

MASTERS OF SEX

Episode #203

"Fight"

by

Amy Lippman

Directed

by

Michael Engler

Production Draft 2/24/14

© 2014

SONY PICTURES TELEVISION INC.

All Rights Reserved

No portion of this script may be performed, or reproduced by any means,
or quoted, or published in any medium without prior written consent of
SONY PICTURES TELEVISION INC.

* 10202 W. Washington Boulevard * Culver City, CA 90232 *

MASTERS OF SEX

Episode #203
"Fight"
Production Draft
2/24/14

CHARACTER LIST

Regular Cast
Masters
Johnson

Guest Cast
Tessa
Waiter/Elliot
Bombeck
Francine
Shelley
Delivery Nurse
Scrub Nurse
Anesthesiologist
Surgeon

MASTERS OF SEX

Episode #203
"Fight"
Production Draft
2/24/14

SET LIST

INTERIORS

JOHNSON'S HOUSE
STAIRCASE/LIVING ROOM

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
OPERATING ROOM
PATIENT ROOM
WAITING ROOM

CHASE PARK PLAZA HOTEL
HOTEL ROOM
HOTEL BATHROOM
HALLWAY
LOBBY
PHONE BOOTH
BAR

EXTERIORS

START on JOHNSON, looking up the stairs.

JOHNSON
Henry? HENRY!

She moves into the living room, crossing to the dining area where TESSA eats her morning cereal.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)
What's keeping your brother?

Tessa doesn't look up. As she munches, she's writing something on a piece of flowery, little girl stationery.

TESSA
His hair.

JOHNSON
His --?

TESSA
-- Diane Delmonico told him he looks like Howdy Doodie, so now he's trying a center part. What's Daddy's address?

JOHNSON
(notices the note)
You're writing him a letter? You're sleeping over at his place tonight.

TESSA
It's not for him. It's for the tooth fairy princess. Look --

She wiggles a loose bottom tooth.

TESSA (CONT'D)
If it falls out when I'm over at Daddy's, she might not know where to come pick it up. Or which pillow to leave my nickle under.

JOHNSON
So you're leaving a forwarding address.

TESSA
Smart, huh?

1 CONTINUED:

1

JOHNSON

Very. Only the tooth fairy isn't a princess, honey. She's just a fairy.

TESSA

Oh no, she is. She's a princess. She's a fairy princess that *specializes in teeth.*

JOHNSON

And is there a tooth fairy prince?

Tessa looks at her, like: um, hello?

TESSA

Mom. There's no such thing as fairy princes. Men can't be fairies.

Johnson starts to object. Then reconsiders.

TESSA (CONT'D)

There's only one kind of prince and that's handsome. You know: the handsome prince.

JOHNSON

Well, what if, just supposing, a prince were rushing to rescue his princess..

TESSA

Okay...

JOHNSON

And he fell off his horse --

TESSA

His steed --

JOHNSON

-- His steed, and he got trampled and his face ended up horribly disfigured?

Tessa thinks.

TESSA

I guess that could happen. But the princess would've had to see him before, back when he was handsome, so she'd know he was the one she was going to end up living happily ever after with.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

JOHNSON

That's just inevitable, huh? The happily ever after part?

TESSA

I don't know what inevitable means.

JOHNSON

At last, something you don't know. Fated. Inescapable. Something that has to happen.

TESSA

Of course. Anyway, the princess would end up kissing him and his face would go back to normal.

Johnson looks skeptical.

TESSA (CONT'D)

It's just how it works.

(a beat)

Daddy's address?

JOHNSON

8573 McLaren Avenue.

Tessa concentrates on writing the address. Johnson kisses her daughter's head.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

You know why I think you like fairy tales so much, bunny rabbit?

TESSA

Hmmm?

JOHNSON

I think you like knowing how things are going to end.

TESSA

Well, doesn't everyone?

2 INT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - DAY (D1)

2

Masters and his team -- delivery nurse, assistant, scrub nurse, anesthesiologist -- perform a routine delivery. The mother, peacefully anesthetized. Everything proceeding unremarkably.

MASTERS

Fundal pressure on the next contraction, nurse, please.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

The nurse places her fist above the uterus and presses down.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Very good. Here we go.

Masters pulls the baby out --

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Bulb syringe.

He aspirates the baby's nose. He hands it to the delivery nurse, who wraps it in a towel, and returns to deliver the placenta.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

The mother?

ANESTHESIOLOGIST

Vitals steady.

SCRUB NURSE

What've you got there, Maureen?

The delivery nurse, moves the towel aside.

DELIVERY NURSE

It's a --
(trails off)

A...

She stops. She turns to Masters.

DELIVERY NURSE (CONT'D)

Dr. Masters?

Masters looks up. There's something in the woman's tone: a note of panic. He moves to her as she angles baby toward him. We PUSH in on Masters.

DELIVERY NURSE (CONT'D)

What is it, Doctor...?

CUT TO:

3 INT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - DAY (D1)

3

The stricken parents, FRANCINE and NATE BOMBECK, mid 30s, regard MASTERS. The mother holds the bundled baby.

FRANCINE

Can you say it again, please? Slower
this time.

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS

Adrenogenital hyperplasia.

FRANCINE

Wait, I should -- take the baby, Nate
-- I want to write that down.

BOMBECK

Why?

FRANCINE

For me. And for when people ask.

BOMBECK

No one's going to ask, Francine. No
one's going to know.

The woman is cowed by her husband. And clearly not for the
first time.

BOMBECK (CONT'D)

And I'm not holding it. So don't ask
me again.

MASTERS

It's not an it, Mr. Bombeck. It's a
boy. The blood test conclusively
shows the XY chromosome.

FRANCINE

A boy, Nate. Like we wanted.

BOMBECK

You think I wanted this? A freak?
Like something you'd pay a nickle to
see on the boardwalk in Atlantic
City?

MASTERS

I understand the physical ambiguity
is -- offputting, Mr. Bombeck. But
eventually the surgery will take care
of that.

BOMBECK

Eventually? You're telling me --
you're expecting us to leave this
place with a kid that looks like
that?

MASTERS

The baby's otherwise in good health --
he'll be released.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

MASTERS (CONT'D)

And in the meantime, a surgical plan,
formulated.

BOMBECK

We can't take it home like this.
People will see --

FRANCINE

We've both got mothers itching to
change diapers.

MASTERS

And if you explain, you don't think
they'll understand?

BOMBECK

Hell, *I* don't understand. The sooner
it looks like what it's supposed to
be -- the better for everyone.

Masters is growing impatient. But he tamps down his
frustration. He goes icy.

MASTERS

Not for the child. There's no
advantage to operating on a newborn.

FRANCINE

What do you do? Just...sew up
the...you know...opening?

MASTERS

The reconstruction's more complicated
than that.

BOMBECK

Well, how's it even going to look
down there, his -- thing?

FRANCINE

Can you make it look --

BOMBECK

Normal?

MASTERS

There's a very wide spectrum of
normal as far as genitalia's
concerned. And I won't be performing
the surgery. It should be a doctor
who specializes in pediatric
endocrinology.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (3)

3

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Someone who's performed many variations of the procedure before.

BOMBECK

So, you're not really the expert, are you?

Masters concedes:

MASTERS

I'm not, no. Not on this particular condition.

BOMBECK

And you're even not the top dog here, right? One of the nurses said you're new.

But this he can't abide. Steely:

MASTERS

To the hospital, sir, not the profession.

BOMBECK

So you can't even tell me with any certainty if the kid's plumbing is going to work. Will it?

FRANCINE

That's so far down the road, Nate --

BOMBECK

(sharply)

You don't know a thing about it, Francine.

(to Masters)

I'm asking you, will he be able to perform. Not in a side show. In the bedroom.

MASTERS

In some cases hormone therapy's necessary. Testosterone treatments.

BOMBECK

In other words, he'll need shots to make him a real man.

A beat. This guy is a real prick.

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS

Erections aren't the totality of manhood.

BOMBECK

You know who thinks that? Men with a little bit of girl in them.

FRANCINE

Nate! I'm sorry, Doctor --

BOMBECK

I want you to cut it off.

MASTERS

What? What did you say?

FRANCINE

(frightened)

Nate?

BOMBECK

You can sew a prick on him the size of the Empire State Building, it still won't make him a man. He'll never be a man. So cut it off.

If Masters were a pugalist, this is where he'd throw a haymaker. But instead, he's perfectly still. A strong, steely force to be reckoned with.

MASTERS

Let me tell you how this is going to go, Mr. Bombeck. You and your family are going to leave here in a few days, and you're going to take some time to become informed, to let your mind catch up to your mouth. And you will come to accept that your son -- your son -- has a condition that can and will be corrected. And when you come back for the surgery that's going to insure his outsides match who he is inside, you're going to thank me for protecting your child from your own poor judgment.

CUT TO:

4 A BOXING MATCH 4

Archie Moore vs. Yvon Durelle, December 10, 1958. (The time code throughout refers to footage of the fight available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTtzltIK2ng. Or go to Youtube and type in "Moore vs. Durelle" -- it's the first video that comes up.)

We come in around 00:45, as the two men spar. And then reveal we're in:

5 INT. CHASE PARK PLAZA HOTEL - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (NIGHT 1) 5

Masters, tightly wound, jacket off, paces in front of the set, lost in his own thoughts, casual glances to the set until --

THE TV -- INTERCUT

-- at 1:05, Durelle knocks down Moore for six counts.

Masters gives a small GRUNT of surprise. His attention officially captured.

Moore staggers around the ring, still reeling from that first knockdown; Durelle is relentless.

MASTERS

Jesus.

He sinks to the edge of the bed, rapt. The sound of a KEY in a lock. The door opens. JOHNSON enters in a coat.

JOHNSON

Hello.

MASTERS

Hel -- Jesus!

(he points to the set)

It's only the first round.

JOHNSON

I see.

She stands there with her coat and purse.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Of how many exactly?

MASTERS

Fifteen. If he makes it that long.

That's two knock downs already --

(he flinches)

-- three! Jesus.

(CONTINUED)

Johnson watches for a moment, takes in the uneven dynamics.

JOHNSON

It doesn't seem like a fair fight.
The colored fighter's obviously
outmatched.

MASTERS

He's the champion. The one getting
the stuffing knocked out of him.

JOHNSON

-- Is the champ? That guy?

MASTERS

Archie Moore. The Old Mongoose.

She shrugs off her coat. Watches a few exchanges.

JOHNSON

Well, isn't that the problem right
there? The old part. He looks old.

MASTERS

That old guy's fighting to keep the
title of the light heavy weight
champion of the world. He's 8 and 0
so far this year. And we're the same
age.

Johnson looks from Masters to Moore and back again.

JOHNSON

Well, be thankful you haven't spent
your life getting punched in the
face.

From the set, A BELL. The fighters return to their corners.

MASTERS

That's the round.

JOHNSON

So.

She slips off her shoes. Waits for a sign from him.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Are we getting to work, or --

MASTERS

Yes. Yes, of course. Shall I call
downstairs and order you a drink?

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

You won't join me?

MASTERS

I'm two down.

She notes the two empty highballs on the console.

JOHNSON

You started early. More hospital politics?

He hesitates telling her. It might be better not to dredge up his day. But it's still weighing on him. After a moment of internal debate:

MASTERS

I delivered a baby today with ambiguous sexual genitalia.

JOHNSON

Ambiguous? So...what does that mean? You can't tell what it is?

MASTERS

It had both a penis and a vagina. It happens in utero, depending on the fetal genitals' exposure to testosterone. In its absence, in a boy, the genitals remain feminized. With a girl, an abundance of testosterone causes the clitoris to grow into a penis, with the labia fusing to form a penile urethra. It's rare, but happens. In med school, I saw a few photographs. Over the years, I've read a paper or two on the condition. But I'd never seen it firsthand before today.

(a beat)

The tests show it's a boy. Which is lucky because sometimes the genetics aren't so clear.

JOHNSON

What happens then?

MASTERS

Well, from a surgical standpoint, it's actually easier -- much easier -- to make it a girl.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

So that's what they'd do? They'd make it a girl? Just on the basis of convenience?

MASTERS

Yes. And fear. This father wasn't a guy who could handle ambiguity, let's put it that way.

JOHNSON

He was probably in shock.

MASTERS

Shock, I understand. This one's a bully. You could see it in how he spoke to his wife, how cowed the woman was.

(building)

How he just expected his bidding done -- cut it off, he told me! As if you'd alter your son's genetic destiny for the sake of expedience. Or because he might not be hung to your satisfaction.

She sees how worked up he's getting.

JOHNSON

Hey.

A beat. Masters tries to shrugs it off.

MASTERS

It'll be easier with him in the morning, after he's gotten some sleep. I'll put him in touch with a specialist.

A beat. The O.C. roar of the crowd directs their attention back to the fight.

JOHNSON

Round two.

They watch.

JOHNSON(CONT'D)

Maybe they need to name him. And once he has a boy's name, he'll be a boy to him. I mean, isn't that what every man wants? A son?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (4)

5

A beat. Masters thinks of his own father. How little his father wanted him.

MASTERS

A certain kind of son. Male through and through.

ON THE TV

The fight -- about 6:10 - 6:19.

RESUME

JOHNSON

You mean like these two? Pummeling each other like a butcher tenderizing meat? Male like that? I wouldn't want that kind of son. Or, for that matter, that kind of man.

(a beat)

You're not like that.

Masters' eyes don't move from the fight. Johnson notices his apparent transfixion.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

If you're going to watch, I'll take a bath.

MASTERS

(preoccupied)

-- What's that?

JOHNSON

I'd love to, actually. A clean tub, without any bath toys. It'd be a treat.

And she moves into the bathroom. Masters watches her go, unsure what to make of what she's just said.

She doesn't want a brute -- and doesn't consider him one. Is that a good thing or a bad thing? Some impulse in Masters starts to build in intensity as he watches Johnson through the crack in the door, as she bends down to run the bath.

6 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS (N1)

6

Johnson in the shiny chrome of the spigot. She twists the hot and cold handles, letting the water run over her fingertips as she adjusts the temperature. She stands still facing the tub, gropes for her dress zipper.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

Masters moves in behind her, tugs the zipper, moves his hands around her frame, puts his face in her neck. Johnson is surprised at his touch, puts her arm behind her head, threads her fingers in his hair. Masters turns her around sharply, presses her up against the bathroom wall, bunches her dress up over her hips, revealing her garter and stockings. There's an urgency to all of this: the way he undoes his belt, pulls his pants to his hips, grinds into her, buries his face in her neck, takes in the smell of her. Virginia responds to his intensity, with surprise -- and desire. And we watch as she slides one stockinged foot up his leg, and then wraps it around his waist, pulling him into her.

It's all very, well, carnal.

CUT TO:

7 INT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT (N1)

7

A beautiful newborn BABY, seen from overhead, its little hands tight like tiny walnuts. It gurgles and twitches on an exam table, the shot just shy of its pubic area.

The baby's P.O.V. of the masked faces of a MEDICAL TEAM, gathered in a circle, staring down in somber silence.

8 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER (N1)

8

The spigot slowly drip drip drips into an inch of standing water in the tub. Masters regards himself in the mirror over the sink, wiping traces of Johnson's lipstick off his neck, the color smeared like a bruise across his chest. His gaze shifts in the mirror, and through the half open door, he watches Johnson, in a hotel bathrobe, sitting on the bed, on the phone, talking to room service.

JOHNSON

And what comes with that,
please?...He'll have the baked
potato, butter, no sour cream, and if
I could just get some sliced
tomato...

Masters emerges. Johnson continues on the phone.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Oh...medium well done for me... And
for my husband --

Masters starts to reply -- but Johnson holds up a finger: she's got this one.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

He likes to say: the chef can just walk the cow through a warm room.

(a beat)

Oh, yes, very much the life of the party.

(she smiles at Bill)

Thank you so much.

(she hangs up)

Dinner's on its way.

The fight -- volume low -- continues on the set. Round Four: around 12:10 - 13:04. Moore connects with a strong jab -- Masters reacts, clenches his fist.

MASTERS

Atta boy.

(re: the volume)

Do you mind?

Johnson shrugs, go ahead. He turns it up. They watch.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

He said he'd retire from fighting if he didn't take this one, keep his title. He's got 15 years on that kid. Yvon Durelle. The "Fighting Fisherman". Apparently, he's been hauling lobster traps to get in shape.

JOHNSON

He's the crowd favorite, huh? Listen to them.

MASTERS

That's a good thing for Moore.

That's what's spurring him on, in part. People rooting against him.

Gives him more to prove.

(points)

Now see that? That's his signature move. The "armadillo curtain". See how he crosses his arms across his chest -- that's not the usual fighting stance -- and it can throw off an opponent and then -- see how that right jab comes out of nowhere? Durelle isn't falling for it --

(Off her surprise)

What?

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

I didn't know you knew anything about boxing.

MASTERS

Yes, well.

JOHNSON

I've never seen you so much as glance at the sports page.

MASTERS

Well, you and I don't have breakfast together, do we?

He doesn't intend this insensitivity, but it wounds her nonetheless. Masters tries to make up for it.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

I learned to box at boarding school. It was the first thing I did, after I unpacked my suitcase. Headed down to the gym and asked the coach to teach me to fight.

JOHNSON

Were you worried about freshman hazing? Or just enamored of the sport?

He regards her. Calculates how much of himself to reveal. Decides, not much.

MASTERS

I wanted to be absolutely certain no one was going to get the best of me in a fight ever again.

He turns to the fight. Johnson studies him.

JOHNSON

Ever again?

MASTERS

(to the set, re: some missed jab)
For Christ's sake.

JOHNSON

So it'd happened before?

MASTERS

Hmmmm. What's that?

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

You said you didn't want to lose a fight ever again. When had you lost before?

MASTERS

(covering)

I hadn't. Oh, the usual schoolyard scrapes. You know.

JOHNSON

I don't actually. How bad do those get?

MASTERS

(back to the set)

Land one, would you?

But Johnson is a dog with a bone.

JOHNSON

Bill?

He looks at her, caught. He shrugs.

MASTERS

There's really not an interesting story here, Virginia, I promise you.

He turns back to the set. On Virginia's frustration at having been shut down.

9 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER (N1)

9

Johnson is, at last, in the bath. She watches Masters through a crack in the door. He's perched on the edge of the bed, watching the fight. He half stands, riveted by some near knockdown, then sinks down again.

She watches his face as he registers each blow. And then is distracted by a KNOCK at the door.

CUT TO:

10 INT. HOTEL ROOM/HALLWAY (N1)

10

Masters opens the door to a waiter, who pushes in a room service cart, with domed plates.

WAITER

Where would you like it, Dr. Holden?

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS

Over by the window is fine.

ON THE SET

Round Five: 13:50 -- right before Durelle knocks down Moore for the third time.

RESUME

WAITER

Very good, sir.

MASTERS

(reacting to the knockdown at
13:59)

Jesus! Get up!

The waiter casts a glance toward the set.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Durelle just took him down with a
right hook!

WAITER

You mind, sir? We've got a few bets
going in the kitchen.

Masters waves him over. They watch.

MASTERS

Where's your money?

WAITER

On the kid. Archie's way past his
prime.

Moore staggers to his feet once again.

MASTERS

I wouldn't count him out.

WAITER

Really? You think those legs are
gonna hold him?

He realizes the informality of the conversation might be inappropriate. Returns to his task.

WAITER (CONT'D)

Will you both be having wine tonight?

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS
I'll pour it, thank you --

WAITER
-- It's Elliot, sir. Sometimes they
put me on the door. I brought Mrs.
Holden that umbrella last time.

MASTERS
Yes. Thank you for that.

WAITER
How's her mother doing, if I may ask?

11 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - SIMULTANEOUS (N1) 11

Johnson cocks her head. Her mother?

MASTERS (O.S.)
...The same.

Johnson rises from the bath, reaches for a robe.

12 INT. HOTEL ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS (N1) 12

WAITER
Hard to know what to wish for, isn't
it? My mother lingered for a long
time, but she was in terrible
terrible pain.

MASTERS
Yes, well.

He makes the final tweaks to the table setting.

WAITER
Will you and your wife be wanting a
breakfast tray in the morning?

MASTERS
We both have long drives. We like to
be on the road early.
(handing him a tip)
Thank you for your trouble --

WAITER
-- Elliot. My pleasure, Dr. Holden.
Now you just give a call when you're
done and I'll get this out of your
way, lickety-split, sir.

(CONTINUED)

And he exits. A beat. Johnson appears in the bathroom doorway in her robe.

JOHNSON

Where are we going that we need to leave in the middle of the night?

MASTERS

You're driving to Louisville to take care of your mother. I'm driving back to my medical practice in Kansas City. We meet halfway when we can.

JOHNSON

What's wrong with my mother?

MASTERS

Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

He removes one the plate warmers. Regards his baked potato. No butter. Shit.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Sour cream. Terrific. You told them, right?

JOHNSON

Idiopathic?

MASTERS

That's right.

JOHNSON

Idiopathic.

She shakes her head. A little hostile.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

And what kind of doctor are you? No, wait. Let me guess. An ophthalmologist?

MASTERS

Radiologist.

JOHNSON

Well, I guess neither one of us has a particularly interesting story, do we?

He can't quite understand where this testiness is coming from.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Couldn't you at least make up
something slightly more imaginative?

It's like she's challenging him to take her on.

MASTERS

Why would I? Isn't the point to fly
under the radar? An ordinary husband
and wife meeting for a ho-hum marital
assignation?

JOHNSON

My mother doesn't have pulmonary
fibrosis --

MASTERS

Idiopathic --

JOHNSON

-- She was blinded in a prison fight.
Where she's doing time. For tax
evasion. And also? Contributing to
the delinquency of a minor. When she
tried to seduce the bag boy at the
Piggly Wiggly. I go to Louisville
whenever I can to read her the bible.
I'm hoping to make her right with the
Lord.

Masters smiles. He thinks he gets it. It's a game.

MASTERS

And me?

JOHNSON

You're a radiologist.

MASTERS

I thought you said that was --

JOHNSON

-- Who's working for the government.
Covertly. On.. on...

(tapdancing here, spots)

A...pen. A radioactive pen. That
will be smuggled into the Kremlin via
a Soviet diplomat, one Gustav
Antonovich --

MASTERS

Gustav isn't Russian. It's German.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

-- his mother was German -- and that device'll be used to take out Khrushchev. It's a top secret mission.

MASTERS

Which is why I didn't mention it to Elliot, our waiter.
(a toe in the water)
We've lost three lab technicians to radiation poisoning already.

She smiles. They're sparring.

JOHNSON

You didn't need to pay for the funerals, darling. You've got to forgive yourself.

MASTERS

It's...difficult.

JOHNSON

You're always too generous. Going above and beyond. It's a real problem.

MASTERS

You're still upset about the pony I bought our daughter for her birthday, aren't you?

Game over.

JOHNSON

We don't have children.

MASTERS

Oh. That's right.

A beat.

JOHNSON

It wouldn't be fair.

What's she talking about? It wouldn't be fair for her and Masters to have kids? Or for the Holdens?

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Not with the lives we lead.

(CONTINUED)

That doesn't clarify much. Masters tentatively tries an approach.

MASTERS

Of course. The clandestine missions.
The prison visits to your deranged
mother.

JOHNSON

You're making fun of me.

MASTERS

Aren't you making fun of us?

JOHNSON

I don't know.

And she truly doesn't. She's momentarily lost her bearings.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

What are we? Are we this?

He can't figure this woman out.

MASTERS

This?

She waves her hand, indicating everything.

JOHNSON

This. Mr. "Steak Very Rare"? Mrs.
"Wouldn't this wallpaper look good in
our den"?

MASTERS

I just had you up against the wall in
the bathroom. That doesn't exactly
make us candidates for the cover of
the Saturday Evening Post, does it?

(a beat)

Did you like that?

JOHNSON

I did. I liked that you had me
standing up.

She bends over next to him, puts one elbow on the table, her
chin in her palm.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Dr. Holden. Of the Kansas City
Holdens.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (5)

12

With the other hand, she pulls up her robe, until it's around her waist. An invitation.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)
We may look like the white picket
fence types. But we're not.

An invitation.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)
Nothing ho hum about us.

13 INT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT (N1)

13

The baby is positioned in an x-ray restraint. If you've never seen one before: it's pretty horrific. A tube that holds the baby still, and forces its hands overhead. Google at your own risk.

A crosshair of light from an x-ray machine scans down its pink chest.

REVERSE of the hulking machine, moving into position, like a cannon being lined up to fire.

The baby fusses. And cries. You would, too.

14 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER (N1)

14

Well, obviously the invitation was accepted. Because they're both sweaty and wrapped in bed sheets and ravenously eating their dinner, with plates perched on their laps. Nothing Rockwellian about this. Johnson is eating Masters' sour creamed baked potato. Both watch the fight at low volume -- Round 6 -- not much happening.

He watches her eat with gusto. She motions to him: want a bite? He holds up a hand.

MASTERS
I'm quite satiated, thank you.

JOHNSON
Why are you looking at me like the
cat that ate the canary?

MASTERS
You surprise me, Mrs. Holden.

JOHNSON
Oh? What about me?

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS

Your appetite.

JOHNSON

I skipped lunch.

MASTERS

Not that kind of appetite.

She gets his drift. Smiles. Coy.

JOHNSON

Surely you didn't think you taught me everything I know, did you?

MASTERS

I'm aware there were others. Before me.

(a beat, testing)

Boys.

She doesn't answer.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Right? A boy or two?

He's pressing on a bruise. Johnson isn't sure she wants to go there.

JOHNSON

After all these years, dear husband, you're asking?

MASTERS

No, I'm not asking.

(a beat)

On the other hand, if there's something you want to tell me...

JOHNSON

Maybe you'll feel threatened.

MASTERS

Why would that be? After all, you married me, didn't you?

JOHNSON

Well, there were others. Boys, yes. But just one man. Only one man who counted.

A beat.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

I wasn't quite eighteen. I was with a girlfriend at the local swimming pool, we were splashing around like ninnies, trying to get the boys to notice us, and I realized I'd lost an earring. It was just some dime store piece of junk I'd bought myself but I'd said was real so I had to make a big show of diving down to the bottom to get it. And suddenly this huge shockwave hits -- some guy's jumped into the water to get it, but all he succeeds in doing is send it straight down the drain. I gave him a hard time because that's the way you showed you were a girl with sass, and not some pushover.

(a beat)

A few days later, we ran into each other at a dance at the Army base. It turns out, he was a captain.

By way of explanation -- a little sheepishly:

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

There're a lot of shiny buttons on a Captain's uniform.

MASTERS

I'm sure.

JOHNSON

He took this worthless little chunk of colored glass out of his pocket -- he'd gotten the maintenance guy to fish it out of the drain, and had been carrying it around in the hopes of seeing me again. He said he knew it was an amethyst because it was his fiancé's birthstone.

MASTERS

He was engaged.

JOHNSON

Well, he claimed. Which was smart. All those girls on Army bases looking for husbands. If a fellow told you he was taken, then it was your fault, not his, for letting things get too serious. But two days in, she'd disappeared into thin air.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

(a beat)

We'd go out driving in his friend's convertible. The first time we made love was outside, under a grove of honeysuckles -- the sap from the blossoms got on our skin, that sticky sweetness mixing with our sweat -- it was...

(she cannot describe it)

It was different, making noise without worrying someone could hear you.

(a beat)

He'd been places. He knew about things. He taught me a little French he'd picked up over there. The boys I knew were farmers. They spent their time looking at the ground -- he knew all about astronomy. I thought, oh, this is what it is to be in love. You can have this with someone every day. It's possible.

(a beat)

And then one day, he had me drive him to the train station and he kissed me goodbye and said thank you -- thank you! -- and he left.

MASTERS

Shipped out?

JOHNSON

No. He left to get married.

Masters takes this in.

MASTERS

And that was a surprise? He told you --

JOHNSON

-- yes. He told me he was engaged. And then he never spoke of it again, not for a whole year, never mentioned another woman's name until the day he went off to marry her. Why wouldn't I have been surprised? He was never not with me from that night at the dance. There was nothing we did that felt like it wasn't going to be forever.

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

If you find yourself standing atop a hill, overlooking the most beautiful valley, and you say, "I want a house with exactly this view." And he says: "It's the second thing I want to see every morning, after you." Aren't the two of you imagining the same future? I mean, where is a fiancé in that house? Well, it turns out, she's downstairs, making oatmeal, just waiting for him to shower you off his skin.

Deep breath. Moving on.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

So. Lesson learned. Sex? Fine. It's a biological function. But you keep your heart out of it.

Masters studies her.

MASTERS

What does that say about us?

JOHNSON

...Us?

Is he truly asking about the two of them?

MASTERS

About our marriage?

She smiles.

JOHNSON

Don't you know, I'd never marry a man I didn't both love and desire?

But this answers nothing for Masters. Is she talking about them, or still playing the game?

Various shots.

An x-ray is clipped into a light box.

REVERSE ON a retinue of doctors considering it.

A tray of surgical instruments being lined up.

Doctors scrubbing up.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

The baby's stomach -- and below -- is swabbed with betadyne.

An IV being started on the baby.

An oxygen mask moving toward the baby's face.

The baby's point of view as the mask is affixed to its face.
And beyond it, the flare of the surgical lamp as it is trained
on the tiny, helpless patient.

16 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (N1)

16

They watch the match, their backs up against the side of the
bed. Johnson is restless. Pours some more wine.

JOHNSON

It's strange. I mean, yes, sure,
when they belt each other and fall
down, that's something. But this
going around and around in circles --
eyeballing each other. And that's
most of it.

MASTERS

This is the best part.

JOHNSON

This?

MASTERS

There's an entire unspoken
conversation happening between them.

JOHNSON

"Can you please stand still so I can
hit you?"

MASTERS

They're telling each other what they
think of each other.
(points to the set)
See there -- when he keeps his gloves
down -- it doesn't mean he's tired.

JOHNSON

He looks tired.

MASTERS

But it doesn't necessarily mean he is
tired. It might just be an
invitation to his opponent to take a
shot -- free and clear.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS (CONT'D)

And when you invite a punch, you're saying you can take it. So what looks like vulnerability is exactly the opposite. By playing weak, the fighter's saying I am stronger than you.

(points again)

Now see that? Is an insult. Moore just insulted him.

JOHNSON

He did? How.

MASTERS

A right hand lead. It's a right punch thrown like a jab -- only you don't set up your left. It says to your opponent, I don't think much of you.

JOHNSON

I don't understand.

Masters gets to his feet.

MASTERS

Come here.

(she looks up at him)

I'll show you.

He pulls her to her feet.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Okay. So. Put up your dukes.

JOHNSON

They really say that?

MASTERS

Now when I come at you like this -- with a right hand lead -- see how far my fist has to travel through space -- all this extra distance past your shoulders?

JOHNSON

So?

MASTERS

So that's the time you have to respond. If you see something coming, you can block it.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

So how do I do that?

MASTERS

You don't. It's coming too fast.

JOHNSON

(irritated)

You said I could see it. I can see it coming.

MASTERS

Yes, but the fact that I'm leading with my right tells you I think you won't. I think you'll miss it. That's how little I think of your reflexes. And that undermines a fighter's confidence.

JOHNSON

I'll prove you wrong.

He's enjoying this. She, not so much. She'd kind of like to punch the smug out of him.

MASTERS

Try.

JOHNSON

Seriously?

MASTERS

I'll take a shot, you try to block me.

JOHNSON

Okay.

Masters takes a swing, aiming for a spot, just to the right of Johnson's face. Johnson's slow on the uptake.

MASTERS

Too slow.

JOHNSON

Try again.

Masters feigns a few times, then fires another one. Again, Johnson tries to duck.

MASTERS

Late. You'd be down on the mat.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

Okay. Let me be you this time. I throw the punch, you try to block it.

MASTERS

Okay.

JOHNSON

Like this, right?

She tries a swing in slow-mo.

MASTERS

Are you going to do it at that speed?

She shoots him a look. Pissed now.

JOHNSON

No, Bill, I am not.

(she sets up again)

Okay, here we go. One...two...

MASTERS

You don't count it off. You've got to use the element of surprise.

JOHNSON

Fine.

They eye each other, fists up, circling each other warily. Johnson makes slight twitchy jabs, then takes a swing with her right. Masters dodges her, easily. She shakes this off.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Again.

She circles her fists like a cartoon character. Or the cowardly lion. Masters can't help smiling.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

It's not funny.

She swings again, irritated, and this time he catches her wrist. Openly grinning now. Enjoying how bad she is at this.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Once more.

MASTERS

Come on, Gini.

JOHNSON

Once. More.

(CONTINUED)

They circle each other again. And then Johnson zings him with a LEFT HOOK -- which Masters wasn't expecting -- her fist glancing off his head and her bracelet catching in his hair. Masters lets out a YELP, brings both hands up to his head, catching her wrist.

MASTERS

Ow ow ow!

JOHNSON

God --

MASTERS

Don't. Move. Jesus, what is that?

JOHNSON

My bracelet snagged.

MASTERS

Well, slide it off. Can you slide it --
(she tries)
-- Jesus.

JOHNSON

It's too tight. Wait. Maybe if I --

She tries to tinker with the clasp.

MASTERS

Vir -- unhook the clasp. Virginia.

JOHNSON

I'm trying.

MASTERS

What the hell were you doing? You were supposed to hit me with your right.

JOHNSON

Yes, well, maybe if you had quicker reflexes --
(re: the claps)
There's too much hair stuck in it.
Maybe if I just give it a yank --

She tests this out, giving a mild tug.

MASTERS

No no no!

They're stuck in this ridiculous position. Her forearm stuck to his head, him clutching it to remove pressure on his hair.

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Do you carry nail shears in your
purse?

She shakes her head.

JOHNSON

We could call down to the front desk,
ask them to send up a pair of
scissors.

MASTERS

You're fine with us opening the door
like this?

JOHNSON

Well, what do you propose, Bill?

They both look around for an answer. And both their gazes
simultaneously fall on the dirty dinner plates. And the
serrated steak knives.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

We'll just have to saw it out.

17 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT - A FEW MINUTES LATER (N1)

17

Masters regards himself in the mirror, trying to fluff out the
dent on the left side of his head, where Virginia sawed off a
hunk of his hair. She moves in with a scissors.

JOHNSON

Housekeeping sent up a pair. I told
them I was wrapping a present.
(indicates the toilet seat)
Sit.

MASTERS

You're going to make it worse.

JOHNSON

Bill. You have a divot on the side
of your head. How much worse could I
make it?

(he sits)

I'm just going to even it out a bit.

She runs her fingers through his hair, trying to assess the
damage. Which, let's face it, must feel very good; if Masters
were a cat, he'd probably purr. She moves around him snipping
here and there. There's a very relaxed intimacy between them.
He watches how intent she is on the task at hand.

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS

You know, you never thanked me.

JOHNSON

For....?

MASTERS

For steering you away from a career
in topiary.

She's not catching his drift.

JOHNSON

Topiary?

MASTERS

Yes, when we met? You were working
at the zoo, trimming bushes into the
shape of animals...

She smiles. He's trying out this make-believe stuff.

JOHNSON

I had talent. I could turn a box
hedge into a grizzly bear like
nobody's business.

MASTERS

I said there was more money in being
a beautician.

JOHNSON

Sure, because you needed a wife with
a good income to put you through
medical school. So really, you
should be thanking me.

(a beat)

When I think of what you've saved on
barbers all these years...

MASTERS

A pretty penny.

JOHNSON

Admit it, has anyone ever given you
as good as good a haircut as I have?

MASTERS

Afraid so.

JOHNSON

Oh? Where'd you ever get a better
one?

(CONTINUED)

He thinks. Smiles, wryly.

MASTERS

The barbershop at the Waldorf
Astoria. When I was fourteen.

JOHNSON

Awfully fancy for a fourteen year
old.

MASTERS

My father took me on my way to
boarding school. We had a weekend in
New York City full of firsts. My
first Broadway show. My first
lobster at Murray's Roman Gardens in
Times Square. And in preparation for
it all, my first shave and a haircut
at the Waldorf, my dad and I sitting
side by side, steaming towels on our
faces. No feeling in the world like
walking out into Central Park on a
fall day after a fresh shave. You
feel ready for anything.

JOHNSON

Like the world was your oyster.

MASTERS

First oyster, too. At the bar in
Grand Central!

A beat.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

It's funny. My father could've been
a boxer. Not a lot of control in his
punches, but he was a master of the
feint. Just when you thought he was
one thing -- like the kind of swell
guy who'd show his kid a good time in
the big city -- wham -- he'd come out
of nowhere, knock you for a loop.
Leave you on the steps of the
freshman dormitory, with a taxi
idling at the curb, letting you know
you wouldn't be coming home for
Christmas... or Easter... or ever.
Telling you -- at fourteen -- it was
time you took care of yourself.

A piece of the Bill Masters' puzzle, at last. Johnson is a
little stunned.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

You never went home after that?

The hurt goes very deep. Masters struggles with it. Shakes his head no, but then quickly tries to spin it:

MASTERS

But it was the best thing that could've happened. It toughened me up. Made me totally self-reliant.

Johnson's not buying any of it.

JOHNSON

You got left, too, huh?

MASTERS

Well, he didn't break my heart.

JOHNSON

No?

MASTERS

Just my nose once. A left hook.

(a beat)

He did me a favor. Made me the man I am today.

(a beat)

A Kansas City radiologist.

He smiles up at her to see if she's willing to go with the joke.

But the concern -- and compassion -- in her face is disarming. Vulnerable is not a feeling he's comfortable with. Looking down, he sees her robe belt has loosened, and the robe has opened slightly, revealing a sliver of her naked skin. Masters parts the fabric, slides his hands around her hips. Holds her there for a moment.

Johnson doesn't know what to make of this. Her hand hovers above his head -- tempted to pull him closer to her. Neither knows quite what's going on with the other.

Masters shrugs off his vulnerability and -- at the same time -- her robe; a quick unexpected turn. She grasps at it --

JOHNSON

Bill!

But it falls to the floor. She reflexively covers her breasts and her groin with her hands, reaches to pick it up, but he stops her.

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS

Leave it.

She straightens, cautiously.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Let me look at you.

Johnson stands there, vulnerable, not sure where this is going.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Take your hands away. I want to see
you.

Masters takes in the sight of her, moves around her, studying
her as if she were a statue.

JOHNSON

Are you going to...touch me?

MASTERS

Is that what you want?

She doesn't move.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Is it?

She nods.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Tell me.

She doesn't understand the game, knows only not to give in.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Say it.

JOHNSON

I don't need to say it.

He moves around her. She can feel his breath on her shoulders.

MASTERS

Tell me how much you want me to make
you feel good.

JOHNSON

Bill.

MASTERS

Go on.

(CONTINUED)

She doesn't answer.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Do it.

Still nothing.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Beg me.

This is a bridge too far. She won't give him the satisfaction.

JOHNSON

No. I won't.

With their eyes locked, Johnson moves her hand from her side to between her legs.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

I can make myself feel good.

And she does for herself what she refuses to beg him to do. Her breathing changes, her eyes become heavy lidded with pleasure. It's both erotic and a kind of fuck-you: a stand off. Masters watches, turned on.

JOHNSON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I can't tell who's ahead.

MASTERS (V.O.)

It can change from moment to moment.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

But in the end, is there always a clear winner? If there's not a knockout?

MASTERS (V.O.)

Sometimes the best fighter isn't the one who lands the hardest punch, but the one who absorbs it. And comes back for more.

Johnson's breathing quickens.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

You'd have to be a masochist to endure that kind of punishment, don't you think?

MASTERS (V.O.)

You stop feeling it after awhile.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON (V.O.)

You mean, you go numb?

MASTERS (V.O.)

You learn to resist your body's
instinct. Which is to run. Flee.
You start to invite that feeling.
You can't control its infliction, but
you can master it. And that, in
itself, makes you feel powerful.
That you can take it -- and not run.

Johnson climaxes, and we FADE DOWN her ragged breathing, and
FADE UP the sounds of the fight.

CUT TO:

INSERT FIGHT FOOTAGE

It's Round 7 and the tide has turned (22:00). Moore knocks
Durelle down briefly, then continues to pummel. (23:13 also
good).

We're in --

18 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER (N1)

18

Masters and Johnson watch the fight, splayed out on the bed.

Johnson watches him closely, so caught up in the fight. After
a moment, gently:

JOHNSON

Why did he break your nose?

MASTERS

Mmmm?

JOHNSON

Your father.

He looks up at her. Embarrassed by his own intensity, he tries
to make light.

MASTERS

Richard Holden Senior? We were just
horsing around. You know. Indian
wrestling. The way fathers and sons
do.

Enough with the bullshit.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

Bill.

(a beat)

Why did he break your nose?

MASTERS

I don't remember. Maybe I slammed the screen door. Maybe I reached for a second helping before he did. Maybe I used a word he didn't know.

(a beat)

Maybe it was...Wednesday.

JOHNSON

You didn't fight back?

MASTERS

No, I did. In my way.

Johnson looks at him, her face a question mark. Not, like, literally.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Sometimes, I didn't even put my hands up. It's the ultimate fuck you. The fighter with his gloves down. You're saying, come on, you sonuvabitch. I dare you. Take your best shot. It won't be enough to take me down. And it wasn't. I took whatever he could dish out.

JOHNSON

You were proud of yourself. Even now.

MASTERS

I acted like a man.

JOHNSON

But you weren't a man. You were just a boy.

And there it is. The truth. The key. Something wells up in Masters. He tries to push it down.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

What if you'd told him to stop?

MASTERS

He wouldn't've.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

What if you begged him?

MASTERS

It wouldn't've mattered.

JOHNSON

So instead you pretended like it didn't matter to you?

(a beat)

Pride. I don't understand it.

Where's the shame in stopping the fight if you're hurt? That Mongoose Man -- if he'd stayed down in those early rounds -- what would that have said about him? That he's a loser? Or that he's human.

(watches the set a beat)

Maybe it is a noble sport. Maybe it's all about character in a way a novice like me can't see. But I'll tell you this. I don't want my son to be a boxer. When he's hurt, I don't want him to act like he's not. He doesn't need to learn that lesson. I don't think that's what's gonna make him a man.

Masters takes this in.

19 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT (N1)

19

A shower spray turning on.

Masters moves under the stream, lets the water cascade down his back.

20 INT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT (N1)

20

The surgery in progress. The surgeon calls out for various instruments (scalpes, Metzenbaum scissors, sutures) -- and assistance (retraction, suction, etc.).

A moment of consternation as the doctor regards the surgical area.

SURGEON

Nurse?

And she brings over a text book, open to an anatomical drawing. The doctor studies it, then nods to indicate he's done and goes back to the surgery.

21 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (N1)

21

Johnson is on the phone, the sound of the SHOWER running in the background. As she speaks, she moves around as far as the cord will allow, collecting the dinner dishes, untangles the sheets to suggest less, er, *debauchery* has taken place.

JOHNSON

And what did Daddy make for dinner?... But, Tessy, you like corn... Well, if you were worried about your tooth, you could've have him cut it off the cob...

(a beat)

Are you in your jams?... And is Daddy going to read you a story?... Well, ask him to make one up... Well then you make up one and tell him.... Let's see...

A stray highball glass on the bedside dresser takes her to Masters' wallet, watch and eyeglasses.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

(she smiles)

A princess, of course... What else?... A magic spell, good... What kind of animal friend?

And his wedding band. Johnson looks at it.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Maybe she could have an adventure of her own, without a prince...

(an earful from Tessa)

Okay, okay!...Okay, fine!... Well, could she rescue him then?...

She takes the band, slips it on her finger. Then regards her reflection in the mirror.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

It does too happen.

(a beat)

No, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Tess.

(a beat, sadder)

You tell the story you want...

A KNOCK at the door.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

I love you, too, Goose. Sleep tight.

(CONTINUED)

She hangs up and quickly slips the ring off, wheels the cart closer to the door, opens it. Revealing the waiter.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)
(indicating the cart)
It's right over here --

WAITER
-- I've got it. Everything was to your satisfaction, Mrs. Holden?

JOHNSON
Yes, absolutely --

WAITER
-- Elliot. I brought you that umbrella last week.

JOHNSON
That's right. Let me find my purse --

WAITER
Oh, that's not necessary. Dr. Holden saw to it.

JOHNSON
For the umbrella, then. Which I didn't bring back.

WAITER
No one ever does.
(notices)
Dr. Holden's wallet is right there.

She looks up. Looks at the wallet. Considers how it might feel to go through it. Decides against it, crosses the room to her purse. The waiter lingers at the door.

WAITER (CONT'D)
You know, ma'am, if you'd like to put in a standing order for anything for next time.

JOHNSON
Excuse me?

WAITER
So we can have it waiting for you. If you'd prefer foam pillows to down, for example... Extra bath towels.

JOHNSON
Towels would be nice.

WAITER

I'll let housekeeping know. Some of our regulars request we have flowers or champagne waiting for them.

JOHNSON

That's alright. We don't need any of that fuss.

WAITER

Women say that, but they appreciate a nice gesture. So says my girlfriend. She's a big fan of trinkets hidden in glove compartments and under sofa cushions.

Johnson hands him a tip.

JOHNSON

Yes, well, when you've been married for awhile -- jewelry doesn't make that many appearances. Here you go.

WAITER

(re: the tip)

Thank you. Perhaps you need to drop a few hints. Give Dr. Holden some direction.

Johnson opens the door for him to wheel the cart out.

JOHNSON

Actually, he does other things for me. He opens doors. He puts his hand on my back when we walk through a room. He's a gentleman. In a few years, that's what your girlfriend will appreciate. The small things.

(a beat)

You remember that, Elliot.

WAITER

(he nods)

Will do. Have a good night, ma'am.

She closes the door. Turns back to into the room. Grabs her stockings, sits down on the bed to fasten them.

ON THE SET

(The fight, round 8, around 25:12-25:28 -- even handed punching with some dramatic hits)

(CONTINUED)

Masters emerges from the bathroom, fully dressed, his hair damp.

MASTERS

What did I miss?

She nods toward the set, reaches for her bracelet on the nightstand. Starts to put it on. They watch for a moment; the two fighters, exhausted, clinging to each other in between punches.

JOHNSON

It almost looks a little like love, doesn't it? The way they reach for each other and hold on. It's them against each other, sure, but also the two of them against that crowd -- listen to those people scream.

Johnson struggles with her bracelet clasp.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Shoot.

Masters moves over to her, sits next to her, gestures for her wrist, which she extends to him along with the bracelet. He wraps it around her wrist, and goes to work on the clasp, his face bent but close to hers. Johnson is hyper aware of his proximity, the intensity with which he approaches the task and she is seized by a wave of feeling for him. She reaches out and touches his hair around the site of the divot, her face full of tenderness. At her touch, Masters looks up at her, and feeling suddenly exposed, Johnson feigns a nonchalance.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

I did a good job. You can't even tell.

The clasp clicks into place. Masters still has hold of her wrist.

MASTERS

There!

He's feeling something, too. He turns the bracelet face up, circling it around as if he needs an excuse to stay close to her for a moment longer.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Do you get many compliments?

JOHNSON

On?

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS
Your anniversary present.

Back to their game.

MASTERS (CONT'D)
I had to look up what you're supposed
to get for your fourteenth-- but no
two jewelry stores said the same
thing. So I decided on ---

He tries to name the stone. Johnson smiles.

JOHNSON
(helping him out)
Bakelite.

MASTERS
I'll do better next year. It's a big
one.

Johnson stands quickly. She feels vulnerable to his kindness.
To the idea of them as a long married couple. She doesn't want
to want this -- and she's prepared to resist with all her
might.

JOHNSON
We should probably go, don't you
think?

Masters stands too, but he's still in the game.

MASTERS
You've got a long drive ahead.
Promise me, you'll pull over at a
rest stop if you get tired. Windows
up and doors locked.

She can't resist. Her final goodbye to the illusion.

JOHNSON
How you worry, Dr. Holden.

She reaches out to straighten his bow-tie. A moment of true
closeness. A hesitation.

MASTERS
This is where a married couple would
kiss.

But Johnson can't let herself go there. She takes a step back.
The mood is broken.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (5)

21

JOHNSON

Don't forget your wallet. It's over there. Next to your ring.

22 INT. CHASE PARK PLAZA HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT (N1)

22

Bill emerges from the elevator. Moves through the lobby. A mother pushing a pram crosses his path, and carries his gaze over to a phone booth. He slows. Feels for coins in his pocket.

23 INT. CHASE PARK PLAZA HOTEL - PHONE BOOTH - SECONDS LATER (N1) 23

Masters on the phone.

MASTERS

Third floor nursery, please... This is Dr. Masters. I'm checking in on the Bombeck baby. Yes, this morning... I left instructions to measure his ins and outs -- has he taken a bottle yet?...

(a beat; suddenly on high alert)

No, you're mistaken... WHEN?

24 INT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT (N1)

24

Masters blasts through a pair of swinging doors, into the waiting room. A few heads turn -- a weary assemblage of people waiting for news of their loved ones. Including Bombeck. Who gets to his feet as Masters charges over.

MASTERS

What's going on? What the hell are you doing?

BOMBECK

I told you. I said I wasn't leaving here with an "it"?

MASTERS

(frenzy building)

Look, you've got to put a stop to this. There's time. The desk said your son's in pre-op --

BOMBECK

-- He's not my son.

MASTERS

He is. He is. They're going to fix him. But it can't happen this fast.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Not overnight. You want to get the very best person --

BOMBECK

-- We found someone. Dr. Bracken? Brigham? Said he'd do it.

MASTERS

Hugh Britton?! But he's a general surgeon --

BOMBECK

-- He said it isn't as complicated as you made it seem. He said a hole's easier than a pole --

MASTERS

-- No. You can't just -- you've got to --

He tries to hold back but Johnson's words have had their effect. His desperation finally breaches the dam, and it's a torrent.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

-- please -- I'm begging you -- go in there and stop it -- this needs more thought -- give it a week -- or even, even just another day -- think it through -- because this is irrevocable. You have a son. I'm begging you -- please --

Masters at the zenith of his desperation.

MASTERS (CONT'D)

Let him be what he is -- a boy.

BOMBECK

It's done. The doctor's finishing. The nurse came out to tell me.

A beat. Masters reels.

BOMBECK (CONT'D)

We're naming her Sarah.

There is it. Masters closes his eyes. Like he's taken a punch.

BOMBECK (CONT'D)

Better a tomboy than a sissy.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

It's over. Masters just stands there. Still swaying slightly like a fighter who won't go down. On his face, the devastation of having exposed himself -- to no avail.

25 INT. CHASE PARK PLAZA HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT (N1)

25

It's Johnson's turn to take her leave. The elevator doors disgorge her (even though that sounds repulsive). She crosses the lobby. Is distracted by the sounds of CHEERS and WHOOPS coming from the bar.

26 INT. CHASE PARK PLAZA HOTEL - BAR - CONTINUOUS (N1)

26

Johnson appears in the entrance, takes in the scene. The room is thick with cigarette smoke. Salesmen knock back drinks, their faces flickering in the black and white light of the TV set above the bar.

Johnson weaves through the crowded room -- providing the men a brief distraction as she passes them -- each of them momentarily torn between lust and bloodlust, before the fight wins back their attention.

We're in the 10th round, around 31:20.

One man isn't so consumed with the match that he doesn't register Johnson's behind as it glides past him, and over to a table. This is SHELLEY DECKLIN, 30's, handsome, a salesman who, at the moment, is selling himself. He takes his drink and his bowl of peanuts with him, sauntering over to Johnson, as she tries to hail a waiter.

Moore knocks Durelle to the mat. The room EXPLODES. Shelley leans into her, having to yell above the din.

SHELLEY

You a fight fan?

The men CHEER, urging Durelle to stay down, stay down! The ref starts the count: one...two...three...

JOHNSON

Not really.

Four...five...six...

SHELLEY

Then what brings you here?

Seven...eight...nine... And Durelle is back on his feet. The crowd GROANS with disappointment. She turns her face up the screen.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

I want to know how it ends.

The CLANG of the bell, signalling the end of another round.

It's not over yet.

FADE OUT.