

Grown and Alone

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. RUNNING/HIKING TRAIL, MALIBU, CALIFORNIA - MORNING

The trail is hopping, with many hard-body athletic types running along its paths. Among them is TARA (27) who's keeping a good pace. Not too far behind her plods RICHARD LORD (42) who is gamely striving to keep up.

Tara slows as they approach a steep hill. Richard catches up and stops. With his hands on his knees he takes deep breaths. Tara motions for him to 'come along' as she runs in place.

She gives him an affectionate peck on the cheek and come-hither look and takes off up the mountain path.

As K.C. & the Sunshine Band's "Keep It Coming Love" kicks in, Richard brushes off his fatigue and gamely follows. K.C.'s techno beat continues as Richard tries to close the gap.

INT. MALL, MAIN WALKWAY - SAME TIME

CORINA TAYLOR (37) walks with purpose through the mall crowd. KELLY (33) bumps into her and they recognize each other.

KELLY

Oh, hey, um, Corina. How are you?

CORINA

Good, Kelly - How are things?

KELLY

I'm tired and jet lagged. We just got back from filming in Italy.

CORINA

Oh, Italy, that's really nice.

KELLY

Yeah, well, you know, the hours were really long, but it was great working with Stephen and Sarah...

An awkward pause settles between them. Clearly Kelly wants to reveal Stephen and Sarah's last names, but Corina isn't biting. Finally, Corina checks her watch briefly.

KELLY (CONT'D)

(a little put off)

Are you late for something?

CORINA

Oh, yes, I'm supposed to have lunch with my sister, Sandy.

KELLY

Oh, okay ... So, what are you working on now?

CORINA

(checking her watch again)

Well, you know, I have some irons in the fire. I have an audition for a pilot in a couple days.

KELLY

Oh ... television. ... That .. that's good, I guess. ... Well, don't worry, I'm sure you'll get back on the horse soon.

CORINA

Thanks. I've really got to go. It was great seeing you though.

KELLY

Likewise.

They part and Corina makes a beeline for the nearby food court. A couple of YOUNG GUYS (early 20s) follow behind her, whispering and giggling. She turns around to face them.

CORINA

Yes? What?

YOUNG GUY ONE

You ... you're Verstacia - right?

CORINA

My name's Corina. But, yes, I played a character named Verstacia ... some time ago.

YOUNG GUY TWO

I knew it! We ... we were big fans ... Those little outfits you wore were awesome.

YOUNG GUY ONE

You really helped us ... manage ... our teen years.

YOUNG GUY TWO

Yeah, 'manage' - that's one way of putting it!

They shove each other playfully and giggle some more.

CORINA

Ah yes, brilliant, just brilliant.
If you two will excuse me please.

She steps around them and heads to the food court.

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - PATIO HOT TUB, MALIBU, CALIFORNIA -
DAY

Overlooking the Pacific, the hot tub is shielded by a lattice bamboo screen and plants. Richard and Tara sit, conjoined, regaining senses after a few moments of post-coital bliss.

They kiss briefly and Tara jumps off of him and gets out of the tub. She quickly towels off and begins dressing.

RICHARD

(Surprised but not upset)
Do you have somewhere to be?

TARA

No, I just have stuff to do today.

RICHARD

I thought we'd order some Thai and watch those movies we talked about.

TARA

Naw, that sounds cool, but I've gotta run. Toss me my shoes?

RICHARD

(hands them to her)
Sure.

TARA

So, you're gonna tell your friend at NBC about me, right?

RICHARD

He's not so much a close friend as he is an old colleague. I mean ...

TARA

(interrupting)
But you know him, right?

RICHARD

Well, yeah. He wrote on my show for three years, before he got the show he's running now. But we don't, you know, hang out much or ...

TARA

(interrupting)

Cool! That's awesome, thanks so much, I really appreciate it!

Richard gets out of the pool and puts on some shorts.

RICHARD

Do you need a ride home?

TARA

Oh, no, I texted my boyfriend your address and he'll be here in a little while.

RICHARD

You have a boyfriend?

TARA

(heading into the house)

Oh, don't worry, it's cool. We're both cool with this sort of thing.

RICHARD

That's a relief. ... 'Cool' seems to be a big part of your world.

TARA

(Laughing a little)

I know, right? I'm gonna use your bathroom real quick - is that cool?

RICHARD

It's all very cool.

She leaves and Richard hits the speed dial on his phone.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Hey, yeah, I'd like to order some Pad Thai. ... Yeah, just one order ... just for one.

INT. MALL, FOOD COURT - LATER

Corina sits at an isolated table with her laptop open while she eats. An INSERT reveals that she's SKYPING with another woman, her sister SANDY (34).

Corina's classic cheekbones and statuesque beauty are a curious match for her younger sister's pixy-like features.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)

Oh my gosh, I can't wait until I've saved enough to visit you in LA. There are so many things I want you to show me!

CORINA

Relax, we'll see all of them ... and maybe some things that aren't on the tourist web sites as well.

SANDY

Can we go through the In-N-Out drive through?

CORINA

Really? In-N-Out is the first place you want to go?

SANDY

I hear it's the best place to have second lunch.

Corina just LAUGHS a little and shakes her head in disbelief.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Ugh, at my pay it's gonna take at least six more months of saving. ... So, you'll have time to do stuff, right? Can you get off work?

CORINA

Well, actually, I've been having a bit of a dry spell on work, so I have plenty of time.

SANDY

Oh, I'm sorry. I hope things pick up - you're so talented.

CORINA

It's okay - I have an audition for a pilot. It's just meant tightening my belt a little financially.

SANDY

I read about this thing, 'TV Magic-Con.' It's kind of like Comic-Con. It's where the authors and stars of sci-fi and fantasy TV shows go.

(MORE)

SANDY (CONT'D)

Maybe you could try that to get some buzz.

CORINA

(Laughing a little)

Oh, little sister, I appreciate the thought, but it's definitely not like Comic-Con. TV Magic-Con is at the bottom of the industry barrel. It should really be called TV Tragic-Con. You'd have to either be pretty poorly advised or desperate for attention to work that one.

INT. TV MAGIC-CON EVENT BALLROOM, LOS ANGELES, CA - SAME TIME

The hotel ballroom is flooded with folding chairs filled with sci-fi fans. On the wall behind the presentation table is a prominent sign that reads "TV Magic-Con 2015".

Richard sits at the presentation table between the MODERATOR, who stands at the podium, and fellow show runner, PETER. Richard is all smiles, but he's a little uncomfortable.

MODERATOR

... before we get into audience Q&A, one of our presenters, Peter Garth, has a quick announcement.

PETER

Thank you. As you all know, our show, 'Satellite Gallipoli,' is entering its final season. As a small token of appreciation to our fans we wanted to give you all a little something today.

He pulls from his nearby satchel a twelve inch light sword and turns it on. It makes HUMMING and VAROOM sounds as he gently swings it to and fro.

It's a cheap knock off of the Star Wars light saber, but no one minds. The entire crowd, minus Richard, is completely mesmerized, as OOHS and AAHS emanate from the audience.

PETER (CONT'D)

Pretty cool, huh? Now, if you reach beneath your chairs - you will find your very own light sword, courtesy of 'Satellite Galipoli.' Remember, these are limited edition.

The crowd buzzes like bees as fans tear open their boxes and begin playing with their light swords. HUMMING and VAROOM sounds fill the room. A few fans CHEER and WHISTLE.

MODERATOR

Folks, please settle down a little - we have limited time for Q&A. So, who's got our first question?

FANBOY ONE (late 20s) steps up to the audience microphone stand, still playing with this light sword. He smells of stale Doritos, World of Warcraft, and ambition deferred.

FANBOY ONE

Peter ... first, I am a huge fan of the show and ...
(holds up light sword)
You are the best show runner ever.

Peter and the rest of the panelists LAUGH a little while Richard just holds his temples with both hands.

FANBOY ONE (CONT'D)

But I was wondering if you could speak to how you are going to handle the time continuum issues that were raised in episode ninety-eight in the final season. ...

PETER

Well, I'm not sure ...

FANBOY ONE

(interrupting)
I mean, how can you justify the viability of the Resistance fighters' Voltaire Initiative given that the Federation would have already known about the Corinthium technologies employed by the Resistance from back when they engaged the time portals. ...

PETER

Well, um, I think that's some good food for thought, and ...

FANBOY ONE

(interrupting again)
(MORE)

FANBOY ONE (CONT'D)

The only way you can make that happen is if Prince Cather makes an alliance with the Union and they work together to disrupt the Federation time portal capabilities from a time in the future.

PETER

Well, that's, um, solid thinking to be sure. Um...

(motioning to assistant)

Write that down - it's good stuff.

Peter CHUCKLES and Fanboy One smiles - Peter's off the hook.

MODERATOR

Okay, thank you very much. Next?

FANBOY ONE

But I have another question. I was told I could ask two.

MODERATOR

Oh. Okay then.

FANBOY ONE

My question is for Richard Lord.

RICHARD

Yes?

FANBOY ONE

The first season of 'Cyber Star One' was pretty tolerable. I mean, I guess it was at least better than both of your movies

RICHARD

Uh ... thank you?

FANBOY ONE

You're welcome. It didn't suck because it focused on the cool technology and weaponry. Then, after season two all we got were stupid stories about politics, the characters, and relationships. Man, you guys just quit.

RICHARD

Well, we didn't quit. I mean, in a show, after you set up a new world and its features - like technology and spaceships - you work on getting deeper into the characters and relationships so people become invested in them and the stories have larger payoffs. Of course, there are many things ...

FANBOY ONE

(Interrupting)

It's just stupid. It ended up like a space soap opera or something.

RICHARD

I'm sorry you feel that way - but I hardly think it was a space soap opera. Ultimately our team felt it was the creative direction that was best for the show.

FANBOY ONE

But it's not what the fans wanted. You have zero artistic integrity.

RICHARD

Excuse me? Isn't a writer doing what he believes is best rather than what the masses demand pretty much the definition of artistic integrity? ... Does anyone here have a dictionary on their iPhone?

FANBOY ONE

You sir, are the Nicholas Sparks of Sci-Fi.

A collective GASP and then OOOHs come from the audience.

RICHARD

(unfazed)

I seriously doubt that. From what I hear, Nicholas Sparks' fans actually support him and his work - regardless of whether he provides them with toy light sabers.

FANBOY ONE

(Pointing his light sword directly at Richard)

I am gonna blog about this so hard tonight.

INT. CORINA'S BASEMENT APARTMENT, SANTA MONICA, CA - DAY

Corina sits in her tiny kitchen, eating In-N-Out and giggling joyfully with Sandy, who's on SKYPE again. Corina's pug, Freddie, rests on her lap.

CORINA

... I know, I know, she was the worst of all of them!

SANDY (ON SKYPE)

The very worst - by far!

There's a loud KNOCKING on Corina's front door. She picks up the laptop and answers the door to an attractive but very serious looking woman - RACHEL (36).

CORINA

Oh, hello.

RACHEL

Well? Do you have it?

CORINA

(Showing her the laptop to reveal Sandy's presence)
Rachel, have you met my sister Sandy?

Sandy gives a small, awkward wave.

RACHEL

Oh, um, yes, I think so, a long time ago - at the show's premier.
(To Sandy)
I hope all's well in Australia.
(To Corina but toned down)
I need the rent - at least some rent. Too much longer and we'll both be out on the street.

CORINA

I know, I know. I'm getting a check for my commercial next week and I have a pilot audition next week.

Rachel just lets out and exasperated SIGH, rolls her eyes and leaves - without saying goodbye to either of them. Corina closes the door and sits back down. Sandy is stunned.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)

She's a real charmer.

CORINA

Oh, she's just stressed. We're both having a tough time making ends meet. Her mortgage on this place is insane - even with the big down payment she made when we were doing the show and making real money.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)

I thought you too were like best friends, or at least good ones.

CORINA

We've drifted a lot since a dust up we had over some guy. I don't think he even liked either one of us. But she was kind of into him.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)

All over a guy ...

CORINA

We had some fun times. It kinda sucks. Good friends can be hard to come by in this town.

INT. RICHARD'S CAR, LA FREEWAY -- DAY

Richard drives with a vengeance through LA traffic while his assistant, NEAL (24) carefully scrutinizes his iPad.

RICHARD

What a fucking shit show.

NEAL

Well, yeah. I guess that could have gone a little better.

RICHARD

You think?!

NEAL

You know, I could try to get you on a panel tomorrow - maybe things could turn around?

RICHARD

That will not be happening!

NEAL

Maybe you should try a publicist. A lot of show runners use them.

RICHARD

Well, I can afford to have either a publicist or an assistant.

NEAL

You should keep the assistant.

RICHARD

I'm sorry, Neal. I didn't mean to snap at you. ... How are you doing? Are you enjoying the job?

NEAL

I am fine and, yeah, I'm enjoying the job. It's so much better than my friends' assistant jobs.

RICHARD

You assistants hang out together?

NEAL

Yeah. Actually, this weekend we're all going to this new bar that has a post modern jukebox type show.

RICHARD

Well hey, that sounds really interesting. Where is it located?

NEAL

Oh, it's just a bunch of young guys geeking out and acting stupid - you wouldn't like it at all.

RICHARD

How do you know I wouldn't like it.

NEAL

I don't know. It's just that ... this is our time, away from work and the bosses and all.

RICHARD

So, I'm just a boss now?

NEAL

I didn't mean ... It's just that I'd feel weird getting drunk in front of you.

RICHARD

Fine ... whatever.

The two face an AWKWARD SILENCE. Richard turns on the radio.

EXT. PATIO OF COFFEE SHOP, SANTA MONICA, CA -- DAY

Corina sit at the patio table while Freddie occupies her lap. She sips her coffee and gets a SKYPE call from Sandy.

SANDY

Hey Sis, what are we eating for lunch today?

CORINA

Nothing today; just coffee. I'm trying to tighten up for my auditions.

SANDY

Tighten up? Is that a thing? Screw that, I did two lunches today. But I'm skipping my afternoon snack to make room for a really big dinner.

CORINA

Living the dream, eh? You know your mongoose-like metabolism can't go on forever.

SANDY

Speaking of making room for dinner, something's moving down there. Sorry, but I'm gonna have to spend some quality time in the Dunny. I'll be back in five or ten okay?

CORINA

(Smiling)
I truly miss you.

SANDY

(walking off screen, SKYPE still on)
Back in a bit, Sis.

Corina LAUGHS a little and takes a sip of her coffee. She checks her iPhone and then picks up Freddie to her face and nuzzles him.

CORINA

(Baby talk)
I'll bet you miss her too, don't ya? Who's my little man? Who's a precious fella? Who's ...

YOUNG LADY ONE and YOUNG LADY TWO (early 20s) have sidled up behind her after Sandy left screen and have heard everything.

YOUNG LADY ONE
 (Interrupting)
 Ma'am? Excuse me, Ma'am?

CORINA
 (Turning around)
 Oh, sorry - didn't see you there.

YOUNG LADY ONE
 Ma'am, can we borrow a chair?

CORINA
 Oh sure - take any one you want.

YOUNG LADY TWO
 We'll leave this one across from
 you for whoever you were speaking
 to.

CORINA
 Oh, no. Someone's there on SKYPE,
 they're just in the Dunny now.

YOUNG LADY TWO
 Excuse me? The Dunn - what? There's
 no one on that screen.

YOUNG LADY ONE
 (Condescendingly)
 Um, okay. We're just gonna take one
 of these other chairs and leave
 that one for Dunny or whoever.

The ladies take a chair and begin to walk away.

YOUNG LADY TWO
 (Whispering)
 Oh my gosh ... that's so sad. Is
 that what getting old is like?

YOUNG LADY ONE
 (Whispering)
 I don't understand. Is the dog
 supposed to be her substitute
 husband or her substitute baby?

CORINA (O.S.)
 (Loudly)
 I can still hear you!

INT. RICHARD'S CAR, LA FREEWAY -- DAY

Richard and Neal continue driving, still in silence. Richard turns the radio down.

RICHARD

Say, Neal - did you get those pet rescue adoption application papers I asked about?

NEAL

You mean for the dog thing?

RICHARD

Yeah, the dog thing. Work hours aren't crazy any more and I think I'm ready for a dog.

NEAL

Yeah, about that ... I went down there and they said you'll need to put up a fenced yard.

RICHARD

But I can't do that ... my neighborhood zoning and all.

NEAL

I know, I told them that.

RICHARD

But what about a little, like, Pomeranian or Chihuahua? I have a big house. My living room would be like a cattle ranch or the state of Rhode Island to a dog that size.

NEAL

Yeah, they said 'no' - not even a little one.

RICHARD

Geez!

NEAL

Maybe you could try something even smaller, like an amphibian.

RICHARD

Meh ...

NEAL

You know, like a frog or a newt or a toad ..or a salamander or ...

RICHARD
 (interrupting)
 I know what an amphibian is Neal!

Neal FLINCHES and Richard apologizes with his eyes as he turns the radio back up.

EXT. BEACH, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Corina sits on a beach blanket with her laptop open, SKYPING Sandy who is devouring an enormous sandwich and fries along with a chocolate milkshake.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
 Aren't you gonna eat?

CORINA
 I have my audition later today and I don't want a lot of, you know
 (waving her hand over her stomach area)
 'activity' going down there when I'm doing a reading.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
 Are you worried about the audition?

CORINA
 No, not really. They're always a bit of a nail-biter, but I've prepared and I've done a million. They'll either want me or not. ... I do need the money though.

SANDY
 Oh, honey, you know I'd help if I could, but you know...
 (Holding up the sandwich)
 My food bills alone ...

They both LAUGH a little. But something's wrong.

SANDY (ON SKYPE) (CONT'D)
 Are you really happy in LA?

CORINA
 I am ... I think I am. Being an actor isn't easy, but I've made my peace with all that. It's just that ...

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
 (Puts down the sandwich)
 What?

CORINA
 I mean, it's just that a lot of people here either grew up nearby or went to college here - or at least in the States, and they have all of these friends and family around them. You know, to do things with - like we're doing now. But I don't have anybody.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
 What do you mean? You have tons of friends on Facebook.

CORINA
 It's not the same - those are work acquaintances and professional people. You hug, kiss on the cheek, and say that you'll get together for coffee, but you never do.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
 Have you been dating much? Have you tried internet dating?

CORINA
 No, no, it's not about that. I mean, I think that will happen ... eventually. I'm not talking about romance ... I just want some friends to hang out with. ... You know, like someone I don't feel uncomfortable complaining about my constipation in front of ...

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
 (With tender sarcasm,
 touching the screen)
 Oh, sweetie, do you want to talk to me about your constipation?

CORINA
 (playfully)
 You are the one who's gonna be constipated - eating all that shit.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIOS OFFICE, BURBANK, CA - A LITTLE LATER

Richard peeks into a studio office while KNOCKING. JAMIE (43), is typing on his computer but instantly recognizes him.

JAMIE

Hey! How are ya man?

RICHARD

I'm doing great - enjoying the easy life between shows, ya know?

JAMIE

Oh, I'll bet - you lucky bastard!

RICHARD

So, anyway, I was stopping by the old office to pick up some stuff and thought I'd see how things were going with your new pilot.

JAMIE

Good. But you know - crazy this time of year.

RICHARD

Yeah, I remember it well. Listen, Jamie, do you want to take a little break? I thought we could get some lunch or something.

JAMIE

Oh, man, I'd love to - I've been missing so many meals with work that I've almost fallen into a healthy BMI range again.

(a little self-laugh)

But ... I can't. Again, it's crazy busy around here.

RICHARD

Oh, yeah, of course. I understand.

JAMIE

We'll do it another time, okay?

(Noticing disappointment)

Hey, listen man, if you don't have anything planned would you like to tag along to some auditions we in a few minutes?

RICHARD

Oh, I don't know, that's ...

JAMIE

No, no it'll be fine. You can give me your take on who to hire.

RICHARD

You really want my opinion on that?

JAMIE

(Grinning)

No, not at all. But what the hell, it'll be fun.

RICHARD

Don't ever change, Jamie. Don't ever change.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIOS AUDITION ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Jamie, Richard, and SHEILA (39) sit in folding chairs in a small room with a camera pointing toward the spot where auditioning actors stand. Jamie and Sheila jot down notes as Richard checks his iPhone.

JAMIE

Who's next Sheila?

SHEILA

It's... Corina Taylor. She was in "Lost Legacy" - remember that show?

JAMIE

Oh yeah, I remember. Bring her in.

SHEILA

Okay.

JAMIE

Wait, you know what would be fun?

Sheila and Richard just stare at him.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

These auditions have been boring as hell. Sheila, let's have Rich read with them from now on.

RICHARD

But it's a woman's part.

SHEILA

Yeah, that's why it would be fun.

JAMIE
(To Sheila)
Is that okay with you?

SHEILA
Absolutely.

Sheila hands Richard the sides.

RICHARD
What about being okay with me?

JAMIE
Come on man, these get so boring.
Besides, it'll give us a chance to
see how they react and adapt.

RICHARD
Okay. I seek to amuse.

Jamie nods to Sheila who opens the door and lets in Corina.

JAMIE
Hey Corina, I loved you in, uh ...

SHEILA
Lost Legacy.

JAMIE
Yeah - a cool show. I'm Jamie, of
course, and this is Sheila. Richard
is helping us out today and will
actually be reading with you.

CORINA
Reading with me? As Janice?

JAMIE
Yep. Is that gonna be okay?

CORINA
Of course, sorry. It's just that
... well, this will be a unique
experience.
(Looking at Richard)
Wait ... aren't you? ... Didn't you
run 'Cyber Star One'?

RICHARD
Well, yes.

CORINA

Oh, that was a great show! You know, I actually had a small guest spot on the show in one of it's early seasons.

RICHARD

(Recognition kicking in)
Wait ... yes, right, you were an enemy fighter pilot or something.

CORINA

Exactly! Geez, that was, like, eight or nine years ago.

RICHARD

Oh, now I feel really old.

CORINA

Oh, well, you don't look old.

RICHARD

(Blushing a little)
Well, I try ... I did go running the other day. ...

They both LAUGH nervously. Jamie and Sheila look bored.

JAMIE

Can we get started now?

Richard walks up next to Corina, holding the sides - Corina doesn't use them. They both settle into their characters.

RICHARD

(As Janice, stilted)
Katherine, if you think you can hold onto Robert, you're crazy.

CORINA

(As Katherine)
Oh really? What makes you so damned sure?

RICHARD

(Even more stilted)
Because he told me he plans on leaving you.

CORINA

(As Katherine)
I don't believe you. Exactly when did he supposedly say that?

RICHARD
 (Really trying)
 Right ... right after he tore off
 my nightie and made love to me.

Jamie, holds it in for a second or two but then bursts out
 LAUGHING. And then Sheila loses it a little.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 (To Corina)
 I'm sorry.
 (To Jamie)
 Are you eleven?

JAMIE
 I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Let's
 (Laughing)
 ... let's go again.

Corina tries to stifle but can't and starts LAUGHING and then
 Richard finally cracks and joins in on the laughter.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN, MALIBU, CA - NIGHT

Richard eats a sad, frozen TV dinner and scrolls through his
 Facebook feed, commenting and 'liking' posts. He stops when
 he comes to a post by his younger brother, DAVID LORD (34).

He picks up his iPhone and starts to punch in the numbers,
 but is distracted by a KNOCKING on his front door. He answers
 it - it's his manager, CLAY (47) - he looks agitated.

CLAY
 Hey.

RICHARD
 Hey, yourself. What uh ... what
 brings you to my neck of the woods
 ... at this hour.

CLAY
 I'm visiting another client in the
 neighborhood. So, I thought ...

RICHARD
 (Interrupting)
 We both know that's not true.

CLAY
 Okay, I don't. I just wanted to see
 if you had anything for me to read.
 Or, more importantly, something I
 could give other people to read.

RICHARD

Look, man, it hasn't been that long. I've got some ideas I'm working on but ...

CLAY

(interrupting)

Yeah, I know. I just want to make sure that this doesn't turn into a permanent hiatus or hermit situation. ... You haven't grown a beard yet - that's a very good sign - and you look like you've showered. ... good for you.

RICHARD

(stroking his chin)

Um, thanks? What do you mean, hermit?

CLAY

You ... I just want to make sure you don't go all Brian Wilson on me - that you, stay productive, and, you know, social.

RICHARD

I'm extremely social - let's go to dinner. I'll go to dinner with you right now!

CLAY

I can't man - I've got a meeting in a little while.

RICHARD

Of course.

CLAY

(walking away)

I'm sorry ... you know I'd love to ... call me when you've got some pages, okay?

RICHARD

(Closing the door)

Fine, whatever.

He sits back down and starts to call David again, but then puts the iPhone down. He looks back at his laptop screen again and looks at a post by Tara. He calls her.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Hey, Tara it's Richard.

(a beat)

Richard Lord.

(a beat)

Listen, I know it's late but I thought maybe you'd like to get some coffee or come over and watch a movie, or ...

(a beat)

Yeah, I suppose it is a long way out here. No, it's okay, really, I just ...

(a beat)

Oh, sure I understand. Well, take care ... bye.

He rubs his temples and then gently and very slowly lowers his head, laying it softly on his laptop. He GROANS and starts to POUND his fists on the table but accidentally lands one of them in his TV dinner mashed potatoes and gravy.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(Weakly, his head still laying on laptop)

Shit.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Clad in her beach cover attire, Corina purchases her coffee at the counter and heads to the cream and sugar station. From her POV we see Richard at a nearby table, reading the paper.

She fixes her coffee and casually walks over his way. She passes him and then does a little double take.

CORINA

Hey, don't I know you?

RICHARD

(Looks up from paper and instantly recognizes her)
You're the man who ripped off my nightie and made sweet love to me.

They both LAUGH and he puts the paper down.

CORINA

Actually, that was Robert - I just grilled you about it.

RICHARD

That's right ... fair enough. Well, take a seat if you'd like.

CORINA

(Gets a chair)

Well, thank you. By the way, did you all do that with all of the actresses?

RICHARD

No, you were the first. But we did it with the remaining four. It wasn't as funny after the first one with you though. Sheila and Jamie have very short attention spans. ... Have you heard from them?

CORINA

No, not yet - we'll see.

RICHARD

So, do you live out here? I've never seen you here before.

CORINA

Oh, gosh no. I live in Santa Monica.

RICHARD

Oh, that's nice.

CORINA

It's a tiny apartment I can't afford. ... I came out here today for kind of a personal beach-mental health day.

RICHARD

Oh, yeah, that's why I live here. Is the acting grind getting to you?

CORINA

Well, yeah, a little, not that I've been booking much lately. I've just been missing my family back in Melbourne - especially my sister.

RICHARD

Are the two of you close?

CORINA

Very close - and I haven't seen her in three years.

RICHARD
Oh yeah, that's tough.

An awkward pause in the conversation ensues as they each tend to their drinks.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Listen, can I ask you something?

CORINA
Sure.

RICHARD
(Speaking a mile a minute)
This is a little weird. And I don't know your situation and I mean no offense or anything. ... Geez, I'm such a sap ... Anyway, I have this obnoxious industry get-together I have to go to tomorrow night - and I hate going to them. But would you have any interest in joining me?

CORINA
Um ...

RICHARD
(Interrupting)
I mean, I don't want this to be awkward and, obviously, no strings attached ... but I really hate going to these things alone and ...

CORINA
(Interrupting)
I'd love to. ... It'll be fun.

RICHARD
Really? I mean, that's great.
Really, it is. ... I don't know you but, if can rant a little ...

CORINA
Please do.

RICHARD
Well, people ask me to go to these things and they get really sore if I don't show up. But then I do show up and they know I don't know anyone there and still they just ignore me the whole time.

CORINA
 Been there, done that. ... And
 everyone shows up in couples ...

RICHARD
 ... And they only talk ...

CORINA
 ... To other people in couples.

The both LAUGH and CLINK their coffees in a little toast.

RICHARD
 People are the worst.

CORINA
 The very worst.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DOOR OF A BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - NIGHT

Richard and Corina stand before the door ready to ring the bell. They're well-dressed, but not formal. They both seem a little nervous.

RICHARD
 Are we ready for this?

CORINA
 As ready as we'll ever be.

RICHARD
 By the way - you look incredible.

CORINA
 Thank you ... and ... ditto.

RICHARD
 So you think I clean up well, huh?

CORINA
 (Smiling)
 No, I was just agreeing that I look
 incredible.

RICHARD
 Well played.

Richard rings the bell and they're greeted by TIM and SOPHIE (early 50s). They are a couple who appropriately live in a Beverly Hills Mansion. Their essence screams 'power couple.'

TIM
 Rich! Hey, how are ya?

RICHARD
I'm doing well, thanks.

They both are welcomed into the ...

INT. FOYER, BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - CONTINUOUS

SOPHIE
And who is this?

RICHARD
This is my very good friend Corina.
We've known each other for
approximately two days.

CORINA
Give or take a few hours.

SOPHIE
Well, that's fantastic. It's so
great to meet you. I absolutely
love that dress!

CORINA
Thanks so much. Your home is
lovely.

SOPHIE
Well, thank you. I'm sorry, I've
got to run - you know, hostess
duties. Maybe we can talk later?

CORINA
That would be great.

Sophie waves down a friend and scampers away as the trio
moves to the edge of the foyer next to the living room.

TIM
So, Rich, you know most everyone
here, right?

RICHARD
(Looking around)
Actually, I'm not sure if I know
anyone here.

TIM
(Pointing to a couple
across the room)
You know John and Leslie, right?

RICHARD
Um, maybe ... no?

TIM
Yeah, sure you do. Anyway, I've got
to handle something on the patio,
but I'll be back a little later to
introduce you two around.
(to Corina)
It was great to meet you.

Tim hurries off before Corina can reply.

RICHARD
(Whispering)
I don't think he's coming back.

CORINA
(Whispering)
Liquor?

RICHARD
Yes - it will never leave us.

INT. LIVING ROOM, BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - MONTAGE SEQUENCE

-- Richard and Corina, drinks in hand, slyly point at people
across the room and whisper to each other, giggling.

-- A waiter passes in front of them and Richard pulls a
couple of drinks off his tray. Corina then stops the
departing waiter and takes two more off the tray for later.

-- The pair is loosening up a little and actually having a
conversation with another couple and even enjoying it.

-- Richard sneaks a bottle of bourbon from a table and pours
shots for them. Corina giggles and playfully musses his hair.

EXT. OUTSIDE RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - LATER

A limousine pulls up to Richard's front door and Corina and
Richard spill out onto the walkway. He takes a big swig off
of the bottle of bourbon and she holds his arm as they
stagger up the walkway.

They get to the door and he fumbles for his keys. He finally
gets it open and Corina PLANTS a big kiss on him. Still
kissing, they stumble into the house.

INT. BEDROOM, RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - A LITTLE LATER

Corina and Richard lie naked in bed next to each other. But they are not basking in the glow of post-coitus. Richard's anxiety and distress are etched on his face and they are both clearly still very drunk.

RICHARD

I don't know ... it's just. Damn it to hell ... I'll be good to go in a little while though ... really.

CORINA

It's fine, no worries. Hey, we're toasted, it happens.

Richard doesn't seem mollified by Corina's gentle assurances. He gets out of bed and drunkenly paces - his embarrassment and self-loathing increasing by the second.

RICHARD

I've ... I'll be back. ... I think some lube might help.

CORINA

Uh, maybe. Do you have some shorts I can put on?

RICHARD

Yeah, sure - in the drawer right next to you. I'll be back.

CORINA

(looking in the drawer)
Okay. ... Hey, it's okay. We can always give it a go in the morning.

Richard is visibly struck by her kind remark, but still upset by the situation.

RICHARD

I know. I'm sorry - I'm being an asshole and you're ... you're very kind. I just need a minute.

She smiles but he's in no condition to return the gesture. She puts on his shorts as he staggers out of the room.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - STUDY, MALIBU, CA - A LITTLE LATER

Richard sits at his desk in a puddle of silent tears. The bottle of bourbon from the party sits by his side.

RICHARD
(Very softly, to himself)
What the fuck is wrong with you?

He takes a big gulp of the bourbon and then gently sets it down and carefully puts the cap back on.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
That's just gonna make it worse.
(a full beat)
Fucking it up - just like
everything else.

He unscrews the bottle's cap and takes another big swig, GENTLY LAUGHING a sad laugh to himself. And then another.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
As if she was going to fall in love
with you anyway.

He stares at his laptop screen for a moment and wipes away the tears that fill his eyes.

Grabbing a random envelope from the desk, he starts writing on the back of it as his lips quiver and his hand shakes.

The message done, he props the yellow envelope against his laptop screen and reaches into his top drawer.

His hand comes out of the drawer bearing a small revolver. He looks at it as thoughtfully as a very drunk person could and begins to raise it to his mouth.

Just then, A HIGH PITCHED MOAN emanates from the bedroom and then an GIANT THUD on the floor.

He puts down the revolver.

INT. BEDROOM, RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - CONTINUOUS

Richard approaches the bedroom door hesitantly - KNOCKING SOFTLY on the door as he enters.

RICHARD
Corina?

He moves around to the other side of the bed and sees her on the ground, motionless. He kneels down beside her and gently places his hand on her shoulder.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Corina? Are you okay?
(Realizing his stupidity)
Of course not. Can you hear ...

CORINA
Uuhhh...

RICHARD
Oh, thank god. What's wrong?

CORINA
Uuuhh...

RICHARD
Right. I'm gonna call nine-one-one.
(a full beat)
A phone ... I need a phone.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM HALLWAY, LOS ROBLES HOSPITAL - LATER

Richard stands in the hallway, quite dishevelled, holding Corina's purse and other belongings in a shopping bag. DOCTOR BETH ANDERSON (36) approaches him, looking concerned.

RICHARD
Hello, doctor ...

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Richard, right?

RICHARD
Yes. What happened? Is she going to be okay?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Now, Richard. ... Who are you? I mean, to Ms. Taylor? You're the one who brought her here, right?

RICHARD
Right, right - I mean, no - she came in an ambulance - that I called. ... She's a ... a house guest of mine.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Well, she's not really able to effectively communicate yet, so I just ... Do you know if she has an emergency contact?

RICHARD
She has a sister in Australia ...

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Could you call her?

RICHARD
Yes, yes - I brought Corina's
phone. I'm sure her sister is in
here somewhere.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
That would be a good start.
(Turning away)
Just let me know when you get her
on the line, okay?

RICHARD
But, doctor, how is she? Is she
going to be okay?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Oh, sorry - it's been a long night.
I'm afraid she's had a stroke.
She'll be okay. But there will be
some lasting effects - although
it's a little hard to tell the
extent of them at this point.

RICHARD
Thank you - really, thanks so much.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Just let the nurse know when you
reach her sister.

RICHARD
I will. ... And I'll be right here
until ... I'll just be right here.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM HALLWAY, LOS ROBLES HOSPITAL - EARLY
MORNING

Doctor Anderson nudges Richard, who is asleep on a chair.

RICHARD
Whuh? What happened?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
(Smugly)
Good morning.

RICHARD

Oh, sorry, I just drifted off for a little while.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

(Laughing a little)

Actually, it's been four hours. ... Hey, I'm not judging - I'd be asleep too if I weren't working. Anyway, thanks for putting us in touch with Sandy - talking with her was very helpful.

RICHARD

And?

DOCTOR ANDERSON

And, it appears there is a family history of strokes at a young age. She has some paralysis on one side - the left side of her face, her left leg, and to a much lesser extent, her left arm. ... And she's going to need some help.

INT. CORINA'S HOSPITAL ROOM, LOS ROBLES HOSPITAL - LATE MORNING

Dr. Anderson and Richard enter Corina's room. Her eyes light up a little at seeing a familiar face.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Corina, you look well. I assume you know this fellow.

CORINA

(Trying to smile and very slurred)

Yes, I do.

RICHARD

How are you doing?

Corina just nods her head and tries to smile.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Well, Corina, you'll be here for another couple of days and then of course, back in for check ups and therapy.

CORINA
 (Concerned and very
 slurred)
 A couple days?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
 What was that? Oh, yes, at least
 two or three days.

Corina is agitated and motions for something to write with. Rich pulls out a paper and pencil from his shopping bag full of her stuff. She writes something and hands it to Richard.

Richard and Dr. Anderson look at the paper. An INSERT reveals that it reads "Must get Freddie and take him to your place."

RICHARD
 (to Dr. Anderson)
 Oh, Freddie is her little dog.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
 Well, it looks like you're getting
 a little dog.

Corina NODS 'yes' emphatically - Richard seems delighted.

INT. CORINA'S BASEMENT APARTMENT, SANTA MONICA, CA - LATER

Richard lets himself into the apartment and doesn't bother to close the door behind himself. He looks around and finally spies Freddie hiding under the couch.

RICHARD
 Hey little buddy ... how are you?

Freddie's not moving. So Richard kneels down and pulls out some treats from his shopping bag. He puts them on the floor in front of him and Freddie tentatively crawls out toward them. Richard puts a few more treats down a little closer.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 That's it little friend ... c'mon.

Freddie comes a little closer and then freezes in his tracks. Something has spooked him.

RACHEL (O.S.)
 Who the hell are you?

Richard spins around and looks like he's had a heart attack.

RICHARD

Geez!! What?? You can't just sneak up on someone like that!

RACHEL

Hey, I own this house and I can do whatever I want. Now, who are you and why are you in my house?

As Freddie munches on the treats, Richard stands up and gets himself together.

RICHARD

I'm here for Corina - to pick up Freddie. I'm Richard, by the way.

RACHEL

Oh, okay, yeah.

RICHARD

I understand you heard about what happened to her.

RACHEL

Yeah. But she's gonna be alright though ... right?

RICHARD

Well, 'alright' is a relative term. I mean, she's gonna live, but ...

RACHEL

(Interrupting)

Yeah, the nurse told me about her condition. ... And she's gonna stay at your place?

RICHARD

Well, yeah ... that's the plan.

RACHEL

I know she's not doing well and I'm gonna come to see her ... I am. But right now ... and I know I am gonna come off as a huge asshole here, right now she owes me over five months of back rent.

RICHARD

Oh ...

RACHEL

Yeah, 'Oh' - and I'm going to lose this place if I don't get a paying renter in here soon. ... So, you need to take her stuff with you so I can find one.

RICHARD

Now? You can't be serious.

RACHEL

(tearing up a little)

I ... I'm sorry, but that's how it has to be. I don't have a choice.

She begins to walk away and he puts his hand on her elbow.

RICHARD

Wait, listen ...

RACHEL

(Pulling away strongly)

Hey jerk! Hands off!

RICHARD

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to ... Listen, I can make this right. I'll have my assistant here in a while with a check and a U-Haul van.

RACHEL

Wait - you're gonna pay it?

(Looking puzzled)

What's going on with you two? Why would you ...

(Stopping abruptly)

You know what? I don't care - as long as the check clears.

RICHARD

How much is it?

RACHEL

It's a little over eight-thousand dollars.

RICHARD

(Eyes popping)

Good god! Are you serious?

RACHEL

(Indignantlly)

Yes!

(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)

It's a Santa Monica apartment - do the fucking math. I was giving her a deal!

RICHARD

Okay, you're right ... it makes sense. Anyway, a kid named Neal will be by this afternoon. But ...

RACHEL

But what?

RICHARD

I still need to get that dog into my car.

They both look at Freddie who's having a feast of treats. He looks back at them suspiciously.

RACHEL

I can't help you. ... Dogs hate me.

RICHARD

You know, I kinda guessed that - and I was kinda counting on it.

EXT. OUTSIDE CORINA'S BASEMENT APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

Richard sits in his car with the driver's door open. Freddie comes running out the basement apartment followed by Rachel.

RACHEL

(Unconvincing baby voice)
Here Freddie, here little buddy!

Freddie runs away from her and hops into Richard's car and onto his lap. He quickly closes the door, feeds Freddie another treat, and gives Rachel the 'okay' sign. She unenthusiastically waves goodbye to them as he drives away.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Richard enters the front door and puts some bags down as Corina slowly makes her way into the room - she's using a walker upon getting out of the hospital. Her speech is still clearly slurred, but much more intelligible than before.

RICHARD

Why don't you move over here to the couch and I'll put your bags in the guest room?

CORINA
Sounds like a plan. I'll try.

She reaches the couch and attempts to sit down from her walker. She's having some trouble and Richard tries to help.

CORINA (CONT'D)
(waving him off)
I think I've got this one - but thanks.

Richard takes the bags into the next room.

RICHARD (O.S.)
I thought maybe we'd get some Thai food delivered for lunch - it's my favorite place in Malibu. Do you like Thai?

CORINA
That sounds great - a lot better than the hospital food.

Richard LAUGHS politely as he returns from the guest room.

RICHARD
I'm glad to see you've kept your sense of humor. ... Do you have any Thai preferences.

CORINA
A small boy to fetch things for me.

RICHARD
(Laughing)
You're on fire - that one was actually funny. But I'm afraid they don't offer that entree - I'll have to do for now.

There's a small, awkward pause and then Richard picks up the phone and a menu to order.

CORINA
Rich, wait a second. I wanted to talk with you about ... all of this. I mean, I really appreciate what you're doing, but I feel ...

RICHARD

No, I don't mind, really. It's no big deal - and, I mean, you owe me nothing - I have no evil 'Human Centipede' plans for you or anything - it's not weird, I promise.

CORINA

I know, Richard, I know ...

RICHARD

(Interrupting)

I just felt really bad about what happened ... I mean we'd been drinking pretty hard.

CORINA

I know. I really just wanted to explain my situation - why I had no one to call or anything. I know it must seem weird that a woman in her mid-thirties ...

RICHARD

(Interrupting)

Eh, thirty-seven ...

CORINA

What?

RICHARD

Thirty-seven is really late thirties, if we're being honest.

CORINA

Richard, I'm trying to say something important here, okay? Anyway, a person of my age usually has more, um, people. ... But, I've always been more of a relationship person and my last two didn't end on good terms. So, I haven't really developed a lot of close friends.

RICHARD

Well, my best and only real friend for the past decade has been work. So, I totally get what you're saying ... You're not weird; not weird at all.

CORINA

Thanks. And I really do appreciate all of this ... and I don't think you or it is weird.

RICHARD

Well, 'all of this' has given me a good excuse to avoid working on my latest pilot project, so you're doing me a solid.

CORINA

Ah, writers - always looking for any possible break from writing.

RICHARD

And I also get to place a double order with Thai Express now. They've always judged my single orders - they don't actually say anything, but it's there in their tone - and their look of pity when they give me my food.

CORINA

Well then - in your face, Thai restaurant - I'll have the Massaman and a diet Coke.

They both smile at each other as Richard picks up the phone to order. He pauses:

RICHARD

But, to clarify - thirty-four, thirty-five, and thirty-six - those are really the mid-thirties ...

CORINA

Just order please.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - GUEST SUITE BEDROOM, MALIBU, CA -
MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Corina painstakingly sits up on the side of her bed and grabs her nearby walker. With quite some effort she stands up with her walker and begins to make her way into the ...

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - GUEST SUITE BATHROOM, MALIBU, CA -
CONTINUOUS

She sidles up next to the toilet and puts her walker to the side, gripping the sink cabinet top with one hand.

She glances into the mirror and catches her reflection - she's still the same, really - except for her limp and curious mouth. She tousles her hair a little.

CORINA

(To her reflection)

Oh, hi there. My name's Corina
(flirting, striking a
pose)

I'm Corina Taylor. How are you?
(business-like - trying to
speak clearly)

Hello - Corina Taylor. It's very
nice to meet you.

(a full beat)

Oh, fuck it.

With her other hand she begins taking down her pajama bottoms. But she missteps getting on the toilet and falls with a LOUD THUD on the bathroom floor.

The sound of FOOTSTEPS running down the hallway ends with Richard's KNOCKING GENTLY on the bathroom door.

RICHARD (O.S.)

What happened? Are you okay?

CORINA

Ohhhh.

RICHARD (O.S.)

Should I call nine-one-one? I'm
coming in.

CORINA

No! Don't open the door - I'm half
dressed.

RICHARD (O.S.)

Well, I have to come in if I'm
going to help you.

CORINA

Just ... just give me a second. Let
me get my pants up.

She struggles and manages to pull up her pants although she's still on the ground.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Okay, you can come in now.

Richard opens the door and kneels down beside her.

RICHARD

Can you get up? Did you break anything? Did you fall on your hip?

CORINA

No ... I didn't break my hip. I'm not bloody eighty years old!

RICHARD

Well I don't know about these things. Do you want me to lift you?

CORINA

I'm sorry. Yes, help me get up.

After several awkward tries, he finds a comfortable and respectable way to lift her to her feet and she leans against the sink counter.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Oh god, I'm so embarrassed.

RICHARD

What? These things are bound to happen.

CORINA

Never again. Never. I am going to kick my therapy in the ass and this will not happen again.

RICHARD

Okay. Do you want me to walk you back to the bed?

CORINA

I ... I still have to go.

RICHARD

Oh. Do you, um, want ...

CORINA

No. I think I've figured it out.

RICHARD

I'll just wait outside the door.

CORINA

Okay. ... Wait - not right outside.

RICHARD

I'll be down the hall?

CORINA
I can still yell if I need help.

RICHARD
(Smiling)
You'd better be nice to me, young lady, or we can make you wear a 'Life Call' button.

CORINA
(Laughing)
Just put a fucking cow bell around my neck and be done with it.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - HALLWAY, MALIBU, CA - MORNING

Corina KNOCKS on Richard's bedroom door.

CORINA
Richard? Are you ready for our walk?

Richard opens the door and steps into the hallway. He has a noticeable limp.

CORINA (CONT'D)
Are you mocking me or something?

RICHARD
(Dejected)
No. ... I wish I was - not really.
(A beat)
It's ... it's my gout acting up.

CORINA
Excuse me, what?

RICHARD
Gout. Yes, I have gout. It usually lasts a day or two.

She yields the hallway to her gimpier friend.

CORINA
After you, your royal highness.

RICHARD
Don't go there.

CORINA
It's the disease of kings and rich people - well known fact.

EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK, SANTA MONICA, CA - A LITTLE LATER

Corina inches along with her walker as Richard hobbles along beside her. They are a sad looking pair on the otherwise youthful and vigorous beach boardwalk.

RICHARD

... and in fact, gout is actually most prevalent among lower socio-economic groups. It's especially prevalent in the Appalachian region where I'm from. And ...

CORINA

(Interrupting)

Okay, okay, I'm sorry. ... C'mon Richard, I was just having a little fun. I know it sucks.

RICHARD

It's just embarrassing - gout gets no respect. ... Geez, it's hot out here - we should take a breather.

CORINA

No argument here - I'm spent.

They stop for a break. But before they find a place to sit down, Corina spots something in the distance.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Wait ... what's that?

RICHARD

What?

CORINA

(Pointing)

That.

She points to an ice cream vending bicycle about forty yards up the boardwalk. The VENDOR is finishing up a transaction with one customer while a girl wearing a bikini and roller blades looks over his menu.

RICHARD

(Longingly)

That man is peddling tasty, frozen treats.

CORINA

I wonder if he has soft serve ice cream.

RICHARD

There's no way he could - not with
a rig that small.

CORINA

I don't know about that. They've
been doing some really innovative
things with soft serve lately.

RICHARD

Well, let's go!

K.C. & the Sunshine Band's "Keep it Coming Love" kicks in,
again, as they begin their sad shuffle toward the bicycle
vendor.

As they slowly close the distance between themselves and the
vendor the toll of their expedited pace becomes evident.
Richard winces in pain from pushing the limits of his gouty
foot and Corina is clearly redlining on her walker. They are
both HUFFING and PUFFING.

The bikini clad roller blade girl gives the vendor some cash
and takes an ice cream sandwich.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(Breathlessly)

They have ice cream sandwiches!

Richard and Corina push it like marathon runners nearing a
finish line. The girl sees the odd duo and rolls away with a
concerned look as the oblivious vendor begins peddling away.

CORINA

(Breathlessly)

Wait!

But the vendor continues peddling. The duo is on pure
adrenaline now as K.C.'s techno beat keeps pumping. Finally,
the vendor stops as a kid waves him down.

The pair eventually catches up once the kid has gotten his
treat and left. They are completely out of breath and can't
make proper words.

VENDOR

Are you two okay?

Richard stands with his hands on his knees as he tries to
take his wallet out of his pants. Corina just plops down on
the pavement and sits.

RICHARD
 (Almost indecipherable)
 Two ass cweam samiches!

VENDOR
 What?

CORINA
 (Almost indecipherable)
 Sob serb ass cweam!

Corina starts pointing to his ice chest and then back to her mouth as Richard starts weakly tossing dollar bills at him.

VENDOR
 Hey man, this ain't a strip club.
 (To Corina)
 And I don't even want to know what
 your after.

CORINA
 (Regaining speech, but
 still slurred)
 Soft serve ice cream.

RICHARD
 (Now clear, handing him
 the money politely)
 She wants soft serve ice cream.

VENDOR
 Oh, lady, I could never sell soft
 serve on a rig this small.

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE PATIO, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Richard assists Corina to their patio table. She puts her walker aside and sits down as he pulls open his laptop case and retrieves a well-worn pad of legal paper and pencil.

From Corina's POV an INSERT shows that Richard's pad is full of scenes for a teleplay - written out in long hand. She stirs her coffee and studies him as he starts writing.

CORINA
 Is this some kind of process thing?

RICHARD
 What?

CORINA

The writing it out in long hand -
is it some type of artistic
process? Your laptop is right
there.

RICHARD

Oh, no. I actually hate hand
writing - and my penmanship is
shit.

CORINA

(Looking it over)

I concur. So, why don't you just
use your laptop?

RICHARD

Oh, well, you know ... we're at the
coffee house, and, you know, I
don't want to be one of those guys.

CORINA

What guys?

RICHARD

You know, one of those sad guys who
works on his screenplay at
Starbucks.

CORINA

Well, first of all, this isn't a
Starbucks. And second, you aren't
one of those sad guys - you're a
successful writer.

RICHARD

You really think I should?

CORINA

Yes.

Richard takes out his laptop and begins opening a file.

CORINA (CONT'D)

So, you write things out in long
hand and then take them home and
transcribe them on the laptop.

RICHARD

(Beginning to type)

Yeah.

CORINA
(Exasperated)
Seriously?

RICHARD
(Still typing, but
quicker)
Well, sometimes I have Neal do the
transcription.

CORINA
That is insane.

RICHARD
(Clearly in a groove now)
You know, I really do like typing
it out as I think it up.

CORINA
Exactly. So, quit worrying so much
about what everyone else thinks.

RICHARD
(Emboldened)
Yes! Fuck all the haters! Fuck all
y'all!

An elderly couple at the next table registers their surprise
at his outburst.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
(To ELDERLY MAN)
I didn't mean you sir.
(To ELDERLY WOMAN)
Or you.

CORINA
(Softly)
Your Kentucky accent's showing
through.

RICHARD
Well, I did get a little excited
there for a second.

INT. LAX, TERMINAL BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - LATER

Richard and Corina slowly make their way to the baggage
carousels. She's very agitated as she struggles along with
her walker.

CORINA

So, why do I have to come along to pick up your business associate? This isn't an easy place for me to navigate!

RICHARD

Well, it's an hour long trip back. You don't think an introvert like me can talk to a near stranger for that long do you?

CORINA

So, you bring along the lady with the paralyzed mouth to help with the conversation?

Richard stops and Corina catches up. He points to a person on the other side of the carousel.

RICHARD

(Smiling broadly)

I believe that's my business associate right there.

Richard's 'business associate' is Sandy. Corina's jaw drops as Sandy runs over and hugs her, nearly knocking her down.

CORINA

(To Richard)

I ... I don't know what to say.

SANDY

I do! Which way is the closest In-N-Out?

INT. PHYSICAL THERAPY CENTER, SANTA MONICA, CA - DAY

Corina works on her walking using the walking rails as Sandy and Richard provide moral support. She doesn't even hold the rails though and is doing quite well.

CORINA

I don't know why I'm doing this, I fine without these things.

Then her left foot doesn't land properly and she almost falls, but for catching herself with the rails.

SANDY

I'm guessing that's why they still have you using the rails.

Corina gets to the end of the rails fairly easily and pushes out from them - still holding on with one hand though.

CORINA

Let me try the three-pronged cane
so I can be a proper senior
citizen.

Sandy starts to hand it to her, looking it over.

SANDY

(Reading cane logo)
Oh my god, they call it a
'Hurricane'.

RICHARD

What?

SANDY

Because, like you're trying to
'hurry' but it's also like a major
storm. Isn't that funny?
(To Richard)
You should write stuff like that.

CORINA

Just hand it to me.

Richard's phone goes off - he looks at it but ignores it.

SANDY

(To Corina, grudgingly
handing her the cane)
Your cane should be called 'arcane'
'cause you're older than me - Now
that's funny ... women are funny!

CORINA

Some women are funny.

RICHARD

(To Sandy)
I think you mean 'archaic'.

CORINA

Don't help her.

Corina takes her first couple steps with the cane. Sandy looks annoyed at being corrected.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Was that Clay?

RICHARD

Yeah...

SANDY

Ooh, are you in trouble at work?

CORINA

He's really more of an independent contractor, Sis.

RICHARD

But people still get pissed at me and make my life hell. So, yeah, I'm in some trouble at work.

(To Corina)

I just can't settle on a character to spin off with - it's not like a sitcom - I can't just take a popular character and put some new people around him or her - the show existed in a very specific world.

CORINA

(Turning to walk the opposite way)

So, don't just spin off a character - make it a sequel.

RICHARD

Eh, I don't know - that would be more of a movie.

CORINA

(A bit excited)

Or a prequel - or a prequel and a sequel - just like the Godfather, Part Two.

RICHARD

Hey ... yeah ... I really like that! That's a serious thought...

SANDY

(Interrupting)

You know, your word doesn't even have 'cane' in it.

RICHARD

What?

SANDY

'Archaic' - it doesn't include 'cane' - so it's a horrible cane name. ...

(MORE)

SANDY (CONT'D)

You should hire me to write on your show - I'm better with the funny stuff than you.

RICHARD

My show's not a comedy.

SANDY

Yeah, but still.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Corina, Sandy, and Richard sit at a table with their coffees and laptops. Sandy stands up with her three prong cane.

CORINA

I'm going to the ladies room.

SANDY

Do you need me to go?

CORINA

No, I'm fine - it's just right there.

(Smiling)

Time me.

She makes her way to the bathroom at a surprising speed. Sandy takes a sip from her coffee but it's too hot.

SANDY

Ouch, I'll give that a while.

RICHARD

(Watching Corina)

She's getting along quite well, you know?

SANDY

Eh, she's not ready for the Olympics just yet.

RICHARD

We need a training montage.

SANDY

(Laughing a little)

That was almost funny.

RICHARD

You're too kind.

A YOUNG WOMAN (24) approaches the table and Richard and Sandy cut their conversation. She stands for a moment or two, glaring at Richard, while holding a frappuccino frozen drink.

They both look at her quizzically as she seems to be summoning some inner courage. With a flourish she THROWS half of the frappuccino in Richard's face and smugly sets the rest on the table.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(Wiping his face)

What the hell?

YOUNG WOMAN

You're an asshole!

(A beat)

I hate your fucking show!

SANDY

I hate lots of shows but I don't go throwing milkshakes on people.

YOUNG WOMAN

(To Sandy)

It's not a milkshake - it's a Caramel Frappuccino!

(To Richard)

You killed Tasha Grace! She was a courageous soldier and a strong female character. You hate women!

RICHARD

What? She didn't die.

YOUNG WOMAN

She was exiled to a deserted planet - of course she died!

RICHARD

She was rescued - and exonerated of the charges - and promoted to commander in season six.

YOUNG WOMAN

(Holding her ears)

Aaaagh! How dare you? I'm binge watching on Netflix and only on season three. You've ruined everything, you asshole!

She picks up Corina's steaming coffee and holds it menacingly, ready to throw, as Richard and Sandy look on in horror. From Sandy's POV we see Corina painstakingly approaching the Young Woman from behind.

RICHARD

Whoa, listen to me, you don't want to do this - it's just crazy. That's really hot. I mean, it's just a show!

YOUNG WOMAN

You're just a dick like all the others! You can't just do whatever you want with ...

Corina WHACKS the Young Woman across the back of her knees with her cane. She almost falls from the effort, but catches herself on the back of a chair.

The Young Woman falls to the ground in pain, dropping most of the coffee onto Sandy's shoes. By now, everyone in the place has turned around to witness the spectacle.

CORINA

That man is a fucking saint! You leave him the hell alone!

YOUNG WOMAN

(Rubbing the back of her knees)

Ooowww! What the ...? Who the hell are you? His mom?

CORINA

I am not his damned mother! I'm Princess - fucking - Verstacia from "Lost Legacy" - and don't you forget it!

SANDY

(To Young Woman, shaking coffee off her shoes)

You bloody mongrel! These are my only pair!

(Grabbing the Frappuccino and taking a big slurp)

I drink your milkshake!

RICHARD

(Ruefully)

Well, I guess we can't come here anymore.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM, MALIBU, CA - NIGHT

Corina and Sandy sit at the dining table facing the same direction, each holding bananas in front of them like microphones.

Between them sit two empty bottles of wine and their partially full glasses. They are performing (for each other) a mock radio show and both speak in solemn Public Radio voices.

SANDY

Good evening and welcome back to National Public Radio's 'My Elite Life'. I'm speaking today with actress Corina Taylor.

CORINA

Hello. I'm glad to be here.

SANDY

Well of course you are - it's NPR for fuck's sake. Now Corina, my understanding is that you used to be an elite as one of the stars of a popular television show, but presently you are, in fact, habitually unemployed.

CORINA

Well, I think you've gotten it basically correct, although I don't know if I agree with your use of the term 'habitually'.

SANDY

Do not correct the host. I will remind you this is fucking NPR.

Richard enters the room, breaking up the 'interview.' But Sandy stays in Public Radio character.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Oh, well, loyal listeners it seems we have a surprise guest on NPR's 'My Elite Life,' television show runner, Richard Lord. Welcome.

Richard walks to the table, appears to recognize a bit when he sees it, and goes into character - with his own Public Radio voice.

RICHARD

(Also holding a banana as
a microphone)

Well, thank you Sandy. I hope you
don't mind - I brought some of my
famous Schweddy Balls.

SANDY

You're what?

(Covering her banana)

Richard that's gross!

RICHARD

(Meekly)

But it's a solid bit ...

SANDY

(Back to Public Radio
voice)

Let's move on ... Richard, it is my
understanding that you actually
attended one of this nation's many
community colleges - is that
correct?

RICHARD

Yes, back in Kentucky.

SANDY

Well, I'm afraid that,
notwithstanding your success, we
cannot have you on 'My Elite Life' -
we do have standards at NPR.

Meanwhile, Corina has started peeling her banana.

SANDY (CONT'D)

(To Corina)

What? You're peeling your
microphone.

CORINA

(Taking a bite)

I thought we were done.

RICHARD

(Nonplussed)

I guess I'll be enjoying my famous
Schweddy Balls in the living room.

Corina gives him a wink and he winks back. He exits and Sandy
gives up and peels her banana.

CORINA
 You know he was doing Alec
 Baldwin's bit from Saturday Night
 Live, right?

SANDY
 Who's Alec Baldwin?

CORINA
 You're clearly drunk.

SANDY
 And you're clearly smitten.

CORINA
 It's not like that.

SANDY
 Then what is it like?

CORINA
 I don't ... we don't really know
 what it is. But we're both very
 comfortable with how things are
 right now ... whatever that is.

Sandy has begun to eat her banana from the middle out,
 rotating it like an ear of corn on the cob.

CORINA (CONT'D)
 What in the hell are you doing with
 your banana?

SANDY
 I prefer to eat mine like a lady.

EXT. BEACH NEAR RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Sandy plays fetch with little Freddie on the beach as Corina
 and Richard talk nearby.

RICHARD
 So, the prequel can be drawn up
 from scratch - that's easy. But we
 can't get back all of the actors
 from the original show, so a pure
 sequel is a problem.

CORINA
 Well, it doesn't have to be an all-
 encompassing sequel - it can just
 focus on the characters that you
can work with.

RICHARD

But what about the characters who
will be missing?

CORINA

As if that hasn't happened all the
time with actors leaving shows?

MONTAGE SEQUENCE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

-- Richard and Corina going over a script on the balcony of
his House overlooking the Pacific.

-- Corina and Richard meeting with Clay in his office.

-- Richard, Jamie, Corina, Sandy and Neal toasting with beers
in a restaurant as Richard holds up the finalized pilot
script.

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - BALCONY, MALIBU, CA - NIGHT

Corina and Sandy sit on the couch overlooking the ocean and
drink beers.

CORINA

Do you have to go back so soon?

SANDY

I was lucky to get as much extra
time off work as I did.

CORINA

I wish you could just stay.

SANDY

I know.

Corina leans her head on her little sister's shoulder and
starts to cry a little. Sandy hugs her and guzzles a beer.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

Richard walks up to the sliding glass doors that look out
onto the balcony. He has a script in one hand. He opens the
door and walks to the ...

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - BALCONY, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

He sees that Corina is crying, but Sandy silently motions for
him to join them.

RICHARD

Is everything okay? Where's Freddie? Did something happen?

SANDY

Oh, Freddie's sacked out on the study couch - he's fine. She's just a little sad that I'm leaving tomorrow.

CORINA

I'm fine. I was just having a moment.

RICHARD

Oh, okay. Well, I'll let you two have some time together and get out of your hair.

(To Sandy)

I just wanted to show your sister a final change I made to the pilot script.

He hands the script to Corina, who looks surprised.

CORINA

But why would you change anything, it was perfect and ... oh ...

An INSERT reveals that the title page has been amended to read "'CYBER STAR ONE: GENERATIONS' By Richard Lord and Corina Taylor". Sandy looks over her sister's shoulder to see it as Richard just smiles. Corina is still stunned.

SANDY

Oh, wait a minute ... you guys are 'Lord & Taylor' - just like the department store ...

RICHARD

True - although it wasn't really the take away from this I had anticipated.

(To Corina)

So, how about it? Are you okay with being the Co-Creator of this series?

CORINA

Oh my gosh, Richard, I don't know what to say.

RICHARD

Well, say 'yes'. It's your ideas in there as well as mine. You should get proper credit ... and royalties of course.

SANDY

(Whispering to Corina)

You should take it. That'll buy a lot of In-N-Out Burgers.

RICHARD

Well, think about it and I'll let you ladies to have your last night alone in peace.

CORINA

No, Richard, of course I'll accept. ... Thank you. It's just a lot to process.

RICHARD

Okay, great. ... Well, I'm going to the study to watch "Real Housewives of Orange County" with Freddie. Good night.

CORINA

Good night.

Richard leaves and shuts the glass doors behind him, entering the ...

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

He takes a last look at the sisters on the balcony and then takes out his iPhone and an INSERT reveals that he is contacting "David Lord". The phone rings ...

RICHARD

Hey, it's me ...

(a beat)

Yeah, I know it's been a while ...

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - BALCONY, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

Corina is still looking at the new title page of the pilot. Sandy's eyes are burning a hole in the back of her head.

CORINA

Okay, you clearly have something to say about all of this ...

SANDY

I only want to make sure ...

CORINA

(Interrupting)

You think it's weird, don't you?

SANDY

I only want to make sure that you don't end up chained to a radiator in someone's basement.

CORINA

You've been here for two weeks - has anything weird happened?

SANDY

No, not at all. ... I was just having a little fun, I'm sorry. Really, he's perfectly normal and nice. It's just ...

CORINA

Just what?

SANDY

What's the next step? Whether or not you two are romantic or just friends - what are you doing a year from now?

CORINA

I don't know. Right now I'm just trying to get back on my feet, you know?

SANDY

Yeah, I understand.

EXT. WHOLE FOODS GROCERY, SANTA MONICA, CA - DAY

Corina scouts the seafood case as Richard pushes the cart and drinks coffee. She now just uses a regular (one prong) cane.

CORINA

Their prices are outrageous. I mean this little salmon filet is over twenty bucks!

RICHARD

(Taking a look)

It's not that little ... and it's a wild salmon.

CORINA

As opposed to a wimpy, domesticated salmon? Was it an especially manly and outdoorsy salmon?

RICHARD

I think it's supposed to taste a little better.

CORINA

For twenty bucks it should give you a bloody handjob.

RICHARD

That'd be okay - as long as he really knew what he was doing down there.

Corina gives him a quizzical look and then moves on to the trout. Richard gets a text on his iPhone and looks concerned.

CORINA

Anything wrong?

RICHARD

Oh, our flight to Kentucky got moved - not a big deal, just an hour later. ... But, I'm so excited about seeing my brother.

CORINA

How long's it been?

RICHARD

Geez, I think five years or more. ... Thanks for doing this ... I don't think I'd go if I had to do it alone.

CORINA

Well, it's not every day a girl is lucky enough to get a free trip to eastern Kentucky.

RICHARD

I imagine it's probably kind of like the outback of Australia.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

In fact, I believe the headquarters for 'Outback Steakhouse' is located in Kentucky.

CORINA

We're not going to eat at one of those are we?

RICHARD

Absolutely not.

Just down the seafood case stands Tara, who recognizes Richard's voice and spots him.

TARA

Richard!? Is that you?

RICHARD

Ah, it is me - at least it was this morning. How are you?

TARA

Things are 'cool' - remember?

RICHARD

Yes, of course. Oh, Tara, this is my friend Corina.

CORINA

Hello, it's nice to meet you.

TARA

(Pretends to not notice
the slurring)

Yeah ... you look kind of familiar.

RICHARD

Corina's an actress too.

TARA

Oh my gosh, you're Princess
Verstacia!

CORINA

Well, yes, that's one role I ...

TARA

(Interrupting)

I used to watch that show all the
time when I was in middle school.

CORINA

Oh ...my ... god ...

TARA

Oh, I didn't mean ... I really am a huge fan though ...

RICHARD

(Interjecting - to Tara)
So, did that thing at NBC work out for you?

TARA

No, they ended up going another way. But they liked me, so it ended up leading to another audition. It's tomorrow, so here's hoping!

RICHARD

That's great - let me know how it goes. It was good to see you.

TARA

Yeah, I'll keep you posted - good to see you.
(to Corina)
You too! Again, I'm a big, big fan.

Tara slinks off to the produce section as Corina and Richard awkwardly return their gaze back to the seafood case.

RICHARD

(Softly)
Thanks for not whacking her with your cane.

CORINA

Pfft. Her only crime is being young.

RICHARD

So ... the wild caught salmon then?

CORINA

Sure.

Corina's iPhone RINGS and she answers.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Hello?

(a beat)

Um, yeah.

(a beat)

Really? Are you serious?

(a beat)

Sure, I'll drop by tomorrow.

(MORE)

CORINA (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Great. Thanks so much - bye.

She hangs up and looks as if she's been shot.

RICHARD

What is it? Is everything okay?

CORINA

That was my agent - I have an audition.

INT. STUDIO AUDITION WAITING ROOM, CULVER CITY, CA - DAY

Corina enters a room with a dozen actresses in their mid thirties who are practicing their lines. Several practice their lines with a slurred delivery and Scottish accent.

She tries to find a seat but all are occupied. She's approached by Kelly who also holds the sides and appears to be auditioning. She opens her arms for a hug.

KELLY

Oh, sweetie, I heard the awful news. How are you doing?

Corina hugs her and steadies herself with her cane.

CORINA

I'm doing better - day by day, you know?

KELLY

Of course, of course ...
(To actresses sitting next to them)
Get up! We have a sick person here!

The two actresses sitting closest get up immediately and move to the other side of the room.

CORINA

Oh, that's really not necessary, I'm fine.

KELLY

Nonsense, you sit here with me and tell me all about it.

They sit down and Kelly spies the sides Corina is holding.

CORINA

There isn't much to tell, really, I guess it all started...

KELLY

(Interrupting)

Are you ... are you on the production team or something?

CORINA

Oh no ... I was asked to audition if you can believe that!

KELLY

(Wheels turning)

I guess I can see that - what with the character being disabled and all. ... But ... what about if they need flashbacks?

CORINA

(Flatly)

I hadn't really given that much thought. I suppose that's something they'll have to think about.

KELLY

Yeah ... I would think so. Do you know who's running this thing?

CORINA

I hear it's a good team.

The main door opens and Sheila enters the room with a clipboard. She spots Corina and gives her a little wave, which Kelly returns enthusiastically.

SHEILA

Hello everyone. Welcome to the 'Scotland Yard' set. We have a lot of you to see today so I think we'll just take you in the order

...

Jamie enters the room holding two cups of coffee and hands one to Sheila.

JAMIE

(Interrupting)

Hey folks! Wow - we have a lot of people today! Sheila, were gonna have to order at lot more coffee!

Jamie CHUCKLES at his own lame joke but he gets nothing but crickets from the auditioning actors.

JAMIE (CONT'D)
Corina! You came, fantastic! Come
on back and we'll talk.

Corina strains to get up with her cane and slowly walks over.

AUDITIONING ACTRESS ONE
(Whispering to another
auditioning actress)
Wow, she is hard core method.

Jamie gives Corina a big hug and the three of them move out the door.

KELLY (O.S.)
(Softly)
This is bullshit.

INT. RENTAL CAR, INTERSTATE 75, GEORGETOWN, KENTUCKY - DAY

Richard drives while Corina plays on her iPhone. She looks up and from her POV we see a 'Welcome to Georgetown' sign and then billboards for a small number of popular low-end chain restaurants with a southern flair.

CORINA
Wow, we can have dinner at Golden
Corral, Chick-fil-A, or the Cracker
Barrel.

RICHARD
(Sighing)
We can drive into Lexington tonight
for dinner if you want.

CORINA
(Patting his shoulder)
Oh, don't get defensive, I'm just
having a little fun. As long as we
don't go to Outback Steakhouse, I'm
fine. ... What does your little
brother do here anyway?

RICHARD
He works at Toyota - and he's
taller than me, by the way. He does
alright for himself. It's Toyota's
biggest manufacturing plant outside
of Japan.

CORINA

And you two grew up in this town?

RICHARD

Actually, we grew up in a smaller town just east of here.

CORINA

(Grinning)

So, towns get smaller than this?

RICHARD

(Playfully)

You know, I'll bet I can find 'Crocodile Dundee' to rent tonight if I searched for it on my laptop.

(a beat)

There's a reason I transferred from Bluegrass Community & Technical College to go into a ton of student loan debt at USC film school.

CORINA

(Patting his hand)

I know ... I know.

(Pointing)

Here's our exit.

INT. DAVID LORD'S LIVING ROOM, GEORGETOWN, KENTUCKY - DAY

Richard and Corina sit on the couch opposite David in his easy chair. The home is modest, but nicely kept. David's wife ELLIE (33) tries to corral their kids Ben (4) and Keri (2) as they are excitedly running around and causing trouble.

DAVID

So, how was your trip?

RICHARD

It was fine. We just flew into Cincinnati and then drove down to the Hilton Garden a few miles from here.

DAVID

Oh, well, you know, ya'll are welcome to stay here.

Between tending to the kids Ellie GLARES at David.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Then again, the Hilton Garden is very nice.

ELLIE

(To David)

I told Aunt Abby I'd bring the kids over to see her today. So, we'll be back in an hour or so.

RICHARD

Oh, Aunt Abby - she was always my favorite - so sweet. How is she doing?

ELLIE

She's dying. ... She really can't see any new visitors now.

(To David)

Is that what this trip is about?

DAVID

Honey, it's not like that.

(A beat)

I'll help you get the kids in the car, okay?

ELLIE

Um, sure.

(To Richard and Corina)

It was nice to meet y'all. I'm sorry I can't stay longer.

DAVID

(To Richard and Corina)

I'll be back in a minute.

David and Ellie each grab a kid and head out the door.
Richard and Corina hear INAUDIBLE ARGUING outside the door.

RICHARD

That doesn't sound good.

CORINA

Now I feel bad.

RICHARD

Why?

CORINA

Because I'm really tired and was going to ask you if it's okay if I go back to the hotel and zonk out.

RICHARD

That's fine - go ahead.

CORINA

Are you gonna be all right?

RICHARD

I'll be okay. It'll give me and David some time alone. He can drive me back to the hotel.

CORINA

Thanks - and to show my appreciation I'll pick us up something from Chick-fil-A for dinner.

RICHARD

You've secretly been wanting to go there haven't you?

CORINA

It's the waffle fries. I love them.

EXT. DAVID LORD'S HOUSE - BACK YARD, GEORGETOWN, KENTUCKY - DAY

David and Richard stand next to a small pond. Each has a beer in one hand and a slice of watermelon in the other.

DAVID

Listen, I'm sorry about all of that. Ellie's under a lot of stress with the kids and, up til recently, taking care of Aunt Abby full time.

RICHARD

Yeah, um, no worries. What was that about the reason for the trip?

DAVID

Eh, you know our cousins. A lot of them are coming in at the end and hoping for a piece of Aunt Abby's estate. ... As if it's much of anything anyway. Ellie just wants what's fair for us. ... It was just a reflex - she knows you don't need the money.

There's a small pause as David finishes his slice and throws the rind into the pond. Richard follows suit.

RICHARD

I really ... I really just wanted to see how you all were doing.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I've had a little break between jobs and ... to be honest I've been feeling a little isolated with no family or anything in California.

DAVID

But you know a ton of people out there.

RICHARD

Eh, I worked with a ton of people out there.

(A beat)

Do you have some good friends here?

DAVID

Well, yeah. And we have our relatives of course - even if I don't consider all of them to be good friends.

(Reflecting)

Yet they still come for Thanksgiving.

They both LAUGH a little and take swigs of their beers.

RICHARD

I guess I was hoping we could spend more time hanging out together.

DAVID

That's not gonna be easy - living on opposite ends of the country.

RICHARD

Well, you know, I do have some connections in L.A., so maybe ...

DAVID

(Interrupting)

Don't. ... Just stop. Let's not have this conversation.

RICHARD

Huh?

DAVID

This ... what Ellie and I have here ... may not look like a lot, but we've built a life and we're happy. And all of Ellie's family lives here. Moving isn't an option.

RICHARD

I know, I know ... sorry. But maybe you could visit for a while.

DAVID

Maybe ... I only get a couple weeks a year off. And we usually vacation with Ellie's family.

Richard's disappointment registers on his face.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Really? I'm supposed to feel guilty about this?

RICHARD

I'm trying here.

DAVID

You left me with those two assholes when I was eleven to move to Hollywood. ... You only came back for their funerals and a couple weddings.

RICHARD

(Meekly)

I had to get out.

(A beat)

I should have taken you with me...

DAVID

(Lightening up a little)

I think there might be laws against doing that with an eleven year old.

RICHARD

I'm really sorry. ... You have to know that.

DAVID

I do ... and I don't want to make you feel bad - I don't.

(A beat)

I mean, at this point we don't even have much history to talk about except our shitty childhoods.

RICHARD

(Smiling)

Worst dinner conversation topic ever.

They both LAUGH a little and David pulls two more watermelon slices out of the ice chest and hands one to Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'm going to try to come out here more ... as often as I can. Does that sound good to you?

DAVID

That sounds like a plan.

RICHARD

And still Facebook buddies?

DAVID

(Flatly)
Absolutely.

David spits a watermelon seed a good ways and David tries to beat his distance with his own seed spit - they LAUGH and a friendly seed spitting battle ensues.

INT. CINCINNATI/NORTHERN KENTUCKY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT,
CONCOURSE AREA - DAY

Corina and Richard walk through the concourse, passing airport shops and restaurants. Richard seems to be in a sad haze, like a boy who has lost his dog.

CORINA

Do you want to talk about it?

RICHARD

It's not as bad as my face would have you believe.

CORINA

Well you look pretty sad.... And we're leaving early. ... And you didn't even touch your Chik-fil-A last night.

RICHARD

I noticed it didn't survive the night.

CORINA

Three hour rule, my friend. The pickle was taunting me.

RICHARD

I understand.

(A beat)

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You know I'm really just mad at myself. I'm such an idiot.

CORINA

I won't disagree with that.
(Smiling and patting his
shoulder)
C'mon - lay it on me.

RICHARD

It was ridiculous for me to think that he'd be over the moon about reconnecting with me after I'd practically ignored him for twenty years. ... I actually thought he might consider moving to California - can you believe that?

CORINA

Of course - we all want our family for nothing and our friends for free.

RICHARD

Timely reference.
(Winks at her)
But really though, why is it so hard for us, but for other people it just seems to ... happen.

CORINA

Well, maybe we just see the outcome - people with a lot of close friends and family - but we don't see all the work behind it.

RICHARD

(Motioning to a free table
and chairs)
I guess ... maybe. But, Neal has tons of friends and he sleeps til noon and plays video games most of the day.

CORINA

I don't think that's how it works...

RICHARD

All I know is that being a social creature is fucking exhausting.

They sit down at the table and Corina gets the BUZZ of a text from her phone and checks it.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Now I know why people get married -
no more damned socializing work.

CORINA

(Staring at her iPhone)
Oh my god!

RICHARD

What?

CORINA

I got it.

RICHARD

Got what? Did you contract an STD?

CORINA

No! I got the part on 'Scotland
Yard.' It's small, but regular!

RICHARD

Oh my gosh, that's fantastic.

He gets up and gives her a hug. She excitedly starts punching numbers into her iPhone.

CORINA

I've got to call Sandy!

RICHARD

(Flatly)
Yeah, of course.

Richard sits back down. His face reveals his mixed feelings on this development.

INT. RICHARD'S STUDIO OFFICE, CULVER CITY, CA - DAY

Richard works at his desk. It's a nice office with posters of his old shows and films adorning the walls. A production assistant, DAVE (25), KNOCKS on his already open door.

DAVE

Excuse me, hi. Phil asked me to
give you these to look over.

RICHARD

(Taking the papers)
Thanks ... I think. It never ends.
(A beat)
Have we met? Do I know you?

DAVE
Oh, no, I just started.

RICHARD
What's your name?

DAVE
Dave, or David, whichever you prefer.

RICHARD
That's my brother's name. What do you prefer?

DAVE
Dave.

RICHARD
Then that's what we'll do. I'll see you around Dave - don't let Phil work you too hard.

Dave takes off and Richard looks at the wall clock - it reads 4:30 PM. He pivots his chair and looks out the window to take in the sunny outside - a bit sadly. He's back in the grind.

INT. 'SCOTLAND YARD' STUDIO SET, CULVER CITY, CA - LATER

Corina walks to the edge of the set where Sheila stands, looking over her clipboard.

CORINA
Hey, how are you?

SHEILA
I'm good. How are you?

CORINA
I'm doing great.

SHEILA
You know we don't need you here until tomorrow, right?

CORINA
I know. I just wanted to come by and check it all out.

SHEILA
Are you excited?

CORINA

Yeah. I mean, I've been doing guest spots and all but they're just different, you know? This is like becoming part of an existing family ... sort of ...

SHEILA

I know what you mean.
(Squeezing her elbow)
You're gonna be fine. It's just like riding a bike - it all comes back to you.

INT. RICHARD'S STUDIO OFFICE, CULVER CITY, CA - NIGHT

Richard finishes marking up a script and looks up at his wall clock - it's 7:45 PM. He looks out the window and it's dark. He gently shoves the script away and stands up. He packs his laptop and leaves, turning off the light on his way out.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE, CULVER CITY, CA - DAY

Richard sips his coffee while perched on a stool that faces the coffee house's large picture window. He looks out onto the street below as Corina comes up from behind and puts her hands over his eyes

CORINA

Hey - guess who

RICHARD

(Her hands still on eyes)
Well, given that we planned to meet here today and the fact that I saw you walking up - I'm going to guess the new star of 'Scotland Yard'.

CORINA

Fair enough. I suppose a pronounced limp isn't that conducive to sneaking up on people.

RICHARD

You'll note that I never mentioned the limp - which is getting better, by the way. But yes, had you been in disguise I still would have known it was you. ... Do you want to order?

CORINA

No, I ordered before I tried to surprise you.

RICHARD

So ... where is it?

CORINA

It was ... a complicated espresso order ... she said she'd bring it over when it's ready.

RICHARD

You know, we should have...

CORINA

(Interrupting)

Yes, I know you think there should be separate lines for coffee orders and complicated espresso orders. That idea and the catch phrase 'Fetch' aren't going to happen. Stop trying to make them happen.

They both LAUGH a little and the Barista brings over Corina's complicated drink.

RICHARD

How's work? We've hardly even seen each other around the house since we've both rejoined the rat race.

CORINA

It's been great, but, you know, busy. My stamina isn't what it was before the stroke, so I have to pace myself a little.

RICHARD

I've been reminded how much non-creative bullshit comes with running a show. I think I used to get a high off of making supposedly important decisions ... now it just drains me.

Corina gets the BUZZ of a text and checks it - she looks pleased.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Good news?

CORINA

Well, I've been trying to convince Sandy to quit her job and move to the States. And today she gave notice to her boss!

RICHARD

Really? Seriously? That's great. We can fix up one of the guest rooms!

CORINA

Um, actually, I'm thinking that we girls might get our own apartment after I get a few more paychecks under my belt.

RICHARD

What? I just assumed ...

CORINA

Rich, c'mon - you know we can't keep up this slumber party forever.

(Rubbing his shoulder)

I'm sorry. Please don't read anything into this. I just need to feel more independent.

(lighter)

Besides, unless you're willing to let Sandy and I completely redecorate your bachelor pad we need to get our own place.

RICHARD

Can we just meet somewhere in the middle on redecorating?

CORINA

We both need this Richard - but nothing else changes, I promise.

RICHARD

(Softly, to himself)

Maybe changing in some ways could be good.

CORINA

Huh?

RICHARD

Nothing. ... I'm sorry. You're right. ... Getting back to the whole show treadmill has been messing with me. I'm losing control of my ... days - and some nights.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Sometimes I wonder why I'm even
doing it. ... Good god, listen to
me - rich, white guy problems.

They LAUGH and attend to their drinks again.

CORINA
Seriously Rich, you try to please
people too much. It's your ship and
it can be whatever you want or need
it to be. Make it so.

RICHARD
(Smiling)
Yes, captain.

They sip on their drinks and take in the street below.

CORINA
I really like this.

RICHARD
What?

CORINA
Sitting like this. This is how
people should go on dates.

RICHARD
Don't we make fun of couples who
sit on the same side of the booth?

CORINA
Yeah, but they're always all over
each other and feeding one another.
I just mean sitting together but
not across from each other.

RICHARD
Oh.

CORINA
You can look out on the world
together without having to
constantly engage in forced
conversation - just taking life in.
Less like an interview and more
like a shared carnival ride.

RICHARD
Yeah.
(Smiling warmly at her)
I suppose so. You ready to go?

CORINA

Yeah, I guess - back to the grind.

They get up to leave and turn round to find themselves right in front of Tara and Kelly. Both sides are a bit taken back.

TARA

Holy shit, Richard! It's like you're everywhere.

RICHARD

Well, I do try to keep in touch with my constituents.

TARA

Huh?

(To Corina)

Oh, hey, it's good to see you again.

KELLY

(To Tara)

You two know each other?

TARA

Well, we've met - she's a friend of Richard's - he's the guy I told you about.

KELLY

(Eyes lighting up)

Oh, okay, I see.

CORINA

(Under her breath)

Indeed.

RICHARD

(To Tara and Kelly)

I hope I got a good report.

TARA

(Playfully hitting him on the shoulder)

Of course! We should go running again.

RICHARD

Oh geez, I might have to train for a while before doing that again.

(A beat)

It was really nice see you all.

Corina smiles politely at Kelly and she returns the favor as they all part ways.

EXT. RACHEL'S HOUSE, SANTA MONICA, CA - DAY

Corina walks to the front door of the house above what used to be her basement apartment residence and rings the bell. Rachel answers the door.

CORINA

Hey. I was hoping we could talk if you have a minute or two.

Rachel is taken aback by Corina's altered speech and the cane by her side. She looks happy to see her - but also a little embarrassed and a little sad. She starts tearing up a bit.

RACHEL

Of course, come on in.

Corina enters the door and they move to the ...

INT. RACHEL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM, SANTA MONICA, CA - CONTINUOUS

Corina maneuvers to a chair and Rachel tries to help her.

CORINA

It's okay, I've got it. It looks harder than it is.

She sits down and Rachel sits down opposite her on the couch. Corina digs for something in her purse - it's a check.

CORINA (CONT'D)

I have something for ...

RACHEL

(Interrupting, voice cracking)

I'm sorry I didn't come to see you in the hospital!

CORINA

Oh honey, it's okay - I was only in there for a few days anyway.

(A beat)

Besides, I'm the one who's here to make amends.

She gives the check she's holding to Rachel.

RACHEL

What's this? You're friend already handled the back rent.

CORINA

And I am in the process of repaying him. ... But there was more, right? Further back? The lunches and drinks; covering me on bills when I was in a tight spot - you remember?

RACHEL

Well, yeah, that was way back when ...

CORINA

... we were still friends?

RACHEL

I suppose.

CORINA

Rachel, you know I was never really interested in him.

RACHEL

Who?

CORINA

Teddy - you're boyfriend.

RACHEL

Teddy? We dated for a few months ... we weren't even exclusive. He wasn't my boyfriend.

CORINA

Then I don't understand.

RACHEL

Understand what?

CORINA

Why we ... why you started being pissed off at me.

RACHEL

I wasn't pissed off ...

Corina gives her a look that suggests otherwise.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Okay, I was a little pissed off.

...

(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)

But really, honey, I'd just had enough ... You were constantly needing help and I felt like I was subsidizing your acting pipe dream - a dream that I'd given up on ...

CORINA

... to find a sensible career. I'm sorry, I guess I was just oblivious.

RACHEL

And I hate this damned job. But, you know, I have this house and all.

CORINA

You're not happy?

RACHEL

(Crying)

Are you kidding? I'm fucking miserable. I get up at six to beat the traffic to get to my shitty cubicle on time and then there's a meeting and Shelly is like 'blah, blah, blah' and then Don has to argue back with 'bluh bluh bluh' - and it never ends. Every day just bleeds into the next one like an endless damned conveyer belt of spreadsheets and production meetings.

CORINA

Oh honey, I had no idea. Do you want out?

RACHEL

(Sniffing)

Yes ... yes I do.

CORINA

Well, I can talk with my agent ... and put a word in for you on the show. But you'd have to cut back.

RACHEL

I don't care. I hate this stupid house. You have to mow the lawn and pay property taxes and other shit.

(Sniffing again)

I just want a little apartment ... and a little cat ... and ...

CORINA
 (Welling up)
 ... maybe a new old friend?

They both start crying and hug tightly.

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - DAY

Corina weaves her way through several cars in the driveway and walks through the front door while carrying groceries. It's quite a balancing act with her cane. She moves into ...

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN, MALIBU, CA - CONTINUOUS

... and puts the groceries on the table. From her POV we see several people on the patio. She walks over to the sliding glass door and opens it. It's Richard and Neal in the hot tub with Tara and Kelly.

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - PATIO HOT TUB, MALIBU, CALIFORNIA

They're watching TV with the volume cranked up and are drinking margaritas. They don't notice Corina until the sound of her CLOSING the door gets Neal's attention.

NEAL
 (Poking Richard)
 Oh, hey Corina!

CORINA
 Wow, I guess I should have brought home some tequila and limes. What are you guys watching?

RICHARD
 (Getting up)
 It's ... it's just some silly Japanese wipeout game show. Here, let me, uh, help you put those things away.

CORINA
 Oh no, just stay where you are. It's not much, really. I just wanted to check to see if we had burglars, or pool-hopping teenagers or something.

Corina backs her way back into the house and slides the door closed - but not before Kelly catches her eye and smiles entirely too broadly at her.

Richard quickly gets out of the tub, towels off, and follows Corina into ...

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN, MALIBU, CA - CONTINUOUS

Corina is already putting away the groceries as Richard stands at the edge of the kitchen, still dripping a little, looking like a boy who's been caught in the cookie jar.

CORINA

What?

RICHARD

It ... well, it isn't what it looks like.

CORINA

It looks like you're having some fun - what's the big deal?

RICHARD

Tara just called and asked if they could come over. I think Neal may have actually invited them. ... It's not a date or anything.

CORINA

So what if it is? That's completely okay. It's not like we've sworn an oath or anything.

RICHARD

Well don't say it like that. That sounds like ...

CORINA

What?

RICHARD

That makes it sound like you think there will never be anything between us.

CORINA

No, it doesn't mean that at all. You're over thinking this Richard. Now go have some fun. I insist.

RICHARD

I ... I guess I really should get back out there. Can we talk about this later?

CORINA

I'd really rather not.

Richard nods 'yes' and slinks back to the patio as Corina shakes her head a little.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - STUDY, MALIBU, CA - MORNING

Richard searches frantically for something in his study - he's clearly in a hurry to get somewhere. His phone RINGS.

RICHARD

Hey, yeah, I know. I'm stepping out the door. I just have to find my waterproof watch.

(a beat)

Well, I know I don't need it, but I like to use it. I don't get in the ocean much.

(a beat)

I'll be there in about five minutes or so; I promise.

He gets off the phone and starts rummaging through the front drawer of his desk; placing random items on the desktop. He comes across the yellow envelope on which he wrote his desperate 'send off' epistle, the night of Corina's stroke. He looks at it.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Oh ... gawd

He puts it to the side of the desk and continues rummaging - placing more items on the desktop. Soon he finds the revolver from that night and places it carefully on the desktop.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Yeesh.

He carefully pulls the cylinder out and removes the bullets, placing them on the desktop. He checks the chamber and it's clear. He puts the revolver in the lower drawer and locks it with a key.

He checks the time on his iPhone - he's really late now - and leaves the room in a hurry.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - HALLWAY, MALIBU, CA - A LITTLE LATER

Corina checks her purse and can't find something. She walks over to the portable land line phone and dials a number. The familiar RING of her iPhone emanates from the study and she walks down the hall toward the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH NEAR RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

Richard comes running up to Neal and Tara who are wearing their surfing wet suits.

RICHARD

(A bit out of breath)

Sorry, sorry. You know I never even found that stupid watch.

Richard plops down his bag of gear on the sand.

TARA

It's no big deal. Neal and I were just about to head out.

(Pointing)

We brought you a foamie board since it's your first time.

RICHARD

Should I put on my wet suit?

NEAL

Well, you can if you want, but you've got some stuff to work on here on the beach before you're ready to get into the water.

TARA

You can swim, right?

RICHARD

Of course! I wouldn't be here if I couldn't.

NEAL

Well, you said you don't get in the ocean much.

RICHARD

That oblong thing in my backyard? It's a pool.

NEAL

Oh ... yeah.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - STUDY, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

Corina enters the study and rings her iPhone with the land line again - the RING is coming from the desk. She walks over and immediately spots her phone on the desktop - and then sees the bullets.

Concerned, she picks one up and looks at it and then sets it back down. In doing so she spies the handwritten note on the back of the yellow envelope.

She picks it up and reads it. Her hand comes to her mouth in horror. She immediately picks up her phone and calls Richard.

CORINA

Richard - where are you?

(a beat)

What beach? Where?

(a beat)

I'm on my way - please wait for me.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH NEAR RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - CONTINUOUS

Richard is trying a 'pop up' on his board while talking to Corina on the phone.

RICHARD

No, don't come. We'll meet up for coffee later.

(a beat)

I don't want to tell you what I'm doing right now.

(a beat)

Fine, whatever, I'll see you in a few minutes.

He gets off the phone and tries another pop up.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(To himself)

It was supposed to be a surprise...

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 (Yelling to Tara and Neal
 who are already surfing)
 Hey! When do I get to do that?!

CUT TO:

INT. CORINA'S CAR - BEACH ROAD - A LITTLE LATER

Corina speeds through traffic and pulls into a parking lot.

CORINA
 (To herself)
 Oh please, please don't do anything
 stupid.

EXT. BEACH NEAR RICHARD'S HOUSE, MALIBU, CA - SAME TIME

Richard performs yet another pop up. He seems frustrated.

RICHARD
 (To himself)
 Well, screw them. I'm gonna take a
 little break.

He reaches into his duffle bag and pulls out a Snickers bar and unwraps it.

Corina comes running, or limp running, from the sea oats, approaching Richard from behind. From her POV we see him putting the end of something dark into his mouth.

CORINA
 (Screaming)
 Richard! Stop! Please stop! Drop
 it! Drop it right now!

She's closer now and Richard hears her and turns around, dropping the Snickers bar to the ground. She finally gets near him, completely out of breath.

RICHARD
 For the love of god, what's wrong?

CORINA
 (Winded)
 Richard, please don't do it ...
 don't ...

She spies the candy bar on the ground.

RICHARD

Holy shit woman, it's just a Snickers, it's not even a king size. I didn't say anything about that Klondike bar you ate last night.

CORINA

What, what are you doing here?

RICHARD

I'm learning to surf.
(Pointing to Tara and Neal
in the waves)
Tara and Neal are teaching me -
sort of. ... I was going to
surprise you with it.

CORINA

Oh ... but ...

RICHARD

But what?

CORINA

Nothing. It's nothing. I'm ...

RICHARD

Are you okay?

CORINA

Yes, yes, I just ... nothing.

RICHARD

Do you want to hang out and watch?
We can go to lunch after ... since
you denied me the Snickers and all.

CORINA

No, I'm gonna head back to the
house and take Freddie for a walk.

RICHARD

Okay. Maybe we can go for some
coffee before we pick up Sandy at
the airport.

CORINA

Yeah, that'd be great.

She turns quickly and heads back to her car before Richard can see her welling up with tears of relief.

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - BALCONY, MALIBU, CA - AFTERNOON

Richard comes out onto the balcony where Corina sits. He hands her a cup of coffee and sits down with his own. They both look out over the Pacific.

RICHARD

Well, I'm a surfer now.

CORINA

(Teasing)

Supposedly. You know, Sandy used to surf. She'll tell me if you're the real deal.

RICHARD

Uh oh. I may have overplayed my hand. Maybe I should just say I'm a surfer-ish guy.

CORINA

Fair enough. So ... you and Tara are spending a lot of time together ... is that just by chance?

RICHARD

(Smiling)

Funny you should mention that. As it turns out she kind of has a thing for Neal - so she's decided to go younger rather than older. ... But, and here's the best part, she likes hanging out with me and is forcing Neal to include me in their socializing. Which he hates, of course... and makes it so much more enjoyable for me.

CORINA

Well, that worked out quite nicely then.

RICHARD

Exactly. And even better, I ended up getting a date with Kelly this weekend.

CORINA

What?!

RICHARD

Yeah. I managed to get us reservations at that swanky sushi place, Urasawa, so it should be a lot of fun.

CORINA

You're taking her there? I wanted to go there! Have you actually had a real conversation with that woman? Do you have any idea what she's really like?

Richard just smiles at her and lets her statement dangle for a while. Then he shakes his head and laughs a little.

RICHARD

If you could see your face ... your expression is fucking priceless.

Corina realizes she's been had and WHACKS Richard on the arm.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Yeah, she's not a nice person ... cute though.

CORINA

(Smiling)

You are a butt head.

They LAUGH together a little more as Sandy drops by on her way out.

SANDY

(Sing-song voice)

Hey, old people - I'm walking down to the beach for a swim.

RICHARD

Look out for the great white sharks, slightly younger person.

SANDY

(Sing song voice)

I'm from Australia and that shit doesn't scare me.

Sandy waves and they wave back and she's gone.

RICHARD

You know, I am really sorry that the whole ladies' apartment thing didn't work out like you'd hoped.

CORINA
Sure you are.

CUT TO:

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - CORINA'S BEDROOM, MALIBU, CA -
FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

Corina sits at her desk viewing her laptop as she talks with Sandy on Skype.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
An apartment?

CORINA
Yeah - it'll be great - just us girls.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
Where?

CORINA
The one I'm thinking about is in the Valley - in a very nice neighborhood.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
So, a two bedroom apartment, miles and miles from the beach?

CORINA
Well, actually, it's a one bedroom. But it has a small study that we'd convert to an extra bedroom. ... So, what do you think?

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
I think you need to go to your balcony and check out the view. Are you serious?

CORINA
But this would be ours. We could decorate it any way we want.

SANDY (ON SKYPE)
I can handle Richard's stupid black leather couch when it's a stone's throw from the beach. You can stay in the Valley apartment.

(MORE)

SANDY (ON SKYPE) (CONT'D)
 I'm staying in the Malibu house
 with the pool and ugly furnishings.

CUT TO:

EXT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - BALCONY, MALIBU, CA - BACK TO SCENE

RICHARD
 I really am sorry - but you can't
 argue with her logic ... and we can
 meet half way on redecorating.

CORINA
 Oh, I'm just busting your chops a
 little. ...
 (Touching his arm gently)
 But, seriously ... on redecorating.
 ...Can we do something about what's
 sitting on your desktop?

RICHARD
 My desktop? What?
 (Realizing what she means)
 ... Oh shit ... did you see the
 bullets?

CORINA
 I swear I wasn't snooping.

RICHARD
 That's okay. I was in a hurry - I'm
 sorry. Did ... did you read the ...

Corina gently nods her head 'yes'. Richard's embarrassment
 shows in the five shades of red in his face.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 I ... it was a very stupid moment
 of self-indulgent ... stupidity. It
 was a good while back and it wasn't
 even ... real. I would never and
 will never ...

CORINA
 (rubbing his arm gently)
 It's okay - we don't have to talk
 about it if you don't want to.

RICHARD
 And I will handle ... the
 redecorating ... of it.

CORINA

Good.

RICHARD

(Calming down)

Everything is so good now. It's just ...

CORINA

I know.

They sit silently for a few seconds sipping their coffees and giving themselves a respite from the moment. Corina takes Richard's hand gently.

CORINA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I was short with you the other day at your hot tub party. Listen, I ... I don't know where this going exactly. But I want it to last. And I haven't had a good track record in relationships ... and friendships often don't survive breakups.

RICHARD

I know. ... You're right - as usual. But, I mean, what happens when you ... you know, find some really hot gimpy guy with partial facial paralysis.

(Smiling)

He'd be like your soul mate and then I'd be out of picture.

CORINA

(Chuckling)

Well, I think my chances of finding that unicorn are pretty slim.

RICHARD

But what with all the internet dating sites, you know, you can match on any characteristics you want - so it could just be a narrowing game.

CORINA

I tell you what Mr. Lord. If, down the road, you ever come to decide that you just have to mate with a 'has been' actress with a crooked smile and a pronounced limp - well then, we can look into that.

RICHARD

And, by the same token, if you ever desire an out of shape writer, with no artistic integrity whatsoever, then we can look into that as well.

CORINA

Regardless, there is one thing I absolutely want you to know.

She stands up and walks behind him and hugs his shoulders as they both enjoy the view together.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Whatever happens - even if I find this rare, gimpy, handsome man or even if you start dating that asshole Kelly - I will be here for you. ... You'll have to work pretty hard to get rid of me, because I plan to always be by your side so we can help each other face the world - together.

Richard's emotions show on his face but he fights to regain composure as she strokes his hair lightly.

RICHARD

So, what I'm getting from this - the takeaway, if you will - is that you're giving me the green light to have sex with Kelly?

Corina lets out a SIGH and buries her face in his shoulder.

CORINA

Richard Lord, you exhaust me.

He reaches back and hugs her tightly with one arm while dabbing his tearing eyes with his other hand.

CORINA (CONT'D)

(Quietly)

And I wouldn't have it any other way.

FADE OUT.