

FIRMWOOD

(aka BIG DICKS)

Written By

Jon Harmon Feldman

Warner Bros. Television  
December 8, 2006  
NETWORK REVISED DRAFT  
CLEAN COPY

ACT ONE

EXT. FIRMWOOD COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

We PUSH past the putting greens, past the perfectly-manicured grounds, past the monied MEMBERS and GUESTS mingling on the patio under a banner that reads -- "ANNUAL LABOR DAY BARBECUE."

This is Firmwood, an exclusive country club located amongst the monied estates of Westchester, New York, just north of New York City, where many of our most successful CEOS -- and CEOs to-be -- live, work and play.

Amidst the snippets of dialogue -- "No, the insider trading charges were dropped," "She was a wonderful nanny until she was deported," "I have the X3 and the X5. One day I hope to get the X7." -- we HEAR something slightly more interesting -- the SOUNDS of SEX. And we're --

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - FIRMWOOD - CONTINUOUS

A COUPLE is engaged in passionate love-making. DUNCAN, early 40s and dapper, has LISBETH, also early 40s but with the surgically-enhanced attributes of a woman half her age -- pinned amidst a row of brooms.

LISBETH

Do you think they're going to hear us?

DUNCAN

Only if we keep doing it right...

Another beat of lovemaking. We're not quite sure who this pair of lovers is until...

LISBETH

Oh...I forgot to mention -- you're behind on your child support.

Duncan acknowledges his ex-wife with a simple "mmm," not wanting to distract himself from the sex.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

And you need to talk to our daughter. She dropped out of school last week.

Duncan looks at her. Lisbeth nods. But he stays focused on the task at hand. And Lisbeth seems to be enjoying it too.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

God. If we did it like this when we were married, we might still be married.

DUNCAN

Or just very, very tired.

As Duncan continues to perform, we FREEZE FRAME over him. The screen reads --

DUNCAN COLLINSWORTH, CEO REV-NET COSMETICS.

SMASH TO

CLOSE ON A DIAMOND NECKLACE. WIDEN TO REVEAL we're --

INT. OAK ROOM - FIRMWOOD

The necklace rests in the hand of WALTER STORRS, late 50s and craggily handsome. Walter is the CEO of AMERIMART INDUSTRIES. As he admires it, the door pushes open and

JAMES AUSTER, 35, enters. James is our moral center, handsome with an easy charm that makes him instantly likeable. As he enters, Walter fumbles the necklace. It falls to the floor. James moves to pick it up.

JAMES

Let me get that...

He notes the INSCRIPTION -- "TO MY ONLY LOVE..." as he hands it back to Walter.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(re: the necklace)

Your wife is a very lucky woman, sir.

Walter says nothing. He simply slips the necklace back into its BLACK CASE. Then he motions for James to sit across from him in one of the leather club chairs.

WALTER

Thanks for meeting me, James. So tell me -- how long have you been a member of Firmwood?

JAMES

Since the promotion. And thank you for that, by the way.

WALTER

Well, I hope it won't be awkward.  
Running into each other here.

JAMES

Why would it be awkward? We see  
each other at the office every day.

WALTER

Because I'm letting you go  
tomorrow.

James is stunned. Off his look...

WALTER (CONT'D)

Stock price is down. The Street is  
rumbling. Nothing turns things  
around like a good shake-up.

JAMES

And you're so sure the Board will  
allow it?

WALTER

The Board doesn't know yet. No one  
does. But when I present my  
reorganization plan to the  
stockholders tomorrow, they won't  
have any choice.

(beat)

You'll land on your feet, James. I  
know you will. You're a survivor.  
That's why I hired you in the first  
place.

James shakes his head in disbelief. Walter stands to leave,  
then turns back.

WALTER (CONT'D)

And since you're new to Firmwood,  
make sure you try the shrimp --  
it's one of life's true pleasures.

And with that, the CEO is gone. James remains, shell-  
shocked, his professional life flashing before his eyes. A  
moment ago, the shining future of AmeriMart and now...nearly  
unemployed. We FREEZE FRAME over him as the screen reads --

JAMES AUSTER. SOON-TO-BE-FORMER GOLDEN BOY, AMERIMART  
INDUSTRIES.

SMASH TO

INT. HALLWAY - FIRMWOOD

In a secluded corner off the main dining room, we FIND KARL, late 30s with a sweet, round face -- as he talks in hushed tones into his cell phone.

KARL  
(into phone)  
I'm sorry, sweetie. But after the barbecue, I need to get right to the office. No, I told you -- it's a crisis. Distribution mixed up our shipments of Viagra and chewable vitamins. Boys all over the Midwest are getting spontaneous erections.

Karl is clearly not pleased with himself. Or his lies.

KARL (CONT'D)  
So don't wait up, okay?  
(he listens, then)  
French toast for breakfast sounds great.

Karl hangs up. His face sinks, instantly drained.

KARL (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
God...this is the first and last time I'm having an affair.

We FREEZE FRAME over him as the screen reads --

KARL MIXWORTHY, CEO FLEXOR-WELLMAN PHARMACEUTICALS.

SMASH TO

INT. DINING ROOM - FIRMWOOD

ON THE BUFFET LINE, as an OVERWEIGHT CLUB MEMBER piles a heap of food onto his plate.

DOWN THE LINE, we find BRODY -- 35, edgy, handsome -- as he watches the glutton and mutters to himself --

BRODY  
(under his breath)  
Jesus, hasn't he ever heard of seconds? I mean, how about this concept -- two trips.

The Overweight Guy pads off with his food, as Brody moves down the line. But as he does, he realizes that one of the trays is EMPTY. Brody looks instantly concerned.

BRODY (CONT'D)  
Where's the shrimp, Hector?

HECTOR -- in his serving whites -- looks up from behind the buffet. Mexican accent.

HECTOR  
I'm sorry, Mr. Brody. We're out of the shrimps.

Brody stares at him.

BRODY  
What do you mean, you're out of the shrimp? People wait the whole year for that shrimp.

HECTOR  
Yes. But --

Brody gets increasingly animated, although he does his best to keep his voice down. Clearly, a nerve has been touched.

BRODY  
(worked up)  
I mean, how do you explain to someone that the dish they've looked forward to for twelve months isn't available because Fattie over there built the goddamn Mayan pyramids out of shellfish?

Hector looks knowingly at Brody.

HECTOR  
The shrimps. They're for your wife, Mr. Brody?

BRODY  
First of all, they're shrimp. Not shrimps, okay? No "s" even when plural. Second of all, Brody is my first name, not my last. And third...  
(softening)  
...help a brother out?

A beat, Hector smiles. He gets it.

HECTOR

There may be some left in the lower kitchen. I'll have them run it down to the pool at once.

Brody smiles. Relieved and appreciative. Instantly, his cell phone buzzes. He answers it with a smile.

BRODY

(confidently)

Hi, honey. The shrimp is on the way.

FREEZE FRAME over him as the screen reads --

BRODY JOHNS, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, C.M. CRISIS MANAGEMENT

INT. DINING ROOM - FIRMWOOD

Duncan and a deeply-conflicted Karl share a table.

KARL

(full of anxiety)

I'm just not the affair-type. I mean, my lies -- they're inane. How Wendy doesn't see through them...

DUNCAN

She trusts you.

KARL

(guilt-ridden)

Great. Remind me that I'm cheating on the saint who plans my breakfasts in advance...

DUNCAN

C'mon, don't beat yourself up. We all change. Look at me -- I just finished banging my first wife in the broom closet.

(off Karl's look)

When we were married, she couldn't have been less interested in sex. But now that we're both single again, it's kind of like the perfect marriage.

KARL

Maybe you should remarry her.

DUNCAN

Right. And then sex in the broom closet becomes "Don't touch me, I'm exfoliating."

Karl nods, as Brody approaches.

BRODY

Sorry I'm late. Operation Shellfish took longer than I thought.

(beat)

Hey, has anyone seen James?

KARL

No. Not since he went to talk to his boss.

On cue, we SMASH TO --

EXT. LOUNGE - FIRMWOOD

James emerges, still reeling from the turn of events. He's met by STACEY, 35, his beautiful, sympathetic wife.

STACEY

There you are. The guys were looking for you.

James nods. Stacey notes his preoccupation.

STACEY (CONT'D)

(concerned)

Hey, are you okay? What did he want?

JAMES

(covering)

Oh...nothing. You know, work stuff.

STACEY

(skeptical)

"Work stuff?" Today?

JAMES

Yeah, you know. SEC poking around. Quarterly reports. All that.

(off her look)

Listen...I'm just gonna go find the guys. And then I'll meet you and the kids for smores, okay?



Stacey nods. James gives her a kiss. As he walks away, he turns back to her --

JAMES (CONT'D)  
(smiles)  
That dress still kills me, by the way.

James exits. Stacey watches him go, thinks.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

James sits with the guys -- Duncan, Brody and Karl.

KARL  
He fired you?

JAMES  
No one knows yet. It won't be official until tomorrow.

DUNCAN  
He's threatened by you. It's obvious. You're younger, you're better-looking and -- worst of all -- you have a hotter wife.

BRODY  
Absolutely. Hot Wife Envy. It's practically Darwin.  
(off James' look)  
Every time he watched Mrs. CEO get out of the shower, you were one step closer to the unemployment line.

James can't help but smile. As he does, we HEAR --

The SOUNDS OF SKIDDING WHEELS and a CRASH. A WOMAN SCREAMS.

KARL  
(urgently)  
Sounds like it's right out front.

The guys stand and quickly make a bee-line towards the exit.

EXT. FIRMWOOD - CONTINUOUS

AN OVERTURNED GOLF CART spins its wheels, as nearby a SMALL CROWD huddles around a STRICKEN MAN.

James pushes through the crowd to see that the downed man is none-other-than...the CEO who just fired him.

JAMES  
(exclaims)  
OhmyGod. My boss!

Meanwhile Brody, just OUTSIDE THE CIRCLE of ONLOOKERS, looks down to see an EMPTY PLATE and SHRIMP strewn across the putting green.

BRODY  
OhmyGod. My shrimp!

Brody scurries to start collecting his wife's shrimp as James pushes to his boss' side, loosens his shirt and presses his fingers against his neck to check for a pulse.

But there's nothing. The impact of the crash has rendered the CEO unconscious. James turns to a CLUB WORKER.

JAMES  
(aloud)  
Call 9-1-1.

James tears open Walter's jacket -- the black JEWELRY CASE falls out of the inner breast pocket. He pulls open his shirt, pounds on his chest and begins administering CPR.

As the onlookers -- including Karl and Duncan -- watch, James furiously tries to breath life into the CEO. But it's no use. James once again checks for a pulse. But...nothing. The CEO is, well, dead.

James looks up at his friends with a grave look in his eyes. Then, to the Club Worker...

JAMES (CONT'D)  
You can forget 9-1-1.

James exhales. He takes off his jacket and gently lays it over Walter's face. And just then, Brody -- with his plate of reclaimed shrimp -- sidles next to James.

BRODY  
(sotto)  
I think things are suddenly looking  
up for you, huh, James?

As Brody smiles at an unsure James, we...SMASH TO:

**MAIN TITLE CARD.**

We DISSOLVE to BLACK and then FADE UP ON --

INT. BRODY'S HOME GYM - (NEXT) DAY

Brody runs on his treadmill, talks on his speaker-phone.

BRODY

Maybe they should have had a sign.  
"CAUTION: CEO CROSSING."

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM

James ties his tie in the mirror, a phone cradled between his shoulder and ear. We INTERCUT between the pair.

JAMES

It's touching to see how hard  
you're taking this. But a man is  
dead and I may be unemployed.

BRODY

Relax. You said your boss didn't  
tell anyone. And even if he did, I  
know a guy who got shit-canned  
once. Kept coming into the office  
anyway. Two months later he got  
promoted. True story.

James considers this. Then..

BRODY (CONT'D)

Besides, I've got real problems.  
Guess what the velociraptor wants  
now?

JAMES

Why do you call your wife a  
velociraptor?

BRODY

Because it's true. I've seen her  
birth certificate.

(beat)

She wants me to throw her a  
birthday party next weekend at  
Firmwood. But she wants me to plan  
it. As a way to show how much I  
care. I said, "Sweetheart. I  
didn't go to Harvard Business  
School to study goddamn party  
planning."

JAMES

You said that?

BRODY

Of course not. The woman tolerates  
no dissent. It's like being  
married to Dick Cheney.

Just then, Stacey enters, with their two adorable kids --  
SAMANTHA, aged 8 and DASHIELL, aged 6 -- in tow. The kids  
have their back-packs on.

STACEY

Okay, guys. Give Daddy a kiss.

James grabs kisses from his kids, who ad lib "Bye Daddy" and  
"We love you," etc.

STACEY (CONT'D)

(noticing the phone)  
Sorry to interrupt.

JAMES

No problem. It's just Brody.

INTERCUT Brody on the treadmill, as he rolls his eyes.

The kids unpeel themselves from James and run off. Before  
Stacey exits, James looks at her. Her eyes look red.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You okay, sweetie? Your eyes are -  
- Have you been crying?

STACEY

(laughs)  
Allergies. Ran out of my Claritin.  
I'll see you later. Remember...  
chili night.

Stacey gives James a quick kiss and exits.

BRODY

She's hot and she cooks. I gotta  
be honest with you. If you worked  
for me, I'd can your ass too.

INT. COUPLES' THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Karl and his wife, WENDY -- late 30s and plainly pretty --  
sit across from the dour couples' therapist, DR. DARLENE  
SEAVER-FILNER. Filled with guilt, Karl looks like he'd  
rather be anywhere else.

WENDY

I mean, I must sound like a cliché...but sometimes I wonder if Karl is seeing someone else.

DR. SEAVER-FILNER

Are you, Karl?

KARL

Yes. My staff of twelve hundred employees who count on me each and every day.

WENDY

It's ironic. When I had a career and friends, Karl wanted more of me. So I quit my job and stayed home and now he complains that I smother him.

(then)

And we barely do anything together anymore. Last week, I asked Karl to go to the movies. To see "The Devil Wears Prada." He said he had to work. On a Sunday.

KARL

I run a billion-dollar pharmaceutical conglomerate. People need anti-depressants on the weekends too.

Wendy nods. She's lost her fight.

WENDY

Sometimes I just wish he could look at me like he used to.

DR. SEAVER-FILNER

Karl...as a gesture to Wendy, could you find the time to take her to the movies? I think it could be a small but important step in repairing this marriage.

But Karl is distracted when he looks down at his cell phone, as it reads "NEW TEXT MESSAGE RECEIVED"

DR. SEAVER-FILNER (CONT'D)

Karl...could you?

ANGLE ON THE TEXT MESSAGE - "I MISS YOUR PENIS."

Karl is flustered. Clearly it's from his mistress. He puts down the phone and looks up at the therapist.

KARL  
(at a loss)  
I'm sorry. You were saying...?

Off Dr. Seaver-Filner's annoyed look, we're...

INT. DUNCAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Duncan sits in his spacious office at RevNet, completing an interview with LORI HODGE, an attractive 30-ish journalist.

LORI  
What's been your greatest triumph  
in building a cosmetics empire, Mr.  
Collinsworth?

DUNCAN  
Duncan. And my father built it. I  
just renovated.

LORI  
(checking her notes)  
You're too modest. Since you  
assumed the chairmanship eight  
years ago, you expanded into the  
global marketplace, increased your  
share price by over 200 percent and  
branded RevNet as the industry  
leader in personal grooming.

DUNCAN  
(false modesty)  
Oh...that.

LORI  
And I'll be honest, I won't leave  
the house without first applying  
your toner and blush.

DUNCAN  
Well I'll be honest, it's working.

Lori smiles, flattered. She closes her notebook, stands.

LORI  
That should about do it. If all  
goes well, you'll be "Capitalist's"  
cover boy in November.  
(beat, stops herself)  
But I do have one last question.

DUNCAN  
I'm an open book.

LORI  
Do you spend much time in Roscoe,  
New York?

Duncan is immediately flustered. Clearly, she's struck a nerve. But he does his best to hide it.

DUNCAN  
"Roscoe, New York?" I don't  
underst --

LORI  
You see, there are rumors. Rumors  
that might interest your  
shareholders. And what kind of  
journalist would I be if I didn't  
ask...?

DUNCAN  
I can assure you I've never been to  
Roscoe, New York in my life.

LORI  
(smiles)  
That's what I thought. In any  
case, since your profile doesn't go  
to press for another six weeks,  
I'll have plenty of time to look  
into those rumors. Nothing worse  
than a good man being tarred by the  
brush of innuendo. Good day,  
Duncan.

Lori exits.

DUNCAN  
(under his breath)  
Mr. Collinsworth.

INT. AMERIMART CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

James walks tentatively down the hall. As he passes oncoming CO-WORKERS, he gauges their reactions, as if trying to determine if he's still employed here.

As he reaches his outer office, his ASSISTANT steps in behind him --

ASSISTANT  
Mr. Auster.

JAMES  
(dreading)  
Yes?

ASSISTANT  
Accounting is waiting for you in  
the conference room.

JAMES  
(hiding his relief)  
Of course. Tell them I'll be right  
in.

James enters his office...

INT. JAMES' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...closes the door behind him and exhales. Apparently, he's still employed. After a beat of relief, KATIE GRAHAM -- mid-30s and attractive -- swivels around in James desk chair.

KATIE  
"Death by golf cart," huh? I  
thought the Old Man was going to  
outlive us all.

JAMES  
Make yourself at home, by the way.

Katie smiles. The pair couldn't be closer. In fact, around AmeriMart, she's referred to as James' "work wife."

KATIE  
Rumor is that the front-runner for  
the CEO job is that jerk from GE  
who hit on me at the Sun Valley  
conference.

JAMES  
Wait a sec. Didn't you go on a  
date with that guy?

KATIE  
Hey, I'm a single woman over  
thirty. If I only went out with  
sweet, polite men, I'd be dating  
the guy who collects shopping carts  
outside my supermarket.



JAMES

(smiles)

C'mon...let's not keep Accounting waiting. They're the guys who calculate our bonuses.

As Katie and James begin to exit, the CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER enters the room.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Good, you're both here. I'd like to speak with you...

Off James' and Katie's looks, we're...

EXT. GOLF COURSE - FIRMWOOD

The guys are golfing. Karl -- complete with a fanny-pack around his middle -- tees off. Brody and James stand nearby in the khakis and golf shirts. Leaning on their drivers, as they await their turns.

JAMES

So not only am I still employed, but they've decided to promote from within. They're interviewing every upper-level exec for the CEO's job. Including me.

Karl slices the ball unsettling close to the other guys. They duck for cover.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Jesus, Karl. What end of the club are you using?

KARL

Sorry. My instructor says that sometimes I break my wrists too soon.

BRODY

No, Tiger Woods sometimes breaks his wrists too soon. You just suck.

James laughs. Karl takes another ball out of his fanny pack and tees it up.

BRODY (CONT'D)

You're gonna get it, aren't you?

(off James' unsure look)

You're gonna be a CEO at 35.

(MORE)

BRODY (CONT'D)  
And I'll still be a senior VP. And  
I'll be honest with you -- that's  
gonna be a real blow to my self-  
esteem. So you know what? As a  
friend...I'd appreciate if you tank  
the interview. For me.

James laughs.

BRODY (CONT'D)  
(stares at him)  
What part of that do you think  
wasn't serious?

Just then, Duncan flies up in a golf cart.

BRODY (CONT'D)  
(to Duncan)  
You're late.

DUNCAN  
(serious)  
I got trouble.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - LATER

The cart is parked at the mid-way break. The guys sit at a  
secluded table, as Duncan recounts his troubles.

JAMES  
Wait a second. I thought you said  
you were arrested for a DWI.

DUNCAN  
(shakes his head)  
No. That was just my cover. For  
why I needed bail money.

KARL  
(hurt)  
You lied to us?

BRODY  
Karl, we're guys. If it involves  
sex, money or a pending criminal  
proceeding...we're allowed to lie.

JAMES  
(to Duncan)  
So I don't get it...then what  
happened in Roscoe, New York?

Duncan exhales, as the guys await his explanation.

DUNCAN  
I was coming home from a hunting  
trip...

BRODY  
You don't hunt!

DUNCAN  
(edgy)  
Fine, I was antiquing. Can we  
stick to the subject here?

The guys nod.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
I was getting tired, so I pulled  
into a rest stop for some coffee.  
To keep me awake for the drive  
home. There was a woman there.  
Dark and beautiful. She smiled at  
me and we began to talk...

JAMES  
Don't tell me. She was a pro.

DUNCAN  
(nods)  
I was lonely. And one thing led to  
another and before I knew it, we  
were in a men's room stall for a  
little business transaction.

BRODY  
(blanches)  
Why do I feel dirty?

DUNCAN  
But in the midst of our...  
transaction, a State Trooper  
stumbled in. Arrested both of us.

Brody looks at Duncan.

BRODY  
Okay, so you got pinched for  
solicitation. Maybe not something  
you want on the resume, but it  
could have been a lot worse --

DUNCAN  
Let me finish.

The guys look at him expectantly.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
 This dark, beautiful woman.  
 Well...she was full of surprises.  
 And probably the biggest surprise  
 was, well...her penis.

The guys all let out spontaneous "eeewws."

BRODY  
 (repulsed)  
 You got a hummer from a  
 transvestite hooker?

DUNCAN  
 (defensively)  
 I told you, I didn't know. How do  
 you think I felt? I mean, you  
 should have seen her. Every inch  
 of her was woman.

BRODY  
 Except the eight-and-a-half between  
 her legs.

DUNCAN  
 (bristles)  
 Nice. Very supportive...

BRODY  
 No...just personal preference.  
 When it comes to chicks, I'm not  
 what you call a "penis man." I  
 like my ladies sans shvantz, if you  
 know what I mean.

James steps in.

JAMES  
 Look, let's focus here. If this  
 journalist gets corroboration...it  
 could sink RevNet's stock price.  
 Not to mention cost Duncan his job.

BRODY  
 (getting on board)  
 Alright, well you've come to the  
 right guy. This is what crisis  
 management is all about. So...did  
 you pull the arrest report?

DUNCAN

Of course. And I greased the palms of every state trooper in a ten-mile radius. So they wouldn't talk...

BRODY

Good. That's good.

KARL

First year law school -- if there's no corroborating witness, then it's all hearsay until someone gets a hold of the tranny.

BRODY

Exactly. Which is why you need to get to him -- or her -- first. And figure out a way to keep her -- or him -- quiet. And you're home free. This reporter can't touch you.

DUNCAN

(a mission statement)

Track down the tranny.

BRODY

(concur)

Track down the tranny.

As Duncan considers the task at hand, we're --

CLOSE ON THE DEAD BODY OF THE CEO IN TRANQUIL REPOSE.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL that he's in his coffin and we're --

INT. OAK ROOM - FIRMWOOD - NIGHT

The Wake is in progress. MOURNERS file past the deceased CEO's body to pay their respects. But since it's an Irish wake, the alcohol is flowing. The room is crowded with EMPLOYEES AND FRIENDS including Stacey (James' wife), Katie (James' "work wife") and our four guys.

ANGLE ON BRODY AND KARL. Brody shakes his head, displeased.

KARL

What's wrong?

BRODY

This is the same room I reserved for Janelle's party this weekend.

(MORE)

BRODY (CONT'D)  
Christ, if she smells formaldehyde,  
I'm a dead man.

ANGLE on James, as he approaches the CEO'S WIDOW, a sturdy woman in her late 50s.

JAMES  
(to the Widow, introducing himself)  
Mrs. Storrs? James Auster. From AmeriMart. I'm very sorry for your loss.

WIDOW  
(cynically)  
That makes one of us.

James looks unsurely at her, then reaches into his breast pocket and takes out the BLACK JEWELRY CASE that was on the CEO's body at the time of his death. He hands it to her.

JAMES  
I think this belongs to you. They left it behind at the scene.

The Widow opens the case but -- it's EMPTY. James is surprised. But a wry, knowing grin forms on her face.

WIDOW  
Apparently he found someone more deserving than me.  
(beat)  
Excuse me.

The Widow moves off. James -- a little stunned -- moves towards Katie.

JAMES  
(to Katie)  
Probably bad etiquette to gossip at a wake, but the necklace -- not for the loyal wife. For the other woman.

KATIE  
(eyes widen)  
Okay. And suddenly, things got a little more interesting...

JAMES  
He must have given her the necklace right before he died.

KATIE  
That sonfabitch.

JAMES

I know...

KATIE

Guy's worth forty million and not  
even a sniff in my direction.

James smiles. Katie notices that Stacey is sobbing quietly  
to herself as she takes in the body.

KATIE (CONT'D)

(re: Stacey)

She okay?

JAMES

Yeah, you know Stacey. She takes  
things hard. I mean, when our  
springer spaniel died, she was a  
mess for --

But James words trail off as Stacey turns away from the  
coffin. Around her neck is the VERY SAME DIAMOND NECKLACE  
that we saw earlier. James stares at it. His face ashen.

KATIE

You okay?

(no answer)

James?

James can't even hear Katie. His eyes simply bore into the  
necklace around his wife's neck. The love of his life was  
apparently the love of another man's too.

Katie studies the pain in James' face, as if trying to  
understand it. But she doesn't and he doesn't bother to  
explain. He bolts from the room. Pushes through the crowd  
and out the door. As Katie watches in concern, we...

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MEN'S ROOM - FIRMWOOD

James -- reeling from the discovery that his wife has been having an affair with his dead boss -- splashes water on his face as he stares at himself in the mirror, as if searching for the wounds that he feels so deeply.

A beat, and Duncan emerges from one of the stalls.

DUNCAN

Hey, James.

JAMES

(half-hearted)

Dunc.

DUNCAN

Nice wake. Though the cash bar is a little tacky.

James doesn't react. He's lost in his own thoughts. Duncan notes James' preoccupation.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

You okay?

JAMES

(covering)

Yeah. Just got a call from an old friend of mine. He, uh, just found out his wife was having an affair.

DUNCAN

(smiles)

Rite of passage for men. Loss of virginity, first threesome, discovery of cheating wife. The holy trinity.

JAMES

You, too?

DUNCAN

(nods)

My second wife. After Lisbeth. Of course, I encouraged her to do it. Spice things up.

James nods. Preoccupied. Duncan studies him for a moment. Then, in a somewhat knowing way...



DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
Your friend. How's he doing?

JAMES  
Trying to breathe. He's not asking  
much more of himself than that.

Duncan nods. He doesn't press the issue. Then...

DUNCAN  
Alright, well I'd better run. Off  
to have lunch with a woman who  
hates me.

JAMES  
Your ex?

DUNCAN  
No. My daughter.

And on that, we SMASH TO --

INT. RESTAURANT - NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Duncan sits across from his daughter, CAMERON, a beautiful  
and belligerent 19-year old. He's in mid-story.

DUNCAN  
...it must have been your seventh --  
no eighth -- birthday. And the look  
on your face when the clown showed  
up at your party. Sheer terror.  
I'll never forget that look.

Duncan laughs. Cameron isn't amused.

CAMERON  
For the record, it was my fifth  
birthday, Duncan. And the reason I  
remember is because it's the last  
one you came to.

The waitress sets down another scotch before Duncan. Cameron  
raises an eyebrow.

CAMERON (CONT'D)  
(re: his drink)  
That's your third, you know.

DUNCAN  
I didn't know you were keeping  
score.

CAMERON

(wry)

I didn't know you needed to get loaded to face your daughter.

DUNCAN

You should try facing her. You'd get loaded, too.

Cameron rolls her eyes.

CAMERON

Look, the stroll down memory lane is touching, but I told you -- I'm not going back to school. I mean, your life turned out fine without a degree. Professionally, at least.

DUNCAN

(ignoring the slight)

Fine with me, Cam. I'm just curious what your plan is.

CAMERON

"My plan?" I'm gonna work, Duncan. Find a job.

DUNCAN

Dad, okay? Call me Dad, please.

CAMERON

Dad was the guy who raised me since I was eight and died from a stroke last year. You're biology, Duncan. That's it.

(beat)

And you don't need to worry about me, okay? I'm bright. I give good meeting. I'll find something.

DUNCAN

Really? What's the market out there for over-entitled 19-year-olds with smart mouths?

Cameron stands, starts to collect her things. Duncan looks disappointed that he let himself take the bait.

CAMERON

This has been fun. In a really "not fun" kind of way. So do me a favor, the next time you want to pass judgement? Send an e-mail.

DUNCAN

What? You can reduce me to DNA.  
But God forbid I open my mouth to  
you...

(then)

Look, sit down, okay? Whatever you  
think of me, I'm still your father.

CAMERON

Okay, Duncan. You want to act like  
my father? Then step up to the  
plate. Prove it.

DUNCAN

How?

CAMERON

Give me a job.

Off Duncan's surprised look, we're...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

CLOSE on KARL, with a wide smile on his face. After a beat,  
we WIDEN to REVEAL that he's not alone. Lying next to him on  
the hotel bed is MARLA, Karl's mistress, a high-strung  
Southern beauty in her late 20s.

KARL

I think I should get you in touch  
with my Trademarks department. There  
are some things you just did that we  
might want to get a patent on.

Marla smiles, nestles close.

MARLA

I'm glad I make you happy. You  
deserve it.

(beat, then)

Can I ask you a question, Karl?  
You and your wife...do you still  
sleep together?

KARL

No, I told you. Not in months.  
And honestly, after being with you,  
I'm not sure we were even doing it  
right to begin with.

MARLA

But you still do other things with  
her, right?

(MORE)

MARLA (CONT'D)

And I love you so much I want to do those things with you, too.

KARL

The truth is -- there's only one thing we do together anymore. Couples' therapy. Two mornings a week.

MARLA

Couples' therapy.

(Karl nods)

Then that's what I want to do with you.

KARL

(huh?)

But we're not even married. Plus we get along great. We don't need couples' therapy.

Marla cheeks redden as her face turns pouty.

MARLA

(not happy)

Oh, I see how this works. I do things to you that you've fantasized about since junior high school. But the second I ask for one tiny thing...

(then, threatening)

Let me ask you. How are you gonna like having to call your wife the next time you feel horny, Karl?

Off Karl's fearful look, we SMASH TO --

INT. COUPLES' THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

TIGHT ON MARLA, who dabs at her eyes and sniffles --

MARLA

I'm not afraid of the hard work, Doctor.

WIDEN TO REVEAL Marla and Karl sitting across from the bemused couples' therapist, Dr. Seaver-Filner, who turns to Karl.

DR. SEAVER-FILNER

Um, Mr. Mixworthy? A word.

Karl and Dr. Seaver-Filner huddle off to the side, out of Marla's earshot.

DR. SEAVAR-FILNER (CONT'D)  
(sotto)  
This is highly unorthodox.

Karl motions to Marla.

KARL  
Look at her. She's an interior  
designer by trade. But you know  
what her real skill is? Making an  
overweight, balding, insecure man  
feel like a porn star.

DR. SEAVAR-FILNER  
That's touching but --

KARL  
And I'll double your fee.

DR. SEAVAR-FILNER  
Done. My contractor is bleeding me  
dry.

Dr. Seaver-Filner returns to her chair and Karl slides back  
in next to Marla.

DR. SEAVAR-FILNER (CONT'D)  
So... where were we?

MARLA  
(emotionally)  
My father. He could be so cold...

Marla sniffles and dabs at her red eyes. As Karl forces a  
smile, we're...

INT. BRODY'S CAR - MOVING

Brody drives, his cell pasted to his ear. Duncan sits in the  
passenger seat, as they speed down the New York State Thruway  
on their mission to track down Duncan's tranny.

BRODY  
(into phone, upbeat)  
Okay. No...not a problem. Don't  
worry, sweetie. Consider it done.

Brody hangs up the phone. Instantly, he sours.

BRODY (CONT'D)  
I have an MBA, an S-Class and can  
run a six-minute mile. And you  
know how she judges me as a man?  
(MORE)

BRODY (CONT'D)  
If I can fly in her favorite  
dessert from this little patisserie  
on the Left Bank in time for her  
party this weekend.

DUNCAN  
"Til death do you part." Sometimes  
it sounds like a real threat,  
doesn't it?

BRODY  
(shakes his head)  
Christ, how the hell am I gonna get  
500 Napoleons here by Saturday?

As Brody's car fires down the Thruway...

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - ROSCOE, NY - LATER

Brody's S-Class pulls off the service road and into the rest  
stop adjacent to the New York State Thruway. When the car  
slows to a stop, Duncan and Brody emerge.

BRODY  
Classy spot. I can see how those  
vending machines might really put a  
guy in the mood.

The guys peer around. Looking for the tranny.

BRODY (CONT'D)  
(to Duncan, re: the  
tranny)  
So you're sure she's going to be  
here?

DUNCAN  
I remember she told me this was her  
regular spot. That her pimp had  
just promoted her.

BRODY  
She got promoted to this? Where  
was she working before, a  
slaughterhouse?  
(beat)  
By the way, you never told me her  
name...

DUNCAN  
Dontrelle.

Brody stops, looks incredulously at Duncan.

BRODY

(stunned)

You hooked up with someone named Dontrelle and you didn't think it MIGHT be a dude? He sounds like a middle linebacker.

DUNCAN

(defensively)

She said "Dontrelle" was a family name. Besides, I told you it was dark.

BRODY

Yeah. Because Dontrelle probably went 6'4", 220 and blocked out the sun.

Duncan chooses not to respond. Then he spots a PROSTITUTE loitering by the vending machines.

DUNCAN

Hold on. There's someone...

Brody and Duncan approach the hooker.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Hey...

HOOKER

Hey, yourself. You boys looking for a good time?

BRODY

No. I'm married. I'm done with good times.

DUNCAN

Actually, we're looking for Dontrelle.

HOOKER

Dontrelle doesn't work Exit 47 anymore.

BRODY

Another promotion perhaps.

Duncan shoots Brody a look. Not helping.

DUNCAN

(to the Hooker)

Do you know where I could find, um, her?

HOOKER

No...sorry. Can't help you.

Duncan pulls out his bill-fold and peels off a couple of TWENTIES. He hands them to the hooker.

HOOKER (CONT'D)

You know, now that I think about it, I might be able to track Dontrelle down through an old john I know.

Duncan jots his phone number on a piece of paper and hands it to the hooker.

DUNCAN

Tell her to call me at that number. And tell her it's important.

HOOKER

She was that good, huh?

BRODY

Let's just say -- when it comes to sex, she's the man.

As Duncan shakes his head, we're --

EXT. JAMES' HOUSE - NIGHT

James sits alone on his back porch, overlooking his pool and spacious backyard. He nurses a beer and thinks. After a moment, Stacey emerges.

STACEY

The kids are asleep. Florie said they were angels.

James says nothing.

STACEY (CONT'D)

I'm pretty tired myself. I think I'm going to head up and --

JAMES

(interrupting)

The first time I saw you. Freshman year at Madison. Econ 101.

STACEY

(laughs unsurely)

What's this about?



JAMES

(continuing)

You walked in -- I was already there, of course, because I arrived everywhere 15 minutes early freshman year -- and I thought to myself that if I could sit across from that girl and have a cup of coffee...that my life would be perfect.

STACEY

You got more than a cup of coffee.

JAMES

I know. But my life isn't perfect.

Stacey looks at him unsurely.

STACEY

What's wrong? Are you nervous about your interview tomorrow?

JAMES

No, I was just thinking about seeing you that first time. And wondering if my boss felt the same way. The first time he saw you.

Stacey stares at him. But does her best to betray nothing.

STACEY

What are you talking about?

JAMES

You...you were sleeping with him. He gave you that necklace before he died, didn't he?

Stacey reflexively clutches at her necklace.

STACEY

Jamey...

JAMES

Don't call me that, okay? Don't talk to me like you love me.

STACEY

But I do love you...

JAMES

Answer me. Were you having an affair with him? And I'll respect you a helluva lot more if you tell me the truth.

(beat, then forceful)

Stacey. Answer me!

A long beat, then...

STACEY

Yes.

James nods. His worst fears confirmed.

STACEY (CONT'D)

(gently)

At least you can't say I'm a liar.

JAMES

No, I am. Because I don't respect you one bit.

James walks past her. As he does, she clutches at his arm. But he pulls away.

STACEY

Wait. Where are you going? Jamey? Let's talk about this. James... don't walk out on me.

He stops, stares at her.

JAMES

I may be leaving. But I'm not the one who walked out.

James walks past her and down the driveway.

STACEY

(calling after him)

James. Wait. James!

We HEAR his car start and peel off. He's gone. As tears run down Stacey's face, we SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. JAMES' OFFICE - NEXT DAY

CLOSE ON A FRAMED PICTURE OF JAMES AND STACEY. Happy, carefree.

WIDEN TO REVEAL James sitting at his desk. He looks every bit the man whose whole world has been turned upside down. Barely slept. Unshaven, no tie. Although a few tie options rest on his desk. He can't help but stare at the picture.

Just then, Katie enters. Stylish and confident in her sleek Prada suit. She takes him in.

KATIE

Jesus... look at you. I can't believe I need to tell you this, but today's the wrong day not to bring your "A-game."

JAMES

How do you know that my "A-game" doesn't include making you think I'm not bringing my "A-game?"

Katie considers this. Then...

KATIE

By the way, why'd you run out of the wake like that? You didn't even say goodbye.

JAMES

(covering)  
Stomach thing, sorry.

Katie looks at him as if trying to determine if he's telling the truth. Just then, James' assistant pokes her head in.

ASSISTANT

Ms. Graham, the Board is ready for you now.

KATIE

I'll be right in.

Katie turns to James.

KATIE (CONT'D)

You know, you may be my best friend but I want this job. And except for men, I'm pretty good at getting what I want.

James nods. Then Katie takes him in -- in all his pitiful glory. She can't help herself...

KATIE (CONT'D)  
Oh, Jeez. C'mere...

Katie straightens James' collar. Smooths his hair.

KATIE (CONT'D)  
And wear the blue tie. It looks great on you.

And she's gone. James smiles to himself. Then as he looks back at the picture, the smile runs from his face.

INT. REV-NET CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Duncan holds court, as he stands before his upper-level management that sit around the conference room table.

DUNCAN  
It's nice to be able to talk about all the things that went right for us this year. Market share is up. The fall campaign has cemented our brand recognition. We're the darlings of Wall Street.

As Duncan talks, Cameron quietly enters with a TRAY OF TO-GO COFFEES. She hands the execs their espressos and macchiatos as Duncan continues to speak.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
But even in success, RevNet must be a leader, not a follower. Did you know that by the year 2015, the most rapidly expanding population group will be women over sixty? Why not take the opportunity to target this growing demographic? Why not make these women feel beautiful too?

The execs nod and murmur "yes" as Duncan continues.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
Why shouldn't women in nursing homes not have access to the best foundation and base available? Why not market a line of hair products specifically for wigs? Or --

CAMERON  
(interrupting)  
Actually, I think the way to reach  
seniors would be to appeal to the  
girl in them. Not the old woman.

All eyes turn to Cameron. Duncan boils.

DUNCAN  
Excuse me?

CAMERON  
C'mon, Duncan. Everyone knows  
women don't like to think of  
themselves as old. The exception  
being your last three teenage  
girlfriends, of course.

The other execs shrink in their seats, wishing they were  
anywhere else. As Duncan seethes, we...SMASH TO --

INT. COPY ROOM - REV-NET - LATER

A livid Duncan dresses down Cameron.

DUNCAN  
(pissed)  
I gave you a job. I gave you  
responsibility --

CAMERON  
Yeah. To go to Starbucks.

DUNCAN  
That's not the point. Do you know  
what my father would have done if  
I'd ever embarrassed him like that?

CAMERON  
Gotten drunk and made a pass at the  
maid? Or was that just on  
Christmas?

Duncan shakes his head. Exasperated.

DUNCAN  
Do you want this job, Cam?  
(no answer)  
Cam?

CAMERON  
(grudgingly)  
Yeah.

DUNCAN

Then you need to shut your mouth  
and prove you belong here.

Duncan takes in the messy, disorganized copy room.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

I want the copy room in shape. By  
Monday morning. Or --

CAMERON

Or what?

DUNCAN

I guess you'll find that out Monday  
morning.

Duncan exits. Cameron looks around, taking in the massive  
job that lays ahead of her and exhales.

INT. AMERIMART BOARD ROOM - DAY

James, wearing his blue tie, sits across from the BOARD  
MEMBERS. He's mid-interview. But preoccupied with recent  
events, he's just not himself. Not even close.

BOARD MEMBER #1

...so what would you do differently  
if you were AmeriMart's CEO?

James is lost in thought.

BOARD MEMBER #1 (CONT'D)

Mr. Auster?

JAMES

Hot in here, isn't it?

He unbuttons his top shirt button, loosens his tie. Again,  
the Board Members exchange looks.

BOARD MEMBER #1

Mr. Auster, are you feeling okay?

JAMES

No. But thanks for asking.

(then, pulling at his  
collar)

Man, it's like a greenhouse in  
here. If you're not careful, the  
embalming fluid might start leaking  
out of some of you.

He takes a drink of water, as the Board Members exchange curious looks.

BOARD MEMBER #1

Mr. Auster, are you serious about being considered for the CEO's job?

JAMES

Yes, sir. I love this company. And trust me, I know what it's like to lose something you love. And we're on the brink of losing this place. Walter Storrs knew we were in trouble when he died.

BOARD MEMBER #3

(combative)

AmeriMart is one of the most influential corporations of our time.

JAMES

And the Romans kicked ass in 100 BC, but what have they done since? Nothing's permanent, gentleman. Trust me on that.

Clearly the Board isn't into James' style.

BOARD MEMBER #1

(dismissing him)

Thank you for your time, Mr. Auster. But we have other candidates waiting.

BOARD MEMBER #2

Serious candidates.

James stands. Faces the Board. Passionately.

JAMES

Look... maybe I'm not telling you what you want to hear. But have you checked our stock price lately? Have you analyzed our earnings numbers? You don't want someone who's gonna blow smoke up your ass, you want someone who can turn this company around.

BOARD MEMBER #1

(curious)

And how do you propose to do that?

JAMES

Focus on our core businesses.  
Raise capital by selling our under  
performing divisions. Issue bonds  
to pay down our debt. Get the  
Street back on our side. It won't  
be sexy but it'll be effective.  
And when your broker calls to tell  
you that your portfolio just  
doubled -- and your wife thanks you  
for the new beach house you bought  
her with AmeriMart stock options --  
you'll be glad you hired the guy  
serious enough to tell you the  
truth.

(then)

And one other thing -- do me a  
favor, turn down the goddamn heat  
in here...

He exits. As the Board Members exchange looks at what just  
transpired, we... SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE



ACT FOUR

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Karl lies in bed. Post-coital. Marla stands off to the side, dressing.

KARL

You're sure you have to leave?  
Because I can cancel my golf  
lesson...

MARLA

I told you, silly. I have to look  
at fabric swatches with a client.  
Unfortunately, sex with you doesn't  
pay the rent.

She zips her skirt. Then she opens her pocketbook.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Damn. I forgot to go to the cash  
machine. Can you loan me twenty  
dollars for a cab?

KARL

Pants pocket.

Marla picks up Karl's pants, takes out his wallet. But instead of cash, she pulls out two TICKET STUBS. We're CLOSE on the tickets which read, "The Devil Wears Prada." Marla furrows her brow.

MARLA

(unsure, re: the tickets)  
You saw "The Devil Wears Prada?"

KARL

(innocently)  
Last night. Wendy was dying to see  
it.

Marla stops short. She thinks, then...

MARLA

(unsurely)  
But you said -- hmmm, you said you  
don't spend time together anymore.

KARL

We don't. The couple's therapist  
thought it would be a good idea.

MARLA

(dubious)

The couple's therapist suggested  
you go to the movies?

Karl nods. But Marla shakes her head. Scorned, she's  
instantly on the war-path.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Well, don't I feel like a fool? I  
mean, you had me convinced that you  
and your wife were practically  
strangers and --

KARL

We are...

MARLA

Well, I don't go to the movies with  
strangers, Karl. Do you?

(beat, angry)

I mean, what kind of man would be  
so deceitful as to lie to the woman  
he's cheating on his wife with?

Karl looks like his head might explode.

KARL

Marla, you're over-reacting. It  
was just a movie. We didn't even  
discuss it afterwards.

MARLA

You know, I bet Wendy would like to  
know what her loving husband is up  
to when he's not at home.

KARL

(alarmed)

What are you saying? You're gonna  
tell her...everything?

MARLA

No, not everything.

(then)

Just the part about the sex in the  
hotel rooms.

Marla exits. Karl wraps a sheet around himself and scurries  
to the door.

KARL  
 (calling after her)  
 Marla...wait. I'll take you to see  
 it tomorrow. There's a matinee!

But it's no use -- she's gone. On Karl, worried, we SMASH TO --

INT. STEAM ROOM - FIRMWOOD - LATER

Karl, Brody, Duncan and a contemplative James are wrapped in towels in the steam room. Karl clearly has just finished recounting Marla's threat.

DUNCAN  
 That's just bad movie stuff, Karl.  
 The mistress never tells.  
 (then)  
 I mean, not usually.  
 (then)  
 Okay, it only happened to me once...

BRODY  
 Christ, how many affairs have you  
 had?

DUNCAN  
 (shrugs)  
 Every man needs a hobby.

Karl shakes his head. Beating himself up.

KARL  
 What have I done? Maybe Wendy and I  
 have grown apart lately, but she  
 loved me when I was poor and had bad  
 skin. The thought of losing her...

JAMES  
 (edgy)  
 You know what's funny? You're so  
 worried about losing her but maybe  
 you've lost her already.

All eyes turn to James.

KARL  
 (shocked)  
 What? What's he talking about?

JAMES  
 How do you know she's not spending  
her afternoons in some hotel room,  
 too?

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Lying in bed with your contractor  
having the same conversations about  
you.

KARL

But Wendy hates our contractor. He  
was completely unreliable...

BRODY

(calmly, to James)  
Hey. Ease off, Jimbo.

JAMES

(guns blazing)  
No, I think Karl might like a taste  
of what it's like to be on the  
other side. Because people do get  
hurt, you know.

Brody, Duncan and Karl share a look over James'  
uncharacteristic behavior. Duncan turns to James.

DUNCAN

(gently, knowingly)  
What's wrong, James?

James looks up at his friends. A long beat, then...

JAMES

Stacey was having an affair with my  
boss.

The guys all turn to James. Full of surprise and concern.

BRODY

(shocked)  
You're kidding? Stacey and the  
dead guy?

James nods.

KARL

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

BRODY

Well, I do -- that sucks. And I'd  
offer to take the guy out if Hector  
hadn't already done it for us...

DUNCAN

(sincerely)  
Whatever you need, James. You know  
that, right?

James nods appreciatively. A long beat, as the guys let the moment linger. Then Karl stands...

KARL  
(apologetically)  
Hey, I hate to break things up.  
But I think I'm gonna go home...  
see if Wendy wants to spoon or  
something.

Karl quickly exits. Brody shakes his head.

BRODY  
Look at us. We're supposed to be  
the "masters of the universe." And  
now... James' wife is sleeping  
around, Karl can't control his  
crazy mistress and I'm too p-  
whipped to tell my wife that the  
delivery company can't locate her  
shipment of Napoleons.

DUNCAN  
(shakes his head)  
Men. We're the new women.

Just then, Brody's cell phone -- which sits next to him on the wood bench -- rings.

BRODY  
(into phone)  
Hello?  
(beat)  
What do you mean, they're in Tampa?  
How the fuck does that help me?  
(beat)  
Okay. Hold on a second.

Brody puts down the phone, turns to the guys.

BRODY (CONT'D)  
I gotta deal with this. I'll see  
you guys later.

Brody pats James on the back, exits. Duncan turns to James.

DUNCAN  
I've always said Brody had a real  
Napoleon complex.

James smiles. The joke cheers him slightly.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
We're going to her birthday party  
tomorrow, right?

JAMES  
(nods)  
We have to. He's our friend.

DUNCAN  
What do you get for the dragon lady  
who has everything?

JAMES  
A jock strap for her balls?

Duncan laughs.

DUNCAN  
Do me a favor. No more jokes about  
women with penises, please?

James smiles. A silent beat as the two friends sit alone.  
Then, Duncan says simply --

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
(re: Stacey)  
I'm sorry.

JAMES  
Yeah. Me, too.

And as the pair sits quietly, we're --

EXT. KARL'S HOUSE - LATER

Marla emerges from a taxi cab in front of Karl's house.  
Apparently, it was not an idle threat. She takes a deep  
breath, steeling herself for the task ahead, and marches  
towards the front door.

She knocks loudly on the door and composes herself as she  
waits. A beat and Wendy opens the door.

WENDY  
Hi. Can I help you?

MARLA  
Actually, maybe I can help you.

And on Marla's smile, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. KARL'S HOUSE - LATER

Karl pulls up to his house in his BMW. He parks and moves quickly towards the front door. He's here to do his best to reclaim his marriage. He opens the front door and enters.

INT. KARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Karl steps into his living room and, much to his horror, he sees Marla and Wendy sitting on the couch and having tea. Karl does his best not to betray a reaction. Wendy looks up at him and smiles.

WENDY

Karl... why didn't you tell me you hired a decorator? Marla and I were just discussing ideas for the guest house.

Karl can only force a weak smile. Apparently, Marla hasn't yet revealed the affair.

KARL

(at a loss)

Oh. Good. The guest house.

WENDY

(to Marla)

It's so unlike Karl to take an interest in decorating.

MARLA

Isn't it amazing? To be married to a man for all these years and not have the faintest idea who he is...

Karl looks like he'd rather be anywhere else. As Marla smiles at Wendy, we're --

INT. LISBETH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Duncan follows after Lisbeth -- his first wife -- as she gathers her things. She is dressed up and looks beautiful.

DUNCAN

(agitated)

Cameron is belligerent. She's headstrong. You can't tell her a thing she already doesn't know...

LISBETH

You should be happy. Proof that  
she's yours.

Lisbeth stops at the foyer mirror to put on her earrings.  
Duncan takes her in.

DUNCAN

You look pretty.

LISBETH

I have a date. The guy who  
refinanced the house.

DUNCAN

Well I don't just know if it's  
gonna work out. With Cameron.

LISBETH

She'll be disappointed. But it  
won't be the first time.

Lisbeth starts walking again Duncan follows.

DUNCAN

What's that supposed to mean?

LISBETH

She's angry at you, Duncan. Not that  
she can admit it. But she is...

DUNCAN

"Angry?" I've given her everything  
she's ever asked for.

LISBETH

That's true. But did you ever  
notice, that after she turned  
twelve she stopped asking?

Clearly, this lands on Duncan. He's instantly lost in  
thought. Lisbeth puts her lipstick in her purse, then looks  
up at him with sympathy.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Look. You may not have been the  
greatest father to date. But  
you're a good man. And the best  
thing about being a father - every  
day's a chance to do better.

Duncan nods, softens.



DUNCAN

Were you this pretty when we were married?

LISBETH

Prettier. You never stopped long enough to notice.

DUNCAN

I wouldn't mind stopping for a while now.

Lisbeth smiles. She knows Duncan all-too-well.

LISBETH

Go home, Duncan. My date's going to be here any minute.

DUNCAN

You like this guy?

LISBETH

I might.

DUNCAN

If it gets serious...we wouldn't be able to sleep together any more, right?

LISBETH

That's right, Duncan.

DUNCAN

Call me after, okay? So I don't have to obsess.

Lisbeth leads him to the door. She looks at him.

LISBETH

You know...if we ever got back together, you'd lose interest in me completely. You know that, right?

DUNCAN

Try me.

LISBETH

Maybe. Just not tonight.

Lisbeth closes the door. Duncan smiles to himself.

INT. JAMES' OFFICE - DAY

James sits at his desk. After a beat, his cell phone rings. He looks at the display which reads "STACEY CALLING." He presses a button and redirects it to voice mail. Just then, we hear an off-camera voice --

KATIE (O.S.)  
I never liked her, you know. Even  
when I said I did, I didn't.

James looks up at her.

KATIE (CONT'D)  
Of course, if you take her back,  
I'll deny ever saying that.

JAMES  
Who told you?

KATIE  
Not you. Which is an issue for  
another time. I had to find out  
the old-fashioned way.

JAMES  
Office gossip?

Katie nods.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
What are they saying?

KATIE  
The men hate her. The women are  
trying to figure out when you'll be  
ready to date.

James smiles ruefully. Katie sits next to him.

KATIE (CONT'D)  
(sympathetically)  
So...what are you gonna do?

JAMES  
I thought I'd start by not eating  
and screwing up my career. After  
that, I'm open to suggestion...

Katie smiles.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Truth is, I haven't been able to face her. I've been staying with Duncan. My kids think I'm on a business trip.

A beat, as Katie looks at him.

KATIE

Look, the heart's a complex little muscle so who knows how this ends? But you're a great guy. And a lot of women out there can see it. Even if your wife can't.

James nods appreciatively. If he was in a better place, this might be a moment. So let's call it a moment-adjacent. In any case, it's punctured by --

ASSISTANT (O.S.)

Mr. Auster, there's a call for you on two.

James picks up the phone.

JAMES

(into phone)

Hello, this is James.

(long beat, then)

Yes, okay. Thank you.

James hangs up the phone. He looks stunned. Katie takes him in, concerned.

KATIE

You okay?

JAMES

I'm not sure.

(beat, haltingly)

I...I just got named CEO of AmeriMart.

Katie looks at him, stunned.

KATIE

(shocked)

You're kidding?

JAMES

They said they wanted new blood. New direction.

KATIE  
(realizing)  
You're not kidding.

Katie can't quite believe it. She's happy for James but, at the same time, she's an incredibly competitive person.

KATIE (CONT'D)  
(trying...)  
Wow. Congratulations.

JAMES  
(smiles)  
You could say it like you mean it,  
you know...

KATIE  
Oh, I have to mean it, too?

Katie stands, checks the time.

KATIE (CONT'D)  
Well, I should go. I'm late for my  
Logistics meeting. And I don't want  
to get off on the wrong foot with  
the new boss.

James rolls his eyes. As Katie starts to exit, James calls after her.

JAMES  
Katie...these women who think I'm a  
great guy. Do I know any of them?

KATIE  
Just the one who's going to take  
your job if you screw up.  
(then, smiles)  
Take care, boss.

She exits. James watches her go, smiles to himself. Then as he thinks and the smile runs from his face, we're --

INT. KARL'S HOUSE - LATER

ANGLE on Wendy -- down the hall in the kitchen -- as she mixes Karl his nightly seven-and-seven.

REVERSE onto Karl and Marla, in the living room. He speaks in hushed, urgent tones. Occasional glances back at Wendy.

KARL  
(sotto)  
What the hell's going on?

MARLA  
I didn't tell her about us, if  
that's what you mean.

KARL  
(unsure)  
Then what are you doing here?

MARLA  
Well, I came here to tell her. But  
then I realized -- Wendy's not the  
one I want to hurt. And then we  
got to talking and you know what?  
We kind of hit it off.

KARL  
(not thrilled)  
You hit it off with my wife?

MARLA  
She's smart and sweet and so  
funny...

KARL  
(incredulous)  
"Funny?" Wendy's funny? Like, she  
made you laugh?

MARLA  
Karl. How you could not appreciate  
her is beyond me. She's a gem. I  
have half a mind to fix her up with  
my handyman.

Karl looks stunned, as Wendy emerges with his drink.

WENDY  
(to Karl)  
Here you go, hon. Sorry if it's a  
little strong.

Wendy admires a vase on the mantle.

MARLA  
I adore this piece, Wendy.

WENDY  
I got it at that little antique  
place I was telling you about.  
(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)  
That settles it -- you and I are  
going there tomorrow!

Karl takes the drink and downs it in one gulp.

KARL  
'Scuse me. Just gonna get a  
refill.

Karl turns and exits. As Wendy smiles happily at her new friend, we're --

INT. COPY ROOM - REV-NET - (FRIDAY) NIGHT

Cameron wipes the perspiration from her forehead, as she slavishly organizes the copy room. Clearly, it's not rewarding work but she's doing her best. As she does, she looks up at the doorway --

FROM CAMERON'S POV, we PAN UP FROM A PAIR OF PUMPS TO STOCKING-CLAD LEGS TO A MINI-SKIRT AND UP A LOW-CUT BLOUSE WITH A PUSH-UP BRA TO ULTIMATELY REVEAL --

A 6-foot, African-American transvestite prostitute. This could be none other than Dontrelle.

CAMERON  
(tentatively)  
Can I help you?

DONTRELLE  
I'm looking for Duncan  
Collinsworth. Do you know him?

CAMERON  
(smiles)  
As a matter of fact, I do.

And on Cameron's impish smile, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. FIRMWOOD COUNTRY CLUB - LATER - NIGHT

The party for Janelle, Brody's wife, is in full swing. We PAN ACROSS the room -- from the sea of Napoleons on the desert table to the formally-attired GUESTS who mingle happily as an ORCHESTRA fills the room with music.

ANGLE on MARLA and WENDY -- Karl's wife and mistress -- chatting animatedly. REVERSE ONTO

KARL, across the room, watching them. Duncan is at his side.

KARL

Unbelievable. My wife finally makes  
a friend and it's my mistress.  
What are the odds?

DUNCAN

(on the bright side...)  
Well, at least you'll have something  
to talk about in couple's therapy.

Just then, Duncan's face turns ashen as he looks to the ENTRANCE of the room to see --

Dontrelle, standing in the doorway. Duncan nearly chokes on his drink.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

(freaked)  
Jesus...

And then...Cameron steps in the doorway next to Duncan.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

(double-freaked)  
...H. Christ.

Duncan -- hoping to prevent a scene -- moves quickly towards Dontrelle and Cameron, who smiles at him.

CAMERON

Duncan, there's someone who I think  
you'd like to speak with...

DONTRELLE

(to Duncan)  
Hi, sweetie.

As Duncan pulls Dontrelle out of the room, we're...

INT. PARTY - CONTINUOUS

A WOMAN -- we can't see her face -- gives Brody a hug and disappears into the crowd. This is JANELLE, Brody's wife. Brody smiles to himself, self-satisfied, as James steps in next to him.

BRODY  
Janelle's thrilled. She's having a great time.

JAMES  
That makes you happy, doesn't it?

Brody uncharacteristically softens.

BRODY  
I know I bitch about her. But she's got another side, too. Maybe you don't see it. Maybe I don't see it as much as I used to. But we just fit, you know?

James nods. He might have once said the same thing about himself and Stacey.

JAMES  
(with regret)  
Yeah. I know.

Then, James does his best to pull himself out of his reverie and indicates the desert table filled with Napoleons.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
And I see the Napoleons made it...

BRODY  
No, they're still in Tampa. But I found this little place in Jersey that knocked 'em out in two hours. Janelle never knew the difference.

James smiles, but Brody's expression darkens as he sees something off-camera...

BRODY (CONT'D)  
And speaking of deception...

ANGLE on Stacey, entering the room. As James smile slips off his face, we're --

CLOSE ON A WAD OF CASH -- as it's handed from a white hand to a black one with perfect fingernails. PULL BACK and we're --



INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - FIRMWOOD

Duncan hands the money to Dontrelle in the very same closet he had sex with his ex in days earlier.

DUNCAN

So remember...if anyone asks, you never met me.

DONTRELLE

For a grand, I can forget almost anything.

Before Duncan can exit...

DONTRELLE (CONT'D)

You know, I consider myself a business person, too. B.A. in Administration from Cal State Chino.

DUNCAN

Really?

DONTRELLE

And the first rule of business -- always leave the customer satisfied. So if you'd like a little taste on the house...?

DUNCAN

(immediately)

No, thanks. I'm good.

Duncan quickly exits the supply closet.

EXT. FIRMWOOD COUNTRY CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

As a TAXI pulls away with Dontrelle inside, Duncan breathes a sigh of relief. Just then, Cameron steps in next to him.

CAMERON

You and Dontrelle -- not just old hunting buddies, right?

DUNCAN

Don't tell your mother, okay?

Cameron nods. A beat, then...

CAMERON

You know, we're more alike than I thought, Duncan.

(MORE)

CAMERON (CONT'D)  
We both have trouble getting out of  
our own ways.

Duncan turns and looks at her.

DUNCAN  
Are you going to stop embarrassing  
me at work?

CAMERON  
Probably not.  
(then)  
Are you going to stop judging me?

DUNCAN  
Not likely.

CAMERON  
Well at least we know where we  
stand.

Cameron turns and starts to walk off...

CAMERON (CONT'D)  
Good night, Duncan. See you  
Monday.

DUNCAN  
(calling after her)  
You can call me "Dad," you know.

CAMERON  
I know.  
(then)  
Good night, Duncan.

Duncan watches Cameron walk off. He can't help but smile.

DUNCAN  
(to himself)  
Baby steps.

EXT. FIRMWOOD COUNTRY CLUB - POOL

We join Stacey and James in the midst of their charged  
discussion.

STACEY  
(generously)  
CEO... God, the articles in the  
papers -- the kids were so excited,  
they took them to school with them.  
I'm so proud of you, James.

James nods, says nothing.

STACEY (CONT'D)

I'm not asking you not to be angry  
at me, you know.

JAMES

Then what are you asking?

STACEY

If you're ever going to be able to  
stop.

James looks at her.

JAMES

Did you love him?

STACEY

No.

JAMES

Then why'd you -- ?

STACEY

I don't know. Maybe I was bored.  
Or maybe I was scared you were.  
That at any moment I'd become one  
of those "first wives of Firmwood"  
whose husbands traded them in for a  
newer model.

James shakes his head at the irony. A beat, then...

JAMES

(heartfelt)

When I was promoted yesterday, you  
know what I first thought? How I  
wished I could call you just to  
hear your voice. And at my press  
conference, you know what I thought  
then? How I loved watching you  
wake up in the morning. And at the  
company dinner...? All I could  
think was how you should have been  
right beside me in your little  
black dress. It was a day I'd been  
dreaming of since B-school, Stace,  
and all I could think of was what  
I'd lost.

STACEY

It doesn't have to be like that.  
You can come home.

JAMES

No, I can't.

STACEY

Never?

JAMES

Not right away, no.

(beat)

I'll find a place nearby. We'll  
tell the kids we're taking a "time  
out."

Stacey nods. She understands. Then...trying to ease their  
pain.

STACEY

CEO of AmeriMart. World's most  
eligible bachelor.

JAMES

It's not what I wanted for myself.  
Not since Econ 101.

A last, regretful look. James is gone. And as Stacey  
convulses into tears, we're...

INT. PARTY - FIRMWOOD COUNTRY CLUB - LATER

James joins Duncan, Brody and Karl in mid-conversation.

BRODY

One. Just one for me. The lady  
with the cute forked tail.

As James sits down at the table...

JAMES

What are you guys talking about?

DUNCAN

The number of women in our lives  
who drive us absolutely off the  
reservation.

KARL

Two for me.

ANGLE ON MARLA AND WENDY -- on the dance floor, as they dance and laugh with one another.

KARL (CONT'D)  
(swigs his drink)  
God help me.

JAMES  
I'm with Brody. One...

INSERT STACEY -- as she stands forlorn by the pool.

BACK TO JAMES -- as he watches Katie, across the party. Brody notices James watching her.

BRODY  
But ask him again in six months.

The guys smile. Karl turns to Duncan.

KARL  
What about you, Dunc?

DUNCAN  
Two and a half.

BRODY  
(unsure)  
"Two and a half?"

INSERT LISBETH, feigning interest on her dinner date. Clearly, Duncan's on her mind.

DUNCAN  
There's Lisbeth...

INSERT CAMERON -- later that night -- as she finishes organizing the copy room and smiles to herself, pleased.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
Cameron, of course.  
(beat)  
And I think Dontrelle's worth a half, don't you?

KARL  
To Dontrelle!

The guys start to raise their glasses in a toast...

BRODY  
And Duncan, I have two words for you -- corrective lenses...

As the guys laugh and clink their glasses, we DISSOLVE TO  
CLOSE ON A SHIRT -- as it's unbuttoned to REVEAL a LACE BRA.  
WIDEN TO REVEAL none-other-than

DONTRELLE, as he reaches into his bra and pulls out a SMALL  
TAPE RECORDER that's been affixed to his chest. We're --

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Dontrelle hands the micro-cassette to Lori Hodge, the  
reporter who earlier interviewed Duncan.

DONTRELLE  
He seems like a nice guy. I don't  
know why you needed me to tape him.

LORI  
Because a thousand words paint a  
very nice picture...

Dontrelle shrugs. And as Lori cradles the tape in her hands -  
- and we wonder to ourselves about the intrigue that awaits  
us, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW