

SOME KIND OF HAPPY

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

All is seemingly quiet on a beautiful, tree-lined street in an upscale cosmopolitan neighborhood as we approach the front door of one particularly well-appointed house, surprised when it opens for us.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER/STAIRCASE/HALLWAY - CONTINUING

Except for a picture turned down on a table in the foyer and another on a bookcase, everything appears in perfect order as we go upstairs to the closed door of the bedroom.

Surprised now when this door doesn't open, we slip through the crack between it and the floor.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

We HOLD ON a tasteful painting on the wall, then a clock and another turned down photograph by the bed as we become aware of a couple in the throes of passion.

Finally, we SETTLE ON RICHARD JENNINGS, 40s, laboring over ARLA DELANEY, 21, in workman-like fashion.

ARLA

This is just how I imagined it.

Thinking she means him, Richard begins thrusting even faster, but her focus is clearly on one of the paintings.

ARLA (cont'd)

She must really like art. Where is she now?

RICHARD

School.

ARLA

She's a teacher?

RICHARD

Student. She went back to school last year.

Richard stops thrusting to look directly into Arla's eyes.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Could we please not talk about my wife right now?

INT. COLLEGE. LECTURE HALL - SAME TIME

Appropriate art slides by Italian Renaissance artists -- Raphael, Leonardo, and Michelangelo -- appear on a screen over the sonorous SOUND of a PROFESSOR in mid-lecture.

PROFESSOR (O.S.)

Raphael helped create a revolution, not just in painting but in artistic ambition as well. Leonardo further expanded the role of the artist to embrace philosophy and science while Michelangelo proved with David, the first monumental free-standing male nude carved in marble since Antiquity, that he was an artist with heroic ambitions.

The CAMERA PANS UP the statue's torso to its' genitals, prompting a female student to GASP which...

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

...melts perfectly into Arla's ORGASM, one she's clearly faking as her gaze floats from the clock by the bed that reads 3 P.M. to Richard's watch that reads 2 P.M.

EXT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL/PARKING LOT - DAY

CLAIRE JENNINGS, 40s, a winning combination of sensuality and wholesomeness, is lost in thought as she exits a lecture hall with a female friend and heads for the parking lot.

FEMALE FRIEND

I wonder what it'd be like to be married to a genius? But then I also wonder what it'd be like to be married to a man with opposable thumbs who can open jars....

She shakes Claire's arm as they reach their cars.

FEMALE FRIEND (cont'd)

Claire!

CLAIRE

What?

FRIEND

Your car?...You're lucky, Claire. If only a statue did it for me.

Claire smiles, not quite sure what for, as the friend gets in her car and drives away.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Richard climaxes finally and lies back on the bed.

ARLA

Did she use a decorator?

RICHARD

No.

ARLA

She did it herself? She's good. Oh, you might want to reset your watch.

RICHARD

It's digital. It keeps perfect time.

ARLA

I guess it's never heard of Daylight Savings Time.

RICHARD

That's today?

ARLA

Yesterday. See?

Arla points to the clock set to the right time, prompting Richard to jump out of bed in a panic and start to dress.

RICHARD

You have to go.

ARLA

But you said I could have a tour!

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DRIVEWAY/STREET - DAY

Disappointed, Arla speeds away in an old beat-up car, just missing Claire's new car as it turns into the driveway.

Puzzled and shaken, Claire removes a bag of groceries from the trunk and approaches the house.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Claire enters a state-of-the-art kitchen that's as clean and organized as the rest of the house.

She starts putting away the groceries as Richard enters and grabs an apple from a bowl on the counter.

CLAIRE

Dinner will be ready soon.
(BEAT) Didn't you have a meeting this afternoon?

RICHARD

They cancelled at the last minute.

CLAIRE

Really? Because I just saw a car --

RICHARD

That was....The firm sent over some files for a new client, Claire.

As Richard bites into the apple and exits, Claire watches the door close behind him, unaware she's squeezing the tomato in her hand so tight its juice is running down her dress.

She notices finally and rushes to the sink to dab water on it.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Claire looks around the bedroom, aware something isn't right.

She goes to the picture that had been turned down earlier -- a wedding photo of Richard and her -- and moves it a fraction of an inch back to its proper place, then straightens the bed-sheets and finds one of Arla's earrings between the pillows.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Claire watches Richard eat, feigning surprise when he finds Arla's earring in his food and holds it up for her to see.

RICHARD

I believe this is yours.

CLAIRE

Is it?

RICHARD

It must be.

He sets the earring aside perfunctorily and continues eating.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. ENSUITE BATHROOM - EVENING

Richard is brushing his teeth in the ensuite bathroom when he stops to study his face in the mirror, obviously liking what he sees.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

Claire changes the bedsheets and pillow cases with more force than is necessary as Richard enters.

CLAIRE

I'll just be a minute.

RICHARD

Good 'cause I'm beat.

CLAIRE

Maybe you should take a few days off.
We could go --

RICHARD

Now isn't a good time, Claire. We're really backed up at the office and --

CLAIRE

It was just a thought.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Unable to sleep, Claire tosses and turns in bed, then turns and looks at Richard sleeping soundly next to her.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING

Richard enters in a rush to find Claire seated at the table, drinking coffee and eating a bagel.

RICHARD

Have you seen my appointment book, Claire?

CLAIRE

Did you check your desk?

He motions for her to look for him and she exits begrudgingly.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. STUDY - MORNING

Claire grabs Richard's appointment book from the desk, starts for the door, then stops and leafs through it, both relieved and disappointed at not finding anything out of the ordinary.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - MORNING

Richard starts to cut a bagel in his hand when Claire enters.

CLAIRE

If I have to take you to the hospital, you really will be late.

She hands the book to Richard, then takes the bagel and, using her free hand for support, cuts it half-way through horizontally, places it on its end, finishes slicing it, then hands it back to Richard.

RICHARD

Thank you.

Again, she watches the door close behind him as he exits.

EXT. STREET/DRESS SHOPS - LATER THAT DAY

Claire and her friend, ELAINE HASTINGS, are window shopping when a wedding dress in one of the windows catches Elaine's eye.

ELAINE

Doesn't that just lick the red right off your candy!

CLAIRE

Your day will come.

ELAINE

Not with Gary, it won't. Sometimes I think all I get from him is something to talk about over lunch.

INT. DRESS SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Claire looks on as Elaine, wearing the dress from the window, admires herself in a floor-length mirror.

CLAIRE

It's not as if he's your first married man, Elaine.

ELAINE

No, but he's going to be my last. That's it, once he leaves me --

CLAIRE

You could always leave him.

ELAINE

Claire! You know very well I swell up like a balloon when I'm not with someone. Then there's the problem of breaking in a new partner because it's one thing to expect someone you know to work away for an hour or so, but it's a lot to expect from someone you've just met. It really is beautiful, isn't it? It's not just my imagination.

CLAIRE

It's beautiful and so are you.

ELAINE

Now I just need a man to go with it. Correction, the right man, a man like your Richard.... Maybe we could share him, Claire? What d'ya think?

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Claire clearly has something on her mind as she waits impatiently for the busboy to clear away the lunch dishes.

CLAIRE

I think Richard's having an affair.

ELAINE

We've been shopping all morning and
you're just telling me this now?

INT. ELAINE'S MOVING CAR - CONTINUING

With Claire in the passenger seat, Elaine maneuvers her
sports car through the mid-day traffic.

CLAIRE

I wasn't planning on telling you at all.

ELAINE

So what are you going to do? Hire a
private investigator?

CLAIRE

I suppose Gary's wife should hire one
to find out about you?

ELAINE

That's different, Claire. Beth doesn't
understand him.

CLAIRE

And you do?

ELAINE

No, but he doesn't understand himself
so we're all at a disadvantage.

CLAIRE

I was thinking that maybe it's just....

ELAINE

Sex?

CLAIRE

I was going to say a physical
attraction that may have already run
its course.

ELAINE

How long have you been married, Claire?

CLAIRE

Twenty-six years....eight months, two
weeks and...four days.

ELAINE

I don't know what you're so worried
about. You've already surpassed the
national average.

Elaine pulls out a calculator and punches the numbers.

ELAINE (cont'd)
 Okay, married men usually wait five years before having an affair so twenty-six-point-eight divided by five --

CLAIRE
 I thought it was seven years.

ELAINE
 That's a myth perpetuated by the movies. Real life's faster. Okay, Richard's probably had five-point-three-six affairs by now.

CLAIRE
 What's a point-three-six affair?

ELAINE
 Hugh Grant in a car. How did you find out, Claire?

CLAIRE
 I saw a woman leaving the house. And I found an earring in the bed --

Elaine pulls her car to a SCREECHING halt, prompting drivers to SHOUT and HONK their horns as they drive around her.

ELAINE
 They did it in your bed? That settles it, Claire! For all the wives and girlfriends I may have hurt, albeit unintentionally, by sleeping with their husbands and boyfriends, I'm going to help you find out just what kind of man you married. Maybe this is just what I need to atone for my indiscretions, to help me realize that Gary isn't my future, that there can be no future with a man married to another woman.

Elaine starts driving again with a renewed sense of purpose when a man in a sports car suddenly cuts Elaine off.

ELAINE (cont'd)
 Did you see that fucker? Hang on, Claire, we're going for a little ride.

Much to Claire's dismay, Elaine GUNS the accelerator and takes off after the car.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Claire places a pair of newly-shined shoes next to the bed, then takes a blue suit from the closet and lays it on the bed.

CLAIRE

All I said was I wish you'd told me you had a meeting tonight, that's all.

Richard appears in the doorway in the middle of shaving.

RICHARD

I thought I did. I was thinking the pin-stripe.

He returns to the bathroom as Claire replaces the blue suit with the pin-stripe.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - LATER THAT EVENING

Claire HEARS the front door close as she loads the dishwasher and goes to the phone.

INT. ELAINE'S CAR/CLAIRE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Parked down the street from Claire's house, Elaine watches Richard go to his car when her cellphone RINGS.

ELAINE

I see him, Claire.

INTERCUT Claire on the phone.

CLAIRE

Maybe this isn't such a good idea.

ELAINE

C'mon, Claire, you need to find out the truth while you still have a few good years left....Claire?

CLAIRE

I'm thinking.

ELAINE

Think about this: Did he take a shower before he left?

CLAIRE

Yes.

ELAINE

For a business meeting, Claire? When was the last time he took a shower before coming to bed to spend the night worshipping your body?

CLAIRE

Okay. Just promise me you'll call as soon as you know something.

ELAINE

I promise. And don't worry, Claire,
you're doing the right thing.

Elaine hangs up and starts to follow Richard's car; Claire hangs up too, clearly not convinced.

INT/EXT. MOVING CAR(S)/VARIOUS STREETS - EVENING

Elaine follows Richard's car into a hotel parking lot.

ELAINE

Dicks are wasted on pricks.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

With the phone in easy reach, Claire drinks wine and looks at pictures of Richard and her in their high school yearbook.

INT. HOTEL. LOBBY/RESTAURANT - CONTINUING

Elaine enters the lobby and looks for Richard, spotting him finally at a table in the adjoining restaurant as a pretty blonde approaches his table.

ELAINE

Figures he'd go for a blonde.

But the blonde walks past Richard and sits at another table as a good-looking man approaches Richard's table and sits.

ELAINE (cont'd)

I suppose it really could be a meeting.
(BEAT) Either that or....Poor Claire.

LATER

Looking bored, Elaine sees his guest exit and rushes to check the restaurant for Richard again.

Disappointed when there's no sign of him, she turns and bumps right into him without realizing at first that it's him.

ELAINE (cont'd)

I'm sorry, I should probably look where
I'm --

RICHARD

It's entirely my fault....Elaine?

ELAINE

Richard? What a surprise! I haven't
seen you since that fund-raiser last
year to save the whales or the trees
or....How's Claire?

RICHARD
 Claire? Claire's fine. Claire's....

ELAINE
 Here with you?

RICHARD
 No, I'm...huh...I had a business meeting. But I'm finished now so perhaps you'd let me buy you a drink?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

With the wine bottle empty now, Claire sets the phone on her lap, grabs the receiver, and AD-LIBS a hello into it.

INT. HOTEL. ELEVATOR/HALLWAY - EVENING

The elevator door opens and Richard exits with a hotel key in his hand, Elaine on his arm, and a smile on his face.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Claire practices grabbing the receiver faster now while continuing to AD-LIB 'hellos' into the phone.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

When she hears the front door while looking at her wedding album, Claire turns out the light and feigns sleep, then pretends to wake when Richard enters and starts to undress.

CLAIRE
 Richard? What time is it?

RICHARD
 It's late, Claire. Go back to sleep.

CLAIRE
 How was your meeting?

RICHARD
 It was...better than expected. Sorry if I woke you.

INT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - THE NEXT DAY

Claire waits impatiently as Elaine deliberately draws out giving her lunch order to a waiter.

ELAINE
 I'm really hungry so I think I'll start with the...house salad...with Oil and Vinegar dressing, I think....
 (more)

ELAINE (cont'd)

No, make that French dressing. We're in a French restaurant, it just makes sense to have their dressing. Then I think I'll have the Pasta Primavera. ...No, the Coq au Vin. Again, French restaurant. As long as the Coq au Vin's good because if it isn't, then I think I'll have the --

Claire grabs Elaine's menu and hands it to the waiter along with her own menu.

CLAIRE

We'll both have the Coq au Vin.

As he exits, she turns back to Elaine.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

I want to know everything....Do I?

LATER

Claire stops eating to just CRY as the waiter and MAITRE'D rush to their table.

WAITER

(to Maitre'd)

It's not my fault this time.

MAITRE'D

Was something wrong with the food, Madame?

(off her look)

The service! Was it the service?

(off her look again)

I don't understand. We serve hundreds of people everyday and we've never had anyone cry. Please, Madame, if you stop crying, we'll give you lunch on the house.

ELAINE

For both of us?

MAITRE'D

Bien sûr, Madame. Of course.

ELAINE

I think we could agree to that. Claire?

Claire stands to leave, still too emotional to speak.

MAITRE'D

Merci, Madame. Merci bien.

They exit as a woman at another table starts to CRY too.

MAITRE'D (cont'd)
 Sacre Bleu!
 (to waiter)
 Quick! Go see if Henri's been into the
 chilli peppers again.

The waiter exits to the kitchen as the Maitre'd rushes to the woman's table.

MAITRE'D (cont'd)
 Was something wrong with the food,
 Madame?

EXT. BOARDWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Claire continues to SOB as people play volleyball, roller-blade, walk their dogs, etc., on the boardwalk.

ELAINE
 Please, Claire, if I'd known you'd take
 it this hard --

CLAIRE
 Did you see her? Is she pretty?

ELAINE
 I'd say more perky than pretty, Claire.
 Actually, you're going to think this is
 funny....

A MOMENT LATER

CLAIRE
 You slept with him? Is this how you
 atone for your indiscretions, Elaine?

ELAINE
 It is sort of the definitive test,
 Claire, and it's not like I enjoyed it.

CLAIRE
 You said you were going to help me,
 Elaine. You didn't say you were going
 to....
 (BEAT) What do you mean you didn't
 enjoy it?

ELAINE
 I mean I've had better.

CLAIRE
 Better? I always thought I was the
 problem.

ELAINE

See? You've learned something you didn't know before and, after all, isn't that why you're going to college?

CLAIRE

So compared to the other men you've been with, Richard's --

ELAINE

You've never been with any other man, Claire?

CLAIRE

No! Richard's the only man I've ever loved and now --

ELAINE

You've discovered what the rest of us have known all along. Men are dogs. So what are you going to do, Claire?

CLAIRE

I'm going to stop listening to you.

ELAINE

Woof, Claire. Woof, woof.

When a DOG BARKS at Elaine, she turns and BARKS right back, prompting the dog to run away.

INT. MALE STRIP CLUB - DAY

When Claire, embarrassed at having a MALE EXOTIC DANCER table dance for her, stands and runs out of the club, Elaine places money in the dancer's G-string and follows.

ELAINE

Don't take it personally. Her husband's cheating on her.

EXT. MALE STRIP CLUB/STREET - CONTINUING

Elaine catches up to Claire as she stops to catch her breath.

ELAINE

I'm sorry, Claire, I thought it'd take your mind off Richard.

CLAIRE

By having some guy stick his thing in my face?

ELAINE

It's called a dick, Claire.

CLAIRE
I know what it is, Elaine.

ELAINE
Then you should know that's all it is.

CLAIRE
You've never been in love, have you, Elaine? I mean, really in love.

ELAINE
I guess not. Not the way you mean anyway.

CLAIRE
Then how can you understand what I'm going through? For the first time in my life, nothing makes sense. The man I've cooked for, cleaned for, made love with....Maybe it wasn't making love at all? Maybe it was just sex like what you have?

ELAINE
There's no need to get nasty, Claire. It's not like I agreed to see him again.

CLAIRE
Did he ask?

ELAINE
Claire! Of course, he asked.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LAUNDRY ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

In an almost somnabulistic state, Claire takes a load of Richard's clothes from the dryer and starts to fold them.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Claire is putting Richard's clothes away when, in a sudden fit of rage, she starts throwing them around the room.

The rage subsides as quickly as it began and she proceeds to make everything neat and tidy again.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BATHROOM - DAY

Claire studies her face in the vanity mirror, then moves to a floor-length mirror to check her still youthful figure.

LATER

Dressed to the nines, Claire applies the finishing touches to her make-up.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

As Richard finishes eating, oblivious to the way she looks, Claire starts to clear away the dishes when she notices he didn't eat his broccoli.

RICHARD
Thank you, Claire, that was good.

CLAIRE
You didn't eat your broccoli.

RICHARD
I don't really like broccoli, Claire.

CLAIRE
Really? I thought you did.
(BEAT) What's your favorite color?

RICHARD
Blue. Why?

CLAIRE
I just wondered if that was true still.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - LATER THAT EVENING

Claire is breaking dishes into the sink when Richard enters.

RICHARD
Are you alright, Claire?

CLAIRE
Sure. Why?...Oh, I saw some dishes on sale today, I thought I'd buy them.

Richard exits and Claire goes back to breaking dishes.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BATHROOM/BEDROOM - EVENING

Wearing a sexy negligée, Claire sprays herself with perfume in the bathroom, then enters the bedroom and climbs into bed.

Oblivious still, Richard turns out the light, leaving Claire staring at the ceiling and holding back her tears.

INT. ART GALLERY - A FEW DAYS LATER

Claire stares at a painting, the rapture clearly evident on her face, as Elaine looks on.

ELAINE
I wonder if the gift shop has this in black velvet. What do you think, Claire?

CLAIRE

I think if you have nothing to say, you should say nothing.

As Claire moves to another painting, we PULL UP TO SEE DAVID TANNER, 20s, sexy, sketching her from a second floor gallery.

EXT. ART GALLERY/STREET/TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

Claire walks along the street as Elaine rushes to catch up.

ELAINE

So am I forgiven, Claire, or did you invite me to the gallery today to punish me? 'Cause if you did, I just want you to know it worked.

CLAIRE

I'm not trying to punish you, Elaine.
I --

Claire stops in front of a travel agency with posters of the Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo, and David on display in the window.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

That's where the real art is. The masterpieces. Venus de Milo, Mona Lisa, David....

ELAINE

You should go for a visit, Claire. You're already on a first name basis.

CLAIRE

I've suggested it to Richard, but all he says is someday.

ELAINE

So go without him.

CLAIRE

I couldn't. Richard would --

ELAINE

Exactly.

Elaine grabs Claire's arm and drags her into the agency.

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUING

A TRAVEL AGENT is on the phone as Elaine and Claire enter.

CLAIRE

(whispering)
What are we doing here, Elaine?

ELAINE
We're inquiring.

The agent hangs up the phone finally and looks at them.

TRAVEL AGENT
May I help you?

ELAINE
Yes, we'd like to buy a ticket in the name of Claire Jennings to wherever that David guy from the window is. Oh, and Venus and Mona too!

TRAVEL AGENT
That would be Paris and Florence.

ELAINE
Paris and Florence. Is that right, Claire?

Claire just nods.

TRAVEL AGENT
I can write that up for you right now if you like. How will you be paying?

ELAINE
With her husband's credit card. He's cheating on her so, of course, she'll want to go first class.

INT. BOOKSTORE - LATER THAT DAY

Elaine pulls French and Italian phrase books and dictionaries from a shelf and hands them to Claire.

CLAIRE
This is crazy, Elaine.

ELAINE
Crazy would be not going, Claire. This is grabbing life by the balls and squeezing. The fact they happen to be Richard's balls is what makes it so much fun.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - A FEW DAYS LATER

Claire is cooking up a storm while listening to a French language CD.

VOICE ON TAPE
What do you think of my new dress? Que pensez-vous de ma nouvelle robe?

CLAIRE
 What do you think of my new dress? Que
 pensez-vous de ma nouvelle robe?

LATER

Claire puts several food containers -- all wrapped and
 labelled -- into the freezer as she repeats the phrase.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 What do you think of my new dress?

Claire stops suddenly, a 'What-am-I-doing?' look on her face.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER. KITCHEN - LATER THAT DAY

Claire carries the containers of food into the kitchen of a
 homeless shelter, much to the delight of a SHELTER WORKER.

SHELTER WORKER
 I can't tell you how much we appreciate
 this. We don't get nearly as many
 donations as we'd like.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY - MONTAGE

-- Claire reacts with mixed emotions to finding her passport
 in the mail;
 -- Claire packs, then repacks a suitcase;
 -- Claire hides her suitcase behind a shelf in the pantry;
 -- Claire repacks her suitcase yet again.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Claire is seated at the table, drinking a glass of wine.

CLAIRE
 Richard, are you having an affair?
 (imitating Richard)
 No, Claire. What makes you say that?

We PULL BACK TO SEE she's all alone.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Richard stirs in bed, next to Claire who is wide awake.

CLAIRE
 Richard, are you having an affair?

RICHARD
 No.

CLAIRE
 Have you ever had one?

RICHARD

No. How could you even think such a thing?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - EARLY NEXT MORNING

Claire watches the clock hit 5:45 AM, then carefully gets out of bed so as not to disturb Richard.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - MORNING

Struggling to write a note at the table when she HEARS Elaine's car outside, Claire rips up the note, lets the bits of paper cascade onto the table, then takes one last look around the kitchen, grabs her purse and suitcase, and exits.

EXT/INT. JENNINGS' DRIVEWAY/ELAINE'S CAR - MORNING

Claire stows her suitcase into the back seat of Elaine's car, then climbs into the passenger seat next to her.

CLAIRE

I don't believe I'm doing this.

ELAINE

It's either this, or end up like me, Claire. Is that what you want?

INT. ELAINE'S MOVING CAR - MORNING

Elaine retrieves a small, wrapped package from behind her seat and hands it to Claire.

CLAIRE

What's this?

ELAINE

A little going away present. I guess I'm feeling a tad responsible still.

CLAIRE

A tad? You slept with my husband!

ELAINE

I know, Claire.

As Claire unwraps a box of condoms:

ELAINE (cont'd)

Some of those Frenchman will undoubtedly want to stick their thing in your thing. That's just the way they are.

CLAIRE

I'm going for the art, Elaine!

ELAINE

When in Paris, Claire! Would it hurt to give me this little piece of mind?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - MORNING

Richard wakes slowly, sees Claire's not in bed, then casually rolls over and goes back to sleep.

INT. AIRPORT. DEPARTURE GATE - MORNING

Claire and Elaine say their good-byes at the departure gate.

CLAIRE

Are you sure you can't come with me?

ELAINE

I have enough problems with men in English, Claire. What would I do with one in French or, God forbid, Italian? Now go and have a good time. Just don't forget, there's more to life than art galleries.

They hug, then Claire disappears through the metal detector while Elaine exits the airport.

Moments later, Claire reappears.

EXT. AIRPORT - MORNING

Claire exits the airport and hails a cab.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - MORNING

Richard enters, sees the bits of paper, and pieces enough of them together to make the words 'Paris' and 'Florence.'

INT. HOTEL. LOBBY. REGISTRATION DESK - MORNING

Claire approaches the registration desk and a friendly-looking desk clerk named TED.

CLAIRE

Hi! I'd like a room, please.

TED

Of course! How long will you be staying with us?

CLAIRE

A couple of days...a week...maybe two.

TED

Do you have any luggage?

CLAIRE

Yes. On a plane going to Paris.

TED

Well, then, you have the perfect excuse to go shopping.

Ted hands Claire the key to her room.

CLAIRE

Thank you.

TED

You're welcome and if there's anything we can do to make your stay more pleasant, please don't hesitate to ask.

INT. HOTEL. CLAIRE'S ROOM - DAY

Claire surveys the room with another 'what-do-I-do-now?' look.

EXT. CAR RENTAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Claire drives out of the parking lot in a luxury rental car.

EXT. CLOTHING STORE/STREET - DAY

Claire exits a clothing store with an assortment of boxes and bags and piles them into the rental car parked at the curb.

EXT/INT. CAR/JENNINGS' HOUSE - EVENING

Richard parks his car and rushes into the house.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - CONTINUING

Richard AD-LIBS Claire's name as he goes from room to room, clearly disappointed when he realizes she isn't there.

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE/STREET - CONTINUING

From her parked car, Claire watches Richard's every move through the windows when a police cruiser pulls up behind her.

She rolls down her window as the OFFICER approaches.

POLICE OFFICER

Evening, ma'am. Are you having car trouble?

CLAIRE

No, Officer.

POLICE OFFICER

May I see your driver's license?

As she hands it to him, he looks at the address, then at the street number on the house.

CLAIRE

I was just leaving, Officer.

POLICE OFFICER

I think that'd be a good idea, ma'am.
Drive carefully.

Claire nods, starts the car, and drives away.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. STUDY - EVENING

Richard sits down at his desk, carefully looking to see if anything's been disturbed.

He removes various business cards and slips of paper with women's names and numbers on them from beneath the blotter and stares at them until the RINGING phone breaks the silence.

RICHARD

Hello, Claire?...No, I'm sorry, you
have the wrong number.

Slowly, an idea comes to him and he exits the room.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Richard rifles through Claire's telephone directory, stops on a familiar name, and dials the phone number.

RICHARD

Yvette? Hi, this is Richard Jennings.
I was just wondering if you've talked
to Claire in the last couple days....
You haven't? Okay, thanks.

Richard dials another number.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Michelle, Richard Jennings. Have you
talked to Claire lately?...No, every-
thing's fine, thanks.

Richard flips to another page and sees Elaine's name.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Elaine. Hastings. Elaine Hastings.
Shit! Elaine Hastings.

Richard dials a number for each word he says:

RICHARD (cont'd)

Five-five-five-I-am-so-busted.

INTERCUT

Elaine answering her cellphone as she sits in a traffic jam.

ELAINE

Hello?

RICHARD

Elaine! Hi, this is Richard Jennings.

ELAINE

Richard! How are you?

RICHARD

That kind of depends on you. You didn't happen to tell Claire --

ELAINE

You mean your wife, Claire?

RICHARD

Yes, Elaine, my wife, Claire. You didn't happen to tell her about....

ELAINE

Can you hold on a sec, Richard? I have another call.

A beat, as Elaine pretends to take another call.

ELAINE (cont'd)

Okay, Richard, I'm back. Now where were we?

RICHARD

Did you or did you not tell Claire that we --

ELAINE

Fucked? It may have come up over lunch. Why? Is that a problem?

Elaine holds the phone away from her ear as Richard SCREAMS incoherently into his end before SLAMMING down the receiver.

INT. HOTEL. CLAIRE'S ROOM - EVENING

Standing in front of a mirror, Claire holds up a couple of new dresses in succession, each time saying:

CLAIRE

Que pensez-vous de ma nouvelle robe?
(after the last one)
Who cares? The important thing is I like them.

INT. HOTEL. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Claire approaches the Maitre'd, wearing one of the dresses.

CLAIRE
I'd like a table, please.

MAITRE'D
A table for one?

She looks around and sees only couples in the restaurant.

CLAIRE
Come to think of it, I'm not very
hungry. Maybe I'll come back later.

MAITRE'D
Very well, Madame.

The Maitre'd turns to a couple who enter, arm-in-arm.

MAITRE'D (cont'd)
Table for two? Right this way.

INT. HOTEL. CLAIRE'S ROOM - EVENING

Again, Claire surveys the room with a 'what-do-I-do-now' look.

LATER

Claire is channel-surfing while eating and drinking her way
through the mini-bar when she stops on Jeopardy.

ALEX TREBEK
Answer: Author Henrich Heine said:
"Oh, what lies there are in these."

ANDREW, Contestant #1, RINGS IN.

ALEX TREBEK (cont'd)
Andrew.

ANDREW
What are kisses, Alex?

ALEX TREBEK
And apparently, there are twenty-five
different types. Pick again.

Claire switches to a channel showing a couple kissing.

CLAIRE
Kiss #18. The lying kiss.

Claire flicks back to Jeopardy as Alex reads another answer.

ALEX TREBEK

Answer: In a recent survey, eighty-five per cent of women polled reported they preferred this to sex.

Claire pops a chocolate into her mouth, then answers at the same time as ANGELA, Contestant #3.

ANGELA/CLAIRE

What is chocolate, Alex?

LATER

Claire is on the phone with Ted during Final Jeopardy.

CLAIRE

I don't know if you meant it when you said all I had to do was ask, but the category is MEN and I've recently discovered I don't know as much about them as I thought....It could be, I suppose. Just a sec, their time's up.

ALEX TREBEK

You're in third place, Andrew, so we'll start with you. What did you put down in response to the most common reason men give for cheating?

(reading his response)

What is reassurance? That's right. Let's see if you bet enough to take the lead.

CLAIRE

We were both right. You about the question and me about not knowing as much as I thought about men. Thank you, I'll let you get back to work now.

Claire hangs up the phone, then dials another number.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Hello, room service? I need someone to restock the mini-bar. Thanks.

LATER

A little tipsy now, Claire is on the phone with Ted again as she works her way through the restocked mini-bar.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

So how do you know so much about men? ...Really? That many?....No, I'm not shocked....Okay, I'm a little shocked.

(more)

CLAIRE (cont'd)

I've only been with my husband who I've recently discovered has been cheating on me....You know, you're the first person I've told that to, other than my friend, Elaine, who then slept with him to prove what kind of man he is....No, I'm not doing anything later. Why?

INT. NIGHTCLUB - EVENING

Ted and Claire are dancing in a crowded gay nightclub.

CLAIRE

I'd forgotten how much I like to dance. Richard never did. So I guess this must keep you pretty busy, huh?

TED

What?

CLAIRE

Cheering up women whose husbands cheat on them.

EXT/INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE/CLAIRE'S CAR - MORNING

Claire sips a cup of take-out coffee while nursing a hangover in front of her house as a love song comes on the RADIO.

CLAIRE

More lies.

She quickly turns the radio off and slumps down in the car as Richard, looking disheveled, exits the house and drives away.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - MORNING - MONTAGE

Clearly emotional as she walks through the house, Claire:

-- lovingly runs her hand over the kitchen appliances;
 -- sits on the bed, then bounces up and down on it;
 -- runs her fingers over Richard's suits in the bedroom;
 -- smells Richard's hairbrush in the bathroom, then notices a ring in the bathtub;
 -- wearing yellow cleaning gloves, Claire scrubs the bathtub.

RICHARD'S STUDY

Claire sits at Richard's desk, notices his desk blotter is crooked and straightens it, inadvertently dislodging his collection of women's names and numbers.

She stares at them, inexplicably drawn to one: A business card for Al's Diner with Arla Delaney's name and number on it.

INT. AL'S DINER - DAY

AL is cooking behind the grill as ROSIE, the waitress, sets a plate of bacon and eggs perfunctorily in front of Claire.

ROSIE

Enjoy.

Rosie moves to a table of women who are obviously regulars.

ROSIE (cont'd)

So I told him to get his ass out of that chair and into a job or he won't be getting into anything if you know what I mean.

Claire perks up when Arla enters, recognizing her immediately.

ARLA

Hey, Rosie.

ROSIE

Hey, girl.

ARLA

Hey, Al.

AL

Hey.

Claire watches Arla remove her coat and put on her apron.

LATER

All the customers have changed, but Claire as Arla grabs a pot of fresh coffee.

ROSIE

(indicating Claire)

Tell her the cup may be bottomless, but the pot isn't.

Arla approaches Claire and refills her cup.

ARLA

Don't mind Rosie. She's having man problems.

CLAIRE

I heard.

ARLA

Who hasn't? But that's her some kind of happy, talking about the man in her life.

CLAIRE
Her some kind of happy?

ARLA
You know, whatever gets you through the day or night. You don't have a some kind of happy?

CLAIRE
Not that I know of. Do you have man problems, too?

Two men enter and acknowledge Arla as they take a seat.

ARLA
They're only problems if you let them be. I don't, so they're not.

CLAIRE
They?

Arla leaves to serve the men without answering.

EXT. SIDEWALK/HOTEL - DAY

Approaching the hotel, Claire rushes to help an attractive MAN who gets knocked to the sidewalk by a car being driven by a maniacal-looking woman who then drives away.

CLAIRE
Are you alright?

JACK
I'm fine, thank you.

CLAIRE
You're not fine. You're bleeding.

The man touches his hand to his face, then buckles at the sight of blood and falls into Claire's arms.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Are you staying in the hotel?
(off his look)
Are you visiting someone?
(off his look again)
You better come to my room then. I'll fix your cut and you can call the police --

JACK
No...no police.

CLAIRE
We'll see about that....

JACK

Jack.

CLAIRE

I'm Claire, Jack.

JACK

Nice to meet you, Claire.

INT. HOTEL. CLAIRE'S ROOM - DAY

Jack is seated on the bed, clearly casing the room while Claire is on the phone with room service.

CLAIRE

No, the mini-bar's fine, but I need some gauze, disinfectant, bandages....

LATER

Claire takes the supplies from a bellboy, closes the door, then goes to the bed and begins cleaning Jack's cut.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

So who tried to run you down, Jack?

JACK

You mean the woman in the car?

(off her look)

My fiancée. She's very jealous.

CLAIRE

Maybe she has reason to be.

JACK

No, no reason. You're very beautiful, Claire.

Jack makes a move to kiss Claire, but she turns away.

CLAIRE

So are you. You also have a psycho fiancée.

As Claire gathers up the mess and exits to the bathroom, Jack goes to her purse on the dresser and removes all her money and credit cards (in Richard's name), then puts back twenty dollars and one of the credit cards as an afterthought.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

I suppose you're going to tell me she doesn't understand you.

JACK

No, she understands me.

He returns to the bed as Claire returns from the bathroom.

CLAIRE

Relationships are hard enough when you start off on the right foot. When you start off on the wrong foot, well, like you are, you're just asking for trouble.

JACK

Those who can explain love are incapable of it.

CLAIRE

Are you sure you don't want to call the police before you go?

JACK

I'm sure....Am I going?

When Claire goes to the door and opens it, Jack follows.

JACK (cont'd)

Thank you, Claire....for everything.

Jack leans in to kiss her again, but she turns away again so he only manages to graze her cheek.

He exits finally and Claire goes to the phone.

CLAIRE

Hi, Ted, it's Claire. Do you feel like going out tonight?...Great, I'll meet you in the lobby.

Claire hangs up the phone, then opens her purse and discovers most of her money and all but one of her credit cards missing.

She picks up the phone again and dials another number.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Hello, Information? I need the numbers for American Express, Visa, Master....

Claire realizes the credit cards are all in Richard's name.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Actually, I won't be needing those numbers after all.

Smiling, Claire hangs up and exits to the bathroom.

INT. THEATRE - EVENING

Claire and Ted are watching EYECONS, a drag show featuring CHRISTOPHER PETERSEN as Marilyn Monroe.

(S)he finishes SINGING My Heart Belongs To Daddy to wild APPLAUSE, then disappears behind a screen.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S.)

Let me tell you, this was a lot easier to do when I was alive. On the plus side, I've discovered a hundred and one uses for nerf balls.

A nerf ball in the shape of a breast suddenly flies over the screen and lands on the stage to the delight of the audience.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd; O.S.)

Growing up, mother always said I was a hard delivery. I said it was the heels. Ba-dum-bum. But seriously, we're all the same really. We're all made up of DNA, that little thing I like to call drag'n'attitude.

(S)he appears from behind the screen dressed as Bette Davis.

CHRISTOPHER

(as Bette Davis)

Fasten your seatbelts, it's going to be a bumpy night.

EXT. THEATRE - EVENING

Claire is still LAUGHING as she and Ted exit the theatre.

CLAIRE

I haven't laughed like that since...I don't remember. Richard was always so serious.

(mimicking Bette)

Fasten your seatbelts...

CLAIRE/TED

...it's going to be a bumpy night.

To Ted's surprise, Claire links her arm in his as they walk.

CLAIRE

I'm starting to think you're the only man I can trust. I bet you'd never leave the opera during intermission.

TED

Never.

CLAIRE

Richard did...all the time. It's early still, how about a drink?

(more)

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 (off his look)
 We don't have to....

TED
 No, we can get a drink.

CLAIRE
 But?

TED
 Don't misunderstand me, Claire, I think you're wonderful. It's because I think you're wonderful that I don't want to see you become a fag hag.

CLAIRE
 Okay, I won't....What's a fag hag?

TED
 A woman who only has gay male friends. My point is you shouldn't give up on all straight men because one turned out to be...well, Richard.

CLAIRE
 Okay, I won't. Can we get that drink now?

Ted nods and Claire takes his arm again.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 Are you sure you're....

TED
 Gay? I'm sure.

CLAIRE
 Have you ever --

TED
 Slept with a woman?

Ted nods.

CLAIRE
 I bet you're very popular. You're so easy to talk to.

INT. AL'S DINER - DAY

Arla refills Claire's coffee cup.

ARLA
 I know why I eat here. It's free.

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
 Waitress, could we order? We're in a
 bit of a hurry.

ARLA
 I'll be right there.

CLAIRE
 You're on your own today?

ARLA
 Rosie called in sick. She went home
 yesterday and found her husband gone.
 (BEAT) Can you find someone gone?

IMPATIENT CUSTOMER
 Waitress! I said we're in a hurry!

ARLA
 Alright, already! Which part of 'I'm
 coming didn't you understand?
 (to Claire)
 He didn't even leave a note, just took
 all his clothes and shit. Men!

As Arla leaves, Claire glances up at a muted TV reporting a
 story on AIDS, throws some money on the table, and exits.

INT. HEALTH CLINIC. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Claire nervously flips through a magazine when a NURSE enters.

NURSE
 Number 23?

Claire stands and follows the nurse into an office.

INT. HEALTH CLINIC. OFFICE - DAY

Claire takes a seat, even more nervous now.

NURSE
 The test is anonymous, but we still
 have to ask you a few questions for our
 records. Now what makes you think you
 need an AIDS test?

CLAIRE
 I recently found out my husband's been
 cheating on me.

NURSE
 Okay, if you could just roll up your
 sleeve for me?...I don't suppose you
 know how many partners he's had?

Shaking her head 'no,' Claire rolls up her sleeve, then fingers her wedding ring as the nurse draws her blood.

NURSE (cont'd)

Do you have any questions?
(off her look)

The only stupid questions, you know,
are the ones you don't ask.

CLAIRE

Why would he do this? I thought we were
happy.

NURSE

Why do people do half the things they
do? I've been married three times and
they were all cheaters.

CLAIRE

Why did you keep getting married then?

NURSE

I guess 'cause people kept asking. But
I got three great kids out of it so it
was worth it. That's what I keep
telling myself anyway.

LATER

The RECEPTIONIST hands Claire a card with a number on it.

RECEPTIONIST

Here's your ID number. You can call
for your results in about a week.

EXT. HEALTH CLINIC/STREET - DAY

Claire stops outside the clinic to steady herself before
starting down the street.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Claire stops in front of a fountain where several kids are
skateboarding and throws her wedding ring into the water.

Just as suddenly, she wades in to retrieve it, emerging
dripping wet as the kids point and make fun of her.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Claire hands her wedding ring to an elderly PAWNBROKER who
peers at her over his glasses.

PAWNBROKER

You want to pawn it, or sell it?

Claire shrugs.

PAWNBROKER (cont'd)
Well, is the marriage broken or just
shattered?

She shrugs again.

PAWNBROKER (cont'd)
A cheater, huh? And on a pretty thing
like you.
(shaking his head)
Degustibus non disputandem est.

CLAIRE
Excuse me?

PAWNBROKER
There's no accounting for taste. Look,
why don't you pawn it? That'll give you
thirty days to figure out your heart.

Claire nods, then takes the money and the ticket the pawn-
broker hands her, and starts for the door.

CLAIRE
How did you know he's a cheater?

PAWNBROKER
He's a man, isn't he?

CLAIRE
Thank you for the degustibus part.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTRE - EVENING

A group of WOMEN introduce themselves in turn.

WOMAN #1
I'm Joan and I'm a cheater.

WOMAN #2
My name's Sue and I'm a cheater, too.

WOMAN #3
I'm Dorothy, and guess what? Cheater.

ELAINE
My name's Elaine and I guess I'm a
cheater, too. No, I am, I'm a cheater.
I even slept with my best friend's
husband, although that was to help her
find out what kind of man she married
because I don't want you to think I
don't have any principles at all.

BETH

My name's Beth. I'm not a cheater, but my husband is and I thought by coming here I might...I don't know...find out why Gary would --

ELAINE

Did you say your name's Beth? And your husband's name is Gary?

When Beth nods, Elaine HEARS the sound of a prison door SLAM SHUT AND LOCK, prompting her to slump in her seat.

INT/EXT. CLAIRE'S CAR/JENNINGS' HOUSE - EVENING

Claire is SINGING Does He Love You? with the RADIO while watching Richard turn lights on and off inside the house.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - EVENING

In the foyer, Richard hits 'PLAY' on the answering machine and listens to Claire's VOICE on the outgoing message.

CLAIRE'S VOICE (O.S.)

You've reached the Jennings' residence.
Neither Claire nor Richard are here at
the moment --

Richard hits PLAY' and listens to the message again.

IN THE KITCHEN

Richard absently hits 'PLAY' on the CD player on the counter, surprised to HEAR a French language CD as the phone RINGS.

RICHARD

Claire?...No, I don't want to do a
survey. What is it with you people?

Richard angrily hangs up the phone, then pulls a piece of paper from his pocket with a woman's name and number on it, starts to dial, thinks better of it, and hangs up.

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE - EVENING

Richard turns out the last of the lights, bathing the house in darkness, and Claire drives away.

INT. AL'S DINER - DAY

Claire enters the diner and takes a seat as Arla approaches with her customary pot of coffee and pours her a cup.

ARLA

I'm not even going to ask.

CLAIRE

I happened to be in the neighborhood....

As Arla looks at her suspiciously, Claire sees a woman walk by the window who's just had her hair done.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

...to get my hair done.

ARLA

At Electra's?

(off her look)

Leonora's?

CLAIRE

Okay, you're right, I had to find out if Rosie's husband came back or not.

ARLA

He did, actually. I figure he didn't have anywhere to go and got scared.

CLAIRE

Where is she then?

ARLA

Took another day off. Make-up sex.

Arla sees a bus filled with SENIORS stop outside the diner.

ARLA (cont'd)

Heads up, Al!

AL

So we'll just work faster.

ARLA

Ten bucks says they'll all want separate checks and they won't tip.

(to Claire)

You want your usual?

LATER

The seniors talk animatedly amongst themselves as Arla tries to take an order for an indecisive group.

ARLA (cont'd)

So that's three blue plate specials and one salad. Is that right?

ELDERLY WOMAN

Maybe I should have a salad, too. My appetite hasn't been the same since I started my heart pills.

LATER

Arla tries to take the order for another indecisive group, clearly frustrated.

INDECISIVE CUSTOMER #1
I can't seem to make up my mind.

ARLA
The fish is good.

INDECISIVE CUSTOMER #1
I had fish yesterday.

ARLA
How long since you've had chicken?

Arla tries to take the order for yet another indecisive group.

INDECISIVE CUSTOMER #2
Everything just sounds so good.

ARLA
Why don't I give you a few minutes?

HUNGRY CUSTOMER
Can you put my order in now? I know what I want.

Claire appears at Arla's side suddenly with the coffee pot.

CLAIRE
Why don't we start with coffee? That always helps me think. And I can tell you that everything on the menu is good, otherwise it wouldn't be on the menu. Isn't that right, Al?

AL
That's right.

ARLA
Thank....I don't even know your name.

CLAIRE
My name? It's Clair...ice.

ARLA
Thank you, Clarice. I owe you one.

Claire just smiles and turns to the customers.

CLAIRE
Okay now, we just have to figure out what you're in the mood for.

LATER

Claire selects a SONG on the jukebox, an old standard which makes the seniors perk up.

ELDERLY MAN #1
They don't write songs like this anymore.

ELDERLY MAN #2
I fell in love with my first wife to this song.

ELDERLY MAN #3
What people listen to today isn't music. It's noise and you sure as hell can't dance to it.

CLAIRE
Why don't you show us how you can dance to this?

As the seniors start to dance, Claire tries to get Arla up.

ARLA
No way, Clarice, I can't dance.

CLAIRE
Don't be silly. Everyone can dance.

ARLA
I can't. I mean, I dance funny.

CLAIRE
Show me.

Arla starts to dance...and it is funny.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
You're right. Hey, everybody, under no circumstances is anyone to ask Arla to dance. Okay?

The seniors LAUGH and AD-LIB 'okays.'

LATER

Arla flips the 'OPEN' sign on the door to 'CLOSED' as Al tries to force Claire to take some money.

AL
Take it, Clarice. You earned it.

CLAIRE
I was just trying to help.

AL
 You did help so take it. Either that
 or you won't be welcome here no more.

Claire reluctantly takes the money finally.

CLAIRE
 I've never earned money before.

ARLA
 I knew you didn't belong in this
 neighborhood.

EXT. AL'S DINER - EVENING

Arla looks angry as she and Claire exit the diner together.

ARLA
 Thanks for your help today.

CLAIRE
 You're welcome.

They start to walk in opposite directions, then Claire turns
 back to face Arla.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 Are you mad at me?

ARLA
 Am I mad at you?

CLAIRE
 Yes. Are you?

ARLA
 You've really never had a job before?

CLAIRE
 No.

ARLA
 Then you must have a husband to rush
 home to.

CLAIRE
 I don't have anyone to rush home to.

ARLA
 Got a good divorce settlement, huh?
 Marriage is grand, but divorce is
 twenty grand.

CLAIRE
 You are mad.

ARLA

You've never had a job, yet you pick up a coffee pot and suddenly you can do mine, no problem.

CLAIRE

I've always been organized.

ARLA

I'm happy for you.

CLAIRE

Don't be.

Claire turns and starts walking away again.

ARLA

Stop! I'm sorry! I shouldn't be angry with you. You were just trying to help.

CLAIRE

I was.

ARLA

Would you let me make it up to you?

CLAIRE

You don't have to --

ARLA

I know, but I'd like to. We could have a girls' night out or -- ?

CLAIRE

Okay.

ARLA

Really? Good. I can't tonight because I have a date, but I'll give you my number and you can call me although the way things are going, I'll probably just see you here tomorrow.

CLAIRE

We can do something I'm not good at.

Arla writes her number on one of Al's business cards as Claire writes her room number on a hotel business card.

ARLA

You're from out of town, huh?...You really were good in there today.

CLAIRE

Thanks. And enjoy your date.

Claire looks at Arla's card as she walks away, amused that it's just like the one she found under Richard's desk blotter.

INT. ART GALLERY - EVENING

Claire is lost in front of another painting as David sketches her again from the second floor gallery.

LATER

David approaches Claire as she continues looking at paintings.

DAVID

Someone once said an hour is the most time you should spend in a gallery at one time because after that you become oversaturated with the images. I think he's wrong, unless, of course, it's dinner time and you have an opportunity to spend it with a beautiful woman.... That was an invitation, by the way.

CLAIRE

Thank you, but I couldn't.

DAVID

You are aware the very future of art may rest on your answer?

CLAIRE

Sorry, but I'm married.

DAVID

I know a lot of married women who eat. And not just dinner.

(off her look)

Okay, forgive me, but I had to ask. I'll just leave you with this and go.

David hands the sketch to Claire.

DAVID (cont'd)

Sometimes nothing feeds the soul like drawing a beautiful woman.

Claire watches David exit, then looks at the sketch.

She notices his signature is illegible, then turns it over to find his phone number and address written legibly on the back.

INT. HOTEL. CLAIRE'S ROOM - EVENING

Claire is watching Jeopardy when she suddenly turns the TV off, reaches for the phone, stops herself, then looks at the mini-bar and dismisses that idea, too.

INT. HOTEL. BATHROOM - LATER

Claire looks at David's sketch, then at herself in a mirror as if seeing herself for the very first time.

EXT/INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE/CLAIRE'S PARKED CAR - EVENING

Claire is parked across from her house, eating chocolates as she focusses on Arla's parked car in the driveway.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - EVENING - MONTAGE

Richard watches Arla as she:

-- flings open the bedroom closets, amazed at how orderly they are;

-- checks out Claire's array of magazines on the coffee table in the living room, then goes to the piano and runs her fingers lightly over the keys;

-- admires Claire's china in the dining room cabinets.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - EVENING

Wide-eyed, Arla follows Richard into the kitchen.

RICHARD

And this is the kitchen.

ARLA

Women get married for kitchens like this.

RICHARD

My wife likes it. But she didn't marry me for the kitchen, we had to renovate.

ARLA

Where's your wife now? Night school?

RICHARD

No. She's...huh...at her mother's for a few days.

Arla runs her finger over the counter, surprised it's dusty.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I've been meaning to call a service.

ARLA

So where would you like to do it? How about the washing machine while it's running?

RICHARD

The bed will be fine.

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE/STREET - EVENING

Claire finishes the last of the chocolates, then drives away.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

With the wedding photograph by the bed face down again as Richard and Arla start having sex, it's obvious he's having performance problems, prompting him to stop.

RICHARD

I don't know what to say. This has never happened before.

Arla picks up the TV remote and switches on the television.

ARLA

We can always try again later. Why don't we watch TV while we wait?

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE - EVENING

Arla looks pissed off as she goes to her car and drives away.

INT. HOTEL. RECEPTION DESK/LOBBY - EVENING

TED

(on phone)

I'm sorry, Room 1312 isn't answering.
I could take a message if you'd like.
...Wait, she's coming in now.

Ted sees Claire enter the lobby and motions for her to pick up a house phone.

CLAIRE

Hello?...Arla! I thought you had a --
Yeah, I can come now. No, it's okay,
I'm sure I can find it.

Claire hangs up the phone...and smiles.

INT/EXT. CLAIRE'S MOVING CAR/PARKING LOT - EVENING

Claire pulls into the parking lot of a bar advertising 'Amateur Duet' night, starts for the door, sees Arla's car, then doubles back and lets the air out of one of her tires.

INT. BAR - EVENING

Twins KENT and KYLE MONROE are SINGING onstage when Claire enters and spots Arla surrounded by several men at the bar.

CLAIRE

Arla. Hi....

ARLA
Clarice! I'm glad you could make it.
Can you sing?

CLAIRE
Not really, no.

ARLA
Well, you did say we could do something
you're not good at. Do you know Does
He Love You?

CLAIRE
I think I may have heard it on the
radio.

ARLA
Good. When we get onstage, just follow
my lead.

As the twins exit the stage to wild APPLAUSE after their
song, Arla gestures to the emcee as he steps to the mike.

EMCEE
That was Kent and Kyle Monroe and next
up we have Arla Delaney and...friend.

ARLA
That's us. C'mon.

Arla drags Claire to the stage by the arm.

CLAIRE
I really think I should just watch --

ARLA
You can't, Clarice. It's duet night
and you're my partner. And who knows,
this may be your some kind of happy!

ONSTAGE

Arla SINGS the first part of the song, then motions for
Claire to join in.

She does and, as the relevance of the lyrics to her life
sinks in, out-sings Arla, prompting Arla to storm off the
stage as the song ends.

CLAIRE
I'm sorry, I don't know what happened.
...I told you I should've just watched.

ARLA
You said you couldn't sing, Clarice.

CLAIRE
I can't. My husband always said I
sounded like chalk on a blackboard.

ARLA
So you do have a husband!

A beat.

CLAIRE
I did, but he died...in a car accident.
There was a fire, they needed dental
charts to identify the body...Wait!
Isn't the whole idea of karaoke to be
good? Isn't that how you win?

ARLA
If you're too good, they think you're
a professional and they disqualify you.
...And I'm beginning to think you're
good at everything you do.
(BEAT) Your husband, was he your some
kind of happy?

CLAIRE
I thought so when I married him.
Otherwise I wouldn't have married him.

LATER

Arla and Claire are seated at a table, both a little tipsy.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
At least I don't think I would have.
He was my first boyfriend, you know.
My only boyfriend really. We started
going out in high school and everyone
just assumed we'd get married and we
did.

Claire takes a sip of her drink.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
This is good. What is it?

ARLA
It's an Orgasm.

Claire LAUGHS.

CLAIRE
You know what I thought you said? I
thought you said it was an...
(whispering)
...orgasm.

ARLA
I did. That's what it's called.

CLAIRE
Really? I don't think I've ever had one.
(indicating drink)
I've never had one of these either.

ARLA
Clarice! You mean you've never? Ever?

CLAIRE
Not that I remember, no. And I think
I would remember.

EMCEE
Ladies and gentlemen, if I could have
your attention, it's time to announce
tonight's winners and they are...Kent
and Kyle Monroe.

Kent and Kyle happily high-five one another while Arla looks
anything but happy.

EXT. BAR/PARKING LOT - EVENING

Claire follows Arla out of the bar.

CLAIRE
I really am sorry.

ARLA
It's not your fault you're good at
things. We'll just have to keep trying
to find something you're not --

Arla stops dead in her tracks when she sees the flat tire.

ARLA (cont'd)
Shit! And I don't have a spare.

CLAIRE
You're in no condition to drive anyway.
Why don't I take you home and you can
deal with this tomorrow?

ARLA
Are you okay to drive?

CLAIRE
I think so.

ARLA
See? You even hold your liquor better
than me.

INT. MOVING CAR - EVENING

Arla runs her hand over the rich upholstery of Claire's car.

ARLA
This is nice.

CLAIRE
It's a rental.

ARLA
It's still nice. Where is it you're from, Clarice?

CLAIRE
Seattle. But I'm thinking of moving here.

ARLA
You are? You should. It'd help you move on after, you know, your husband.

CLAIRE
Didn't you have a date tonight?

ARLA
It's that one.

Claire pulls to a stop in front of a run-down building.

ARLA (cont'd)
I did, but he couldn't do it and got all pissy. I don't suppose you'd like to come in?

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING. STAIRCASE - EVENING

Arla runs up the stairs ahead of Claire, SHOUTING as she goes.

ARLA
It's just one more floor.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Arla enters the one-room disaster area that is her apartment and rushes to pick up and/or hide clothing, food, magazines, etc., as Claire enters and tries not to react to the mess.

ARLA
I think I might have a bottle of wine somewhere. Although it's probably not the kind you drink.

CLAIRE
I'm sure it'll be fine.

LATER

Arla and Claire are seated on the floor around the coffee table as Arla empties the last of the wine into their glasses.

ARLA

There are some nights when I'm in the groove and I think I could be a real singer, you know. Not the best maybe but good....You know what would go good right now? A joint!

CLAIRE

A what?

ARLA

Marijuana. Don't tell me you've never tried it? You should.

CLAIRE

Okay.

ARLA

Really?

CLAIRE

I seem to be trying a lot of things lately.

Arla retrieves an already-rolled joint, lights it and does a toke, then hands it to Claire who tentatively does the same.

ARLA

What d'ya think?

CLAIRE

I'm not sure.

ARLA

I can't afford the good stuff so it might take a minute.

LATER

Arla and Claire are both tipsy and a little stoned now.

CLAIRE

So tell me about these men in your life, the ones who aren't problems.

ARLA

They're just men I do. Have sex with. It's no big deal.

CLAIRE

It might be to their wives.

ARLA

I figure they know. I mean, how can you be married to someone and not know? Except maybe for the one tonight. I think she may have just found out and left him because there was dust on the counter and, if you saw this house, Clarice, you'd know how strange --

CLAIRE

There was dust....?

ARLA

And you should this kitchen! It's out of this world....

CLAIRE

So why do you 'do' all these men? If you don't mind my asking.

ARLA

You probably won't understand because you can afford to buy what you want, but it's a lot like window-shopping. I like to see how people live. What they eat, what they wear....Are you hungry?

Arla starts to cut a bagel the way Richard did earlier.

CLAIRE

Why don't you let me do that?

Claire takes the bagel, cuts it quickly and properly, then hands it back to Arla who looks suitably impressed.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

There, now you have a bagel and all of your fingers. So how do you get these men to take you home?

ARLA

That's the easy part because they love to show off, especially in the marriage bed....Would you like to stay here tonight? I mean, it's late. It doesn't make sense to go all the way back to your hotel.

CLAIRE

Okay. I'm not sure I could even find my hotel tonight anyway.

LATER

Claire and Arla lay on the sofa pulled out into a bed.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

I was thinking...if the wife of the guy you did...almost did...if she has left him, what's stopping you from moving in and really seeing how he lives?

ARLA

(sarcastically)

And you could move in here instead of having to stay in a hotel! Sounds like a win-win situation for everyone. Good-night, Clarice.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Richard is wide awake when the phone RINGS during the night.

RICHARD

Claire?...No, you have the wrong number, and why are you calling people at this time of night anyway?

As Richard hangs up, we PULL BACK TO SEE one of Claire's outfits on the bed with a picture of her in place of her head.

After a moment, he gets up, changes the outfit, then lays back down.

LATER

Richard gathers up all the pictures of Claire, puts them in a box, then places it in the back of the closet.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Arla is sound asleep while Claire remains wide awake with something clearly on her mind.

Finally, she gets up and starts washing the dishes.

LATER

Claire is quietly tidying up the apartment when Arla rouses.

CLAIRE

Sorry, I was trying not to wake you.

ARLA

I dreamt I moved into the beautiful house and everything was perfect. The house, my life....What are you doing?

CLAIRE
I couldn't sleep so I thought I'd
straighten up a little. You don't
mind, do you?

ARLA
Do you bowl, Clarice?

CLAIRE
No, I don't bowl. Why?

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

In an all-night bowling alley, Arla knocks down a few pins
with her first two balls, then gutters the third ball.

ARLA
That's all there is to it. Just aim
for the pin in the middle.

Claire bowls her first ball and gets a strike.

ARLA (cont'd)
You expect me to believe you've never
done this before, Clarice?

CLAIRE
I haven't, I swear.

Claire bowls another ball and intentionally gutters it.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
See? Beginner's luck. So are all these
men you 'do' married?

ARLA
They have to be, Clarice. Single men
live in apartments or condos, not
Colonial houses or Tudor houses....

CLAIRE
What if one of them wanted to leave his
wife for you?

ARLA
Men don't leave other women for someone
like me, Clarice. They just don't.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY. PARKING LOT - EARLY MORNING

Claire and Arla exit the bowling alley as the sun comes up.

CLAIRE
What about diseases? Aren't you afraid
of catching something?

ARLA

The sex is always safe. My whole life I've never had sex without a condom.... What's it like?

CLAIRE

What's it like?...I don't know, I've never had sex with one. I've never 'done' anyone but my husband....You know, before the accident.

ARLA

You must miss him a lot. But didn't you ever wonder about other men?

CLAIRE

I may have wondered what it'd be like to 'do' a Frenchman, one who can't speak a word of English.

ARLA

You should?

CLAIRE

Yeah, right! Right after we see about your car.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - MORNING

Richard wakes to the morning newscast on the RADIO.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

A survey out today says married people have better sex and have it more often than single people. Honey, if you're listening, I'll be home early today.

Richard SLAMS his hand down hard on the radio's off button.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BATHROOM - MORNING

Richard is combing his hair, obviously annoyed by the number of hairs he finds both in the sink and on his comb.

EXT. BAR/PARKING LOT - DAY

Auto Club JESSE changes the flat as Claire and Arla look on.

ARLA

I'm going to pay you back for this, Clarice, I promise.

CLAIRE

Why don't we just call it even? After all, you did teach me how to bowl.

ARLA

I taught you? You kicked my ass,
Clarice!

CLAIRE

So what's this guy like? The one from
last night.

ARLA

Richard? I figure he was probably a big
fish in a little pond in high school
and college, but in life he's just a
little fish and he doesn't much like
it. And I think that's why he cheats,
not because he doesn't love his wife
because I think he does.

CLAIRE

He has a funny way of showing it.

ARLA

Some men like to fuck once in awhile.
What are they supposed to do if their
wives only ever want to 'make love?'

Arla reads Jesse's name off his uniform as he hands her a
receipt.

ARLA (cont'd)

Isn't that right, Jesse?

JESSE

If you say so. And if you have any
more problems, call the number on here.
We're on call twenty-four-seven.

ARLA

Is this your home number?

He writes his home number down, then hands it back.

JESSE

By the way, there is always one who
kisses and one who is kissed.

They watch Jesse turn and walk back to his truck.

ARLA

Nice ass....And that's how easy it is
to meet someone, Clarice. You should
try it, you have a lot to offer a man.

CLAIRE

I'm not sure I want a man. Another
one, I mean.

ARLA

That's when you get them the most.

CLAIRE

What time do you have to be at work?

ARLA

I don't. Today's my day off.

CLAIRE

Good. That'll give us time to get you ready.

ARLA

Ready for what?

INT. SPA - DAY - MONTAGE

Claire and Arla are getting full beauty treatments: manicures, pedicures, massages, wax peels, etc.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard is working at his desk when he suddenly stops, dials his home phone number and listens to Claire's VOICE on the outgoing message of the answering machine.

CLAIRE'S VOICE (O.S.)

You've reached the Jennings' residence.
Neither Claire nor Richard are here at
the moment --

He hits redial and listens to the message again.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING. BATHROOM - DAY

Richard moves up to a urinal next to a CO-WORKER and casts his eyes down towards the man's crotch.

RICHARD

Have you ever had any sort of...
...problem?

CO-WORKER

Problem!...No, I've never had any
problem.

RICHARD

Good, that's good.

The co-worker nervously zips himself up, then goes to the sink to wash his hands while Richard continues peeing.

RICHARD (cont'd)

But if you did have a problem -- ?

CO-WORKER

I told you, I don't have a problem.

The co-worker exits as two MEN in mid-conversation enter and take their places on either side of Richard.

MAN #1

It was the oddest thing. I'm in the produce section of the supermarket and I get excited...if you know what I mean.

MAN #2

The same thing happened to me after my divorce. There's just something about women handling vegetables. Have you ever noticed how phallic they are?

Richard remains at the urinal while the men finish and exit.

INT. RICHARD'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Richard's secretary quickly puts a phone call on hold and pretends to work when he exits his office with his coat and briefcase and walks past her desk on his way to the door.

RICHARD

I'll be out of the office the rest of the afternoon, Alice.

ALICE

Very well, Mr. Jennings.

As soon as Richard leaves, she picks up the phone again.

ALICE (cont'd)

You still there?...I hear Gail in accounting has been stealing from 'Accounts' to pay for her surgeries.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Richard sidles up to various women as he pretends to shop, then checks himself for signs of an erection.

When there aren't any, he holds a bag of frozen vegetables to his forehead to cool himself down as a woman points him out to the store's security guard.

EXT. SUPERMARKET. PARKING LOT - DAY

The security guard throws Richard summarily out of the store.

INT. BEAUTY SALON - DAY

Claire and Arla get their hair done.

INT. CLOTHING STORE/CHANGE ROOM - DAY

Claire picks out an outfit, then takes it to the change room and KNOCKS on the closed door.

ARLA (O.S.)

Come in.

Claire enters to find Arla in just her bra and panties and averts her eyes as she hands her the outfit.

CLAIRE

I thought you might like this one.

(BEAT) I can see why men like you.

Arla holds the outfit in front of her.

ARLA

It's nice, Clarice, but you still haven't told me what it is we're doing.

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE - DAY

Claire and Arla, with a suitcase in hand, stand in front of Claire's house.

ARLA

This is nuts, Clarice. Even for me.

CLAIRE

It's either this, or always wonder what might have been.

ARLA

Maybe I should call first?

CLAIRE

Trust me, it's better to catch him off-guard. Besides, what's the worst that could happen? He could ask you to leave. But he might not ask you to leave, he might ask you to stay... at least till his wife comes back... if she comes back. And if he really is a little fish like you say, he's probably not good at being alone.

INT. JENNINGS' GARAGE - DAY

Claire pretends to look for a key in a shelving unit.

CLAIRE

There's bound to be one here somewhere.

Claire discreetly pulls a key from her pocket and holds it up.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

See?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

As they enter the kitchen, Claire feigns surprise.

ARLA

Well? What'd I tell you?

CLAIRE

You're right, some women would get married for a kitchen like this.

ARLA

Wait'll you see the rest of the house.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY - MONTAGE

Claire continues to feign surprise as Arla happily shows her:

-- the pantry, fully-stocked with canned goods;
 -- the dining room cabinets filled with beautiful china;
 -- the bedroom closets filled with stylish clothes;
 -- the bathroom with its scented soaps and plush towels.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

Claire enters Richard's study ahead of Arla and hides a photograph of her that Richard missed earlier.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Richard breathes in and out while a DOCTOR listens to his chest with a stethoscope.

DOCTOR

And again. Are you having any other problems? Any unusual stress at work?

Richard shakes his head, still breathing in and out.

DOCTOR (cont'd)

How are things at home?

(off his look)

Richard?

RICHARD

Claire...she, uh, may have left me.

DOCTOR

May have? For another man?

RICHARD

No.

DOCTOR

A woman?

RICHARD

No. I think she went to Paris.

DOCTOR

They say people who go to Paris are either in love or looking for love.

RICHARD

Claire loves art, that's the only reason she'd go to Paris....Or Florence, that's the other place she always talked about going. She talked about us going together....

DOCTOR

She probably got tired of waiting. You can get dressed now.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard is dressed now and seated across from the Doctor.

DOCTOR

Your problem isn't physical so why don't you just tell me what's going on?

Richard looks at the doctor with a mixture of guilt and embarrassment.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The doctor removes a vial and a needle from a desk drawer.

DOCTOR (cont'd)

This is Alprostadil. I only recommend it as a last resort because it's strong enough to give a dead man an erection.

Richard immediately perks up and starts rolling up his sleeve.

DOCTOR (cont'd)

That's not where it goes.

Slowly, Richard looks down to his groin.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Arla follows Claire into the kitchen.

CLAIRE

We should start thinking about what to make this Richard for dinner.

ARLA
Dinner?

CLAIRE
You want him to be in a receptive mood,
don't you? Can't you cook?

Arla shakes her head 'no' as Claire removes a cookbook from a shelf, seemingly at random.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Don't worry, his wife probably has a
cookbook here with all his favorite
recipes marked....

Claire opens the cookbook to a page with a marked recipe.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
What'd I tell you? Veal Parmigiana
sounds good. Why don't you see if
there's some veal in the freezer?

Arla goes to the freezer, surprised to see Claire quickly remove various ingredients from the cupboards.

ARLA
You know where everything is.

CLAIRE
Well, that's because everything's in
alphabetical order. Some people just
have way too much time on their hands.
Did you find the veal?

Arla holds up a package of veal.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Veal Parmigiana, it is.

INT. RICHARD'S MOVING CAR - DAY

Richard drives past a church and gets an idea.

INT. CHURCH. CONFSSIONAL - DAY

Richard begins a confession.

RICHARD
Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.
I cheated on my wife and I think she
found out. Now I can't seem to....I
can't seem to do it anymore, Father.

FATHER
What do you mean you can't do it?

RICHARD
You know, Father. IT!

FATHER
But I thought you said your wife left you?

RICHARD
That's right.

FATHER
So who is it you're trying to do it with?

RICHARD
I see your point, Father.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY

Claire finishes setting the table with a tinge of déjà vu, then enters the kitchen where Arla is following the recipe.

ARLA
This isn't as hard as I thought it'd be.

CLAIRE
It's amazing what you can do when you set your mind to it....Well, everything seems to be under control so I guess I'll just be on my way.

ARLA
You're leaving?

CLAIRE
Trust me, you don't want me here for dinner. Besides, you'll be fine as long as you're firm. This Richard doesn't sound like the confrontational type.

ARLA
Thank you, Clarice. This has been the best day of my life.

Arla runs to Claire and gives her a big hug, leaving Claire with a conflicted look on her face.

INT/EXT. CLAIRE'S MOVING CAR/JENNINGS' HOUSE - DAY

Claire quickly drives away from the house in her rental car.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - CONTINUING

Arla runs through the house with child-like abandon.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTRE - DAY

Another group of women are seated in a circle, with Elaine and Beth the joint leaders now.

ELAINE

I'm Elaine.

BETH

And I'm Beth.

ELAINE

And we're here to help you reclaim your lives. You don't have to be the 'other' woman anymore, you can actually be the one in control.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Ted hugs Claire as a porter loads her things into her car.

TED

Are you sure you know what you're doing, Claire?

CLAIRE

No, I just know I have to do it. If I ask you to keep being my friend, will that make me a fag hag?

TED

It depends. How many straight male friends do you have?

CLAIRE

All our male friends were Richard's. But I'll get one and I'll call you. How's that sound?

TED

I'll be waiting.

Claire drives away, oblivious to Jack driving toward the same woman on the sidewalk who'd knocked him down earlier.

When the woman falls, a businessman rushes to her side.

BUSINESSMAN

Are you alright?

WOMAN

I'm fine, thank you.

BUSINESSMAN

You're not fine. You're bleeding.

As the car speeds away, the woman touches her hand to her face, then falls into the man's arms at the sight of blood.

INT. BAR - DAY

Richard takes a seat at the bar and motions to the bartender.

RICHARD
Scotch, please.

Richard surveys the nearly-deserted bar while he waits for his drink when a MAN takes a seat beside him.

MAN
I don't think I've seen you in here before.

RICHARD
I've never been in here before.

He gulps down the drink as soon as the bartender sets it in front of him, then motions for another.

MAN
Not having a good day, huh?

RICHARD
Not really, no....You want one?

MAN
Why not? I hate to see a man drink alone.

LATER

A little tipsy, Richard and the man are seated at a table now covered with empty glasses.

MAN (cont'd)
I've always wondered about men who drink like you do.

RICHARD
You've obviously never been in love.

MAN
Excuse me, but I've been known to fall in love several times a night.

RICHARD
Really? I only fell in love once. I just didn't know it and now....all because I thought I was missing out because I'd only ever been with one person. You think that's strange?

MAN

I guess it depends on the person.

RICHARD

I think it's strange. The world thinks it's strange. But how do you know you're not missing out if you don't.... Where'd that waiter go?

MAN

Sometimes what you're looking for's right in front of your eyes.

RICHARD

We could drink to that! If the waiter ever comes back.

MAN

You should take a break. Why don't we dance instead?

RICHARD

Dance? No, I don't dance.

MAN

And I don't usually drink scotch.

Richard continues looking for the waiter as the man leads him to the dance floor and takes him in his arms for a slowdance.

MAN (cont'd)

I've heard all your problems just melt away when you're dancing.

RICHARD

Did I mention I have a performance problem?

MAN

Maybe if you didn't drink so much!

RICHARD

It used to work...all the time....
(BEAT) I see you don't have a problem.

They continue to dance as the man writes a phone number on a business card and tucks it into Richard's pocket.

MAN

I'm giving you the number of a real-live angel. If this doesn't do it for you, nothing will.

RICHARD

You're very nice. Thank you.

MAN

It can be a curse, but you're welcome.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Claire opens Arla's closet and GROANS at the mess as the phone RINGS.

CLAIRE

(into phone)

Hello?...No, Arla's not here,
she's....What am I doing tonight?
What do you mean, what am I doing
tonight? I don't even know you.

Claire hangs up in disgust and returns to the closet.

When the phone RINGS again, she lets Arla's machine pick up.

ARLA'S VOICE ON MACHINE (O.S.)

I'm probably out window-shopping so
leave a message after the beep.

MAN'S VOICE ON MACHINE (O.S.)

Hi, Arla, this is Daniel. My wife'll
be out of town this weekend so give me
a call at the office if you're free.
Don't call me at home, okay? Thanks.

Claire mouths Daniel's name and continues organizing when the phone RINGS a third time.

ARLA'S VOICE ON MACHINE (O.S.)

I'm probably out window-shopping so
leave a message after the beep.

RICHARD'S VOICE ON MACHINE (O.S.)

Hi, Arla, I...um...never mind. I'll
talk to you some other time.

Claire reacts to the forlorn SOUND of Richard's voice.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Looking through Claire's CDs, Arla stops on La Bohème.

ARLA

La Bome?

She puts it on and reacts to HEARING opera for the first time.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BATHROOM - DAY

Arla relaxes in a bubble bath, still listening to La Bohème blasting through the house.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

As she struggles with some tangled hangers in Arla's closet, Claire dislodges her stash of pot from the shelf, then after a moment, pulls out a joint and lights it.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Arla looks through Claire's clothes, amazed the hangers all have little attachments to keep them from getting tangled.

LATER

Wearing one of Claire's dresses, Arla tries on some of her jewelry too, in particular a necklace she takes a liking to, then finishes by spraying herself with Claire's perfume.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Claire picks out an outrageous outfit from Arla's closet, double-takes on it, then finally tries it on.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Arla surveys the dining room table, then goes to the kitchen.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - EVENING

Richard enters the foyer and, smelling Claire's perfume, bounds up the stairs to the bedroom as he CALLS her name.

Clearly disappointed when he doesn't see her, he enters the bathroom, disappointed once again.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Richard enters the dining room and, buoyed by the sight of the table set for two, rushes to the kitchen and...

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUING

...reacts to seeing Arla instead of Claire.

RICHARD

Arla! I smelt the perfume...and I saw the table. I thought....

ARLA

Hi, Richard. I've decided to let you make it up to me for last night.

Richard smells the Veal Parmigiana cooking on the stove.

RICHARD

Is that...?

RICHARD
Veal Parmigiana?

ARLA
Veal Parmigiana. I found
it in one of your wife's
cookbooks.

RICHARD
My wife! Did she call?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - EVENING

Richard presses 'PLAY' on the answering machine.

VOICE ON MACHINE
You have zero new messages.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

A little stoned and wearing Arla's outrageous outfit still, Claire finds her wig collection, tries one on, then dances happily around the room.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Arla watches Richard eat with a hopeful look on her face.

ARLA
How is it?

RICHARD
It tastes just like....

Richard stops just short of saying Claire's name.

RICHARD (cont'd)
...it's good.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - EVENING

Wearing Arla's wig and outfit still, Claire dances the night away, surrounded by good-looking men.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Wearing one of Claire's negligées, Arla enters from the bathroom and starts to climb into bed as Richard does the same.

When they both go for the same side, she relents and gets in on the other side, then waits for Richard to make a move that never comes.

ARLA
Aren't you going to....?

RICHARD
I don't know.

ARLA
 You're still....?
 (off his look)
 Have you tried?

She makes a jerking off motion with her hand.

RICHARD
 Would you?

ARLA
 You want me to?

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Richard tries to concentrate while Arla masturbates him.

ARLA (cont'd)
 Anything?

Richard shakes his head 'no.'

A FEW MORE MOMENTS LATER

Arla reads a magazine while continuing to masturbate him.

ARLA (cont'd)
 Now?

RICHARD
 It's no use.

ARLA
 We can always try again tomorrow.

RICHARD
 You mean you still want to stay?

ARLA
 Do you want me to stay?

Arla shrugs and turns out the light.

He immediately turns it back on and looks at her.

RICHARD
 Why do you want to stay?

ARLA
 Everyone has to be somewhere.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - MORNING

Arla flings open the curtains, flooding the room with light,
 then jumps on top of Richard in bed.

RICHARD
What the....?

ARLA
Time to rise and shine.

RICHARD
I thought we proved that wasn't possible.

ARLA
So you're going to what? Give up? What kind of man are you?

Arla drags Richard out of bed.

RICHARD
Obviously not the kind who can please a woman.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Naked, Arla and Richard are seated on the floor with their legs crossed while breathing in and out.

ARLA
Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in, breathe out....

Richard breathes in and ends up in a COUGHING fit.

LATER

Richard awkwardly copies Arla in various yoga poses that closely resemble a game of naked Twister.

ARLA (cont'd)
This opens you up and helps you get in touch with your sexual energy.

RICHARD
I don't think it's working. Maybe I don't have any sexual energy anymore.

ARLA
You're not trying.

RICHARD
I'm trying.

Richard falls back onto the floor with a THUD and CRIES out in pain.

RICHARD (cont'd)
I think I broke my back.

INT/EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER/DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Arla watches Richard go to his car, then goes to the phone and dials a number.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Claire rouses when the phone RINGS.

CLAIRE

Hello?

ARLA (O.S.)

Hi, Clarice. What are you doing this morning?

INT. HERBALIST SHOP - MORNING

Arla and Claire survey the many jars, packets, and sex toys that occupy the shelves of a herbalist shop.

CLAIRE

So how is this Richard treating you?

ARLA

Pretty good, considering he wishes I was his wife. I mean he wishes his wife was back home.

CLAIRE

Doesn't that bother you?

ARLA

You said yourself, some men aren't good at being alone and for the first time in my life I feel like I'm on vacation. I even took time off work.

CLAIRE

Won't that leave Al short-handed?

ARLA

There's nothing special about what I do, Clarice. Anyone can do it. You know, he even asked if I thought you might like to fill in, but I told him you wouldn't want to. You don't, do you?

Before Claire can answer, an Asian PROPRIETOR appears from the back and hands a package to a customer at the counter.

PROPRIETOR

There you go, everything you need. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Arla mouths the words 'satisfaction guaranteed' to Claire as the customer exits and the proprietor turns to them.

PROPRIETOR (cont'd)
May I help you?

CLAIRE
We hope so. We're looking for something to cure....

ARLA
Impotence.
(off his look)
It's not for us.

CLAIRE
It's for a friend. Do you have anything that might help with....

ARLA
Impotence.

PROPRIETOR
Well, we have tinctures, powders, potions, herbs, plants, animal parts....

CLAIRE
Maybe you could choose something for us?

PROPRIETOR
Of course. I'll just be a minute.

As the proprietor exits, Arla picks up a dildo, turns it on, and points it playfully at Claire who looks embarrassed.

ARLA
Don't tell me you've never had one of these either?

CLAIRE
So, do you really think any of this stuff really works?

ARLA
Who knows? But at this point, anything worth a try, even though I think it's kind of sweet he can't do it. It proves he really loves his wife.

CLAIRE
Or it proves he feels guilty. Do you think he feels guilty --

Before Arla can answer now, the proprietor returns with a package.

PROPRIETOR

Here you go, some deer antler and dried sea horse. Just slice it and cook it in a nice chicken broth and, just in case, I've included some oysters, a rhinoceros horn and a sheep testicle.

ARLA/CLAIRE

Sheep testicle?

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Claire and Arla exit, LAUGHING.

CLAIRE

I thought he'd just give us some herbal tea or something. Oh, I almost forgot, I brought you your phone messages.

As Claire retrieves Arla's messages from her purse, Arla surreptitiously removes Claire's necklace -- the one she took a liking to earlier -- and pretends to take it from her purse.

ARLA

I have something for you, too.

Arla hands Claire the necklace which she immediately recognizes as her own.

ARLA (cont'd)

For some reason this made me think of you so I hope you like it.

CLAIRE

I love it, thank you.

As an afterthought:

ARLA

Maybe he's gay.

CLAIRE

Excuse me?

ARLA

Richard. Maybe he's gay.

CLAIRE

How could he....You say it so easily.

ARLA

It is easy. Either you are or you aren't. You either sleep with men or you don't.

(more)

ARLA (cont'd)

Unless, of course, you sleep with men and women, but even then you're at least partly gay....On second thought, it's crazy. I'll call you.

Arla turns and leaves, leaving Claire looking bewildered.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard is drumming his fingers nervously on his desk when he picks up the phone suddenly.

MOMENTS LATER

Richard waits for a list of recent charges to his credit cards to spit out of a fax machine, then reads them with increasing surprise.

They include: Plane tickets to Paris and Florence, strange charges, courtesy of the credit cards Jack stole, as well as Claire's local hotel bill.

INT. HOTEL. REGISTRATION DESK - DAY

Ted is registering a middle-aged male and his blonde FEMALE COMPANION when Richard approaches another DESK CLERK on duty.

DESK CLERK #2

May I help you?

RICHARD

Yes, could you tell me which room Claire Jennings is in?

Ted perks up at the mention of Claire's name as desk clerk #2 types her name into the computer.

CLERK

We don't seem to have a Claire Jennings registered. Are you sure you've got the right hotel?

RICHARD

I'm not sure of anything. Could you check Claire Morrison? That's her maiden name.

The clerk types this name into the computer.

CLERK

Sorry, there's nothing under Claire Morrison either.

Disappointed, Richard walks away as Ted turns to the clerk.

TED

I wouldn't feel too sorry for him. Not only does he cheat on his wife, but he leaves the opera during intermission.

FEMALE COMPANION

Hey, he cheats on his wife too!

EXT. BOARDWALK - DAY

Deep in thought, Claire stops to rest on a bench, slowly becoming aware that an elderly WOMAN seated next to her is CRYING at the sight of various couples in love.

CLAIRE

Are you alright?

ELDERLY WOMAN

I'll never be young and in love again.
Don't ever take it for granted.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Claire is tidying up Arla's apartment when she sees a couple making love in an apartment in the next building.

She's horrified initially, then remembers her AIDS test and, retrieving the card from the clinic, goes to the phone.

CLAIRE

Yes, hello. I'm calling for my test results. My identification number is 767238....Yes, I'm still here....Oh, thank you, thank you very much.

INT. ART GALLERY - DAY

Claire moves peacefully through the gallery as David sketches her from his usual position in the second-floor gallery.

INT. ART GALLERY. LOBBY/GALLERY - DAY

Claire goes to a pay phone in the lobby, pulls David's sketch from her purse, and dials the number on the back.

INTERCUT David approaching her while answering his cellphone.

DAVID

Hello?

CLAIRE

Hi, David! This is...um...Claire...the woman whose sketch you did in the gallery?

(more)

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 Anyway, you probably have an entire studio filled with sketches you've done of women in the gallery so maybe you don't remember me, but --

DAVID
 Of course, I remember you, Claire.

CLAIRE
 You do? That's good. Anyway, I'm calling because I was just wondering if you're a nice guy? Actually, what I need to know is if you're not a nice guy. Are you?

Claire absently turns and sees David talking to her on his cellphone...and blushes.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Claire and David are seated opposite one another in a booth.

CLAIRE
 See, my husband's been cheating on me. Then a man I tried to help stole my credit cards, but they were in Richard's name so I didn't really mind even though I wasn't sure I'd ever be able to trust a man again which is why I need to know if you're not a nice guy. So are you...not a nice guy?

DAVID
 Considering my history with women, I probably would hurt you and it sounds like you've been through enough already. I'm sorry.

David exits, leaving Claire with a stunned look on her face.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Arla spreads the things the herbalist gave her on the counter.

LATER

Arla is cooking everything according to the herbalist's instructions when she notices the CD player on the counter, pushes 'PLAY' and reacts to the SOUND of Claire's French CD.

VOICE ON CD (O.S.)
 Que pensez-vous de ma nouvelle robe?

With a mischievous grin on her face, she goes to the phone.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Claire supervises two moving men as they carry the last of Arla's furniture out of the apartment, then closes the door and starts to paint the walls of the now-empty apartment a bright, cheery color.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - EVENING

Richard enters the foyer, goes to the answering machine, and presses the message button.

VOICE ON MACHINE

You have zero new messages.

Disappointed, he heads to the

KITCHEN

where Arla is putting the finishing touches to dinner.

ARLA

I hope you're hungry....Oh, I got you
a movie to watch while you're waiting.
...It's already in the machine.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

Richard presses 'PLAY' on the TV remote, surprised when a porno film appears on the screen as Arla enters and sits on the arm of the chair.

ARLA

Maybe we could try that after you eat.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Arla enters from the kitchen with a plate of food as Richard finishes eating a bowl of chicken broth.

ARLA

You ate it all. Good.

She sets the plate in front of him, then takes a seat at the other end of the table as he looks at the food suspiciously.

RICHARD

What is it?

ARLA

Oysters and....Maybe I should tell you
later.

RICHARD

Aren't you having any?

ARLA
I picked while I cooking.

INT. HOTEL. LOBBY. REGISTRATION DESK - EVENING

Claire approaches Ted at the registration desk.

CLAIRE
I'm still working on finding a straight male friend, but it seems I may have a husband who isn't.

TED
Straight? You mean Richard's gay?
(off her look)
You can't deal with something you can't say, Claire.

CLAIRE
I can say it. Gay, okay? I brought a picture, I thought you might take a look at it.

Claire hands a picture of Richard to Ted who takes a quick look at it, then hands it right back to her.

TED
It doesn't work that way, Claire. But I don't need a picture anyway because I've seen him. He came to the hotel looking for you. If you want, I could try sleeping with him, but as I recall, you weren't too happy when your friend, Elaine, did that.

CLAIRE
You're right, I'm sorry. I guess I'm just not thinking straight.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Arla is hanging Richard's suit up in the closet when she finds the business card with Angel's name on it and goes to the phone with another mischievous look on her face.

LATER

Richard climbs into bed and starts to make love to Arla, only to stop within moments.

ARLA
Nothing?
(off his look)
Have you ever considered professional help?

RICHARD
You mean like a psychiatrist?

ARLA
Not exactly.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

Holding the card with Angel's name and number on it, Richard paces nervously as...

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - CONTINUING

...Arla opens the door to ANGEL who just happens to be the man who table-danced for Claire earlier.

ANGEL
Hi, I'm Angel.

ARLA
Please, come in. And if you wouldn't mind waiting here for a sec, I'll be right back.

Angel enters the foyer as Arla exits to the living room.

He listens to their conversation without reacting.

RICHARD (O.S.)
I told you. I don't want a man.

ARLA (O.S.)
How do you know? Have you ever had one?

RICHARD (O.S.)
Of course not.

ARLA (O.S.)
Well, then?

MOMENTS LATER

Arla returns.

ARLA
He's a little nervous.

ANGEL
Maybe if you told him I specialize in first-timers.

ARLA
Good idea. I'll be right back again.

And again, Arla exits to the living room.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Richard nervously watches as Angel seductively removes his jacket, then proceeds to remove Richard's jacket.

ANGEL

Don't worry, we'll take it as slow as you like and stay in your comfort zone.

RICHARD

This wasn't my idea, you know.

ANGEL

Then you have a very understanding wife.

RICHARD

Arla? No, Arla's not my wife. My wife is....Arla's just here.

ANGEL

Maybe you'd feel more comfortable if she joined us?

RICHARD

Joined us? No, I don't think so. No.

ANGEL

Okay, just keep breathing. We don't want your first time to be your last time, too.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Arla flips through Claire's magazines on the coffee table, then goes to the CD player and hits the PLAY button.

When the SOUND blasts out of the machine at full volume, she quickly turns it off and goes to the phone.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT/JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

With the apartment all painted now, Claire supervises the same moving men as before putting new furniture into place when the phone RINGS.

CLAIRE

Hello?

ARLA (O.S.)

Clarice? It's Arla.

CLAIRE

Arla! I was going to call you. Can you come by tomorrow? There's something I'd like to show you.

INTERCUT Arla on the phone with Claire.

ARLA

Sure. But you'll never guess what's going on here tonight.

MOMENTS LATER

Claire hangs up the phone with a look of surprise on her face.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Still in their clothes, Richard and Angel are on the bed, watching an episode of Gilligan's Island on television.

ANGEL

Sure, Ginger's hotter on the surface, but I bet underneath that innocent veneer Maryanne's a seething inferno. Still waters run deep, you know.... Sorry. Maybe if you put your arm around me? It might help you relax.

Richard scoots closer to Angel and puts his arm around him.

ANGEL (cont'd)

How's that feel?

Richard smiles noncommittally, still uncomfortable.

LATER

Richard's head is on Angel's chest as Angel strokes his hair.

ANGEL (cont'd)

I don't know what I'd do if my wife ever left me.

RICHARD

You're married?

(off his look)

And your wife doesn't mind your....

He makes a fucking motion with his arm.

ANGEL

She understands it's a job.

RICHARD

If she's that understanding, maybe there's still a chance for Claire and me....So even when you're not attracted to your customer you can still....

As he makes another fucking motion with his arm, Angel nods.

RICHARD (cont'd)
If I had your job, I'd starve.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - DAY

Richard AD-LIBS a 'thank you' to Angel as he hands him some money while seeing him to the door.

Angel, in turn, tries to hand some of the money back.

ANGEL
I didn't really do anything.

RICHARD
But you would have so, please, take it.

ANGEL
Okay, and good luck. With everything.

As Angel exits, Arla appears in the doorway.

ARLA
I'm beginning to run out of ideas.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Claire goes to the fridge as there's a KNOCK at the door.

She opens it to see FRANÇOIS, the best-looking man she's ever seen, holding a bag of groceries and a bottle of wine.

FRANÇOIS
Bonjour. Nous ne nous connaissons pas, je crois?

He enters and kisses her on both cheeks.

FRANÇOIS (cont'd)
Je m'appelle François. Enchanté.

CLAIRE
François?

When she pronounces his name with a flat 'a', he corrects her.

FRANÇOIS
François. Et comment allez-vous?

He looks around the room, impressed with the way it looks.

FRANÇOIS (cont'd)
C'est magnifique. Le couleur est bon.

François immediately goes to the kitchen and starts unpacking the groceries while Claire looks on, dumb-founded.

CLAIRE
I'm sorry, I only know how to say 'Que pensez-vous de ma nouvelle robe?'

FRANÇOIS
Vôtre robe est très jolie. Et comment vous appelez-vous, ma chérie?

When Claire doesn't reply, he points to himself, then to her.

FRANÇOIS (cont'd)
Mon nom est François. Et vous?

CLAIRE
My name! You want to know my name!

FRANÇOIS
Oui. Vôtre nom.

CLAIRE
I'm...Cla...rice.

FRANÇOIS
Bonjour, Cla...rice.

CLAIRE
No. Just Clarice.

FRANÇOIS
Bon! Vous serez très satisfait, Clarice. C'est une promesse.

François is obviously familiar with the kitchen as he checks a drawer for a corkscrew, surprised when he doesn't find it.

FRANÇOIS (cont'd)
Tire-bouchon?

CLAIRE
What?

He makes a corkscrew motion over the bottle of wine.

FRANÇOIS
Tire-bouchon.

CLAIRE
Corkscrew! It's in the next drawer.
...I moved things around a little.

François opens the drawer Claire points to, finds the corkscrew, and proceeds to open the wine.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
You must be a friend of Arla's?

FRANÇOIS

Arla, elle est incroyable. Tu ne vis qu'une fois, tu sais.

Gesturing with her hands to make her point:

CLAIRE

But she's not here, I'm afraid. No Arla.

FRANÇOIS

Arla, pas d'ici? C'est dommage mais ça ne me fait rien.

François hands Claire a glass of wine, then raises his glass in a toast.

FRANÇOIS (cont'd)

Tu es tellement belle, Clarice.

They CLINK glasses when Claire suddenly remembers the French dictionary Elaine made her buy.

CLAIRE

(muttering to herself)

The dictionary.

She retrieves it and starts to look up some of the words while François returns to the kitchen and starts cooking.

LATER

Claire quietly sits and listens to François while he cooks.

FRANÇOIS

J'aime l'atmosphère ici. Mais savez-vous, ce n'est pas si mal chez-nous aussi. Que pensez-vous de toujours travailler et ne jamais vous détendre? J'aimerais beaucoup danser avec vous, Clarice.

He puts MUSIC on, then motions for Claire to dance with him.

FRANÇOIS (cont'd)

Je pourrais danser avec vous toute la nuit.

Claire resists at first, then relents when François refuses to take no for an answer.

LATER

Claire and François eat dinner as Claire continues looking up words in the dictionary.

CLAIRE
It's delicious.
(reading)
Délicieux.

FRANÇOIS
Délicieux. Oui, c'est ça. Merci.

CLAIRE
Merci.

Claire starts to look this word up too when François grabs the dictionary and tosses it aside.

FRANÇOIS
Pas de nécessaire.

He leans over and kisses her.

CLAIRE
Tu m'as charme, Clarice.

François pulls Claire to her feet and, kissing her, starts to remove her clothes.

Once again, she resists...until he takes her hands in his and helps her remove his shirt, revealing a magnificent chest.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Oh, François!

Again, he corrects her pronunciation.

FRANÇOIS
François.

CLAIRE
François.

FRANÇOIS
Dites-moi Jean-Luc.

CLAIRE
Jean-Luc.

Claire mispronounces this, too.

FRANÇOIS
Jean-Luc.

CLAIRE
Jean-Luc.

Finally, he smothers her with kisses her so she can't talk anymore.

MOMENTS LATER

As Claire and François make love, she has the first heart-pounding, sheet-pulling, eyes-in-the-back-of-your-head orgasm of her life.

MOMENTS LATER

With her head on François' chest, Claire pulls out one of his chest hairs, making him GROAN.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 Sorry. Just checking to see if you're
 real.

He immediately starts to make love to her again.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 What, again?...Oh, well!

LATER

Claire looks over at François sleeping soundly beside her, then quietly reaches for the phone and dials a number.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 (whispering)
 Hello, Ted? I don't know if we're
 friends because he doesn't speak a word
 of English, but I met a man and he's
 definitely straight.
 (as François stirs)
 I'll talk to you tomorrow.

Claire hangs up, then looks back at François and smiles.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Richard and Arla go to bed without even trying to have sex.

LATER

Richard tosses and turns as he tries to sleep, then gets up finally and goes to the bathroom.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BATHROOM - CONTINUING

He looks in the mirror again, clearly obsessing on the hair growing out of his nose, ears, and back.

He opens the medicine cabinet finally and his eyes fall on a bottle of sleeping pills on one of the shelves.

RICHARD
 I need to sleep.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - NIGHT

Richard is holding the bottle of sleeping pills and a bottle of scotch as he hits the button on the answering machine to listen to the outgoing message.

ARLA'S VOICE ON MACHINE (O.S.)
Neither Arla, nor Richard are here at
the moment so --

Surprised to HEAR Arla's VOICE instead of Claire's, he rips the tape from the machine and throws it on the floor.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. STUDY - NIGHT

The sleeping pills and bottle of scotch are in front of Richard on the desk as he removes the business cards and slips of paper from under his blotter.

He studies a card, throws it into the garbage, then swallows a pill and washes it down with a swig of scotch.

He repeats this procedure with several more cards, more preoccupied than suicidal.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM/BATHROOM - NIGHT

Arla wakes to find Richard's side of the bed empty, then goes to the bathroom to find the door of the medicine chest ajar.

She moves closer to see the empty space where the bottle of pills had been and becomes worried.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - NIGHT

Arla wanders from room to room, CALLING Richard's name.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. STUDY - NIGHT

Richard is muttering drowsily to himself about Claire without ever mentioning her name as he continues to throw away cards while washing down pills with scotch.

He slumps over his desk finally as Arla enters.

ARLA
RICHARD!

She rushes to the desk and grabs the pill bottle.

ARLA (cont'd)
How many of these did you take,
Richard?...Richard! How many?

Arla looks at the label on the bottle.

ARLA (cont'd)

It says there are a hundred.

She spreads the pills out, starts to count them, then stops.

ARLA (cont'd)

But that doesn't mean there were a hundred to start with. RICHARD! HOW COULD YOU DO THIS?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Arla holds a visibly shaken and somewhat delusional Richard as he vomits into the toilet bowl, then pats his face with a cold compress while rocking him in her arms.

RICHARD

I need to go to Paris. Or Florence.
I need to go to Florence.

ARLA

You're not in any condition to go anywhere.

RICHARD

But my wife's in Florence. Or Paris.
Or...I need to see my wife, I need to see --

He starts throwing up again before he can finish her name.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Claire and François are making love yet again.

CLAIRE

Oh, François.

Her pronunciation is much better this time.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - MORNING

Arla panics when she wakes up to find Richard gone again.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - MORNING

Richard is about to cut a bagel in his hand way as Arla rushes into the kitchen.

ARLA

Thank God! When I woke up and saw you were --

RICHARD

You thought I tried to off myself again?

ARLA

You might if you insist on cutting your bagel like that.

Arla takes the bagel from him, perfunctorily cuts it the way Claire did, then hands it back to him.

ARLA (cont'd)

I'm going back to bed. You know, you're not so bad when you're not trying to be someone. I mean someone you're not.

Richard looks at the bagel, then at the door as Arla exits.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER/STAIRCASE/HALLWAY - MORNING

Richard rushes to the foyer as Arla starts up the stairs.

RICHARD

Why did you cut the bagel like that?

ARLA

Like what?

RICHARD

Like my wife, that's what.

ARLA

Millions of people eat bagels everyday, Richard. They all have to cut them somehow.

RICHARD

Most of them cut them the way I do. They don't cut them the way Claire does. You know her, don't you?

Arla stops in her tracks.

ARLA

Your wife's name is Claire?

RICHARD

Yes. Do you know her? Do you know where she is?

ARLA

No. I don't know anyone named Claire.

RICHARD

Are you sure?

ARLA

Yes.

Richard removes a picture of Claire from a drawer and shows it to Arla who looks at it without giving anything away.

RICHARD

This is Claire. This is my wife!

ARLA

Like I told you, Richard, I don't know anyone named Claire.

She continues up the stairs until she's out of his sight.

ARLA (cont'd)

CLARICE!

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

Richard nervously watches Arla pack her suitcase.

RICHARD

If you don't know her, then why are you leaving?

ARLA

I haven't exactly been able to help you with your problem, now have I?

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - CONTINUING

Arla goes down the stairs to the foyer with her suitcase as Richard appears on the landing.

RICHARD

I know you know her. Why won't you tell me where she is?

Arla exits without looking back.

INT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - DAY

François is happily AD-LIBBING in French while Claire fingers her French dictionary.

Finally, she interrupts him.

CLAIRE

We need to talk.

She picks up the dictionary and starts to look up words.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

We...nous...need...besoin....to talk....

She starts using hand gestures again as the WAITER arrives with their food and starts translating for them.

WAITER
 Nous besoin de parler. I mean, vous
 ...vous besoin de parler.

FRANÇOIS
 D'accord.

WAITER
 He agrees.

Claire looks at the waiter, both grateful and annoyed.

CLAIRE
 You're very special, François --

The waiter continues to translate throughout.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 So what I'm about to say isn't a
 reflection of you as a person, because,
 well, I don't know you as a person
 since we've never really talked. And
 the sex? Let's just say I didn't know
 it could be so....

Claire looks embarrassed when the waiter translates this,
 then shakes his hand in admiration at the end.

FRANÇOIS
 (to Claire)
 Cela vous va bien.

WAITER
 He says it looks good on you.
 (BEAT) And he's right.

The waiter pulls up a chair finally and sits down.

WAITER (cont'd)
 Besides, is there anything better for
 the complexion? I don't think so.

FRANÇOIS
 Quelque chose ne va pas? Dites-moi.

WAITER
 He wants to know what's wrong.

CLAIRE
 What's wrong is I don't love you. I'd
 be lying if I pretended what happened
 between us was anything but...sex.

WAITER
 Je suis en amour avec toi.

Instead of translating what Claire actually said, he tells François that Claire loves him.

François responds by asking the waiter if he's crazy.

FRANÇOIS

As-tu perdu la boule?...That's not what she said. If you're going to translate, at least translate correctly.

WAITER

You understand English?

CLAIRE

And you speak it!

FRANÇOIS

Oui. I mean, yes, I understand English. I also understand love. What I don't understand is you English-speaking people who make it so complicated. If you like the sex, like the sex. What's with all these hang-ups about love?

François and the waiter both look to Claire who stares at them for a moment, then breaks into uncontrollable LAUGHTER.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Claire and François are having sex again.

CLAIRE

This may surprise you, but I've never had sex during the day before, not even on my honeymoon. Does that surprise you?

FRANÇOIS

Just go with it, Claire!

CLAIRE

I'm trying, but I've always equated love with sex so it's going to take some time for me to --

Claire has another mind-blowing orgasm.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Oh! That helps. That really helps.

INT. ARLA'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

Claire is straightening the apartment so it looks perfect when there's a KNOCK at the door.

She takes one last look, then opens the door to Arla.

CLAIRE
Welcome to Chez Arla!

As Arla looks around the room in disbelief, Claire pours two glasses of wine and hands one to Arla.

ARLA
I don't believe this.

CLAIRE
So do you like it?

ARLA
You did this all by yourself, Clarice?

CLAIRE
I wanted to surprise you.

ARLA
Well, you did, Clarice.

Claire CLINKS Arla's glass in a toast.

CLAIRE
To your new apartment. It's here for you whenever you want it. If you want it. How did things go with....

ARLA
Angel? They didn't. I think the only thing that'll work is for his wife to come back.

CLAIRE
You think she will?

ARLA
I don't know, Clarice. Would you if you were her?

CLAIRE
Well, I met someone. He just showed up at the door with a bag of groceries, a bottle of wine, and not a single word of English. That is, until I broke up with him, then the English just poured out of him. You set me up, Arla! Why?

ARLA
No one's ever done anything nice for me before so I wanted to do something nice back.

(more)

ARLA (cont'd)

Besides, you said yourself you always wondered what it'd be like to do a Frenchman and, as Frenchmen go, he's the best. Even if he is only French-Canadian.

CLAIRE

That doesn't excuse what you....You mean you had him too?

ARLA

Women have as much right to enjoy their bodies as men do, Clarice. Or should I say Claire?

CLAIRE

So you know?

ARLA

Did you really think I wouldn't find out? Maybe we finally found something you're not good at...thinking. What were you thinking, Claire?

Arla looks around the room again.

ARLA (cont'd)

I would throw something if it all didn't look so beautiful.

CLAIRE

Go ahead. If it'll make you feel better.

Arla gulps her wine and gets ready to throw the glass.

ARLA

I can't....You must have really enjoyed making a fool of me.

CLAIRE

I didn't mean to. It's not as if I expected to like you.

ARLA

I can't believe you actually told me your husband was dead...Wait! You like me?

CLAIRE

Would I have done all this if I didn't?

ARLA

So what are you going to do?

CLAIRE

I guess that depends on you.
 (off her look)
 Are you going back?

ARLA

You mean back to your house? I don't belong there anymore than....

CLAIRE

I do?

ARLA

Do you want to go back?

CLAIRE

I just know I want to find out what was and wasn't real. No, I have to know. I keep thinking there must have been signs. But if there were....

ARLA

What d'ya know? You have a some kind of happy, after all. It's love.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY

Richard, looking a lot like Jack Nicholson in The Shining, pulls clothes randomly from the closet in the bedroom, then throws them around with one hand while taking periodic swigs from a bottle of scotch in his other hand.

RICHARD

It's just sex. It doesn't mean anything. Why can't they understand that it doesn't mean anything?

He staggers out of the bedroom to the

HALLWAY

where he picks up a vase from a table and carries it to the top of the landing, then proceeds to drop it to the floor below where it SMASHES into a million pieces.

RICHARD (cont'd)

That calls for a drink.

He takes another swig of scotch, sets another vase on the floor, and tries to drop kick it over the railing.

Unfortunately, it's heavier than the previous one so he only succeeds in knocking it onto its side and hurting his foot.

Wincing in pain, he limps downstairs to the

FOYER

where he grabs the answering machine and SMASHES it to the floor, then continues to the

LIVING ROOM

where he starts throwing CDs willy-nilly around the room.

RICHARD (cont'd)
This is shit. This one too.
Shit. More shit.

He picks up Bob Seeger's Night Moves finally.

RICHARD (cont'd)
This one's good.

He puts it on, cranks up the volume, and plays air guitar along with it.

RICHARD (cont'd)
A man's not supposed to sleep with just one woman his whole life. It's not natural. A man should sleep with, a man should sleep with....

Richard starts counting on his fingers, loses count, then starts counting again.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Six...no, seven women. It should always be an odd number...no matter what the sex is....even if the sex is....

He can't bring himself to finish the sentence, taking another swig of scotch instead as he moves to the

DINING ROOM

where he grabs an armful of saucers from the china cabinet and uses them as frisbees to break the cups and plates.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Even if the sex isn't....

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. PANTRY/KITCHEN - DAY

Richard sweeps the canned goods off the shelves, then goes to the kitchen cupboards and does the same there.

RICHARD
Life isn't supposed to be this fucking organized. It's supposed to be....

Richard opens several cans with an electric can opener and dumps their contents all over the kitchen.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Messy. Well, maybe it's not supposed to be messy, but it is messy.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Richard SMASHES the now-empty scotch bottle against a wall in the living room, then retrieves a full one from the bar.

As he opens the bottle and takes a drink, he focusses on the paintings on the wall.

RICHARD
None of this would have happened if she hadn't gone back to school to study art.

He sets the bottle down, then starts pulling the paintings off the walls, KNOCKING over both a table lamp and himself in the process.

Finally, the scotch makes him pass out for a moment.

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE - DAY

Claire tentatively approaches the front door.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. FOYER - DAY

Claire enters the foyer and, taken aback by the mess, her face drains of all its color as she struggles to breathe.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM/FOYER - DAY

Claire enters the bedroom to find her clothes strewn around the room as...

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

...Richard slowly stirs from his drunken stupor.

RICHARD
I have to find her. I have to find Claire.

He struggles to his feet and starts to exit to the foyer, walking right past Claire as she enters the living room.

CLAIRE
Hello, Richard.

Richard does a double-take on Claire, then his gaze follows hers to the paintings he's just smashed.

RICHARD

I was just moving them, Claire. So they'd pick up the light better.
(BEAT) You came back!

They stand and stare at one another for a few moments, then Richard rushes to Claire and hugs her for all he's worth.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I'm glad you came back, Claire.

CLAIRE

We need to talk.
(BEAT) Are you crying, Richard?

RICHARD

I've missed you, Claire. I'd like to show you how much if you'll let me.

CLAIRE

First, we need to talk.

RICHARD

Okay.

CLAIRE

I want you to look at me, Richard.

RICHARD

Okay.

Richard makes a feeble attempt to look at her.

CLAIRE

No, really look at me. Look at me the way you did when we first met.

As Claire breaks Richard's embrace and takes a few steps back, he tries to look at her the way she wants.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Why did you marry me, Richard?

RICHARD

Because I loved you, Claire. And I love you now, more than ever. When I thought you weren't coming back to me, Claire, I --

CLAIRE

I don't even remember you ever asking me to marry you, Richard.

Richard steels himself, trying to make sense of what Claire is saying.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

What I do remember is our two best friends in high school getting married and then, all of a sudden, we were too. But like I said, Richard, I've been doing a lot of thinking and I'm as much to blame as you are. I just want you to know I forgive you.

RICHARD

Thank you, Claire. Does that mean you're back to stay?

CLAIRE

We'll see. First I'm going to change into my own clothes, then I'll make some coffee and we'll --

RICHARD

I'll make the coffee, Claire. Please, let me make it.

CLAIRE

Okay, Richard.

She starts for the stairs, then turns back to face Richard.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

And just so you know, I'm not the woman I was when I left. I've learned some things....It's funny, when I first found out you were cheating, I wanted to know who, I wanted to know when, I wanted to know where. Mostly I wanted to know why. Now that I know why....

RICHARD

You do?

CLAIRE

Maybe we can find a way to start all over again. Things are going to be different, Richard, I promise.

Claire exits finally and Richard stumbles to the kitchen.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Still groggy, Richard tries to focus sufficiently to make a pot of coffee as...

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

...Claire starts to pick the clothes off the floor, then throws them down again and exits to the bathroom.

INT. JENNINGS' HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUING

With the coffee brewing, Richard's eyes fall on some bagels.

RICHARD
 (muttering to himself)
 I'll never sleep with anyone but
 Claire, as long as I live.

He grabs a large knife and, proceeding to cut one in his hand as usual, cuts his hand instead.

The sight of copious amounts of blood spurting everywhere causes him to faint, then bump his head as he falls to the floor.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Claire, Arla, Ted, Elaine, and assorted others are grouped around a cemetery plot with their heads bowed in prayer for Richard's interment.

PRIEST
 Heavenly Father, we bless this man's
 body -- Richard Jennings -- to the
 ground, today and forevermore. Amen.

Mourners offer their condolences to Claire, then begin to disperse as Elaine approaches.

ELAINE
 I'm so sorry, Claire.

CLAIRE
 I know, Elaine. Thank you.

ELAINE
 I mean about Richard --

CLAIRE
 I know.

ELAINE
 About his being dead.

CLAIRE
 I know, Elaine. I've already forgiven
 you for sleeping with him. Oh, by the
 way, this is Ted and Arla. She did
 Richard, too, so I guess that makes
 three of us who have had better.

ELAINE
 What? You're telling me you finally got
 a life, Claire? Because so did I.

CLAIRE
Gary left his wife?

ELAINE
She left him...

Elaine waves to Beth.

ELAINE (cont'd)
...and now we're together. I don't know why it took me so long to realize that, of course, it takes a woman to know what a woman needs.

CLAIRE
I'm happy for you, Elaine. Really.

Claire and Elaine hug, then Elaine exits.

TED
I'm going to go to the car and let you two have a moment.

Ted exits too, leaving Claire and Arla by the gravesite alone.

ARLA
I guess I'll never know why he let me stay now.

CLAIRE
Does it matter? An artist I didn't even know once did a sketch of me and saw more in me in ten minutes than Richard did in all the years we were married.

ARLA
It's funny, your whole life you sleep with only two men and one dies? What are the odds?

CLAIRE
I guess some things just aren't meant to be.

EXT. JENNINGS' HOUSE - DAY

A real estate broker erects a 'FOR SALE' sign on the lawn.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

The pawnbroker hands Claire her wedding ring.

PAWNBROKER
You finally figured out your heart, huh? Mind if I ask what you decided?

CLAIRE

That there's no accounting for taste.

EXT. PARK. FOUNTAIN - DAY

Claire throws her wedding ring into the same fountain as before.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Claire and Arla are standing at an airport departure gate when a boarding announcement comes over the PA system.

STEWARD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Flight 617 to Nashville is now boarding.

CLAIRE

Are you sure this is what you want?

ARLA

I'm sure. So how many music executives do you think I'll have to do to get a music career?....Just kidding. I'm going to do it on talent and I'm going to pay you back every penny, Claire.

CLAIRE

Think of it as a gift from Richard and me. If there's one thing he was good at it was buying life insurance.

Arla hugs Claire, trying to forestall the inevitable.

ARLA

Are you sure you can't come with me?

Claire holds up her plane ticket to Italy.

CLAIRE

I have a date with a man named David, remember?

Claire watches Arla disappear through the boarding gate, then goes to another gate to wait for her plane.

She takes a seat opposite a smarmy-looking man named MICHAEL KRAMER who quickly moves to the seat next to her.

STEWARD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Flight 924 to Florence will now be delayed two hours.

MICHAEL

Looks like we're going to be travelling together? I'm Michael.

CLAIRE

Claire.

MICHAEL

For once, my horoscope was right.
(off his look)
It said I'd get 'lucky' today.

CLAIRE

I take it your wife isn't travelling
with you?

MICHAEL

What makes you think I have a wife?

CLAIRE

You don't?

MICHAEL

We're in the process of getting a
divorce, acutally. Look, why don't I
give you my numbers? Maybe we could
have dinner sometime?

He hands her a business card with several numbers on it,
including his home number.

Claire looks at it, then turns to a man with a cellphone.

CLAIRE

Could I borrow your phone for a moment?
(off his look)
It's a local call, I promise.

The man hands his phone to Claire and she dials a number.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Hello? Is this Mrs. Kramer?

Claire offers the phone to Michael.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Would you like to speak to your wife?

Knowing he's lying by the look on his face, Claire hands the
phone back to its owner.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Thank you. By the way, the correct
time is 12:32.

(to Michael)

Now if you'll excuse me, I just
remembered I have something to do.

Clearly disappointed, Michael watches Claire exit.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

With a look of resolve on her face, Claire exits the airport and hails a cab.

INT. MOVING CAB - DAY

Claire removes David's sketch of her from her purse and reads out the address written on the back to the cabbie.

CLAIRE
2152 Forrest Drive, please.

EXT. DAVID'S LOFT/STUDIO - DAY

The cab pulls to a stop in front of David's loft/studio, then continues to wait as Claire KNOCKS on the door.

David opens it, surprised to see Claire.

DAVID
Claire!

CLAIRE
Before you say anything, I need to know something.

DAVID
Me, first.

He kisses her passionately.

DAVID (cont'd)
I've been wanting to do that since the first time I saw you.

To the surprise of both of them, Claire then kisses him with just as much passion.

CLAIRE
Me, too. I just didn't know it at the time. Do you have a passport?

DAVID
Is that what you need to know?

CLAIRE
That, and whether or not you dance because I spent sixteen years with a man who didn't and I don't want to make that mistake again. So do you?

DAVID
Yes. To both.

CLAIRE

Then how would you like to continue this conversation in say, Paris and Florence because that's --

DAVID

...where the real art is. The Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo...

DAVID

David.

CLAIRE

David.

CLAIRE

I've always dreamed of seeing them in person and as you can see I have a cab waiting and even though you said you'd probably end up hurting me, you also told me the truth which I think means we have something to build on and I'd really like to share this with you --

DAVID

Do you always talk this much?

CLAIRE

Only when I'm nervous so what d'ya say?

DAVID

I say maybe you should come in and help me look for my passport.

INT. DAVID'S LOFT/STUDIO - DAY

Claire enters, surprised at the sight of more sketches of her, as David points to a desk.

DAVID

Why don't you check in there and I'll have a look upstairs?

He starts to leave, turns back, kisses her again, then exits as she fumbles through the desk and finds his passport.

She looks at his picture, followed by his name, then SCREAMS as he comes running into the room.

DAVID (cont'd)

What's wrong?

CLAIRE

It says here your name is David.

DAVID

It is. Didn't I sign the sketch I gave you?

CLAIRE
Not legibly.

A strange look crosses Claire's face.

DAVID
What's wrong?

CLAIRE
Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Claire and David hold hands and kiss on the plane.

EXT. PARK. FOUNTAIN - DAY

A HOMELESS WOMAN routes through the garbage while a HOMELESS MAN spots Claire's ring in the fountain, wades in to get it.

HOMELESS WOMAN
Did you find something?

As he climbs out of the fountain:

HOMELESS MAN
A ring. I don't suppose you'd marry me?

HOMELESS WOMAN
You're joking, right? You haven't had a job since I've known you, let alone taken a shower. Besides, you know how much I like my independence.

HOMELESS MAN
It was just a thought. I guess there's no reason to ruin what we already have.

HOMELESS WOMAN
That's right. A piece of paper or a ring doesn't change anything.
(BEAT) Ya think it's real?

He shrugs as they trundle off through the park together.

EXT/INT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS - MONTAGE

-- Arla entering a club advertising auditions, then exiting again with a disappointed look on her face;
-- Claire and David standing in front of Michelangelo's David;
-- Claire and David having dinner in an outdoor café;
-- Arla working as a waitress in a restaurant;
-- Claire and David standing in front of the Venus de Milo;
-- Claire and David taking a walk;

-- Arla entering another club advertising auditions, then exiting again, still disappointed;
 -- Claire and David standing in front of the Mona Lisa;
 -- Claire and David making love.

INT. NASHVILLE. THE BLUEBIRD CAFE - EVENING

Arla nervously waits as a young man finishes SINGING a song and exits the stage to a big round of APPLAUSE.

EMCEE

If you want to hear more from Chris,
 you can catch him later at the bar.
 (BEAT) He's the bartender. Okay, next
 up we have Arla Delaney.

Arla takes the stage and starts SINGING tentatively, then spots Claire and David as they enter.

She finishes the song strongly and rushes to hug Claire.

ARLA

What are you doing here?

CLAIRE

We asked the cab driver to take us to
 the best place to find an up'n'coming
 singer. Oh, I'd like you to meet David.
 (off her look)
 That's right. Just like the statue
 except this one you can touch.

DAVID

You were really good up there.

ARLA

Thanks.

Arla motions for a good-looking MAN at the bar to approach.

ARLA (cont'd)

I have someone I'd like you to meet,
 too. He's young, he's single, and
 guess what?

CLAIRE

Don't tell me!
 (to man)
 Your name is David.

David nods, everyone LAUGHS, and we

FADE OUT:

THE END