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Better Living Through Chemistry

by

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OCCUPANT FILMS
Registered, WGAw

OVER BLACK, WE HEAR A MAN'S HEAVY BREATHING. Raspy, strained, urgent. It's then overlapped with...

CHILDREN'S VOICES (O.S.)
I pledge allegiance to the flag of
the United States of America...

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - LATE MORNING

A quaint upper-middle class neighborhood filled with perfectly manicured lawns. Each with one Prius and one SUV in the driveway. Property taxes are high here.

CHILDREN'S VOICE (O.S.)
...and to the Republic for which
it stands...

A MAN enters frame pedaling a HIGH PERFORMANCE 10-SPEED BICYCLE. Dressed in nice gray pants, blue button down shirt, black shoes, and a WHITE LAB COAT that flaps in the breeze behind him. This is DOUGLAS VARNEY, and he is sweaty...it's HIS BREATHING we've been hearing.

CHILDREN'S VOICES (O.S.)
...one nation, under God,
indivisible...

Checking his watch, he starts to pedal even harder but LOSES HIS FOOTING. His SMOOTH BOTTOM LOAFERS slip off the "clip-in" pedals causing the bike to wobble violently which sends Doug tumbling to the ground. Hard.

His knee badly skinned and his pants ripped, Doug shakes it off, gathers his bike, and continues riding.

CHILDREN'S VOICES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...with Liberty and Justice for
all.

EXT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - MINUTES LATER

Leaning into the turn, Doug zips around the corner and sails toward the BIKE RACK, skidding to a halt and dropping his bicycle amidst the scooters and BMX's before jogging into the school with a slight limp in his gait.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Okay, class. I'd like us all to
welcome Mr. Varney.

CLASS OF KIDS (O.S.)
Good-morning-Mister-Varney.

INT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

A FULL CLASS of 7th graders sit at their desks, all eyes forward on DOUG. Behind him the blackboard reads, "Bring Your Dad To School Day."

DOUG

Good morning, everyone.

Doug is DRENCHED IN SWEAT. Pit stains have penetrated through his lab coat and an archipelago of dark dampness rapidly spreads across his chest and belly.

The more-than-a-little-pathetic-looking teacher, MISS D'FRANCESCO, smiles thinly...

MISS D'FRANCESCO

Class, Mr. Varney is going to tell us all about being a Pharmacist.

As special as she's made "pharmacist" sound, the class remains nonplussed.

DOUG

Good morning, everyone.

MAN (O.S.)

You said that already.

A heavyset man, with badly thinning hair and a blue-tooth headset in his ear (BRIAN) chimes in. He's one of the few other DADS IN SUITS there today.

DOUG

Right. So, how many of you here know what a Pharmacist does?

Silence, met only by more silence. It's a tough room. Doug is floundering until he makes eye contact with a SHAGGY-HAIRED BOY in a 'Linkin Park' t-shirt. Doug smiles, the Boy sends a smile back - "you can do it."

A Preppy-looking Blonde Boy speaks up...

PREPPY BOY

You work at the Pharmacy.

DOUG

I actually own the Pharmacy.

PREPPY BOY

But it's called 'Bishop's.'

DOUG

(hissing) You wanna see the mortgage paperwork?

The Preppy Boy recoils at Doug's venom.

YOUNG GIRL (O.S.)
So, you're a doctor then?

Doug sighs. He hates that question.

DOUG
Sort of. I work with doctors to help people feel better.

YOUNG GIRL #2
You make the medicine, right?

DOUG
Yes. It's why a pharmacist is also called a "chemist." When you get sick, the doctor prescribes medicine. I make sure you get the right kind and amount, and--

BRIAN (O.S.)
--That's when the insurance companies swoop in and screw you.

This elicits chuckles from the gallery of Other Dads.

DOUG
Insurance companies certainly do complicate things. But these days they cover most prescription medications, unless it's something personal or cosmetic. Like Propecia. For example.

Doug gives a QUICK SIDE GLANCE towards Brian who goes silent, gently touching his THIN HAIR.

YOUNG BOY #2
I bought a water gun at the pharmacy.

YOUNG GIRL #1
And candy.

YOUNG GIRL #2
And a hair dryer.

DOUG
Well, yes, nowadays pharmacies offer a variety of products and services.

ANOTHER BOY
Condoms!

This sends the class into hysterics...

MISS D'FRANCESCO
Come on, people. Let's show Mr. Varney a little respect.

The class quiets down, when we hear...

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)
You're bleeding.

Looking down, we see Doug is in fact bleeding. A steady trickle of blood oozes from a MAKESHIFT BANDAGE and stains his torn pant leg. He moves to touch it when...BOOM!

The CLASSROOM DOOR is flung open, startling Doug and the kids. A POLICE OFFICER STANDS THERE, looking pissed. He strides into the room, heading straight for Doug.

POLICE OFFICER
Douglas Varney, you're under arrest.

DOUG
Wait, hold on a second...

He grimaces as the Officer grabs his arm and twists it behind his back, controlling him.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Jesus--

POLICE OFFICER
--Hands on your head, now!

Unnerved as he's violently shoved onto the desk knocking over a cup of coffee, Doug's head is pinned down by a nightstick...

DOUG
Hey! Take it easy, man--

POLICE OFFICER
--You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.

The cop KICKS HIS FEET OUT FROM UNDER HIM, dropping him to the floor, slapping on cuffs with lightning quick efficiency. The kids are awestruck.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)
Do you understand these rights as I've just read them to you?

Now hog-tied, Doug can only lay there and submit, face inches from a piece of FLATTENED OLD GUM, as the officer finishes reading him his Miranda Rights.

All sounds BLEED OUT SILENT, Doug's eyes close and he looks peaceful, as though accepting his fate.

FADE TO WHITE.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
You can't help everyone. But
everybody can help someone.

The CLIPPED, MEASURED BRITISH VOICE sounds an awful lot like DAME JUDI DENCH. In fact, for our purposes, IT IS.

FADE UP ON...

DOUG'S FACE, still smushed sideways...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But, when it comes right down to
it, how does a man truly help
himself?

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

FROM ABOVE, we see his head wedged between the bed and night stand. Relegated to a mere sliver of mattress.

That's because his wife, KARA BISHOP-VARNEY has spread out during the night. EYE MASK ON, matching silk pajamas, she breathes loudly through her mouth.

Doug looks at her...then looks at his THROBBING MORNING HARD-ON under the covers...then decides to make a move. He readjusts himself, spooning up next to his wife, stabbing her with his erection. She stirs...

KARA
Come on, Doug. It's a weekday.

In one quick movement she pulls back the covers and leaps out of bed, leaving Doug alone with his wilting boner.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
For Douglas Varney of Woodbury,
Connecticut, that was a question
he'd never really considered.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Stifling a yawn, Doug knocks on a door and pushes it open.

DOUG
Hey, Ethan. Time to get up.

The bedroom is PITCH BLACK. Doug moves to the window and raises the shades...yet NO LIGHT comes in.

DOUG (CONT'D)
What the hell...?

After flipping on a lamp he finds the bed empty. And, after making a closer inspection, he flakes a chip of paint off the WINDOW with his fingernail, finding the GLASS HAS BEEN PAINTED BLACK.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - LATER

Doug heads down the stairs, when he hears a clatter...

DOUG
Ethan!?

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ETHAN, their PUDGY, SHAGGY-HAIRED 12 YEAR OLD SON - who we recognize as the 'Linkin Park' kid from the classroom - is dragging a CHAIR over to reach the highest cupboard.

He swings open the cupboard and lunges behind the granola, dried fruit, and other health foods to retrieve a LARGE BOX OF OREOS. Removing a single sleeve of cookies, he puts the box back and climbs down.

DOUG, hidden from view, continues to watch...

Now sitting at the table, wooden spoon in hand, Ethan proceeds to WHACK the shit out of the sleeve of Oreos, reducing them to small chunks.

He shakes out ALL THE PIECES into a large bowl, then tilts a bottle of STRAWBERRY QUIK into the bowl of Oreo pieces.

DOUG
(hushed) Jesus.

Clicking the remote control, Ethan turns on the TV and watches "Good Morning America" while devouring his homemade cereal.

DOUG (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
I appreciate his ingenuity, but
maybe we shouldn't keep Oreos in
the house anymore?

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - BASEMENT EXERCISE ROOM - LATER

Kara is dripping in sweat, finishing up an impossible Yoga pose, quite literally standing on her head. Doug, now dressed for work, stands talking TO HER FEET.

KARA

It's important for him to know when he behaves that the treats we promise him are real. If we take the cookies out of the house, those promises become empty.

DOUG

He's not a dog, Kara.

Her focus still on her yoga and breathing, she shifts into another pose. Doug is getting restless...

DOUG (CONT'D)

Do you know he covered his windows in black paint?

She bows forward into downward dog, then into plank pose, sealing in her practice, before looking Doug in the face...as if joining the conversation for real now.

KARA

Yes. He asked me before he did it.

DOUG

And you think it's okay for him to live in a black box?

KARA

We need to remain supportive, even if his interests are *different* than ours. Sooner or later he'll realize it's nice to have sunlight and he'll remove the paint.

Walking to a small BAR AREA, she shakes out a SERIES OF VITAMINS from the countless bottles.

DOUG

Taking so many vitamins at once cancels out the impact.

KARA

Dad disagrees.

DOUG

He's not a doctor.

She throws the pills in her mouth and swallows them with a giant chug of protein drink.

KARA

Neither are you. Excuse me...

Kara nudges past him towards a HEAVY BAG hanging from the ceiling on a chain mount, and begins to pummel it.

KARA (CONT'D)

What happened to all that talk
about getting up early and working
out together? It would be really
good...for both of you.

DOUG

I've been so busy lately.

KARA

Busy sneaking candy bars.

She reaches out and tweaks Doug's NASCENT MAN-BOOB. He angrily knocks Kara's hand away and walks out in a huff.

For the briefest moment, Kara looks sorry for what she said...then she just shrugs and returns to KICKBOXING the heavy bag, and WE CUT TO...

INT. DOUG'S PRIUS - MORNING

Doug drives through the picturesque, affluent VILLAGE OF WOODBURY. Home to New York City commuters, it's the kind of place that still has well-kept cobblestone streets, a gazebo, and a LARGE RESTORED CLOCK in its town square.

Rounding the bend we see a LARGE CRANE removing a sign from atop one of the quaint "shoppes." Parking his car across the street, Doug watches as a worn wooden sign that reads "BISHOP'S Rx" is lowered down.

He kills the engine and grabs the TWO CUPS OF COFFEE from the cup holders. Sighing, he stares out the window.

EXT. WOODBURY TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

An OLDER MAN, with a full, thick head of white hair and a bushy moustache to match, turns to spot Doug - *eyeballs him up and down, unimpressed* - then turns right back to supervising the sign change. This is WALTER BISHOP. He wears golf apparel in social settings.

DOUG

Morning, Walt. Brought you a nice
hot cup-a-joe.

Walter lifts his hand to reveal he already has Coffee.

WALTER

Wasn't sure if you were going to
make it this morning.

DOUG

You kidding me? This is a big day.
The changing of the guard. The
apprentice replacing the master--

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
--Almost done here, Walt.

A BURLY MAN in Carhart overalls saunters over and gives Walter a firm handshake.

WALTER
Rick Scruggs, this is my son-in-law Douglas Varney.

Rick extends his hand. Still holding the two cups of coffee, Doug can't shake so offers him a coffee instead.

RICK SCRUGGS
(holding up his coffee) No thanks, Doug. (then) So, Walt, what you want to do with the old sign?

WALTER
Probably just take 'er with me. 40 years that sign's been up. Lotta memories.

RICK SCRUGGS
It'll make a nice addition to your rec room.

WALTER
That's a good idea, Rick!

DOUG
Memories.

They look at Doug waiting for more, but it never comes. The awkward silence is broken by the BEEP, BEEP, BEEP of the crane moving into place, drawing Rick's attention. He heads back towards the work site...

RICK SCRUGGS
It's show time. Excuse me...

DOUG
He seems like a nice guy--

WALTER
--You transfer the insurance like I told you to?

DOUG
All taken care of.

WALTER
Sign the mortgage paperwork with Al Dupuis over at First National?

DOUG
Aye-aye, cap'n.

WALTER
Restock the douches?

DOUG
The moment they come in. You've got nothing to worry about Walter. You've taught me a lot these past few years, the business is in good hands.

WALTER
(re: the sign) Here we go...

Doug looks up, smiling with pride as the NEW SIGN is hoisted into place...but that smile quickly fades as he sees the new sign. Sleek, contemporary, bold, it reads..."BISHOP'S Rx."

DOUG
So I guess you decided to go with the 'Bishop's' sign after all

WALTER
It is the name of the store.

DOUG
Yeah, right, of course. But, I just thought, when we agreed to buy the business from you--

WALTER
--Let's just put this to rest right now. I had offers from a number of heavy hitters, Doug. CVS, Walgreens...all the big chains. This is a very profitable little outpost here. It was a gift that I agreed to let you and Kara buy the business.

DOUG
And we appreciate it. Really. It's just that--

WALTER
--What? You planning on calling it "Varney's" or something?

Walter lets out a guffaw as Doug balks, clearly his plan.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Doug, listen. People know "Bishop's." It's a name that Woodbury has trusted for a long, long time. For as long as that clock has been around.

And, like that clock, they can
count on our service to always be
right. Accurate. Trustworthy.

Walter starts towards his car...

WALTER (CONT'D)
Besides, 'Bishop' is a robust,
healthy sounding name. And
Varney...well, I don't recall any
chess pieces named a "Varney."
Know what I mean?

They reach Walter's ostentatious GOLD CADILLAC where he gets in and starts the car. A beat, then he rolls down the window...

WALTER (CONT'D)
Almost forgot.

He holds out a SET OF KEYS. Hands still full, Doug extends a finger for Walter to hang them on.

DOUG
Thanks again, Walter. For
everything.

WALTER
Don't forget about the douches.

And he pulls away leaving Doug out on the sidewalk to watch as the new BISHOP'S SIGN is bolted into place. Doug POURS OUT the coffee nobody wanted.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
Doug had high hopes. He knew today was the day he became the man in charge. He knew today was the day he would reap the benefits of running his own business. But, despite all this...

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - MOMENTS LATER

Doug steps inside and flips on the lights, illuminating the rows filled with all manner of items.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
...Doug knew that today was going to be just like every other day.

STATIC SHOTS OF ALL THE STUFF WE SEE IN PHARMACIES BUT NEVER THINK ABOUT...

- Candies, greeting cards, plastic toys.

- The glass case full of collectible ceramic and crystal woodland creature figurines.
- Feminine hygiene products, diapers, and an EMPTY SHELF SPACE where THE DOUCHES should be.
- An ANTIQUE marble mortar & pestle - and other relics of a bygone era - on display in the big bay window.
- Finally, we end up at the PHARMACIST STATION. That big WHITE COUNTER HIGH UP in the back, behind which sit endless rows of filled prescription bags, mixing agents, a potent variety of chemicals used to create drugs.

THE FAX MACHINE whirs to life, printing out a new prescription that lies on top of a small stack in the tray. Off Doug GRABBING THEM...

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - AFTERNOON - LATER

Donning his short-sleeved white PHARMACIST'S JACKET, Doug works diligently behind the counter preparing an order. He grabs a LARGE JAR, but finds the top screwed on impossibly tight.

Giving it all he's got, he finally frees it but SENDS PILLS FLYING everywhere in the process.

DOUG

(sotto) Fuck.

Doug quickly clean things up, clumsily CRUSHING A FEW PILLS that hit the floor with his shoe when, over a scratchy P.A. we hear...

WOMAN'S VOICE (P.A.)

Consult!

DOUG

Okay, one second.

WOMAN'S VOICE (P.A.)

Connnn-sult!

Doug leaves the mess for later, adjourning to...

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - COUNTER AREA - CONTINUOUS

Awaiting Doug is JANET, the 20-something local who couldn't handle the high pressure academic environment at Woodbury Community College. To say that she doesn't give a shit about this job would be an overstatement.

At the counter waits a MAN (ARNOLD MORELLO) about Doug's age, dressed in a POSTAL WORKERS UNIFORM.

JANET
He needs a consult.

DOUG
I heard you the first 2 times,
thank you Janet.

She hands him the WHITE PRESCRIPTION BAG while she smacks her gum loudly.

POSTAL WORKER
Where's Walter?

JANET
Playing golf.

DOUG
Hey, Janet. I think the Dr.
Scholls display may have tipped
over again, would you mind...

Popping her gum, she hops up on the counter, spins her legs around top, and drops down the other side...

DOUG (CONT'D)
Sorry about that. She's just...I'm
taking over the business for him.

POSTAL WORKER
Oh. I'm Arnold Morello. Nice to
meet you.

DOUG
And I'm Douglas Varney. You've
delivered my mail for over ten
years.

Arnold just nods vacantly.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Okay, then. Let's see what we've
got here.

Doug opens the bag while leading him down to the "private" side of the counter.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
There were many, many aspects of
Doug's occupation that he
disliked. However, he took great
pride in his consults.

CLOSE ON a pill bottle as Doug pulls it out, reading the LABEL intently.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's not that Doug found joy in explaining proper dosage and side effects of his customers' medications. Rather, he found solace in the fact that he would always know more about his customers than they would ever know about him.

ON DOUG, the faintest grin in the corner of his mouth. You wouldn't notice it unless you knew to look.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
As the one pharmacist in a small town, filling prescriptions let Doug into the private, dark corners of his neighbors' lives. People like Daphne Zucker.

SMASH CUT TO:

THE PHARMACY COUNTER AREA - FLASHBACK

Where a MORBIDLY OBESE WOMAN leans in to take her medication from Doug.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Daphne struggled with her weight ever since she was a little girl. Doug provided her with Lipitor to manage cholesterol, always reminding her to avoid grapefruit.

Daphne slaps down a BABY RUTH and 2 SNICKERS as well...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
However, avoiding fruit was never the problem.

SMASH CUT TO:

THE PHARMACY COUNTER AREA - FLASHBACK

Next up, a series of NERVOUS-LOOKING HOUSEWIVES come up in succession to get their meds...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Because some days are dark even when the sun is shining over soccer games, Doug was there with Lexapro, Zoloft, and in the case of Kaye Tashman--a large quantity of Xanax.

Holding on KAYE TASHMAN, who balances one baby while her other toddler runs around like crazy.

KAYE TASHMAN
Just one of those days. Ya know?

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
All too well, Kaye. All too well.

IN QUICK SUCCESSION WE SEE...

Ethan's teacher, Mrs. D'Francesco approach the counter.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And for Ethan's teacher, Susan
D'Francesco, Tegretol. Because she
was bipolar.

A MAN IN HIS THIRTIES who looks FIFTY, with aged skin and
discolored teeth.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Brian Molloy took Chantix and
successfully beat his nicotine
addiction. However, because side
effects included severe
constipation...

He dumps a pile of FLEET PERSONAL ENEMAS on the counter.

Finally, a PALE WOMAN with NO EYEBROWS and a handkerchief
over her head...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Kathleen Bergman. Sadly, Lysodren.
Because her cancer knew no
remission.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - COUNTER - REAL TIME

CLOSE on the bottle Doug is holding. He rolls it over and
we see "Morello, Arnold--VALTREX."

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
And in the case of Arnold Morello,
Valtrex. To help control outbreaks
of his freshly acquired case of
genital herpes.

Doug looks back up at Arnold, noticing the dread on his
face and the WEDDING RING on his finger.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Dirty old sod.

DOUG
Well, okay then Mr. Morello--

ARNOLD
--Call me, Arnold. Please.

DOUG

Arnold. (then) It's pretty simple really. Just take one of these a day - with or without food - and be sure to finish all the pills.

ARNOLD

Then...then it will go away.

DOUG

It will never really go away. This just helps suppress outbreaks.

ARNOLD

Outbreaks? Jesus Christ.

Arnold is still coming to grips with this. Looking even more pathetic in his stupid Postal Carrier shorts.

DOUG

Your physician did cover this, right?

ARNOLD

Yes, it's just...it's all very complicated. I'd never been to Atlantic City before.

DOUG

I understand. It's a lot to digest. Just be diligent about the medication and you'll feel better before you know it.

Doug places the pill bottle back in the bag and hands it to Arnold Morello, who leaves only slightly less upset than when he arrived.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Jesus. What's that guy on?

Leaning on the counter is a DUMPY 30-something with a wispy chin beard, an assortment of shitty mall jewelry, and a "Dream Theater" t-shirt underneath his Bishop's windbreaker. This is NOAH, and it's no surprise he's ended up a delivery man for a pharmacy.

DOUG

That's confidential.

NOAH

Anti-depressants, I bet. Postal Worker, at the end of his rope just trying not to, you know...

Mimes like he's blowing people away with A MACHINE GUN.

DOUG

Noah!

NOAH

Just sayin', he looked pretty
fucked up, that's all.

Noah holds up his fake machine gun and blows fake smoke
off it, laughing just a bit too hard...

DOUG

Noah, have you been drinking?

NOAH

(defensive) What? No. I mean, give
me some credit, Doug. It's like,
not even 11 o'clock yet. Geez.

DOUG

Okay, sorry. Don't wander off,
I'll have a new batch of
deliveries ready for you soon.

NOAH

Yeah, about that. I know I said
I'd be on 'til closing tonight but
my buddy Rio just landed tickets
to see 'Widespread' in Hartford
tonight. Think it'd be all right
if I knocked off a bit early?

DOUG

You promise to get all the
deliveries done before you go?

NOAH

You have my word.

SMASH CUT TO:

A PLASTIC BOX, marked "DELIVERIES." And it's full,
brimming over with bags.

DOUG (V.O.)

Hi honey...yeah, I'm gonna be
late...yes, Noah. I know...I know.
It's fine, just eat without me.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - LATER

Doug grabs a Snickers, a Baby Ruth, and a bag of Skittles
from the candy rack.

DOUG (V.O.)

I'll eat something...yes, healthy.
Be home later...me too, bye.

And a Kit-Kat for dessert...

EXT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - MOMENTS LATER

Doug, annoyed, opens his car door and throws the box of deliveries, along with a clipboard, onto the passenger seat and gets in...taking a bite of Snickers Bar.

EXT. STREETS OF WOODBURY - NIGHT

We watch as Doug makes a series of deliveries, still maintaining a relatively pleasant air about him when he GREETS PEOPLE AT THEIR DOORS, despite being exhausted and annoyed at having to carry out this task himself. He checks his clipboard and sees one last stop.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Doug's car peels off onto DONNYBROOK COURT, a NARROW dirt road with a thick canopy of trees making it almost pitch black. The headlights provide the only light. Doug is starting to lose his patience when he comes upon...

EXT. ENORMOUS TUDOR STYLE HOME - CONTINUOUS

With a sprawling lawn that slopes down toward the road, it is an impressive structure. Doug's car winds up the lengthy driveway, finally coming to a stop behind a big, silver Mercedes S500.

INT. DOUG'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Killing the engine, Doug leans over and sifts through the plastic bin pulling out the meds that correlate to his clipboard...

INSERT: A few bags labelled for, "Roberts, Jack" while the other 6 are labelled "Roberts, Elizabeth"...

DOUG
Junkies.

EXT. ENORMOUS TUDOR STYLE HOME - CONTINUOUS

Doug ascends the long stone path to the front door and rings the doorbell, instantly startled by the sound of barking dogs - BIG DOGS - bracing himself for what is sure to leap up on his chest when the door is opened.

The muffled sound of a woman shouting at the animals, quiets them instantly, followed by the lock unhinging and the door swinging open.

Standing there in the dim light, is the aforementioned "ROBERTS, ELIZABETH." 30ish and STUNNING. Doug's eyes move to the floor, as she stands there wearing a slip, open silk robe draped over it, little left to the imagination...

DOUG

You must be Mrs. Roberts?

ELIZABETH

At present, yes.

DOUG

I believe these belong to you.

Doug sticks out his hands, each holding the white prescription bags. Elizabeth doesn't look ready to put down her OLIVE FILLED tumbler of vodka...

ELIZABETH

Would you mind? It's a bit chilly...

She takes a few steps back and nods, indicating for him to enter the foyer.

INT. ELIZABETH'S HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Elizabeth closes the door behind Doug. He catches a glimpse of her now-erect NIPPLES piercing her slip...and she catches Doug catching a glimpse. Closing her robe...

ELIZABETH

Like I said, a bit chilly.

DOUG

Of course. I won't be long. Let's just get you sorted out.

Doug methodically checks the clipboard with each bag he puts down, being sure to tick each box as he goes. As the bags stack up...

ELIZABETH

(re: the huge order of meds)
Probably think I'm some kind of junkie, huh?

DOUG

It's not my business to know how people got sick, just how to get them feeling better.

ELIZABETH

Catchy.

She smiles at his polite discretion. Then finishes her drink. From the looks of it, SHE'S HAD A COUPLE.

DOUG

Okay, it looks like there was some confusion with the insurance company and the Valium isn't--

ELIZABETH

--Not an issue. How much do I owe?

DOUG

Two-hundred and fifteen dollars, plus the eight dollar delivery fee...but I'll waive that.

ELIZABETH

That's very nice of you. But won't your boss be mad?

DOUG

I am my boss. I mean I won't be mad. I mean, I'm the pharmacist.

He opens his parka to reveal his WHITE LAB COAT on underneath.

ELIZABETH

So, you're Bishop?

DOUG

Varney. Douglas Varney.

ELIZABETH

But the bags say Bishop's--

DOUG

--That going to be cash or check?

ELIZABETH

Right. Of course. Just give me one minute.

Elizabeth shuffles O.S. while Doug waits...

ELIZABETH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You ever think of calling it Varney's?!

Doug grits his teeth, casually walking around peeking into the ADJOINING ROOMS; each tastefully decorated with all the trappings of extraordinary wealth. Wandering...

TO THE LIVING ROOM, he spots a large PAINTING of Elizabeth with a HANDSOME, OLDER, "SILVER FOX" kind of guy over the fireplace. Doug moves in to inspect it.

The Handsome Older Guy towers over two German Shepherds, while Elizabeth sits on a chair in the middle, diminished in impact if not beauty. As Doug stares at the painting, we hear a LOW GROWL.

Doug slowly turns to find THOSE SAME TWO ENORMOUS GERMAN SHEPHERDS, in the flesh and perched in the doorway, BARRICADING him into the room. Tongues wagging, back on their haunches, impeccably trained they stare at Doug growling, but do not budge.

ELIZABETH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We had it done right before the
wedding.

The dogs SUDDENLY FLEE at the sound of Elizabeth returning, fresh drink in hand.

DOUG
Sorry. I didn't mean to...

She waves her hand, *stop being silly.*

ELIZABETH
So, what do you think?

DOUG
Of the portrait? It's nice.

ELIZABETH
Jack insisted on it. They even
gave him bigger pecs. Ridiculous.

On a second look, Older Handsome Guy is pretty chiseled.

DOUG
Looks like a comic book character.

ELIZABETH
You're right. "The Adventures of
Rich Man and Trophy Wife."

DOUG
I'm sure he's a great guy.

ELIZABETH
He certainly thinks so.

Doug shifts gears by reviewing his clipboard again...

DOUG
So, I double checked the bill here
and...

ELIZABETH

Right. Of course. This is embarrassing, but turns out I only have about 20 dollars on me and my husband is the only one with a checkbook around here. And, of course, he's still in the city.

DOUG

Oh. Um, okay--

ELIZABETH

--I know, I know. I'm in this house with a seventy-thousand dollar Benz out in the driveway, a ten thousand dollar plasma on the wall, and I barely have enough cash to order a pizza.

DOUG

I was going to say, not a problem. You can just come by the store and pay the rest when you have it. *But I'll have to take the Mercedes as collateral, of course.*

Elizabeth laughs and grabs Doug's forearm, partly for balance - she is buzzed - but also because she's genuinely touched.

ELIZABETH

You're just one of those authentically nice guys, aren't you? Honest and sweet.

DOUG

Well...yeah. I guess so. Maybe why girls always saw me as a best friend and not a boyfriend--

She then WRAPS DOUG UP IN A HUG before he can react...he stiffens, but slowly hugs her back. Her eyes are moist.

ELIZABETH

Girls don't appreciate simple kindness, but women do. I do.

Without warning, she turns her head slightly and KISSES DOUG right on the mouth. Lingering for a few seconds, before separating.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Thank you, Doug.

DOUG

(flustered) OK. Good, then. I'm just going to get going and you can drop by the store. You know where it is?

She taps one of the White Paper Bags, noting the address.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Yes. Okay. And...good night.

EXT. ELIZABETH'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Doug exits the house and walks briskly towards his car. Looking back at the house he sees Elizabeth smiling at him from the large bay window, causing him to TRIP A LITTLE, before getting in his car and driving away.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Kara sits at the center island reading some sort of fitness magazine and drinking a glass of red wine.

DOUG

Sorry I'm so late. But the deliveries were all out of order and I didn't know all the addresses - Noah didn't even put them in the ledger--

KARA

--I got a call today from Ethan's school.

It's clear that Kara isn't interested in anything Doug is saying, which is fine by him this evening...

DOUG

Oh. Okay. What's the problem?

Doug has moved to the freezer and pulled out the VODKA, making himself a drink...

KARA

Principal "hyphenated-name" wouldn't say over the phone. Wants to have us in ASAP for a parent/teacher conference.

DOUG

He painted his windows black. Why are you acting so surprised?

KARA

Since when do you drink vodka?

DOUG
Oh...I just felt like having--

KARA
--Please, just go talk to him.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Ascending the stairs, he hears BLARING HEAVY METAL MUSIC. Pushing the door open, he discovers...

Ethan standing in front of his TV playing GUITAR HERO with his SHIRT OFF.

DOUG
Hey, Pal. How was school today?

Ethan does not answer, focused only on the game. Doug CONSIDERS his son's awkward age. Puberty coming hard and fast with the first few zits and whiskers of facial hair sprouting...along with an unattractive PAUNCH around his waist. It's a dangerous time for Ethan, like it is for most 12 year old boys.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Think maybe you'd want to come out
with us for a Varney family ride
this weekend?

ETHAN
Are you serious right now?

DOUG
You know, that bike we bought you
was pretty expensive and--

ETHAN
--I don't think so.

DOUG
Aw, c'mon. The open road, sunshine
on your face, wind in your hair.
Give it a chance, it could be fun.

Not taking his eyes from the Television, Ethan strides over and KICKS THE DOOR SHUT right in Doug's face.

DOUG (CONT'D)
So, you'll think about it?

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
Doug yearned to connect with
Ethan. To spend more time with
him. But he knew that his son
could see right through his lies.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROADSIDE - AFTERNOON

The orange, yellow, and brown foliage dot either side of this otherwise desolate stretch of road. A DIM HUM is heard growing closer, and closer and closer, until...

A PACK OF CYCLISTS BUZZ past us down the road. Mostly men, with a few women peppered into the group, all decked head-to-toe in spandex and helmets. It is clear they are NOT PROFESSIONALS but WEEKEND WARRIORS, as many of them labor to keep pace; snug spandex only highlights their imperfections.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
 Because there was absolutely
 nothing fun about the Varney
 weekend bike rides at all.

Somewhere towards the middle is DOUG, decked out in ridiculously bright NEON SPANDEX. He is sweating profusely, doing his best to keep up.

KARA (O.S.)
 On your left!

Startled by the shout, Doug glances in THE SHAKY LITTLE REARVIEW MIRROR attached to his helmet...

MIRROR POV SHOWS: KARA, bearing down on Doug like a cheetah closing on a wounded gazelle...and WHIZZING PAST HIM, super close, nearly knocking him off balance.

KARA (CONT'D)
 See ya around.

And she effortlessly GAINS ON THE PACK, swiftly reaching the lead rider (ED) and giving him a high five.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
 After reading an article in
 Redbook on the merits of Road
 Cycling as a means to shed excess
 baby weight, Kara gave it a
 try...and took to it immediately.

EXT. COUNTRY ROADSIDE - YEARS EARLIER

Nearly identical fall setting. Kara and Doug, each a little younger, ride along together.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
 It was just the kind of carefree
 activity Kara sought for them when
 they first met in college. And
 Doug was onboard. He saw bicycling
 as a chance for them to do
 something as a couple.

To recapture the feelings that made him first fall in love with his wife. And for a moment, it was fun.

Doug finding enjoyment in the simple pleasures while Kara, decked out in FULL PRO SPANDEX, pedals with controlled intensity.

PULL BACK WIDE to reveal that BABY ETHAN - *also in matching spandex and helmet* - rides on the back in a BABYSEAT. Kara bears down and swiftly pulls away from her husband.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
One brief moment. It quickly became a chore. A frustration. One more thing Doug did because someone told him to.

Doug gives a half-hearted attempt to keep up but quickly stops and coasts...Kara doesn't even look back.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
For Kara, though, cycling quickly turned from hobby into obsession.

INT. "WHEELS ON FIRE" SPINNING STUDIO - DAY

A crowded class of SWEaty SUBURBAN WOMEN chug away on stationary bikes as Kara leads them in the front.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
Then occupation. Inspiring her business at the nearby Glen Rock Shopping Center.

MUSIC THUMPING, Kara "motivates them" by yelling through her headset.

KARA
C'mon! Grind it out! Cottage cheese is for breakfast, not thighs!

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
And led her to victory at the Tour de Woodbury 30 miler.

EXT. WOODBURY TOWN SQUARE - FLASHBACK

A crowd of people cheer as Kara is awarded a LARGE TROPHY, atop the podium...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
 She's taken first place 5 of the
 last 6 years. 8 times total. The
 race has now become the
 cornerstone of Kara's year.

In a series of JUMP CUTS, we see her accept one GIANT TROPHY after another, only her spandex outfit changing.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the bane of Doug's existence.

Doug looks on from the crowd with a series of GENERIC RIBBONS pinned to his spandex shirt that read "Good Job!" or "Sportsmanship!"

VOICE (PRE-LAP)
 On your left!

EXT. COUNTRY ROADSIDE - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

The last of the group pulls away from Doug. He instantly shifts gears and begins to ENJOY HIS RIDE AGAIN. Sun on his face, wind in his hair, he even stops to admire a FLOCK OF NEWBORN DUCKS being lead by their mother.

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFE - LATER

Quaint, upmarket restaurant set on the DOCK OF A MARINA, a FLEET OF BICYCLES leaning against the side.

After a beat, Doug coasts into frame, stopping out front. Parking his bike, taking off his helmet, he dismounts, SLIPPING A LITTLE. His legs weak, riding shoes without traction on the cobblestone sidewalk, he approaches...

A GROUP OF RIDERS SITTING AT THE JUICE BAR, with Kara holding court...

KARA
 So I said, 'Armstrong? More like
Headstrong!'

THEY BUST UP LAUGHING as Doug click-clacks his way over to them. He starts laughing to try and join in the revelry...just as everyone else stops.

KARA (CONT'D)
 Doug! You made it.

Doug nods, sitting down on a barstool. He gulps down a glass of WATER, letting out a satisfied "Ahhh" before slapping his hands together and looking at the SMOOTHIE MENU.

DOUG
So, what's good today?

ON CUE, The Bartender delivers the check and everyone else STANDS TO LEAVE. For the first time, we notice the row of EMPTY SMOOTHIE CUPS.

DOUG (CONT'D)
But...I haven't gotten anything yet.

KARA
Doug, we waited twenty minutes for you. I'd stay, but I gotta maximize my energy booster.

DOUG
I just figured--

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
--Here ya go, Dougie.

Ed, the douchebag lead rider, pokes Doug in the gut with the CHECK as Kara fiddles with her bike.

ED
You know the drill, last one pays.
Sorry, bud.

KARA
Now, I know it'll be dark soon, so I want you to be careful, ok?

She sets a BLINKING RED CLIP-ON LIGHT in front of Doug on the table and gives him a quick peck.

THE GROUP PEDALS AWAY, as Doug sits there, stupid red light blinking....

WAITER (O.S.)
Can I take that from you, sir?

DOUG
No!! (catches himself) Sorry. I'm actually going to order something.

He hands it back to The Waiter.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Doug?

Doug turns to see ELIZABETH, much more put together now in a stylish fall outfit, designer sunglasses, sitting at an adjacent table sipping a glass of white wine.

DOUG
Oh, hey there. Mrs....Roberts?

ELIZABETH
Elizabeth, please. You look
different.

DOUG
I'm not wearing my lab coat.

ELIZABETH
You'd look pretty bizarre riding a
bicycle in that outfit.

DOUG
Don't think it can get much more
bizarre than it already is.

She smiles at his quip while grabbing a prescription pill
bottle from her purse, shaking out a few, and downing
them with her wine. Doug's eyes disapprove...

DOUG (CONT'D)
Eating alone?

ELIZABETH
My husband's meeting me.

DOUG
Oh. I'll just leave you--

ELIZABETH
--But that was supposed to happen
45 minutes ago. Care to join me?

Doug looks off, Kara and the rest of the group are all
but SPECKS ON THE HORIZON at this point.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFE - LATER

The sun is now much lower in the sky, the short fall day
almost at an end. Many of the patrons have left, the
staff starting to break down the tables, ONLY DOUG and
ELIZABETH remain. EMPTY WINE BOTTLES litter the table.

ELIZABETH
...And you never wanted to go to
medical school?

DOUG
I did - *I was* - but when Kara got
pregnant things changed. We got
married and this just seemed like
the logical choice; especially
with Kara's father owning the
Pharmacy and all.

ELIZABETH

He's "Bishop?"

DOUG

He is definitely Bishop.

Doug loosens one of his riding shoes and rubs his foot..

ELIZABETH

So you do this cycling to stay fit, or just for the cool clothes?

DOUG

(laughing) I mostly do it because my wife tells me to, although I don't share her passion. Still a good cardio workout--

ELIZABETH

--Can I ask you another question, Doug? Something personal.

DOUG

Go ahead.

ELIZABETH

You always do everything your wife tells you to do?

Doug's smile fades. The question wouldn't be so poignant if he didn't ask himself the same one almost everyday.

JUST THEN, Elizabeth's cellphone starts to RING. She pulls it out, checks the caller ID, then raises an eyebrow...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

She gets up and walks towards the docked boats to take her call. Doug moves to refill his wine glass when he is startled by YELLING coming from...

THE MARINA, where the sounds of Elizabeth ARGUING FURIOUSLY on her phone have others looking as well. She slams it shut and starts to stomp back towards their table. Doug shifts in his seat...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Sorry about that.

Hastily sifting through her bag she pulls out another PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE of pills, and shakes a few out...

DOUG

You know, I really shouldn't be saying anything - *because you seem like you're going to be very good for business* - but the pills in those orange bottles aren't always the solution to people's problems.

ELIZABETH

Well, you let me know when you find out what the solution is.

She pops a series of pills. Doug looks away, as if he's averting his eyes from a train wreck. THE WAITER approaches...

WAITER (O.S.)

Here you are sir. With your lunch and drinks added on, like you requested.

He opens up the BILLFOLD to see that the check for lunch, plus what he's consumed, totals an eye popping \$257.

Unzipping the small pocket on his spandex shirt, he finds only a crumpled 5 dollar bill and a chapstick. Then slowly closes the billfold, realizing he is fucked.

ELIZABETH

Something wrong?

DOUG

I'm a little short.

Elizabeth digs into her purse and pulls out her credit card. She stacks the billfolds and puts her card on top of them. The Waiter returns to take them...

ELIZABETH

Just put them both on my card.

DOUG

I can't let you do that.

ELIZABETH

Figure I owe you some money anyway for the delivery the other night. Should we call it even?

DOUG

Almost.

ON: DOUG'S BICYCLE STICKING OUT THE TRUNK OF A MERCEDES, the little red light blinking on the back of it now.

DOUG (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

I can't tell you how much I appreciate this.

INT. ELIZABETH'S MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Doug rides shotgun, while Elizabeth drives them through the picturesque town.

ELIZABETH

Yes you can.

DOUG

I appreciate it.

ELIZABETH

See, I knew you could.

Sharing another chuckle and look, it's easy to see they like each other. The car glides to a stop at a red light.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

This has been really fun. Hanging out with you, talking...

DOUG

Yeah, it has been.

ELIZABETH

I mean, honestly, Doug. This was the first real conversation I've had in months.

DOUG

Well, I am one of those 'authentically nice guys,' right?

ELIZABETH

And I'm a nice girl.

DOUG

Kindred spirits.

There's a LONG BEAT as they stare at one another. The light has turned from RED TO GREEN, but they do not move.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. REMOTE PARKING LOT - LATER

Spandex shorts around his ankles, legs hanging out the backseat of the car, Doug THRUSTS AWAY ON TOP OF ELIZABETH as she moans in ecstasy...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

Doug never would have wanted this for himself. The very word, adulterer, made him sweat. But, let's face it, a guy like Doug is not about to turn down a hot piece of ass like Elizabeth.

EXT. DOUG'S HOUSE - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

He retrieves his bike and slams the trunk shut. He glances at the house - nobody in sight, Ethan's WINDOWS PAINTED BLACK - then sticks his head in the window and gives Elizabeth a quick kiss.

DOUG

So...what happens now?

ELIZABETH

I'm not really sure. This isn't something I normally engage in.

DOUG

Right, sorry. I wasn't suggesting that you--

ELIZABETH

--But, I think, maybe you go inside to your wife and I go home to my husband.

DOUG

Right. Of course. So, I'll just, uh, see you around?

ELIZABETH

Okay, then. Good night.

She smiles and pulls away, tail lights disappearing into the night.

DOUG

"I'll just see you around?" Idiot.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Still in his day-glo Spandex and clip-in shoes, Doug walks in to see Kara. Freshly showered and dressed in a nice looking cocktail dress, she's finishing her makeup.

KARA

Jesus Christ, Doug. Where the hell have you been?!

DOUG

At the Marina. Where you left me.

KARA

That was hours ago. What the hell have you been doing?

Doug stammers for a second...

KARA (CONT'D)
Never mind, I don't care. Please,
just go shower. We're supposed to
meet Dad and Bree in 20 minutes.

Desperately wanting to wash the sex off of himself, Doug
doesn't stop, and keeps moving off screen.

KARA (CONT'D)
And see if your son is going to
join us!

He click-clacks off in his riding shoes.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Trudging up the stairs, Doug makes his way to Ethan's
door. MUSIC BLARES from inside, he knocks...

DOUG
Hey, Ethan. You going to join us
for dinner?

Remarkably, the music is turned up even louder. Doug
shrugs and walks away...

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - SHOWER - MOMENTS LATER

SITTING IN THE TUB, Doug lets the hot water from the
shower head rain down on him. Still a bit buzzed from the
wine and sex, it's relaxing. His mind bounces between
images of:

- Elizabeth in her nightgown at the door, her erect
nipples...
- Elizabeth laughing and caressing his arm playfully at
the Marina Cafe...
- Elizabeth's touch. Her nails scraping in his back. Her
moaning with ecstasy as they have sex...

BANG, BANG, BANG...he is snapped out of it by KNOCKING ON
THE DOOR.

KARA (O.S.)
Doug! Seriously!

CUT TO:

ECU on an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN (BREE), with blonde hair and a
face that may have been tweaked by plastic surgery...

BREE

*Dr. Friedman - Mitchell - for
being the head cardiologist here
at County I'm surprised you can't
diagnose a real heart ache. I've
worked too long and hard to become
a nurse here at County General
just to throw it all away now.
But, but I love you...and I'll do
whatever it takes to keep you.*

She holds for a beat, then popping out of character...

BREE (CONT'D)

Then we kiss.

WALTER (O.S.)

Super, babe. Just super.

Walter CLAPS WILDLY, cheering on his second wife, an aspiring actress who's biggest role thus far has been in a commercial for Fabric Softener. Reveal we're...

INT. LUM CHINS RESTAURANT - EVENING

An UPSCALE suburban Chinese Food Restaurant that does good business. They eat dim-sum style...

BREE

Oh, knock it off Wally.

Bree lets out a HORRIBLE LAUGH. From the way Kara polishes off her glass of wine, we get the feeling she's not too fond of Bree. She wiggles the empty bottle at the waiter as a signal they need another one pronto...

KARA

That was great. Wasn't that great,
Doug? Doug!?

Daydreaming, about you-know-who, he snaps to...

DOUG

Yeah, just great. So what happens now, Bree? They "call you back," right?

BREE

Only if you get the part.

DOUG

Did they call?

BREE

Not yet.

WALTER

So, Doug. Everything okay down at the store?

DOUG

Tip top.

WALTER

Great. That means we can talk about Ethan.

DOUG

(you told him) *Kara*.

KARA

He's just concerned, Doug.

WALTER

I am. He's at a pivotal age, this is where things get all fucked if you don't keep 'em in check.

DOUG

"*Keep 'em in check?*" What is that even supposed to mean, Walter?

KARA

I think what dad is *trying* to say, is that we all need to look out for Ethan right now.

WALTER

That's why I was going to suggest he come stay with us a few nights a week.

DOUG

That's ridiculous!

WALTER

A change of scenery, along with another male influence, might do the boy some good.

DOUG

Are you suggesting that I'm an inadequate role model?

WALTER

Not really suggesting anything.

KARA

Dad, Why!? Everytime! We can't just sit down and enjoy a meal...

Walter and Kara argue in the background. Bree accidentally drops a dumpling from her chopsticks into her glass of wine...then plucks it out and eats it. Doug stares out the window...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

Walter Bishop was an arrogant prick, no doubt. But perhaps Doug had let Ethan down? If you don't respect yourself, you can't expect anyone else to respect you either.

EXT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - MORNING

We recognize the building from earlier in the film. American Flag whips against the pole out front, as parents drop off their kids...

INT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Doug and Kara sit in chairs waiting inside the school's MAIN OFFICE.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. and Mrs. Varney...

INT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Standing in front of a large oak desk is a masculine looking woman of about 40. Crew cut, pants suit, little make up, FRAMED PHOTO on her desk of her embracing a SUPER BUTCH DYKE at "Lilith Fair '06." Her name plate reads PRINCIPAL SUSAN SAMMS-CARMICHAEL.

Flanking her is a thin man in his 30's, DR. ADAM ROTH. An underpaid, overqualified school psychologist.

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL

Thank you both for coming in.

KARA

Well, your message--

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL

--was alarming, I'm sure. But we're all here to help work through this the best way possible.

KARA

So maybe you could tell us why we're here then.

DR. ROTH

Has Ethan been acting out at all,
at home? Tantrums, bouts of sudden
anger or rage.

DOUG

He keeps to himself, mostly. A
pretty quiet kid. I was like that--

KARA

--They don't care what you were
like, Doug. This is about Ethan.

DR. ROTH

No, this is good. Any family
history of behavior or mental
illness--

KARA

--Mental illness? Can you please
just tell me what this is all
about already!?

The principal looks at Dr. Roth - *okay, I'll tell them.*

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL

It was brought to my attention
that last week, while he should've
been in Life Science, Ethan was
discovered by one of our faculty
members in the boys locker room
vandalizing one of the lockers
with, um--

DR. ROTH

--Excrement.

Kara goes white. Doug does his best not to seem slightly
amused by this, hiding a little smile.

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL

And this wasn't the first time.
Substantial pieces of, uh--

DR. ROTH

--*Human fecal matter--*

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL

--Have been turning up around the
school for the past 2 months.
There's no way of connecting Ethan
to the other *leavings*, but--

KARA

--You suggesting my son is some
sort of...of Uni-shitter?

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL
Like I said, there's no way of
being 100% sure.

KARA
He has no history of disciplinary
issues.

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL
No. He doesn't. But--

KARA
--Then maybe you need to look
elsewhere. Like that David Chen
kid. You know, the one who brought
those fireworks on the class trip
to the Six Flags. Hmm? Seems
likely that the same kid who's
toting explosives on a field trip
would also take a dump in a
locker. No?

PRINCIPAL SAMMS-CARMICHAEL
We've been keeping a close eye on
Ethan. Like your husband said, he
does keep to himself and appears
to get on just fine with the other
students. At the surface
everything seems tranquil, which
is often misleading.

KARA
I'm going to be sick.

DR. ROTH
Mrs. Varney. While extreme and
unsanitary, this is nothing more
than a young boy crying out for
attention. A person committing an
act such as this wants to get
caught.

KARA
I'm sorry, who are you again?

Dr. Roth looks hurt, he's clearly been through this...

DR. ROTH
Doctor Roth. The school's
psychologist.

KARA
And your degree comes from which
of our fine online universities?

DOUG
Honey, please.

KARA

I'm sorry. But these are serious accusations being made by strangers with very little in the way of evidence.

DR. ROTH

If it's all right with you, I'd like to start seeing Ethan twice a week. Just to check in, nothing too formal. Mostly just to get a better idea of who he is and what's going on, and head off any trouble at the pass.

KARA

We'll think about it.

Kara gets up and storms out. Doug sits there, still soaking it all in...

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - LATER

Doug is going through the motions, putting together a prescription...then stops. He leans on the counter, the weight of everything he's heard from the morning hitting him like a ton of bricks.

THE DOOR CHIME JINGLES, causing him to look up INTO THE BUBBLED SECURITY MIRROR and spot WALTER walking in.

DOUG

(to himself) Fuck.

After giving Noah a zesty, firm handshake...

WALTER

Doug. Can I get a moment?

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - COUNTER AREA - MOMENTS LATER

They find a bit of privacy between two of the GIANT SHELVES, each filled with prescription bags. Walter takes it upon himself to inspect an order...

WALTER

Betty Cavendish. Been on birth control for 25 years, yet has lived alone with her cats for the same period of time. Crazy world.

DOUG

I'm a little busy, Walter. What did you need?

WALTER

Yes. Right. Anyhow, it's, um,
about the other night, at dinner.
I said some things...and, well, I
wanted to say--

DOUG

--Water under the bridge.

Walter looks relieved that he didn't actually have to use the word "sorry." Letting out a big sigh...

WALTER

Great! Glad we settled that.
(then) So, how's it been so far.

Walter leads him back out to...

THE FRONT COUNTER AREA, inspecting things as he goes.

DOUG

You know, still ironing out a few
kinks but settling in. Just not
enough hours in the day sometimes.

WALTER

So, close early.

DOUG

I'm sorry?

WALTER

You own the store. Not CVS or Rite Aid. Thus, you make the hours. If you need to close early now and then, it's no big deal. Call it one of the perks.

DOUG

Seriously?

WALTER

Sure. Used to do it all the time if we had a big snow on the way, wanted to squeeze in a quick 9 holes, or had too many black kids on the floor. Know what I mean.

He pats him on the shoulder as he makes his way out.

THE DOOR CHIME JINGLES AGAIN and in steps ETHAN, along with a few other disaffected pre-teens...

WALTER (CONT'D)

There he is!

Walter rushes up to Ethan, tussling his hair and pretending to wrestle with him. Or, the exact opposite of what Ethan wants to have done to him.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Handsome guy like you running
around after school. Where's your
girlfriend at?

ETHAN
I don't have a girlfriend.

WALTER
Well, if ya take after your
Grandpa, won't be long 'til they
catch wind of that Pepsi bottle
dangling between your legs! Heyo!

This sends Walter into hysterics. Ethan is mortified, as is Doug.

WALTER (CONT'D)
I gotta get going. You take care,
champ. And Doug, don't forget what
we talked about...

He nods at A NICE BLACK COUPLE buying diapers on his way out.

Ethan grabs a MAXIM magazine off the shelf. Doug cranes his neck, nodding at the BUSTY BLONDE on the cover.

DOUG
Not bad. Her tits.

Ethan puts the magazine back on the shelf, and grabs GUNS & AMMO. Alarmed, Doug takes it away and puts it right back on the shelf.

ETHAN
I saw you and Mom at school today.

DOUG
We had a little meeting with some
of your teachers.

ETHAN
About what?

DOUG
Nothing major. Just some
Parent/Teacher stuff. Bor-ing.

Ethan plucks another magazine off the rack, but Doug puts his hand on his shoulder, prepping for a heart-to-heart.

DOUG (CONT'D)
You know, if there's ever anything
you want to tell me...or just want
to talk. I'm all ears.

ETHAN
This a sex thing?

DOUG
It's not a sex thing.

After an awkward beat, Doug smooths out his own lab coat.

DOUG (CONT'D)
I gotta get back to work, but I'll
catch you later pal.

Spinning on his heel, Doug heads back up towards the
Counter Area feeling a little better...but inadvertently
knocks over that pesky DR. SCHOLLS DISPLAY.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Shit. Hey, Noah. Noah!

But Noah does not respond. He's too busy pretending a
tube of WRAPPING PAPER is his penis, going between
jerking it off and fucking a shelf as a cluster of
TEENAGE BURNOUTS crack up.

Doug kneels down to pick up the bottles of athletes foot
powder. Looking up, he catches a GLIMPSE OF ETHAN in the
SECURITY MIRROR, shoving the Magazine in his jacket.

Craning his neck around the corner, still hidden from
view, Doug watches as ETHAN PROCEEDS TO SHOPLIFT a
variety of items. Nail clippers, water balloons and,
finally, a LARGE BOX OF LAXATIVES. Then, looking both
ways, he slips out the front door.

Doug turns to see JANET WATCHING HIM catch his son
shoplifting and do nothing.

DOUG (CONT'D)
What!?

Janet snaps out of her astonishment, and says...

JANET
There's a phone call for you.

DOUG
Take a message.

JANET
Sounds important.

DOUG
Take. A. Message.

The clock reads 5:45. Doug can't bear another hour plus of work. Heeding his father-in-law's advice...

DOUG (CONT'D)
Then lock up. We're closing early.

JANET
Why?

DOUG
You want to go home or not!?

She perks up instantly and hops into action.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - LATER

Doug is cleaning up his area, putting things away when the DOOR CHIME JINGLES. He hears Janet up front...

JANET
I'm sorry Miss, but we're closed.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Says here you don't close 'til 7.

Doug recognizes the voice and cranes his neck to spot ELIZABETH...his eyes go wide.

DOUG
Janet! Hold on, wait! Wait!

LEAPING OVER THE COUNTER AND RUNNING TO THE DOOR...

JANET
But, you said to lock up--

DOUG
--I know what I said. But I think we can help one more customer.

JANET
You also said I could go. Bye.

Janet pushes out between them, the door shuts behind her.

DOUG
Nice to see you again.

ELIZABETH
Yes, you too. But, if you're closing early then--

DOUG
--No, no. What can I do for you?

She reaches into her purse and pulls out TWO PRESCRIPTIONS, rubbing them together and smiling.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - LATER

Doug works at his station putting together the order, when Liz approaches carrying a basket full of other items she gathered from around the store.

DOUG
Find everything okay?

ELIZABETH
Yes. But, actually, I'm struggling with something, Doug.

DOUG
I know. Me too.

He stops what he's doing to lean over the counter towards her, expecting her to address THE PINK ELEPHANT in the room, when Elizabeth reveals that she's holding a SMALL CERAMIC FIGURINE in each hand.

ELIZABETH
I'm struggling between the 'fawn eating shrubs,' and the 'drunk chimney sweep.' Big decision.

DOUG
Oh. Right. That is a tough one. But, if pressed, I'd go with the fawn. That way you could ultimately complete the set with...

Doug reaches into the nearby DISPLAY CASE, pulling...

DOUG (CONT'D)
The triumphant buck. And the farmer gnome.

ELIZABETH
Then it's settled.

Putting the ceramic fawn in her basket they share a laugh, and A MOMENT...but it is interrupted when they feel eyes on them. NOAH'S.

NOAH
The douches came in.

He stands there holding a BIG BOX OF DOUCHES.

ELIZABETH
Well, that certainly sounds like good news to me.

DOUG
Thank you, Noah.

NOAH
Where's Janet?

DOUG
Told her she could leave early.
Why don't you do the same.

NOAH
No shit?

DOUG
Good night, Noah.

Thrilled to pieces, Noah turns on a dime, sheds his "Bishop's" windbreaker, and is out the door.

The BELL JINGLES, signaling his exit. A beat passes as Elizabeth and Doug stand there, alone now in the store.

ELIZABETH (PRE-LAP)
C'mon. You can't tell me you
aren't fascinated by all
these..."controlled substances."

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - COUNTER AREA - LATER

Doug is now hard at work in his lab area to fulfil Elizabeth's new prescriptions, while she leans on the counter watching him work.

DOUG
Chemistry has always fascinated me, but I guess it's the same feeling Bank Tellers have about hundred dollar bills. You're around them long enough, after a while it's just green paper.

He is good at his job. Moving confidently between the various mixing agents, rapidly counting off pills, printing the labels and slapping them on the bottles. She is impressed...

ELIZABETH
Think about it. By ingesting something the size of a bread crumb you can immediately help yourself overcome anxiety, depression, distraction. Be swept away into an artificially maintained sense of bliss. Or made more assertive, docile, erect.

DOUG
I am interested. It's my business to be. But, I never--

ELIZABETH

--Get high on your own supply?

DOUG

That's illegal.

Elizabeth has opened a small bag of peanut M&M's, rolling one around in her mouth...

ELIZABETH

Of course it is, but it must be hard working in the candy shop all day. Knowing that most any problem that arises could be solved by any one of your apothecaries.

DOUG

I've been fortunate enough not to have to take any medication for--

ELIZABETH

--Being crazy. Like me.

DOUG

That's not what I was going to say. And you're not crazy.

ELIZABETH

My husband might disagree with you.

DOUG

Come on. You're beautiful, smart, worldly--

ELIZABETH

--I dropped out of UConn after 3 semesters. And I'm 'worldly' if you consider the world to be three investment banking conventions in St. Lucia. We ate Ruth's Chris every night--

DOUG

--Great onion rings--

ELIZABETH

--All I have going for me is a rich husband, Doug. Other than that it's just a list of things I want to do and places I want to see, a mile long.

DOUG

Well, you can argue me on smart and worldly, but I think you're beautiful and there's nothing you can say that will change my mind.

ELIZABETH

Are you saying all this because
you mean it, or because you want
to sleep with me again?

Startled by this, Doug knocks over a jar of swabs...

DOUG

That was a mistake.

ELIZABETH

Complimenting me or--

DOUG

--We both got swept up in the
moment, it was very nice, but I
have a family and you have a
husband. Both would be very upset
to lose us.

ELIZABETH

Fine. You're right. It was a big
mistake. Let's just put it behind
us and move on. Like adults.

DOUG

As friends. I'm good at friends.

ELIZABETH

Okay, then. Adult friends.

There's a dash of disappointment in Doug's face, but he's not about to argue. Doug hands her the bag...her manicured fingers draping over his, as she takes it from him. Their eyes meet...

SMASH CUT TO:

DOUG AND LIZ kissing and peeling each other's clothing off with great urgency.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - MOMENTS LATER

They move from the counter area towards the aisles, ultimately falling to the ground, and slink OUT OF VIEW. However, the breathing and kissing sounds are vivid.

ON THE GROUND, she fumbles with her prescription bags, grabbing a pill bottle and shoving it in Doug's mouth.

DOUG

What is that?

ELIZABETH

Jack's Viagra.

DOUG
But, I don't need...

ELIZABETH
(mischievous) I know.

They slink out of frame...DOUG'S HAND reaches back into frame grabbing a BOX OF MAGNUM CONDOMS off the rack next to them. AN EXTENDED BEAT LATER, Liz's hand reaches into frame and grabs the REGULAR SIZE CONDOMS.

THE PORCELAIN FIGURINES - gnomes, milk maids, etc - all look on. Their little faces registering shock and joy.

FADE TO BLACK:

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
Doug did not feel guilty about
engaging in an extra-marital
affair. Nor the sneaking around or
the depraved sexual acts. He felt
guilty because he was getting away
with it so easily...

SMASH CUT TO:

DOUG AND ELIZABETH ARE SWEPT INTO THEIR AFFAIR...

- In the back of Doug's Prius. She puts pills in both their mouths. What exactly, we're not sure...
- They have sex on a rug in front of the HUGE FIREPLACE in Elizabeth's mansion. The German Shepherds watch.
- In a RAMADA INN, tangled in the sheets having a "picnic" comprised of pills and whatever can be purchased from a hallway vending machine, laughing as they watch THE JERK on television.
- Elizabeth hands him a NORDSTROMS BAG, from which Doug pulls a shirt, ties, clothing much more fashionable than he's used to...he's touched.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And as the sex became more
frequent and experimental...

- Doug is blindfolded, small droplets of hot wax being sprinkled over his bare chest...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
So did the drug use.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - LATE NIGHT

IN A QUICK SUCCESSION OF SHOTS, we watch Doug grab the ANTIQUE PHARMACY TOOLS and go to work at his mixing station. He CRUSHES tablets in the mortar & pestle.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

Doug's extensive knowledge of pharmaceuticals and the chemistry within were being stretched in ways he never imagined...

Using a liquid mixing agent, he re-forms the powders into a thick syrupy liquid, then delicately pours it into what looks like a TINY MUFFIN TRAY that's used to shape pills.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

20 milligrams of Viagra, blended with 40 milligrams of Ritalin allowed for intensely focused and elongated rounds of sex.

IN THE HOTEL ROOM BED - they go at it with the methodical stamina of Kenyan Marathoners. Doug squirts water into his mouth from his biking water bottle, without stopping.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

15 milligrams of Percocet, 4 milligrams of Xanax, with a dash of amobarbital made for an almost euphoric state of openness.

ON A BLANKET, laid out on the far side of the lake, they lay face-to-face...in awe of one another.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And, of course, Doug's favorite. The kitchen sink wild card.

Doug sweeps together the various CHIPS AND FLAKES of whatever was left lying around on the counter, merging them together into one LARGE RAINBOW-FLECKED PILL.

DAME JUDI DENCH (CONT'D)

A blend that inspired Doug to spend his lunch breaks elsewhere.

EXT. WOODBURY STREETS - AFTERNOON

High as a fucking kite, Doug rides along on his bike - still in slacks and lab coat - marveling at the sun splintering through trees, the birds, etc. He's just out for enjoyment rather than being forced by his wife.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

He created a smorgasbord of new psychotropic, psychotherapeutic, and narcotic drugs. Doug was nervous at first, but Elizabeth filled him with confidence and love, and he trusted her completely.

She even crushes up a few and encourages him to SNIFF THE POWDER which, of course, he does.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This new relationship made him feel special again...

They then collapse back onto the couch in a loving embrace, staring into each others dilated pupils...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The pills made him feel everything else. Euphoric, aggressive, care-free...whatever the moment required...that anything was possible. And that the solution to his problems and the gateway to instant bliss had in fact been around him all this time.

BACK IN THE PHARMACY, Doug turns from his station to find that, instead of jars, the pills are now brimming out of PLEXIGLASS BINS. Using a scooper, Doug skips between bins like a SCHOOL GIRL, filling up a white bag...it's a CANDY SHOP.

IN REALITY, Doug is sorting out a prescription and "accidentally" swipes an extra two pills to the ground...placing his loafer on top of them and sweeping them aside.

Doug even plucks the staples out to open a WHITE BAG holding a completed prescription, and shakes out two pills, before closing it back up.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Doug had found better living through chemistry, and once again believed that anything was possible. He was no longer restricted in the distance with which he could move. He was more than a Bishop, he was a King.

EXT. GLEN ROCK SHOPPING CENTER - DAY

Doug's Prius pulls into the PARKING LOT and cruises the aisles until he locates a space.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
 But, while their feelings for one another continued to grow, the effects of the apothecaries were only temporary. And reality beckoned.

The score that fueled this segment bleeds into TERRIBLE HOUSE MUSIC as Doug comes to a stop RIGHT OUTSIDE OF...

INT. WHEELS ON FIRE - CONTINUOUS

Kara's SPINNING STUDIO, where she leads a class in session. Dripping in sweat, wild eyed, she 'motivates' her class by shouting commands over the PA SPEAKERS on her headset.

Doug enters and works his way up the side of the room, until he's next to Kara at the front. The entire wall next to her is FILLED with her Tour de Woodbury trophies.

KARA

Doug, I'm in a class.

HER VOICE BOOMS OVER THE SPEAKERS, her students look a bit confused, craning their necks to see...

DOUG

I need to talk to you.

KARA

Can it wait? We've got one more big hill then the cool down. Let's go you lazy hausfraus! Pick it up!

Judging by their exhausted looks, we get the feeling that even her spinning students are getting tired of Kara too. ED, the dickhead from their riding group, is the only one who finds her entertaining.

DOUG

No, it can't...

He reaches out and CLICKS OFF HER MIC, prompting a DEATH STARE FROM KARA...

KARA

What are you doing!?

DOUG

Dr. Roth called me. Apparently Ethan didn't show up for his appointment today with him.

KARA

Not surprising.

DOUG

What are we gonna do about him?

KARA

We? No. What are you going to do about him?

DOUG

The hell is that supposed to mean--

KARA

--It means I've tried, and he's your son too. So, be his father, and do something.

Kara FLIPS BACK ON HER HEADSET...

DOUG

What do you expect me to do?

KARA

(over the PA) It's called being a man, Doug. Give it a try. Who knows, you might actually like it.

That stung. Ed tries to stifle his laugh, as the entire class of women on stationary bikes now stare at Doug...

INT. ELIZABETH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Doug and Elizabeth are tangled in the sheets in a brief intermission from their sexcapades. Elizabeth comes closer, ready for more...but Doug pulls away.

ELIZABETH

What is it?

DOUG

I'm sorry, I'm just not...I don't know.

She instinctively sifts through the cache of pill bottles until she hits THE VIAGRA, shaking out one, but Doug stops her.

DOUG (CONT'D)

No. It's not that...

ELIZABETH

Okay. I've got that desoxyn-thingie you made, which was great. Ooh, or maybe even some Ambien. We keep each other up and trip out--

DOUG

--It's my wife.

As Elizabeth stops fumbling through her bottles...

ELIZABETH
Does she know?

DOUG
No. Not at all...but I almost want her to. So she can see how happy I am.

ELIZABETH
I'm happy, too.

DOUG
And also so she can see all the sex stuff we're doing. Like that thing you did on top...?

ELIZABETH
You mean reverse cowgirl.

DOUG
Yeah, that. That was something. I'd never seen that before.

ELIZABETH
Don't watch a lot of porn, do you?

DOUG
Kara busted me one time, ya know (mimes jerking off). So she put a parental lock on my laptop.

ELIZABETH
What?

DOUG
She has this code on the computer now...

ELIZABETH
Jesus-fucking-Christ, Doug!

DOUG
What? Why are you yelling at me?

ELIZABETH
Because I don't understand why a guy like you puts up with shit like that. You deserve more.

DOUG
Sure, maybe. But what am I going to do about it--

ELIZABETH
--Leave.

Doug doesn't respond...he's obviously thought about this too.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Both of us. Just leave. It would be great, wouldn't it? Pick up on a whim and just go somewhere together, maybe the tropics--

DOUG
--I burn easily.

ELIZABETH
OK, then Europe. Australia. Kathmandu. Wherever! Get out of here and see the world. Just imagine, hitting the reset button, getting a do-over, making a new life with someone great...

Doug takes a deep breath. Treading into serious waters.

DOUG
I can't. Kara would bleed me dry, and I'm sure you signed a pre-nup.

ELIZABETH
I did. And it doesn't give me much of anything in a divorce. The pre-nup is just a small reminder of what I am: a trophy wife. We don't age gracefully and die holding our husband's hand in the rest home. We get replaced.

DOUG
Well, what if we made you a widow?

A beat. It just hangs there...then Elizabeth BURSTS OUT INTO CACKLING LAUGHTER. Doug keeps a serious look just a beat longer and then ERUPTS IN GIGGLES, too. They are on a variety of mood-altering drugs, after all...

DOUG (CONT'D)
Maybe you could get the dogs to eat him!?

ELIZABETH
If I really wanted to kill him, I'd just gain a hundred pounds.

DOUG
(laughing) No. If you really wanted to kill him, you'd mess with his heart arrhythmia...

And he tails off, as though some invisible line has been crossed.

DOUG (CONT'D)
I was joking--

ELIZABETH
I know you were, honey. I was, too. But...you're right. His heart is a problem. Has been forever. But you know that already, Mr. Pharmacist. Half his pills are just to keep the damn thing ticking. And those meds could keep him going for another twenty years. Twenty years of cocktail parties, fund raising dinners, golf tournaments. I hate golf.

She sits up and takes his face in her hands...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Which is why sometimes I like to imagine you, me, and more thousand dollar bills than we know what to do with.

She cradles and caresses his face, lovingly. Doug is deep in thought, but bewitched by her touch...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
It adds a little excitement to my life...like when I think about how I'm falling for you.

DOUG
I love you, too.

She grins and softly touches his face...

DOUG (CONT'D)
But I should tell you, there actually aren't any more thousand dollar bills. Too easy to counterfeit. In fact, the hundred dollar bill is the largest one still in circulation--

He's cut off by Elizabeth's hand COVERING HIS MOUTH.

ELIZABETH
Honey, sometimes you gotta know when to shut up and just give it to a girl. Now being one of those times.

Doug wraps his arms around her, rolling over on top as...

DISSOLVE TO:

A GRUMPY OLD MAN'S FACE (MR. AANENSON)...

MR. AANENSON
It's not like nothing is coming out. I'm not constipated, understand. My stool, it's just not...substantial.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - EVENING

AT THE COUNTER, Doug is helping him select the right product. He is distant, still mulling Elizabeth's proposition, and clearly not paying much attention.

MR. AANENSON (O.S.)
Varney?!

DOUG
Yes. What?

Mr. Aanenson slaps TWO BOXES of LAXATIVES down on the counter. One of them registers with Doug as ETHAN'S BRAND OF CHOICE, and he fixates on it...

MR. AANENSON
You gonna help me out or what?

DOUG
Sorry? With what?

MR. AANENSON
My shit.

DOUG
Right. Sorry. These are both fairly aggressive stool softeners. Either one will do the job.

MR. AANENSON
I went through two Readers Digests the other day and all I got were these small pellets. Like the kind I put in the bottom of my fish tank.

DOUG
One serving in the morning and another at night, and I'm sure your next movement will be markedly more satisfying.

Doug puts the laxatives in a brown bag and Mr. Aanenson swipes it off the counter...upon which Doug rests his head after he walks away. Still with his head down.

JANET (O.S.)
Doug?

DOUG
Just a minute, Janet.

JANET (O.S.)
But, there's this guy here--

DOUG
--Dammit, Janet, in a minute!

JANET
Jesus, what's gotten into you?

Unused to such outbursts, Janet spins and takes off in a huff. A MEEK LOOKING man in his 30's, dressed in an off-the-rack suit from JC Penney stands there...

MAN
Are you (reading off pad) Douglas Varney?

DOUG
Yes.

MAN
And you're the owner of this establishment?

DOUG
Yes.

MAN
Then how come it's called "Bishop's?"

DOUG
Did you need a consultation or...?

MAN
Oh, right, of course. Here I am running my big mouth, asking all these questions, and I haven't even introduced myself...

He hands Doug a business card from his wallet. ANDREW CARP, Field Agent, Drug Enforcement Agency.

CARP
I'm Special Agent Andrew Carp, from the DEA field office down in New Haven.

Doug looks at Janet, like "What the fuck?"

JANET
(snotty) Doug, there's a gentleman here to see you from the DEA.

She shoots Doug a told-ya-so look before storming off.

As Carp replaces his wallet, Doug sees that he also CARRIES A GUN...and immediately snaps from his fog.

AGENT CARP

I've tried calling - *a few times*
actually - you're a tough man to
get on the phone, Mr. Varney.

DOUG

Oh, yeah, well...we've been busy.
Cold and flu season, ya know.

AGENT CARP

According to our records Bishop's
Pharmacy recently changed owners
but no paperwork has been filed.

DOUG

How does that concern the Drug
Enforcement Agency. I report to--

AGENT CARP

--the Board of Pharmacies, I know.
But when there's a change of
ownership, they call us. Protocol.

DOUG

Shouldn't you be wearing a
windbreaker and cool sunglasses,
smashing down doors looking for
bricks of uncut heroin?

AGENT CARP

What most people don't realize,
Mr. Varney, is that the
misallocation of prescription
medication kills just as many
people, if not more, as any of the
glamour drugs.

DOUG

Glamour drugs?

AGENT CARP

Coke, crack, smack, E, p-dog...

DOUG

P-dog?

AGENT CARP

Yeah, it's kinda like "Sherm." In
any event, the change of
ownership...

DOUG

Damn. That's right. I'm sorry.
See, I just took over for my
father-in-law not too long ago--

AGENT CARP
--October 3rd.

DOUG

Right. And, well, I'm a little overwhelmed. He was - *is* - a bit of a control freak and didn't let me handle much around here so I'm still trying to get a handle on things.

AGENT CARP
I understand. My father-in-law's the same way. Nevertheless, I'm still going to need a look at your inventory.

DOUG

My inventory? Why? We're fully stocked.

CARP

I'm sure you are. I just have to ensure that your actual dispensation of meds matches up with the prescription records.

DOUG

To make sure I'm on the up and up?

AGENT CARP
That's right. Unless, of course, you're some sort of no-good, thieving pill popper.

A BEAT, as Doug's face tightens...until Carp BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)
I'm playing with ya. Again, it's just protocol with new ownership, so if we could...

The tiniest bead of sweat develops on Doug's forehead. He's unsure how to play this...and he catches NOAH staring at him accusatorily before slipping away.

DOUG

Now might not be the best time. It's just...like I said, things are just a bit busy around here, that's all.

Carp looks around. The place is virtually empty.

AGENT CARP

Little trade secret, Mr. Varney: I don't want to be here any more than you want me to be. And, *between us*, you're not exactly what we call a 'high risk' establishment. The old owner, your father-in-law--

DOUG

--Walter Bishop.

AGENT CARP

Yeah, Bishop. Record's tight as a drum. Had almost 100% match rate. Never lost track of a single pill. Must really keep things in check.

DOUG

Yeah, he's wonderful. So, that happens with other pharmacies, though? Losing pills?

AGENT CARP

On the record, no comment. But c'mon, Mr. Varney, if our government has misplaced nuclear weapons a few pills are bound to go MIA, right?

He chuckles, getting a laugh out of Doug, who thinks he's in the clear. And then...

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)

(snapping back to attention) Now really, if we could just get to it, I'll be out of your hair in half-an-hour.

Doug stares Carp down, then nods and lets the agent back into the stock room. As Carp gets out a notepad and begins to jot things down, Doug surreptitiously pops a pill.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - GARAGE - EVENING

Doug pulls the Prius in and kills the already silent engine. Getting out he spies that KARA'S CAR IS THERE, and sinks...but then notices that her BICYCLE is missing off of the rack, and SMILES. Relieved.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Still rattled from his run-in with the law, Doug goes to the freezer and pulls a frosty bottle of vodka and fixes himself a drink...but is distracted by the thumping music coming from upstairs. Ethan's room.

Doug sifts through the mail, noticing an ENVELOPE FROM ETHAN'S SCHOOL. He opens and reads, keying on the terms "recommendation" "psychiatric analysis" "professional opinion" "potential round of medication."

DOUG

Fuck, Ethan.

He fishes around in his pocket and pulls a VARIETY OF MIXED PILLS, sifting through them until finding something that will ease his tension. Then pops one, washing it down with his vodka.

With pills still in hand he looks to the counter and notices something...RACK FOCUS, to a SMALL BOTTLE OF STRAWBERRY QUIK that Ethan loves so much.

Considering the pills in his hand, then Ethan's drink. The music from upstairs growing more intense...Doug lets the pills in his hand clatter to the counter, then reaches for a ROLLING PIN.

INT. ETHAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

THE MUSIC BLARES, as Doug knocks/pushes the door open, and turns down the stereo.

DOUG

A little loud, don't you think?

ETHAN

You're supposed to listen to Mastodon loud.

DOUG

Of course. Mastodon.

Doug tries his best to be casual, handing the bottle of Quik to his son, then checks out the crap on his shelves.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Here. Brought you a snack.

ETHAN

Thanks.

DOUG

(over his shoulder) So how are things at school?

ETHAN

Okay, I guess.

DOUG

Right. Any idea why they might've suspended you then?

Ethan shakes the Quik, getting ready to open it.

ETHAN

I...they just don't...I mean that Dr. Roth guy. He's such a dick.

At the end of the shelf, Doug sees a FRAMED PHOTO of YOUNGER ETHAN and Doug each wearing custom t-shirts that read "son" and "dad", respectively. This makes Doug smile, a beat rolls by...

ETHAN (CONT'D)

It's like I'm his science project or something.

Ethan unscrews the cap, and lifts the bottle to his mouth...BUT IT'S SWIPED AWAY before it touches his lips by Doug...who DOWNS IT IN ONE GULP. Then gags a little.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

What the hell, Dad?

DOUG

I was thirsty. There's plenty more downsta--the fuck are these?

Doug notices a SET OF NEW GOLF CLUBS sitting in the corner.

ETHAN

(duh) Golf clubs.

DOUG

I know that, but what are they doing here?

ETHAN

Grandpa bought them for me. Said I needed a hobby. Something like golf to teach me the "value of hard work and discipline."

DOUG

(to himself) Asshole.

ETHAN

I told him I already have a hobby, but he didn't seem to care. Grandpa really loves golf.

DOUG

Golf is fucking stupid and elitist. And so is your fucking Grandfather. Fuck!

Hearing the "F" word fly out of his father's mouth with such reckless abandon seems to jar, and entertain, Ethan...the slightest smile curling.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Your mother might not agree with me on this one, but Grandpa doesn't always know what's best. Learning to play golf, or bike riding, or any other stupid activity isn't going to make you perform better at school.

ETHAN

Am I sick, Dad? Dr. Roth said something about putting me on medication.

DOUG

No. You're not sick. You're just 12. And being twelve sucks, for everyone. And everyone gets into some weird shit around this age. I mean, I used to fuck the couch when I was 12.

ETHAN

(starting to laugh) What?

DOUG

You heard me. Rather than use my hand to, you know (motions jerking off) I'd stuff a towel in the couch and, well, fuck it.

Ethan is laughing hysterically now, which makes Doug feel like a million bucks.

ETHAN

That's crazy.

DOUG

Like I said, it ain't easy at your age. But then, one day, you look up and you're okay again...without doctors, or drugs, or anything else.

ETHAN

You and mom aren't okay.

DOUG
You're right. But we're working on
it.

ETHAN
If you say so...*couch fucker*.

They laugh again.

DOUG
(fearing the worse) Now, uh,
what's this hobby you've got?

ETHAN
Ninja Juhakkei.

DOUG
Cool. (beat) What is that?

Ethan hands him a BLACK METAL THROWING STAR...

DOUG (CONT'D)
And what is this?

ETHAN
It's a ninja throwing star. It's a
weapon.

DOUG
So, you collect these?

ETHAN
Among other things.

Ethan pulls a LARGE BOX from underneath his bed. Popping
the top IT'S FILLED WITH ALL SORTS OF NINJA WEAPONS.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
There's 18 different weapon
disciplines to master. I've only
got 11 so far.

DOUG
Cool.

ETHAN
Really? You're not mad?

DOUG
Well, should I be? I don't know
much about Ninjas.

ETHAN
No. I just collect the stuff. It's
not like I'm out there killing
squirrels or destroying public
property.

Doug lifts up a BLOW GUN with its DARTS, and smiles.

DOUG
Would you like to?

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL - NIGHT

A rustle in the bushes...then Doug and Ethan appear. FACES COATED IN WAR PAINT and wearing all black - ninja style - they creep into position while eyeballing a target in the distance.

ETHAN

DOUG
Gimme that thing.

Doug yanks the BLOW GUN from him, loads it with a LARGE DART and gives it a heave of air...WOOSH-SNAP-CRASH, the sound of GLASS breaking in the distance.

With one shot, Doug has SHATTERED THE TOWN SQUARE CLOCK. After the initial shock wears off, they laugh.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Here, you try.

Doug hands the blow gun to Ethan who loads it with another large dart, and lets fly...CRASH. He's BUSTED A VINTAGE LAMP POST.

ETHAN
Awesome! What should we hit next?

Doug's EYES ARE LOCKED on something. He smiles...

EXT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

It sits in the heart of the square, silent, save for the dull hum from the illuminated NEW "BISHOP'S" sign.

Ethan and Doug stand before it, fully armed...

ETHAN

DOUG
Isn't not...it's a great idea.

And, with that, he hauls off an WHIPS one of the Chinese Stars into the new sign. Light bulbs EXPLODE!

Following his father's lead, Ethan does the same. And together they unleash an ONSLAUGHT on the pharmacy. IN GLORIOUS FASHION, we watch as they lay waste to the sign.

The catharsis of this act, along with the drugs, has Doug grinning from ear-to-ear. Out of ammo, he grabs a METAL-MESH GARBAGE CAN and throws it THROUGH THE GIANT GLASS BAY WINDOW. The CRASH AND FLYING GLASS are spectacular...but the reality of the damage is jarring.

ETHAN

Holy fuck, Dad.

DOUG

Run!

They sprint off into the night laughing, awkwardly slapping five, sounds of DOGS BARKING in the distance.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - GARAGE - LATER

The car pulls in and the door closes behind them. They sit there for a minute, faces still painted and eyes aglow with mischief.

ETHAN

Thanks, dad.

DOUG

For what?

ETHAN

Tonight. It was fun.

DOUG

Yeah. It was, wasn't it. (then) I know you don't want to 'talk' and, quite frankly, neither do I. So just tell me what this shit-stuff at school is all about.

ETHAN

(sigh) In the warrior code, it is written, that the highest insult is to smear one's excrement on the home of their adversary.

Doug nods, soaking in his son's rationale.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Andy Berg, Kevin Redmond, David Chen...they're all dicks. All they do is make fun of me, so...

DOUG
So you insult their honor with
your poop?

ETHAN
Yeah.

DOUG
Well, I think you've achieved the
desired affect so do your old man
a favor and give it a rest, okay?

ETHAN
Alright.

DOUG
Thank you. Now go clean that war
paint off your face before your
mother starts asking questions.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

They enter and Doug is about to fix himself a Vodka...

ETHAN (O.S.)
Dad...

DOUG
Yeah?

ETHAN
There's this thing next week -
bring your dad to school or some
shit - it'll probably be gay, but
if you showed up it would look
pretty good for the both of us...

DOUG
(beaming) I'll be there.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - EARLY MORNING

Where the once-pristine NEW "BISHOP'S RX" sign has been
reduced to a collection of busted glass, metal, and
plastic. A YOUNG UNIFORM COP on a ladder looks baffled,
as he pulls a CHINESE THROWING STAR from the rubble.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)
Everyone, just stay back. Thank
you.

THE WOODBURY POLICE look baffled as to protocol. Not much
crime ever happens here...evident by the fact that an
OFFICER can't even unfurl the "Crime Scene" tape.

WALTER'S GOLD CADILLAC screeches up to the curb. He hops out, still in his robe, thick white hair mussed, and mouth agape from what he's seeing...

WALTER
What in the fuck happened here?

THE YOUNG OFFICER (WILLITS) approaches...

OFFICER WILLITS
Mr. Bishop, I'm Officer Willits.
We spoke on the phone--

WALTER
--You said 'incident.' That there had been an incident. This is a Goddamn warzone!

He pushes past Officer Willits and stomps over to DOUG, who stands there wearing SUNGLASSES and one of the new shirt/tie combos Elizabeth bought for him. Calmly sipping his coffee watching with subdued pride and air of cool.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Who could've done all this?!

DOUG
Not sure, Walter. But I think Officer Willits here had a promising lead on, what was it--

OFFICER WILLITS
--Ninjas.

Officer Willits hands him an EVIDENCE BAG containing the throwing stars...

WALTER
The fuck is a Ninja?

OFFICER WILLITS
It's an ancient Japanese warrior, cloaked in black, often with mystical powers.

DOUG
Sounds pretty serious, Walter.

WALTER
Why in the fuck would an ancient Japanese Warrior destroy a pharmacy sign in Connecticut!?

OFFICER WILLITS
Our investigation is ongoing and, as soon as we have more information, we'll let you know.

WALTER

Doug, what are we going to do
about this?

DOUG

I think it best if we leave this
in the capable hands of the
Woodbury PD. They seem to have
things under control. Now, if
you'll excuse me, I need to go
take inventory after this heinous
crime. Excuse me, gentlemen.

Doug turns and walks back into the Pharmacy, HUGE GRIN
SPREADING ON HIS FACE...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

Doug did have more important
things to take care of...

INT. BISHOP'S RX - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Up in his lab-station area, Doug works feverishly, but
focused.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

He had no time to dwell on his
latest victory. It was time to
prepare for the next...

Grabbing his "tools" and the stray pills that were "lost"
Doug is a whirl-wind at work on something...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Even with months of regimented
training and proper diet, Doug
would still fall short in the Tour
de Woodbury.

JANET (O.S.)

Consult!

DOUG

You do it!

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

However, Doug had no intentions of
going quietly this year. In fact,
he planned to compete at a very,
very high level.

One by one, he throws ingredients together grinding them
down to a fine powder with his mortar & pestle...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Using a base of hypertropin growth
hormone for quicker recovery, 30
milligrams of glycolysis to stave
off cramping caused by lactic
acidosis, along with highly
concentrated doses of adderall for
focus, Oxycontin to numb his legs,
a good old fashion 10 cc's of
methamphetamine for that extra
burst when all other systems
failed. It was, most definitively,
a recipe for success.

With expert precision, he adds the liquid bonding agent
to the powder, turning it to that DOUGHY SUBSTANCE he
then pours into the MINI-MUFFIN TRAY to mold GIANT HORSE
PILLS. They are scary and awesome looking.

EXT. WOODBURY PARK - AFTERNOON

Buzzing with activity, spectators and competitors alike
flood the STARTING LINE AREA of the Tour de Woodbury.

Doug, SWEATING PROFUSELY and GRINDING HIS TEETH, walks
his bike to the starting line with the same intense gaze
of THE INCREDIBLE HULK. Accidentally, he BANGS into a
little girl, causing her to lose grip on a bundle of
balloons which floats away into the sky. Her Dad turns...

LOCAL DAD
Hey! Watch where you're going--

DOUG
--Fuck off.

The Dad recoils a bit, Doug doesn't even look at him...

AT THE STARTING LINE...

Doug pushes his way right TO THE FRONT, where we
recognize some of the people from his weekend warrior
biking troupe...and KARA, who looks askance at Doug.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Whoa, look who it is!

We recognize this guy as one of the JACKASSES (ED) from
their weekend warrior biking group.

ED
Sure you want to get tangled up
front with the big dogs, Dougie?

DOUG

Hey, Ed. Maybe you should worry more about the clotrimazol cream clearing up that fungus growing inside your asshole, and less about where I start the race.

This quiets Ed right down. Doug readies himself into position a few riders over from KARA...

KARA

What are you doing, Doug?

DOUG

Baking a red velvet cake. What does it look like I'm doing?

KARA

You don't honestly think you can compete in this thing?

DOUG

I'm not here to compete. I'm here to win.

KARA

Sure you are.

A race official steps up holding the starting gun...

RACE OFFICIAL

Racers, take your marks...ready...

AN EXTENDED BEAT that seems to last forever, as Kara and Doug stare one another down...BANG! The gun goes off and the bikers shoot out of the blocks.

EXT. WOODBURY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

With traffic blocked off, the Bikers have the roads to themselves...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

It was tight for the first few miles, but soon the contenders separated from the pretenders and Doug was right there with them. It was unchartered territory for him, but he was adjusting nicely.

Whipping around turns, pedaling with purpose, Doug is focused and right in the mix of things...but he starts to fade and fall towards the back.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Doug had never been able to keep
up like this before and he was
losing steam. Victory was slipping
away.

Doug pops a pill and splashes it down with water.

DAME JUDI DENCH (CONT'D)
However, if one of something is
good, two is certainly better...

A beat, and he pops another pill.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And, this time, Doug was playing
for keeps.

After a minute, Doug regains his mojo and steams back
into the mix. He flies past a WATER STATION, when he
hears...

ETHAN (O.S.)
Go, Dad, go!

He spies Ethan on the shoulder cheering wildly for him.
This makes him pedal even harder. He quickly gains on...

ED. Neck-and-neck and as Doug's about to pass him, Ed
panics, SWERVING INTO DOUG's path. Doug dodges. Ed tries
again, but misses.

DOUG
Jesus Christ, Ed.

ED
Not today, Varney. Not ever! I
told you not to get tangled up
with the big dogs. WOOF-WOOF--

WHAM! Caught up in his ranting, ED CRASHES INTO A PARKED
CAR, sending him FLYING OVER HIS HANDLE BARS and down to
the ground violently. Doug GIVES HIM THE FINGER as he
pedals away...

EXT. WOODBURY PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Kara, measured and focused, has the lead all to herself.
And, with the finish line breaking in the distance, she
starts to ease up slightly when we hear...

DOUG (O.S.)
On your left!

WHIZ...DOUG FLIES BY HER, kicking up leaves and twigs in
his wake. Kara's 'oh shit' face firmly in place, begins
to shift gears and pedal hard again, but it's no use...

EXT. WOODBURY PARK - FINISH LINE - CONTINUOUS

The crowd waits anxiously for the racers...

RACE OFFICIAL

Wait, I think I see something.
Yup, here they come!

They start to cheer wildly...FOR DOUG. All by himself, buzzing down the straight away. The cheers taper off slightly, Doug not being who they had anticipated.

Hands raised above his head, Doug PUNCHES THE SKY with joy, as he zips across the finish line. In the crowd we see Ethan clap and whistle, proud of his dad...Walter, next to him does not share his enthusiasm, looking on as Kara finishes amongst the rest, not even placing.

Even ELIZABETH WATCHES from afar through her designer sunglasses. Despite her effortless cool, she SMILES WIDE and claps, happy for Doug.

JUMP CUT TO:

THE RACERS PODIUM...

Where Doug stands atop the rest, being handed his first place GOLD MEDAL and TROPHY, hoisting it above his head.

Kara settles for the shitty "Sportsmanship" ribbon, throwing it in the trash bin.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
Doug Varney was not used to
winning...

INT. LIZ'S MERCEDES - WOODS - LATER

The familiar position of Doug's legs hanging out the Mercedes backseat door, riding pants around his ankles, as he plows away on top of ELIZABETH. His GOLD MEDAL still around his neck, it dangles in Elizabeth's face.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)
...but he was beginning to enjoy
how it felt.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

Doug CRANKS OUT PUSH-UPS on the carpet, still WIRED FROM HIS RACE-TIME CONCOCTION. He pops up and checks himself out in the mirror. His body doesn't look particularly different, but his confidence somehow makes him look more handsome.

Emerging from the bathroom wrapped in a towel, Kara is a little taken aback at the sight of her husband.

KARA

Oh. Doug. Hi.

DOUG

Hey, honey. All finished in there?

KARA

Yep.

The same rote conversation they've had for years. Until Doug drops his pants. Kara finds herself looking at Doug's junk. Staring, actually. Doug notices her noticing but plays it off. Whistling, he heads towards the bathroom. Before he gets there, though...

KARA (CONT'D)

Doug?

DOUG

Yes?

KARA

I just...well, I was impressed today. I never thought you had it in you.

Doug walks back over, STANDING NAKED in front of her, not giving a fuck.

DOUG

You'd be surprised what I'm capable of.

She nods, intrigued by the machismo, then starts to giggle, and we can tell from her sight line that she's worried about getting stabbed.

DOUG (CONT'D)

What is it? What's so funny?

Suddenly shy and giddy, she nods at his midsection.

KARA

I just haven't seen your - you know - in a while. Not in the daylight, or on a weekend, anyway.

As MASTODON blares from Ethan's next door room, a frisky Doug PUSHES HER DOWN onto the bed...

KARA (CONT'D)

Ooh, Mr. Tough Guy now that he wins a race.

She mounts him, seizing control. But this time, Doug's not having it and wrestles with her for position...

KARA (CONT'D)
What are you doing...?

A cornucopia of hormones and performance enhancing drugs still coursing through his body, he's wild eyed.

DOUG
Sometimes you gotta know when to shut up and just give it to a girl.

He then flips her over, mounting up from behind.

DOUG (CONT'D)
It's called being a man.

On his first thrust Kara is instantly in euphoria. We close up on her face to see that she is blown away by her husband's "newfound" prowess.

KARA
Doug! Ohshitohshitohshit!!

She moans loudly as Doug bangs away IN TIME with the HEAVY BEAT of the music with a look of ecstacy and twisted pleasure. Not dissimilar to the look he had when he trashed the pharmacy. He's really going at it now.

KARA (CONT'D)
OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD! OH MY--

Kara COMES LIKE A TON OF BRICKS. Staccato panting, trying to catch her breath, she is delirious. Doug grins...

KARA (CONT'D)
Doug. That was...that was--

DOUG
--I know. (then) I'm gonna make some pizza bagels, let me know if you want some.

And Doug walks out, leaving an orgasmic Kara tangled in the sheets.

INT. BISHOP'S - MORNING

EXTREME CLOSE UP on A LEFTOVER CIVIC AWARD from the Woodbury Council to Walter that's still on a shelf in the back area. A beat, and then Doug YANKS IT OFF AND THROWS IT IN THE TRASH, replacing it with the GLEAMING TROPHY from the race and taking a few steps back to gaze with pride.

AGENT CARP (O.S.)
That's some trophy.

Doug turns to find AGENT CARP admiring the trophy.

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)
I won one like that back at a high
school track meet. Steeplechase.

DOUG
Difficult event.

AGENT CARP
Yeah. But there's something about
people chasing you that brings out
your best, ya know? Too bad we
can't have people chase us for the
rest of our lives, right!?

Carp laughs at his own quip...Doug feigning along with
him, if he only knew. An awkward beat.

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)
Looks like you had yourself a bit
of a break-in the other day.

A GLAZER is putting the finishing touches on the NEW
WINDOW.

DOUG
Yeah. Crazy. Busted the sign, the
window there. They really tore the
place up.

AGENT CARP
Terrible. (then) Anyhoo, it's the
damnedest thing. I ran the data
from the inventory against our
prescription database again today,
and it didn't add up. I mean, not
at all.

DOUG
Could be because of those vandals.
Maybe they snagged some of the
missing medicat--

AGENT CARP
--No. No. Not according to...

Carp flips through his pad, before landing on a page...

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)
...the police report here. Says
that nothing had been stolen from
the premises. Not a thing.

DOUG
Shit. That's strange.

AGENT CARP
Didn't realize you were a
compounding pharmacy, Doug.

Carp nods at THE MORTAR AND PESTLE coated in a fine powder, sitting smack in Doug's work area...

DOUG
Oh, this? I'm...we're not, really. But I have this one customer, an older gentleman. He's all screwed up. Parkinson's. Needs a delicate and precise balance of Rotigotine, Levodopa, and Pramipexole. And he has trouble swallowing so I have to make up a paste for transdermal application.

AGENT CARP
And which customer is this...?

DOUG
(poker face) You know I can't tell you that, Agent Carp.

AGENT CARP
Right. Of course. I'm sorry, it's just that I hadn't noticed it before, that's all. Anyway, like I was saying, I'm sure this is all just a glitch, but if you'll just show me your ledgers for the last 12 months I can get this over with as quickly as possible.

DOUG
Sure thing. The only problem is, I've got them at my home office.

CARP
Mr. Varney, I'm sure you know that Federal Code 101.b-12 of the Narcotics Distribution Act requires that all ledgers be kept at the licensed facility.

DOUG
And 99.9% of the time they are. It's just...it's just that after your last visit I was so concerned with getting things right that I took my ledgers home to double check against my own records, which I keep on my personal computer. At home.

Doug slaps the side of his head, as if to say 'duh.' Carp silently makes notes in his pad. Growing more concerned, Doug fills the void...

DOUG (CONT'D)

I mean, look, I spilled a bottle of Amoxicillin the other day. I got most of 'em, but might've missed a few, may have even stepped on one. I didn't say anything because, well, like you said, everyone does that now and then.

AGENT CARP

Everyone but Walter Bishop.

DOUG

I've had my hands full and, I mean, just look at my staff.

He nods at Janet and Noah, who surreptitiously drops out of view when he sees Doug pointing at him.

DOUG (CONT'D)

OK, tell ya what. If you want to hang out for a bit, I can run home and get them right now.

Agent Carp looks him in the eyes. Doug doesn't flinch. The tension thickens, until Carp POPS it by clicking his pen closed.

CARP

That won't be necessary, Doug. I'll be back up this way in a couple days. Howabout you just have them here for me then?

They shake hands. Agent Carp heads for the exit...

DOUG

You got it. And, hey, thanks again Agent Carp, for letting me off the hook!

AGENT CARP

This investigation is still pending, Mr. Varney. I haven't let anybody off the hook yet.

Doug's smile falls as he meets Agent Carp's all-business stare. The bell jingles, Carp is gone, and Doug takes an EXCEEDINGLY DEEP BREATH.

PANNING DOWN, we see a series of large LEDGERS for EVERY MONTH OF 2010 lined up neatly on the SHELF right next to Doug's legs.

OFF THE RING OF A DOORBELL...

INT. ELIZABETH'S HOUSE - EVENING

The HUGE OAK DOORS are swung open to REVEAL: Doug, still in his lab coat and work clothing, looking just this side of crazy..

DOUG

Okay. I'm in.

And he pushes her inside, closing the door behind them. He shoves her up against the wall, kissing her forcibly and caressing her breasts. She pushes him away.

ELIZABETH

I'm sorry? In for what...?

DOUG

For, you know, the plan
(pantomimes slicing his neck).
Let's do it. Let's start over.

And again he begins to kiss her. She kisses back for a beat before breaking off again.

ELIZABETH

Plan? Doug, we were just joking
around--

DOUG

--(hurried, antsy) I know. I know we were. But I've been thinking. A lot. I've been thinking a lot about everything. I mean, shit, my wife fucking hates me, and this Carp guy is all over me - I won't do well in jail - I just...

Elizabeth leads him to the leather couch, pouring him a glass of wine and pushing a PILL into his mouth...

ELIZABETH

Here. This will take the edge off.

He swallows.

DOUG

Thank you. (then) What I'm saying is...you're right. You're always right. And I'm the pharmacist. And, well, he's the guy with the bad heart...

Doug nods to the PORTRAIT WITH HER HUSBAND over the fireplace...

ELIZABETH

Okay. Let's do it. Tomorrow.

DOUG

Jesus. So soon...?

ELIZABETH

I don't want to waste anymore time
being unhappy.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY - DAY

Top down on the Mercedes, Scarf over her hair, sunglasses on, Elizabeth cruises along. Expressionless look on her face...

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

Tomorrow, will work best. I sometimes head out to our Hamptons house first thing Friday morning to beat the weekend rush. So, it won't be a surprise that I'm gone...

INT. BISHOP'S - EVENING

Just another day at work. Janet helps an old lady with cosmetics, as Doug counts out a set of pills, preparing to funnel them into a bottle.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

As we've discussed, Jack takes medication for his heart. ACE inhibitors, beta blockers, ARBs.

We look down at the pills. UP CLOSE, they read: "Angiotensin II Receptor Blocker (ARB) 'Teveten' 400mg."

DOUG (V.O.)

Yes, that's a powerful mix. Actually, I usually recommend Diavan, but that's--

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

--Not really important right now, is it? What's important is the dosage. Because of the various drugs, Jack gets a 300 mg dose of Teveten. But if he were to get, say, 400 mgs...

Doug places pill bottles in an envelope, then places the envelope in the BIN FOR DELIVERY where Noah picks it up.

ELIZABETH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 That slight bump, in combination
 with his usual after-dinner trough
 of scotch...

INT. ELIZABETH' HOUSE - NIGHT

We see her husband, from behind only, as he comes in the back door, dropping off some paperwork and flipping through the mail.

On the counter is his pill dispenser with a note: *"Left early to beat traffic. See you tomorrow! All my love, E."* He pours himself a large glass of Scotch, sits down in a wing chair and pops the pills, snapping his head back to swallow them.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)
 Well, then, when they call me in
 the Hamptons the next day, it's
*"Oh my God, officer, I'll be there
 as soon as I can."*

Her husband slowly slides off the chair, collapsing in a heap, Scotch spilling everywhere.

ELIZABETH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I'm his sole beneficiary. So, I
 sign some papers, collect it all,
 and tell them wire the funds to
 wherever we end up...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Liz and Doug, dressed glamorously, ride along in a convertible laughing with not a care in the world...

BACK TO REALITY

INT. ELIZABETH'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Doug swirls his Chardonnay around the glass.

DOUG
 That's it? Just like that, huh?

ELIZABETH
 Just like that. You get to tell
 that Bitch on Wheels where to
 stick it, and then we spend the
 rest of our lives buying whatever
 looks good and giving each other
 mind-blowing orgasms. God, this is
 exciting.

Doug smiles and leans in to kiss her, but she stops him.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Wait, this is important; no calls, no contact whatsoever. Nothing that can tie us together or leave a trail. So, this will be the last time we talk for a while.

DOUG

How...how long? I thought--

ELIZABETH

--C'mon, Doug. Do I have to spell everything out for you? We have to be careful. At least until this all blows over, if not longer.

He looks forlorn, maybe even doubting things...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

C'mon, baby. This is about us and we're so close.

DOUG

I know, I know.

ELIZABETH

Well, just so you don't forget.

She kisses him real quick then slinks out of frame...a ZIP is heard, and a smile spreads on Doug's face.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BISHOP'S RX - DAY

Doug works away at his station, filling orders, when JANET steps into frame holding prescriptions.

JANET

Fax orders just came in...

Taking a deep breath, Doug looks at them, knowing full well what awaits. He leafs through until he spots it: "Roberts, Jack"...then goes to work.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

Doug filled the order like he always did...but with one slight change. When Jack Roberts took his medication tonight, he would not wake up the next morning.

We watch as Doug manipulates things...

DAME JUDI DENCH (CONT'D)

Teveten was a very potent medicine to begin with, coming with detailed specific instructions to monitor dosage. There was a long history of people misreading this information, causing their heart to race like a jackrabbit, and ending up in the emergency room. Making a slight change to its potency would render these pills deadly and close to undetectable in any toxicology report.

Doug finishes counting out the pills, swipes them into the plastic orange bottle, then puts the label on and seals it shut.

SUPER CLOSE UP ON the prescription bag: "ROBERTS, JACK" being carried like a baby...

Doug, looking a little pale, sets the bag in the bin, flipping through to make sure he places it in proper alphabetical order.

DOUG

Noah?

NOAH (O.S.)

Yeah, boss?

Noah spins around, wearing ELVIS STYLE SUNGLASSES that he's pulled off the SALE RACK. He adopts an Elvis pose, arms extended, and accidentally KNOCKS OVER THE DELIVERY BIN, sending prescription bags scattering everywhere.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Shit, I'm sorry.

DOUG

Honestly! What the hell's the matter with you?

Doug kneels down hastily jamming the spilled bags of prescriptions into their section best he can, while Noah helps in vain...trying his best not to laugh.

DOUG (CONT'D)

For Christ's--the fuck are you on?

NOAH

I'm fine. I'm fine. Big night last night, just a little hungover.

DOUG

Are you okay to drive?

NOAH

I drove here, didn't I.

DOUG

Not the answer I was looking for,
but I'll take it. Now, listen
carefully...

He plucks the sunglasses off Noah's head and, kneeling face-to-face with him on the floor, looks into his bloodshot, DILATED SAUCER-LIKE EYES.

DOUG (CONT'D)

It's imperative that all these deliveries make it out today. ALL OF THEM. People have been complaining and we need to show our customers we can still be counted on...like that big clock in the square. To always be right. Accurate. Trustworthy.

NOAH

But...that clock's broken, Doug.

DOUG

(sigh) Just make the deliveries.

NOAH

You can count on me, Doug.

DOUG

No, I can't. Which is why we're having this conversation. Just get these done, okay.

Noah picks up the bin and gives Doug a SALUTE before spinning around and walking outside.

Doug moves to the window, watching his delivery boy placing Doug's new life in the passenger seat of his BEAT UP Kia Sportage and driving off.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Janet!

JANET (O.S.)

Let me guess? We're closing.

INT. LUM CHIN'S CHINESE RESTAURANT - BAR - EVENING

Dimly lit BAR AREA of the popular restaurant, populated by "regulars," being tended to by a THIN CHINESE BARTENDER (HU).

Judging by the small army of empty tumblers in front of Doug, he's had a few. Each time someone enters the restaurant, Doug points and mutters...

DOUG

That's Jerry Heller. He's been on Prozac for about a year now...but his wife's on Ritalin. You think they'd balance each other out.

Another guy walks in...we recognize him as ARNOLD MORELLO, out with HIS WIFE.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Oh. And, lookie-loo, it's Mailman Morello. (calling out) Hey, Arnie! You ever get back to Atlantic City?! Yes?! No?!

Mailman's wife looks at him confused, he quickly brushes it off as they walk inside...

DOUG (CONT'D)

They don't even realize, Hu. I'm the man behind the curtain. The Wizard. I pull the strings.

HU

Yes, sir.

ANOTHER PERSON walks inside. An OLDER GUY with gray hair, but this time heads for the bar...next to Doug.

GRAY HAIR MAN

Anyone sitting here?

DOUG

Be my guest.

HU

Evening, sir. Something from the bar?

GRAY HAIR MAN

Black label, neat. Thanks.

DOUG

And, another Grey Goose martini on the rocks for me. Extra olives.

GRAY HAIR MAN

Amazing. That's the same exact drink my wife orders.

DOUG

It is?

GRAY HAIR MAN

Yeah. Then again, martini's are pretty popular, I guess...

DOUG

Do I know you?

GRAY HAIR MAN

Jack Roberts, moved in a few months back. Over on Donneybrook.

HOLY SHIT...they shake hands. Doug immediately cools and tenses towards this man that he's been taught to despise.

DOUG

Right, right. Doug Varney, good to meet you. It's the big place on the cul-de-sac, right?

JACK

Yeah. Too big, if you ask me. You live in town, Doug?

DOUG

Over 10 years now. I actually own the pharmacy on the square.

JACK

Oh, then you definitely know my wife.

DOUG

Why would you say that?

JACK

The woman takes enough pills to keep Pfizer in business.

DOUG

(I don't know her) We get a lot of customers, so...

Hu drops off their drinks and Jack takes a LONG SLUG, almost finishing his in one shot. We also notice that Doug and Jack's shirts are of a similar cut and style.

JACK

You married, Doug?

DOUG

Why? You trying to pick me up?

Jack laughs. Doug smiles, then brandishes his WEDDING RING, clinking it against his tumbler...

JACK

It's hard goddamn work being married.

DOUG

They don't tell you that part when
you're registering at Crate &
Barrel.

JACK

No, they certainly don't. This is
my third, and I still have no clue
what I'm doing.

DOUG

It's not you, pal. It's them.

JACK

You said it, Doug. I've always
been the type of that keeps a
steady stream of gifts rolling in,
to avoid conflict. I mean, I'm
lucky I make a nice living, no
reason not to spread it around.
Women are tough, but there's
nothing like seeing their face
when you come home with flowers or
something sparkling, ya know.

Doug stares at Jack, trying to provoke him. It's then
that JACK'S FOOD ORDER ARRIVES in a brown bag.

JACK (CONT'D)

(re: the food) Wifey's away, so
I'm cooking.

DOUG

I know...*what that's like.*

Jack's definitely a little confused by Doug. He lays down
the checks, but Jack grabs BOTH HIS AND DOUG'S.

DOUG (CONT'D)

(aside) Mr. and Mrs. Roberts
always pick up the tab, huh?

JACK

What's that?

DOUG

Oh...you shouldn't--

JACK

--My treat. Least I can do for a
new neighbor, right? Besides,
heard what those vandals did to
your store. Disgusting.

Jack peels off a few twenty's from his WAD OF MONEY and
lays them on the bar.

JACK (CONT'D)
See you around, Doug.

And out walks the "Monster" Liz has poisoned Doug's ear about now for weeks...and he's about as likeable as they get. Doug SLAMS the rest of his drink.

DOUG
Barkeep!

The bartender comes back over, not looking so friendly.

HU
Mistah Dougras, you cut off.

DOUG
No more drinky. I need some paper.
And a pen.

The bartender shrugs, looks around, and hands Doug a piece of OFFICIAL LUM CHIN'S STATIONERY.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Thank you, Hu.

As he begins to write...

DOUG (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Dear Kara, by the time you read
this letter I'll be gone.*

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Doug, tipsy from his drinks at Lum Chin's, staggers into the house, dropping his keys loudly on the floor.

DOUG
SHHHH!

Shushing himself, he giggles and bends over to pick them up, nearly falling over.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Wasted and hungry, he climbs up and grabs the OREOS. Returning to the table to CRUSH THEM UP and make the same gross/delicious meal Ethan enjoys for breakfast.

DOUG (V.O.)
*I know I haven't been what your
father thought you deserved. But
you know what...I don't fucking
care.*

He slurps from the bowl...

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

Believe it or not, there was a time I did care about what you thought...and I cared about you. But that all ended when the sweet, funny, adventurous girl I met next door to me in Penland Hall junior year, transformed into a self-centered cunt lurching towards menopause. Don't believe me, just ask the few friends you have left.

Doug quietly slips into his closet, putting a few things in a bag.

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

I know this will be hard on Ethan, and that breaks my heart. But, in the long run, this will be better for him too. Better to be raised by two happy parents apart than miserable ones together. But, if he starts in with the shitting stuff again, let me know.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - ETHAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doug looks down at his sleeping son.

DOUG (V.O.)

I've tried, Kara. I've tried hard. But you can't help someone unless they're ready to help themselves first. So, with this letter, I leave you to wallow in your own miserable little existence. Where you'll most likely die alone, if you don't get clipped in a bike accident first.

He kisses Ethan, props up one of his NINJA FIGURINES that has fallen, and walks out of his room.

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

I wish I could've been a stronger man. But fuck, do I wish you had been a better woman. Doug.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Doug turns on the shower and rifles through his pockets pulling out a bottle with NO LABELS on it, just a smiley face written on the cap in Sharpie. Shaking a couple pills out, he swallows them dry, snapping his head back to get them down.

He turns on the shower radio on the counter, whirring through stations until he lands on "She's Always A Woman" by Billy Joel.

DOUG (PRE-LAP)
 (singing) *"But she'll bring out
 the best and the worst you can be,
 blame it all on yourself cause
 she's always a woman to me."*

Again, like he likes to do, he SITS DOWN IN THE TUB and lets the shower head blast him with hot water, the drugs taking effect. He looks complacent, happy, and relaxed as he SINGS ALONG WITH THE EASY LISTENING HIT.

So fucked up on meds and relaxed that his eyelids grow heavy, he dozes off. The shower continuing to pelt him with water, he does not even wake when a WASH CLOTH slides off the rim of the tub and CLOGS THE DRAIN.

It isn't long before the water in the tub begins to fill up, reaching Doug's chest...Yet he does not wake. The water continues to rise, rise, rise, until DOUG'S FACE is completely submerged...HE IS GOING TO DROWN.

As we pan overhead, we look down into the tub and see, looking up at us, the WIDE-EYED, BLOATED CORPSE OF JACK ROBERTS.

DOUG (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
 Ahhh!

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Wrapped in a blanket, face covered in Oreo crumbs, Doug sits up THE COUCH...where he dozed off IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR. It was all a BAD DREAM.

He takes big gulps of air in disbelief. ON THE TV is a Discovery Channel Program about Hummingbirds. He considers it a second before flipping the TV off and taking a glance at the CLOCK it reads: 5:17 AM.

DOUG
 What the fuck am I doing?

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - EARLY MORNING

Dressed now, ready for work, Doug flies in only to grab a soda out of the fridge...

ETHAN (O.S.)
 Dad?

DOUG

(startled) Hey. Just heading in to work. Early bird and all that.

ETHAN

Store doesn't open for another hour.

DOUG

Oh. Yeah. Well we've got a big shipment of Summer's Eve coming in and--

ETHAN

--But you're still coming to school today, right?

DOUG

(Clearly forgot) Of course. Right. Wouldn't miss it for the world.

As Doug leaves WE RACK FOCUS ON THE FRIDGE, where we see the SMILING BUDDHA of the Lum Chin's stationery stuck on the refrigerator with a magnet.

EXT. DOUG'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Racing outside, fumbling with his keys, Doug stops short as he sees that HIS CAR IS PULLED UP INTO THE YARD where he left it a few hours earlier, drunk.

He gets in, revs it, and CHEWS UP MORE OF THE YARD...

INT. DOUG'S PRIUS - MOMENTS LATER

Doug "floors" his Prius, it lets out a whispering buzz as he tears through the streets of Woodbury. Looks like it RAINED LAST NIGHT. He dials his cell phone...after a few rings we hear, *"You've reached the voicemail for Elizabeth Roberts. Please leave a message."*

DOUG

Hey, it's me. Abort. Abort the mission. We shouldn't do this. We can't...I can't. Call me back.

EXT. ELIZABETH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Winding up the curvy driveway, Doug screeches to a halt right out front, hops from the car and barrels up the steps to the front door. RINGING the bell...then again a few seconds later....then just starts knocking.

The only response is the faint, muffled barking of the GERMAN SHEPHERDS.

DOUG
Shit.

Breaking into a light jog, Doug heads AROUND BACK...

Craning his neck, looking in the windows, he finally makes it to the HUGE FRENCH DOORS that let into the living room. Placing his face up against the glass with his hands to block the glare he sees The GIANT PORTRAIT of Liz & Jack...open bottle of scotch...JACK'S ARM dangling off the side of the couch, being pulled down by the weight of his giant ROLEX. Motionless.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Oh, fuck....fuck!

Doug's lip quivers, he BANGS ON THE GLASS trying to stir Jack, but he's not moving. Doug starts crying. Through his tears, he mumbles...

DOUG (CONT'D)
I killed him. I fucking killed him.

But is soon interrupted by a LOW GROWL. TWO low growls actually...coming from The German Shepherds, doggie door swinging behind them in the background. They look furious with Doug...

DOUG (CONT'D)
Easy, fellas. Easy...

BARK...BARK, BARK, BARK...alternating, their vicious, snapping barks make us jump.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Easy...easy...easy...

After a beat...DOUG RUNS, sprinting for all he's worth through the rain as the dogs give chase.

EXT. DOUG'S PRIUS - MOMENTS LATER

WE HOLD ON a static shot of the car as we hear motion off screen...then the BEEP BEEP of the car unlocking...then Doug RACES into view, opens the door, hops into the car, and SLAMS the door.

He has just a millisecond to breathe heavily before the two huge dogs SLAM INTO HIS DOOR, barking loudly, their drooling snouts and slimy paws smearing up the window...

INT. DOUG'S PRIUS - CONTINUOUS

Gasping for breath, Doug floors the car through Elizabeth's high end neighborhood leaving the dogs behind. He tries to hold onto his cell phone with one hand while driving. We hear a ringing...ringing. Then a message, again. "You've reached Elizabeth Roberts. Please leave a message."

DOUG

(whispering for no reason) Hey.
It's me. Where are you?! Call me
when you get this. Seriously.
I...I killed him. I really killed
him--SHIT!

The phone clatters to the floorboard as a FAMILY OF DUCKS crosses in front of the Prius. Doug takes evasive action to avoid them, and loses control as the car begins to hydroplane.

He over-corrects and we see the car begin to spin, avoiding the scattering deer, and BOOM. The horrible sound of crunching metal as Doug crashes into a STURDY TELEPHONE POLE. EVERYTHING GOES BLACK...

INT. PRIUS - MOMENTS LATER

Doug opens his eyes to see the ENTIRE FRONT END crumpled, SMOKE pouring from the hood. The engine refuses to turn over, and Doug ANGRILY POUNDS ON THE STEERING WHEEL. Finally, he looks in the rearview mirror...we RACK FOCUS allowing us to see the HIGH PERFORMANCE BIKE still clipped to the back, the RED CLIP-ON LIGHT BLINKING.

EXT. WOODBURY STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

NOW ON BIKE, lab coat flapping in the wind, Doug rides like a bat out of hell...and we begin to hear kids' voices reciting the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, catching us up to **THE MOMENT WE MET HIM IN THE OPENING FRAMES...**

As he gets closer to the school, carpool minivans start to WHIZZ PAST HIM. Checking his watch, he starts to pedal even harder but LOSES HIS FOOTING. His SMOOTH BOTTOM LOAFERS slip off the "clip-in" pedals causing the bike to wobble violently which sends Doug tumbling to the ground and eating shit. Hard.

Surveying the damage, his pants are ripped and his knee is badly skinned. He looks up to find that he's right outside Bishop's, the damaged sign still hanging overhead.

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

Doug limps inside, pops whatever pills he had on him, and heads down an aisle and arriving at the Bacteen. He grabs a package and tears it open, readies himself, and SPRAYS THE BACTEEN on his knee.

DOUG

AAAHH! Motherfuck that stings.

He throws the bottle aside and heads back for the door, dialing his phone. A ring, and then a different message.

PHONE MESSAGE (V.O.)

We're sorry, this phone number has been disconnected. If you think you've reached this number in error, hang up and dial again.

We can almost hear Doug's stomach turn as he starts to feel very, very nervous. He clicks off the phone just as the Dr. Scholl's display falls over, AGAIN, causing him to trip and fall, RE-INJURING his freshly bandaged knee. Doug considers the display, then proceeds to JUMP UP AND DOWN ON IT. Kicking, shredding, tearing it to pieces.

EXT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

Doug emerges from the BACK DOOR and mounts his bike, gingerly pedaling off down the street. Behind him, amongst all the parked cars, we barely notice Noah's Kia Sportage, CLUMSILY PARKED UP ON THE CURB, door ajar.

EXT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Doug skids to a stop at the bike rack, tossing his Trek to the ground next to all the Kids' bikes...

MISS D'FRANCESCO (PRE-LAP)

Come on, people. Let's show Mr. Varney a little respect.

INT. WOODBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Doug stands at the front of the room, sweaty and disheveled. We've caught up to our opening scene.

The class quiets down, when we hear...

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

You're bleeding.

Looking down, we see Doug is in fact bleeding. A steady trickle of blood oozes from his MAKESHIFT BANDAGE and stains his torn pant leg. He moves to touch it when...BOOM!

The CLASSROOM DOOR is flung open, startling Doug and the kids. An angry OFFICER WILLITS storms into the room.

OFFICER WILLITS
Douglas Varney, you're under arrest.

DOUG
Wait, hold on a second...

He grimaces as the Officer grabs his arm and twists it behind his back, controlling him.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Jesus--

OFFICER WILLITS
--Hands on your head, now!

Unnerved as he's violently shoved onto the desk knocking over a cup of coffee, Doug's head is pinned down by a nightstick...

DOUG
Hey! Take it easy, man--

OFFICER WILLITS
--You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.

Officer Willits KICKS HIS FEET OUT FROM UNDER HIM, dropping him to the floor, slapping on cuffs with lightning quick efficiency. The kids are awestruck.

OFFICER WILLITS (CONT'D)
Do you understand these rights as I've just read them to you?

Now hog-tied, Doug can only lay there and submit, face inches from a piece of FLATTENED OLD GUM, as Officer Willits finishes reading him his Miranda Rights. All sounds BLEED OUT SILENT, Doug's eyes close and he looks peaceful, as though accepting his fate behind bars.

A beat, and then...APPLAUSE. He opens his eyes to find the cop SMILING and the teacher clapping.

MISS D'FRANCESCO
Let's everyone give a big hand for Kristopher's father, Officer Willits!

OFFICER WILLITS
(to Doug) Great stuff, man.

THE KIDS GO CRAZY, clapping. He may lack a college education, but Officer Willits is very popular with the pre-pubescent set. Especially standing next to Doug, who's quite a sight to see with his wet hair sticking up everywhere and bloody knee.

OFFICER WILLITS (CONT'D)
Alright, alright. But being a police officer is more than just kicking ass, car chases, and guns...

He quickly brandishes his .9mm GLOCK drawing "oohs" from the kids, before holstering it again.

OFFICER WILLITS (CONT'D)
It's protecting and serving the community. It's making sure that Woodbury remains a safe community for all of you to work and play--

He's interrupted as his WALKIE-TALKIE SQUAWKS to life. He suddenly gets very serious.

OFFICER WILLITS (CONT'D)
Excuse me for a second.

Officer Willits STEPS OUTSIDE the room for a second, talking on his radio. After a beat, Willits LOOKS UP AT DOUG, and meets his gaze with his asshole cop eyes. We hear the radio beep off, and Willits re-enters, looking serious.

OFFICER WILLITS (CONT'D)
I'm going to need you to come with me, Doug.

EXT. BISHOP'S RX - DAY - LATER

There are an additional three Police Cruisers parked out front, lights flashing, the officers sealing off the area with yellow crime scene tape. It's quite a scene, which would explain the crowd...or audience, depending on how you look at it.

OFFICER WILLITS (O.S.)
Check it out, Varney. You're famous.

Officer Willits parks his cruiser, lets Doug out of the back, and escorts him through the melee - he can feel every set of eyes on him.

INT. BISHOP'S RX - CONTINUOUS

Doug steps inside to find even more law enforcement picking through the store, bagging evidence, etc...

DOUG
Janet?

She's seated in the corner, GENTLY CRYING by herself...

AGENT CARP (O.S.)
Mr. Varney.

DOUG
Yes.

AGENT CARP
*For Christ's--can we get these
cuffs off him, please?*

Willits obliges...

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)
Little unnecessary, if you ask me.

DOUG
Really?

AGENT CARP
None of this should come as a surprise to you, given the inconsistent state of affairs around here.

DOUG
I'm aware.

AGENT CARP
With a paper trail as thick as this one, it was only a matter of time, Mr. Varney. It's usually how these things work out.

DOUG
I'm so sorry.

AGENT CARP
Don't apologize. It's over now.

It's then that the CORONERS make their way in pushing a gurney, deflated BODY BAG soon to be filled, on top.

DOUG
What are they doing here?

AGENT CARP
Mr. Varney...to remove the body.

DOUG

How the fuck did he get here from
his house!?!?

AGENT CARP

Well, he probably panicked. And,
being as how there weren't any
doctor's offices nearby, he did
the next best thing and came here.
So, this is where he expired.

Doug's head is spinning. He looks like he might throw up,
or cry, or both...

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)

Are you okay, Mr. Varney?

Doug is cracking up...it's then he pushes his way past
Carp and into the storage area after the Corners...

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)

Hold on, wait!

INT. BISHOP'S RX - STORAGE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Doug bursts in to find a Crime Scene Unit tagging and
dusting the area. He pushes through the throng before
they can stop him, until he sees it...

DOUG

(beat) What the fuck?

Lying on the floor, contorted and pale as a sheet, with
dried vomit on his face and chest...**IS NOAH**. Dead as a
doornail. Doug's world just got even more turned around.

AGENT CARP

He was no angel, a few
misdemeanors here and there, even
brought up on a B&E charge that
didn't stick, but he got in over
his head with this one.

DOUG

With...with what?

AGENT CARP

Pilfering. Pill skimming. One
here, two there, the kind of thing
that adds up in a hurry. Too quick
sometimes. There's a real cottage
industry for this stuff out here
in the 'burbs. Guess he got high
on his own supply. (then) Noah
Rayburn pulled a fast one on you,
Mr. Varney. But you shouldn't feel
bad.

This was the third pharmacy he'd worked at in the last two years.

Noah was a shithead, but he looks very scared and innocent lying there. He's soon ZIPPED UP in the BODY BAG and rolled away...Doug is numb.

DOUG

But...but he was a moron.

AGENT CARP

On the contrary, junkies like him are often remarkably clever. He was probably ripping them off, too. Anyway, we'll have this area cleared out shortly.

DOUG

So, that's it then?

AGENT CARP

As far as the DEA is concerned, between the stiff, the pill cache in his apartment and a toxicology report that will no doubt read like the periodic table - it'll be hard to isolate which of these meds killed him - this case is closed. Just some minor paper work for you to sign and we're done here.

Doug is in shock and Carp knows it, which is why he breaks character for a minute and puts his hand on Doug's shoulder.

AGENT CARP (CONT'D)

Listen, Doug, I know it's tough. But this kid was a royal fuck-up and something like this was bound to happen sooner or later. There's nothing you could've done to stop it.

Officer Willits comes by and gives Doug a friendly chuck on the shoulder.

OFFICER WILLITS

Heh, from the looks of things you oughta prescribe yourself a little something to take the edge off.

Carp rolls his eyes behind Willits's back.

AGENT CARP

Local cops. (then) But he's probably right. Go ahead.

It'll be our little secret. You take care, Doug.

And he heads for the door, whistling. Doug takes a deep breath.

DOUG (O.S.)
Agent Carp, wait!

Agent Carp and Officer Willets both turn back towards Doug. In the background, we hear the JINGLE announcing an entering customer.

DOUG (CONT'D)
I...uh. I need to tell you something. I need to conf--

MAN (O.S.)
--Pardon me, but where can I find the advil?

Doug turns to find JACK ROBERTS, live and in the flesh, staring at him. Hair mussed, worse for wear, but alive.

JACK
Hey! Drinking buddy!

DOUG
You're not supposed to be here.

JACK
I know, I know. Called in sick. First time since...well, it's been a while since I've taken a personal day. After the drinks we had at the bar I went home and kept the party going by myself. 3 egg rolls, some lo mein, and a bottle of Blue Label later I passed out cold right there on the couch. Probably why it feels like my head is in a vice right now.

Jack laughs, but stops, his head aching badly. Doug reaches over to a shelf and plucks off a box of Advil, handing it to him...still in disbelief.

JACK (CONT'D)
Thanks. (then) Oh, I should probably also pick up my prescription while I'm here. Delivery guy never made it up to the house last night.

DOUG
Yeah. We had an incident here, a lot of orders got screwed up.

I'll get it filled and have
someone run it over to you later.

JACK
How much do I owe you?

DOUG
Call it even...for the drinks.

JACK
Thanks.

Jack shakes his hand then turns to leave, when...

DOUG (O.S.)
Everything else okay?

JACK
I'm sorry?

DOUG
You know, with your wife. What you
were telling me at the bar...

JACK
Hard to tell, she left me.

DOUG
And...she's not coming back?

JACK
We'll see. We've played this game
before; I get drunk and say some
things, she cries and says even
worse things, then leaves. Then I
start talking fast and can usually
catch her, but this time I wasn't
fast enough. Even shut off her
cell phone, so maybe she's for
real this time. Who knows, maybe
it's for the best.

DOUG
Yeah. Maybe.

JACK
Anyhow, we can get into it over a
couple of drinks at Lum Chin's
sometime.

DOUG
Sure thing.

Jack leaves. Doug breathes a sigh of relief, when...

AGENT CARP (O.S.)
Doug, you wanted to tell us
something?

DOUG

I was saying...oh, yeah. Thanks. I wanted to say thanks for all your help.

AGENT CARP

We all do our part to keep the world turning, Doug. You take care now.

As they exit, Doug walks back into the storage room. Sits down in a folding chair and stares at the floor where Noah's body lay.

For the first time, we notice how haggard Doug looks. A couple weeks of popping pills, an affair, and plotting to kill someone will sure take it out of you.

Instinctively, he pulls out a PILL BOTTLE and is about to open it, but doesn't. He throws it in the trash.

TIME LAPSE PHOTOGRAPHY shows the crowd of Police Officials and city workers thinning out, until it's JUST DOUG LEFT ALONE. Exhausted, he shuts his eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE BUZZING/RINGING OF A CELLPHONE FADES US BACK INTO...

INT. BISHOP'S PHARMACY - STORE ROOM - DAWN

DOUG IS STILL ASLEEP, hair now mussed and a line of drool dripping from the corner of his mouth. Everyone is gone, as he's been sleeping FOR HOURS.

Taking a moment to collect his bearings, he looks down at his watch. It's almost 6 am.

DOUG

The fuck?

Then looks at the phone, expecting it to be Kara, but it says UNKNOWN CALLER.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Hello?

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

Hey, baby.

DOUG

Elizabeth? Where the fuck...you haven't answered calls--

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

--That was the plan, darling. We said no calls, remember?

EXT. QUAINT SMALL TOWN SHOPPING AREA - CONTINUOUS

CLOSEUP on Elizabeth, attractive as ever in a designer suit and \$500 sunglasses. She stands inside an old-timey PHONE BOOTH with a finger in her other ear.

ELIZABETH

You have no idea what kind of a bitch it is to find a pay phone these days.

DOUG

You in the Hamptons?

ELIZABETH

Yes. It's freezing. Is it always so cold this time of year?

DOUG

I'm not a meterologist, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

Of course you aren't. You're the pharmacist. The man with the plan.

DOUG

Well, the plan has changed. Jack isn't dead.

ELIZABETH

What? Why? Doug--

DOUG

--There was a screw up with his delivery. Noah...it's complicated.

ELIZABETH

Jesus. It was so simple. How could you fuck this up, Doug?!

DOUG

Me? Me!?! It takes two to make a conspiracy, sweetheart. Maybe I should call the cops and let them sort it all out?

She holds up her iPhone to the receiver and presses a button. We hear snippets of Doug from earlier. "Abort this mission," and "I killed him! I really killed him!"

ELIZABETH

As long as I have Doug Varney's greatest hits on tape, you're not going to do anything.

DOUG

You wouldn't dare!?

ELIZABETH
Really? Go ahead and try me!

There's a beat...

DOUG
Why are we fighting?

ELIZABETH
I don't know. (then) I don't know.

A BEAT, as a shaky Elizabeth lights up a cigarette.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
I'm not cut out for this...

DOUG
Bonnie and Clyde we are not.

Elizabeth chuckles, but it turns into a choked sob. She collects herself.

ELIZABETH
It's not too late, you know. We could still just go away--

DOUG
--I have a kid, Elizabeth. I can't leave.

There's AN EXTENDED BEAT. Disappointment and reality washing over both of them. Elizabeth looks down, gently spinning the MAMMOTH DIAMOND RING her husband gave her.

ELIZABETH
So...so, what do we do?

EXT. DOUG'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

The rain has finally stopped. Everything is glistening with moisture, but the SUN SHINES BRIGHTLY.

Doug walks down his street, still limping slightly from the bike accident.

KID'S VOICE (O.S.)
On your left!

A HIPSTER TEENAGER on a FIXED GEAR touring bike zips past him, tossing a newspaper that lands on Doug's porch.

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Doug shuffles inside and goes to the fridge and drinks some OJ straight from the carton. When he closes the fridge door, we reveal KARA to be standing right there.

She waits a beat...before wrapping Doug up in a HUGE HUG.

KARA
God, I was worried sick.

DOUG
(cold, clipped) I'm fine.

KARA
And then, this...

She HOLDS UP HIS LETTER. Doug just stares.

KARA (CONT'D)
You were right. About all of it.
And I'm sorry. I had no idea
that's how you felt. I've been so
caught up in...in well, the new
studio, Ethan's BS. But listen, I
promise to do my best to make some
changes. But for now, you're home,
and that's what's important.

Doug calmly removes himself from her clutches.

DOUG
I forgot to pack a bag.

KARA
What?

DOUG
Kara, that letter wasn't me asking
you to change. It was me telling
you that I'm leaving.

Kara throws her hands on her hips, reverting back to her callous side in a heartbeat.

KARA
Your theatrics are not lost on me,
Doug. Bravo. But, really...I'm
supposed to stand here and believe
that you're leaving me?

Doug takes another sip of the OJ, then puts it back in the fridge.

DOUG
Yes. Yes I am.

He pats her on the top of the head like she's five, and walks out. We hear THE DOOR OPEN then slam shut, while Kara remains standing there, motionless.

MAN'S VOICES (PRE-LAP)
Bow to your sensei. Bow to your
opponent...

INT. KARATE DOJO - A FEW WEEKS LATER

CLOSE ON AN EMBROIDERED GI that reads "David Chen." Pulling back, we see that he's about to square off against ETHAN. He appears to have lost some weight, indicating that time has passed. More importantly, he looks focused and, from his knowing smile, HAPPY.

Their sensei holds up his hand and indicates for them to "Fight!" After a brief exchange, Ethan executes a perfect combination, dropping David Chen to the mat.

DOUG (O.S.)
Hell yeah!!

Doug explodes out of his seat pumping his fist, startling the other parents...including Kara, who sits several rows below and down from Doug.

EXT. LUM CHINS RESTAURANT - EVENING

His repaired Prius, with Ethan riding shotgun and holding his YELLOW BELT, pulls into the lot...

INT. LUM CHINS RESTAURANT - MAITRE'D STAND - CONTINUOUS

As Doug waits, the cashier sifts through the MANY TO-GO ORDERS. Doug grabs a fortune cookie out of a jar. He cracks it open, and eats it while he reads...

ON FORTUNE: *"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."*

Doug smiles, rolls the fortune into a ball, and flicks it into the trash before hearing a HORRIBLE LAUGH...

AT A TABLE INSIDE - Kara, Walter, and Bree sit together - Bree pantomiming another lame scene for their entertainment - as Doug and Kara make eye contact. He gives her a sarcastic thumbs-up and she turns away.

Doug grabs the bag of to-go food...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Hey, Doug.

AT THE BAR AREA sits Jack. Alone.

JACK
Howabout that drink?

DOUG
Maybe some other time.

EXT. WOODBURY STREETS - MORNING

It's a chilly morning as Doug emerges from a CONVERTED LOFT APARTMENT and crosses the street towards his place of business. He arrives to find Walter standing there, holding out a cup of coffee.

DOUG

No thanks, Walt. I'm off caffeine.

Walter looks awkward holding an extra cup of coffee, just as Doug once did.

WALTER

Big day.

DOUG

Yeah, I guess it is.

Off screen we hear a LOUD WINCHING NOISE and we track over to see Rick Scruggs operating a piece of heavy machinery and lifting a new sign into place. Following the crane up, we see that the sign says...

VARNEY'S Rx, in a handsome Art Deco style.

WALTER

Funny. I don't hate it as much as I thought I would.

DOUG

Funny. I really don't care.

INT. VARNEY'S - CONTINUOUS

A little cowed, Walter follows his son in law into his redone store. It seems brighter, friendlier, less clinical.

He and Walter end up in front of a HUMONGOUS DISPLAY OF FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS, where we see a GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN comparing items.

DOUG

Ma'am, are you finding everything alright?

As the woman turns and we see that she's none other than DAME JUDI DENCH, in the flesh. She looks at Doug, then Walter, then Janet, even Bree off to the side, SIZING THEM UP...

DAME JUDI DENCH

Yes, I am. And, may I just say, this pharmacy has the most impressive collection of douches I've ever seen.

Tucking her purchase under her arm, she heads for the checkout as Walter looks at Doug with a raised eyebrow.

DOUG
High blood pressure. Acid reflux.
(hushed) Chlamydia.

WALTER
Would never have guessed.

DOUG
No one ever does.

He and Walt share a look: the look that comes from knowing these kinds of secrets. Janet pokes around the aisle, dressed in a VARNEY's Rx SHIRT, far more professional than ever before.

JANET
Doug. There's a woman, says she needs your help with something.

INT. VARNEY'S PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

Doug swings around the aisles, when he stops cold...it's ELIZABETH. Dressed down, but still looking very good.

DOUG
I thought you--

ELIZABETH
--Had to come back to sign a few papers. Make it final. And of course, you know, there were a few things I absolutely needed to pick up from the pharmacy.

Doug, sinks a bit...until she HOISTS UP TWO LITTLE FIGURINES that we saw in the case earlier. We notice that her ring is LONG GONE.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Had to complete the set.

The tension between them breaks with a shared laugh.

DOUG
(wanna go out) So. Uh, are you going to be in town long, or--

ELIZABETH
--I leave tonight. Madrid. Then Paris. Then, I'm not really sure. I don't really care, so long as I don't understand the menu.

DOUG

Oh. OK. That sounds great--

Then she leans in and KISSES DOUG before he can finish, echoing their first kiss, but this time with real intent. With meaning. Saying goodbye. Over this...

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

You can't help everybody. But everybody can help someone.

She breaks the kiss off, leaving Doug a little wanting.

ELIZABETH

Take care of yourself, Doug.

She turns and walks out...Doug watches her go.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O)

And sometimes that someone is yourself.

DOUG

You too.

The door jingles one last time, as it shuts behind her.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.)

Douglas Varney wasn't used to winning...

Doug takes a long, satisfied look at his new domain, running the way he wants it to.

DAME JUDI DENCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...but he was beginning to enjoy how it felt.

JANET (O.S.)

Consult!!

SNAP TO BLACK.