

UNCOUPLED

Pilot

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UNCOUPLED

INT. MICHAEL'S AND COLIN'S LOFT - BEDROOM - MORNING (D1)

CLOSE ON: COLIN MCKENNA, 50 today, handsome, asleep in bed. Suddenly, his eyes open, then slowly close again as he begins to moan with pleasure. WIDEN TO REVEAL up and down movement under the covers below Colin. As the movement accelerates, Colin's face tenses, his moaning gets louder, finally climaxing in, well, a climax. A beat, then a tousled head, belonging to MICHAEL LAWSON, 46, very cute, pops up from beneath the covers next to Colin's face.

MICHAEL

(smiling)

Happy birthday, baby. I believe I just got you *and* your year off to a pretty great start.

INT. MICHAEL'S AND COLIN'S LOFT - KITCHEN - LATER (D1)

Michael, now dressed casual-chic, sips a cup of coffee as he texts. Eggs, onions, peppers on the counter. Colin enters, suit and tie, going over some paperwork.

MICHAEL

They just moved my showing up an hour. I was going to do a whole birthday egg white scramble and now I gotta scramble.

COLIN

That's okay, I'm not very hungry.

MICHAEL

Not very happy either. You've got to cheer up, honey. I mean, fifty? Fifty is nothing. Fifty is the new thirty.

(off Colin's look)

Five.

COLIN

That's what people who aren't turning fifty say.

MICHAEL

Okay, well, I don't have time to indulge a hot, virile, super successful dude in a bonkers pity party.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

If Nicole Kidman can turn fifty with a smile on what used to be her face, so can you.

(then, looking at him)

You really are so handsome.

COLIN

(weak smile)

Thanks.

MICHAEL

I gotta bounce. The reservation is at seven-thirty. My last showing is at six so I'll meet you at the restaurant.

COLIN

Okay.

MICHAEL

I'll text you the address. I'm glad it's just the two of us tonight. A nice, cozy little celebration of the milestone whose name we dare not speak.

COLIN

Yeah.

Michael embraces him, whispering in his ear:

MICHAEL

I love you, old-timer.

He grabs his phone and briefcase and exits.

INT. UBER - DAY (D1)

Michael in the back seat, on the phone with a party planner.

MICHAEL

(into phone)

Yes, Eric, we'll be there at seven-thirty on the dot. Everyone knows they have to arrive by seven-fifteen or wait until after eight. You're sure we have enough champagne? It's a very thirsty bunch. Oh, and remember about the lighting -- dim dim dim. These are not young men.

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE STREET - DAY (D1)

Michael exits the Uber. He approaches his real estate partner SUZANNE PRENTISS, 48, expensively put together, maybe one accessory too many, who stands in front of an elegant building.

SUZANNE

Quick, before the clients get here -
with or without the scarf?

She poses with a colorful scarf around her neck, then whips it off and poses without it.

MICHAEL

So without.

SUZANNE

Yeah, I was afraid I was getting
into a Deborah Birx area.

She stuffs the scarf in her bag.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

In other bad news, Tyler Haskell
got the Beresford listing.

MICHAEL

Are you fucking kidding me? They
went with that smug entitled
Millennial over us?

SUZANNE

How do you think I feel? They're my
cousins! And that's just the cherry
on the parfait of my life lately. I
went out with that guy I met on
Hinge last night. Suffice to say
they should rename that app
Unhinge. Psycho bastard told me I'd
be so hot if I lost ten pounds but
I could sit on his face anyway.

MICHAEL

So chivalry's not dead.

SUZANNE

Also just found out my ex's new
girlfriend is three months younger
than our son, who, by the way, is
basically a male whore with his own
supply of Plan B.

MICHAEL

Yeah, one slip-up there and you can add "Grandma" to your dating profile. Sexy.

SUZANNE

Don't even. Let's talk about something fun. How's the party prep? Colin remotely suspicious?

MICHAEL

Nope. Thinks we're having dinner just the two of us. He's going to be blown away. We've recreated the old Limelight where we met. I walked into that club, saw Colin and thought --

SUZANNE

That's the man I'm going to marry.

MICHAEL

No, I thought how can I figure out a way to rub up against his ass but just seem like I'm dancing. Can't believe it's been seventeen years.

SUZANNE

And still not married. Smart.

MICHAEL

That's the secret. He's my BFF -- boyfriend forever.

SUZANNE

B-A-R-F.

(then)

Sorry. Clearly I'm not only fat, I'm also bitter and jealous.

MICHAEL

Come on Suzanne. You're not fat.

SUZANNE

Haha. But seriously. A gorgeous, stand-up guy who's also a fucking hedge fund manager? Who do you have to blow to find one of those?

MICHAEL

Him, actually.

(looking down the street)

Here they come.

A FORTY-SOMETHING COUPLE, ZACK and EMILIA, approach.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Hey there, you two. We're very
excited about 12G. I don't want to
jinx it, but --
(points to store front)
I think that may be your new dry
cleaners.

Michael's phone rings. He checks it, then puts it away.

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER (D1)

Michael and Suzanne walk through the elegant apartment with
Zack and Emilia.

MICHAEL
You have views looking west at the
Met and South over Fifth Avenue...

SUZANNE
And double pane windows, the Donald
could shoot someone down there and
you'd never hear a thing.

Zack and Emilia laugh.

ZACK
Well, it's a little out of our
price range but it's so --

MICHAEL
Worth it. We wouldn't be showing it
to you if the value wasn't here.

SUZANNE
Even without the Bulthaup kitchen
with stainless steel countertops
and Gaggenau appliances.

MICHAEL
Kind of a no-brainer.

Michael's phone rings. He takes it out, looks.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Sorry, it's my housekeeper. Second
time she's called.

SUZANNE
(to Zack and Emilia)
Come, I'll show you the master.
(MORE)

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

I hope you like a closet you can
park a Prius in.

They cross out as Michael answers his phone.

MICHAEL

(into phone)

Hi Carmen, what's up?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MICHAEL'S AND COLIN'S LOFT - SAME (D1)

CARMEN, 50's, Latina, is nearly hysterical on the phone.

CARMEN

Mister, I just get here and they
stole!

MICHAEL

Carmen, calm down, I can't
understand you. They what?

CARMEN

They stole! They rob you! I don't
know how they get in!

MICHAEL

Alright, first, are you okay?

CARMEN

Yes, I'm okay, but oh Mister, they
take all that good wine, and they
go through your closets and they
take the Sonos speaker and that
nice cashmere blanket, the designer
towels...

MICHAEL

Okay Carmen, write everything down.
I'm calling Colin. He'll know what
to do.

Michael hangs up, then speed dials:

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Hey it's me, Carmen just called -
she says we've been robbed. Can you
go to the apartment? Now? I'm way
uptown and I've got back-to-back
appointments. Okay, call me.

Michael hangs up as Suzanne re-enters.

SUZANNE

They're in there kvelling over the laundry room. I don't know what it is about a Bosch washer dryer but-

MICHAEL

We got robbed.

SUZANNE

What?

MICHAEL

Yeah, the housekeeper says they took clothes and wine and... what else? A Sonos speaker... I think some Hermes towels that are too nice to actually use...

SUZANNE

Sounds like someone's having a gay yard sale.

MICHAEL

I can't believe this is happening the night of Colin's party.

SUZANNE

It's a good diversionary tactic. Nobody thinks robbery - surprise!

Zack and Emilia re-enter. Suzanne plasters on a smile.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

So? Are we ready to change zip codes?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (N1)

Michael stands outside a nondescript building, on the phone.

MICHAEL

(into phone)

I'm right outside, he should be here any minute. Is everyone in position? Great. Yes, very exciting.

(pulling phone away)

Don't squeal, Eric, I can hear you on the sidewalk!

He hangs up as a cab stops in front of him. Colin gets out.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Hey, birthday boy.

Michael hugs Colin.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Wow. The tension in your shoulders
is off the charts. What's going on?

COLIN
A homeless guy spit on me today.

MICHAEL
Ew, gross. But hey, maybe it's good
luck, like when a pigeon shits on
you. Is that all?

COLIN
I don't know. I'm having a really
hard time with this birthday.

MICHAEL
Honey, you've got to let it go.
Look at your life - you're healthy,
financially secure, you have a
hunky partner who loves you, all
your hair... it's kind of the gay
jackpot.

COLIN
(looking around)
Where is this restaurant? I don't
see any signs.

Michael leads him toward the building door.

MICHAEL
It's right up here. No signs, it's
very exclusive. There's maybe even
a password. By the way, you never
called me back. Did you check on
the apartment?

COLIN
We weren't robbed.

MICHAEL
But Carmen said all that stuff was
missing. Suzanne thinks it was an
inside job, maybe that plumber last
week got a copy of our elevator key
and-

COLIN
We weren't robbed.

They are at the door. Just as Michael is about to open it:

COLIN (CONT'D)
I took my clothes and some stuff
and moved out.

Michael stares at him, uncomprehending. Michael inadvertently opens the door. A LARGE CROWD OF PEOPLE yell:

CROWD
SURPRISE!

INT. EVENT SPACE - CONTINUOUS (N1)

The space is lit and decorated like a gay club in the nineties: Cher's *Believe* plays as go-go boys dance on the bar.

A totally shocked (for different reasons) Michael and Colin are bombarded by the crowd who are laughing, hugging, and libbing: "Happy birthday!", "Colin, you should see your face!", "You really didn't suspect anything?!" etc. Colin, genuinely surprised, and Michael, trying to approximate a normal reaction, are gradually separated by the party-goers.

BILLY JACKSON, 46, Black, TV handsome, approaches Michael. With him is WYATT, 23, 'nuff said. Billy hugs Michael, hands him a drink.

BILLY
Here, baby. Congrats, it's
fabulous. Mikey, this is Wyatt.

WYATT
Happy birthday.

MICHAEL
(blankly)
Um...

BILLY
(to Wyatt)
No, that's Colin, honey. Remember I
told you, Michael's my best friend,
we went to high school together,
it's his partner's-

WYATT
Oh right. Sorry. It was a pretty
quick tutorial.

Billy laughs, a tad too hard. It wasn't that funny.

BILLY
(to Michael)
How adorable is he? He couldn't
name three Cher songs!

WYATT
I mean, isn't she like eighty?

MICHAEL
(looking around)
Billy, I gotta go find --

STANLEY JAMES, 50, witty, bit of a sad sack, comes over.

STANLEY
Hello, Michael, Billy... and I
assume Billy's new child bride.

BILLY
Wyatt, this is Stanley. He's a very
successful art dealer. A much less
successful homo.

WYATT
Um, we don't really use that word.

MICHAEL
(trying not to lose it)
Sorry guys I really need to find --

BILLY
Go, do your host thing. And relax,
sweetie. You look more shocked than
Colin.

Michael crosses off, spots Colin, tries to make his way over
to him, but is intercepted by Suzanne, with her son MATT,
early 20's, cute, straight hipster.

SUZANNE
Yay, you pulled it off! I assume he
never saw it coming?

MICHAEL
No... totally never suspected. How
dumb is that? Hey, Matt.

MATT
Hey. So I'm guessing not a ton of
straight women under forty here?

SUZANNE

Matt, you're with your mother tonight. Can we please give the pussy patrol the evening off?

JONATHAN AND JONATHAN, late 40's, approach, hug Michael.

JONATHAN #1

Such a great party!

JONATHAN #2

We danced! We're young again!

MICHAEL

(stuck)

Uh, Suzanne, Matt, Jonathan and Jonathan.

JONATHAN #1

The Jonathans!

MATT

That's funny.

JONATHAN #2

(to Michael)

So, you guys ready for the big snip?

MICHAEL

Oh. Right.

(to Suzanne and Matt)

They just had a baby boy and-

JONATHAN #2

The bris is Monday and Michael and Colin are the godfathers.

SUZANNE

Mazel tov! Lucky little boy to have those two in his life forever.

MICHAEL

Sorry, I really need to talk to-

He crosses off.

MATT

So, at a bris, like, everyone stands around while some dude chops the end off of the baby's little dick?

JONATHAN #1

And then we have lox and bagels!

JONATHAN #2

Jews!

INT. EVENT SPACE - NIGHT (N1)

Michael, with his parents, LISA and BEN, 60's, looking over at Colin talking with guests.

BEN

We're very proud of the two of you, you know. He's like our other son.

MICHAEL

Uh, thanks Dad.

LISA

If only your sister could find someone who loves her. She's never been lucky like you. I mean, just look at her hair...

INT. EVENT SPACE - NIGHT (N1)

Michael, crossing through the dance floor, approaches Colin, talking with KURT, 50, aging jock, and his wife STEPHANIE, 48, pretty.

MICHAEL

(softly to Colin)

Can I have a minute?

KURT

Hey, Mike!

MICHAEL

Hi, Kurt. Steph.

Hugs.

KURT

I was just telling Steph how Col used to take me to clubs like this all the time when we were in college.

STEPHANIE

All the time? Anything else you want to tell me?

COLIN

(laughing)

Believe me, if he'd wanted to dabble in those waters, the pool would've been full of speedo-wearing volunteers.

Michael looks at Colin, laughing and drinking with Kurt and Stephanie. He tries to catch Colin's eye when ERIC, 30's, officious party planner, approaches him.

ERIC

Everything good, Michael?

Michael leads Eric away.

MICHAEL

Yeah, Eric. Listen, before we start the video and all that I --

Suddenly, the music cuts off. A spotlight hits a piano, where MARC, late 40's, pixie, vamps and SCOTT, early 50's, stately, stands nearby.

SCOTT

Good evening. In honor of Colin's big night, Michael asked if Marc and I could come up with some kind of musical tribute.

MARC

Apparently, he thought just because we've won a couple of Tonys we could bang out a great song in no time.

SCOTT

And he was right!

Marc plays as he and Scott sing their funny tribute to Colin, which of course includes Michael.

SONG TO COME

During the song, Michael watches, confused, as Colin, laughing and clapping, seems to be having a great time. Could Michael have misunderstood before?

The song ends, everyone cheers and applauds. As Michael tries to make his way over, he sees Billy unbuttoning Colin's shirt. Madonna's *Erotica* starts playing. Colin wriggles out of his shirt, showing his still-ripped torso. Billy hands him a pair of angel wings to put on. A YOUNG MAN passes by.

YOUNG MAN
(to Colin)
Ooh, hi Daddy.

COLIN
(points to Jonathans)
No, they're the daddies.

BILLY
Honey, you're fifty. You're the
daddy.

COLIN
(sinking in)
Wow. I'm the daddy.

He downs another shot as Michael finally approaches him.

MICHAEL
Hey, I really need to talk to-

Eric taps Michael on the shoulder. He turns around.

ERIC
We're ready with the video.

MICHAEL
(frantic)
No no, not yet, I told you-

Suddenly a large screen lights up.

ERIC
Ooh, sorry, I forgot.

Michael turns back, Colin is gone.

Everyone watches as the video, a chronology of Colin's life, begins. DIFFERENT SONGS accompany photos of Colin as a baby, child, in high school, his arm around Kurt in college, etc. Then the first photo of Michael and Colin appears as Whitney's *I Will Always Love You* begins and plays throughout the seventeen years of their relationship on the screen. Michael is barely holding it together when the video ends to wild applause. He spots Colin, being hugged and congratulated, as Eric approaches Michael with a glass of champagne and a microphone.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Now the toast.

MICHAEL
(paralyzed)
I - I - I -

ERIC
(into mic)
Everyone! Your attention please!

He hands the mic and champagne to Michael.

MICHAEL
I... um... first thank you all for coming and for keeping our little surprise a secret. I know how hard it is to pretend everything is normal while you're quietly plotting away.

People laugh, Colin smiles and looks down.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
But we did it for our beloved Colin. My partner, my best friend, my everything for the past seventeen years.
(getting emotional)
I remember saying to him after our first date, "What if we just found each other?" Because the knowing was that fast. That strong. I... I can't imagine... my life without you.

Colin looks at Michael,

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
It just... doesn't make any sense. So, to you, Colin. Few have what we have. May it go on forever. I love you. I love you.
(tearing up)
I love you.

COLIN
(emotional)
I love you, too.

They hold each other's gaze. Everyone applauds, not a dry eye.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (N1)

Outside the event space. Michael and Colin exit with Billy, arm around Wyatt, Stanley, and the Jonathans, all pretty tipsy.

Ad libs: "Fucking great party," "Just like the old days," "I'm so drunk." Wyatt: "Like a Virgin... Lucky Star... and... Like a Prayer, that's three!" They all hug goodbye and walk away. Michael turns to Colin.

MICHAEL
(deep breath)
Okay. I feel like that's the first
breath I've taken all night.

COLIN
I know what you mean.

A beat. Then:

MICHAEL
So, can we finally talk?

COLIN
I intended to talk to you at the
dinner I thought we were having
tonight. I wasn't counting on a
massive surprise party.

MICHAEL
Yeah - you're fucking welcome! And
by the way, "surprise happy
birthday" is a a lot more fun than
"surprise I'm leaving you!"

COLIN
It's late. I have to go.

Colin raises his hand to hail a cab. Michael slaps it down.

MICHAEL
What do you mean 'go'? Colin, You
can't just blindside me like this
and not talk about it! Is there
someone else?

COLIN
I just need time on my own to
figure things out.

Michael finally loses his shit.

MICHAEL
After seventeen years you don't
"figure things out" alone in
another apartment with the Hermes
towels and THE WINE!!

COLIN

(coolly)

I only took collectibles that I paid for myself.

MICHAEL

Yeah, towels we're not allowed to use and wine we can't drink. What is the point of that? I never understood.

COLIN

Stop making this about you. It's not all about you.

MICHAEL

No, it's about us! You're making an us decision all by yourself. Where is this apartment anyway? And who did you use to find it?

COLIN

It doesn't matter.

MICHAEL

The hell it doesn't. There is a realtor in this city, a person I probably know, who knew you were leaving me before I did! Can you get how fucking humiliating that is for me?

COLIN

See? And now it's all back to you again.

A cab pulls up and Colin gets in. It speeds away, leaving Michael alone on the street.

EXT. NYC - MORNING - ESTABLISHING (D2)

INT. MICHAEL'S AND COLIN'S LOFT - BEDROOM - DAY (D2)

Michael wakes up, feeling the hangover from last night. Looks over to see the empty side of the bed. And then it all comes flooding back. He gropes for his phone on the nightstand.

He texts Colin:

Michael: **I don't understand. We have to talk.**

MICHAEL
(looking at phone)
C'mon, dots...

Nothing.

INT. CAB - DAY (D2)

Michael, dressed for work, sits in back. On the screen in front of him, Billy is delivering the *STORMCENTER 4* report in front of a large map.

BILLY
(on screen)
...with partly cloudy skies and a
high of sixty seven. Out on Long
Island ...

Michael's phone buzzes. He looks at the text:

Colin: **Made appointment with a couple's counselor. Can you make tomorrow at 3?**

Michael texts back: **YES!!!!**

Then removes the exclamation points.

Erases the YES and responds with a "thumbs up" over Colin's text.

Swipes up on the screen to reveal his home-screen pic: a shirtless vacation shot of Michael and Colin.

INT. MODEL APT - DAY (D2)

A slick-suited REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER speaks to an assembly of BROKERS who are gathered at this luxe as fuck model apartment to hear his pitch. We find Suzanne among this crowd of uber brokers, munching on a small pastry.

DEVELOPER
Soaring more than one thousand
square feet over Madison Square
Park, The Verge will redefine the
downtown luxury condo experience.

Minimalist, self important images flicker behind him on an enormous flatscreen.

DEVELOPER (CONT'D)

Exclusive amenities like on call pilates instructors, a raw milk cheese cave, and private security run by former Mossad agent Yossi Zelman give this building a cachet unmatched by anything downtown has to offer.

Michael approaches Suzanne as the developer drones on.

SUZANNE

At four thousand a square foot, you think they'd be serving us something better than pigs in a blanket.

(she clocks him)

Amazing party last night. Did you even sleep?

MICHAEL

Not really.

SUZANNE

I bet. You totally pulled it off. I could tell Colin was really surprised.

MICHAEL

Yeah, not as surprised as I was.

(beat)

Right before the party, he told me he's leaving me.

SUZANNE

Get the fuck out.

MICHAEL

Yeah. He kinda did that too.

A WOMAN approaches them with "THE VERGE" branded hardhats.

WOMAN

For the tour.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION ELEVATOR - DAY (D2)

Suzanne and Michael, now wearing hardhats, ascend the outside of the shell of this building. The city spreads out beneath their feet.

SUZANNE

Do you think there's someone else?

MICHAEL

He says no but I don't know. I don't know anything! Except that while I was planning his party, he was plotting his escape.

SUZANNE

Honestly, I never thought he had that kind of flair for drama.

MICHAEL

Comforting. Thanks.

SUZANNE

I'm sorry - I just can't believe you're here. I'd be in bed calling lawyers or interviewing hit men.

EXT. 80TH FLOOR - DAY (D2)

The group steps onto a floor of raw space with jaw dropping views.

DEVELOPER

This is our top tier lounge - available exclusively to owners above the fiftieth floor. For a separate membership fee.

MICHAEL

Gotta make sure the ultra-rich have someone to look down on.

SUZANNE

Colin looked like he was having such a good time last night. He even kissed me, and he's not a kissy person.

MICHAEL

Yeah, that's what you call a Judas kiss.

SUZANNE

Sweetheart, I'm so, so sorry. What did he say, exactly?

MICHAEL

Well, there was the typical panic about turning fifty and that he needs to figure things out.

SUZANNE

Why are you so calm? You didn't come up here to jump, did you?

MICHAEL

No, because he made an appointment for us to see a therapist, which is a big deal. Colin doesn't like to talk. He likes to sweep shit under the rug. He's so out of touch with his feelings. I don't believe he's going to throw away seventeen years together because he's having a dark moment about his fucking birthday.

Suzanne nods gravely, then:

SUZANNE

Can I tell you what I'm thinking?

MICHAEL

Yes.

SUZANNE

This might be the building that gets the Warnocks to finally sell their place on Park and move downtown.

Off Michael, she's not wrong.

EXT CHELSEA GALLERY - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT (N2)

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT (N2)

A buzzy opening populated by a fashionable crowd of uptown and downtown, intoxicated by the open bar and money hanging on the walls.

Michael stands with Billy looking at a painting.

BILLY

Seriously? Moved the fuck out?

Michael gives him a once over, suspiciously.

MICHAEL

Did you know?

BILLY

What? No!

MICHAEL

Your reaction sounded rehearsed.

BILLY

You think Colin confides in *me*? I'm your friend, baby.

MICHAEL

Oh God, let's not start with that - friends getting into camps...

BILLY

It doesn't make sense. Not after that party last night. And that Whitney tribute to your love. Sounds like he's just shellshocked about turning fifty.

MICHAEL

Exactly. We're going to see a therapist tomorrow

BILLY

What? Why?!

MICHAEL

So we can talk.

BILLY

Why do you have to pay someone to talk to each other?

MICHAEL

I need a professional to tell him he's crazy.

BILLY

You know what's crazy? Having sex exclusively with the same person for seventeen years. Men aren't built that way. You guys need to open up. And not to a therapist.

Stanley races over.

STANLEY

So I just heard from the director of the Hirshhorn that they want two pieces from this show; but how can I be happy about anything after hearing about you and Colin?

MICHAEL

What? What did you hear? Who told you?

STANLEY

Suzanne. She's worried about you. She said you were about to jump from the fiftieth floor of raw space this afternoon.

MICHAEL

Yeah. But then I remembered your opening tonight and how you are about last-minute cancellations.

STANLEY

I still don't believe it.

MICHAEL

There's no story here, folks. We're taking some time to figure things out. Relationships hit potholes.

STANLEY

That little Sherri Levine painting I gave you as a housewarming gift belongs to you.

MICHAEL

We're not dividing our assets.

STANLEY

Good. Because trust me, you do not want to be gay and single in this town at our age. You're invisible.

BILLY

You've been saying that since you were thirty.

STANLEY

So I speak from experience.

BILLY

Not mine. I think it gets better with age. The number of young guys that want to hook up with an older man is ridiculous.

STANLEY

That's because you're on TV. Every shallow twink in this city wants to sleep with someone on TV. Don't give yourself too much credit.

BILLY

I've seen your profile on Grindr, my friend. Nobody wants to fuck a post of a Donald Judd stack.

STANLEY

That's my instagram profile, you asshole. I'm not on Grindr. It's nothing but hookers and massage therapists.

BILLY

Well, to some...

(beat)

Being single is an attitude. And the minute you're desperate for a relationship, you're never going to find one.

STANLEY

Well, Michael did. He hated being single. We'd go dancing and to bars and all he wanted was to meet someone to settle down with. At thirty.

MICHAEL

I wasn't desperate.

STANLEY

Okay, you were focused.

MICHAEL

I wasn't...

(then, admitting)

Alright, yeah. I didn't love being single much.

STANLEY

So imagine, if you didn't like it then, when you were young and hot...

BILLY

He's still hot.

STANLEY

I'm just saying, whatever it is, work it out. Colin's a wonderful guy and I believe in the two of you.

BILLY

Here here.

MICHAEL

Thank you, guys.

Stanley crosses off.

BILLY

I mean it. You're still hot and
there are plenty of young guys --

MICHAEL

Stop.

EXT. OUTDOOR COURTYARD - NIGHT (N2)

A festive long table is set beneath twinkling lights. Michael sits next to an empty place setting with the place card COLIN MCKENNA announcing his absence.

Michael texts Colin: **Dinner tonight for Stanley's opening.
Think you'll make it?**

No response.

A hand reaches into frame and snatches Colin's place card away.

STANLEY

Just as I thought. He's a no-show.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry.

STANLEY

Y'know - relationship drama doesn't
give people a free pass to be rude.

MICHAEL

Are you really going to make me
feel worse about this?

STANLEY

(whispering)

I'm sitting you next to Claire
Lewis. She and her husband are
major league art collectors and
getting a divorce. They're selling
everything including the apartment.
You're welcome.

A lithe twenty-something assistant escorts Claire to her seat next to Michael. Claire is late 50's, still keeping it tight - maybe too tight.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

Claire, this is my dear friend and fabulous real estate agent, Michael Lawson. Michael, Claire Lewis, collector extraordinaire.

Claire sits as Stanley walks away. After a beat she turns to Michael.

CLAIRE

So, you're getting divorced too?

MICHAEL

(stunned)

That's what he told you?

CLAIRE

(shrugs)

I guess it's catching.

EXT. OUTDOOR COURTYARD - DINNER - A LITTLE LATER (N2)

CLAIRE

The problem with art is that everybody chases the same thing. If you want it you can't buy it, and if you can buy it nobody wants it.

MICHAEL

It's the same thing with real estate.

CLAIRE

My husband is in a hurry to sell the apartment. He thinks it's a white elephant and doesn't want to go through the headache in a down market.

MICHAEL

You can't let him do that. I know that building, and anything with a terrace is extremely desirable.

CLAIRE

Well then I guess that makes me "extremely desirable" adjacent. Which, trust me, is the best thing I've heard in a long time.

MICHAEL

C'mon!

(beat)

Who are you working with?

CLAIRE

We haven't decided yet.

(beat)

But think I know why Stanley sat me next to you. He wanted to make a match.

MICHAEL

I would love to come and take a look with my partner Suzanne. We won't let you sell yourself short.

CLAIRE

Your partner's a woman?

MICHAEL

Suzanne Prentiss. I think you'll like her very much.

CLAIRE

No, I like the gays. She'd be there more to keep my husband happy. He can also be a bit of a yeller, FYI.

MICHAEL

Oh.

Claire calls out to a passing waiter re: her drink.

CLAIRE

Another one?

Off Michael, wondering what he's signing up for.

EXT. MICHAEL'S AND COLIN'S LOFT - DAY - ESTABLISHING (D3)

INT. MICHAEL'S AND COLIN'S LOFT - MORNING (D3)

Michael, dressed for work, downs a cup of coffee as he scrolls through his phone. The elevator door opens and Carmen the housekeeper enters the apartment.

MICHAEL

Hi Carmen. I'm just going.

He goes to sink, starts to wash out his cup.

CARMEN

No, I do that. You don't clean good, you always leave a ring.

She takes the cup from him and washes it.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

So you called police? Did they catch the robbers?

MICHAEL

No, and actually it turns out it may not have been a robbery after all.

CARMEN

What about everything that's gone? And I forget to write down all of Mister Colin's watches were missing.

MICHAEL

I know. The truth is-

CARMEN

And also that rubber penis he keeps in his underwear drawer.

MICHAEL

(stammering)

That's not... I mean, it's... I'm really late, Carmen, bye.

As he pushes the elevator button.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(muttering)

Mister Colin's just full of surprises.

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE STREET / INT. LUXURY BUILDING - DAY (D3)

Michael is on the phone, walking up to an opulent Park Avenue building.

MICHAEL

(into phone)

I'm here, Suzanne! How far? Well hurry! You know how much this listing means!

He enters the lobby, approaches the Doorman.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Michael Lawson to see Claire Lewis.

The Doorman picks up the house phone.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(pissed, into phone)
I don't want to fuck it up because
one of us didn't prepare for the
slim possibility of NEW YORK CITY
TRAFFIC!

He hangs up. The Doorman eyes him disapprovingly.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(meekly)
Sorry, its just been a rough couple
of --

The Doorman dismissively indicates the elevators.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Right, thanks.

He quickly crosses to the elevator.

INT. LUXURY BUILDING - ELEVATOR/ANTE ROOM - DAY (D3)

The elevator doors open. Michael steps out into a small, well appointed anteroom facing two large double doors. Claire opens one of the doors.

CLAIRE
Hello, Michael. What was all the
shouting on the phone downstairs?

MICHAEL
What? How did -- ?

CLAIRE
We have very proper doormen. A
raised voice, the use of profanity,
it sets off alarm bells. After all,
one's ears are not garbage cans.
Just FYI if there's a next time.
Please, come in.

MICHAEL
Sorry. My partner is stuck in
traffic so she'll be a little --

INT. PARK AVENUE DUPLEX - CONTINUOUS (D3)

Michael enters an extravagant apartment in the twenty-to-twenty-five million dollar range -- sweeping staircase, breathtaking views, terraces... it is next level luxury.

MICHAEL

(awed)

Oh my god. This is... I feel like I'm in one of those '30's movies where the Depression is happening outside but up here there's only Fred Astaire and servants and parties --

CLAIRE

Well, I'm afraid lately there's been a good amount of depression happening up here as well. That tends to be your emotional state when your husband of twenty eight years, with whom you've raised two children in this apartment, comes home one day, tells you you're not "fun" anymore and moves out.

Michael's ears prick up.

MICHAEL

So, it was just like that? No warning?

CLAIRE

None. Went off to work in the morning, what do you want for dinner, came back, ruined my life, then took a few things to his new apartment.

Claire lights a cigarette, opens the terrace door.

MICHAEL

So he'd already rented an apart --

CLAIRE

I'm not fun? He misses his poo window in the morning and his whole day is shot.

Claire starts pacing and puffing.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

You live with a person for decades,
you think you know them, then one
day you find out this can happen!

MICHAEL

(tentatively)

Was he, you know, in hindsight,
showing signs of unhappiness that
now you go, "Oh, that should have
tipped me off?"

CLAIRE

Nothing! Completely normal, then
all of a sudden the fat fuck says
"I need some space." I didn't even
understand what he was talking
about. There's five thousand square
feet in this apartment and a house
in Amagansett, how much more space
do you need? And then he had the
nerve to say I should be more
supportive about this!

MICHAEL

(light bulb)

So he was asking you to be more
positive about his need for space?

CLAIRE

Can you fucking imagine? He's
leaving me and I'm supposed to be
all sympathetic and encouraging
about it? He can go suck a dick.

(then)

No offense.

Claire stubs out her cigarette, then lights another.

MICHAEL

(waving it off)

Please.

(then)

But back to the space thing - was
he saying you could've maybe worked
it out if you'd understood his need
for-

But Claire isn't listening, she's spinning out.

CLAIRE

What the fuck am I supposed to do,
start over at my age?

(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

What if I never have sex again?
What if I end up paying for
companionship?

MICHAEL

Oh, I don't think, I mean you're a
very attractive --

CLAIRE

Don't kid yourself, baby, I know
women like that! Men too! Everybody
wants young, young, young. No one's
looking for someone my age. I'm
going to fucking die alone! How did
this fucking happen to me?

There is a knock on the door, then Suzanne tentatively
enters. She sees Michael is frozen, then looks at Claire,
shaking with rage.

SUZANNE

I feel like recapping what I missed
would be unproductive, so why don't
we just pick up from here?

INT. ANTEROOM/ELEVATOR - LATER (D3)

Michael and Suzanne at the elevator, Claire at the front
door.

CLAIRE

Thanks for coming. I'll be in
touch. Oh and Michael... remember
our little talk about "lobby
etiquette."

She closes her door as the elevator arrives. Michael and
Suzanne step inside, doors close.

SUZANNE

What's lobby etiquette?

MICHAEL

It's about yelling and cursing in
the lobby. Apparently all bets are
off once you get upstairs.

SUZANNE

Well, she seemed to really respond
to us, despite whatever the fuck
was going on when I got here.

MICHAEL

She started talking about her husband leaving her and it kind of spooked me a little. Our situations are not dissimilar...

The elevator doors open. A YOUNG MAN, late 20's, smug, stands there.

SUZANNE

Tyler Haskell!

TYLER

Oh my god, deja vu! The last time I ran into you guys was at the Beresford. Sorry.

He makes a sad face.

TYLER (CONT'D)

But the good news is, we've already had two offers above asking.

MICHAEL

(joyless)

Yay. I assume you're here to see Claire Lewis.

TYLER

Love Claire. Friends of my parents. So sad about her and Henry.

Another sad face, then he enters the elevator, pushes the button.

TYLER (CONT'D)

By the way, there's a listing coming up at 1040 Fifth. Jackie O's building? I went to Collegiate with her grandson John, dreamy, so I know the tenants. Just didn't want you to get your hopes up.

The elevator door closes.

SUZANNE

Shit!

MICHAEL

It's not over. We still have a --
(off her look)
Shit.

INT. BERGDORF GOODMAN - LATER (D3)

Michael, on a mission, enters, followed by Suzanne.

SUZANNE

Really? A housewarming gift? For the apartment he rented behind your back before telling you he was leaving --

MICHAEL

I know the story, Suzanne, I don't need a recap.

(then)

Do you believe in fate?

SUZANNE

I do if it'll get us quicker to the reason you've completely lost your-
(suddenly distracted)

Oh look, placemats half off. Do you think he'll be entertaining - oh my god I'm as crazy as you!

MICHAEL

Listen to me. I think I understand why I was meant to meet Claire. It wasn't to get the listing.

SUZANNE

I wish you'd told me that yesterday, I could've saved a hundred bucks on a blowout.

MICHAEL

Claire is supposed to teach me how anger and bitterness and negativity will just push Colin further away, like her husband. Maybe he'd still be there and they wouldn't be selling their apartment --

SUZANNE

And Tyler wouldn't be representing them and getting three percent of twenty million. I wanna to kill myself --

MICHAEL

-- If Claire had just been able to take a step back and help Henry figure things out. Nobody wants to throw away all those years if they can find their way through.

SUZANNE

I don't know... my ex seemed to have no problem shit-canning two decades of marriage for a pair of twenty-six-year-old tits. But go on.

MICHAEL

This is a wake-up call -- I need to stop pretending we're the perfect couple and support him moving out while we go through this counseling process so we can become a better couple. Hence the housewarming gift, which I will give him later today at our therapy session.

SUZANNE

Okay then. I'm on board.

They peruse through Housewares.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Just so I can be helpful, what kind of a gift are we looking for? I mean, can you really say "I understand and respect your need for your own space" with a Diptyque candle?

Michael stops in front of a display of expensive frames.

MICHAEL

It should be something useful, Colin's very practical, but also something we're both going to love when it ends up back in our apartment in three-to-six months.

SUZANNE

So it's really a gift for you.

MICHAEL

For us. Eventually. Don't make it sound weird.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY (D3)

Nondescript with a whiff of leftover 80's decor. Michael sits next to Colin (dressed in a suit) on a couch, the wrapped gift on his lap. DENNIS SWEENEY, mid fifties, soft spoken with a serious, compassionate demeanor sits across from them. A beat of uncomfortable silence, then:

MICHAEL

So, before we dig in ...
(turns to Colin)

I just want to say thank you. For giving us the opportunity to take this journey of communication while living apart, and for making this appointment with Dr. Sweeney.

COLIN

You're welcome.

MICHAEL

And, just to demonstrate my support for your process, I bought you a housewarming present for your new apartment in the undisclosed location.

He places it on the table in front of them.

COLIN

Thank you. That wasn't necessary.

MICHAEL

I bet it's in Williamsburg. Or Dumbo.

(to Dennis)

He's always romanticized Brooklyn.
(back to Colin)

Am I warm?

Dennis intervenes.

DENNIS

Well, it sounds like Michael has a lot of questions, Colin.

MICHAEL

I do.

DENNIS

So as I understand it, you haven't told Michael where you are living.

MICHAEL

He didn't tell me he was leaving. I thought we'd been robbed.

COLIN

Oh, c'mon. Will you stop overdramatizing this.

MICHAEL

Sorry, but it was a dramatic move.
Shoot first ask questions later...
that's what you do to someone you
love?

COLIN

If I had told you before, you would
have talked me out of it. It's the
only thing I could do to give us a
chance of dealing with our issues.

MICHAEL

Great! Then I'm all for it. You
took a brave step, even though I
might have interpreted it as a
passive aggressive sucker punch.

COLIN

Kind of like that surprise party
you threw me? For a birthday I told
you I had no intention of
broadcasting to the world?

MICHAEL

What is this shame around age?

COLIN

You know I don't like being the
center of attention..

MICHAEL

I was celebrating you.

COLIN

Without my consent.

MICHAEL

Then I apologize, but that is kind
of the definition of a surprise
party.

(beat)

But that's not why you moved out.

COLIN

No.

DENNIS

Well, gentlemen there is a lot to
unpack here.

COLIN AND MICHAEL

Yes. Yeah.

Michael sighs.

MICHAEL

I feel like our lives are run by work, and social obligations, and so much shit that is just superficial when the truth is all I really care about is you.

COLIN

Thank you for saying that.

MICHAEL

And I'm glad we're here. To focus on what's important. I just want to use this as an opportunity to really listen to you.

INT. THERAPISTS OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (D3)

MICHAEL

(rambling on)

...and I feel like we have this great life, and maybe a lot of it goes unexamined, so is there work to be done? Absolutely. That's why we're here. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to it.

DENNIS

Our time is almost up. But I see many positives here. A lot of couples come in with the intention of using therapy as a safe space to end their relationship. But what I see here are two men looking for a way forward. And prepared to do the sometimes painful hard work of what that entails.

MICHAEL

I definitely am.

COLIN

Yeah, me too.

Michael takes Colin's hand. He squeezes it in return.

MICHAEL

Don't forget - we've got the Jonathans' bris at 5. Do you want to go together?

COLIN

I've got a meeting I'm already late for. See you there?

MICHAEL

Sure.

He stands and begins to gather his things.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Dennis)

Our best friends asked us to be the godfathers to their son.

DENNIS

That's lovely. Shall we schedule our next appointment? Same time next week?

MICHAEL

Good for me.

COLIN

Great.

He starts to exit.

MICHAEL

See you there, Godfather.

Michael sighs as Colin exits, a small weight lifted his shoulders for the first time.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

So, in your professional opinion, how did that go?

DENNIS

I think it's a terrific first step. Longterm relationships can stagnate without the people in them even realizing it. But with counseling, they can fall in love all over again.

MICHAEL

Well, then I'm grateful to be here.

Michael stands, suddenly noticing the gift left on the table.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Oh shit, he forgot his gift.

DENNIS
Don't read into it.

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN BUILDING - NIGHT (N3)

INT. HELL'S KITCHEN APARTMENT - NIGHT (N3)

A brand-spanking-new unit in a glass high rise. A group of friends and family are gathered, grazing at a buffet table. This is "the Jonathans'" apartment.

STANLEY
Can you believe this apartment?

MICHAEL
I found it for them. Shhhh it's a rental don't tell anyone.

STANLEY
I remember Hell's Kitchen when you couldn't walk west of ninth avenue without getting knifed. Now it's Chelsea with better gays.

MICHAEL
Progress.

Billy approaches, clocks the gift in Michael's hand.

BILLY
The invite said 'no gifts.'

MICHAEL
This is for Colin. Something for the new apartment.

STANLEY
The man leaves you cold and you buy him a present. Where's your self respect?

BILLY
He's not wrong. You've got to play hard to get if you want to get him hard again.

MICHAEL
Ha. Look, I'm supporting his journey. And I'm not taking relationship advice from either of you - your personal lives speak for themselves.

The Jonathans approach.

JONATHAN #1
We said no gifts!

JONATHAN #2
But if you insist.

Jonathan #2 tries to take it out of his hand.

MICHAEL
(holding on to it)
It's not for the baby.

JONATHAN #2
Where's Colin?

MICHAEL
On his way.

JONATHAN #1
Even though he doesn't have a drop
of Hebrew blood, we're honored to
have both of you as Levi's
godfathers.

Jonathan #2 motions to a handsome, dark haired man in his
thirties noshing on chopped liver.

JONATHAN #2
Have you seen the mohel?

MICHAEL
Seriously? Where did you find a hot
mohel?

JONATHAN #1
We're superficial Jews, what can I
say?
(to Billy, admonishing)
He's straight - don't get any
ideas.

BILLY
Relax, I'm not getting ideas about
your "hot mohel."

He heads off.

STANLEY
He's totally going to hit on him.

JONATHAN #2

(to Michael)

Tell Colin to get his ass here -
were ready to start.

MICHAEL

What would you like us to do?

JONATHAN #1

Just stand next to me and catch me
in case I faint.

The Jonathans head off.

STANLEY

Lucky you. A ringside seat to the
genital mutilation. See that guy
over there?

He motions to a fit balding man wearing a polo shirt.

MICHAEL

Balding with the biceps?

STANLEY

Yeah. We went on a date three years
ago. I said hello when I came in
and he said "Nice to meet you."

(beat)

I swear I don't even know why I
bother scooping my bagel anymore.

Michael's phone PINGS. He reads the incoming text.

**Colin: I'm not coming. And I don't think there's anything for
us to work on anymore. Sorry.**

Michael stares at the phone. Blinking. Stanley interrupts.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

Is everything OK?

Jonathan #1 approaches.

JONATHAN #1

We're ready to start. Is Colin...?

MICHAEL

(in shock)

Umm... he's got a work emergency...

(beat)

Excuse me.

He rushes to the bathroom.

INT. HELL'S KITCHEN APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT (N3)

Michael races in, throws up the toilet seat and vomits. He rinses his mouth, and splashes water on his face. Looks in the mirror and pulls himself together. Flushes the toilet. Then exits.

INT. HELL'S KITCHEN APARTMENT - OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS (N3)

Stanley is standing right outside, concerned.

STANLEY

Oh my God, did you just throw up?

MICHAEL

(admitting)

Yeah.

STANLEY

So that's your trick. Stupid me. I could never learn how.

He starts away, leaving Michael feeling more alone and vulnerable than he's ever felt in his life.

INT. COLIN AND MICHAEL'S LOFT - NIGHT (N3)

Michael sits on the couch next to the housewarming gift. An open bottle of vodka and an empty tumbler on the table beside him.

He unwraps the gift he bought for Colin. It's silver frame with a picture of the two of them, looking young, handsome and happy. Smiling and in love. Michael studies it for a moment, when his phone rings.

MICHAEL

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. MIDTOWN STREET - NIGHT (N3)

Suzanne exits a restaurant with some friends.

SUZANNE

I know where Colin is living. Are you sitting down?

Off Michael, dreading the news.

