOLDING A BRA AND DOESN'T LOOK PLEASED.

RONNIE

What's this?

BRYCE

It's not a bra?

RONNIE

It's not my bra.

BRYCE

(WINCING) Shoot.

RONNIE

I have a question: How stupid are the women you fool around with that they don't even remember they came in with a bra?!

BRYCE CAN ONLY OFFER HER A HAPLESS SMILE. ON THE TV:

KATIE COURIC (ON T.V.)

Once again, the bock is called "The Guide to a Fairy Tale Marriage".

FADE OUT.

ACT ONE

SCENE B

FADE IN:

INT. "VERONICA'S CLOSET" RECEPTION AREA - NEXT MORNING

SOPHISTICATED CORPORATE OFFICES, BUT WITH A FEMININE TOUCH. RONNIE GETS OFF THE ELEVATOR. HER ASSISTANT JOSH IS WAITING TO GREET HER WITH A CUP OF COFFEE. JOSH IS IN HIS TWENTIES -- SMART, WITTY, WITH A DRY SENSE OF HUMOR -- THE PERFECT ASSISTANT, WHO BOTH LOVES AND HATES HIS JOB AS RONNIE'S PERSONAL SLAVE.

JOSH

(HANDING HER COFFEE) There was no vanilla non-dairy creamer. Only hazelnut. If you fire me now, I can be out of here in five minutes.

RONNIE

Hazelnut's okay.

JOSH

Damn.

RESET TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

THEY START TO WALK TOWARD RONNIE'S OFFICE. AS SHE INHALES THE COFFEE, JOSH FILLS HER IN ABOUT HER DAY.

JOSH

Okay. You've got your regular 9:30 with the three-headed beast -Olive's here, Leo and Dina are running late.

(MORE)

JOSH (CONT'D)

The proofs for the winter catalogue are on your desk. The periwinkle bras are looking a little lilac -- don't start hemorrhaging, everycody's aware, the reshoot's Friday. This afternoon, you've got that sew store opening at the (UNSUFE: Fairbrook Mall -- Fallerook Mall -- Pleasant Happy Hills Mall, I don't know! Oh, and I broke up with Sally this weekend, thank you.

THEY PASS JOSH'S AREA AND HEAD INTO RONNIE'S OFFICE.

RESET TO:

INT. RONNIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

IT IS A LARGE, LAVISH OFFICE WITH A DESK AT ONE END AND A SEATING ARRANGEMENT AT THE OTHER.

RONNIE

I'm sorry.

JOSH

Yeah yeah yeah. I don't even know why it didn't work out.

RONNIE

Maybe it's because... you're gay!

JOSH

We don't (SLIGHT HESITATION) necessarily know that.

You're gay, Josh! You're a gay man!

JOSH

Would you stop saying that. You and my mother. What is with you two?

RONNIE

We just want you to be happy.

JOSH

Here. Take your vitamins. By the way, I found them in the trash again on Friday.

RONNIE

I hate vitamins.

JOSH

Really? Most people love them.

Now, come on. They're good for

you. Besides, I slipped a

tranquilizer in there. So there's
a little something for everyone.

HE STARTS TO EXIT. <u>OLIVE ENTERS</u>. OLIVE HANDLES THE BUSINESS SIDE OF RONNIE'S COMPANY. SHE'S ANYWHERE FROM THIRTY-FIVE TO FIFTY -- CYNICAL, SARCASTIC, SELF-ASSURED.

OLIVE

Morning. Coffee, please. Black, two sugars.

JOSH

You're kidding. I've only made it for you, like, a million times.

HE EXITS. OLIVE TURNS TO RONNIE.

OLIVE

Hello. Don't ask. How was your

weekend?

RONNIE JUST MAKES A FACE.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

What'd you find this time?

RONNIE

Bra behind the couch.

BEFORE OLIVE CAN RESPOND TO THIS, <u>JOSH ENTERS</u> WITH A TRAY OF DANISH. HE SETS IT ON THE COFFEE TABLE. HE STARTS TO GO. THE WOMEN BOTH REACH FOR THE SAME DANISH.

OLIVE

You take the raisin. Your husband cheated on you.

HEARING THIS, JOSH PIVOTS TO HEAR THE DIRT.

RONNIE

Look, Josh is leaving.

 $\underline{\text{JOSH}}$ PIVOTS AGAIN AND $\underline{\text{EXITS}}$. RONNIE TURNS BACK TO OLIVE WHO IS STARING AT HER PCINTEDLY.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Stop looking at me like that. What do you want me to do?

OLIVE

I don't know. You could, say... divorce the man!

(BRIGHTLY) Hey, there's a thought.

I could ruin my business and be alone.

OLIVE

Look, I realize you two are supposed to be this poster couple for true romance, but...

RONNIE

But what? Do you actually have something to follow that "but"?

OLIVE

No. (BEAT) Yes. You should be happy.

RONNIE

I am happy. Ish. I'm just afraid that if people find out about the "ish", then I will no longer be The Queen of Romance -- I will be The Queen of Stupid Women Who Got Screwed Over.

OLIVE

So this has nothing to do with the fact that you still have feelings for him?

(CAUGHT) I -- I do not have anything even... remotely resembling... feelings.

OLIVE

Oh, please. It's me. On some level you still love your husband.

RONNIE

That is a terrible thing to say!

OLIVE

(UNCONVINCED) All right, then.
RONNIE

My only concern is protecting my business. This company is my life. My husband is just the guy who sleeps in the other bedroom.

(THEN) Do you think if we're quick, we can eat all the danish before the other people get nere?

OLIVE

One more thought?

RONNIE

No! Didn't you hear me just change the subject? We're on "danish" now! Only things about "danish"! OLIVE

(PLOWING ON) I just think if you're not going to leave him, you deserve to have the happiness he does.

RONNIE

What were you going with this?

OLIVE

In : ord? Cheat.

RONNIE

Oh. ma. Mo. No.

OLIVE

When was the last time you had sex?

RONNIE

(THINKS) With someone else? (OFF OLIVE'S LOOK) I couldn't do it. It's just not me.

OLIVE

Let me tell you something: I never cheated on my first two husbands --

RONNIE

Just so you know, no one will ever take a piece of advice that starts that way.

JOSH ENTERS, CARRYING COFFEE. HE STAYS TO TAKE NOTES ON THE MEETING. DIMA ENTERS WITH HIM. SHE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MERCHANDISE. SHE'S IN HER LATE TWENTIES -- EAGER, FUN, FULL OF ENERGY.

DINA

Morning!

RONNIE

What all-natural, homeopathic energy boosters are you on?

DINA

Bee pollen! I can not recommend it highly enough! I feel --

RONNIE

Sit!

DINA

(SITTING) Yeah, okay.

LEO ENTERS. HE IS THE THIRD MEMBER OF RONNIE'S MANAGEMENT TEAM. LEO HANDLES MARKETING AND PUBLICITY. HE'S AROUND THIRTY -- SWEET, HUGGABLE, OFTEN HARRIED. HOWEVER, TODAY HE IS GRINNING FROM EAR TO EAR.

LEO

Sorry, I'm late.

HE KISSES RONNIE ON THE HAND, ON THE CHEEK, ON THE FOREHEAD.

LEO (CONT'D)

I love you. I love this woman.

RONNIE

I gather it went well with Rita last night.

LEO

And again this morning. I have the happiest, sexiest-feeling pregnant wife in New York City.

DINA

Eeewww...

LEO

(IGNORING HER; TO RONNIE) You are a genius. You'll be getting flowers from my genitals later today.

RONNIE

(BEAT) You'll understand if I
don't smell them. (THEN) Okay,
let's get started. I only have -JOSH

An hour.

RONNIE

-- an hour. Dazzle me.

DINA

All right. Just don't say "no" right away.

RONNIE

Okay...

DINA

(DEEP BREATH) Edible underwear. (OFF RONNIE'S LOOK) And there's the face.

RONNIE

I'm not saying "no".

DINA

You're thinking it.

I can't even think "no"??

DINA

I admit, it's a little tacky --

RONNIE

It's candy pants!

DINA

(SELLING HARD) However, we've had great success with erotica in the past. This could be a huge Valentines item, both in the stores and in the catalogue. I'm telling you, there is a big market out there for people who want to eat each other's underwear! (THEN, CASUAL) Besides, it's just really cool. Check it out.

SHE PRODUCES A BUNCH OF SAMPLES. THE GROUP EXAMINES THEM.

RONNIE

(UNENTHUSED) Oooo. Tutti frutti.

OLIVE

Bubble gum? For whom is Bazooka

Joe erotic?

RONNIE RAISES AN EYEBROW AT JOSH.

JOSH

Would you let it go!

All right, look, I will only consider carrying these --

DINA

Yay!

RONNIE

-- <u>if</u> we can make them in sensuous, sophisticated flavors. Champagne. Creme caramel.

JOSH

Veal!

DINA

(TO RONNIE) Great. I'll have new samples by next week. Not the veal.

RONNIE

(TO OLIVE) I also want to see the production costs on that. (RE: THE UNDERWEAR) I can't imagine you'd want to sweat in these. (THEN) All right, what else?

OLIVE

(EVIL GRIN) I think it's Leo's turn.

LEO

(UNEASY) No, Olive, you go. That's okay.

OLIVE

All right. (QUICKLY, TO RONNIE)

Here's a draft of the shareholder's report -- let me know what you think. Back to you, Leo.

HE HESITATES.

RONNIE

Leo...

LEO

(TENTATIVE) The guys in Marketing feel -- and this is really them, not re, just them, totally them...

RONNIE

Why am I already hating this?

LEO

Their feeling is that it's a bit problematic -- well, more than a bit...

DINA

Take longer.

LEO

(IN A BLURT) Okay, we need new pictures of you on the packaging.

RONNIE

(SURPRISED) Oh.

LEO PRODUCES A SAMPLE LINGERIE PACKAGE. NEXT TO THE "VERONICA'S CLOSET" LOGO IS A YOUNGER RONNIE IN A NEGLIGEE.

LEO

It's just that this pictured is fifteen years old...

RONNIE

Fine. So let's take new pictures.

LEO

Here's the thing. The guys feel -and, again, them, not me, never
me -- that your... physique is not
quite what it was then.

RONNIE FREEZES, HER DANISH INCHES FROM HER MOUTH.

JOSH

Can I stop taking notes, and just enjoy?

RONNIE

Look, when I took those pictures,
I'd just gotten over pneumonia and
it was a week before my wedding!
Cartoon characters aren't this
thin!

LEO

I totally understand. So our thought is... we use your head -- which never looked better, by the way... and put it on someone else's body.

IN ONE MOTION, RONNIE GRABS A PAPERWEIGHT AND JOSH WHISKS IT OUT OF HER HAND.

No. The answer is no. The company is called "Veronica's Closet". Not "Veronica's Head's Closet". If you need me to have... less physique, then I'll do it myself. I can look like this again. I'll just... diet.

JOSH

Oh, no. No. I beg of you. I can not live through another one of your diets. And this is <u>so</u> not the week for it. The water retention alone is gonna kill us.

RONNIE

Well, I don't care. You're not putting my head on some skinny bitch's body!

OLIVE

Told you she'd take it well.

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE C

EXT. STREET - LATER THAT MORNING

RONNIE COMES OUT OF HER OFFICE BUILDING AND HEADS TOWARD A WAITING LIMOUSINE. A WOMAN SEES HER AND STOPS.

WOMAN

(EXCITED) Oh, my god. You're her. You're Veronica Wells.

RONNIE

I'm her.

WOMAN

Can I just tell you: your first book saved my marriage! And also your Eyelet High-cut Briefs ride up in the back.

RONNIE

Well, I'm happy to hear the first thing, and I promise we'll work on the second -- nobody likes a wedgie.

- WOMAN

Thank you.

THE WOMAN BEAMS AS RONNIE MOVES TO THE WAITING CAR. HER CHAUFFEUR, PAT, HOLDS HER DOOR OPEN. HE IS IN HIS SIXTIES, STILL VITAL, AND VERY MUCH THE CHARMER.

RONNIE

Morning.

PAT

And a lovely morning it is.

RONNIE SQUINTS AT HIM.

RONNIE

You're drunk again.

PAT

I am not drunk. At the moment, I

am merely... colorful.

RONNIE

Too colorful to drive?

PAT

(CONSIDERS THIS) Legally?

RONNIE

(SIGHS) Oh, Dad...

CUT TO:

SCENE D

INT. LIMOUSINE - MOMENTS LATER

RONNIE IS BEHIND THE WHEEL, DRIVING. PAT IS IN THE BACK.

RONNIE

Do a whole we're going?

PAT

Jers , comewhere.

HE POURS HIMSELF A FINE.

RONNIE

What are you doing?

PAT

You're the designated driver now. (THEN) Why are you going through the park?

RONNIE

I'm gonna take the bridge.

PAT

Take the tunnel.

RONNIE

Too much traffic.

PAT

The bridge is twice as far.

RONNIE

The tunnel could collapse and we could drown.

PAT

Oh, and that never happens to bridges?

BEAT.

RONNIE

Can I ask you a question?

PAT

Shoot.

RONNIE

You think you can cheat on someone and still love them?

PAT

Or take the bridge.

RONNIE

I'm serious.

PAT

Shouldn't you be asking your husband this?

RONNIE

He's not in the car. (THEN) Did you still love Mom when you were cheating on her?

PAT

I have not had <u>nearly</u> enough to drink to answer these questions.

(OFF RONNIE'S SILENCE) Yes, I loved your mother.

(MORE)

PAT (CONT'D)

I <u>still</u> love your mother. I just know she's better off without me. (LOOKING DOWN) I'm wearing two different shoes.

RONNIE

Olive thinks I should cheat on Bryce.

PAT

I always liked Olive. You don't think her and me could --

RONNIE

No.

PAT

So, you gonna?

RONNIE

Nah.

PAT

You sure? 'Cause he certainly deserves to be cheated <u>on</u>. And if you've gct someone who you love and who loves you... (BEAT) So... is there someone?

RONNIE

I imagine there is <u>somewhere</u>.

(THEN) I just can't see myself doing it.

PAT

You don't know. Maybe someday you'll find somebody wonderful enough to cheat on your husband with.

RONNIE

I wouldn't count on it.

PAT

A father can only hope. (BEAT) Seriously, take the tunnel.

AS THEY CONTINUE TO ARGUE AND DRIVE...

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE E

INT. RECEPTION AREA - THE NEXT DAY

RONNIE GETS OFF THE ELEVATOR. JOSH IS THERE TO GREET HER WITH A GLASS OF WATER.

JOSH

Morning.

RONNIE

(STARING AT GLASS) This coffee's too weak.

JOSH

Twelve eight-ounce glasses. Start drinking.

RESET TO:

INT. HALLWAY/JOSH'S AREA - CONTINUOUS

AS THEY WALK TO RONNIE OFFICE:

JOSH (CONT'D)

Now, what do you want for breakfast? Half an orange or twelve grapes?

RONNIE

I'll have the grapes. And the danish. Cheese danish. For the protein.

JOSH

Twelve grapes coming up.

RONNIE

You hate me.

JOSH

Your trainer should be here any minute.

RONNIE

You nate me a lot.

OLIVE COMES UP, CAPPLING DOCUMENTS.

OLIVE

Morning: I need signatures.

RONNIE

What it I signing?

OLIVE

You're buying me a vacation home.

BEFORE RONNIE CAN LOOK AT THE DOCUMENTS, A SPECTACULAR HUNK OF MAN COMES UP TO THEM. HE IS PHYSICAL PERFECTION IN EVERY WAY.

REG

Excuse me? Hi. I'm Reg. The trainer? Here to "make a new you"?

RONNIE

(SMITTEN) Of course you are. (TO THE OTHERS) He's here to make a new me. (TO REG) Why don't you go on in. I'll be right behind you.

SHE CRINKLES HER NOSE AT HIM. REG SMILES AND EXITS INTO RONNIE'S OFFICE. RONNIE, OLIVE AND JOSH ALL WATCH HIM, UNDRESSING HIM WITH THEIR EYES. ALL THREE SIGH. RONNIE GLANCES AT JOSH AND RAISES AN EYEBROW.

JOSH

I'm not!

OLIVE

(TO RONNIE, MEANINGFULLY) He's very cute.

RONNIE

So? (GETTING IT) Oh, please.

He's, like, twenty.

OLIVE

(WISTFUL) Yeah.

RONNIE

Would you put your glands back in their cages. I am just going to get trained. That's all.

SHE STARTS INTO HER OFFICE. THEN PAUSES TO ADJUST HER MAKE-UP, FLUFF HER HAIR AND CHECK FOR LIPSTICK ON HER TEETH. SHE EXITS INTO HER OFFICE.

RESET TO:

INT. RONNIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

REG IS MOVING THE FURNITURE ASIDE. RONNIE ENTERS AND FINDS HERSELF STARING STRAIGHT AT HIS RATHER FIRM BEHIND.

RONNIE

(CAPTIVATED) Need any help?

REG

I've got it.

RONNIE

Yes, you do.

REG

Before we start, I've gotta tell you, Miss Wells... this is kind of a thrill for me.

It's Ronnie. And tell me why it's a thrill.

REG

Well... oh god, okay... I've always had sort of a pretty big crush on you.

RONNIE

(AW SHUCKS) On me? Noooo.

REG

Yup. Ever since I was a little boy.

RONNIE

(DEFLATING) Oh, good. All the way since then.

REG

My mom used to get your catalogues.

I thought you were so hot. You
were kind of my first.

RONNIE

Well, now I feel old and dirty.

HE LAUGHS.

REG

Yeah, like you're old.

RONNIE

(PLEASED AGAIN) I see what you mean.

HAVING CLEARED THE FURNITURE, HE FACES HER.

REG

Okay, lay down.

RONNIE

(STARTLED) What?

REG

On your back, on the floor, legs apart, knees up.

RONNIE

'Kay.

SHE GETS DOWN ON HER BACK.

REG

All right, now, you're gonna be using me -- Eyes open.

RONNIE

'Kay.

REG

You're gonna be using me as your weights. I am your resistance.

RONNIE

0000.

HE LEANS DOWN OVER HER.

REG

Start by putting your feet on my chest.

SHE DOES.

RONNIE

Mmmm. I can feel with my toes,
you're so strong.

REG

Okay, bend your knees. Now, lower me toward you.

RONNIE

'Kay.

REG

Slower. Slower. There you go.

Now push me away. Push. Push me
away.

RONNIE

I don't wanna.

REG

C'mon. You're doing great.

SHE RELUCTANTLY PUSHES HIM AWAY.

REG (CONT'D)

Now lower me toward you. (SHE

DOES) Now push me away.

BUT INSTEAD OF PUSHING HIM AWAY, SHE CONTINUES LOWERING HIM TOWARDS HER.

REG (CONT'D)

Push. Push. No, push me away.

SHE CONTINUES TO BRING HIS BODY CLOSER. HER FACE IS NOW INCHES FROM HIS. IT'S VERY INTIMATE.

REG (CONT'D)

(LIPS NEAR HERS) You're not

pushing.

RONNIE

No. Is that a problem?

REG

Not for me.

SHE LOWERS HIM STILL FURTHER. THEN:

RONNIE

Oh, sod... I can't. I can't do

thii.

WITH ALL HER EFFIRE HE PUSH HIM UP AND OFF HER. HE STUMBLES BACK.

REG

You and that pretty well.

RONNIE GETS UP. THE'T FLUSTERED AND UPSET.

RONNIE

Okay, we're done.

REG

But we just started.

RONNIE

Yes, well, that's all Miss Wells can do. She wishes she could do more, believe me, but that's it.

Bye-bye.

REG

But --

RONNIE

Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye.

SHE HUSTLES HIM OUT. THEN LEANS AGAINST THE DOOR AND LETS OUT A WHIMPER. SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED AND DESPERATELY HUNGRY, SHE REACHES FOR THE EDIBLE UNDERWEAR. SHE TEARS INTO THEM AND STARTS BINGING. AFTER A MOMENT, OLIVE, DINA AND LEO ENTER. THEY CATCH RONNIE WITH HER MOUTH FULL OF PANTIES.

All right, fine! Find me a body!

I can't be celibate and thin!

OLIVE

We've got bigger things to worry about.

RONNIE

(STILL UPSET) Oh, good!

DINA

(TO LEO) Tell her.

LEO

Why is it always me?

OLIVE

I'll tell her. We've learned that in Liz Smith's column tomorrow, she's reporting that your husband was spotted coming out of a hotel room with a blonde.

BEAT.

RONNIE

Pass me the chocolate underpants.

OLIVE DOES. AS RONNIE CHOWS DOWN, MISERABLE...

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

SCENE H

FADE IN:

INT. RONNIE'S LIVING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

BRYCE IS MAKING HIMSELF A CUP OF TEA. RONNIE ENTERS.

BRYCE

Hello, darling.

RONNIE

Who's the blonde?

BRYCE

(GENUINELY UNSURE) You're going to have to give me a little more than that.

RONNIE

Last week at the

Sherry-Netherlands?

BRYCE

(GOT IT) Oh, okay.

RONNIE

Who is she? No, I don't want to know. Yeah, I want to know. No, I don't want to know. Just tell me this, do you think she's someone we can pay to keep quiet?

BRYCE

Absolutely.

(SARCASTIC) I feel so much better.

BRYCE

(OFFERING) Tea?

RONNIE

Oh, well, tea will change everything.

BRYCE

Don't blame the tea.

RONNIE

You think I blame the tea??

BRYCE

I was hoping.

BEAT. SHE SMACKS HIS ARM. HARD. BEAT.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Ow.

RONNIE

All right, so we pay off this girl.

(HESITATES) No, I don't want to know. (THEN) And then you and I are going to have to do some major damage control. We're talking a very public display of affection.

BRYCE

That's what I'm here for. (THEN)
So. If that's everything...

HE STARTS TO CROSS AWAY WITH HIS TEA.

Hang on, Bucko. You may want to sit down for this.

BRYCE

I'm sorry?

RONNIE

Assuming this works -- and god help us if it doesn't -- I want you to promise me that you will never have another affair again.

BRYCE

(BEAT) You're asking a lot.

RONNIE

Yes, I realize it's hard not to cheat on your wife. But if people find out that's what you're doing, then they will stop buying my things, and then we will have to stop buying things, and we all know how much you like things.

BRYCE

(SINCERE) I understand. (THEN)
No women ever?

RONNIE

Why is this such a hard concept?

HE WEIGHS HIS OPTIONS FOR A LONG BEAT. THEN:

BRYCE

(RELUCTANT) All right. I won't cheat on you.

RONNIE

I appressate that.

BRYCE

But thever say I never did

anyth :: for you.

HE EXITS WITH HIS TIME AND WE...

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE J

INT. RONNIE'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

RONNIE IS TALKING WITH LEO, DINA AND OLIVE. JOSH IS ON HAND. RONNIE MUNCHES FROM A BOX OF DONUTS ON THE TABLE.

RONNIE

I spoke to Bryce. He's totally on board.

LEO

Good. 'Cause I want him with you at every book signing, personal appearance, hugging you like crazy --

RONNIE

Maybe he can come with me when I'm on "Oprah" next week.

LEO

I love that!

DINA

Maybe we're making too much of this. Maybe nobody reads Liz Smith.

LEO

The phones have not stopped ringing.

DINA

Okay.

LEO

I've been telling people it's all a bunch of crap. But they don't believe me. They know I lie.

OLIVE

This is not good.

RONNIE

Please tell me it's all going to go away.

LEO

It's all going to go away.

RONNIE

Says the liar.

OLIVE

We should get started.

DINA

All right, you're going to be seeing four models today. The two best from the catalogue. And two runway girls we've worked with before.

RONNIE

Am I going to hate this?

OLIVE

No question. Now, if you see a body that you like, just let us know.

JOSH

(WITH INNUENDO) Does that go for all of us?

RONNIE

(TO JOSH) You don't have to do that.

DINA GOES TO THE DOOR.

OLIVE

(TO LEO) Actually, you don't need to be here for this.

LEO

That's okay. I've got nowhere to go.

DINA

Okay, ladies, c'mon in. Just line up over here.

FOUR GORGEOUS MODELS ENTER. THEY ARE ALL DRESSED IN NEGLIGEES. THEY LINE UP FACING RONNIE.

RONNIE

(SOTTO) Oh, dear god, look at them.

OLIVE

I know.

RONNIE

It's so unfair. (TO ONE OF THE MODELS) Hi. Would you like a donut? Any of you girls?

(MORE)

RONNIE (CONT'D)

(EATING ONE, TEMPTING) You sure? They're reeeally good. Tell you what. We'll just leave the box right here.

DINA

Ronnie, this is Amber.

THE FIRST WAIF-LIKE MODEL STEPS FORWARD AND POSES.

RONNIE

Hi, Amber. (ASIDE TO DINA) Oh, please. If you stuck my head on that body, she'd fall over.

DINA

Alrightee. Sienna, can you step forward, please?

THE NEXT MODEL, A KATE MOSS TYPE, STEPS FORWARD AND GIVES THEM A SWEET SMILE.

RONNIE

(SOTTO) I don't like her attitude.

OLIVE

What's wrong with her attitude?

RONNIE

It's too damn thin!

DINA

Now Ariel might be a good body for you.

THE NEXT MODEL STEPS FORWARD.

(SOTTO) Nope.

OLIVE

Why not? She's gorgeous.

RONNIE

I hather It's time somebody

ret : ner.

DINA

Which leaves us with... Tree.

THE LAST MODEL STELL FORWARD.

RONNIE

(SCTTO, Mmmm... her ankles are a little thick.

LEO

That's exactly where I went.

DINA

(WEARY) You're not even going to be seeing her ankles in the shot.

RONNIE

Well, excuse me. Is it so wrong to want a perfect body?

OLIVE

(GENTLY) Ronnie, honey, if you want, we can bring you five more girls. We can bring you fifty more girls.

(MORE)

OLIVE (CONT'D)

And you're still not going to be happy with the idea of one of them being your body. But this is what we agreed to do. Right?

RONNIE

Right.

OLIVE

(LOSING IT) So pick one!

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE K

INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON THE FINISHED COMPOSITE PHOTO: RONNIE IN A NEGLIGEE WITH THE BODY OF A TWENTY YEAR OLD. PULL BACK TO REVEAL RONNIE, JOSH, AND DINA LOOKING AT IT.

DINA

What do you think?

RONNIE

(TEARS IN HER EYES) I... look... beautiful! Look at my tiny little waist and my perky little breasts.

JOSH

Absolutely. You're the prettiest make believe person I've ever met.

RONNIE

(TENDER) This girl, the one who's my body... can we kill her?

DINA

Not till she signs the release.

LEO COMES_UP.

LEO

You're all set for tonight. I just need you to pick the restaurant.

Both La Joie and Le Cirque have tables by the window.

RONNIE

Bryce hates La Joie. Let's go there.

DINA

What's tonight?

RONNIE

Big, stupid romantic dinner with my big, stupid husband.

DINA

Aw, that's nice.

JUST THEN, TREE, THE MODEL, GETS OFF THE ELEVATOR.

TREE

Hi! (COMING OVER) Ooo, what's the
picture? Is that us?

RONNIE

Actually, we decided to go with my body after all. But thanks for all your trouble.

TREE

(LOOKING AT PICTURE) Nope. That's me. Ooo, you even used my neck. I can't stand my neck.

RONNIE

Please make her go away.

DINA

Tree, why don't come with me?

AS DINA AND TREE MOVE OFF:

RONNIE

(TO JOSH) I hate my new body.

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE M

INT. LIMOUSINE - THAT NIGHT

RONNIE AND BRYCE ARE IN THE BACK, DRESSED FOR A FANCY DINNER. PAT IS DRIVING.

PAT

You know who's hot? Martha
Stewart. On her show today, she
was showing us how to make
potpourri out of things you find in
your garden. And I just thought, I
wonder if she ever does that naked.

RONNIE

I'm making you go away now, Dad. SHE PUSHES A BUTTON. THE GLASS PARTITION GOES UP.

PAT

C'mon. Martha Stewart naked? It's a good thing!

THE GLASS IS UP. RONNIE TURNS TO BRYCE.

RONNIE

Anyway...

BRYCE

You look beautiful tonight.

RONNIE

Yeah, whatever. (DOWN TO BUSINESS)
Here's the deal. We're going to La
Joie.

(MORE)

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Leo's let it slip to the paparazzi -- they'll be there when we arrive. We're all hugs and kisses on the way in. We have the table by the win: At some point during the ever: : I'll slip off my shoe and run - . : sot up and down your leg. Don's set too excited. (HANDS HIM A WEARRED BOX) You're going to give re this gift. It's a diamond nechlace -- you have good taste. You're going to put it on me yourself. I'll lick your fingers. Try anything, and I'll bite them. We're going to close down the place. You'll slip the maitre d' this money to leave us alone. (GIVING MONEY) It's all for him. Then I'll draw the curtains. We'll wait thirty-five minutes -- which is giving you way too much credit -- and Dad'll take us home. Any questions?

BRYCE

I'm sorry, I was still picturing Martha Stewart naked.

CUT TO:

SCENE P

EXT. STREET - A BIT LATER

PAT HOLDS THE DOOR OPEN. RONNIE AND BRYCE STEP OUT OF THE LIMOUSINE.

PAT

Is this gonna be long? I have a date.

RONNIE IGNORES THIS. SHE AND BRYCE HEAD FOR THE RESTAURANT. BRYCE HAS HIS ARM AROUND HER. SEVERAL REPORTERS AND PAPARAZZI DESCEND UPON THEM, FLASHBULBS POPPING.

REPORTER

Ms. Wells! Is it true your husband's having an affair?!

RONNIE LAUGHS, AND TURNS ON THE CHARM.

RONNIE

If he were, would I be having a romantic dinner with him? Give me some credit.

ANOTHER REPORTER

Then who was the blonde?!

RONNIE

How do you even know there was a blonde?

BRYCE

(STOPPING) This is insane. Let's just tell them the truth.

(UNEASY) What -- what truth is that?

BRYCE

The blonde was... my wife in a wig. We were playing a little game. A naughty, dirty, sexy game.

RONNIE

(PLAYING ALONG) Bryce! (TO THE REPORTERS) Is there any way we can keep that out of the papers?

REPORTER

Was it just the wig, or was there also a costume?

RONNIE

If you tell them, I'll kill you.

SHE STARTS INTO THE RESTAURANT. BRYCE STOPS TO QUICKLY TELL THE REPORTERS:

BRYCE

French maid. Little apron.

Nothing else.

RONNIE FEIGNS SHOCK AND PULLS HIM INTO THE RESTAURANT.

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE R

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

AS PLANNED, RONNIE AND BRYCE ARE SITTING AT A TABLE BY THE WINDOW. A WAITER BRINGS A PLATE OF OYSTERS.

RONNIE

Uh, we didn't order oysters.

BRYCE

Actually, I did. This place reminded me of that time in Paris, with the oysters and... you know.

RONNIE

Yes, I remember what happened after the oysters. I don't remember how to do it anymore, but I remember what happened.

BRYCE SMILES AND PICKS UP AN OYSTER.

BRYCE

May I do the honors?

RONNIE

(TRULY EMBARRASSED) Oh, please...

BRYCE

Come on. (INDICATING REPORTERS)

For them.

RONNIE SIGHS, RELENTING. HE POURS THE OYSTER INTO HER MOUTH. FLASHBULBS POP FROM OUTSIDE.

RONNIE

Thank you. That was very slithery.

HE SMILES. AS THEY EAT THE OYSTERS:

BRYCE

I've got something for you.

RONNIE

(GENUINE) What?

BRYCE

Here.

HE PRODUCES THE WRAPPED GIFT FROM THE CAR.

RONNIE

(REMEMBERING) Oh. Right.

(ACTING) What is it?

BRYCE

(SINCERE) This is for too many years of putting up with a louse of a husband. You deserve better than me. But I want you to know, in spite off all the stupid, hurtful things I've done, I've never stopped loving you.

RONNIE IS STUNNED BY THIS THIS.

RONNIE

(SOTTO) Was that for them? 'Cause you know they can't hear you.

BPYCE

That was for you. And so is this.

HE HANDS HER THE BOX. SHE UNWRAPS AND OPENS IT. SHE LOOKS DOWN AT THE NECKLACE AND IS GENUINELY MOVED.

RONNIE

It's perfect.

BRYCE

Here, let me put it on you.

HE GETS UP AND PUTS THE NECKLACE AROUND HER NECK. THEN LOOKS AT HER.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You really do look beautiful.

HE LEANS DOWN AND FIRSES HER. CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT, SHE KISSES HIM BACK.

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE T

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

AS PLANNED, RONNIE AND BRYCE ARE NOW THE LAST TWO DINERS IN THE RESTAURANT. THERE'S THE REMAINS OF DESSERT ON THE TABLE. A BUSBOY IS CLEANING UP. THE MAITRE D' IS BY THE DOOR. RONNIE AND BRYCE ARE LAUGHING, GENUINELY HAVING A GOOD TIME TOGETHER.

BRYCE

You must tell me!

RONNIE

What do you mean I must?!

BRYCE

Come on, I'm whining!

RONNIE

Okay, fine! (CALMER) I always knew when you were cheating on me, because you'd do your blinking thing.

BRYCE

What blinking thing?

RONNIE

You know. You do it when you bluff in poker. (DEMONSTRATING, BLINK BLINK BLINK) "I don't have a full house." (BLINK BLINK BLINK) "She was just here to clean the room."

BRYCE

That's terrifying.

Why, you thought you were so sneaky?

BRYCE

Yes!

RONNIE SMILES. HE TAKES HER HAND.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Let me ask you something. In spite of all of it... you still care for me, don't you?

RONNIE

Yeah, right.

BRYCE

I'm not saying "love". But on some level, I think you care.

RONNIE

Just pay the maitre d' and get over yourself.

BRYCE SMILES. HE SIGNALS THE MAITRE D'.

MAITRE D'

Will that be all?

BRYCE

(SLIPPING HIM CASH) Actually, if we could be left alone for a little while...

MAITRE D'

Certainly, sir.

THE MAITRE D' SIGNALS THE BUSBOY. THEY EXIT. RONNIE AND BRYCE ARE NOW COMPLETELY ALONE. BRYCE POPS A SUGARED GRAPE IN HIS MOUTH.

BRYCE

So what now?

RONNIE

I suppose you could kiss me again.

BRYCE

I could do that.

HE DOES. ONCE AGAIN THERE ARE FLASHBULBS FROM OUTSIDE THE WINDOW. BRYCE SMILES AND POPS ANOTHER GRAPE IN HIS MOUTH.

RONNIE

What?

BRYCE

I stopped by your office today to drop off some papers. Saw your new logo shots. Very sexy.

RONNIE

Hate to disappoint you. Not my body.

BRYCE

Noocoo.

RONNIE

You could tell?

BRYCE

I'm still your husband, you know. (THEN) And I met the girl.

Which girl? The "body" girl?

BRYCE

She's very sweet. She said you were mean to her.

RONNIE

I wasn't mean. I just...

SHE TRAILS OFF, NOTICING THAT HE'S BLINKING.

BRYCE

Yes?

BLINK BLINK BLINK.

RONNIE

Oh, my god...

BRYCE

What?

RONNIE

Either you have a full house or you slept with her.

BRYCE

I did not... (BLINK BLINK BLINK)

People blink! It's what eyes do!

RONNIE

The "body"?? You slept with the "body"??

BRYCE

(WINCING) Well... maybe you could just think of it as a tribute to you.

I don't think so!

BRYCE

(WARNING) Ah ah ah...

HE INDICATES THE REPORTERS OUTSIDE THE WINDOW. RONNIE PLASTERS ON A FAKE IMILE. SHE GETS UP AND SEXILY DRAWS THE CURTAINS. SHE IMPUS BACK TO BRYCE, FURIOUS.

RONNIE

You in of a bitch.

BRYCE

Now. ust calm down. Honey.

There's no reason to --

HE POPS ANOTHER GRAFE IN HIS MOUTH. AND CHOKES ON IT. TRY AS HE MIGHT, HE CAN NOT DISLODGE IT FROM HIS THROAT. RONNIE STARES AT HIM FOR A BEAT. THEN LOOKS OVER AT THE CHOKING PREVENTION POSTER. SHE READS IT. SLOWLY. SHE LOOKS BACK AT BRYCE, HER PHILANDERING HUSBAND OF FIFTEEN YEARS. AND LOOKS. AND THINKS. SHE TAKES A LAST SIP OF HER COFFEE. SHE SIGHS, GOES BEHIND HIM, AND GIVES HIM THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER. THE GRAPE FLIES OUT. BRYCE GASPS. THEN LOOKS UP AT HER.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

See, you do care.

RONNIE TAKES A BEAT. THEN:

RONNIE

No. The only reason I did that was

so that you could be alive to hear

me say this: I'm leaving you.

BRYCE

What?

RONNIE

I'm leaving you.

BRYCE

But -- but what about your company?

RONNIE

I'll take my chances. I spend too much time helping other people find happiness. I deserve some of that, too.

SHE STARTS FOR THE DOOR.

BRYCE

Wait. This is crazy. We should talk about this.

RONNIE

Goodbye, Bryce.

SHE EXITS. STUNNED, HE RUNS AFTER HER.

CUT TO: -

SCENE W

EXT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

RONNIE STRIDES PAST THE REPORTERS AND PAPARAZZI TOWARD THE WAITING LIMOUSINE. BRYCE CHASES AFTER HER.

BRYCE

Honey, wait! I love you! I love

you!

SHE IGNORES HIM.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

(TO THE REPORTERS) I love her! I

do! This is just another little...

sexy game we're playing. Wait up,

kitten!

BUT RONNIE IS ALREADY GETTING INTO THE LIMOUSINE. IT DRIVES OFF, LEAVING HIM THERE.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

(MISERABLE) How sexy is that?

CUT TO:

SCENE X

INT. LIMOUSINE - SAME TIME

RONNIE SITS IN SILENCE, OVERWHELMED BY WHAT SHE'S DONE. AFTER A MOMENT:

PAT

You know we're missing someone.

RONNIE

Mmm hmm.

PAT

Huh.

BEAT.

RONNIE

Oh, my god...

PAT

You want me to turn around?

RONNIE

No. (THEN) Yes. (QUICKLY)

No. (MORE SURE) No. (BEAT)

Daddy?

PAT

Yeah, princess?

RONNIE

Why are you taking the park?

FADE OUT.