

"ATLANTA"
A Brutal Romantic Comedy

by
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BLACK SCREEN

WE HEAR BUDDY GUY'S ASS-KICKIN' "DAMN RIGHT I GOT THE BLUES"

FADE UP ON:

EXT. - ATLANTA SKYLINE - MORNING

A PERFECTLY BEAUTIFUL CRISP FALL MORNING - NOTHING TO HAVE THE BLUES ABOUT. SUNLIGHT BOUNCES OFF STEEL-AND-GLASS CORPORATE MEGA-BUILDINGS. ON THE HIGHWAYS, CARS ARE ZIPPING BRISKLY ALONG. BUT ON ONE PARTICULAR STRETCH - THEY'RE NOT. WE MOVE IN ON THAT.

BUDDY GUY (SINGING)
"You're damn right I got the blues...
from my head down to my shoes..."

CLOSE IN ON A SHINY BLACK HUMMER AT A VIRTUAL STANDSTILL.

INSIDE - THE SONG IS PLAYING ON THE CAR RADIO. BEHIND THE WHEEL IS ERIC GRANDERSON, EARLY 30'S, GOOD-LOOKING, SHIRT AND TIE, JACKET ON THE SEAT NEXT TO HIM. HE'S ON HIS CELL.

ERIC
No... No... I'm not kidding! A box of actual vomit. Hand-delivered to my office... (ANSWERING THE QUESTION) I don't know - I'm assuming it was hers, but what's the difference? If she sent a box of "cat vomit" is that, like, better? Either way, I'm thinking the relationship is pretty much over, don't you think? (LISTENS, RESIGNED) Yeah, well...(REALIZING) Hey, thank God I never gave her my home address.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - SAME TIME

A RED, CANVAS-TOPPED JEEP-WRANGLER - AN "OFF-ROAD" CAR THAT'S ACTUALLY USED OFF-ROAD - IS MOVING ALONG SOMEWHAT TENTATIVELY.

INSIDE - BEHIND THE WHEEL IS JESSICA BUCKLEY - ALSO EARLY 30'S, ALSO ATTRACTIVE, THOUGH AT THE MOMENT, LOST.

JESSICA
(TO HERSELF) This is wrong. This is definitely wrong.

BY CONTRAST, HER G.P.S."VOICE-LADY" SEEMS CONFIDENT AND CHIPPER.

G.P.S. LADY (O.S.)
"In three-hundred feet, turn right."

JESSICA
(TO THE G.P.S. LADY, INSISTENT)
But there's no place to turn there.
I'm going to go back this way.

SHE HANGS A U-TURN. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS:

G.P.S. LADY
"In seven-hundred feet, turn left."

JESSICA
(TO GPS LADY, GENTLY REPRIMANDING)
Oop - I heard the little attitude
there. Like you're pissed I didn't
listen to you, but you're not allowed
to say anything...

G.P.S. LADY
"In three-hundred feet, turn left."

JESSICA
There it is again. Little "huffy
silence." But hey - it's okay. I
get it, I totally get it.

AFTER A FEW BEATS:

G.P.S. LADY
"In one-hundred feet, turn left."

JESSICA
No.

G.P.S. LADY
"Prepare to turn left."

JESSICA
No.

G.P.S. LADY
"Turn left *here*."

JESSICA
(PUTTING AN END TO IT) No, because I
live here, and you don't, so shut the
fuck up for a second and let me just
think.

AND SHE CONTINUES TRYING IT HER OWN WAY.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - ERIC'S CAR

BLUES STILL PLAYING IN THE B.G., ERIC STILL ON THE PHONE.

ERIC

No, no, no - you're thinking of someone else. The girl who worked at "Bed Bath & Beyond?" Yeah, no, that ended pretty ugly too, but... Y'know, maybe it's a sign from God I should stay away from women. Maybe I'm gay. Hey, is that possible? (CONSIDERS, THEN) No, I would know if I was gay, right? Yeah... Okay, so maybe I just need to stay away from "Women Who Are Volcanicly Insane." That shouldn't be that hard, huh?

HE NOTICES TRAFFIC IS OPENING UP.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Oo - I'm moving again. Okay - I should be there in like ten. Save me a good spot there, would ya? Alright - see ya.

HE HANGS UP PHONE - TURNS UP VOLUME ON RADIO.

D.J. (ON RADIO)

That's Buddy Guy, "Damn Right I Got the Blues." And ain't that the truth. *Everyone* got the blues over *somethin'*. Maybe you don't like your job...

ERIC

("THAT'S NOT IT") No...

D.J. (ON RADIO)

Maybe you don't like the way you look...

HE TAKES A QUICK LOOK MIRROR - THAT'S NOT HIS PROBLEM.

ERIC

No...

D.J. (ON RADIO)
Or maybe your problem is "you know
how it is" and everybody else "just
don't get it."

BINGO. FINALLY SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS HIM.

ERIC
Thank you.

D.J. (ON RADIO)
Well, whatever your thing is, we got
more blues - just for you.

AS A NEW, FUNKY BLUES TRACK KICKS IN, HE CRANKS UP THE VOLUME.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. - JESSICA'S CAR - SAME TIME

JESSICA
(INTO HER CELL PHONE) Well, the
directions you gave me *suck*,
because... Wait - are you there
already? (ANNOYED) No, I'm here, but
there's no way in. (LISTENS) I *did*...
I *did* turn right, but... Wait a
second...(MAKES ANOTHER TURN) Okay -
here it is. I'll see you in a
minute.

SHE HANGS UP.

SHOT - SHE'S PULLING UP TO THE GATES OF A CEMETERY.

G.P.S. LADY
"You have arrived."

JESSICA
(TO GPS LADY, SNIPPY) Yeah, be *less*
helpful.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY GRAVE-SIDE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A GOOD-SIZED CROWD OF MOURNERS IS MILLING ABOUT BEFORE THE
SERVICE. IT'S A VERY ECLECTIC GROUP - MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN, BLACK,
WHITE, WELL-DRESSED, CASUALLY-DRESSED, A FEW BIKER-TYPES...

ERIC ENTERS AND SPOTS HIS FRIEND - RUSSELL (FROM THE PHONE CALL.)
RUSSELL IS ALSO EARLY 30'S, ALSO DRESSED "CORPORATELY HIP." HE
MAKES HIS WAY OVER, THEY EXCHANGE "GUY HUGS." THEN:

ERIC
(RE: THE TRAGEDY OF THIS OCCASION)
Hey... huh?

RUSSELL
("AIN'T THAT THE TRUTH?") Right?

THEIR P.O.V.

A WOMAN - LATE 40'S, LOVELY IF UN-GLAMOROUS, AND HER TWO CHILDREN -
BOY, 8, AND GIRL, 12 - ACCEPTING CONDOLENCES FROM SOME WELL-
WISHERS.

ERIC
That his family?

RUSSELL NODS, "YES."

ERIC (CONT'D)
(SINCERELY) That totally kills me.

RUSSELL
Just the friggin' worst.

ERIC CONTINUES SCANNING THE CROWD - UNTIL HE SPOTS JESSICA. (WHO
LOOKS EVEN MORE TERRIFIC NOW, OUT OF HER CAR.)

ERIC
Who's that?

RUSSELL
I don't know.

ERIC
Relative?

RUSSELL
("I TOLD YOU...") I don't know.

ERIC'S P.O.V.

CLOSE ON JESSICA'S HAIR

CLOSE ON JESSICA'S LIPS

CLOSE ON JESSICA'S LEGS

CLOSE ON JESSICA'S ASS

CLOSE ON JESSICA'S FACE, SLO-MO, AS SHE TURNS AND LOOKS RIGHT INTO LENS, AND THEN, REVEALING NOTHING, TURNS HER HEAD AWAY AGAIN.

BACK ON ERIC - STARTLED FOR HAVING BEEN CAUGHT LOOKING. THEN:

ERIC

I'm gonna go say hello.

RUSSELL

Have you learned nothing?

ERIC

("RELAX") To the *family*. I'm gonna say hello to the *family*.

BUT RUSSELL KNOWS BETTER. HE WATCHES ERIC CROSS TO THE LINE OF WELL-WISHERS WHICH, AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, INCLUDES JESSICA.

ERIC GETS IN LINE AS JESSICA OFFERS HER CONDOLENCES TO THE WIDOW. WHEN SHE'S DONE, ERIC KEEPS AN EYE ON HER AS SHE HEADS AWAY.

FOLLOW JESSICA OFF TO THE SIDE - WHERE SHE IS APPROACHED BY HER FRIEND ANGELA (FROM THE PHONE CALL.)

ANGELA

Hey, you made it.

JESSICA

(EMBRACING) Hey, yeah. Sorry I said your directions sucked.

ANGELA

Already over it. (RE: THE CROWD) Do you believe how many people are here?

JESSICA

I know. Hey, the guy over there - do we have any idea who that is?

THEIR P.O.V. - ERIC - STILL WAITING HIS TURN ON LINE.

ANGELA

Ummm... no. Why?

JESSICA

He keeps looking at me.

ANGELA

("SO WHAT"?) Maybe he's just checking you out.

ERIC SEES THEM LOOKING AT HIM AND DEFTLY LOOKS AWAY.

JESSICA
("DOESN'T HE REALIZE...?") We're at a
funeral. Don't be checking people out
at a funeral.

ON ERIC - IT'S HIS TURN - HE STEPS UP TO ADDRESS THE WIDOW.

ERIC
(TAKING HER HAND) I'm so sorry for
your loss. (SHE SMILES
APPRECIATIVELY) I knew your husband
just from the club, but... he was
always... You know. He was just...

STUCK FOR THE RIGHT WORDS, HE ADDRESSES THE KIDS.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Your Daddy was a really nice man.
(THEY HAVE NO RESPONSE) Okay.

AND HE AWKWARDLY TOSSLES THEIR HAIR.

ON JESSICA AND ANGELA

JESSICA
(STILL LOOKING AT ERIC) Is "unctuous"
the same as "smug?"

ANGELA
I don't know. Why don't you ask *him*?
He's coming over.

JESSICA
(SEEING ERIC HEADING OVER) Uch.

ANGELA
I'm gonna go sign the thing.

SHE HEADS AWAY, AS ERIC APPROACHES JESSICA, OFFERING HIS HAND.

ERIC
Hi. I'm Eric.

JESSICA
(VERY NON-COMMITTAL) Hello.

HE CLOCKS THAT SHE ELECTED TO NOT OFFER HER NAME, BUT PRESSES ON.

ERIC
Were you very close with --

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S)
Jess?

THEY'RE INTERRUPTED AS A WOMAN GUEST COMES OVER TO EMBRACE JESSICA. ERIC WAITS PATIENTLY WHILE THEY EXCHANGE PLEASANTRIES. WHEN FINISHED, JESSICA TURNS BACK TO ERIC.

JESSICA

Sorry.

ERIC

No, I was just going to ask if you were close with --

BUT HE'S INTERRUPTED AGAIN AS JESSICA NOW GRABS THE ELBOW OF A PASSING GUEST.

JESSICA

(TO THE GUEST) Hey, how are you?

AGAIN, ERIC WAITS AS SHE EXCHANGES MORE PLEASANTRIES. THEN:

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I was just --

ERIC

No, hey, don't worry about it. I was just... Forgive me for not knowing - are you related to --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Jessica Buckley, look at you!

THEY'RE INTERRUPTED FOR THE THIRD TIME AS JESSICA IS PULLED INTO A FRIENDLY EMBRACE BY ANOTHER GUEST. ERIC WAITS. FINALLY:

JESSICA

I'm sorry, there are just so many people here I didn't realize were all...

ERIC

(EVER THE DIPLOMAT) No, please, listen... These things are always --

GUY AT A MICROPHONE (O.S.)

(ADDRESSING THE CROWD) If we can all quiet down and gather together, please, if you would.

THIS SEEMS TO NOT BE ERIC'S DAY. JESSICA POLITELY INDICATES SHE'D LIKE TO MOSEY TOWARDS THE CASKET, AS JUST INSTRUCTED.

JESSICA

I'm just going to...

ERIC

Of course, no, hey -- that's what we're here for, right?

JESSICA SMILES AND STARTS AWAY.

ERIC (CONT'D)

It was very nice meeting you.

SHE NODS HER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, AND AS SHE TURNS AWAY, WE NOTICE THE SLIGHTEST SMILE. SHE MAY OR MAY NOT BE TOTALLY TOYING WITH HIM.

ON ERIC - HE'S NOT SURE EITHER. HE SPOTS RUSSELL, WHO GESTURES, "SO?" ERIC GESTURES BACK, "NO IDEA."

CUT TO:

SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

THE CROWD IS GATHERED GRAVE-SIDE LISTENING TO A EULOGY BY FAMILY FRIEND TRUMAN SUDDETH - 50'S, BALD, PORTLY AND UNACCUSTOMED TO WEARING A COAT-AND-TIE, AND TO SPEAKING IN PUBLIC.

TRUMAN

(VERY HEART-FELT, SALT-OF-THE EARTH REFLECTION)... And as much as a shock as it feels like to be here today... Put it this way: we all know Scooter was never the kind of guy who was gonna stick around and become an "old guy."

SOME WARM CHUCKLES AND SMILES FROM THE CROWD.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)

Personally, I feel... I don't know... I want to say "honored," but that's not really... (HE'S THOUGHT OF A BETTER WORD) "*Blessed*." That's what it is, really. I feel I've been *blessed* to have had Scooter as my partner in business, and as my friend. Y'know... I look around out here, and I see so many of y'all... from so many different parts of his life ...his family, of course...

ANGLE - THE WIDOW AND CHILDREN

TRUMAN (CONT'D)

And those of you who grew up with Scooter...

ANGLE - A FEW GUESTS IN THEIR MID-LATE 40'S

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
.. Or knew him just from business...

ANGLE - JESSICA, WHO KNEW HIM FROM BUSINESS.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
... and so many of you who just knew him from "Hanratty's" - or, as Scooter liked to call it - "the joint."

ANGLE - ERIC AND A FEW OTHER YOUNGER "SINGLES-WITH MONEY" TYPES.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
Who just came in to the bar for a drink, some good times... Whoever you were - Scooter made you his own. You couldn't pass through the man's life without feeling somehow better for it.

EVERYONE NODS IN WARM AGREEMENT.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
So... I want to do something here. It may sound dopey, but... I don't care. I want everybody to *hold hands*.

ANGLE - THE CROWD - A FEW UNCOMFORTABLE LOOKS AND NERVOUS TITTERS.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
No, I know what you're thinking. But I'm going somewhere with this. And I know Scooter would have really dug this, so c'mon. Everybody just grab the hand of the person next to you. C'mon... We're all family here.

ANGLE - JESSICA STANDING NEAR A GREY-HAIRED GENTLEMAN - 60'S. THEY SHARE A NERVOUS CHUCKLE, AND DECIDE, "NO WAY AROUND THIS." THE GUY HOLDS OUT HIS HAND TOWARD JESSICA, WHEN -

ERIC - FROM OUT OF NOWHERE - STEPS IN BETWEEN THEM AND TAKES THE GUY'S HAND. THEY SHARE A SMILE AND THEN ERIC TURNS TO JESSICA. SHE IS DEFINITELY ON TO HIM, BUT CAN'T REFUSE, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. SHE TAKES HIS HAND.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
(PLEASED) Alright. Cool. Now I want
y'all to hold your hands up to the
sky... C'mon, just hold 'em on up...
(AS THEY DO SO) Good.

EVERYONE'S CLASPED HANDS ARE HELD TO THE SKY.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
And I want you to repeat after me:
"In honor and in memory of
Scooter..."

EVERYONE
"In honor and in memory of
Scooter..."

TRUMAN
"...I vow as of today..." (EVERYONE
REPEATS) "To embrace life to the
fullest." (EVERYONE REPEATS) "To not
live life afraid." (EVERYONE REPEATS)
"To remember that life is short."
(EVERYONE REPEATS) And finally - and
maybe most importantly, "Party
responsibly, (EVERYBODY REPEATS) And
please --

A LONG PAUSE FOR DRAMATIC EFFECT. THEN:

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
"Please!... Always tip your
waitress."

THE CROWD LAUGHS AT THE JOKE, BUT REPEATS IT ANYWAY.

TRUMAN (CONT'D)
There you go. Thank you. That wasn't
so terrible was it? And y'all are
invited down to Hanratty's tonight -
we're gonna hoist a few beverages in
Scooter's good name. (THEN) Oh, and
you can all let go your hands now.

ANGLE - ERIC AND JESSICA - STILL HOLDING HANDS, BRING THEIR ARMS
DOWN.

CLOSE ANGLE - THEIR HANDS - JESSICA RUNS HER THUMB SUBTLY BUT
SENSUOUSLY ACROSS ERIC'S HAND.

ON ERIC - HOLY SHIT! HE LOOKS ACROSS THE CROWD TO RUSSELL AND
TRIES TO CONVEY "DID YOU SEE THAT?!" RUSSELL SAW NOTHING.

AS JESSICA AND ERIC RELEASE HANDS, JESSICA GIVES NO ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF WHAT JUST PASSED BETWEEN THEM.

ERIC
(WITH "MEANING") Well, that was...
very nice.

JESSICA
("DIDN'T QUITE HEAR YOU") I'm sorry?

ANGLE - ERIC - DID HE JUST IMAGINE THAT LITTLE COME-ON? OR IS SHE FUCKING WITH HIM. HE DECIDES TO PLAY IT SAFE.

ERIC
No, I was just saying, that speech...
it was very nice.

JESSICA
So perfect, wasn't it? So "Scooter."

ERIC
(STILL TRYING TO GAUGE THIS WOMAN)
Very Scooter. Exactly.

AS JESSICA'S ATTENTION IS PULLED AWAY BY ANOTHER GUEST, WE HOLD ON ERIC - WHO IS CONFUSED, INTRIGUED AND AROUSED.

CUT TO:

INT. - ERIC'S OFFICE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

ERIC IS A TOP ACCOUNT-EXEC AT A BIG AD AGENCY. RIGHT NOW, HE'S CLUTCHING A BASEBALL, PACING AND TALKING TO RUSSELL.

ERIC
(AMPED UP) Okay, man, that wasn't
just a come-on. That was like "I'll
race you to the nearest mattress!"

RUSSELL
(LOOKING SOMETHING UP ON ERIC'S
COMPUTER) And it's not possible you
read it wrong?

ERIC
"Read it wrong?!"

RUSSELL
Like maybe she was just re-arranging
her hand?

ERIC

Hey, if a woman opened you pants and stuck their hand in your fly, could you take that the wrong way?

RUSSELL

Did she do that?

ERIC

Might as well have. C'mon. The "slow thumb across the hand"? You don't do that by accident! One way - maybe. But she -

RUSSELL

(HEARD IT ALREADY) She went back as well as forth.

ERIC

You're damn right she went back and forth!

RUSSELL

(FINDING WHAT HE WAS SEARCHING FOR ON THE COMPUTER) Okay. Here you go. (READING) "Jessica Eleanor Buckley."

ERIC

("EWW") "Eleanor?"

RUSSELL

"Born 1974." So she's...

ERIC

Thirty-two.

RUSSELL

(A LITTLE SLOWER WITH THE MATH) Thirty-two.

ERIC

From...?

RUSSELL

(READING) Charlotte, North Carolina. Now lives here, she's "Senior regional sales rep, Stonewood Wine and Beverage."

ERIC

Okay. So that's probably how she knew Scooter, right? From the bar. Sold him wine and stuff?

RUSSELL

Could be. (FINDING MORE TIDBITS)
"Graduated Duke University, 1996...
Double major - Communication and
Psychology..."

ERIC

("HUH?") Of course. Because when
you're selling wine, what could be
more useful?

RUSSELL

("HERE'S SOMETHING") "Two years,
Women's varsity track."

ERIC

(INTRIGUED) Oo. Track.

RUSSELL

See?

ERIC

We like that.

RUSSELL

So she can "communicate psycho-
logically" and throw a javelin up
your ass. She could beat you either
way.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. ANGELSA'S CAR - SAME TIME

ANGELA IS DRIVING AND ON HER CELL PHONE.

ANGELA

Okay, I talked to Cheryl. Her room-
mate's friend from work went out with
him like a year ago - said stay away,
the guy's an asshole.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT./EXT. JESSICA'S CAR - SAME TIME

JESSICA'S DRIVING - ON THE PHONE WITH ANGELA.

JESSICA

Cheryl said, or the friend said?

ANGELA

Cheryl. But she got it from the friend.

JESSICA

Any specifics?

ANGELA

Like what?

JESSICA

Like what *kind* of asshole? I mean, like - "He burns crosses on people's lawns" or she just didn't like the way he broke up with her.

ANGELA

("WHO ARE YOU?") Wow. A cross burner? That's what you got from him?

JESSICA

Why not? Just because he wears a suit? That doesn't mean anything.

ANGELA

Well, I uh... I don't believe he's criminally sociopathic, but you know what? Either way, why are you even bothering? You said yourself the guy was buggy.

JESSICA

And like *so* in my face. Where do guys get that? That *entitlement*. (AS JOE SMOOTH) "Hello, I couldn't help but notice you..." I'm like, "Just, walk away, would you pal? There's no reason we need to meet."

ANGELA

So... Why are we doing this? I mean, yeah, he's cute, but --

JESSICA

("NOT EVEN") *Moderately* cute. And frankly, if you factor in "creepy" and "buggy," the "cute" means nothing.

ANGELA

Exactly. So, why --

JESSICA
(DOESN'T WANT TO HEAR IT) I know, I know. You're probably right. Just... What else?

CUT TO:

INT. ERIC'S GARDRN APARTMENT - THAT EVENING

IF YOU SPENT ALL YOUR MONEY ON A GREAT CAR AND NICE CLOTHES AND DIDN'T CARE WHAT YOUR PLACE LOOKED LIKE 'CAUSE YOU NEVER BRING ANYONE BACK HERE ANYWAY, IT WOULD LOOK LIKE THIS. THE CAMERA MOVES THROUGH THE LIFELESS APARTMENT AND TOWARDS THE OPEN BATHROOM DOOR.

SFX: A CELL-PHONE RINGS

ERIC STEPS OUT OF THE SHOWER, GRABS THE PHONE FROM ATOP THE BATHROOM SINK.

ERIC
(INTO PHONE) Yallo.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RUSSELL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

RUSSELL
(PLEASED WITH HIMSELF) I just sent you a little video you'll appreciate.

ERIC
(WRAPPING A TOWEL AROUND HIS WAIST)
Yeah?

RUSSELL
Your new friend. With the flirty thumbs.

ERIC
(ALREADY HEADING TO HIS LAPTOP IN THE BEDROOM) Really? Doing what?

RUSSELL
Go look.

ERIC
(QUICKLY CHECKING HIS E-MAIL)
I'm looking, I'm looking.

RUSSELL

Also, interesting little tid-bit on her voting habits:

ERIC

Where do you find this stuff?

RUSSELL

(IGNORING THE QUESTION) In 2000, she voted for Bush. In 2004 she voted and *campaigned for* Kerry.

ERIC

Which tells us what?

RUSSELL

(SHRUGS) She's open-minded? Flighty? Schizophrenic? You tell me.

ERIC

(FINDING THE VIDEO FILE) Okay. I got it.

RUSSELL

Enjoy.

CLOSE ON HIS LAPTOP SCREEN - A VACATION VIDEO OF JESSICA PARA-SAILING, FLOATING HIGH ABOVE A BEAUTIFUL SEA (SHOT FROM THE BOAT BELOW.) SHE LOOKS RADIANT - HAIR BLOWING IN THE WIND, LAUGHING IN EXCITEMENT.

THEN THE BOAT SLOWS DOWN, AND SHE STARTS TO DESCEND, LOOKING ALL THE MORE ANGELIC. THE VIDEO CAMERA MOVES IN ON HER FACE - TOTAL SERENITY AND CONTENTMENT. THIS IS A LOVELY WOMAN.

ERIC

(TAKEN) Where'd you get this?

RUSSELL

Turns out, my friend Victor was at Duke same time as her. Couple years ago they had like an "alum weekend" in Myrtle Beach - from whence comes *this*.

ERIC

(SMITTEN) Wow.

RUSSELL

Don't say I never gave you anything.

ERIC

No, hey... this is unbelievable.

RUSSELL
(CHANGING SUBJECT) You going to the
thing for Scooter tonight?

ERIC
Hmm? Yeah. You?

RUSSELL
Probably. Think *she's* going?

ERIC
Well, we'll just have to see, won't
we?

RUSSELL
Yes we will. Alright. Later for you.

ERIC
(STILL STUCK ON THE VIDEO) Yeah.
Okay. See ya.

HE HANGS UP, BARELY TAKING HIS EYES OFF THE LAPTOP.

CUT TO:

INT. - JESSICA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

IT'S NICER, WARMER THAN ERIC'S PLACE. JESSICA IS CASUALLY GETTING
OUT OF HER WORK CLOTHES WHILE TALKING TO SOMEONE O.C.

JESSICA
(CALLING OFF) I don't even know why
I'm going, frankly, because I'm
actually kind of beat. But I kind of
said I was going to go, and... I
don't know... It seems like the right
thing to do. I'm sure it'll be pretty
unexciting - but, you want to come?
You can totally come if you want.

HER LIVE-IN BOYFRIEND, TODD APPEARS - MID-30'S, PERFECTLY NICE-
LOOKING ENOUGH. HE'S ON THE PHONE, BUT ANSWERS HER.

TODD
Nah, that's alright, Baby. You go.
Eddie just scored some Braves
tickets, so we may just go down,
catch the end of the game.

JESSICA
(HEADING INTO THE BATHROOM) Okay.

TODD

And we might go out for a bite or something afterwards, so...

JESSICA

That's okay...

TODD

Okay, so I'll just see you back here then?

JESSICA

Okay.

HE GOES BACK TO HIS PHONE CALL AS JESSICA STEPS INTO THE BATHROOM AND CLOSSES THE DOOR.

CUT TO:

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

ERIC IS NOW ON THE BED, STILL IN JUST A TOWEL. THE LAPTOP IS ON HIS CHEST.

ANGLE - LAPTOP SCREEN

IT'S JESSICA PARA-SAILING AGAIN - NOW IN SLOW MOTION.

ERIC MOVES THE LAPTOP OFF, AND WE TASTEFULLY SUGGEST THAT HE'S REACHING DOWN BELOW HIS TOWEL TO DO SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR HIS OWN AMUSEMENT. (THE IMPLICATION IS NOT THAT THIS IS SEEDY OR PIGGISH - JUST THAT HE IS ENTIRELY CONSUMED BY THIS WOMAN.)

CUT TO:

INT. JESSICA'S BATHROOM - SAME TIME

JESSICA, NOW IN JUST AN OPEN SHIRT AND BRA, STANDS AT THE MIRROR. WHILE LOOKING AT HER REFLECTION, SHE SLOWLY REACHES INSIDE HER SHIRT AND GENTLY CARESSES HER BREAST. IT SADDENS HER THAT TO BE TOUCHED TENDERLY, SHE HAS TO DO IT HERSELF. SHE LEANS BACK ON A HAMPER, BRACES HER LEGS UP AGAINST THE SINK, BURIES HER FACE IN HER HANDS AND CRIES.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. "HANRATTY'S" CLUB - THAT NIGHT

AN UPGRADE NIGHT-SPOT FOR KICKING BACK AND HOOKING UP.
TONIGHT THE PARKING LOT IS PARTICULARLY PACKED.

CUT TO:

INT. HANRATTY'S - CONTINUOUS

A LOT OF GOOD-LOOKING PEOPLE UNDER 40 WITH MONEY. WOMEN SHOW A LOT OF LEG, GUYS SHOW A LOT OF CONFIDENCE. A NEW BANNER ABOVE THE BAR READS "WE LOVE YOU SCOOTER - GOD BLESS."

WE SCAN THE CROWD AND FIND ERIC - MAKING HIS WAY ACROSS THE ROOM WITH A BEER IN HAND. HE PASSES ONE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WHO STOPS FOR A KISS AND A QUICK HELLO BEFORE MOVING ON.

NEXT, A DRUNK IDIOT GUY STOPS HIM, THEY PUNCH KNUCKLES AND RAISE A TOAST TO THE SCOOTER BANNER. ERIC HEADS ON.

ANGLE - A BANQUETTE AGAINST THE WALL - THERE'S JESSICA, ALONE - LOOKING QUITE TERRIFIC, NURSING A GLASS OF WINE. SHE CASUALLY SCANS THE ROOM.

ANGLE - THE BAR - ERIC AND RUSSELL STAND AMONG SOME OTHER BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE - INCLUDING ONE PARTICULARLY SEXY WOMAN WHO IS SHOWING OFF HER NEW TATTOO ON HER LOW BACK/HIGH ASS AREA.

 SEXY WOMAN WITH TATTOO
See? It's a butterfly.

 RUSSELL
(TO ERIC, ADMIRING) See?

 ERIC
Look at that. A little butterfly.
That's really... And it's a good one,
too.

 SEXY WOMAN WITH TATTOO
Really? You think? (HE NODS) Thanks.

RUSSELL NOTICES SOMEONE O.S.

 RUSSELL
(TO ERIC, SOTTO) Oo, oo... Behind
you. To the right.

ERIC TAKES A SIP OF HIS BEER AND CASUALLY TURNS TO LOOK.

HIS P.O.V. - JESSICA - WHO ENGAGES THE STRANGER NEXT TO HER, LEST SHE BE CAUGHT SITTING ALONE.

ERIC
(TO HIMSELF) Well, whataya know.

BUT HE "PLAYS IT COOL" AND JUST TURNS BACK TO HIS GROUP.

ANGLE - JESSICA - IS IT POSSIBLE HE DIDN'T SEE HER? GIVING HIM THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT, SHE SLIDES OVER A FEW FEET SO SHE'S SPOTLIGHTED BY AN OVERHEAD LIGHT.

ANGLE - ERIC - DECIDES TO TAKE ANOTHER CASUAL "LOOK AROUND" - THIS TIME STARTING FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, BUT AGAIN, GLANCING JUST PAST JESSICA, "NOT NOTICING HER."

ANGLE - JESSICA

JESSICA
(MUTTERING TO HERSELF) Asshole.

SHE GETS UP AND CROSSES STRAIGHT FOR ERIC, WHOSE BACK IS TO HER.

RUSSELL
(COVERING HIS MOUTH WITH HIS DRINK)
She's coming over.

PLAYING MORE GAMES, ERIC IMMEDIATELY PUTS HIMSELF "MID-STORY".

ERIC
(TO THE GROUP, ANIMATED) ...So, I said, "You know what? If I'm spending a billion-three of my client's money on your network, then, yeah, it would be kind of nice if *some* of your shows didn't entirely suck."

RUSSEL LAUGHS IN SUPPORT - THE OTHERS ARE CONFUSED BY THIS TAIL-END OF A STORY THAT CAME OUT OF NOWHERE.

JESSICA
(TAPPING ERIC ON THE SHOULDER) Hey, how-ya-doing?

ERIC
("SURPRISED") Oh, hey, nice to see you again.

JESSICA
Can I talk to you for a second?

ERIC
("THAT WAS EASY!") Sure.

THEY TAKE A TINY STEP AWAY FOR "PRIVACY."

ERIC (CONT'D)
How's it going?

JESSICA
I just wanted to...(REALIZING) I'm
sorry - you told me your name, but I
forgot.

ERIC
("NO YOU DIDN'T, BUT I'LL PLAY
ALONG") "Eric."

JESSICA
"Eric." Right. I knew it was either
"Eric" or "Kevin," which.. I don't
know why those two names always --

ERIC
(CUTTING HER OFF) And you actually
never told me your name.

JESSICA
I didn't? (HE SHAKES HIS HEAD "NO")
Oh. I'm --

ERIC
(BEFORE SHE CAN SAY IT) "Jessica."
(EXPLAINING) I heard someone say it
before.

JESSICA
Oh. Well, anyway... I just wanted to
apologize for... my behavior this
morning. At the cemetery.

ERIC
Apologize? For what?

JESSICA
It's just that funerals make me
uncomfortable, and whenever I'm not
comfortable I either do stupid things
or say things that --

ERIC
You didn't say anything stupid.

JESSICA
(AWKWARD) Well, I may have been... I
may have sent you a signal I didn't
really mean to send.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)
(OFF HIS LOOK OF "CONFUSION") When we were holding hands.

ERIC
(ENJOYING MAKING HER SWEAT) I didn't get any signal.

JESSICA
("BULLSHIT") Really.

ERIC
("I'M NOT BULLSHITTING") Really.

SHE STUDIES HIM FOR A BEAT, THEN:

JESSICA
(HURT AND PISSED) Okay, you know what? I didn't have to come over here and say *anything*. I didn't have to apologize. But I *did*.

ERIC
(NOT SURE WHERE SHE'S GOING) Okay.

JESSICA
And then you don't even have the decency to *not* be an asshole for one minute? Fine!

ERIC
Whoa, whoa... Are we having a "fight?" Because I don't even know you.

JESSICA
You going to tell me you don't know what I'm talking about? When we were holding hands?

A BEAT, THEN:

ERIC
(COMING CLEAN) Yeah, yeah, okay - I know what you're talking about.

JESSICA
Thank you.

ERIC
How could I *not*?

JESSICA
Thank you.

ERIC
You were the one that who acted like
nothing happened.

JESSICA
I know, which is why I'm --

ERIC
Don't worry about it.

JESSICA
(RELIEVED) Fair enough.

ERIC
(INDICATES THE BAR) Will you have a
drink with me?

JESSICA
(POLITE ENOUGH) No, thank you. I
didn't come over here to "talk." I
just wanted to say what I said, and
so.. I said it, and that's all.

ERIC
Well, I appreciate it. I really do.
But -

JESSICA
(POINTING TO WHERE SHE CAME FROM) I
have some friends over there, so...

ERIC
Okay. I just want to say that --

AS ERIC REACHES BEHIND HER TO GET HIS BEER, SHE MISTAKES THE
GESTURE - THINKS HE'S REACHING FOR HER. SHE INSTANTLY RECOLLS.

JESSICA
(NO KIDDING AROUND) Please don't do
that.

ERIC
("RELAX, WOMAN") I'm getting my beer.

JESSICA
(STILL ALL CLENCHED) What?

ERIC
(POINTING, SLOWLY) I'm getting my
beer. Is that okay?

JESSICA
(EMBARRASSED) Oh.

ERIC
("BE MORE CONCEITED") Yeah.

SHE UN-TENSES A BIT, AND TURNS TO SEE WHERE HE'S REACHING.

JESSICA
Oh, sorry. I didn't--

IN THE PROCESS, ERIC'S WATCH CATCHES ON THE WAIST OF HER SKIRT.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Hey!

ERIC
Hold it a second.

THE MOVE CLUMSILY IN TANDEM.

JESSICA
What are you doing?!

ERIC
My watch is stuck on your --

JESSICA
(AS THEY BOTH PULL) OW!

THE MORE SHE TURNS, THE MORE HIS WRIST YANKS HIM ALONG WITH HER.
THE DRUNK IDIOT FROM BEFORE MISTAKES THEIR TUSSELE FOR FOREPLAY.

DRUNK IDIOT
Wooh! Way to go Eric!

JESSICA
(THAT DIDN'T HELP) Okay, seriously,
get off me.

ERIC
I'm trying!

HE USES HIS OTHER HAND NOW TO TRY DISENGAGE HIS WATCH HAND.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(STRUGGLING) But your skirt is --

JESSICA
(IN RESPONSE TO AN INDELICATE MOVE)
Hey - Okay - that's my *actual ass*
now!

ERIC
Sorry, I'm just --

DRUNK IDIOT
(STEPPING IN) Yeah, baby - ride that
bronco!

AND HE GIVES ERIC A BIG SMACK ON THE BACK - WHICH CAUSES ERIC TO
STUMBLE FORWARD - TAKING JESSICA'S SKIRT WITH HIM. SHE SHRINKS.

ANGLE - JESSICA - SEMI-UNDRESSED, IN SEMI-SHOCK, COVERING HERSELF
AS BEST SHE CAN. [BY THE WAY. THOUGH WE FEEL FOR HER, SHE DOES
LOOK REMARKABLY SEXY.]

DRUNK IDIOT (CONT'D)
(RE: JESSICA) Hubba hubba wah wah!

ERIC
(SHOVING THE GUY AWAY) Get outta
here, will ya?

JESSICA
(AT ERIC, RE: HER SKIRT) Give me
that!

ERIC
(GENUINELY STRUGGLING TO GET IT OFF
HIS WATCH) I'm trying. I'm trying.
(CAN'T MANAGE IT) Here - take my
jacket!

HE SLIPS OUT OF HIS JACKET, WHICH OF COURSE GETS TANGLED ON THE
SKIRT STUCK TO HIS WATCH. HE TUGS AT IT TILL IT ALL FINALLY COMES
OFF, AND MESSILY SHOVES THE WHOLE JACKET/SKIRT COMBO HER WAY.

JESSICA GRABS IT AND SPRINTS OUT OF THERE. [AGAIN - UNFORTUNATE,
BUT NICE TO WATCH.]

ERIC (CONT'D)
(CALLING AFTER HER) You know that was
an accident, right?

SHE JUST PUSHES HER WAY THROUGH THE CROWD TOWARD THE EXIT.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I didn't mean to -- (A BRIGHT IDEA)
Here, look.

THINKING IT'LL MAKE HER FEEL BETTER, HE QUICKLY UNBUCKLES HIS
PANTS AND LETS THEM DROP TO THE FLOOR.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(STANDING PATHETICALLY IN HIS SHIRT
TAILS AND BOXERS) Look - I'm
embarrassed too! Everybody's --

URGENTLY, TO A PASSING WAITER.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Drop your pants.

THE WAITER INSTANTLY DROPS HIS PANTS. AS DOES ANOTHER GUY.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(STILL CALLING AFTER JESSICA) See?
Everybody's embarrassed! It's not
just you!

JESSICA REACHES THE EXIT AND RUNS OUT.

ANGLE - ERIC, THE WAITER AND THIS OTHER POOR GUY - THREE SHMUCKS
STANDING WITH THEIR PANTS AROUND THEIR ANKLES. ERIC YANKS UP HIS
PANTS AND STARTS AFTER HER.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(TO THE WAITER AND THE OTHER GUY)
Pull your pants up.

CUT TO:

EXT. HANRATTY'S - CONTINUOUS

A DISHEVELED ERIC RUNS OUT, FINDS JESSICA - WHO HAS MANAGED TO PUT
HER SKIRT BACK ON AND IS WALKING ACROSS THE PARKING LOT.

A PORSCHE SPEEDS BY - ALMOST HITTING HER.

ERIC
HEY!

BUT SHE BARELY NOTICES THE CAR - OR HIM - AS SHE'S BUSY TRYING TO
LIGHT A CIGARETTE - AN EFFORT TO CALM HER SHATTERED NERVES.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Hey, hey. I'm *so sorry* about that,
but you know that wasn't on purpose,
right? I mean, I would *never* --

SHE TURNS AND FLINGS HIS JACKET BACK IN HIS FACE.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Okay.

SHE TAKES A LONG DRAG OF HER CIGARETTE AND BLOWS IT OUT. SHE SEEMS
TO BE CALMING DOWN - A TAD.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Would you come back inside and let me
buy you a drink?

JESSICA
I would really like for you to go
away now.

ERIC
Please?

BUT HE STANDS THERE AND WATCHES AS SHE TAKES ANOTHER DEEP DRAG.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You know that stuff'll kill you,
right?

SHE JUST EXHALES CONTEMPTUOUSLY.

JESSICA
If I gave you *money* would you go
away?

ERIC
Okay. I'm sorry. I'm going.

HE STARTS PUTTING HIS JACKET BACK ON.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I know that was terribly
embarrassing, and I'm truly sorry.
But, I just have to say... Y'know,
(TURNING TOWARDS THE CLUB) I come
here a lot. And I see a lot of people
who, you know...

WHILE HIS BACK IS TURNED, SHE STEALTHILY REACHES OUT AND WITH
LIGHTER IN HAND, TRIES TO SET FLAME TO THE BACK OF HIS JACKET.

SENSING "SOMETHING", HE TURNS BACK TO HER, BUT SHE'S RETREATED
PERFECTLY AND IS "INNOCENTLY" JUST LISTENING.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(A BEAT, THEN CONTINUING) A lot of
people who night after night...

HE TURNS HIS BACK ON HER AGAIN TO REFERENCE THE CLUB.

ERIC (CONT'D)
-- think they're going to meet
someone "special" in there. And, to
be honest with you, I've never seen
it happen.

DURING THE ABOVE, JESSICA HAS AGAIN TRIED TO LIGHT HIS JACKET BEHIND HIS BACK. BUT AGAIN HE TURNS AROUND TO FACE HER, AND AGAIN, SHE COVERS FLAWLESSLY.

ERIC (CONT'D)
But, doesn't matter. Because every night -- (TURNING HIS BACK TO HER AGAIN) -- here we all are.

SHE REACHES OUT WITH HER LIGHTER A THIRD TIME.

ERIC (CONT'D)
And yeah, you meet people, and yeah you hook-up, but you know what?

HE TURNS BACK TO HER, AND AGAIN SHE DEFTLY DOESN'T GET CAUGHT.

ERIC (CONT'D)
It starts to get old.

SHE'S NOT SURE IF HE'S ON TO HER OR NOT.

ERIC (CONT'D)
But then, with you... I don't know. It seemed like there was something "special" going on.

SHE SAYS NOTHING, BUT SHE - AND WE - NOTICE A SMALL FLAME HAS CAUGHT ON THE BACK OF HIS JACKET.

ERIC (CONT'D)
And -- (NOTICING HER LOOK) What?

JESSICA
Hmm?

ERIC
I thought you were going to say something.

JESSICA
No.

ERIC
Oh.

THEY STAND THERE FACING EACH OTHER, AS THE FLAMES SLOWLY RISE UP HIS JACKET. HE IS NOW WEARING A JACKET THAT'S ON FIRE. BUT HE AMAZINGLY DOESN'T MOVE. AND SHE DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING EITHER. WE REALIZE HE ABSOLUTELY KNOWS WHAT SHE'S BEEN DOING, AND THAT HE'S CURRENTLY ON FIRE. IT'S A GAME OF "CHICKEN." FINALLY, SHE BREAKS.

JESSICA
(RUSHING TO GET IT OFF HIM) Okay,
your jacket's on fire! Your jacket's
on fire!

ERIC
(CALMLY TAKING IT OFF) I know.

AND SHE'S THE ONE WHO THROWS THE JACKET TO THE PAVEMENT AND STAMPS
OUT THE FLAME.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(PLEASED WITH HIMSELF) I'm not afraid
of you. (THEN) Even though you're
clearly disturbed.

JESSICA
You want to know what everybody says
about you?

ERIC
I'm an asshole?

JESSICA
More than a few people think so,
yeah.

ERIC
What else?

JESSICA
You make a lot of money, you spend it
stupidly, you sleep with a lot of
girls, you're nice to them for about
a week and then you're not, you do
just about everything that guys do
that makes it hard for nice guys to
ever have a fighting chance because
you've already pissed off so many
women, and ultimately, you're just
shallow, insincere and predictable.

A BEAT.

ERIC
"Predictable." Ouch.

JESSICA
Yeah. So...

ERIC
(A BEAT, THEN:) Would you have one
drink with me?

JESSICA
(CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S STILL TRYING)
Oh, my, God.

ERIC
One drink.

JESSICA
("NO") I'm not one of the people "in
there."

ERIC
(IMMEDIATELY) I know.

JESSICA
Good. So... Good night.

SHE TURNS AND HEADS TO HER CAR.

ERIC
You know what? You don't even --
(THINKS BETTER OF IT AND DECIDES TO
GIVE UP) Never mind. You're right.
Nice to meet you.

AS HE TURNS AND HEADS BACK TO THE CLUB, A SLEEK MERCEDES SPEEDS BY
BETWEEN THEM.

JESSICA
("TELL ME") What.

ERIC
("HUH") What?

JESSICA
What were you going to say? "I don't
even" *what?*

HE CONSIDERS FOR A GOOD LONG MOMENT, AND THEN:

ERIC
When we were holding hands? During
the thing? (SHE NODS) What that guy
said, in his speech... It really
kinda hit me. Because he's right.
Life *is* short. And... And...(THIS IS
A LITTLE HARDER FOR HIM) Y'know... I
thought you were really beautiful and
everything... And... The way you
touched me...

JESSICA
("CUT IT OUT") Oh please.

ERIC

No, I mean, *literally*. With your thumb. The way you touched me with your thumb... I felt like, maybe that was a sign. From God. Or something. I don't know. Because I kinda believe those things do come. Sometimes. So, okay - I was wrong. (SHRUGS) I took a shot. I'm sorry.

A MOMENT WHILE SHE DIGESTS ALL THIS, THEN:

JESSICA

Really? That's what you got?

ERIC

What.

JESSICA

"Life is short?" You got that you should talk to me?

ERIC

Yeah. Why? What'd you get?

JESSICA

Exactly the opposite. "Life is short, so don't waste time with a guy who would actually hit on you at a funeral."

ERIC

(BEAT) Interesting. (THEN, DOING THE "THUMB THING" ON HIS HAND) Then what was *that*?

JESSICA

(SHRUGS) That was just mean. Which is why I apologized.

A STANDSTILL. THEN:

ERIC

Seriously. Would you come back in and have one drink with me?

JESSICA

No.

ERIC

Can I call you?

JESSICA
You've got to be kidding me.

ERIC
I didn't say, "Can I sleep with you?"
I said, "Can I call you?"

JESSICA
No, you can't.

ERIC
Why not?

JESSICA
Because I said "you can't." (BEAT)
Y'know I live with someone.

ERIC
I know. (BEAT) But I heard it's kinda
dying out. (OFF HER LOOK, DEFENSIVE)
I didn't say that - that's just what
I heard.

JESSICA
(PUTTING AN END TO THIS) Listen, it
was very nice to meet you, Kevin, and
I'm sorry if --

ERIC
"Eric."

JESSICA
What?

ERIC
You called me "Kevin."

JESSICA
(SINCERELY) Wow, that wasn't even on
purpose. Sorry.

ERIC
It's okay.

JESSICA
(HEADING OFF) I'm going to go home
now.

ERIC
Don't.

JESSICA
("AS I SAID...") I'm going to go home
now, and I wish you all the best, and
I'm sorry we're not twenty-four.
But... There ya go. See ya.

AS SHE STEPS OUT FROM IN BETWEEN A ROW OF CARS, A FERRARI COMES
SPEEDING AROUND A CORNER, HEADING RIGHT FOR HER. JESSICA FREEZES
LIKE A DEER IN CAUGHT IN A FERRARI'S HEADLIGHTS.

ERIC
HEY!!

HE JUMPS OUT AND TACKLES HER OUT OF HARM'S WAY. THE FERRARI SPEEDS
OFF AND DISAPPEARS.

ANGLE - ERIC AND JESSICA ON THE PAVEMENT - THEY'RE BOTH SHAKEN.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You okay?

JESSICA
Yeah.

THEY'RE BOTH BREATHING HEAVILY, THEIR FACES INCHES APART. THE
MOONLIGHT IS HITTING THEM JUST SO.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Y'know, if this was a Sandra Bullock
movie we'd kiss right about here.

TAKING THE CUE, HE SMILES AND MOVES IN FOR THE KISS.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
(TURNING HER HEAD AWAY) But it's not.
It's a parking lot. And you're on my
hair.

ERIC
("YOU ARE A PIECE OF WORK") Wow.

HE MOVES TO GET OFF HER HAIR, AND SHE SLOWLY GETS UP.

JESSICA
Thank you for making me not get hit
by a car.

ERIC
(GETTING UP) You're welcome.

JESSICA
(OFFERING A HANDSHAKE) It was nice to
meet you.

THEY SHAKE, AND SHE STARTS AWAY AGAIN.

ERIC
I really think you should let me call
you.

JESSICA
(AMUSED) Why? Because I "owe you
one?"

ERIC
No. Because I'm a better person than
you think I am. (BEAT) And life is
short.

THIS TAKES HER BY SURPRISE. SHE CONSIDERS. THEN:

JESSICA
Gimme your phone.

HE WHIPS OUT HIS PHONE, OPENS IT AND HITS A FEW BUTTONS TO SET IT
UP TO PUT IN HER NUMBER.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Hurry up before I change my mind.

HE QUICKLY FINISHES AND HANDS IT TO HER.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
(ENTERING HER NUMBER) This is my
cell. Don't ever call after seven.

ERIC
Okay.

JESSICA
I'm serious.

ERIC
I got it. No calls after seven.

THEY TAKE A MOMENT, AND THEN SMILE.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Thank you.

JESSICA
("WHATEVER") Yeah, yeah. (THEN) See
ya.

HE WATCHES AS SHE CLIMBS INTO HER JEEP, STARTS IT UP AND PULLS AWAY. HE WALKS TO HIS HUMMER, AND GETS IN.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. ERIC'S HUMMER - CONTINUOUS

BEFORE STARTING HIS CAR, HE LOOKS AT HIS PHONE, PONDERES A MOMENT, THEN DIALS A NUMBER.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT./EXT. JESSICA'S JEEP

SHE'S BARELY OUT OF THE PARKING LOT WHEN HER CELL PHONE RINGS. SHE ANSWERS IT IMMEDIATELY.

JESSICA
(ANTICIPATING) No, it's not a fake number.

ERIC
Okay. Just checking.

JESSICA
(WHISTLES, AS IN, "YOU'RE A PIECE OF WORK TOO") My oh my - this is gonna be interesting, isn't it?

ERIC
(WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY) Yes it is.

THEY BOTH SMILE, BOTH HANG UP THEIR PHONES, BOTH DRIVE AWAY.

CAMERA PULLS UP UNTIL, LIKE THE NIGHT-TIME VERSION OF THE OPENING SHOT, WE SEE A ZILLION CARS - INCLUDING THEIRS - MERGE ONTO HIGHWAYS AND INTO THIS MAGICAL NIGHT.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW