"I Think I Love My Wife"

Written By.

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&
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**THIS MOVIE IS RATED "R". IF YOU DON'T LIKE RATED "R" MOVIES PLEASE DON'T READ.**

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OPENING CARD: "Here's to those who love us, if only we cared.
Here's to those whom we'd love, if only we dared."
INT. SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

We have entered the home of RICHARD AND ERICA COOPER. The place LOOKS very Norman Rockwell. PICTURES are on the mantel and ESSENCE MAGAZINES on the coffee table. RICHARD, 38, is an investment banker. He is married to ERICA, 36, a high school English teacher. She’s six months pregnant.

INT. HALLWAY BETWEEN BEDROOMS - MORNING

We hear their DAUGHTER, KELLY, crying in one of the rooms. Richard comes out of the master bedroom and stands in the doorway of Kelly’s room. He is tying his tie in a hurry. “Good Morning America” is on the T.V.

RICHARD
Shh... shh... Daddy loves you.
Mommy will be right there.

She stops crying. He goes back into his room. The instant he leaves the doorway, the crying starts again. He runs out again, sticks his head back in her room, now pulling on his shoes.

RICHARD
Come on now, baby. Mama’s coming.
Shhh. Daddy loves you.

She stops. He repeats this a few times. Each time he leaves, she cries instantly and each time he reappears he is closer to being ready for work. Finally, fully clothed, he gets the baby out of the room and walks to the bathroom holding her.

RICHARD
Who’s my baby? Kelly’s my baby.
You love your daddy?

He knocks on the bathroom door. We can HEAR the shower running.

RICHARD
Erica... Erica.

ERICA (O.S.)
Yeah, come in.

He opens the bathroom door and we see Erica’s beautiful naked back as she wraps a towel around herself and starts to dry off.
RICHARD
Here, can you take her? I gotta get outta here.

ERICA
I got her.

Erica takes the baby. Richard kisses her.

ERICA
You better stop. You’re gonna get wet.

RICHARD
It’s okay, I have my raincoat on.

They kiss.

ERICA
Call me if you’re going to be late.

RICHARD
I will.

As he walks away from her, he looks back. We are seeing a beauty shot of Erica smiling holding the baby. The perfect wife. The CAMERA PUSHES INTO HER VERY SLOWLY.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Hi, I’m Richard Cooper. I’ve been married for seven years and I’m bored out of my fucking mind.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S HOUSE – DAY

Erica is now playing with their daughter in her playroom. Both are on the floor.

RICHARD (V.O.)
And that’s my wife, Erica. She is the last. She’s the last woman I’ve ever taken on vacation, the last woman I ever took out to dinner, the last woman I ever had sex with and, by the way, like a lot of married couples, we don’t have sex -- correction, we don’t fuck. Oh, we have intercourse less than eight times a year, but we never fuck.
INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Richard and Erica are in bed. Richard makes a move to touch her.

ERICA
Honey, I don’t want to do anything. I’ve got a headache.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Another day in bed.

ERICA
Please don’t touch me. My hair hurts.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Another day in bed.

ERICA
What are you doing?!

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

*RICHARD (V.O.)
I went though the same thing every married man does: I married my wife, she had kids and went nuts.

ERICA
I want another baby.

RICHARD
What are you talking about? You’re having a baby.

ERICA
Yeah, but I’m ready for another one.

*RICHARD (V.O.)
But we worked it out. We went to couples therapy and I got my ass kicked by both of them.
INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK

A pregnant Erica is crying as the therapist writes on a pad and gives Richard (who we don’t see) disapproving looks.

ERICA
He doesn’t listen to me. It’s like I’m not even there. We’re two strangers living in a house.

ANGLE ON: Richard with bandages on his face, a black eye and a fat lip.

RICHARD
I’m sorry.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Most men would go out and cheat. But here’s what happened when she thought I was cheating.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

The house is dark. Richard makes his way to the stairs quietly. Suddenly we hear a punch land, Richard falls.

RICHARD
Hey! What’s going on?

ERICA
Mutherfucker, you didn’t think I was going to find out?

RICHARD
Ow! My eye! You’ve got it all wrong, baby!

ERICA
Tell that to your bitch!

INT. KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY

Erica is adjusting Richard’s tie. She gives Richard a kiss.

RICHARD (V.O.)
But now everything’s okay... it’s just that I’m bored out of my mind.

RICHARD
I love you.
Richard turns to go, but Erica pulls him back by the tie.

**ERICA**

I love you, too. Oh, after work *
pick up two boxes of pampers. *

**INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - LATER**

Richard sits among OTHER PASSENGERS on his daily commute to work. He opens his briefcase, pulls out a newspaper and an iPod. He puts the headphones on and presses a button. He plays some Wu Tang Clan and starts reading the New York Times.

Richard looks around at the WOMEN in his car.

**RICHARD (V.O.)**

So our marriage was normal, which *
meant I wasn’t getting laid. *

A pretty girl stands holding a pole. To Richard it appears to be more seductive than it is.

**RICHARD (V.O.)**

Now what I don’t understand is, how can my wife not have sex with me and then send me out into a world with so many beautiful women? I’ve *
always liked looking at women, but now I stare at them like a damn psycho. I have to do everything I *
can to resist them. *

The camera PANS to another BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMAN putting on her lipstick.

**RICHARD (V.O.)**

Oh yes, look at her. Put on that lipstick, baby. Oh yes, put it on.

**ANGLE ON:** a BLONDE WOMAN on her cell-phone.

**RICHARD (V.O.)**

Look at her on the phone. Yes, dial those numbers. Let me see you talk. Yeah, say something dirty. What’s wrong with me?

**ANGLE ON:** a SPANISH WOMAN reading the paper.
RICHARD (V.O.)
What about her? Turn that page.
Yes, that’s nice. Read baby.
Yeah, read for daddy. That’s it.
Maybe I should just drive to work.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK - A LITTLE LATER

The morning COMMUTERS hustle through the streets on their way to work.

RICHARD (V.O.)
I don’t really like living in New Jersey. It’s so boring, but that’s what Erica wants. You know how that goes. I LOVE Manhattan. I love the flow of the crowd. I love the mix of people.

EXT. MIDTOWN - LATER

Richard in midtown. He is moving in the throng.

RICHARD (V.O.)
I love that-- oh shit!

We see SIX BLACK AND PUERTO RICAN THUGS walking down the street toward Richard.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Let me get my ass across the street.

Richard crosses the street. The thugs pass by. All is well.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LATER

Richard walks through the busy lobby toward the elevator. He stands waiting for the elevator.

RICHARD (V.O.)
I work as an investment banker at a place called “The Gotham Asset Company.” I’m one of the only blacks at the firm.

(MORE)
RICHARD (V.O.) (cont’d)
As a matter of fact, there are so few here that I think I know every black person in the building.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY – SAME

Richard is walking the hallway. He sees the cleaning lady mopping the floor.

RICHARD
How’s it going, Pam?

PAM
What’s up, Richard?

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BATHROOM – SAME

Richard walks into the men’s bathroom and sees the janitor emptying the garbage.

RICHARD
What’s up, Ron?

RON
Good morning, Richard.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSSTAND IN THE OFFICE BUILDING – SAME

Richard buys a Kit Kat at the newsstand. The elevator comes and Richard boards.

RICHARD (V.O.)
It’s not that bad. Everybody here treats me pretty good, but I have to admit, being one of the only blacks here makes me a little paranoid, but I guess I’m okay.

INT. OFFICE – MOMENTS LATER

Richard enters the open multi-cubicle area of this financial office and walks through the EMPTY bullpen. He stops at his mail slot. He glances through some mail. He puts his raincoat and briefcase down and starts using a computer.
As he types, he unwraps the Kit-Kat bar, cracks off half of it, leaving the other half on the desk. Just then ONE of TWO SECRETARIES, TRACY, arrives. TRACY is a 26 YEAR OLD, PRETTY, DARK-HAIRED WHITE WOMAN. She's dressed very professionally. It's all business between these two.

TRACY
Morning, am I late?

RICHARD
No, I'm early. I'll get off this in a second.

She hangs up her coat. Richard goes over to the printer and removes the printout, reading it. He then goes into HIS OFFICE, which is private.

INT. RICHARD’S PRIVATE OFFICE – MOMENTS LATER

A nicely appointed office. A DEGREE or TWO hang on the wall, FAMILY PHOTOS, ETC. Not a huge office but it has a great view of midtown. Richard does some quiet work. He is really concentrating.

EXTREME CLOSE UP SEQUENCE: WORKING

A series of quiet (no music), extreme close ups showing:

RICHARD’S PEN as he writes on a report.

RICHARD’S EYES as he reads a flow chart (wearing glasses?).

RICHARD’S FINGER as he traces a line down a very dense sheet of stock figures. We see he wears a gold class ring. He traces down the stock codes next to their current value until he settles on a single figure and taps it once.

RICHARD
(whispering)
There you are.

Richard highlights the figure and rips the sheet out, going back out his office door.

INT. OFFICE – CONTINUOUS

Richard opens the door onto a now BUSY office. Everyone is arriving at work.

RICHARD
(handing Tracy the print-out)
(MORE)
RICHARD (cont'd)
Tracy, this is what we're doing today. Where's George?

GEORGE, Richard's colleague, a well dressed bespectacled WHITE MAN, and MARY, the other receptionist who is exactly like Tracy but HISPANIC, walk up the bullpen aisle, talking loudly until they reach George's private office which is next to Richard's.

MARY
Why is there always a track-fire? Every morning I'm sitting on a train waiting for a track fire.

RICHARD
C'mon, Mary. They tell you it's a track fire because they don't want to say rat stampede.

TRACY
George, your wife is on the phone and Veronica called.

GEORGE
Okay, call back Veronica and tell my wife I'll call her later.
(to Richard)
Rich, you want to go over that stuff before Landis gets in?

Just then, MR. LANDIS, the boss walks in. Landis is a 55 YEAR OLD WHITE MAN, a Gene Hackman type.

MR. LANDIS
Too late. I'm here. 'Morning everyone. Cooper, can you bring those contracts to my office ASAP?

RICHARD
No problem. I'll get them right now.

MR. LANDIS
Tracy, send somebody to Starbucks.

TRACY
It's already done.

MR. LANDIS
Alright. Let's get to work, people.

CUT TO:
INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

George pops his head in the doorway.

    GEORGE

    Lunch?

Richard gives him a look like "you ask this everyday and you know the answer."

    GEORGE

    Had to ask. Who knows, you might just say "yes" one day.

EXT. MIDTOWN - DAY

We see PEOPLE in line at a chicken/pita stand, a line going outside of a McDonald's and a long line at the Soup Nazi stand on West 55th street. Mary and Tracy sit on a bench in Bryant Park, eating salads, chatting.

    CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION AREA - SAME

The reception area is empty.

    CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - SAME

Richard is at his desk pouring over papers hard at work.

EXT. MIDTOWN - LATER

We see the SOUP NAZI closing his place. We see the chicken/pita stand closing down. We see a HOT DOG MAN pouring dirty hot dog water into the street.
RICHARD (V.O.)
They say New York is the city that never sleeps, and it’s true, but what they don’t say is that every day around three PM, after lunch New York takes a little nap and that’s when I like to get out of the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNEY’S NEW YORK - DAY

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY’S - MEN’S DEPARTMENT - LATER

Richard is in the MEN’S DEPARTMENT of the store looking at shirts. A SALESMAN approaches him.

MUSIC: Department store muzak.

SALESMAN
Can I help you find something?

RICHARD
No, I’m just looking.

He looks further. An average looking SALESWOMAN approaches him.

SALESWOMAN
Have you seen the new Prada suits?

RICHARD
No thanks. I’m just looking.

A GAY SALESMAN approaches, not over the top but still gay, comes over with cologne.

GAY SALESMAN
Excuse me, sir, would you like to try the new fragrance from Calvin Klein?

RICHARD
No, that’s okay.

He follows Richard and sprays a little in the air.
GAY SALESMAN
You should really try it. It's fantastic.

RICHARD
Hey, man, don't spray that shit on me!

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY'S - MEN'S SHOE DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Richard is now looking at some shoes. Another SALESMAN approaches him.

SALESMAN
Can I help you with anything?

RICHARD
No, just looking.

A beautiful ASIAN SALESGIRL approaches him.

SALESGIRL
Can I help you?

MUSIC STOPS.

RICHARD
(referring to a shirt)
Yeah, do you have this in blue?

She picks up a green shirt and holds it up to his body.

SALESGIRL
You should try this green one.

RICHARD
I don't like green.

SALESGIRL
No, you should. Go try it on.

Richard shrugs.

CUT TO:
INT. BARNEY'S MEN'S DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

We see Richard in the dressing room, buttoning up his shirt. The salesgirl walks in before he's got it buttoned up and is now sharing the tight space with him.

SALESGIRL
That looks great on you.

RICHARD
Really? You think so?

SALESGIRL
It's sexy. I like it.

Richard looks again.

RICHARD
I don't know. I don't normally wear stuff like this.

SALESGIRL
You should start. You look really handsome in it. Hey, Lisa...

The Asian salesgirl draws back the curtain. A beautiful BLACK SALESGIRL, LISA, joins them in the dressing room which is now even more cramped. Lisa looks him up and down. Both girls are standing very close to him and staring at him in the mirror.

RICHARD
(looking in the mirror)
You think so?

BOTH SALESGIRLS
Yes, very handsome.

Just then the gay salesman that was trying to sell the cologne sticks his head in the dressing room.

GAY SALESMAN
I think it looks great on you.

RICHARD
Okay, I'll take the shirt!

CUT TO:
EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION – EVENING

Now the CROWD OF COMMUTERS hurries to catch their trains back home to the suburbs. PEOPLE on line at a bus stop.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLY’S BEDROOM – SAME

Kelly’s nursery is decorated in a HELLO KITTY motif. Erica is putting Kelly in her crib. She HEARS the front door open and close.

ERICA
Daddy’s home.

Richard enters the room. Looks into the crib. Kisses Erica. She smiles putting down his stuff.

RICHARD
How’s it going?

ERICA
Watch this. How big is Kelly?

Kelly raises her arms over her head.

KELLY
This big.

RICHARD
Hey, big girl!

ERICA
Where’s Kelly’s nose?

Kelly points at her own nose.

KELLY
Right here.

RICHARD
Alright! Now where is Kelly’s esophagus? Where’s Kelly’s Patella? Where’s your femur?

ERICA
(chuckling)
Give her a break. She’s only two.
RICHARD
So what? There’re white kids her age taking the bar exam. She’s gotta keep up.

Richard pulls his turtleneck off, but stops when it is covering his face. He peeks out of the neck at Kelly.

RICHARD
Hey, Kelly! Look out! Turtle-man’s gonna getcha! Turtle Man’s gonna getcha!

Kelly laughs. Erica laughs.

Erica sees his SHOPPING BAGS.

ERICA
You went shopping? What did you buy?

He takes the shirt out of the bag.

ERICA
I thought you didn’t like green.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION AREA – NEXT DAY

Richard enters wearing the green sweater. He starts toward the door to his office.

TRACY
There’s a woman in there waiting for you.

RICHARD
A woman? Who?

He enters his office.

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE – MOMENTS LATER

A very BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMAN has her back turned to us. She’s smoking a cigarette and WEARING super-tight low riding SEVEN jeans over her perfect-stop-traffic ass, a red PRADA top over stop-air-traffic tits and MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes on her perfect feet. She turns around in SLOW MOTION and we meet NIKKI.
RICHARD
Damn.

NIKKI
I knew you wouldn't recognize me.

RICHARD
Nikki?

NIKKI
What? Did you think I was dead?

Richard puts his stuff down, settling into his office and tries to act like he's not affected by her.

RICHARD
I don't know. I wasn't really thinking about you.

She takes a slow drag off her cigarette, smiling.

RICHARD
You know, people don't smoke in offices anymore.

He goes over and opens a window.

NIKKI
You don't seem happy to see me.

RICHARD
No, hey. I'm happy to see you.

He gives her a quick, uncomfortable hug, then moves away.

RICHARD
So, what brings you here?

NIKKI
I came to see you. I just bumped into Simon at Starbucks and he told me you worked here, so I figured I'd come up and say hi.

RICHARD
How's Simon doing? He owes me a call?

NIKKI
He's alright. Just got out of rehab. (then impressed) (MORE)
NIKKI (cont'd)
Look at you. You’re a big man here?

RICHARD
Not really. I have a few people I have to answer to, but I’m not complaining. They take good care of me.

Richard takes his daily Kit-Kat out of his pocket, cracks off half and starts eating it, leaving the rest on his desk and leans back in his chair. Nikki sees pictures of Richard’s family on his desk.

NIKKI
Are you married?

RICHARD
Yes, for seven years. That’s my daughter, Kelly, she’s two and that’s my wife, Erica. We have another baby on the way.

NIKKI

He looks at her for a beat.

RICHARD
Uhh yeah... I’m happily married.

NIKKI
Really, I don’t know. You didn’t say it right.

RICHARD
Really? How should I have said it?

NIKKI
I know you shouldn’t have had to think about it. I hear ice cracking.

RICHARD
What?

NIKKI
When I was in Boston College I used to walk across the Charles River to get to school.

(MORE)
NIKKI (cont'd)
You ever walk across a frozen river and hear ice cracking? That's the scariest sound in the world.

RICHARD
Don't worry, my ice is fine. You married?

NIKKI
Me married? Hell no!

Phone RINGS. Richard answers it.

RICHARD
(to Nikki)
Excuse me.
(into phone)
Hello?... Yeah, come right now. I'm not doing anything.

He hangs up the phone.

NIKKI
Am I in the way?

RICHARD
No, you're okay. So what are you doing with yourself?

Nikki sits on his desk, picking up the other half of the Kit-Kat and eats it.

NIKKI
Nothing great. I work at the Blue Bar. You know, right next to Nell's.

RICHARD
Next to Nell's? I don't think I've been to a club in like six years.

NIKKI
Damn, you really did settle down. I'd like to settle down, but I still like to hang out real late. I like to have breakfast when everybody else is eating lunch.

RICHARD
Ooh, what a rebel.

They share an uncomfortable silence.
RICHARD
Hey, look, sometimes I’m free in the afternoon. If you call maybe one day we could have a late lunch.

NIKKI
You don’t want to have lunch with me. You’re just trying to make up for being so mean when you walked in.

RICHARD
No, listen, it would be great to see you and catch up.

The intercom BUZZES. Richard picks up his phone, now all business. Nikki sees this and leaves.

RICHARD
Yeah... Okay, let’s go over that tomorrow...
(to Nikki)
Later, Nikki.

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN – EARLY EVENING

Still wearing the green sweater, Richard sits with other PASSENGERS on his way home. He’s got his headphones on listening to Wu Tang Clan.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Seeing Nikki made me realize how uncomfortable I’d become with women. I’d like to think that before I got married I knew how to talk to women.

INT. TIMES SQUARE – FANTASY

Richard is walking through Times Square in SLOW MOTION. PEOPLE pass him by. He’s dressed in an Armani suit, cool shades and expensive shoes, very slick and rich looking. He has an intense look on his face. The general atmosphere tells us this is not reality.

MUSIC: "Excuse Me Miss" by Jay-Z plays.

Through some subtle VISUAL AND SOUND EFFECT, Richard’s body lights up for a second.
EXTREME CLOSE UP: Richard's face. As he begins to exude sheer confidence.

ANGLE ON: SEVERAL CLOSE UPS of SEVERAL WOMEN, who were walking by, peering at Richard as they pass him, instantly falling for him.

ANGLE ON: RICHARD drinking it in with a deep breath (kind of like Keanu in the last scene of "the Matrix").

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    If I was single I'd be dangerous.

A WOMAN walks by. She seems very busy and successful.

    RICHARD
    Excuse me, do you want to have sex with me?

    WOMAN ONE
    Of course I do.

    RICHARD
    Then come on.

He leads her off.

INT. TIMES SQUARE - FANTASY

Richard approaches ANOTHER busy looking WOMAN.

    RICHARD
    Hey, let's go to a hotel.

    WOMAN #2
    But I have an appointment.

    RICHARD
    Yeah, an appointment to give me some. Come on, bitch.

INT. TIMES SQUARE - FANTASY

Then ANOTHER WOMAN, WOMAN #3.

    RICHARD
    Excuse me, are you a prostitute?

    WOMAN #3
    Yes, I charge one thousand dollars.
RICHARD
Well, I’ll charge two thousand.
You better bring your ass on.

She pulls out a wad of cash and hands it to him. They leave.

INT. TIMES SQUARE – FANTASY
Richard approaches a cute, young girl.

RICHARD
Excuse me, Miss--

CUTE GIRL
Get the fuck out of here.

She walks off, leaving him standing there.

RICHARD
Maybe it is a good thing I got married.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S HOUSE – NIGHT
Richard walks into the kitchen after a hard day’s work still carrying his briefcase. Erica is feeding Kelly who sits in a high chair. “Girlfriends” is on the TV.

RICHARD
(gives Erica a kiss)
Hi, honey. I’m home.

ERICA
Hey, I’m almost done with her.
I’ll have your food ready in about half an hour, okay?

RICHARD
Take your time. I’m not that hungry.

Richard bends down to Kelly.

RICHARD
Hey, Kelly, give daddy a kiss.

Kelly puts some carrots in Richard’s mouth instead. Erica laughs.
RICHARD
Thank you, Kelly. So how was school today, honey?

ERICA
It was fine. I'm starting to get tired of these kids rubbing my stomach. Kelly, tell daddy how busy we were today. First, we went to music together then she had a play date at Brian's house.

RICHARD
Any B-L-A-C-K kids?

ERICA
Not one. I'm thinking about joining a "Mommy and Me" group in Teaneck. I gotta figure something out.

RICHARD
We should take her to see her cousins next week.

ERICA
We should do that. How was work? Anything happen with you today?

RICHARD
Nothing. Just work.

ERICA
Okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY
Richard buying a Kit Kat.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - A WEEK LATER
Richard is in a packed elevator. EVERYBODY is in a suit and tie. Richard is the only black on the elevator. He looks straight ahead.

CUT TO:
INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

Richard is on the phone with a prospective client.

   RICHARD
   Yes, I know you're working with
   Cross and Lubitch, but I think
   you're going to see some trends in
   the market soon which will point
   you our way.

Mary sticks her head in.

   MARY
   There's a Nikki Tru on line one.

Richard nods to her and she leaves.

   RICHARD
   Okay... No, no... This is just a
   courtesy call to make you aware
   that our doors are open... Good...

He punches another line on the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE/NIKKI'S APARTMENT - SAME

INTERCUT BETWEEN RICHARD AND NIKKI

Nikki's on the phone. She's sitting on her bed wearing a
Metallica t-shirt and panties.

   NIKKI
   Hey, you wanna do lunch today? I
   just got up. If I jump in the
   shower right now I could be there
   in about an hour.

   RICHARD
   I can't do it today.

   NIKKI
   How about tomorrow?

   RICHARD
   Tomorrow? Okay, but not until two.
NIKKI
I’ll see you tomorrow.

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
Richard hangs up. George comes in his office, fired up.

GEORGE
You want to go to lunch?

RICHARD
No.

FADE OUT:

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - THAT EVENING
Richard and Erica are having dinner with ANOTHER UPWARDLY MOBILE BLACK COUPLE, ALLAN and JENNIFER. The WAITRESS is pouring them wine, she is very hot and Richard is trying not to notice.

ERICA
(re: waitress)
She’s pretty, huh?

RICHARD
Who?

JENNIFER
Anyway, Allen still wants to live in New York, but I told him you can’t raise a kid here.

RICHARD
What do you mean you can’t raise a kid here? People have been raising kids here for centuries. Those Columbine kids weren’t from New York. What’s their excuse?

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

JENNIFER
So let me get this straight—you’re saying education is overrated?
RICHARD
No, I’m saying that school is overrated. Education is great, but school teaches kids so many lies.

ERICA
I’m a teacher. I don’t teach kids lies.

RICHARD
Yes, you do. You know what my favorite lie that they teach in school is? The one where they say that the Indians sold Manhattan for what was it—sixteen dollars.

ALLEN
How do you know that was a lie? Were you there?

RICHARD
Come on, it doesn’t make any sense. The Indians sold Manhattan for sixteen dollars? The White man took everything when he got here why would he buy Manhattan? That’s like a rapist asking for a date. I don’t think so.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

RICHARD
What grown man has kids sleeping in the bedroom?

JENIFFER
I admit it’s weird, but it doesn’t mean he’s guilty.

ERICA
I blame the parents.

RICHARD
I know you think he’s innocent, but he’ll never baby-sit my kids.

ERICA
Okay, honey you made your point. You don’t need to scream.
RICHARD
Scream? What are you talking about? I didn’t scream.

ERICA
Just forget it.

RICHARD
What’s wrong? When we go out and I don’t talk you get mad, now we’re out and I’m talking and you’re still mad.

Jennifer jumps in breaking the tension.

JENIFFER
I need to go to the ladies room.
(to Erica)
You want to come?

ERICA
Yeah, I better go.

They leave Richard and Allen alone.

RICHARD
Damn! Why is she so mad all the time?

ALLEN
It might not be you. She’s been upset at work a lot lately, too.

Richard’s looking at the waitress. She smiles back.

RICHARD
Do you see this waitress? She’s killing me.

ALLEN
I know what you mean.

RICHARD
This is ridiculous. I’m gonna say something.

ALLEN
Come on. Let’s just pay the check and get outta here.
RICHARD
Nah, nah. Somebody's gotta say something. Excuse me, could you come up here for a minute?

Right then the MAITRE'D comes over.

MAITRE'D
How are you doing, gentlemen? Has everything been satisfactory?

RICHARD
The food was great. We just had a problem with our service.

MAITRE'D
Really? Did she bring your food on time? Was she rude?

RICHARD
No, no. Nothing like that. The service was great, but just look at her.

MAITRE'D
Jessica?

RICHARD
Yes, Jessica. We came here for a quiet dinner with our wives. We don't need this shit. Do you know how hard it was to try and not notice her all night? I couldn't even enjoy my food. My wife's trying to tell me something about my daughter, next thing I know I got these big tits asking if I want an appetizer.

MAITRE'D
I'm very sorry, sir.

RICHARD
The next time I come in here with my wife you better send the oldest, ugliest man you got to come and take my order, you got it?

MAITRE'D
Yes, sir.
RICHARD
Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING
Richard sitting with OTHER PASSENGERS on his way to work. He’s got his headphones on listening to the Wu Tang Clan.

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - NEXT DAY
Richard is on the phone.

RICHARD
Well, what do you expect for those prices? You get what you pay for...

We HEAR a knock on the door. Mary sticks her head in.

MARY
Nikki’s here to see you.

RICHARD
(covering the receiver with his hand)
Really? It’s two already?

* He looks at his watch.

RICHARD
Okay, let her in.

Mary closes the door.

RICHARD
(into the phone)
Well, if you’re interested in going over some figures give me a call.

He hangs up.

Nikki enters and closes the door behind her. As the door closes we see that Mary’s watching her go in and is giving her a dirty look.

NIKKI
What’s up? You ready for lunch?
RICHARD
Yeah. I’ll be with you in two seconds.

Nikki sits down in a chair, takes out a cigarette and lights it.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

They’re seated at a table by the window. Nikki smokes.

RICHARD
...and you were with Nelson. He was out of his mind when he was with you.

NIKKI
I know. Poor Nelson. Hey, remember when we all went to the Vineyard? Remember?

She stares into his eyes. He stares back, resisting.

RICHARD
Vaguely.

NIKKI
Vaguely? You weren’t married then. We both kinda cheated on your best friend, but big deal. That’s old news. You and I always had bad timing.

RICHARD
When I met you, you were going out with Nelson.

NIKKI
I called you after we broke up and you were with... what’s her name?

RICHARD
Marcy.

They’re silent for a beat as Richard looks around.

RICHARD
Where’d you find this place? I’ve been working in this neighborhood for years and I’ve never seen it.
NIKKI
I just stumbled across it one day.

RICHARD
So what’s going on with you?

NIKKI
Well, I live with Teddy on the West side. We also have a place in D.C.

RICHARD
What does he do?

NIKKI
He’s a promoter. So he’s away a lot. It’s almost like having my own place.
(Beat)
Do I know your wife?

RICHARD
I don’t think so.

NIKKI
Is she white?

RICHARD
No! Why’d you say that?

NIKKI
Don’t get offended. Remember that girl you brought to Andre’s party?

RICHARD
That was one girl at one party. What am I, branded? Some of you sisters don’t notice a good brother ’til a white girl gets him.

NIKKI
Okay, I didn’t mean anything by it. So... do you and your black wife still fuck?

RICHARD
Excuse me??

NIKKI
Don’t be offended. I’m curious. Everybody I know who’s married tells me after a while they don’t fuck anymore.
RICHARD
So, do you love this guy?

NIKKI
You didn’t answer my question.

RICHARD
I know. So, do you love this guy?

NIKKI
Teddy? No. I like him a lot.
He’s just... Poor Teddy.
(beat)
So, how did you meet your black wife?

RICHARD
I was playing football in Central Park. She was there with her class. I don’t know. There was something calm about her. I just had to meet her.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

MUSIC: We HEAR “Summertime” by Will Smith over the following--

Richard is on the football field. He looks over to see a younger Erica. She is surrounded, up to the waist, in CHILDREN. Richard stares at her. She looks up at him. He smiles. We HEAR somebody yell “hike.” We see the other GUYS in the background yelling at Richard, who is still grinning at Erica. The ball lands at Richard’s feet. He is oblivious. The other guy runs over and knocks the shit out of Richard.

MUSIC stops.

BACK TO:

INT. RESTAURANT – PRESENT DAY

Richard is looking at his food, silently, engrossed in the memory. Nikki snaps him out of it with a chuckle.

NIKKI
(semi-sarcastic)
Aw, you’re in love with your wife.
That’s sweet, Ritchie.
RICHARD
Something wrong with that?

Richard is a little uncomfortable.

NIKKI (CONT’D)
Hey, I’d love to get domesticated, have some kids, stop all this bullshit. If you have any friends for me let me know. I’m getting a little too old for the club scene.

RICHARD
I don’t know how you do it. Being tired all the time, smelling like smoke, there’s always a fight. Gotta know the doorman, gotta have the right sneakers. Some girl won’t fuck me cause my car’s not nice enough. Meanwhile this chick’s on the bus. Everybody’s got a Jersey on. I don’t know if I’m in a club or a training camp.

Richard’s cell-phone rings.

RICHARD
(to Nikki)
Excuse me.
(into phone)
Yes...

As Richard is on the phone the waiter puts the check on the table. Richard picks it up and puts a credit card in it.

RICHARD
(into phone)
Okay... No, I’ll be back in the office in about ten minutes...

Okay.

He hangs up.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
(to Nikki)
I gotta get back to work.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE TIMES WARNER CENTER - TWO DAYS LATER - SATURDAY

It’s one of the only malls in Manhattan.
INT. SHOPPING MALL - LATER

Richard and Erica, who’s holding Kelly, are walking through a mall.

RICHARD (V.O.)
The next Saturday Erica and I came into the city to do some shopping.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIA’S SECRET - MOMENTS LATER

Richard is in the panties section, holding his daughter, Kelly, waiting for his wife. He is looking around at some OLD WOMEN buying lingerie.

RICHARD
(under his breath)
God bless these gals, still working on the marriage. Good for them.

Richard picks up a pair of skimpy panties off a rack.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
Honey, why don’t you get these? I like them.

Erica is sifting through a bin with some OLDER WOMEN. She looks at what skimpy panties Richard is holding up.

ERICA
Okay, well let’s find your size so YOU can wear them.

RICHARD
Very funny. I don’t know why you come to Victoria’s Secret to get these big-ass panties.

Richard holds up a HUGE pair of panties.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
You could’ve gotten this shit at a gas station.

ERICA
Don’t curse in front of Kelly.

NIKKI (O.S.)
Hey, Richard!
They look up to Nikki, who crosses to them. She's holding the same panties Richard wanted Erica to get.

    RICHARD
What are you doing here?

    NIKKI
Picking up a few things. I thought you lived in Jersey.

    RICHARD
We do, but Erica wanted to come into the city.
(to Erica)
Honey, this is an old friend, Nikki.

Erica and Nikki shake hands.

    NIKKI
Very old...

    RICHARD
You remember Nelson? She went out with Nelson for a while.

    NIKKI
(to Kelly)
And what's your name?

    ERICA
Don't be shy. Speak up, girl.

    KELLY
Kelly.

    NIKKI
Hello, Kelly. She's beautiful. Just like her mom.

    ERICA
Thanks.
(to Kelly)
Say, "thank you," Kelly.

Nikki touches the lingerie Erica picked out.

    NIKKI
These are cute. Are they from the Angel Collection?
RICHARD
No, they're from the "parachute" collection. We use them to jump out of planes.

ERICA
Stop it! No, I tried those. When Tyra Banks wears it it's a teddy. When I put it on it's a grizzly.

NIKKI
You could wear anything you want. I've got to go. You guys take care.

Richard and Erica say good-bye. Nikki leaves.

ERICA
So, she's the one Nelson tried to kill himself over? She doesn't seem dangerous. I like her. What does she do?

RICHARD
I think she works at some club in the village. I don't know how she found me. She just stopped by one day to say hi.

ERICA
When?

RICHARD
About a week and a half ago.

ERICA
You never mentioned it. How come you didn't tell me?

RICHARD
I don't know. I guess I just forgot.

ERICA
Did you forget anything else?

RICHARD
No.
ERICA
Okay. Well let's go upstairs. We need pillowcases.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING
Richard sitting with the OTHER PASSENGERS on his way to work. This time he's reading the paper.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK
A TRAFFIC COP directing traffic. PEOPLE at a newsstand.

INT. OFFICE - MONDAY MORNING
Richard enters. Mary is typing and Tracy is standing behind her.

MARY/TRACY
(in unison)
Nikki called.

RICHARD
How long ago?

TRACY
Just now. She said she'll be by at five.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON
Richard on the phone.
Richard talking to Mr. Landis
Richard on the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. - RICHARD'S OFFICE - THAT EVENING
Richard is at his desk working. A KNOCK on the door.
RICHARD
Come in.

It’s Nikki. She has two shopping bags. She sets one on a chair.

NIKKI
This is for me.

She crosses to his desk and hands him the other bag.

NIKKI
And these are for your daughter and the new baby. I was thinking about you guys all weekend. You looked so cute together.

Richard takes a LITTLE DRESS and LITTLE SHIRT out of the bag.

RICHARD
This must have cost a lot. Thanks.

NIKKI
Don’t worry about it.

A KNOCK on the door. Nikki gets up from the desk and goes to the window. Tracy pops her head in.

TRACY
Mary and I are leaving. Do you need anything before we go?

RICHARD
No, I’m okay. Good night, Tracy.

TRACY
(to Richard)
Good night.

NIKKI
Good night.

Tracy ignores Nikki and exits.

NIKKI
I don’t think your secretaries like me.

RICHARD
They’re not even thinking about you.
INT. RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

Tracy looks at Mary and they both shake their heads as they walk out.

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Nikki is still sitting on the windowsill.

NIKKI
Hey, you got any singles?

RICHARD
(going through his wallet)
Yeah. I’ve got about seven or eight bucks. What do you need?

NIKKI
Come here.

She takes the money from Richard.

RICHARD
What are you doing?

NIKKI
Feeding the fish. Watch this.

Richard leans out the window as Nikki drops a dollar bill. It flutters down to the sidewalk, before it hits the ground a shocked pedestrian jumps and catches it.

Richard and Nikki laugh. Nikki drops more money down. We see a dollar on the ground.

ANGLE ON: Richard and Nikki in the office.

RICHARD/NIKKI
Come on, bum. Get it. Get it bum.
Ahh, he missed it.

ANGLE ON: The street right as the bum passes it, a white college kid scoops the dollar up.

ANGLE ON: Richard and Nikki.

RICHARD/NIKKI
Damn.

ANGLE ON: Street as two people fight over a bill.
MAN #1
That’s my money.

MAN #2
No. Fuck you. That’s mine.

ANGLE ON: Richard and Nikki.

RICHARD
Oh shit. Let’s get out of here.

He closes the window quickly.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - LATER

Richard on the train with the bags he got from Nikki listening to his iPod. An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN walks by. Richard just takes a look and shakes his head.

INT. RICHARD’S LIVING ROOM - THAT EVENING

Richard shows Erica the little shirt and dress.

ERICA
This stuff’s not cheap. Should we... invite her to dinner?

RICHARD
No. Let’s not. I don’t want Nikki coming around here.

ERICA
I thought she seemed nice. I think you’re just judging her on her past. People grow, people change. Look at you.

RICHARD
She seems nice, but she’s complicated and needy. She’s living with one guy, then she’s living with another, going to Miami just for some Puffy party. She just won’t grow up.

Erica smiles at him politely.
ERICA
Okay, I got it. Don’t invite her to
dinner. So do you want lima beans
or corn?

RICHARD
Lima beans.

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN – MORNING

We see Richard walking through a CROWDED train looking for a
seat.

EXT. RICHARD’S OFFICE – MORNING

There’s Nikki outside smoking a cigarette. Wearing a green
Prada sweater and tight Seven jeans. They walk and talk...
She looks upset, like she might have been crying.

RICHARD
Hey what are you doing here? Are
you okay?

NIKKI
Teddy and I broke up last night.
I’m so upset I haven’t slept.

RICHARD
What happened?

INT. ELEVATOR – MOMENTS LATER

Richard and Nikki are in an elevator. There are a couple of
other PEOPLE on with them.

NIKKI
I don’t know. We had been fucking
all night and he just fell asleep.
Can you imagine?

RICHARD
No.
NIKKI
I couldn’t take it. I mean if we’re fucking and I fall asleep that’s just great. If we’re fucking and then we both fall asleep that’s okay. But if we’re fucking and then just you fall asleep that’s fucked up. I guess you married people don’t have these kinds of problems.

RICHARD
Yeah. Lucky me.

NIKKI
No, really, you are lucky. If I was smart I would’ve dated a guy like you instead of messing with these idiots. I’m getting too old for this shit.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER
Richard and Nikki are in his office. A few minutes have passed. Richard has taken off his coat.

NIKKI
It’s almost like we broke up a few months ago, but I just didn’t know it. But now I’ve got to move. Can you put me up for a couple of days?

RICHARD
(struggling)
Ah, no. Our place is small. We’ve got the baby coming. We’re moving a nanny into the guest room.

NIKKI
I love kids. I could be your new nanny.

RICHARD
I don’t think my wife would--

NIKKI
Got cha. I’m just playing with you. Damn, you should have seen the look on your face.
Richard starts doing a bit of paper work. Nikki notices his iPod and starts looking at it.

NIKKI
Oh, you have an iPod. You still listen to Wu Tang all the time?

RICHARD
Yup. All the time. You got a good memory. I'm not done downloading music yet.

She scrolls through the songs.

NIKKI
Boy, you got some nigger ears.

RICHARD
Nigger ears? What are you talking about?

NIKKI
Look at this... Luther Vandross. Patti LaBelle, Levert, Wu Tang, Tribe, P.E., Snoop, Jodeci. Ya know, white people make music too.

RICHARD
One day you think I have a white wife now I got nigger ears. I told you I wasn't done yet.

NIKKI
No Nine Inch Nails, no Radiohead, no U2, no Chili Peppers. Look, let me put a little something on here for you. Open your horizons.

She takes out her iPod, connects it to his with a wire, downloading some music. She scrolls to one song and shows it to him.

NIKKI
And this one... you listen to this on your train ride tomorrow. This is from me to you.

RICHARD
I'll listen with my nigger ears.

She puts back her iPod, starts leaving. On her way out, she runs her hand through Richard's hair playfully.
NIKKI
See you later. I gotta find an apartment. Let me know if you get a divorce, okay?

RICHARD
I’ll let you know.

She leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. COOPER HOUSE - NIGHT

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

Richard and Erica saying good-bye. Richard’s about to go to work again. “Good Morning America” is on the T.V.

ERICA
So have you heard from your friend Nikki?

RICHARD
No, I don’t think I’ll be seeing her again. She likes to disappear.

ERICA
Ah that’s too bad. I finally got her a thank you card for those clothes she got Kelly.

RICHARD
Well, give me the card and if she stops by I’ll give it to her.

ERICA
I thought you said she disappeared.

RICHARD
Well she might reappear. And if she does I’ll give her the card that you bought for her. Do you have it?

ERICA
It’s all the way upstairs. I’ll give it to you later.
RICHARD

Okay.

Richard kisses Erica and playfully grabs her ass. She moves away.

ERICA

You better go. I have to get Kelly ready for a play-date.

RICHARD

Any black kids?

INT. TRAIN – MORNING

Richard is on the train. He takes out his iPod, scrolls through some songs and clicks on the songs that Nikki put on there for him. He hates the first few songs and clicks fast then he finally stops at “Closer” by Nine Inch Nails. While the music is playing we see that Richard is affected by what he’s hearing. He looks like he’s going to sweat. He loosens his collar. The CAMERA is just on Richard, but about 8 seconds in we’ll cut to different WOMEN on the train lip-syncing the lyrics.

NINE INCH NAILS

"YOU LET ME / VIOLATE YOU / YOU LET ME DESECRATE YOU / YOU LET ME PENETRATE YOU / YOU LET COMPLICATE YOU / HELP ME / I'VE BROKEN APART MY INSIDES / HELP ME / I'VE GOT NO SOUL TO SELL / HELP ME / GET AWAY FROM MYSELF / I WANT TO FUCK YOU LIKE AN ANIMAL / I WANT TO FEEL YOU FROM THE INSIDE / I WANT TO FUCK YOU LIKE AN ANIMAL / MY WHOLE EXISTENCE IS FLAWED / YOU GET ME CLOSER TO GOD."

The last line of the song is sung V.O. by Nikki. Richard snaps out of his fantasy and we see an OLD LADY smiling at him.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. OFFICE – THE NEXT DAY

CUT TO:
INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard is at his file cabinet going through some files. Tracy walks in. She's got an attitude.

TRACY
Nikki's here. What do you want me to do?

RICHARD
What's wrong with you?

TRACY
Nothing. What do you want me to do?

RICHARD
Just let her in.

Tracy walks out. Nikki walks in.

RICHARD
What's up? Did you find an apartment yet?

NIKKI
Actually I came to ask if you'd come with me to look at a place in Harlem. I'm just a little scared to go up there alone.

RICHARD
You know, if you're scared to look at this place in the daytime maybe you should be looking someplace else.

Richard walks out to the reception area and speaks to Tracy.

RICHARD
Tracy, when you send out the roster for the Bank of New York, don't forget the second tier reports.

TRACY
Don't forget you have a conference call at twelve.

RICHARD
They don't need me for that, right?

He calls out to George.
RICHARD
George?

GEORGE (O.S.)
Yeah.

RICHARD
Do you need me for that conference
call at twelve?

George enters the reception area across from his office.

GEORGE
I don't need you. You need me.

Nikki watches from the doorway of Richard's office. George
glances over and sees her.

RICHARD
(noticing)
Ahh George, I want you to meet
Nikki.
(introducing)
Nikki. George.

She enters the reception area and shakes George's hand.

GEORGE
Please to meet you.

NIKKI
You, too.

RICHARD
So, I'll see you this afternoon.

Richard and Nikki leave. George watches them leave,
wondering...

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY

Nikki and Richard are in the back of a cab.

NIKKI
I don't know how you can stand
working in an office. It looks so
unreal to me. Everyone's dressed
the same.

(MORE)
NIKKI (cont'd)
Everyone's so busy working for some big company that doesn't give a fuck about them. It's sad.

RICHARD
Hey, people have to work. If people like me didn't work, people like you couldn't shake their asses in clubs all night.

NIKKI
Hey, did you listen to any of that music I put on your iPod?

CUT TO:

EXT. BUILDING IN HARLEM - LATER

The building isn't bad, but the building next to it is gone. Just a lot full of rubble. Richard and Nikki get out of the cab and walk into the building. Richard looks around at the FOLKS hanging around on the street. He sticks out in his nice suit. He looks uncomfortable.

NIKKI
What's the matter? You're not afraid of your own people are you?

RICHARD
My own people? I don't know these niggers. I'm from Brooklyn.

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The LANDLADY leads Richard and Nikki into the room. It's very small and very basic.

LANDLADY
Here it is.

NIKKI
The ad said there's a balcony.

LANDLADY
I lied.

NIKKI
Oh.
LANDLADY
I don't know if the bed is big enough for the both of you. This place is really for students.

NIKKI
We're not a couple.

RICHARD
I'm just a friend.

LANDLADY
A friend? So which one of you is paying the rent?

NIKKI
I am.

LANDLADY
Sure you are.

Richard gives Nikki and the landlady a look.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL FACULTY ROOM/INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

INTERCUT RICHARD AND ERICA

Erica is on a phone in the faculty lounge, as she drinks her coffee. Other TEACHERS are lounging also. She is eating a sandwich and some fries.

ERICA
(into phone)
I have two more classes today. I threw up during the last one. The kids loved it. I wanna have this baby already.

RICHARD
(into phone)
You don't have to be working right now. You should just take your maternity leave now.

ERICA
(into phone)
I don't want to waste it.
As she speaks, ALLEN, (the guy from dinner) also a teacher sits next to her. He takes a french fry from her plate and eats it casually.

ERICA
(to Allen)
If you want some more take it.

RICHARD
(into phone)
Who are you talking to?

ERICA
(into phone)
Allen. He was eating my fries.

RICHARD
(into phone)
Oh.

ERICA
(into phone)
I think I’m going to wait ‘til the baby is born and we can use my leave to go away someplace. What are you doing?

Tracy sticks her head in.

TRACY
Nikki’s here.

Richard gives Tracy the “okay” sign.

RICHARD
(into phone)
Nothing, just work. Listen, I gotta go. I’ll call later, okay?

He hangs up the phone. Nikki walks in.

NIKKI
Hi.

RICHARD
What’s up? How’s your new place?

NIKKI
Small, but I like it. You have some time? You want to get out of here?
RICHARD
Um... sure.

NIKKI
Let's go.

She gets up. He gets up. George sticks his head in.

GEORGE
Hey, partner.
    (noticing Nikki)
Oh, hi.

RICHARD
George, you remember Nikki?

GEORGE
Sure. Nikki, hi.

They shake hands.

GEORGE
(to Richard)
You know what, can we talk for just a second? I need to know just a couple of things before I make this call.

RICHARD
Sure. Nikki, why don't you wait outside. I'll be out in a minute.

GEORGE
Sorry, I won't keep him long.

NIKKI
No problem.

Nikki leaves. George closes the door and leans on the desk, * looking at Richard severely.

RICHARD
So-

George is concerned.

GEORGE
What-the-fuck are you doing?

RICHARD
What's wrong?
GEORGE
Do you want to mess up your whole life? What the fuck is wrong with you?

RICHARD
I'm gonna try that again. What's wrong, George?

GEORGE
What's wrong?! This bitch Nikki. That's what's wrong. I can't believe you got this bitch up in the office everyday.

RICHARD
George. Nikki's just-

GEORGE
You got a kid on the way. You got a good wife. Are you crazy?

RICHARD
George, slow up. I'm not fucking her.

GEORGE
She's fucking you, Richard. She's already fucking you. You just don't know it. I'm telling you...

RICHARD
Okay, first of all, nothing's going on. Second of all, how's this coming from you? You cheat on your wife all the time. Last year, you were fucking Tracy and Mary at the same time and I didn't say shit to you.

GEORGE
That's different. I don't give a fuck about any of these bitches I fuck them, then "Hey, bitch, get the fuck out. I gotta pick up my wife." You on the other hand, you're like Captain-Save-A-Ho. You like to be needed and Nikki knows it.

RICHARD
I appreciate it, dad, but I'm alright. She's a friend.
GEORGE
A friend? Right. She's gonna fall
man. And when she falls, she's
gonna land on you.

Richard leaves.

INT. ELEVATOR - A LITTLE LATER

Nikki and Richard are standing. Richard is pensive and
stirred by what George said.

NIKKI
You okay? You seem upset.

RICHARD
You know what, we shouldn't do this
anymore.

NIKKI
Do what? What are you talking
about?

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD
Our whole "hanging in the afternoon
lunch" thing. It doesn't look
good. I think we gotta stop.

NIKKI
Stop what? We're not doing
anything. Look, I'm not trying to
fuck you. I'm not trying to fuck
anybody. I just wanna hang out
with my friend.

She holds his hand in hers. Richard looks into her doe eyes,
sees pain, and it melts him.

RICHARD
I'm your friend. It's just that I
don't need any drama.

NIKKI
Then come on, let's hang. No
drama, I promise. Let's go
somewhere and just chill.
She leads him off, still holding his hand.

RICHARD
You wanna get something to eat.

NIKKI
Not really. Let’s go somewhere different.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER

CUT TO:

INT. CAR SHOW - SAME

They are in a big Convention Center with cars displayed all over. Richard and Nikki are strolling in the hot car section. Porsches, Ferraris, concept cars are glittering at each display, doors open and velvet ropes around them. There are HOT GIRLS strolling around, SECURITY GUYS at the cars and car FANS checking everything out.

RICHARD
I’ve been wanting to come here, but I’ve just been too busy.

NIKKI
It’s only here for a few more days.

RICHARD
Man, look at these cars.

NIKKI
Look at these girls. I wonder how much they make.

RICHARD
Wow! Porsche turbo. That’s hot.

They walk over to a Porsche prototype which is heavily guarded.

NIKKI
My friend, Brad, has one of those. They’re horrible on gas.

RICHARD
Yeah, but I bet they’re great on pussy.
NIKKI
Did you say something?

RICHARD
No. Nothing. Is Brad your new boyfriend?

NIKKI
No, he likes me, but it ain’t going to happen. Poor Brad.

Nikki walks over to the car, stepping gracefully over the velvet rope. ONE of the SECURITY GUARDS sees her. He smiles and holds the door for her as she slides into the seat. Her skirt rides up, showing her fine legs.

NIKKI
Come on, Richard. Get in.

Richard walks over and gets in the passenger side.

NIKKI
I love the smell of a new car. You should get one of these.

Nikki puts the seat way back and puts her feet up on the dash.

RICHARD
You know how much I’d have to make, to buy a car like this? For me to get a “Porsche,” I gotta buy my mother a Taurus, my wife a Volvo, and then maybe I can get a Porsche. Even then, where does the baby seat go in this thing?

NIKKI
Well, I’m gonna get one someday and you’re gonna be old and wish you had one.

RICHARD
Well, you’re gonna be broke someday and you’re gonna wish you hadn’t. Let’s look at the rest of this stuff so I can get back to work.

CAR SHOW MONTAGE:

Richard and Nikki having a good time. They sit in different cars: Ferarris, Nascars, etc.
They play a racing simulation game, they talk to HOT MODELS. Richard sits in a two seater, between Nikki and a HOT MODEL, etc.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S HOUSE – SAME TIME

Erica is playing with the baby. She picks up the phone.

       ERICA
       (into phone)
       Hi, Tracy. Is Richard there?...
       No, I tried his cell... Okay.
       Well, just let him know I called
       again... Okay, bye.

Erica hangs up the phone looking slightly concerned.

INT. CAR SHOW – SAME TIME

While Nikki and Richard are sitting side by side in a race car we see them glance into each other’s eyes, and for the first time we can see that they have feelings for each other. Richard opens the door of a new Mustang and the alarm goes off. Richard and Nikki run.

EXT. STREET – DAY

Nikki is walking Richard back to the office.

       RICHARD
       I really had a nice time.

       NIKKI
       I had a nice time too. I’m gonna
       miss you this weekend.

       RICHARD
       I’m going to miss you, too.

They stop in front of the building and look at each other. It feels like they might kiss but they don’t for now.

       RICHARD
       I thought you said “no drama.”

       NIKKI
       There’s no drama.

       RICHARD
       Bye, Nikki.
NIKKI
Bye, have a good weekend.

She kisses him lightly on the lips and leaves. He watches her walk away and starts to skip down the street. Frank Sinatra, "I Got The World On A String" starts to play. We see Richard give a BUM some money, kiss an OLD LADY then the music stops and the smile leaves his face. Richard runs right up to the camera and yells (we don’t hear anything).

EXT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S BACKYARD – FALL DAY

Richard is pushing Kelly on the swing set as Erica walks up.

ERICA
I called your office yesterday around three forty-five and nobody knew where to find you. I called your cell, no answer. I paged you, you didn’t page me back.

RICHARD
I was probably getting something to eat at the deli.

ERICA
Well, I called you a few times. You should let people know where you’re at and keep your phone on. What if something was wrong with Kelly? What if I got hit by a car?

RICHARD
I’m telling you, I went to get something to eat at the deli.

ERICA
I didn’t say that you didn’t go to the deli. What’s wrong with you?

RICHARD
Nothing. So what do you want to do tomorrow? A movie? We could have brunch with Allen and Jennifer.

ERICA
We always do that. Why don’t we do something different?

CUT TO:
INT. CAR SHOW - THE NEXT DAY

Richard and Erica are walking among the family cars. Richard is a little uncomfortable. While they’re walking they pass the model Nikki spoke to the day before. She nods at Richard when Erica’s not looking.

ERICA
Are you okay?

RICHARD
Huh? Yeah. I’m great.

SECURITY GUARD
(to Richard)
Can’t get enough, huh?

ERICA
Who was that?

RICHARD
I don’t know.

ERICA
Hey, there goes the new mini-vans. Let’s check them out.

SMALL MINI-VAN MONTAGE:

Just like the “cool” car montage but in this one Richard isn’t excited. He’s bored out of his mind. No pretty girls here. Just FULL-FIGURED WOMEN. Erica is really into the mini-vans. Richard opens a mini-van and the alarm goes off.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Richard is in a meeting with George and some CLIENTS. George is going over some charts. Richard’s cell-phone RINGS. Everybody in the room looks around like “whose phone is ringing.”

RICHARD
(uncomfortable)
Sorry. That’s mine.
He answers it.

RICHARD

Hello?...

The music blast from his cell phone and we hear...

NIKKI (V.O.)

Hey, it's Nikki.

RICHARD

(to the room)

Hey, excuse me for a sec.

He moves to the corner of the office, talking quietly into the phone. George and Mr. Landis look at Richard like he's crazy.

RICHARD

What's up? I can't really talk I'm in a meeting...

INT. BAR/INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

INTERCUT NIKKI AND RICHARD

Nikki is on the phone at the bar where she works. It's empty and they're setting up stools for the night, but the music is LOUD.

NIKKI

Okay, I just have to ask you something but I'm afraid you'll get mad at me.

RICHARD

Nikki, I can't do this. I'm in a meeting.

NIKKI

Just promise me you won't get mad.

RICHARD

Fine. I promise.

NIKKI

Okay, I need a little favor. Can you help me get my things out of Teddy's apartment?

RICHARD

Now? I told you I'm in a meeting.
NIKKI
No, tomorrow.

RICHARD
Okay, I’ll see you tomorrow.

ANGLE ON: George, eyeing Richard as he talks.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - NEXT DAY

Richard and Nikki are in a cab on the Westside Highway.

RICHARD
Alright, so where’s this guy live? I got things to do.

NIKKI
We should be at the shuttle in about twenty minutes.

RICHARD
Shuttle? What are you talking about? Shuttle where?

NIKKI
D.C. Our first apartment is there. I left a lot of my stuff there. He left town, so now’s my chance.

RICHARD
I’m not going to another state with you to some guy’s apartment to pick up your shit. That’s crazy!

NIKKI
D.C.’s not another state. It’s a thirty minute flight. It’s quicker than going to Brooklyn. You’ll be back at your office before lunchtime besides you live in Jersey. That’s another state.

RICHARD
Get the fuck out of here. I’m not...

CUT TO:
EXT. AERIAL FOOTAGE OF WASHINGTON D.C. - LATER

Taken from a landing plane.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME DAY

Nikki and Richard sit on the flight as it taxis to the gate.

    FLIGHT ATTENDANT
    Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to
    Ronald Reagan International
    Airport. It is now safe to use
    electronic devices.

Richard gets on his cell-phone.

    RICHARD
    (into cell-phone)
    Okay, I’ll be back by three. I
    have some errands to run. You know
    what? If Nikki calls, tell her
    I’ll call her back to her tomorrow.

He hangs up. Nikki smiles.

    NIKKI
    Ooh. You’re a good liar.

    RICHARD
    Shut up. We’re catching the two
    o’clock shuttle back. No later.
    You better not have too much stuff
    to carry on, ’cause we’re not
    checking shit. I have a meeting at
    four.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - LATER

They approach a building. We see a COUPLE of POLICE CARS on
the block.

    NIKKI
    (to the driver)
    It’s right here on your left. You
    can stop at the green car.
RICHARD
I wonder what all these cops are doing here.

NIKKI
This neighborhood is crazy.
There's always cops around here.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - SAME DAY

Nikki and Richard reach a door inside the apartment complex. She is looking for her keys.

RICHARD
So how many cities did you live in with this Teddy guy?

NIKKI
Here and New York. In Miami I lived with his brother, that's how I met him.
(still looking in her purse)
Where the hell are my keys?

RICHARD
You lived with a guy, then left him and moved in with his brother? How the fuck did you pull that off? I have a hard time telling my wife I want pancakes.

NIKKI
Hey, I'm not saying it was easy. I really didn't want to hurt him, but I had to follow my heart.

Richard thinks about it. Then...

RICHARD

NIKKI
You're wrong. I don't do whatever I want. I try to do whatever I want. Big difference.
(beat)
Damn, he changed the locks.
RICHARD
Okay, let's get butta here.

NIKKI
No, wait a minute. Let me try one more thing.

Nikki walks down the hall and knocks on a door.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

CHUCK, the MUSCULAR SUPERINTENDANT of the building, takes out some keys and easily opens the door, letting them in.

CHUCK
No problem. In you go.

Nikki kisses him on the cheek and he leaves.

CHUCK
Call me, baby. I still didn't forget.

NIKKI
Neither did I.

Richard follows Nikki into the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Nikki and Richard walk in. Nikki starts going through stuff while Richard looks around. The large windows look out onto the POURING RAIN. He finds a photo album on a table and looks through it. We SEE old pictures of Nikki. Nikki at the prom, as a cheerleader, etc.

RICHARD
It's really coming down.
(dawning on him)
We gotta get a flight. What time is it?

He looks at his watch. Nikki is oblivious going through her things.

NIKKI
Just one second. Here, can you carry these?
She hands Richard a bunch of DVD's and a man's shirt. She pulls off her shirt, down to her bra, and starts pulling on a different one that she found.

RICHARD
South Park? I didn’t know you liked South Park.

NIKKI
I love it. That’s my favorite movie.

They both start singing.

NIKKI/RICHARD
"Shut your fucking face, uncle fucker / You’re a motherfuckin’ bitch, uncle fucker / You’re an uncle fucker / Yes, it’s true / Nobody fucks uncle quite like you."

A voice is HEARD off screen.

TEDDY (O.C.)
Can I help you?

They both turn, startled, to find TEDDY, a fat guy with dreadlocks, dressed in a football jersey. He stands at the open door.

NIKKI
Teddy. I’m just-

TEDDY
Who the fuck is this? You brought your man to my crib? So this is the nigga.

Teddy walks up to Richard and Richard stick out his hand to shake.

RICHARD
No, no, I’m not the nigga. I assure you, I am not the nigga.

Teddy cuts him off with a slap to the face. He drops the shirt on the floor.

TEDDY
Don’t drop my shirt on the floor, bitch!
RICHARD
Oh shit, look, I’m sorry I didn’t know.

Teddy swings at Richard. Richard covers up. The blow hits him on the arm and head and he falls, knocking down a lamp that falls and breaks.

TEDDY
Hey, nigger, that shit’s Chinese.
You owe me four grand.

Teddy starts punching and kicking at Richard who is curled in a ball.

NIKKI
Teddy, calm down.

TEDDY
No, you calm down. I can’t believe you brought this nigger in my house.

NIKKI
Stop it, Teddy! Stop!

TEDDY
Stop what, bitch?! You want some of this?

He runs over and grabs her hair. She screams. A voice is HEARD off screen. Richard jumps on Teddy’s back.

VOICE (O.S.)
Hey! Watch your mouth.

They all turn around to see TWO COPS standing at the open door.

TEDDY
What the fuck do y’all want?

COP #1
We were responding to a burglary upstairs. Is everything okay?

TEDDY
This mother-fucker broke into my apartment, and this bitch-

He pulls her by the hair. She screams.
COP #2

Hey!

The two cops run over and separate them. They are now restraining a furious Teddy.

TEDDY
Get off me, you fucking cop punk bitch!

COP #2
Just settle down, Pal.

TEDDY
Fuck you! You settle down.

COP #2
Okay! Is this what you want?

They start beating him up, Rodney King style.

TEDDY
Aaaaah! Bitch ass cops! Fuck the police! Fuck the police! Fuck the police! Thug life! Thug life!

Nikki runs over to Richard and helps him up. The cops are still beating Teddy.

NIKKI
Richard, are you alright?

RICHARD
Yeah. Let’s get out of here before they start whooping our ass.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They sneak out as the cops beat the hell out of Teddy.

NIKKI
We can’t just leave him like that. They might kill him.

RICHARD
What are we gonna do? Call a cop?

Just then we HEAR gun shots.

RICHARD
Oh shit! Let’s go.
INT. TAXI CAB - MOMENTS LATER

The rain is pouring down REALLY hard on their cab, which is stuck in traffic not moving.

NIKKI
I'm so sorry. I am so sorry! I thought he was out of town.

Just then Nikki leans over and kisses Richard and for a couple of seconds they're making out in the cab until Richard pushes her away.

RICHARD
Get off of me! What the fuck is wrong with... I gotta get back to work.

NIKKI
Don't worry, you'll make it.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Mr. Landis, George and some CLIENTS are waiting. Mr. Landis looks at his watch. It reads 4:05PM.

MR. LANDIS
Did he say anything to you? Where the hell is he?

GEORGE
You know, I'm sure he has a good explanation. You know his wife's pregnant.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - SAME

Richard and Nikki are trying to get through airport security. Richard keeps beeping, removing his keys, belt -- all in a tense hurry, then beeps again. He has to be screened by a SECURITY GUY with a wand.

CUT TO:
INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Mr. Landis, George and the clients are still waiting.

  MR. LANDIS
  Okay, I think we should start.

They all start opening their folders to begin.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - THAT NIGHT

George and Mary are putting on their coats and turning the lights out in the office.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT GATE - THAT NIGHT

Richard and Nikki sit in a very crowded gate area.

  AIRLINE PERSON P.A. (V.O.)
  Ladies and gentlemen. Our flight
  is going to be further delayed. We
  don’t have clearance to leave the
  gate yet but as soon as we do we’ll
  let you board. In the meantime...

Richard has his head in his hands. Nikki sits quietly beside him.

INT. OFFICE - THAT NIGHT

We see the cleaning lady from earlier mopping the floor. *

Everybody’s gone.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Erica sits at the kitchen table, looking down at her dinner. Richard’s dinner sits across from her. She looks solemn, a bit sad. She is waiting for a while then the door opens and Richard is there, looking haggard.

  ERICA
  What happened to you? Why are you late?
RICHARD
I had a shit day, honey. Just... a nightmare. First the train then the traffic then the rain.

ERICA
You want to talk about it?

He kisses her.

RICHARD
No. Just let me clean up. I’ll be right back. Go ahead and eat.

He leaves the room, taking off his coat.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S KITCHEN - 15 MINUTES LATER

Richard and Erica sitting down and eating and not saying anything to each other. First, we have the camera CLOSE-UP on Erica just eating. Then we have the camera CLOSE-UP on Richard eating and thinking. Then we see Richard look at the T.V. where we see the news--

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
Today in Washington, D.C., a man named Teddy Smith shot and wounded two police officers. He was later apprehended after a violent stand-off.

Richard stops eating.

ERICA
(off his reaction)
Are you sure you’re okay?

RICHARD
Yeah. I’m fine. I’m great. Just tired. Can I get some more rice?

INT. TRAIN - NEXT DAY

Richard on his way to work. He’s listening to his iPod. He looks tired and slightly disheveled.

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY
Richard walks into his office, taking off his coat. He reaches in the pocket and is startled to find the boarding pass from the night before. He holds it in his hand, considering what if it'd been found. He sits at his desk, ripping it to pieces and lets out a breath of relief. Just then Mr. Landis walks in.

MR. LANDIS
Okay, Cooper, what happened to you yesterday? You look like shit.

RICHARD
I can explain. I was...

MR. LANDIS
Did your mother die?

RICHARD
No.

MR. LANDIS
Did your father die?

RICHARD
Ah, no.

MR. LANDIS
Did your wife or child pass away?

RICHARD
No, sir.

MR. LANDIS
And I can see that you're breathing which means you have no fucking excuse, Cooper! You're on probation. If you mess up one more time you're fired. You fuck up my money, I'll fuck up yours. Am I understood?!

RICHARD
Yes, sir.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Richard and George walk out together.

GEORGE
Need a ride?
RICHARD
Yeah, could you just drop me off at
the train station?

GEORGE
Come on, I’ll drop you.

INT. BMW - LATER

George is driving Richard in his nice car. They pull up to
Grand Central Station.

RICHARD
Look, George, I’m sorry about the
other day. I had a family
emergency.

GEORGE
Hey, you don’t have to explain shit
to me. I said my piece just don’t
let it fuck with your work again.
You know, when you mess up like
that the whole office starts
looking at me like, “where’s your
friend?” You wouldn’t believe some
of the racist shit they say when
you’re not around.

RICHARD
Like what?

GEORGE
You don’t want to know. I just
hope she’s worth it.

RICHARD
What are you talking about?

GEORGE
You know what I’m talking about.
Hey, I got something for you.

George reaches into the glove compartment and hands Richard a
blue pill.

GEORGE
Here.

RICHARD
What’s this?
GEORGE
What do you think it is? It's Viagra.

RICHARD
You just keep Viagra in the glove compartment?

GEORGE
Right next to the Altoids.

RICHARD
I don't need it.

GEORGE
Rich, you've been married seven years. These girls have changed since you were single. They're working out, they're watching porn, they're doing yoga. It's like they got "rodeo pussy" and if you don't have enough dick you're gonna get tossed off.

RICHARD
For the last time, I'm not fucking her.

GEORGE
Well, if you don't fuck her you're gonna fuck somebody. I can see it in your eyes. You're gone, man... Okay, what's going on with you and your wife?

RICHARD
Nothing we're fine. Alright! We're doing just fine.

GEORGE
You're not fine. If you were doing just fine you wouldn't be fucking it up. Listen, I know I gave you that pill for Nikki, but if you really want to be happy use it on Erica.

George laughs at Richard who doesn't want to hear it. Richard leaves the car and George pulls away.

CUT TO:
INT. CAR - DAY

Richard and Erica are driving home from the supermarket with Kelly.

MUSIC: "Chop Suey!" By System of a Down plays in the background.

ERICA
Honey, what's wrong?

RICHARD
Nothing. I'm fine. What are you talking about?

ERICA
You seem preoccupied lately. It's like you're a zombie. What the hell is wrong?

RICHARD
Hey, do you read the papers? Do you see what's happening in the market? Things are fucked up right now. I got a lot on my mind. I gotta take care of this family.

ERICA
No, I don't see what's happening because you don't tell me anything. You keep it all inside and when I ask you a simple question you yell like I did something wrong to you. Did I do something wrong?

RICHARD
No, I'm sorry.

ERICA
Stop being sorry... just talk to me. Damn! And what the hell is this music you're listening to?

RICHARD
What? You don't like it?

ERICA
No, I don't. I got in the car the other day and all my CDs are gone. What happened to my Usher? My Beyonce?
RICHARD
You know what, you’ve got nigger ears.

ERICA
Nigger what?! Don’t fucking talk to me like that? Nigger ears?!
What is that? What are you talking about?

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN – MORNING

Richard is on the train listening to his iPod.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Boy, did I fuck up. My job had me on probation. My wife was becoming suspicious. And on top of that, being one of the only black people in the office was starting to get to me.

QUICK CUTS of WHITE PEOPLE in the office speaking very nicely.

A WOMAN behind her desk.

NICE WOMAN
Good morning, nigger.

A MAN in an elevator.

NICE MAN
Nice suit, nigger.

Mr. Landis passes by.

MR. LANDIS
How you doing, Richard? How’re the wife and the nigglets?

RICHARD (V.O.)
I was losing my mind. Nikki tried to call me, but I didn’t want to hear it.

CUT TO:
INT. OFFICE

Richard at his desk going over some paperwork. Tracy sticks her head in.

TRACY
Nikki's on line one.

RICHARD
Tell her I'm not here.

TRACY
Yes.
(then, into phone)
He's not in.

INT. OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

Richard walks into the office. As he passes Tracy's desk--

TRACY
Nikki called twice. What do you want me to say if she calls again?

RICHARD
Just tell her I'm not here.

TRACY
Yes.

INT. TRAIN - ANOTHER DAY

Richard is on the train just reading the paper.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Richard walks past Tracy's desk on his way out with a client. The phone rings and before Tracy can pick it up--

RICHARD
I'm not here.

CUT TO:
EXT. STREET

Nikki’s on her cell-phone.

NIKKI
Could you just tell him I got a new job and to give me a call?

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S HOUSE – NIGHT

Kelly is in bed as Richard reads her a story. Erica pops her head in the room and looks on approvingly.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE – AFTERNOON

CARD READS: Two Months Later.

We see Christmas decorations all over the place. Richard is looking at shirts and a SALESMAN comes up to him.

SALESMAN
Can I help you find something?

RICHARD
No, I’m just looking.

He keeps looking. An AVERAGE LOOKING SALESWOMAN approaches him.

SALESWOMAN
Have you seen our suits?

RICHARD
No, that’s okay.

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE – JEWELRY DEPARTMENT – SAME

Richard is in the jewelry department looking at watches when he HEARS—

NIKKI
I think the pink Rolex is really cute.

RICHARD
Hey, what are you doing here?
NIKKI
Just spending money I don’t have.
When I saw you I started to not
* even come over here... but then I
* though you looked over here and I
* didn’t want you to think I was
ducking you...
* (beat)
* So are you still mad at me? You
* won’t take my calls. Are we okay?
*

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - WOMEN’S DEPARTMENT - SAME

Richard and Nikki are now walking around the women’s
department.

RICHARD
So, my boss is mad at me. My wife
* is mad at me. But it’s okay, I’ll
* live.

NIKKI
You know, if I thought you were
happy I wouldn’t even bring this
* up, but why are you still with your
* wife? Every time you talk about
her you seem depressed.

RICHARD
I don’t know... I’m with her ’cause
* she was with me when I had no
* money. Because she’s a good mother
to Kelly. I guess I’m with her
* because I love her.

NIKKI
You didn’t say it right.

RICHARD
Don’t start that shit again. How
* the hell am I supposed to say it?

NIKKI
You’re supposed to say you’re with
* her because you love her and you
can’t live without her, but you
can’t. You’re with her because you
feel indebted. You’re not in
* love, you’re in loyal. That’s sad.
RICHARD
What's so sad about that? At least I'm in something. I got a family. You're the sad one. Who do you have?

NIKKI
Don't throw the family shit at me. You and your wife don't talk, you don't fuck. You've got nothing but your kids.

RICHARD
You don't know anything about kids. You don't know anything about marriage.

NIKKI
Well, I know if you were really into your wife you wouldn't want to hang with me so much. If that's what family is then I'll wait.

RICHARD
Wait for what?

NIKKI
For the real thing. For real love. Or a good sponsor. But I'm not settling for anything in between.

RICHARD
You ever think of getting a skill?

NIKKI
Oh, I got skills.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - LATER

Nikki is dropping Richard off at his office. They stop to say goodbye.

NIKKI
What are you doing tonight? You want to go to a club?

RICHARD
Tonight? I can't do that. What would I tell my wife?
NIKKI
You don't tell her about the
daytime why should the nighttime be
any different?

RICHAIRD
What's so big about tonight?

NIKKI
A guy I met at the restaurant is
going to introduce me to one of the
owners of Tavern on the Green who
might be able to give me a hostess
job.

RICHAIRD
What do you need me for?

NIKKI
Okay, I know this guy is after me.
Damn, he comes to the restaurant
every night. Anyway I want you to
come with me so he'll think I'm
seeing somebody. Plus, I just want
you to tell me what you think about
him.

RICHAIRD
Do you like him?

NIKKI
Why? You jealous?

RICHAIRD
No, I'm not but you want my opinion
of the guy, you must like him a
little bit.

NIKKI
Please. He drives a Bentley and
wears a big watch with diamonds. I
don't go for that stuff. He
produces records. His name is
Delite. It's so pathetic, like his
mama named him Delite. What kind
of grown ass man is named Delite?

RICHAIRD
Tonight? I don't know how I'm
gonna get out the house.
NIKKI
Why don’t you just start a fight?

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Erica is at the oven getting dinner ready.

RICHARD
Honey, I’m home.

ERICA
Hey, dinner’s almost ready. Why don’t you go and wash your hands while I set the table?

RICHARD
Okay, so what’s for dinner?

ERICA
I made some chicken and—

RICHARD
Chicken?

ERICA
Yes, what’s wrong?

RICHARD
Chicken, again? Why do we have chicken every day? I’m tired of chicken.

ERICA
I thought you liked chicken.

RICHARD
I don’t like it every day. I feel like I’ve got feathers coming out my ass.

ERICA
This isn’t about chicken. What’s wrong?

RICHARD
What’s wrong is there are other animals running around. Have you heard of lamb chops, pork chops? Just asking, just asking.

(MORE)
RICHARD (cont'd)
If I didn't say anything you'd give me chicken until I die.

ERIC A
Are you crazy?!

RICHARD
I will be if I eat another piece of chicken.

Richard starts to exit.

ERIC A
Where are you going?

RICHARD
To get some ribs.

He SLAMS the door.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - MOMENTS LATER

Richard still sits alone. He glances over and sees an OLD MARRIED COUPLE.

RICHARD (V.O.)
What the hell is wrong with me?! How could I yell at Erica like that? I'm losing my mind. I gotta go home. Next stop I'm gonna get off this train and go home to my wife. That's what I'm gonna do. I'm going home.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Music is playing. Richard makes his way through the CROWD. The place looks like a Lenny Kravitz video. He looks out of place in his suit and is being lead through the club by a BEAUTIFUL FRIEND of Nikki's named, HOPE. It's a club so EVERYBODY IS YELLING.

HOPE
Hi. I'm Hope. I just got off the phone with Nikki. She told me to take good care of you. She's running a little late.
RICHARD
Late! How late? Where is she and where are we going?

HOPE
I don’t know where she’s at. She didn’t say. I’m taking you to the VIP section. Don’t worry she’ll be here.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S KITCHEN – SAME

Erica is stunned by what just happened with Richard. We see her take a moment and shake her head in disbelief. Then we watch her stand up and start to walk. The CAMERA follows her to the bedroom. She goes to a clothes hamper, pulls out a pair of Richard’s pants and starts to going through the pockets. From there we do VARIOUS QUICK CUTS of Erica’s hand going through Richard’s pockets.

TIME PASSING MONTAGE:

INT. NIGHTCLUB – SAME TIME

Richard is just waiting.

CUT TO Richard having a drink, looking at his watch.

CUT TO Richard tapping Hope on the shoulder.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S BEDROOM – SAME TIME

Erica is going through the pockets of a jacket. She looks determined.

INT. NIGHTCLUB – SAME TIME

Richard is still waiting at the club. He taps Hope’s shoulder again.

RICHARD
Did you hear anything from Nikki?

HOPE
No, not yet. I’ll let you know.
INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Erica is taking a whole dresser drawer and dump it on the floor.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. VIP SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Richard is sitting in a booth looking at his watch. Just then from off camera we HEAR--

GIRL (O.S.)
Did you wear it yet?

RICHARD
Excuse me?

REVEAL it's the Asian salesgirl and the black salesgirl from the department store earlier in the movie.

ASIAN SALESGIRL
Did you wear the sweater? I sold you a sweater a few months ago. I work at Barney's in the men's section.

RICHARD
Yes, yes... I remember you, too. The green sweater. What are you doing here?

BLACK SALESGIRL
We're just hanging out. We're here every week. Wednesday's the best night. We're going to the bathroom and do some ecstasy. You wanna come?

Richard looks shocked.

RICHARD
Ah, you know I better not, I'm waiting for somebody. Maybe next time.

ASIAN SALESGIRL
Come on, it's totally natural. I got it from a doctor I know.
RICHARD
Okay, just a little bit.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S BEDROOM

We CUT to Erica in bed watching David Letterman’s opening monologue. She’s on the phone.

--SPLIT SCREEN--

INT. SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Allen is on the other end.

ALLEN
Are you sure nothing’s going on?

ERICA
I don’t think so. I’ve been through his stuff. Richard’s been really stressed out lately. He’s under a lot of pressure at work and we have a new baby coming. I’m sure he’s somewhere just getting his head together.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK OF NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Richard is back in the booth. His jacket is off and he’s down to his t-shirt. He’s very high. He’s holding a bottle of champagne. The Black salesgirl is in her bra. The Asian salesgirl is rubbing against Richard. It’s crazy. Richard is singing along to a Ying-Yang Twins song.

RICHARD/SALESGIRLS
(singing)
"Wait til’ you see my dick"
"Wait til’ you see my dick"
"Wait til’ you see my dick"
"Wait til’ you see my dick"
"You will never get enough"

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S BEDROOM/INT. ALLEN’S HOUSE - SAME TIME
SPLIT SCREEN

Erica and Allen on the phone.

ALLEN
You're probably right. Having kids is scary. There's something about fatherhood that makes you feel like you have to be a responsible adult.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Richard now has two champagne bottles and is singing even louder with his shirt unbuttoned. He's dancing with the gay salesman from earlier in the movie. Dancing to a FAT JOE song.

(RICHARD AND GAY SALESMAN
(singing)
"MY NIGGERS DON'T DANCE / WE JUST
PULL UP OUR PANTS,
AND DO THE ROCK-AWAY,
LEAN BACK, LEAN BACK,
LEAN BACK, LEAN BACK"

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - EVEN LATER

The girls and the gay salesman are now dancing without Richard. PAN from the girls to Richard, who is now sitting down, realizing how fucked up he is. He's burnt out. He mops at his forehead with a napkin, tries to focus, and looks at his watch. He realizes it's very late. Richard climbs out of the booth, past them, searching through the CROWD and finding Hope.

RICHARD
Where the hell's Nikki?

HOPE
I just got off the phone with her. She told me to tell you she's sorry she's not going to make it. She said she's going to Miami with some guy named Delite. Something about Puffy having a party.
At that moment Richard starts to sober up while EVERYBODY around him is having the time of their lives. He can't believe what he just heard. He's crushed. Suddenly his phone is ringing. He checks the caller I.D. screen.

ANGLE ON RICHARD's PHONE: It reads "Home". Richard, realizing he can't answer the phone in the club, runs fast for a back door.

INT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE - LATER

ERICA
Where have you been? Are you gonna tell me why you were acting so crazy? Screaming about chicken... Are you fucking some bitch?! Are you fucking somebody? I swear if I find out you...

RICHARD
No, no! I'm not fucking around. I swear to God. I'm sorry. I was wrong to scream at you like that. I've just been really stressed out about work and the baby, and I just needed some air.

ERICA
You still haven't told me where you've been.

RICHARD
I just went to a sports bar and watched the game. That's all.

ERICA
Okay, well next time just tell me that's what you wanna do.

RICHARD
I'll let you know next time.

INT. TRAIN - THE NEXT MORNING

Richard pulls out his cell phone and dials.

NIKKI (V.O.)
Hello, this is Nikki. I'm not here to take your call. Remember love is God and God is love. (Beep)
RICHARD
(into phone)
Nikki, it’s Richard. I don’t know what happened to you last night and I really don’t care. I’m married, you’re single. Don’t call me, don’t come by the office. Don’t e-mail me, don’t fax me.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Richard is in the office.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Now that Nikki was gone I was finally able to focus on work and my family.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM - DAY

Richard, Erica and Kelly in a Music Together class. Everyone is singing the Itsy-Bitsy Spider song.

CLASS
(all singing)
"The itsy-bitsy spider came out the water spout. Down came the rain and washed the spider out."

FAMILY MONTAGE:

As we hear them continue to sing we--

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERMARKET

Richard and Erica are pushing Kelly through the produce section.

CUT TO:
EXT. LIVING ROOM

Richard, Erica and Kelly are sitting under the Christmas tree unwrapping gifts.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM

Richard and Erica in a Lamaze class.

END FAMILY MONTAGE

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM

Everyone is still singing.

CLASS
"And the itsy-bitsy spider came out the spout again."

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE

Richard and George are in the office talking to A CLIENT. Richard looks at his BlackBerry, then runs out of the office.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The streets are PACKED WITH PEOPLE. Traffic’s at a stand-still. There’s not a cab to be found. Richard is running down the street like a bat out of hell.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A very sweaty Richard gets off an elevator and runs to a desk. There are TWO YOUNG BLACK NURSES there.

RICHARD
Excuse me, is this the maternity ward?
NURSE #1
Yes, it is.

RICHARD
I'm looking for Erica Cooper.

NURSE #2
(looking him up and down)
Oh, are you the baby's daddy?

RICHARD
No, I'm her husband.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Erica, holding the NEW BABY, hears Richard. He comes bursting in the door.

ERICA
Richard, it's a boy!

He runs up and hugs and kisses her. He takes the boy, holds him up and kisses him. They are all very happy.

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD AND ERICA'S HOUSE

There's a paper stork on the front door that says, "It's A Boy!"

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Richard and Erica are playing with the baby boy.

RICHARD (V.O.)
After all the relatives left I took a week off to help out and it was finally time to get a nanny. Erica wanted to do the hiring but I took care of it myself. I wanted to make sure that the nanny wasn't the slightest bit cute. The last thing I wanted was two women in the house who I couldn't fuck.

A very OLD, GRAY-HAIRED NANNY comes in carrying the new baby.
EXT. STREET

Richard is walking to work, looking stoically straight ahead. As he walks we SEE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN passing him by.

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    Now I went to work and I looked straight ahead. I wasn’t fascinated by every woman I saw. As a matter of fact they annoyed me.

A BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMAN walks by putting on lipstick.

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    What’s wrong with her? She should do that shit at home.

A BEAUTIFUL RED HEAD walks by on a cell-phone.

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    Who the hell is she talking to? I wish she would shut-up.

We see a NAKED WOMAN in heels wearing glasses and holding a briefcase. Richard walks by her without even taking a look.

    RICHARD (V.O.)
    I told you, I’m not bullshitting.

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - ONE MONTH LATER

Richard is at his desk working with Tracy helping him over his shoulder.

    RICHARD
    Okay, we’re gonna start with these three accounts, and then work our way to the newest ones. You better order in, there’s lots to do.

We HEAR a knock on the door.

    RICHARD
    Come in.

Nikki enters.

    NIKKI
    Miss me?
RICHARD/ TRACY

Shit.

CUT TO:

FREEZE FRAME: RICHARD’S FACE.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Right then I knew I should’ve
kicked her out or called security
or just told her I was busy. But,
I couldn’t.

INT. RESTAURANT – LATER

Richard and Nikki are sitting in a booth.

NIKKI
So... what’s new? Did Erica have
the baby?

RICHARD
Yeah, we had a baby boy. He’s two
months old. His name is Brian.
What’s new with you?

NIKKI
Well, I just got back from St.
Barts with Sean. A boy? Good for
you.

RICHARD
And Sean is... what? The guy who
buys your toothpaste? What
happened to Delite?

NIKKI
I think he’s gay. He liked a
finger in his ass a little too much
for me. Poor Delite. Now I have a
fiancé, Sean. I can’t wait for you
to meet him.

RICHARD
Get outta here. You’re getting
married?

NIKKI
Yup, I did it. I’m closing the
deal. Sean’s a banker. He’s got a
real job like you.
(We never see Sean. We hear his voice, we see him shake hands with Richard, but we never see his face.)

RICHARD
So what is it? Real love or a sponsor?

NIKKI
You know, I was at a party a couple of months ago and I was talking to this guy, he must have been about forty and something felt weird. We weren't talking about anything out of the ordinary just books and while we were talking this little twenty-two year old girl walks by and he just says, "excuse me" and runs over and tries to talk to her. I was a little embarrassed and then I realized what was wrong. For the first time in my adult life I was having a conversation with a straight man who wasn't thinking about fucking me. It never even crossed his mind. So when I met Sean I said to myself "I gotta make this work." We're getting married in June.

INT. BABY'S ROOM - EVENING

Erica sits by the crib holding Kelly. Richard is looking at the other baby.

ERICA
Look, Kelly, look at the baby. You see, that's your brother. That's your brother, Brian. Say Brian.

KELLY
Brian...

RICHARD
That's my girl. Kelly, "E" equals what?

KELLY
MC squared.

RICHARD
That's my love.
Richard is down to his turtleneck. He pulls his turtleneck over his face and plays peek-a-boo.

RICHARD
Hey, Brian, Brian. What’s up, boy? Turtleman’s gonna getcha. Look out for the turtleman.

Erica and Kelly laugh.

ERICA
So how was work? Anything happen?

RICHARD
No, nothing happened. Just work.

ERICA
(laughing)
Allen told me the funniest thing today...

Richard gives her a look.

EXT. WOMEN’S CLOTHING STORE – MIDTOWN – DAY

Nikki greets Richard at the door. They kiss on the cheek.

RICHARD
So this is where you shop these days?

NIKKI
Well, Sean owns the building and the one next door. So I’m over here a lot.

RICHARD
It’s nice.

Nikki looks over Richard’s shoulder.

NIKKI
Here comes Sean now.

Richard turns. (We don’t see Sean, we just see his arm extended.)

NIKKI
Richard, this is Sean.
They shake hands.

SEAN (O.S.)
Pleased to meet you.
(to Nikki)
I gotta get back. Don’t forget you’re meeting me at Nobu at nine. Don’t be late. Richard, if you’re ever in Malibu look us up. Bring your wife. We’ll all go to dinner.

RICHARD
That sounds good.

Richard watches Sean kiss Nikki and leave.

RICHARD
Malibu? That’s great. Malibu? I’m never in California. I guess I’m going to need a new lunch date. (beat) So this is... What you want? You and Sean... you’re happy... you love him?

NIKKI
Do I love him? Not right now. But ten years from now, who knows? I’m going to be just like you -- nice house, nice husband, easy dull life. But I can tell you that I’ll never love him the way I love you.

RICHARD
Come on, don’t go there. You and me... we just got bad timing.

NIKKI
I know. But don’t you think we’d make each other happy?

RICHARD
Everybody says you’re supposed to be happy. That’s bullshit! If everybody was happy everybody wouldn’t be happy. Everybody can’t be happy.

NIKKI
I’m not talking about everybody, I’m talking about us. You and me, happy together.
RICHARD
My life is not about what I want.

NIKKI
I hear ice cracking.

They both look at each other for a beat.

NIKKI
Sean is leaving for L.A. tomorrow. Why don’t you come by my place so we can say goodbye?

A short beat.

RICHARD
Okay, I’ll see you about two o’clock?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT
Richard makes a move on Erica.

ERICA
What are you doing, honey? Just go to sleep.

INT. TRAIN - THE NEXT DAY
Richard is on the train listening to his iPod.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDTOWN - DAY
Richard walking through the CROWD to work. He looks at his watch. It’s nine AM.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD’S OFFICE - LATER
Richard is having a meeting with a couple of CLIENTS. Richard looks at his watch, it reads 12:30 PM.
INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Richard sits in a CROWDED room with his other COLLEAGUES as a businessman makes a proposal. Richard glances up at the clock it reads 1:05 PM.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - LATER

Richard on the phone. He looks at his watch, it reads 1:15PM.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - LATER

Tracy and Mary are typing away. Richard leaves his office and speaks to Mary.

RICHARD
Hey, I'm going to get some lunch.
If anybody calls tell them to call back in about an hour.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY - LATER

Richard walking down a CROWDED street. We see him thinking as we HEAR a voice-over.

NIKKI (V.O.)
Why don't you come by my place tomorrow so I can give you a real goodbye?...

We SEE Richard walk into a CVS convenience store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - LATER

Richard comes in and gets a bottled water and we watch as he walks up and down the aisles looking for something. We don't see what he's looking for. A STORE CLERK approaches him.

STORE CLERK
Can I help you find something?

RICHARD
No, I'm okay.
We see Richard still looking down a couple of aisles. Finally he goes to the crowded counter and asks the cashier—

RICHARD
(almost whispering)
Excuse me, do you have any condoms?

CASHIER
Sorry, I didn’t hear you.

RICHARD
(a little louder)
Do you have any condoms?

CASHIER
Oh, condoms. Sure, right here.

She points behind her and we see what looks like a hundred different types of condoms.

CASHIER (CONT’D)
What kind do you want?

CLOSE UP: Richard’s eyes looking at the condoms, then away.

RICHARD
I’ll take the blue box.

CASHIER
Three pack or twelve pack?

CLOSE UP: Cashier’s eyes. She looks down at Richard’s hand.

CLOSE UP: Richard’s hand, his wedding ring. He quickly covers it with his other hand.

ANGLE ON: RICHARD, he is now sweaty.

RICHARD
Uh, three pack.

CASHIER
Twelve pack is cheaper.

We are now cutting very fast from Richard, the cashier, the condoms, the magazine, another sexy woman in line behind Richard. His breathing quickens.

RICHARD
Look, just please give me a small box of fucking condoms.

The cashier puts them on the counter.
INT. STAIRWELL - LATER

We see Richard walking up the stairs to Nikki’s apartment with his briefcase. He stops. Puts his briefcase down. Pulls out his wallet, opens a compartment and pulls out a Viagra pill. He looks at it then swallows it. Then he takes off his wedding ring.

EXT. NIKKI’S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Richard walks to her door carrying his briefcase and knocks.

    RICHARD
    Nikki?

He turns the doorknob.

    NIKKI (O.S.)
    It’s open. Come in.

Richard goes into the apartment, walks through it to the bathroom. He opens the door. It’s filled with steam. As the steam escapes through the open door, he sees Nikki in panties, bra and a pair of black Jimmy Choo shoes. She’s rubbing lotion on herself. She walks over to the shower and * cuts it off. Then she hands Richard the lotion she’s holding and says--

    NIKKI
    You made it. I was thinking you might not come. I thought you’d get scared and not show up.

    RICHARD
    Scared of what?

    NIKKI
    I don’t know. Just scared. Could you rub some of this on my back?

He puts down his briefcase takes the lotion and starts to rub it on her back. He’s a little nervous. He rubs a little in then stops.

    RICHARD
    I think I got it.

She puts her arms around him and gives him a lite kiss.

    NIKKI
    Thank you.
She walks away from him to the other side of the room. We see Richard in the foreground. As she walks away we hear her say--

NIKKI (CONT’D)
Do you mind if I keep these shoes on?

RICHARD
It’s okay. I don’t mind.

MUSIC STARTS: “DARLING NIKKI” BY PRINCE.

PRINCE
I KNEW A GIRL NAMED NIKKI /
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY SHE WAS A SEX FIEND...

Richard starts to take off his jacket. Nikki walks to the bed and lays down flat on her back. Her head is on a pillow. The song keeps playing. Nikki stares at Richard as if to say, “what’s up?”

PRINCE
I MET HER IN A HOTEL LOBBY
MASTURBATING WITH A MAGAZINE...

Richard stares back at Nikki. Then with his back to her he pats his crotch. He can’t believe how hard he is. This Viagra shit works. Nikki is on the bed laid out. She’s looking hard at Richard. All we see of her is her head and her breast as she says--

NIKKI
What are you doing all the way over there? I thought you weren’t scared.

RICHARD
I’m not scared. I’m just looking at you.

NIKKI
Well come over here, I won’t bite.

Richard slowly walks across the room and stands at the foot of the bed.

NIKKI (CONT’D)
I’m really going to miss you.

RICHARD
I’m going to miss you, too.
Just then Nikki puts both her ankles on Richard's shoulders. We can see that she still has her shoes on. The CAMERA goes from her face to Richard's face. We never see her crotch. Then she says--

NIKKI
So what are you waiting for?

AT THAT MOMENT, we see Richard reach down and take off her panties. Remember we never see her crotch. The reason we know that Richard took off her panties is because we saw them come past her left shoe. Richard starts to pounce on her and Nikki says--

NIKKI
Wait. Take off you sweater.

Richard begins to take off the turtleneck until only his face shows.

AT THAT MOMENT, he turns to see himself in the MIRROR next to Nikki on the bed and FREEZES. He looks horrified by what he sees because what he sees is the turtleneck. The character he acts out with his son and daughter. We FLASH back to see Richard in the earlier scenes playing turtleneck with his kids. THE MUSIC DROPS OUT SUDDENLY. THERE IS NO SOUND. NO MUSIC, NO AMBIENT SOUND. TOTAL SILENCE.

The silence is broken as he takes a deep breath and looks in the mirror. He pulls the shirt back on, gathers up his things and leaves the apartment as fast as he can. The MUSIC starts back up where we HEAR Prince screaming "Nikki, Nikki!" The music keeps playing.

NIKKI
What's wrong? What's wrong? Where are you going?!

CUT TO:

EXT. - NIKKI'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

We SEE Richard running down Nikki's staircase.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

We SEE Richard walking fast down a city street looking a little shaken. Prince is still playing.
INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE/RECEPTION AREA - LATER

MUSIC STOPS.

Tracy is on the phone.

TRACY
Listen, I'll be there at four. Wait for me.

Richard enters and walks straight to his office without a hello. He looks upset and sweaty from running.

TRACY
I'm glad you're back. You have a few calls to return.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - SAME

He shuts the door, paces around nervously. He then goes to the phone and after a deep breath, dials. We HEAR a phone message with Erica's voice.

ERICA (V.O.)
Hello. You've reached the home of Erica and Richard. Nobody's here to take your call so leave your name and your number, and we'll get back to you.

Richard hangs up. Then he leaves the office walking by Tracy and Mary.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - MOMENTS LATER

MARY
When will you be back?

Richard leaves without a sound.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKKI'S APARTMENT - LATER

Nikki still naked is smoking a cigarette and talking on the phone.
NIKKI
(into phone)
Yes, just sitting here doing
nothing... Yeah, I’ll bring it...
Okay, honey. I’ll see you
tomorrow... Love you, too.

She hangs up the phone and looks real sad. A tear rolls down her cheek.

EXT. RICHARD AND ERICA’S HOUSE – LATER

Richard walks in the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD’S LIVING ROOM – SAME

Richard walks in like a mad-man and starts looking
frantically for Erica.

RICHARD
Erica... Erica...

Richard runs upstairs, opens his bedroom door and finds his
wife, Erica, having sex with their friend, Allen—from
behind.

ERICA
Fuck me. Fuck me.

RICHARD
Noooo...

BACK TO:

INT. RICHARD’S LIVING ROOM – REALITY

Erica is at the desk grading papers. Richard walks in again
like a mad-man.

ERICA
You scared me. What are you doing
home so early? Everything alright?

RICHARD
We’re are the kids?
ERICA
I just dropped them off at my mother’s house.

RICHARD
Everything’s fine. I was just missing you and thought I’d come home early.

ERICA
Are you sure that’s it? For once could you be honest and tell me what’s really wrong with you?

MUSIC STARTS

Richard and Erica start to talk/sing at each other, but not “sing sing” more of a talk–sing like the beginning of a Barry White or Rick James and Teena Marie record. Romantic music plays throughout the end of this scene.

RICHARD
You know, baby, I just wanna tell you how sorry I am for being so cold. It’s not that I don’t like being married. It’s just that sometimes it feels like the walls are closing in on me.

ERICA
I understand, baby. But it’s not just you. I gotta admit that I’ve been distant too. I haven’t always been nice. As a matter of fact, sometimes I’m as cold as ice.

RICHARD
So cold. So cold. You’ve been very cold, baby.

ERICA
But one thing I have to ask you, baby... it’s time I know the score, but the thing I have to ask you is how come you don’t make love to me anymore?

RICHARD\)
It’s been a long time.

ERICA
A mighty, mighty long time.
RICHARD
Baby, I still want you and I’ve wanted you for so long. But every time I touch you, you act like I did something wrong.

ERICA
No, I don’t.

RICHARD
Yes, you do.

ERICA
No, I don’t.

RICHARD
Yes, it’s true... I don’t want to leave.

ERICA
Neither do I.

RICHARD
I still want you.

ERICA
I’m gonna cry.

RICHARD
Where are the kids?

ERICA
I told you. They’re gone.

RICHARD
In that case, we should make love.

BIG ENDING NOTE IN UNISON:

RICHARD AND ERICA
All night long. Yeah.

Big swell in the music and then it stops.

RICHARD
I love you, baby.

ERICA
I love you, too.
At that moment, Erica and Richard start kissing passionately and taking each other's clothes off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COOPER HOUSE - LATER

We see Richard come out of the master bedroom just like in the beginning of the movie. We see him put on his coat and walk over to Erica and give her a big kiss goodbye. V.O. starts as Richard leaves the house. Al Green's, "Let Get Married" is playing.

RICHARD (V.O.)
A lot of people have rules about what's cheating and what's not. Some people say if you're in another country it's not cheating. Some people say if you're in another room it's not cheating. I used to think I was a good father and a bad husband, but now I that I'm older I realize that if you're cheating on your wife, you're cheating on your kids.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME TIME

We see Nikki sitting in first class gazing out the window with her iPod on.

RICHARD (V.O.)
I'm really going to miss Nikki and the bad thing is I can't tell anybody about it. I gotta keep this whole thing to myself.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN

Richard is sitting down, puts his iPod on and is looking out the window as the train moves.

RICHARD (V.O.)
Any guy I'd tell would think I was crazy for not having sex with her. And any woman I tell would think I was a dog for letting it get that far.
INT. AUTO SHOW
Richard and Nikki at the auto show.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE
Nikki walking into Richard's office.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT
Richard and Erica sitting at one of the same restaurants he was at with Nikki.

BACK TO:

INT. TRAIN
Richard on the train.

RICHARD (V.O.)
It just wasn't the right time. You know when all is said and done, I think I love my wife.

We see Richard start nodding his head to whatever music is playing on his iPod. A BEAUTIFUL BLACK GIRL walks by him. Richard takes a look and shakes his head in disbelief.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END