

# PRINCESS

(A Love Story)

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WGA REGISTERED: #1218050

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OVER BLACK:

Based on a true story.

THE WORDS DISAPPEAR AND WE...

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

Freehold Township, NJ. Sherwood Drive. Front lawns and backyards. Nice and cozy. Where nuclear and post-modern families lovingly coexist.

The sun burns but does nothing to curb the cold morning air felt by the trees, the grass, the squirrels and the...

THREE KIDS on SKATEBOARDS rolling down Sherwood performing various simple tricks as...

They are passed by an OLD CAR. It HONKS, causing one of the kids in mid-ollie to lose balance and WIPE OUT. The kids react, LAUGHTER mostly.

The OLD CAR rolls on down the street...

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE/SHERWOOD DRIVE - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

Equipped with a 2 car garage, 4 bedrooms, 2 bath, finished basement, friendly well-to-do neighbors and plenty of property that could use the services of a rake. -- Who wouldn't want to live here?

Pumpkins from Halloween sit on the front steps. A reliable, low maintenance CAR is parked in the driveway. Somewhere, an American Flag tries not to freeze.

SUBTITLES FADE UP:

November 11, 2001.

A Sunday.

THE SUBTITLES DISAPPEAR, AS:

The OLD CAR rolls to the curb and the ULTRA-THICK SUNDAY NEWSPAPER gets tossed up the driveway...

A LOUD BOOM! RESEMBLING A GUNSHOT, syncs with the landing of the paper --

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - PINK BEDROOM - MORNING

Pink and pretty. Fit for a Teenage Princess.

VERONICA, 17, in bed, her EYES JUMP OPEN...perhaps from the "Loud Boom." But more likely the BUZZING ALARM CLOCK is responsible. It's 7:12. She silences it. Sits up in bed.

And with that bit of movement a POUNDING HEADACHE presents itself. She fights off the initial pulse and with a few deep breaths Veronica calms herself...waking up is not what she wants to be doing right now, but -- she throws the covers off and slowly rises.

-- Veronica: beautiful without having to try and when she does try her beauty goes unmatched by every other girl in her High School. Intellectually mature for her age, but combining that with her emotional immaturity can and has led to some bad decisions in her adolescent life. --

Her first order of business is to make the bed: perfect, tight. Like a hotel maid.

Number two: She removes a bottle of PERFUME from the vanity -- Hitting every corner of the room with a shot, and the bed with a couple of direct hits. The PERFUME is placed in its exact original position.

Third: A DRAWER is slid open. A substantial sized PHOTO ALBUM is laid to rest. The cover is glittered/bedazzled -- it feels custom made.

Finally: She exits, pulling the door closed.

CUT TO BLACK:

START MAIN TITLES.

FADE UP ON:

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

The SHOWER RUNS in the background as Veronica stares in the mirror. She's a mess; hungover, tired, beaten, a hint of anger...She sees so much in that reflection, but not herself.

She opens the medicine cabinet...

VERONICA (V.O.)

The time has come when one makes that definitive statement after a night of hard drinking --

...Removes a TYLENOL BOTTLE, takes two. Cups some water to her mouth from the faucet and swallows 'em down. Back to studying her reflection:

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 -- I'm never drinking again.

She moves to the shower to check the water temp. It'll do, so Veronica starts to remove her bathrobe, but stops, heads for the door...and SHUTS IT IN THE CAMERA'S FACE.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON a Coffee Maker as the digital time reads 7:29 -- 7:30. It comes to life, starts to brew.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON Veronica showering, eyes closed. Hot water pouring over her...It feels like a baptism.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON the Coffee Maker. Now six cups full of black gold.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica enters, wearing her bathrobe, head wrapped in a towel. She moves to her closet. Scans...bends...fishes --

VERONICA (V.O.)  
 You might be asking, "Young lady, if you're hungover, tired, and have a shitload of studying to do, where is it you are going this early on a Sunday?"

She rises with a particular OUTFIT in hand, tosses it to the bed.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Well, I figured --

She eyes the OUTFIT for a beat.

-- We are now well aware that this is not the pink pretty bedroom she woke up in. This is Veronica's room: resembling the domain of an isolated college grad student, not an isolated High School student. --

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON the Coffee Maker resting quietly. Then; the pot is lifted as...

Veronica prepares her morning coffee.

VERONICA (V.O.)

There's this moment when you wake up and realize what day it is. But it doesn't matter because you know today is going to be just like yesterday --

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - LATER

Veronica reads the Sunday Newspaper and sips her coffee. Her hair is still a bit damp. She's wearing the outfit fished from her closet: her Sunday best.

VERONICA (V.O.)

-- The only thing that changes is your clothes and the weather. Unless you live in Arizona or Alaska. Me? I reside in the grand ol' state of New Jersey where the temperature is about as predictable as the lotto jackpot numbers --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - MORNING

The front door opens and Veronica comes out. It's a cold morning, her breath follows her as she walks to the driveway.

VERONICA (V.O.)

But what do you do about it? Usually, I'd go back to sleep. But not today. Today feels different for some reason. So, I'm going to church.

Veronica gets in her reliable, low maintenance CAR.

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

Haven't been there since my eighth grade graduation --

INT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

She settles in. Puts the key in the ignition, turns...but nothing happens.

VERONICA (V.O.)

-- And I have this intense feeling that I've already filled out and signed my application for eternal damnation in that cozy little cove called hell.

She turns the key again and again and...nothing. She pouts, annoyed and confused. She pops the hood.

EXT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Veronica stares down her engine. No idea what she's looking at. She SLAMS the hood down. -- "What to do next?"

VERONICA (V.O.)  
Seems church has been thwarted.

She retreats to her bed.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica, now a lump under her warm blankets. Her church clothes collect new wrinkles by the foot of the bed.

END MAIN TITLES.

CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

VERONICA (V.O.)  
Rudyard Kipling. God Damn Rudyard  
Kipling. "If."

FLASH IN ON:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A printed copy of the Rudyard Kipling poem "IF" sits atop a notebook on the scattered/busy/unorganized desk of Veronica.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
Why the hell do they make us memorize  
"If" in High School? What's it even  
about?

Veronica, still a bump under the blankets, oblivious as the DOOR to her bedroom gingerly opens.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Some 19th century British poets' ethos  
and personal philosophy about being a  
successful human being?

She shifts under the blankets as a SHADOW passes over her. Someone else is now in the room.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I fail to see any relevance to me and my  
life. Guess that's why I put this inane  
assignment off to the last minute.

A restless roll over brings her head out from the layer of blankets. A tired sigh, then her eyes open --

QUICK REVEAL OF WES, 18, looming over Ronnie.

WES  
BOO-bie!!

VERONICA  
JESUS-HOLY-CRAPPING-SHIT!!

She buries herself under the blankets. Embarrassed. Frightened. Annoyed.

Wes stands over Veronica holding a NOTE. He's a tall, alright looking kid who wears his personality on his sleeve. Forthright, honest, caring, accessible, he's a good friend to have.

WES  
What is that, catholic tourette's?

VERONICA  
That is so not right!

WES  
Rise and shine, sunshine! The day awaits!

VERONICA  
So not right!

WES  
Yeah, yeah, I know. But it happened.

Veronica leans up, still wrapped in blankets. Wes sits on the bed next to her.

VERONICA  
You're such a toolbag.

WES  
Awww, look at you all wrapped in your blankies. My little pig in a blanky. I totally cherish you in this moment.

Veronica eyes Wes, something's building inside her...

WES (CONT'D)  
(indicating)  
You got an eye boogie.

Veronica unleashes: PUNCHING his arm incessantly.

WES (CONT'D)  
 Hey, hey stop! Okay stop!

Little by little, embarrassment and fear evacuate Ronnie with every strike.

WES (CONT'D)  
 Stop! I bruise very easily!

She adheres.

VERONICA  
 Yes I know. You're a delicate little peach! -- How'd you get in?

WES  
 Door was unlocked.

VERONICA  
 Bullshit.

One last punch, SMACK! -- That'll leave a mark.

WES  
 (fighting the pain)  
 Found this. Was on the door.

Wes hands Veronica the HANDWRITTEN NOTE.

VERONICA  
 (reading)  
 "Free white woman upstairs." -- This a joke?

WES  
 Sounds like a bargain. Don't know anyone who would pass up a free white woman. Albeit, she's slightly used and has been known to bite.

VERONICA  
 At least I'm house broken.

WES  
 So you say.

VERONICA  
 This is ridiculous.

WES  
 Made me laugh.



VERONICA

The word "hambone" makes you laugh.  
You're a child.

WES

It's a fun word to say! HAMBONE! Come  
on, say it with me, "hambone!"

Veronica drops the note and lays back down.

VERONICA

I'm sleeping. Go away.

WES

Let us pretend that you are awake. What  
is it that Veronica would be doing?

VERONICA

Veronica has to memorize "If" for Mr.  
Bright's English class and provide  
analytical examples comparing it to me  
and my current station in life.

WES

That it?

VERONICA

Physics test Tuesday. Newton's Laws;  
Inertia, Conservation, Gravitation, blah,  
blah, not worried about that. I can  
handle Newton but Kipling...he's just a  
moralizing ass.

WES

Least he's not Shakespeare.

Veronica leans up. Annoyed a bit at Wes.

VERONICA

Shakespeare I get. Shakespeare speaks to  
me. -- "Life is but a walking shadow, a  
poor player that struts and frets--

Wes can't help but roll his eyes and wish he never mentioned  
Willy Shakes.

WES

--I see, I see, very exciting stuff here.  
But before you bore me to death, let's  
get something to eat.

VERONICA

I'm broke.

WES

On me.

Veronica throws the covers off her and onto Wes. Gets out of bed and immediately preps for the exit.

VERONICA

I'm not one to turn down a free meal.  
But we have to take your car. Mine won't start.

WES

Really?

VERONICA

Not making it up.

WES

Put gas in it?

VERONICA

Ten bucks yesterday.

WES

Premium?

VERONICA

Does it matter?

WES

I...don't...know.

Veronica bends down and picks up the note.

VERONICA

Did you really find this on the front door?

WES

Yeah. Also noticed you people have pumpkins left over from Halloween. Kinda gross. Could be attracting a Yeti or Sasquatch --

VERONICA

...Handwriting's familiar....

WES

-- or other Neanderthal creatures. Such as your dear boy Tommy.

The look in Veronica's eyes tells us she's ready to go another round with his arm as the punching bag. Instead, she pushes the note into his chest and leaves the room.

Wes follows, smirking. The door shuts.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

An OLD CAR, similar to the one in the opening scene, is inconspicuously parked by the curb, blending right in.

The driver side window rolls down and a well-smoked CIGARETTE falls out, still burning.

INT. OLD CAR - MORNING

The cigarette lighter POPS and the MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL uses it to ignite another cancer stick. We never get a look at who it is, thanks mostly to a hooded sweatshirt, only how he's been living...in this car.

Littered everywhere are fast food containers, coffee cups, crumpled newspapers/magazines and the ash tray is at full capacity.

THE THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD POV OF THE MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL reveals that he's involved in a stakeout of...

VERONICA'S HOUSE. Which is a good three or four houses down. Veronica and Wes exit the front door and walk to her car in the driveway.

The man behind the wheel takes a sip of coffee, or whatever is in that styrofoam cup, and a hearty drag from his smoke.

EXT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Wes and Veronica stare down her engine....totally clueless.

WES

Start her up. Let Wes see what happens.

VERONICA

Nothing happens.

WES

I want to see nothing happen. Show me nothing happening.

Against her will, Veronica finally offers:

VERONICA

Fine.

INT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Veronica gets in, turns the key.

WES (O.S.)  
You try it?

VERONICA  
Yes I did!

WES (O.S.)  
Fire again, girl. And give it some gas.

Veronica rolls her eyes, does as she's told...still nothing.

WES (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Again!

She's had enough. Frustrated, she gets out.

EXT. VERONICA'S CAR - MORNING

Wes buried in the hood, unaware of Veronica's return.

WES  
You try it!?

VERONICA  
It's freakin' dead!

Wes JUMPS --

WES  
Holycrapjesuschristgod!

VERONICA  
What is that, Catholic Tourette's?

WES  
I am two seconds away from beating your  
ass!

VERONICA  
(rubbing his head)  
You couldn't beat an egg, my little Wesy-  
poo.

WES  
Granted, but I do frighten easily and it  
causes me to lose control of  
certain...things. You remember Great  
Adventure?

VERONICA  
The tea cup ride!?

WES  
One spin! All it took!

VERONICA  
What the hell is wrong with my car?

MR. FARLEY (O.S.)  
It's the battery.

Simultaneously: Veronica and Wes look off camera to --

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S FRONT LAWN - MORNING

MR. FARLEY, 70s, Veronica's neighbor. He's either descending into senility or incredibly aware of himself and his place in society that he chooses to amuse himself in his dealings with today's youth. -- Who knows?

He's all bundled up, RAKING A SPOT of his lawn.

MR. FARLEY  
Sounds' if your battery's dead. Get yourself pair of jumper cables. Spark her up.

Simultaneously: Veronica and Wes look down at the engine.

WES  
(like he's discovered gold)  
Hey, it's missing!

CLOSE ON the empty spot where the battery should be.

MR. FARLEY  
That's not all that's missing...

VERONICA  
Who steals a battery?

WES  
Sasquatch.

They throw down the hood, move down the driveway to Wes's CAR.

VERONICA  
Thanks for the heads up Mr. Farley. P to D, gas, brake, steer: that's the extent of our car knowledge.

MR. FARLEY

...Mmmhmm....

WES

So, how you doing there old timer?

Mr. Farley ponders a tick, leans on his rake...Then;

MR. FARLEY

Well...toilets' been my number one enemy, no feeling in my left leg most the time and when it does catch a twinge: means rain. Takes me two hours to get outta bed just to do nothin' all day. Not had myself an erection in years. Let alone a reason to. I pray every mornin' for the good lord to take me. End my pain. But here I am. Waiting for the sun to go down.

That stopped both Wes and Veronica in their tracks. Wes offers:

WES

Well, least you're optimistic.

MR. FARLEY

(resumes raking)

Eh, what'da you know...about pain.

That last part was barely audible to both Wes and Veronica.

WES

I know a much easier and time effective way to do get your yard done.

MR. FARLEY

And I know twelve different ways to kill a man with a rake. You wanna swap stories?

Veronica smiles. Mr. Farley catches it. Her smile just made his day....

VERONICA

Bye, Mr. Farley.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - STREET CURB - MORNING

At Wes's CAR...

WES

So where do you want to go to eat?

VERONICA  
It's your dime, your call.

WES  
No preference?

VERONICA  
Whatever's good for a hangover.

WES  
Grease and gratuitous nudity always sets  
me straight.

They get in and WE MOVE INTO A CLOSE UP of his rear license  
plate and --

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - WES'S CAR - MORNING

WE PULL BACK from the license plate, REVEALING A NEW  
LOCATION:

We're in the PARKING LOT of a local DINER.

WES (O.S.)  
Wait a minute --

INT. WES'S CAR - DINER PARKING LOT - MORNING

Wes puts the car in park, kills the engine.

WES  
-- I know you weren't at homecoming last  
night so...where were you?

VERONICA  
Home alone.

WES  
Did you fend off burglars and save  
Christmas?

VERONICA  
I de-prioritized my priorities.

WES  
And so you...?

VERONICA  
Inevitably found myself with a case of  
acute nostalgia and Corona. So I  
indulged.

WES  
That explains it.

VERONICA  
Explains what?

WES  
Your death-like appearance. This is when  
make-up becomes a cosmetic necessity.

VERONICA  
(opening car door)  
Eat me.

Veronica gets out of the car. Wes smiles, follows suit.

INT. DINER - MORNING

A cozy little eatery decorated with welcoming familiarity  
encompassing a dinner table like atmosphere.

Veronica and Wes are seated, food already in front of them.  
Wes spreads some dressing over his salad. Veronica takes a  
bite out of her beef-laden sandwich...it doesn't sit well.

WES  
I got into it this morning with my  
parents.

She's done after one bite, rests her head on her hand. Wes  
devours his salad.

VERONICA  
Really? Least your parents talk to you.  
I'm jealous.

WES  
When they due back?

VERONICA  
Sometime today I guess. They didn't  
really tell me.

The parental figures are not an easy topic for Veronica. Wes  
knows this...even if it wasn't written on her tired face.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
So what was this mornings' topic of  
discussion?

WES  
Me and the Colonel are on opposite  
viewing ends of the scope.



VERONICA

The Colonel? Who are you Elvis Presley? -  
- What scope?

WES

The future.

VERONICA

...Okay...

WES

I can't actually see mine.

VERONICA

Same here. It's perfectly normal.

WES

I don't believe that about you.

VERONICA

Alright, I see it. But have chosen to  
ignore it.

WES

Why wait? Get your shit together now.

VERONICA

You want a stool sample? I'm well aware  
of the fact that I should be medicated  
and in therapy.

WES

Have you even given college a single  
thought?

VERONICA

Not a serious one.

WES

You're sure to have your pick of the ivy  
litter, Ms. Mensa. I despise that about  
you, you know.

VERONICA

I'm blessed, I'm aware. But I'd still  
prefer college to remain an intangible  
presence in my life...Until graduation at  
least.

WES

Okay, you're right. The year just started and you have plenty of time before your whimsical perspectives bite you in the ass.

VERONICA

Who says you have to go to college right away? I'll graduate, take some time off, do some traveling, learn a second language...cure cancer, maybe build an ark.

WES

For what purpose? What's to gain from postponing college?

VERONICA

Worldly experience and human knowledge.

WES

Isn't that why sororities exist?

VERONICA

Cute.

WES

It sounds like a waste of time.

VERONICA

Maybe, but it's my time. I can do with it as it so suits me.

WES

That's a selfish statement.

VERONICA

No it wasn't.

WES

Then what was it?

VERONICA

Building an ark is neither selfish nor a waste of time.

WES

That's not what--

VERONICA

(interrupts)

(MORE)

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Can we leave me alone and talk about you  
and why you had a spat with your folks!  
Por favor!

WES

No! Okay, no!

VERONICA

I hate you. I really hate you.

WES

You love me.

VERONICA

No...I hate you.

Suddenly; a war erupts in Veronica's stomach. Alcohol vs.  
her one bite of sustenance.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You and Rachel have a good time at the  
dance last night?

WES

We didn't go.

VERONICA

Why not?

She's hurting. Tasting last nights Coronas with every  
breath.

WES

Really wasn't up for it.

VERONICA

So what'd you do?

WES

Home by eight. Bed by nine.

VERONICA

You should of called. I would of let you  
come over and take full advantage of me  
in my inebriated state.

WES

Oh, how charming.

Without warning, Veronica BURPS --

WES (CONT'D)

And classy.

VERONICA

Shit.

She puts her hand over her mouth, holding something in.

WES

You alright there?

Her face a porcelain white. Beads of sweat on her forehead.

VERONICA

I gotta...

She excuses herself.

INT. DINER - LADIES ROOM - MORNING

Veronica closes the stall door behind her. CAMERA stays outside. And in a matter of seconds: the unmistakable sound of PUKING fills the ladies room.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Wes picks aimlessly at this salad. Then; TWO HANDSOME MALES, 20s, walk past him. His lingering eyes follow the dudes as they make for the exit. Wes thinks certain thoughts to himself...

INT. DINER - LADIES ROOM - MORNING

Toilet FLUSHES. Veronica vacates the stall, exuding the remnants of a pukefest from her eyes/nose...

AT THE SINK -- She sniffles as she wipes her eyes dry, rinses out her mouth, and does her best to avoid seeing her reflection in the mirror.

She exits the ladies room.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Wes watches Veronica drop some half'n'half and sweet'n'low into a cup of coffee. A beat. Then:

WES

Do you believe in destiny?

VERONICA

(exhausted)

Do I believe in destiny?

WES

In the broadest sense of the term, yeah.

Veronica looks up from her coffee to study her friend: He's sincere in his inquiry. She obliges.

VERONICA

I do. But mainly to feel better about and or justify my actions.

WES

So buying stock in destiny is good for you or...?

VERONICA

Are you really asking me this?

WES

Looks that way.

VERONICA

Depends. It's not always sentimental-lovey-dovey chance meetings of two future lovers or that kind of bullshit. Destiny abides by laws. Primarily the law of human nature?

WES

So what do you think destiny has in store for you?

VERONICA

My future is very much like those leafs of lettuce in your salad. My shape, my life span, my function in society, all those things are already written in stone. I'm living a predisposed existence. For better or for worse? So be it.

WES

So there's nothing you or I can do to change any of it?

VERONICA

Well, you can try to ignore it. That's a legitimate attempt to cheat fate.

WES

How do I ignore it?

VERONICA

...You Just Don't Look...for we are helpless in the face of destiny.

Veronica and Wes soak that statement in.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
This coffee's weak.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - STREET CURB - MORNING

Mr. Farley is seen in the b.g. raking as Wes's CAR enters frame. Parks in front of Veronica's house.

INT. WES'S CAR - STREET CURB - MORNING

Wes shifts his automatic transmission to park.

VERONICA  
You going home?

WES  
I really don't want to.

VERONICA  
You should talk to your parents again.  
Work out whatever issues you guys are  
currently reading.

WES  
So should you.

VERONICA  
I'm not talking to your parents.

WES  
Why do your parents hate you again?

VERONICA  
Past indiscretions.

WES  
Sure it's nothing an honest, heartfelt  
apology can't fix.

VERONICA  
Doubtful.

WES  
Have you ever tried?

Not wanting to continue her part of this -- Veronica abruptly  
opens her door, exits.

WES (CONT'D)  
Ronnie!

Her door shuts. Wes follows.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Wes catches up to Veronica...

WES

Hold on a sec! Last night...Rachel told me something.

VERONICA

What, she pregnant?

WES

No. -- Shit....Maybe. Shit, why'd you say that? She could be. That might help explain the current situation.

VERONICA

Forget it, forget it. What current situation?

WES

She loves me.

VERONICA

So?

WES

I don't love her.

VERONICA

And the real problem here is?

WES

What, that's it. I feel nothing for her. We've dated for almost ten months and I still feel nothing for her.

VERONICA

There's a very simple solution to this very simple problem: You Break Up With Her. She's sixteen, she'll get over it.

WES

But then what?

VERONICA

Wes, there is something you need to realize about yourself that almost everyone sees but you. Take off the blinders, look in the mirror, and ask yourself...What do I feel? Why do I feel this? And who am I? Really.

WES

What are you getting at?

VERONICA

Go home, Wes. Talk to your parents again and most importantly: talk to yourself.

WES

Was planning on playing with myself. Never tried talking too. But --

VERONICA

You know what I mean.

WES

Do I?

VERONICA

You do.  
(sarcastic)  
"Face your destiny."

WES

What about you?

VERONICA

I'm gonna get some more sleep.

WES

No, what about you and your problem?

Veronica's body sinks. Utterly annoyed. She walks away from him with anger growing in her belly....

VERONICA

Deal with your shit. And I'll talk to you later.

Wes watches her walk to the front door. A trace of disappointment on his mug.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Oh, and Wes!

WES

Yes, dear.

VERONICA

You know why you don't care about Rachel?! You know why your future is so damn clouded?!...Because you're gay! Women don't do it for you.



WES  
What are -- no!

VERONICA  
Recognize, deal, benefit!

WES  
What! How could you--

VERONICA  
Quick, Britney Spears or Christina  
Aguilera?

WES  
Madonna!

VERONICA  
Take a look in the mirror Wesy.

Veronica opens and disappears through her front door.

Wes takes an introspective beat...retreats to his car.

Mr. Farley continues to rake.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
"If you can keep your head when all about  
you are losing theirs and blaming it on  
you."

FLASH IN ON:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica returns to her bed.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
"If you can trust yourself when all men  
doubt you, but make allowance for their  
doubting too."

INT. OLD CAR - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

POV THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, staking out Veronica's house.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
"If you can wait and not be tired by  
waiting, or being lied about, don't deal  
in lies --

Smoke rises up from the ash tray as we see: A TEENAGED MALE INTRUDER walking up Veronica's driveway...

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica in bed, eyes shut.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
-- Or being hated, don't give way to  
hating --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MORNING

The INTRUDER creeps up to the front door.

CLOSE ON the door knob as he turns it, enters the house.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

We now get a solid look of the INTRUDER. And we're not disappointed. Meet --

TOMMY, 17, gifted with the physical features of an Abercrombie model and the charisma of a true playboy primed to con you out of your life savings.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
-- And yet don't look to good, nor talk  
to wise."

He shuts the door behind him. Surveys his surroundings briefly, then heads up the stairs.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON Veronica in bed, eyes shut. Muffled TALKING/LAUGHING causes her eyes to stir. She's curious. She's up.

She swings her legs around to the floor, landing on the "free white woman upstairs" NOTE, picks it up.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MORNING

Veronica peers out her doorway, notices Tommy down the hall engaged in conversation with someone behind an open door.

TOMMY  
...Alright you little son a bitch...

Acknowledging the presence of Tommy, Veronica now opens her door all the way. Awaits her turn.

TOMMY (CONT'D)  
 This shit better be better than the last  
 batch. I never got diarrhea from weed  
 before. -- Late.

Tommy closes the door. Notices Veronica. He looks at her  
 with genuine warmth and giddiness.

TOMMY (CONT'D)  
 Hey.

Veronica presents him with the NOTE.

VERONICA  
 Is this you?

Tommy, walking towards her, gives the NOTE a glance.

TOMMY  
 Not my style, babe.

VERONICA  
 You steal my car battery?

TOMMY  
 Who steals a battery?

VERONICA  
 Alright, Tommy. You let yourself in, you  
 can let yourself out.

TOMMY  
 "I'm good, how are you?"

VERONICA  
 I don't need to see you today.

Veronica turns her back to him. He scurries up, gives her a  
 hug from behind and kisses her neck.

TOMMY  
 I missed you.

They move to --

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter, embraced...

VERONICA  
 Its only been two days.

TOMMY

You missed homecoming last night.

VERONICA

I didn't miss it. I just wasn't there.

Veronica looks over her shoulder to Tommy, judging by the exchanging glances a kiss on the lips is expected, but instead:

She breaks, moves to her desk. Disappointed, Tommy hangs back.

TOMMY

I got homecoming King.

VERONICA

All hail.

Veronica sits, tosses the note into the garbage. Tommy goes through her dresser drawers.

TOMMY

And you'll never guess what I did after the dance.

VERONICA

You took my relentless advice and joined A.A.? -- Assholes Anonymous?

He grabs a BRA from the drawer, puts it on over his shirt.

TOMMY

Aren't you a big, bright ball of beaming sunshine this morning. Bend over so I can remove that rhino from your ass and maybe you'll be a little easier of a person to talk to.

Veronica turns in her chair, looks at Tommy. Attempts to lighten up a bit:

VERONICA

Now that's hot. You own that bra babe, and -- Shit, why did you pick that one?

TOMMY

I don't know. It was the first one I saw. Why?

VERONICA

Because...it's...

Veronica turns away from Tommy.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
...not mine.

An uneasy, yet familiar, wave of realization passes over him.

TOMMY  
You wear her clothes?

VERONICA  
She is my exact size.

Tommy snaps the bra off.

TOMMY  
Maybe up here, yeah, but...you do fill  
out your jeans better than she did. A  
little more bump in your rump there baby  
doll.

VERONICA  
Are there any more compliments you want  
to throw my way?

TOMMY  
No, that about...rounds 'em out.

VERONICA  
Got some bad news for you. I know why  
you're here and it's not going to happen.

TOMMY  
Why not?

Her eyes turn to Tommy and with complete and total  
manipulation she says:

VERONICA  
I can't do it anymore.

TOMMY  
Can't or won't?

VERONICA  
Same difference.

TOMMY  
What are you, kicking me to the  
proverbial curb? You don't wanna do  
that.

VERONICA

Tell me why.

TOMMY

Because...I love you and you love me--

Veronica rolls her eyes and chair in unison.

VERONICA

--People say things they don't mean so they can get what they want. And they don't think about what it does to the person they say it to. Love is one of those things. So please don't ever say it to me again. -- Unless you mean it.

TOMMY

No, I do, I mean it. Stop denying it, and take it for what it's worth.

VERONICA

Oh really? Please, tell me: What did you do last night after the dance, King Tommy?

TOMMY

Shit, nevermind. Forget I even mentioned it.

VERONICA

No. Why? You afraid to tell me now? Perhaps you saying it will make you realize just how much you "love me?"

Tommy, helpless, remits:

TOMMY

We...post-homecoming, Cal Stevens had a bunch of people over --

VERONICA

...Naturally...

TOMMY

-- Are you angry?

VERONICA

What'd you do?

TOMMY

You know Chelsea Campbell?

VERONICA  
No you didn't.

TOMMY  
I did.

VERONICA  
What exactly?

TOMMY  
You want positions?

VERONICA  
Forget it.

TOMMY  
What's the big deal? She knew what she was getting into. And...it's not like I give a shit about her.

Veronica knows that and deep down, she takes comfort in it.

VERONICA  
Why then?

TOMMY  
Why what?

VERONICA  
Your consistent desire to pick up any poor or desperate drama-obsessed-shallow-sexy-piece-of-Highschool-trash lying drunk on the floor with a hole to be filled, insisting that you, my dear boy Tommy, are just the size eight printed silk couture attire needed to fill said hole.

TOMMY  
God, you are angry.

VERONICA  
No, currently curious.

TOMMY  
I think that's...well, because of you.

VERONICA  
Me?

TOMMY  
You manipulated me once...upon a time.

VERONICA

I did not manipulate you. Shutup.

TOMMY

You at least...seduced me.

VERONICA

You made a choice.

TOMMY

You're right...okay, and now I, we, have to live with that. Any way we can.

VERONICA

Did I hear regret in that statement? Because it sounds to me that--

TOMMY

I'm sorry...sorry.

VERONICA

I don't need this. Now I'm officially pissed off.

TOMMY

What do you want me to do?

VERONICA

Leave.

TOMMY

Stop, said I was sorry...This is complicated...I don't know what you're really thinking sometimes. One day you can't let me go, and then, like today, you don't want me at all. What is it?

Veronica can only placate:

VERONICA

You know I need you.

TOMMY

I need you too. And...yes, Ronnie, I Love You...but, what about you?

VERONICA

I loathe me.

TOMMY

No...Me. Do you love me?



She denies him a verbal response, offers a look that appeases the situation. She rises...

VERONICA

Why Chelsea? She's seeing someone. And that someone just so happens to be living in a house just beyond my backyard. Your exploits are getting closer to home and I don't feel safe.

She playfully SMACKS Tommy over the head.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

So stop it! Alright.

TOMMY

I'll try. I promise.

He crosses his heart with his fingers.

VERONICA

Good. Now seriously, go home. I got shit to do.

TOMMY

I don't wanna go home. I know my Mom is going to put my ass to work. Fall cleaning and shit. Can't I stay here? Out of your way.

Tommy grabs her hand.

VERONICA

Fine, hang out in the basement. I don't know when my parents will be home and the last thing I need is for them to see you lounging about.

TOMMY

You got snacks?

He kisses her hand.

VERONICA

In the kitchen. Take whatever you want. You always do.

They kiss on the lips...sweet and soft.

TOMMY

Thanks babe.

Tommy turns, she SMACKS his ass as he goes. She almost lets a smile out as Tommy exits, the DOOR SHUTS behind him.

Her attention shifts to the floor and the BRA Tommy tried on for size.

VERONICA (V.O.)

Alright, here's the deal -- I have a sister. A twin sister. An identical twin sister: Alison.

She picks up the BRA, stuffs it in a drawer.

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

The genesis of my parents' meeting and falling into love was set to the soundtrack of one Elvis Costello.

Veronica moves to her desk, grabs her copy of "IF" and a notebook. Goes to her bed.

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

So we were aptly named. "Veronica," "Alison." Good tunes. As for my older brother, well, he didn't get off so easy: Elvis. Gotta love my parents devotion to romanticism.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Tommy grabs two zip lock bags from a cabinet. One full of pretzels. One full of potato chips.

VERONICA (V.O.)

Alison ran away seven months ago. That's all we know. And my parents marriage has been deteriorating ever since.

Tommy opens the fridge, grabs some dip for the chips.

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

That's why they're in the Catskills on a weekend marriage retreat to try and save it.

Tommy opens the freezer, intrigued by something...a 3/4 full bottle of VODKA.

He thinks a beat..."why not?"

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica in bed with "IF," a pen, notebook, and a blanket.

VERONICA (V.O.)

They mainly blame me for Alison leaving.  
One could say that's just an excuse to  
help them deal with their own shoddy  
parenting. But it's the truth --

Unable to focus, Veronica tosses her homework to the floor  
and buries herself under the covers.

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

So her letter said. I won't go into the  
specifics of said letter because...well,  
I just don't want to, okay.

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - MORNING

Tommy disappears through the Basement Door --

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING

A second-hand furnished domestic hang out spot. Tommy comes  
stomping down the steps. He plops down on the couch. Gets  
situated.

VERONICA (V.O.)

Tommy and I have been sleeping together  
for about seven months now.

Tommy pours a shot of Vodka into a paper cup, grabs a remote  
control, turns on the TV.

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

I can go on and on, on the subject of  
Tommy. But -- Man, my life just doesn't  
make sense anymore.

He downs the shot. Opens up the bag of pretzels.

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

And that excuse, "I'm only seventeen,  
it's not suppose to make sense" is  
getting kind of stale.

He takes a bite. They could be stale. Doesn't matter. He  
lets out a deep sigh as he kicks back, relaxes on this cold  
November Sunday.

The SOUND of someone KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCKING on a door rises.

INT. BACK DOOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

A large silhouetted FIGURE is KNOCKING/BANGING on the back  
door -- BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG!

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica, warm and cozy under her comforter. -- BANG, BANG!  
She stirs slightly, frustration oozing out from under the  
blankets.

BANG, BANG, BANG! The blankets fly off and Veronica's up and  
out of the room.

INT. BACK DOOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica opens the back door to --

ERIC, 17, a lovable loser, a bit overweight but it's mostly  
just baby fat. He looks like he wants to explode, but you  
couldn't tell with what. Anger? Tears? He's all over the  
emotional map. A PLASTIC BAG is in his hand.

There's a subtle tension in the air. Then: Eric reaches into  
the PLASTIC BAG, holds up a PHOTO to Veronica's face.

CLOSE ON PHOTO: A cheesy shot of Eric and his girlfriend  
CHELSEA CAMPBELL. He's happy as a game show host, she's as  
happy as the game show contestant who came in second.

ERIC

Remember this? This was us, her and me,  
Juliet and Romeo. Look at this!

Veronica responds with a lukewarm nod.

ERIC (CONT'D)

We were happy! We were in love! Where did  
it go! Do you know!? Do you know!?

VERONICA

That...I don't.

ERIC

Young love in full blossom! Happy!  
Smiling! Laughing! It felt good!

VERONICA

(walking away)  
Come on in, big guy. Let us talk.

Eric closes the door behind him. Follows Veronica.

En route to the living room, Veronica passes the BASEMENT  
DOOR, and for nothing more than peace of mind: LOCKS IT.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica enters, sits on a recliner. Eric follows.

VERONICA

So...your relationship with Chelsea is currently a bubbling pot of turmoil.

ERIC

To say the least.

VERONICA

Sit.

Eric puts the plastic bag on the coffee table, removes his jacket and sits on the couch.

ERIC

It felt destined to last forever. The spiritual and emotional unity of two young souls in love. It was powerful, it was cosmic, it's...it's gone.

VERONICA

I admit your intoxicated like runs of P.D.A. at school were nauseating, but it looked genuine. I observed from a distance mind you. I break out with hives if I get too close to public displays of affection.

ERIC

Really?

VERONICA

No, not really. -- It's a "wish I could have that thing" thing. Jealousy. -- Never mind. Give me the dirt.

ERIC

Oh, it's pretty simple: she cheated. Cheated. That little bitch, whom I loved with all my...cheated on me and-

VERONICA

She told you this?

ERIC

I didn't believe it. It's one of those things that just happens and you say, "I don't believe that just happened!", but it did.

(MORE)

ERIC (CONT'D)

Like a bomb dropped right on my lap and kaboom! Nothing's the same. It's all different. Like this...

He snatches a tissue box from the table.

ERIC (CONT'D)

...tissue box, does not look the same as it did yesterday. This cardboard is all distorted and befuddling. I want to vomit.

VERONICA

So you've abandoned all hope of a reconciliation?

ERIC

Hells yes! She slept with someone else! ABC, 123! Close the book, go to sleep, fairy-tale's over!

Eric tosses the tissue box like a kid having a hissy fit.

VERONICA

Do you know who it was?

ERIC

Who?

VERONICA

The other participant in Chelsea's adulterous sex romp.

ERIC

I do not. And I...I didn't even think to ask. -- But if I ever do find out, I am gonna go to town on that bastard's balls.

A beat as Veronica visualizes Eric's threat.

VERONICA

Yeah well, you never know, it could very well have been a she.

The thought of Chelsea being a lesbian never crossed his mind. It crushes him. Tears are imminent.

ERIC

Oh, jeez.

With the pity level now off the charts, Veronica gets off the recliner, moves to Eric.

VERONICA

I'm sorry big guy. You don't deserve this.

ERIC

Maybe I do. Maybe it's all my fault. Maybe I should've been a better boyfriend.

VERONICA

Eric, you're the epitome of a great boyfriend. You're caring, loyal, fun, and you have tremendous heart. A lot of guys don't, most just have...well, balls and no heart.

ERIC

Maybe that was the problem. Maybe I wasn't man enough for her. -- I'm a sissy. A little, big, fat, sissy baby who needs a change! Where's babies diapers!? -- It was my fault, I drove her away.

VERONICA

Eric, listen to me: as far as cheating goes, the only person who falls under blame is the one who committed it. You're an innocent victim.

ERIC

She was so calm and easy about it. Like she was telling me how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. "Take two slices of bread, jelly, peanut butter, and a knife, spread evenly, then rub up and down the NAKED TORSO OF SOME OTHER GUY!" -- Or girl. No remorse!

VERONICA

Maybe it was for the best.

Like a child falling to his mother for comfort, Eric lays his head down in Veronica's lap. She goes with it...

ERIC

It doesn't feel like "for the best." It feels like my life is meaningless now.

VERONICA

Don't do that. You have the right to be bitter and melancholy, but don't go jumping off any ledges over this.

ERIC

I'm nothing without her --

VERONICA

Don't Do That To Yourself!

ERIC

-- And it's chillingly clear that I'm nothing to her as well.

VERONICA

Relationships in high school come and go. Some end fondly others just end. It sucks and it hurts but it's not the apocalypse. And unless you can give me one unrelenting, undeniable sentiment about how Chelsea confirms your existence. I encourage you to shut up.

A beat. All Eric can do is respond with absolute honesty:

ERIC

I'm in love with her. Simple as that.

VERONICA

And love blinds you. Who knows what you're not seeing because you have in your head this unfounded notion that the sun won't rise or set without Chelsea by your side. It's foolish...

Eric removes his head from her lap.

ERIC

You ever been cheated on?

VERONICA

No, I never-I...haven't even had a boyfriend since the sixth grade. He dumped me for a red-headed junior high chick with longer legs, bigger boobs and was a cheerleader. One of those top-of-the-pyramid-type-bitches.

ERIC

There's this overwhelming sense of unimportance. To be passed over, thrown away...for what?

VERONICA

(low, almost to herself)  
Someone else.



ERIC

Precisely.

Veronica, now practically lost in her own thoughts/drama, turns her attention to the PLASTIC BAG.

VERONICA

You'll be fine, Eric. It's okay to have a broken heart. Just don't fixate on the one who did it to you and keep your eyes and your self open for the girl who can mend it.

The contents of which are revealed as: FOUR DVD'S, CHOCOLATE BARS, AND A HANDFUL OF PHOTOS OF ERIC & CHELSEA.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(re: DVD's)

"Say Anything." "When Harry Met Sally."  
"Untamed Heart." And..."Funny Farm?"

The DOORBELL RINGS.

ERIC

It was an impulse buy, right by the counter. Three ninety-nine, you believe that?

VERONICA

You gotta get your mind off of Chelsea.

ERIC

You want to go bowling?!

She does not, thankfully: THE DOORBELL RINGS again.

VERONICA

I'll be right back.

She leaves. Eric grabs a chocolate bar and flips through an issue of GLAMOUR MAGAZINE that was on the coffee table.

ERIC

...Chelsea...

I/E. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FOYER/FRONT DOOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

Veronica opens the door, greeted by --

BARKER, 16, a short pest who looks and acts like a "Mini-Eminem." He does his thang...

BARKER

Oh, sweet, sweet Ronny, my goodness do you look all hot and juicy, I'll like to lick you up and down starting at the tootsie and ending up at the puss--

THE DOOR SHUTS. Cutting Barker off.

THE DOORBELL RINGS. Veronica opens the door.

VERONICA

Don't talk! -- Elvis ain't here, and he won't be here all day. So just go home.

BARKER

Naw, baby dear, I called his ass five minutes ago, I know he's here.

VERONICA

And what did he tell you?

BARKER

That he don't want to deal to me. Ain't givin' shit for free. I'm broke, but I ain't no joke. I'll pay the man as soon as I can. Come on, sweet Ronnie baby, let me in...then let me in!

VERONICA

Better luck next time, junior.

THE DOOR SHUTS. CAMERA STAYS OUTSIDE as Barker stands there bummin', staring at the front door.

BARKER

Damn! Why don't no-body take me serious? I'll be back!

CAMERA PANS AWAY from Barker as he exits, annoyed, and PUSHES IN ON the BASEMENT WINDOW...

INT. BASEMENT - EARLY AFTERNOON

Intense MOANS/GROANS/BAD SOUNDTRACK MUSIC: all the makings of a classy porno are heard as WE PULL BACK from the BASEMENT WINDOW and find...

Tommy on the couch eating pretzels, eyes glued to a PORNO MOVIE on the TV.

CAMERA THEN BOOMS UP, away from Tommy, as he downs a shot of Vodka from the paper cup...

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

CAMERA PANS UP from the floor to Eric on the couch, skimming through GLAMOUR, looking like he wants to die.

VERONICA (O.S.)  
Sorry about that.

Veronica sits next to him. Eyes the cover of GLAMOUR...

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
You find the dress that flatters your  
body the most yet?

No response from Eric. Then; a total act of randomness:

ERIC  
I wrote a little poem.

The mag is TOSSED and he pulls a well-folded piece of paper from his front pant pocket.

VERONICA  
(cautious/concerned)  
Oh...awesome...

He unfolds it, which seems to take forever. Veronica watches...waits.

ERIC  
I felt compelled to document certain  
moments about last night.

VERONICA  
(fearing torture)  
Good. Healthy. Love to hear it.

Eric takes a beat before delivering his deliberate, emotional poetry reading. Veronica sweats it out.

ERIC  
(in dribs and drabs)  
Nothing is something. Something is  
nothing. Everything is everything.  
And...anything is everything I wanted to  
tell you how I felt. But I forgot the  
words when you walked out the door. But  
anyway, I don't care that I care that  
nothing is something that I got and  
something is nothing we have and  
everything--

She's putting an end to this.

VERONICA

--It's beautiful, it's real, it's honest.  
Is there an abridged version?

ERIC

It's double-sided. A broken heart  
bleeds.

VERONICA

That's good Eric, vent. You have a lot  
on your mind and it can only benefit you  
to let it out. -- And I have an ass load  
of work to do for English class so--

ERIC

Mr. Bright?

VERONICA

Sadly.

ERIC

He's such a hardass. And a perv.

VERONICA

Totally. And unfortunately I'm on his  
bad side so even if I do wear a skirt and  
rock some cleavage tomorrow I'll still be  
without a reprieve. -- You and your love  
lorn thoughts are more than welcome to  
hang on my couch. Just remember:  
progress.

Veronica nudges Eric, trying to be playful. He nods. She  
rises.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Yell if you need me, big guy.

ERIC

K. Thanks Ron, you rock.

Veronica leaves, Eric produces a pen and writes...

ERIC (CONT'D)

(struggling)

My...heart burns...like...a hot can of  
worms....My soul yearns...like the butter  
churns.

A PHONE RINGS.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON Veronica's RINGING PHONE. She enters, answers it...

VERONICA

Hello...Hi...I'm alright, how are you?...Why?...No, no...No, this isn't right!...That's not right!...This is totally unprofessional...It wasn't me...It was probably that new girl with the, the tatoos and dozen piercings. Self-mutilation don't come cheap you know...Someone's gotta pay for it...Don't do this, come on...You can't do this...FINE!...I never liked your fat ass anyway.

Veronica hangs her phone up. Now irate, unsure where/how to channel her anger.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Shittles!

She exits.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Calming, Veronica stands outside Elvis's bedroom door, performs a "SECRET KNOCK."

VERONICA

Hey Elvis, be a pal and loan me twenty bucks.

(silence)

Barker was here, I told him you weren't.

(silence)

So who are you here for?

(silence)

Alright, so can I borrow the--

A \$20 BILL slides out from under the door.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Thanks, brother.

She grabs it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Veronica enters, clearly agitated, plops down on the floor in front of Eric.

ERIC  
Something wrong?

VERONICA  
I got fired.

ERIC  
No way. From Vans?

Veronica nods.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
That sucks. Why?

VERONICA  
I've been accused of stealing and found  
guilty without trial.

ERIC  
Did you?

VERONICA  
Did I what?

ERIC  
Steal?

VERONICA  
Yeah, but I never thought I'd get caught.

ERIC  
How much did you steal?

Veronica takes a beat, mentally calculates.

VERONICA  
\$692.90. But I'm sure they have no idea  
about that particular figure.

Eric, speechless for a moment, finally offers an escape:

ERIC  
I'll put a movie in. -- "Say Anything?"

VERONICA  
Sure.

Eric grabs it and heads to the TV.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
You hungry?

ERIC

Always.

VERONICA

I'll order a pizza.

Veronica gets up.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S FRONT LAWN - AFTERNOON

Mr. Farley raking another SPOT on his yard. He's close to the curb as:

A CAR SPEEDS ACROSS FRAME --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - STREET CURB - AFTERNOON

The speeding CAR slams on the brakes and ends up with one wheel up on the curb.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

"Say Anything" plays. Eric sits on the couch, staring at the TV, he can't sit still, a ball of potential energy.

Veronica sits on the floor, bored. Staring at her feet.

VERONICA

I'm wearing two different kinds of socks today.

ERIC

On purpose?

VERONICA

One's black and the other is white.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Lunch time.

Veronica gets up and THE CAMERA FOLLOWS BEHIND HER through the Living Room...

...Past the KITCHEN as she removes the \$20 from her pocket...

...Moving down the HALL, eventually arriving at...

INT. FOYER - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

CAMERA SWINGS AWAY from Veronica as she opens the front door...

HOLDS ON A PICTURE FRAME hanging on the wall. It's a montage of precious moments starring the once happy Taylor family: Mom, Dad, Elvis, Veronica & Alison.

VERONICA (O.S.)

Hi, thanks...Whoa wait, wait, wait! What is this? This isn't what I wanted... Yeah, that's my address but that's not what...Plain...Yeah plain, what's wrong with just plain?...What law says I need a topping?...No I will not just pick it off. Get your act together and bring back what I ordered...Thank you.

CAMERA SWINGS as the door shuts and FOLLOWS Veronica back to...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...She prepares herself a cup of coffee, moves to the...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Veronica enters with her coffee in hand, finds the room empty. Eric has vanished.

VERONICA

Eric? Eric!

Veronica shakes her head, rolls her eyes.

She exits.

INT. BASEMENT - AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON VODKA being poured into a paper cup. Tommy downs the shot.

He eyes the stairs as he recoils from the bitter taste. Tommy rises.

He walks up the steps and tries the basement door: it's locked. He's trapped.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Veronica walks down the hall, opens her bedroom door --



INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Veronica shuts the door and immediately slips off her WHITE SOCK, tosses it aside and opens a dresser drawer. She produces a BLACK SOCK, slips it on. Now they match.

She picks up "IF" and her Notebook off the floor, hops into bed and throws the blankets over her.

CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

VERONICA (V.O.)  
 "If you can dream, and not make dreams  
 your master --

FADE IN ON:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Veronica wrapped safely in her blankets. Her eyes wide, focused, staring just past the CAMERA LENS.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
 -- "If you can think, and not make  
 thoughts your aim. If you can meet with  
 Triumph and Disaster, and treat those two  
 imposters just the same.

Veronica throws her blankets off, leaves her room.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 -- God, I can't even bear the sound of my  
 own thoughts anymore.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Veronica enters her bathroom, stops dead in her tracks. A beat.

VERONICA  
 You need help? Forget what to do next?

REVEAL Eric perched atop the toilet seat, lid down. Totally lost in thought. Looks as if he's been crying.

ERIC  
 This bathroom, right here...This is where  
 we first kissed.

VERONICA  
 You and Chelsea hooked up in my bathroom?

ERIC

Happened during the New Year's Eve party. We were only talking up to that point, nothing serious yet. Then it happened. She laughed, I smiled, our eyes met and didn't know how to separate. A move had to be made. We came in here for some privacy. And I kissed her.

VERONICA

See, since day one your relationships' been in the crapper.

Eric eeks out a smile.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Yay, you can smile. That's good.

His smile extends a bit further.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Now come on, get up and get out, I gotta go.

ERIC

I want you to know. You are helping.

VERONICA

Good, but what I'm not doing is peeing, so if you'll excuse me...

ERIC

--Yup, 'nuff said.

He rises and before he exits, much to Veronica's surprise, he gives her a big hug.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Thank you.

VERONICA

Don't mention it.

She gives his back a friendly slap or two. Eric releases with tears on the horizon.

ERIC

I'll see ya.

VERONICA

Duly noted.

Eric's gone. Veronica shuts the door.

EXT. VERONICA'S/MR. FARLEY'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The sun has shifted, the wind has picked up. The OLD CAR drives past in SLOW-MOTION as leaves swirl. Mr. Farley continues his raking odyssey.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Tommy and the porno marathon continues. Remote control in one hand, paper cup shot glass in the other, totally relaxed.

A beat. Tommy senses that he's being watched. And he is --

REVEAL Veronica, surveying the scene.

VERONICA

Comfy?

TOMMY

Hey. Yeah, I was, a...helping myself, like you said.

VERONICA

Why are you drinking?

TOMMY

I don't know. Why'd you lock me in here?

VERONICA

Because Eric was upstairs.

TOMMY

Who's that?

VERONICA

Eric Ginn.

TOMMY

Oh, cool. What's the big deal?

VERONICA

I offer the same: Eric Ginn.

TOMMY

What, I like Eric. He's good people. Sensitive, real...touchy feely. I admire that.

VERONICA

He's also Chelsea Campbell's ex-boyfriend thanks to you.

TOMMY

I did him a favor. That chick was trying to ditch him since school started. He wouldn't listen to her. She needed to do something that would force him to listen.

VERONICA

What are you saying?

TOMMY

All I'm saying, all I did was...provide a service, a utility...I'm the gas company alright. -- I did nothing wrong.

Veronica studies Tommy. He feels her eyes, waits...She accepts his reasoning, moves on --

VERONICA

(re: TV, porn)

Biological research? Taking notes I hope.

TOMMY

Your Dad has a nice library of quality porn down here.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

VERONICA

It's my Mom's. -- And exactly what differentiates quality porn from sub-par porn?

The DOORBELL RINGS again.

TOMMY

Believable situations and or performances.

Veronica turns to go.

VERONICA

You mean believable orgasms...

TOMMY

Nooo, I mean -- Wait! Where you going?

VERONICA

(walking away)

Doorbell Tommy.

A third DOORBELL RING brings us to --

I/E. FOYER/FRONT DOOR - DAY

Veronica opens the door, finds no one there to greet her, just a handwritten in black marker NOTE taped to the door.

THE NOTE: "FILLEAN AN FEALL AR AN BHFEALLAIRE."

Veronica digests it for a moment, then RIPS it down. The door shuts.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Veronica plops down next to Tommy, tosses the NOTE on his lap. He gives it a passive glance.

TOMMY

What is that, Hebrew?

VERONICA

It's Latin.

TOMMY

You know Latin?

VERONICA

I'm a genius Tommy. I know everything.

TOMMY

What's it say?

VERONICA

(perfect pronunciation)

"Fillean an feall ar an bhfeallaire."

TOMMY

In English babe.

VERONICA

The treachery returns to the betrayer.

TOMMY

What goes around comes around?

VERONICA

Exactly. That's the second one today. You're my man, do something.

TOMMY

It's not addressed to you per se. Per se? Is that Latin?

The DOORBELL RINGS. Veronica and Tommy exchange a look.

TOMMY (CONT'D)  
 Want me to get it?

A beat, then: Veronica sprints off, flies up the stairs --

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - DAY

Veronica bursts through, continuing her dash to --

INT. FOYER/FRONT DOOR - DAY

-- The DOORBELL RINGS. Veronica opens the door. It now FILLS THE FRAME, blocking our view of the conversation.

VERONICA (O.S.)  
 Great, it's you...yeah how much?...No, no he said twelve fifty, not fifteen twelve...well, then you're not getting a tip...fine...Here...Can I have my change?...four bucks...yeah...Have a nice day.

Door shuts, reveals Veronica with a BOX OF PIZZA. She exits FRAME. A beat.

VERONICA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Son of a bitch!

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Veronica, Tommy, and a box of pizza.

TOMMY  
 What's the matter with it?

VERONICA  
 Sausage! I waited like two hours for this pizza and they still screwed it up.

TOMMY  
 So pick it off.

VERONICA  
 How dare you.

TOMMY  
 What?

VERONICA  
 If I pick then I admit defeat and they have won. I will not be beaten.

Tommy grabs a slice.

TOMMY

Correct me if I'm wrong, but you're insane.

VERONICA

Nope, still tinkering on the edge...

Veronica kicks back, puts her feet up, rests her head.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

And...never eating today.

TOMMY

There's pretzels.

Tommy picks up the VCR remote.

VERONICA

Think the last time my Mom bought pretzels was in 1997. No thanks. -- What are you doing?

TOMMY

Fast forwarding.

VERONICA

Why are you fast forwarding?

TOMMY

To move it forward, faster.

VERONICA

You seriously have problems.

TOMMY

Do not.

VERONICA

My dear Tommy, you're watching a porno movie and fast forwarding through the sex to get to the story.

TOMMY

I want to know what happens.

VERONICA

Eighteen and you're already desensitized to sex.

TOMMY

Maybe, but I don't take it for granted.

VERONICA  
That. Is bullshit.

TOMMY  
No, I'm serious.

VERONICA  
Last night. Ring a bell?

TOMMY  
Does that keep coming up....

VERONICA  
You had sex with her, correct? Or was it  
a hotly contested game of Connect Four  
that got misinterpreted?

TOMMY  
Yeah, we had...you know, but it's --  
irrelevant.

VERONICA  
Irrelevant?

TOMMY  
Time spent with girls like Chelsea  
Campbell is like time spent masturbating.  
However, when you and me are together,  
the experience is...amazing, it's real.  
Something worth fighting for, you know.

VERONICA  
Right...you make me feel so "special."

TOMMY  
You're not believing me?

A beat. She searches Tommy...wanting to believe him.

VERONICA  
Shutup and tell me what this trash you're  
subjecting me to is about.

TOMMY  
This guy, Kurt, lost all his rent money  
at a hand of poker, so he called his  
Uncle for help. His Uncle said sure, but  
with one string attached --

VERONICA  
-- They use the house to shoot a porn  
movie?



TOMMY

A classy porn movie. One on one straight lovin'. No outside devices, i.e: a carrot. No bondage, midgets, and third input is kept to a "heat of the moment" minimum.

VERONICA

Relatable morality. Porn is turning a corner.

TOMMY

Porn has many avenues, don't get it wrong. -- But now Kurt's blonde hot ass sister shows up with her husband, they own the house, and along with the bible toting neighbors they--

VERONICA

Want to shut the whole production down.

TOMMY

It puts our main character in a debilitating moral dilemma.

A beat, as they stare at the boob tube.

VERONICA

The smell of sausage is killing me.

Veronica leans up, closes the lid to the Pizza Box. Tommy can't help but smile as she cozies up to him.

TOMMY

You do anything last night?

VERONICA

Got drunk.

TOMMY

Alone?

VERONICA

In a roundabout way.

TOMMY

That's not normal.

VERONICA

I'm an angry, lonely, disaffected youth who had no where to go and a six pack of Corona on ice. What do you want?

TOMMY  
Homecoming, babe.

VERONICA  
I couldn't go to that dance.

TOMMY  
Why not?

VERONICA  
Because everyone hates me. And If I  
showed up and stood in that crowded gym,  
with the banners, streamers, and the  
blaring, vomit inducing, savvy hip hop:  
it would've been a waste of time.  
(sarcastic)  
Despite my overwhelming sense of school  
spirit.

TOMMY  
I was there. We could of had fun. I'm  
honing my Wango Tango for prom.

VERONICA  
When fun becomes a goal and not a given,  
all appeal is lost.

TOMMY  
Seriously...it's Homecoming and you're a  
senior. Loosen up, babe.

VERONICA  
No one would of talked to or acknowledged  
me and my existence as a human being.

TOMMY  
Where is all this negativity coming from?

VERONICA  
My daily observations.

TOMMY  
Like...?

VERONICA  
Like when I walk down the halls.

TOMMY  
I'm sure this is just you blowing things  
out of proportion.

VERONICA

You know how when you cross paths with someone they usually veer slightly to avoid a hip or shoulder bump? I don't get that veer anymore. I get a shove and a "go to hell" glance.

Tommy pours a shot of Vodka.

TOMMY

How long has this been going on?

Veronica takes a beat. Regains control of the conversation:

VERONICA

Did you mean what you said?

TOMMY

What I say? Rewind/Remind me.

Tommy downs the shot.

VERONICA

That you love me.

He recoils, responds with naked/embarrassed honesty:

TOMMY

What, yeah...come on, you know it...goes beyond love. -- I admire you, think about you all the time...I don't want to sound cliched or boring Ronnie, but...when I close my eyes, whenever I dream, when I'm...with you...alone, or...I see nothing but you. Your face. It's--

VERONICA

You see my face?

TOMMY

Yeah Ron--

VERONICA

Or you see Alison?

That was a punch to Tommy's stomach. He's stung.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(anxious)

Please answer me, this is important. Did you love my sister?

TOMMY

I don't...I cared, I don't, don't think,  
no...no.

VERONICA

But you're positive you love me?

TOMMY

You're scaring me -- Yes! You guys are  
identical twins who are completely  
different.

VERONICA

Why?

TOMMY

Why what?

VERONICA

Why are you sure you love me and not her?  
You were with her for over a year.

TOMMY

-- I don't know--

VERONICA

--She loved you Tommy. She lived and  
died by you.

TOMMY

I don't know! You were...desire. I  
mean, you always came out on top. Al  
played second chair to all your  
accomplishments.

VERONICA

Even you.

TOMMY

You were the one I always wanted.

VERONICA

You don't miss her?

Tommy takes a long, hard look at Veronica. She matches his  
glare. He can only respond with honesty:

TOMMY

I have you. I'm not missing a thing.

He leans in, wanting nothing more than to kiss her, but --  
THE DOORBELL RINGS.

VERONICA  
Hold that thought.

She gets up, exits. Tommy resumes the movie, pours another shot of Vodka. He's suddenly very self-conscious.

TOMMY  
Shit.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Veronica, en route to the front door -- stops dead in her tracks.

VERONICA  
Hey.

REVEAL Eric, he has returned to the couch.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
Where did you go?

ERIC  
After the bathroom debacle I went for a walk. Flush my head, so to speak.

VERONICA  
What's that on your face?

A SMUDGE OF DIRT is on his cheek. He wipes at it.

ERIC  
Oh, I was playing in a pile of leaves down the street with the Ferguson kids. Things got a little down and dirty.

The DOORBELL RINGS. A bemused Veronica instructs:

VERONICA  
I gotta get that. Don't move.

She leaves. Eric pulls a LEAF out from the backside of his pants.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Veronica opens the front door to...BRIE, 18, cute, confident, fearless. A true adversary who only lacks the presence Veronica possesses.

They stare at each other as tension blows in with the wind.

BRIE  
You gonna invite me in?

VERONICA  
Who are you and why should I invite you  
in?

BRIE  
I'm Brie.

VERONICA  
You're a cheese?

BRIE  
Brienne Evegan.

VERONICA  
That suppose to mean something to me?

A beat. Guess not.

BRIE  
I'm here to see Elvis, alright.

Veronica opens the door further, inviting Brie in. She steps  
inside. Veronica shuts the door.

VERONICA  
He's upstairs. You know what door?

BRIE  
Yes I do. Thanks.

Brie stares at Veronica as if she wants to say something.  
Veronica raises her eyebrows, impatient/annoyed.

Brie offers a smile, and makes her way up the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Veronica enters the KITCHEN, prepares a much needed cup of  
coffee.

A subdued Eric sits on the couch in the LIVING ROOM.

INTERCUT, as they speak from their respective rooms to each  
other.

ERIC  
What happened to the pizza?

VERONICA  
Oh...I didn't have any money.

ERIC

Did the delivery guy show up?

VERONICA

Yeah, it was an embarrassing moment and I'm sure it'll be one of many wounding justifications for me being in therapy one day. -- You thirsty, want some coffee?

ERIC

Nah, coffee ain't my cup of tea. I prefer a juice. Or yoo-hoo? Got any yoo-hoo?

VERONICA

I'm sure we don't, sorry.

Her coffee now ready for consumption, Veronica, again, LOCKS THE BASEMENT DOOR as she leaves the kitchen and moves to the...

LIVING ROOM. She sips her coffee as she stands by Eric.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You feeling any better?

ERIC

I feel neglected. Like an uneaten chicken wing on Rosie O'Donnell's dinner plate.

VERONICA

That's some...deep thoughts Eric.

ERIC

Hey, so what do you think? What came first, the chicken or the egg?

VERONICA

What?

ERIC

The chicken or the egg? What came first?

VERONICA

I don't know. It's one of those questions that doesn't have one pronounced, definitive, concrete answer.

ERIC

Give it a try.

VERONICA

No, not today.

ERIC

Please, Ronnie. Throw me a philosophical bone marinated in insight and theory. I'm grieving here.

VERONICA

Alright, alright.

She sits next to Eric on the couch. Gulping her coffee.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Well...you have to look at it with two different points of view here: One as the creationist and one as the evolutionist.

ERIC

Uh-huh, naturally.

VERONICA

If you believe God created man and God created the animals then obviously he created the chicken first. And the egg came from the chicken -- just like Adam and Eve. They came from God. But their offspring, those incestuous eggs that were spawn forth, came from them.

Eric is all ears, he calculates her words.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

On the other hand, if you're an evolutionist you believe one species came from another one through some DNA mutation. Therefore, some animal that hatched eggs, eventually hatched an evolved...something that resembles a chicken. Loaded with protein and low in carbs, thus giving birth to the Atkins diet and a perpetual paradigm on cause and effect.

Eric nods.

ERIC

So it was the chicken?



VERONICA

I didn't say that. It all depends on your own personal philosophies about creation. God or Darwin: The Battle Royale.

Eric takes a beat, he reverts to the depressed/lovelorn soul that showed up earlier.

ERIC

Chelsea liked to live in the moment. She dismissed philosophy. Said it was like a map of many roads that went from nowhere, leading to nothing. Like high school and ...love.

VERONICA

You know that's total bullshit, right?

ERIC

It's going to be hard...to go to school tomorrow knowing...knowing I have nothing. I...I want to cry, okay! Cry, is that--because all I'm use to is now...she decided to leave.

Veronica swigs her coffee, wishing it was 180 proof.

VERONICA

...Keep talking Eric --

ERIC

(with tears lurking)

I cooked for Chelsea....A lot. I liked cooking, it impressed her. She was my little chicky-baby, she...hated chicken!

Veronica empathizes with Eric's condition, but is lost on a cure.

ERIC (CONT'D)

But I did make her eggs once. On our six month anniversary. She said they were runny, but ate the whole breakfa--

Veronica interjects: hoping...

VERONICA

--You know...there's an old proverb that says, "He who wants eggs must endure the clucking of the hen."

ERIC  
 (intrigued)  
 Really?

VERONICA  
 I don't lie.

Eric digests that statement. It agrees with him.

ERIC  
 That's genius.

VERONICA  
 It is?

ERIC  
 Yes.

VERONICA  
 It is.

ERIC  
 You're right! You are so...That makes  
 perfect sense!

VERONICA  
 Thanks...Wait, what?

He explains:

ERIC  
 I am the he. And Chelsea is the hen.  
 And the eggs...is love.

VERONICA  
 Is that good?

Eric, ecstatic, a smile so bright you'd go blind.

ERIC  
 It's perfect! It's exactly what I needed  
 to hear.

He stands, Veronica looks up to him, utterly clueless.

VERONICA  
 Hold on.

Veronica grasps for comprehension.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
 Tell me how I cheered you up.

ERIC

"He who wants eggs must endure the clucking of the hen."

VERONICA

Yes I know.

ERIC

Think about it.

VERONICA

Eric, I don't--

He sits back down.

ERIC

Think about it.

Veronica's aching head formulates...

VERONICA

Alright. -- You desire a fulfilling, healthy relationship which results in an overabundance of...eggs. And Chelsea, represents this hen...who clucks. Generating an annoyance, a complication.

ERIC

Yes. But --

VERONICA

But...

Veronica regards the smiling Eric, notices the PLASTIC BAG FULL OF PHOTOS and suddenly: it makes sense to her. She finishes her coffee and her thought --

VERONICA (CONT'D)

But, you really love Chelsea and would do anything for her, logic be damned. And now here you sit, on the frying pan of desperation, hopelessly starved.

ERIC

...For eggs.

VERONICA

Right.

They sit for a beat. Eric, feeling good. Veronica, feeling oddly pensive.

INT. BACK DOOR - DAY

They walk to the back door, Eric has his PLASTIC BAG FULL OF PHOTOS/DVD'S in hand.

VERONICA

What are you gonna do now? How are you processing this in regards to Chelsea?

ERIC

Easy. If you're gonna put all your eggs in one basket, make sure the bottom doesn't fall out on you.

VERONICA

No Humpty Dumpty's?

ERIC

Precisely. You'd want to avoid his fate.

VERONICA

Along with most of our nursery rhyme heroes, ironically.

Eric offers the PLASTIC BAG.

ERIC

Could you throw this away for me?

VERONICA

No. Hang on to them. You never know what memory you're going to need to be reminded of. For better or worse.

Eric nods, gives Veronica one of his patented bear hugs.

ERIC

Thanks.

VERONICA

Anytime, big guy.

They break, Veronica breathes. The back door opens --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - BACK DOOR - DAY

Eric exits. He takes a moment...to DANCE.

INT. BACK DOOR - DAY

CLOSE ON the back door as Veronica LOCKS it --

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - DAY

CLOSE ON the basement door as Veronica UNLOCKS it --

INT. BASEMENT - LATE DAY

Tommy downs a shot of Vodka. Veronica sits next to him. A porn movie plays out on the TV in front of them.

TOMMY

Who was it?

VERONICA

Who was what?

TOMMY

Who was at the door?

VERONICA

Some chick for my brother that distinctly resembled a homeless nymphomaniac.

TOMMY

Was it Brie? Brienne Evegan?

VERONICA

I think that's what she said her name was.

TOMMY

She a hottie. Got a nice pair of porno lips.

VERONICA

Porno lips?--

TOMMY

--Thick, full, generous.

VERONICA

Do you ever think anything you don't say?

TOMMY

You know why she's seeing him right?

VERONICA

You mean seeing as in dating?

TOMMY

She's a big fan of E...Ecstasy.

VERONICA

I'm down with the abbreviated lingo.

TOMMY

And Elvis is always holding. Boys got everything. He's quite the entrepreneur. Your parents must be proud.

VERONICA

They bring it up at every family gathering. I'm sure this Thanksgiving will be no different. It's a nice moment right before Dad carves the turkey -- Mom raises her glass in a toast to acknowledge her son as the most successful drug pusher to teens in the county.

TOMMY

You ever try it?

VERONICA

I hate giving toasts.

Tommy turns off the TV, grabs a different remote, turns on the STEREO. Music plays. It's a whole new atmosphere.

TOMMY

E?

VERONICA

I'm a drinker.

TOMMY

You're more than that. You smoke weed.

VERONICA

So?

TOMMY

So try E with me.

VERONICA

I have limits.

TOMMY

You'll sleep with me, drink yourself stupid, and hit the bong like a hippie at a Phish show, but you won't do E with me. Not even once?

VERONICA

Someone has been paying attention.

Tommy pours a fresh shot of Vodka, but he doesn't take it.

TOMMY

Who are you again?

VERONICA

Just a high school girl searching for an identity. -- How many times have you done it?

TOMMY

Only a couple. It's like a prolonged orgasm. Not only that, but it allows you to open up, feel at peace with ...everything. It is happiness.

VERONICA

Happiness in a pill? Such a scary society we reside in.

TOMMY

You really should try it. All the bad is good and all the good is better.

VERONICA

That's only temporary. The side effects aren't.

TOMMY

What side effects? Would I develop a third testicle?

VERONICA

Ecstasy forces your brain cells to release all the stored serotonin at once. Which is why you feel that sensation of so called euphoria.

TOMMY

An appealing alternative to the mundane.  
-- What's the damage

Tommy reaches into his pant pocket, pretends to listen...

VERONICA

The neurochemical reaction it causes in your brain yields to serious bouts of, ironically, depression. It also burns permanent holes in your brain. Lucky for you it's...not your most important organ.

...Tommy presents a YELLOW SMILING TAB of E to Ronnie.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

What is that?

TOMMY

A Preparation-H suppository.

VERONICA

Well, then, shove it up your ass.

Tommy snuggles up to Veronica, turns on the charm...

TOMMY

Oh, cheer up babe. Take it. I miss seeing you smile...I miss hearing you laugh. I bought it for you...for us. Take it.

Veronica takes the pill, inspects it. Does she want to? Probably: That would make Tommy happy. Will she? Hell no: She flicks it away.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

--What are you--?

CLOSE ON Tommy's paper cup as the E tab dives into the Vodka.

Tommy, blind to this development, is disappointed.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

You're hopeless.

VERONICA

Sound like my guidance counselor. "I have the ability but lack the mobility."

TOMMY

Yeah, yeah, blah, blah, bitch, bitch. Come on, let's get naked.

VERONICA

Keep it down, boy. I got homework to do. You can either go home now or continue to stay down here and...whatever.

Veronica stands. Tommy scans the surrounding area for the E tab.

TOMMY

I can't go home. Tommy's in no condition to clean. -- Where's the tab?

He falls to the floor, searching.

VERONICA

Your pathetic display of need is breaking my heart.



TOMMY

Did you see where it went?

She walks away from him.

VERONICA

No.

TOMMY

Can't find it.

VERONICA

Try praying to Saint Thomas.

TOMMY

Could you get your brother to replace  
that one? Shit ain't cheap.

Veronica moves up the steps...

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Ronnie?!

The BASEMENT DOOR OPENS and SHUTS. Tommy laments, and with his searching eyes on the floor, he swigs the shot of Vodka.

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - LATE DAY

Veronica takes an exhausted beat, leans up against the basement door.

VERONICA (V.O.)

Princess. My parental figures always referred to Alison as Princess. They saw how we were.

She moves to the fridge, grabs a CAN OF SODA.

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

How she needed to feel different. How she needed to feel special. I was fine with that.

Veronica pulls the tab on the can and PSSSHH! -- IT EXPLODES! Soda sprays all over her shirt, cascades down her hand to the kitchen floor.

Veronica remains unfazed. This is just how her day is going. She rips off some paper towels and cleans up the mess.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - LATE DAY

Veronica enters, takes off her soda soaked shirt, throws it to the floor as she opens her closet...

VERONICA (V.O.)  
Singling her out as the little Princess  
in the house was the best they could do.  
It seemed to work. She liked being  
called Princess.

She stares into her closet for a beat, lost in thought.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
She was a straight C student who  
struggled, I float by with A's.  
Perpetually bored.

Veronica extracts a long sleeved shirt, and tediously puts it on.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
She had a gaggle of friends and was a big  
player in the drama club. Me? Yeah,  
everyone hates me. She shaved her legs  
with an electric razor, I used a lady  
bic. She dated Tommy and I...well --

Veronica spots her notebook and copy of "IF" on the floor. She picks them up, sits on the side of the bed.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
-- She might of been Princess but I  
reigned as the unspoken Queen. And I did  
legitimately feel sorry for Alison  
sometimes...Sometimes...

The DOORBELL RINGS. -- Veronica rolls her eyes, sinks.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Did that just happen? I've been hearing  
that thing all freakin' day. It  
resonates in my head. Like a radio  
jingle--

The DOORBELL RINGS again.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
Shitballs!

Veronica storms out, shuts the door.

I/E. FOYER/FRONT DOOR - LATE DAY

Veronica opens the door to find -- WES, head down, finger on the doorbell.

VERONICA

Ring it again and I brake off your finger  
and insert it way up into your ass.

Wes removes his finger from the button, looks up -- REVEALING  
A HUGE WELT under his right eye. He's not comfortable.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Oh my god!

WES

Yes. It hurts!

He makes his way into the house. Veronica shuts the door behind him.

INT. BASEMENT - LATE DAY

Tommy stares at the TV, remote in hand, incessantly flipping through regularly scheduled programming. SUDDENLY: He leans up. Something unexpected is happening to him.

TOMMY

Oh shit.

Tommy's swimming in Vodka and now rolling on E.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

This is going to be a loooooong day.

INT. KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

Wes sits on the counter. Veronica removes something from the fridge and walks over to him.

WES

You were right.

She hands him a RIB EYE STEAK.

WES (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Wes soothes his swollen eye.

WES (CONT'D)

(re: steak)

Cold.

VERONICA  
Don't be a baby. -- About?

WES  
Everything. Rachel. Me.

VERONICA  
So you are...?

WES  
Yes, I'm...I am...

Veronica knows what he wants to say, she spares him --

VERONICA  
Single?

Wes smiles, nods.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
How'd it go? Breaking the news to  
Rachel?

WES  
Well...unpleasant.

Wes cringes. He adjusts the steak as he recalls and WE --

FLASH ON:

INT. ANONYMOUS LIVING ROOM - DAY

Wes sits, completely vulnerable/desperate, looking up as an  
unseen RACHEL looms over him. He sips soda through a straw.

WES  
...I am! I'm being honest with you,  
please listen. I need you to understand.  
It's not your fault. It's me, and I'm  
sorry, okay. You're great, you're  
wonderful, you're you. And I love you  
but --

Wes takes a sip, looks up to Rachel and what feels like the  
hundreth time in this one-way conversation, he says:

WES (CONT'D)  
I am Gay. Okay! I am ga--

WHACK! Rachel's RIGHT HAND connects with his right eye.

BACK TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

Wes continues to recount. Veronica sympathizes.

WES

Then she threw whatever was in grabbing distance at me.

FLASH ON:

INT. ANONYMOUS LIVING ROOM - DAY

A red-eyed Wes stands in a corner, deflecting flying objects hurled his way by an unseen Rachel.

WES

-- Stop...hold on...calm down...Ow, that burned, what was that? --

He ducks out of frame as a POTTED PLANT soars past, SMASHING into the wall behind him.

BACK TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

A beat. Wes flashes a concerned glance to Veronica with his good eye and offers:

WES

Then she threw a bunch of names at me.

Veronica moves to the fridge.

VERONICA

Barbaric obscenities?

She opens the fridge door, searches.

WES

Names of guys she hooked up with while we dated.

VERONICA

I'm sure she felt completely inadequate, could you blame her?

WES

One was your dear boy Tommy.

Veronica had anticipated that. Does her best to move past it:

VERONICA

Yeah, well, she was out to hurt you.  
Wouldn't put much stock into it.

(looks to Wes)

There really isn't anything to eat in  
here.

Wes subtly indicates the steak he's been holding to his face.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I, in no way, planned on cooking. -- You  
want Chinese? Got leftovers.

WES

Leftover from when?

VERONICA

Last night.

WES

That'll do. Heat me up.

Veronica grabs two Chinese Food containers from the fridge. --

Nukes them in the microwave. --

-- They wait...

VERONICA

Rachel...was never much of a feminine  
creature, so if you think about it, you  
two dating was kinda apropos.

WES

I, humbly, beg your pardon.

VERONICA

She plays catcher for the varsity  
softball team.

WES

She's athletic and you're jealous.

VERONICA

She has a moustache Wes.

WES

She has a strong French Italian  
background. It's not her fault.

VERONICA

Still, she could've of cared, she  
could've naired. Legs, arms, stomach--

WES  
-- You're exaggerating.

VERONICA  
Sasquatch Wes.

WES  
Stop being insensitive, bitch.

VERONICA  
I just call them as I see them.

WES  
Is that what you did this morning? When you told me to look in the mirror and see my gay self.

VERONICA  
I admit it was a boisterous attempt at forcing you to deal with those little voices and strange attractions you've been harboring. But I sensed you were on the edge, so I pushed.

The microwave DINGS.

WES  
And I thank you. But I've actually known who I was for a while now.

Veronica removes the containers. Opens a drawer and fishes out two forks.

VERONICA  
Really?

WES  
Yeah.

VERONICA  
Then why the act?

Veronica hands Wes a container. He picks at his pork fried rice, while she ignores her's, unable to eat.

WES  
Never got comfortable. We were always on the move. Been to six high schools in five states over the last four years. And by the way, Wyoming? There's a reason why it's forgotten as one of the fifty states. Ninety-percent dirt.

VERONICA

Do you feel comfortable now?

WES

Here with you, absolutely. I love you Ronnie. You're probably the best friend I ever had and I really wanted to come out to you. But was never sure on how you'd react to it.

VERONICA

Why tell Rachel?

WES

I always thought college would be my time to shine. Steady environment. Larger community. Path to my future.

VERONICA

She's pregnant isn't she?

WES

College might no longer be an option.

VERONICA

Why, you decide to join the army?

WES

Turns out Mom has a gambling problem and spent most of last year in Atlantic City. Blowing my college fund on craps and no limit poker. She has an aggressive personality.

VERONICA

You're lying.

He is not.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You're not lying.

WES

Looks like I'll be spending a few years in...Community College.

VERONICA

Oh my god Wes. Damn, I'm sorry.

WES

It happened.

Wes slides off the counter, moves to the kitchen table.



WES (CONT'D)

Sometimes you forget your parents are human too. Which makes the reminder that much more harsh.

Veronica watches him as he takes a seat the table, impressed by his composure.

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S HOUSE - MAGIC HOUR

Mr. Farley and his rake, propped up against the porch. He's enjoying a CIGAR as the sun goes down, ending his day.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MAGIC HOUR

Street lamps and porch lights burn up the neighborhood as the OLD CAR moves down the street.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - OLD CAR - MAGIC HOUR

The OLD CAR comes to a stop at the curb, underneath a street lamp. The engine killed, headlights extinguish.

INT. OLD CAR - MAGIC HOUR

A cigarette is lit. Smoke fills the front seat. The man behind the wheel brings a NOTEBOOK to his lap. He methodically takes pen to paper.

INT. BASEMENT - MAGIC HOUR

The majority of light comes via the muted TV. Tommy is on the couch, sweating, smiling, gone...enjoying the ride.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The day is officially gone. The moon now rules the sky.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

AT THE TABLE, Wes scrapes the bottom of the container. Veronica, her food ignored, finishes the Sunday Jumble.

WES

You talk to Tommy today?

VERONICA

Yeah. He's in the basement.

Wes pauses, surprised/intrigued.

WES

Seriously?

VERONICA

Tommy showed up this morning. Decided to  
down shots of Vodka and watch porn.

WES

And?

VERONICA

There's no and.

WES

There has to be an and.

VERONICA

And Veronica's not in the mood to deal  
with a drunk and hormonally erect Tommy.  
Not today at least.

WES

Then why put up with it?

VERONICA

He says he loves me.

WES

That's unfortunate. -- What do you say?

Veronica looks up from her jumble, bothered.

VERONICA

I say thank you and give him a juice box  
and a cookie.

Wes eyes Veronica, demanding honesty.

WES

Are you in love with Tommy?

Veronica knows she has to answer that question, but first:

VERONICA

(re: Chinese food)  
You done with that?

WES

Every bite. Yes.

Veronica grabs his container and heads for the sink.

Wes watches her as she cleans some dishes...

VERONICA

Okay -- prior to today Veronica had this haunting premonition that Tommy saw her as Alison and not Veronica and still loves Alison but uses Alison's cheap designer imposter sister to fill the emotional void created by her absence and to lend a consistent hand to the preservation of the sexual tenderness that Alison and Tommy shared with one other. Bottom line, Veronica always felt: used. And was copacetic as long as she remained: happy. Content.

WES

You no longer feel that way?

VERONICA

Now Veronica thinks she's falling in love and needs confirmation that Tommy is legitimately into her. Not who she aesthetically resembles.

Wes wants to help, formulates an idea...

WES

Tommy's in the basement?

VERONICA

Right.

WES

And drunk?

VERONICA

Like shit on a bar stool.

WES

I see...

VERONICA

(alarmed)

Why, what? What are you thinking?

Wes gets up, grabs Veronica's hand and leads her to --

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - NIGHT

Wes and Veronica in front of the basement door.

WES

Can I go down?

VERONICA  
For what purpose?

WES  
I don't know. Put my homosexuality to task.

VERONICA  
You want to seduce the guy I just told you I'm possibly in love with?

WES  
More or less.

VERONICA  
Don't you think you need to mourn your hetero-self a bit longer.

Veronica has pegged Wes's motives all wrong. He retorts:

WES  
My intentions are purely beneficial to you and your state of mind.

VERONICA  
This is sick.

WES  
Relax, Sir Walter Raleigh. Nothing inappropriate is going to happen. That's stupid. I will merely try and talk to the lad and get some answers for you.

Veronica doesn't take her eyes off of Wes. Still unsure.

WES (CONT'D)  
Look, two of the most honest moments in one's life is when drunk and when found naked and wet.

VERONICA  
Alright, alright. Shutup.

She opens the door.

WES  
Destiny awaits --

VERONICA  
--Just go.

Wes YELPS as Veronica PUSHES him in, shuts/locks the door.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
I need new friends.

Veronica exits.

WES (O.S.)  
I heard that.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica at her desk, staring at her copy of "IF". She puts the printout down and writes purposely in her notebook.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
"If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken, twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools. Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken. And stoop, and build them up with worn out tools."

The DOORBELL RINGS -- Shooting Veronica in the back. She slumps in her chair...The DOORBELL RINGS again.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
(rising)  
I need a butler.

Upon leaving her room, she shuts off the light, closes the door.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The porch light pops on. The front door opens and Veronica finds nothing. Not even a note. All is quiet on Sherwood Drive.

She investigates a bit further...and there it is:

REVEAL VERONICA'S CAR -- Decorated with a DOZEN EGGS, one of the PUMPKINS from the front porch, and the words SLUT and WHORE appear in the windows via white shoe polish.

Veronica digests it: par for the course.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Veronica takes a GARDEN HOSE to her car. Blasting away the yolk, pumpkin seeds, and slander. She looks dazed, tired.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
You ever actually take the time to observe the suburbs at night?  
(MORE)

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

The flickering blue light of the television glowing in living rooms as husbands and wives relax after a nice family dinner. The kids upstairs doing homework, dog asleep in the corner, garbage is by the curb and things are just...perfect. Sublime. Heavenly. It's so god damn eerie. And my house is painfully out of its element here. Or maybe my house is the element but the template is misunderstood. Perhaps normality has evolved and the walls of these quaint suburban homes house nothing but landmarks of fully functioning families of dysfunction.

Veronica drops the hose. A stark realization hits her:

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I need food.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica at the kitchen table, primed to force herself into eating her Chinese Food, THEN --

BRIE (O.S.)

Hey Ronnie.

BRIE takes a seat across from her.

Veronica drops her fork. Spitefully acknowledges her guest:

VERONICA

Hi.

BRIE

You know Chinese food really isn't good for you.

VERONICA

I know it's full of protein and low in fat.

BRIE

All that cholesterol and sodium is bound to kill you.

VERONICA

Just about anything in society will kill you these days. And I don't want to go out on an empty stomach.

BRIE  
It's your funeral.

VERONICA  
Leave me alone, alright. I'm hungry and trying to stuff my face while you on the other hand are taking a break from just...getting stuffed. Bully for you.

Brie, all smiles, genuinely responds with:

BRIE  
How are you?

VERONICA  
I'll be better tomorrow. Or when you leave. Whatever comes first.

BRIE  
You really have to be a bitch all the time?

VERONICA  
Look, whoever you are: get out of my house.

BRIE  
Don't remember me, do you?

VERONICA  
I remember letting you in the door three hours ago and now regretting to take into consideration the fact that you could be a Jehovah's witness type A personality who would be near impossible to exterminate from the premises.

BRIE  
God, you have changed.

VERONICA  
I've changed? When did you even know me? Who are you?

BRIE  
Brienne Evegan. We had Chemistry together freshman year. Mrs. Fox. Second period.

VERONICA  
No bells are ringing up here.

BRIE

We were lab partners for christ sake.

Veronica does remember, but won't give her the satisfaction.

VERONICA

I am truly sorry for not being able to recall every irrelevant character in the movie that is my life. There's a lot of extras forced to do their own makeup and who have nothing to say.

BRIE

You know...the last year and a half I continuously stuck up for you. Never an unkind word passed these lips. But, shit if all the girls in our high school aren't right about the kind of person you are. If you possessed even half the charm your sister had, or was even half the human being: You could be someone worth knowing. But instead, you walk around the halls thinking your shit don't stink and make damn sure everyone gets a strong whiff of your ego and condescension. Because you are Veronica Taylor: the girl who gets anything she wants and has nothing that she deserves.

VERONICA

First off, I know my shit stinks and I've accepted that. Secondly, Who the...do you think you are!? What makes you so god damn special that you can come in here and judge me, criticize me, tell me what I am. So we sat together two years ago in Chem class, big deal. Forget what you heard. You don't know me. You're just someone who comes by and bangs my drug dealing brother.

BRIE

You don't know him either do you?

VERONICA

I know enough not to get involved.

BRIE

You know that he misses you? That he's full of shame and regret.

VERONICA

What are you, his publicist?



BRIE  
I'm just his girlfriend.

VERONICA  
Really?

BRIE  
Yeah.

VERONICA  
You guys in love?

BRIE  
We are.

VERONICA  
(sincerely)  
Good. I'm happy for you. Both.

A beat. Veronica picks at her Chinese food. Brie had an agenda, she gets back to it:

BRIE  
I know all about your sister. About the note she left. About why she left.

VERONICA  
What did I ever do to you? We had a nice little moment, then you go ahead and verbally fart in my general direction.

BRIE  
Tell me about Alison.

Veronica chuckles, reaching her wits end.

VERONICA  
As much as I'd love to continue this little congenial exchange between old acquaintances, I'm, unfortunately, going to have to insist that you leave. Now.

BRIE  
If you really want me to go, I'll go. I do have better things to do. -- But when was the last time you talked to a girl your age? When was the last time someone at school gave you the time of day or even regarded your existence?

Veronica stares at Brie, intrigued.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

VERONICA

Don't move.

Veronica exits. The Chinese food catches Brie's eye.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The door is open and no one is there. Veronica checks for a note...nope. Veronica takes a look at the DRIVEWAY and NOTICES:

HER CAR. The front tire has been SLASHED. No air remains.

VERONICA

Jesus! What next?

BARKER (O.S.)

Ronnie baby, you're so fine, I'll drink  
you down like a wine --

Veronica turns as Barker rapidly approaches from the side of the house.

BARKER (CONT'D)

-- take my time, and make you scream so  
good, it should be a crime. -- Hey  
sweetie, Elvis in the building yet?

VERONICA

You ring my doorbell?

BARKER

I'm lookin' for Elvis. Borrowed some  
money from my Moms, so I'm legit, wanna  
pick up some fly shit.

Veronica turns, heads back inside.

VERONICA

He'll call you.

The FRONT DOOR SLAMS on Barker.

BARKER

Gimme five minutes baby to turn your life  
around. -- Damn!

Barker retreats and the CAMERA MOVES AWAY FROM him...and PUSHES IN ON THE BASEMENT WINDOW..."MUSIC" bleeds out.

INT. KITCHEN/BASEMENT DOOR - NIGHT

"MUSIC" bleeds as the CAMERA MOVES AWAY from the basement door to the...

KITCHEN TABLE, where Brie is conspicuously chewing as Veronica enters behind her, listening...to the bleeding "MUSIC."

BRIE  
(hiding a mouthful of food)  
Someone in your basement?

VERONICA  
(curious)  
Back in a sec.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A COLORFUL DISCO BALL STROBE LIGHT rotating on a table. The once bleeding "MUSIC" is now in full effect. It is "HEART AND SOUL" by Ella Fitzgerald.

Veronica comes down the steps. There's a slight hesitation in her step. She reaches bottom, takes a few deliberate paces forward and notices --

Wes and Tommy SLOW DANCING. More like: Wes holding Tommy up.

They don't notice as Veronica takes in the scene for a beat, then retreats upstairs.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica breezes past Brie, eating her Chinese food.

INT. STORAGE CLOSET - NIGHT

Veronica searches through a closet in the hall. Extracts a POLAROID CAMERA.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica stops to offer an explanation to Brie, but can't find the words...she goes to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Tommy and Wes, dancing. "HEART AND SOUL" continues...

VERONICA (O.S.)  
Hey! Fred and Grace!

Wes and a completely wasted Tommy turn to face -- VERONICA, with the Polaroid Camera ready to fire.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Smile!

WES

Wait, wait! Hold on!

Wes positions himself and Tommy into a fitting pose for the moment.

WES (CONT'D)

Fire at will.

She CLICKS. The Camera WHIRS and spits out the POLAROID.

Tommy's eyes open as a result of the FLASH.

Veronica holds the POLAROID in her hand. Waits for it to develop. She's actually enjoying this.

VERONICA

Quite an ambiance you've conjured up here. The King and Queen of the alternative lifestyle prom share a dance.

WES

We were only talking.

VERONICA

Really? You didn't try and make out with my boyfriend?

WES

I'm not a psycho, come on. This is new to me. Baby steps.

VERONICA

Crawl before you can walk across the gay carpet.

WES

Cute.

VERONICA

You get any answers?

WES

He's been a drunken useless mess. Thought I'd make him feel at ease with some soulful, yet gentle rocking.

VERONICA  
Ella Fitzgerald?

WES  
Your Mom has a kick ass record  
collection.

VERONICA  
It's my Dad's.

Veronica glances at the POLAROID, smirks, hands it to Wes.  
He digs the image. Has an idea for it:

WES  
Two words...Year Book.

VERONICA  
Yearbook's one word.

WES  
I'm keeping this.

A half-conscious Tommy pipes up.

TOMMY  
What's with the Grandma music? -- What  
time is it?

WES  
Time for you to start thinking up excuses  
for why you won't be in school tomorrow.

VERONICA  
It's almost nine, babe.

WES  
(whispering in Tommy's ear)  
Excuse number one: up super late 'cause  
Wes Jacobs taught me how to be a High  
School God amongst boys by sho--

TOMMY  
--I gotta get home, take the trash out.

VERONICA  
...Wes...?

WES  
(in Tommy's ear)  
By showing me that saccharine tongues and  
schmaltzy melodies enlarge the member and  
sweeten the soul if used properly.

VERONICA

Stop it!

WES

Subliminal learning!

VERONICA

What you're saying doesn't even make sense!

TOMMY

Sunday's garbage night. Mom is gonna be pissed if I don't...garbage cans...

A beat. Veronica looks to Wes.

VERONICA

Can you take him home? Please.

WES

Yeah. I can do that.

THEN: Tommy looks at Veronica. His eyes open. Meeting hers. He smiles.

TOMMY

Ah, it's you.

Veronica returns the smile.

VERONICA

It's me alright.

TOMMY

Alison. -- Where've you been? I missed you.

Veronica seems unfazed by the faux pas. Wes seems concerned.

VERONICA

Ha, ha. That's not funny, Tommy, and I'm not in the mood. So let's just--

Tommy steps toward Veronica.

TOMMY

Alison. Why'd you leave?

VERONICA

Tommy, stop! I know you can hear me in there. Play nice and maybe we'll have sex tonight, okay!

TOMMY

No...we never...I feel...dreaming. Is this real?

WES

Total hallucination.

Tommy moves to HUG Veronica.

TOMMY

Alison...Come here...

Veronica rejects the hug. Tommy FALLS to the floor.

Veronica can't pretend anymore, she's pissed, hurt. Anger boils over.

VERONICA

Man...shit! Screw you Tommy! Asshole!

Veronica KICKS Tommy in the stomach. Twice. Hard. Wes intervenes.

WES

Whoa, hey! Let's not beat the boy to a pulp.

Veronica backs off, seething. Wes helps Tommy up.

WES (CONT'D)

Sure it's not the first time he got wasted and mistook you for your identical twin. Who just happens to be his ex.

TOMMY

...who kicked me? Shit hurts...

Veronica burns a hole through Tommy with her stare.

WES

And I think he's on something more than Vodka. Ignore it.

VERONICA

No! No, Wes! I'm gonna get me some answers!

Veronica SNAPS her fingers in front of Tommy's face, desperately seeking his focus.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Hey! Tommy! Asshole! Look at me! Right here, look into my eyes! Who do you see?! What do you feel?!

Tommy does his best to abide.

TOMMY

...sorry. Sorry I hurt you...I need you.

VERONICA

Do you love me?! Say my name! Do you love me?!

TOMMY

...sorry...

Veronica, beyond desperate, grabs Tommy by the collar.

VERONICA

Say my name god dammit, please! Look at me and say my name!

Tommy caresses Veronica's hair, moves his hand to her cheek. Soft, innocent. He looks her in the eyes:

TOMMY

...Princess...

Veronica's heart falls to her ankles.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

..I love you Princess, I do...

Veronica gives up. She can't win here.

VERONICA

And she loved you.

She lets go of Tommy, gives Wes a nod and he drags him away.

A beat. Veronica refusing to cry. Refusing to be beaten.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Brie eating Veronica's Chinese food. A RUCKUS grabs her attention as --

WES AND TOMMY emerge from the basement. Wes shoots her a friendly nod, moves on.



INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Veronica sits on the arm of the couch, eyes shut, willing/wishing this day was all a dream.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Wes carries Tommy across the yard. A bag of weed falls from Tommy to the cold ground.

I/E. WES'S CAR - SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Wes plops Tommy down in the passenger seat, shuts the door. He walks around to the driver side. Enters.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Wes's car drives off into the suburban night...Somewhere... the OLD CAR is seen.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Veronica's eyes still closed. A beat. They open. She checks her surroundings, realizes: this is not a dream. This day is happening.

As if she's been shot out of a canon: Veronica JUMPS off the couch, FLIES up the steps --

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica surfaces. She's on a mission.

BRIE

You okay? I saw--

VERONICA

--So, Brie...

Veronica sits.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Aside from my massive ego and legion of scholastic accomplishments, tell me: what is the quintessential reason for me being shunned and falsified by all the girls in our high school?

BRIE

Easy...he just left.

VERONICA

Wes?

BRIE

Tommy.

Veronica exhales a beat, having anticipated the answer. Now that she's heard it, she wants to scream.

VERONICA

Why?

BRIE

Because everyone wants him. He has this unique quality that no matter what he says or does you still look at him and just want to grab him and rip off his pants and...

VERONICA

Rub the magic lamp.

BRIE

Exactly.

VERONICA

I know this. I know everyone wanted Tommy. I know he chose Alison. I know that he loved her and that no one could turn his head, make him sway.

BRIE

You did. And you still do.

VERONICA

And now I'm seen as the school whore? That's bullshit.

BRIE

It's not like you try and stagger away from the stigma that everyone has tagged you with.

VERONICA

You're right. But everyone should be thanking me. Not hating me.

BRIE

How do you see that?

VERONICA

'Cause now Tommy will hook up with anyone who can come up with a good enough reason for him to do so.

BRIE

And how does that make you feel?

VERONICA

He always comes home to me.

BRIE

You love him?

Veronica attempts to relate her motives/her reasons, to Brie in the only way she really knows how:

VERONICA

You ever read Macbeth?

BRIE

Cliff Notes. Shakespeare's language is way to cryptic for my taste.

A beat, "How dare she badmouth Shakespeare!" CAMERA STAYS, MOVES IN ON Veronica during the following monologue --

VERONICA

Macbeth wanted to be King of Scotland, but more so, that is what his wife, Lady Macbeth desired. So they plotted and killed the only man standing in their way of the throne: Duncan. Macbeth got to be King. And during his kingship he was plagued by numerous enemies who despised his aggressive behavior. He wanted it all. And then there was Lady Macbeth, who was systematically going mad. Consumed with guilt concerning the murder of Duncan. She slept-walked, she had hallucinations, she eventually...went all-together Koo-koo for Cocoa Puffs. Killed herself. Perpetual blood on the hands. Propelling Macbeth into a deep depression. He eventually lost his throne. And ultimately, his life.

Brie, not getting it. Or not caring.

BRIE

What is your point?

Veronica simplifies.

VERONICA

If I sever this relationship with Tommy it will cause more damage than repair. To both of us.

BRIE

You're using each other? And aware of it?

VERONICA

We're swimming in reverie, trying not to drown. And it's the healthiest thing I got going for me.

Brie stands up. She tried.

BRIE

Wonderful. Best of luck to you then --

VERONICA

Thank you.

Brie stops, not looking at Veronica as she offers a final thought to the world:

BRIE

But motivations fueled by guilt are not and can not be the least bit genuine. But what do I know? I'm just a girl who comes by and bangs your drug dealing brother.

Brie exits. Veronica ruminates. A beat. Veronica leans across the table, grabs her Chinese food container -- it's empty.

VERONICA

...Rude...

She's angry, but expected nothing less.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

All is quiet. A light in Veronica's bedroom window burns.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica in her bed, stares straight ahead. Her copy of "IF" face down on her chest. Notebook in her lap.

VERONICA (V.O.)

"If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew to serve your turn long after they are gone, and hold on when there is nothing in you except the will which says to them Hold On!"...Can you believe this shit is a quarter of our semester grade?

There's a KNOCK on her door. It opens and Wes enters, hands behind his back.

Veronica barely looks at him as he stands by her desk.

WES

Brought something for you.

VERONICA

Is it a certain someone's head on a pike?

WES

Have you ever had a pet?

VERONICA

We all did at some point. Elvis had a gerbil, Cyclops: dead. Sucked up by the vacuum. Al had a cat, Lucky: dead. Hit by car. Me: had a turtle named Uncle Jesse.

WES

What happened to him?

VERONICA

Ran away.

WES

Well...

Wes reveals what he's been hiding behind his back --

A small FISH BOWL complete with a small FISH making the rounds inside. She gives it a glance.

WES (CONT'D)

Meet the new member of the family.

Wes puts the FISH BOWL and a container of fish food on her desk.

WES (CONT'D)

They say watching fish can reduce anxiety, stress, and blood pressure.

VERONICA

Right after Lucky died Al got a goldfish from our Grandmother. King Midas.

WES

Let me guess: found belly up the next morning.

VERONICA

Two weeks. Natural causes, but homicide was never ruled out. No subsequent pets were introduced...as ordered by PETA.

WES

Do you miss her?

VERONICA

I neglected to form a tight bond. Goldfish have a short-term memory that lasts only three seconds. I don't have that type of commitment.

Wes smiles. He genuinely loves this girl and wants to help.

WES

Alison. Do you miss her?

VERONICA

At times.

WES

Where do you think she is?

VERONICA

She's in this house. Continuously haunting me.

WES

Are you mad at her?

Veronica sets her homework aside, sits up her bed, knees to her chin.

VERONICA

Goddamn. This day has been relentless. Did a memo go out? Veronica Taylor, 160 Sherwood Drive, in dire need of psychoanalysis, come one come all, bring cake and uncensored adamant thoughts and opinions regarding her state of mind.

WES

I'm only trying to understand why you can't make peace with yourself. Move on.

Veronica glares at Wes. He holds his ground, challenging her. With a sudden burst of energy: Veronica moves off her bed and to her CLOSET.

Wes watches, uncertain.

She opens the closet, reaches up into the corner and produces a SHOEBOX.

VERONICA

You know my neighbor Mr. Farley?

WES

...sure...

And on that, Veronica's gone. Leaving an addled Wes behind.

WES (CONT'D)

(to the fish)

Stay.

He follows after her.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - PINK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica sits on the edge of the bed fit for a teenage princess, SHOEBOX in hand. Wes eventually enters a room he's never seen before.

VERONICA

In January, Mr. Farley's wife died. I went to the funeral despite not knowing a thing about her. Except her address.

Veronica opens the SHOEBOX. The contents: pictures, notes, letters and a few trinkets. Certain memories.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

She only came out of the house like three times a year. And when she did, she would yell at the grass. Accused 'em of being communists, spreading hay fever, and teenage pregnancy. -- But that's it. That was the only thing I could remember. Her cursing the lawn. I know her existence went deeper, but that's what she was to me. A joke without a punchline. Alison was able to see a tragedy. She saw what Mr. Farley felt. Complete loss. Lost. Despite never having the actual experience, she knew. Heightened emotion was both her gift and her curse. During the ceremony, she cried everytime she looked at him. Me, all I could think about was my own funeral.

Veronica is nothing but emotion. Her pain is subtle, yet evident.

WES  
That's normal.

Veronica removes A FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER from the shoebox.  
She unfolds it. Slowly.

VERONICA  
How I'd want it to be an event. Live music, huge dance floor, flashing lights, and a grand send off, July 4th Governor's Island style. I'd want people to say, "You know Veronica Taylor?" "Not really." "But I heard her funeral was kick ass." "Great show, man, had to be there." It'd be like Woodstock, '69, peace, love and understanding. A true liberation of the soul.

She offers the PAPER to Wes.

WES  
What's this?

VERONICA  
Alison's runaway note.

Wes takes the NOTE, scans it. He offers it back to Veronica.

WES  
I don't want to read this.

She ignores the offer.

VERONICA  
Read it and maybe you'll understand.

WES  
I already understand.  
(re: note)  
"It is a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Veronica appreciated the Shakespeare. Wes knows that. He places the NOTE on the bed.

WES (CONT'D)  
I never really got to know your sister, from what I gather...she's a fucking baby who ran away when things got difficult.

Without warning, Veronica is on the verge of tears.



WES (CONT'D)

And if you would s--

VERONICA

--Me...Me! I'm the reason she left. I'm the reason she's not here. I'm the reason why Tommy's so...lost! I'm the reason why my Mom and Dad feel constant pangs of hate when in each other's field of gravity! I represent a documented fact that they are failures as parents! I offer misery! I'm sad, puerile, I'm pitiful!...and so god damn depressed.

A flood of tears want to flow from Veronica's eyes. The dam doesn't break, but it's leaking.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

And so...angry at who I was and what I've become. I've literally reached a point where I don't want to live but I don't want to die either. I'm scared and I all I can think of doing is curling up into a ball and hiding in the dark until everyone forgets who I am! -- I want to be able to start over.

WES

You can.

VERONICA

I can't! I can't stop --

WES

Stop what? Hating yourself?

Veronica answers that question with her swollen eyes.

VERONICA

The sad truth of the matter is that I have always hated myself and it has rendered me completely, miserably, numb. And I can't fully expect you to understand.

Veronica wipes her eyes. Embarrassed. Wes sits next to her on the bed.

WES

I understand what it feels like to be ashamed of who you are or what you've done. You know that.

(MORE)

WES (CONT'D)

It's okay as long as you're not hurting yourself in the process by dwelling on past events and clinging to chaotic relationships. Because there's not going to be any room left to find happiness. Time to move on.

A beat.

VERONICA

You make it sound it so simple.

WES

Cause it is. You open up! You bury it! Burn it!

Wes pleads to Veronica:

WES (CONT'D)

Break it off with Tommy! Completely! Apologize to your parents! Show that you do love them and say how proud you are of them! Go buy a dime bag from your brother! Roll a couple of joints, blast some Petty or Marley and shoot the stoned shit with him! Reminisce! Then: you join the yearbook staff and inspire upper and underclassmen for years to come with your insightful thoughts and ideas on the High School experience! And here --

Wes grabs the NOTE, CRUMPLES it into a ball.

Veronica sits still as Wes opens the window and tosses the NOTE out of it.

INSERT: NOTE LANDING ON THE FRONT LAWN.

VERONICA

That was drastic.

WES

You might be next.

A beat, Veronica digests what Wes has just done for her.

VERONICA

I hate you.

WES

You love me.

VERONICA

No...I Hate You.

WES

Well, alright...I can live with that.

Veronica presents her whites. And it's a true smile filled with unfiltered joy. Wes smiles back at her.

VERONICA

Hey...You want to make out?

Wes can only shake his head in response, "That's my Ronnie,"  
And:

WES

That's my cue.

VERONICA

-- Just a little?

He moves to the bedroom door.

WES

You need a ride to school tomorrow?

VERONICA

No. I think I'll walk.

Wes hangs by the door, observing the moment.

WES

Bye Veronica.

Veronica looks over her shoulder to Wes.

VERONICA

Bye Wes.

He goes, ending an overly poignant moment.

Veronica peruses the "Taylor family memories" she has hidden away in that shoebox.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD/SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Wes walks across the front yard to his car. THEN: TIRES SCREECH and the OLD CAR SPEEDS past. Wes watches the car move down Sherwood Drive, continues on to his ride home away from this house, this day.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Barker comes struttin' across the lawn. SUDDENLY: He stops, looks down, and is beyond flabbergasted as he picks up Tommy's fallen bag of weed. He sniffs it just to make sure: Score! -- He takes the bag and runs.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica at her desk, writing feverishly in a notebook. "If" is close by.

IN QUICK SUCCESSION: Veronica puts her pen down. Rips a page out of her notebook. Folds it up. Stuffs it in an ENVELOPE. Licks it, sealing the deal.

She gets up.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica enters, props the ENVELOPE up against the centerpiece of the kitchen table.

It's addressed to "MOM & DAD." She leaves.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Veronica climbs up the steps -- the DOORBELL RINGS. Her body sinks, and in a zombie-like state, she reverses direction.

I/E. FOYER/FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Veronica opens the front door, slightly relieved by who it is.

VERONICA

Hi.

REVEAL ERIC, he looks cold.

ERIC

Can I come in? It's a bit chilly around here.

VERONICA

Sure, what's up?

Veronica lets Eric in. Shuts the door.

ERIC

Oh...I don't know. I was...walking over here to see if you wanted to get a late dinner or such, and...

VERONICA  
And what? What's wrong?

ERIC  
What's wrong? I'll tell you what's wrong. -- You're wrong! You hypocritical bitch!

VERONICA  
I'm a what?

ERIC  
A bitch!

VERONICA  
A what!?

ERIC  
A bitch!

VERONICA  
Say it again!

ERIC  
How could you!?!...How could be so maniacal and...bovine!?

VERONICA  
Bovine, really!? -- Eric, please tell me what this about?

ERIC  
I know about Tommy.

VERONICA  
Chelsea told you, okay. That explains your anger but...I don't see how I'm the bitch here.

ERIC  
Oh, you don't?

VERONICA  
No, I don't.

ERIC  
You don't?!

VERONICA  
I don't! -- Are you on drugs!? Seriously!?

ERIC

The only thing I'm high on is rage. And you. You're high!...high on my shit list. You're a bad person, Veronica! And I'm pissed!

VERONICA

Eric! What the hell is this!? Think before you speak, don't say something else you're going to regret.

ERIC

I already regret plenty, thank you very much. I regret feeling sorry for you after Al left. I regret the time I lost trying to help you. I regret being your friend--

VERONICA

--Why? What? Where is this coming from?

ERIC

You're guilty, just like Chelsea. You were so sick of seeing Alison happy for once that you sought out and destroyed her source of happiness. She had someone who cared about her, and you, you...Ruined Everything.

VERONICA

Where are you getting this? This isn't true! You know me!

ERIC

No. I was the only one who didn't.

Eric pulls ALISON'S NOTE out his pocket. He holds it in front of her.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Ever hear of a trash can? You should, because that is what you are...trash.

Eric, with a smug look on his face, reads from the note.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Veronica is a cancer. A disease infecting whoever she wants with her words, looks, and actions. She exists only to please herself."

VERONICA

...Eric...

ERIC

(reading)

"You have taken the sole reason for my existence from me. My first and only love, Tommy. You have screwed my perfect existence and countless others in our High School. You've probably convinced him that he loves you. How proud you must be."

(Looking at Veronica)

You are a bad, sad human being. And you disgust me.

Eric throws the NOTE at Veronica.

ERIC (CONT'D)

That's it.

Eric opens, SLAMS the door.

Veronica, in a state of shock, bends down to pick up the NOTE, chases after Eric --

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Eric disappears along the side of the house. Veronica stands alone on the front steps. Alison's NOTE burns in her hand. She looks at it, then looks to her vandalized car.

Her face reads the culmination of the days events.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Veronica stares at her reflection in the mirror. This is Veronica finally looking at Veronica. And she's disgusted. -- She's experiencing a true moment of clarity, allowing her to see her future, not her past.

VERONICA (V.O.)

Rehabilitation.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica at her desk, writing in a notebook. Her fish to her right. Copy of "IF" to her left.

VERONICA (V.O.)

It works for some of us. Whether it's in psycho therapy, drug rehab, prison reform or religious synagogues.

(MORE)

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Like it or not, everyone goes through an  
unexpected growth period.

EXT. VERONICA'S DRIVEWAY/SHERWOOD DRIVE - NIGHT

Veronica drags a garbage can to the curb.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
You come out different. Your view is  
skewed. For better or worse. They  
condition you to see other people's point  
of views. Mostly: their view of you.

AT THE CURB -- Veronica lifts the lid to the garbage can,  
shoves Alison's NOTE inside, replaces the lid.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Veronica stands outside Elvis's door, performs the SECRET  
KNOCK. A deep breath.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
I see that I've been callow in dealing  
with everyone in my life since...since  
anytime worth remembering.

She opens the door, enters with purpose.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Veronica's "MOM AND DAD" ENVELOPE ON THE TABLE.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
And because of that, I only wanted to  
say...I was sorry.

A HAND enters frame, snatching up the ENVELOPE.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's dark. Veronica sits upright in her bed, a bundle of  
nervous energy. There is a KNOCK at her door.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
The term sorry is a lot like the term  
love. The majority of its usage is out  
of obligation or selfishness. Rarely do  
you mean it, or better yet, feel it in  
every bone of your body when you say it  
to someone.

Veronica's MOM and DAD have entered her room. They stand in  
front of their little girl. Veronica, full of fear,  
loneliness, and regret, smiles at them.



Her Mom HUGS her. Tight. Meaningful. -- They break.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 God damn if I wasn't sorry for what I've  
 done. I wanted my parents back. And I  
 know they wanted a daughter back.

Veronica and her Dad exchange a look, understanding each other.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 I wasn't their little Princess, but I was  
 their daughter.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Veronica's copy of "IF" and her completed written assignment on her desk.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
 "If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
 with sixty seconds' worth of distance  
 run, yours is the Earth and everything  
 that's in it."

Veronica in bed, comfortably under her blankets.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 "And which is more, you'll be a Man my  
 son." -- "If" by Rudyard Kipling. Piece  
 of cake.

Her door slightly open, this day officially over, her future now a possibility...Veronica closes her eyes, falls asleep.

DISSOLVE TO BLACK:

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE/VERONICA'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

The SUN on its way up. It's unbearably bright.

An OLD CAR stutters to the curb, drops the Monday NEWSPAPER by the driveway, moves on to the next subscriber.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica in bed, eyes open, staring at the ALARM CLOCK: 6:39.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
 There's this moment when you wake up and  
 realize what day it is.

A pregnant beat, THEN: 6:40 hits and the ALARM CLOCK BUZZES. Veronica immediately silences it.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But it doesn't matter because you know  
today is going to be just like yesterday.

She throws the covers off, hops out of bed.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

Veronica at the sink brushing her teeth, water runs.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
The only thing that changes is your  
clothes and the weather.

She spits, takes a beat to look at herself in the mirror.

VERONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
God that statement feels so foreign to me  
right now.

She's never looked as happy as she does right now.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Veronica on her bed, ready for school, stuffs her notebook inside her backpack. She springboards up. More than eager to start the day.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Veronica, Mom, and Dad are seated around the kitchen table eating breakfast, sipping coffee, reading the newspaper, etc.

They're all happy...it's a good morning in deed.

VERONICA (V.O.)  
Now this was huge. You might be thinking "big deal, they're eating together, that means shit." I guess the best way to explain this to you is...well, I can't. Because when you lose something that you took for granted...yeah, you miss it, but you're also consumed with self-loathing and misdirected anger because you wish you would of paid more attention to it when you had it. I miss my sister. I missed Elvis. I missed my parents. And this tiny, stupid little meal we are having makes me smile. And I will never forget what it tastes like.

TIME DISSOLVES AS: Dad says goodbye, heads for work -- Next, Mom's turn: leaving Veronica alone in the kitchen -- She finishes the Jumble -- Rinses out the dishes.

INT. FOYER - MORNING

Veronica puts on her backpack, opens the door, exits.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MORNING

The front door shuts behind Veronica. There is a PIECE OF PAPER attached to it. Veronica didn't see it. Or did she?

A gust of wind blows. The PAPER FLAPS against the door, demanding Veronica's attention. She turns, takes notice of:

ALISON'S WRINKLED RUNAWAY NOTE taped to the door. Veronica, a mass of confusion, takes the letter down.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Veronica walks down the sidewalk, reading the NOTE.

INT. OLD CAR - SHERWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

WE ARE WATCHING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD as Veronica walks away from US. The key in the ignition is turned by the MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL and the OLD CAR RUMBLES to life.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Veronica stops, now aware of the OLD CAR down the street. She takes her backpack off, unzips it, about to put the NOTE in WHEN --

The OLD CAR ROARS up, SLAMS ON THE BRAKES!

It idles adjacent to Veronica for a tension filled beat.

The passenger window rolls down.

Veronica, frozen in fear drenched confusion, stares at the OLD CAR.

The OLD CAR remains silent.

Veronica bends down to get a look at the driver.

The OLD CAR remains silent.

Veronica's backpack falls to the ground, the NOTE is still in her hand.

CLOSE ON Veronica as a calm comes over her as she sticks her head in the car. She smiles, about to speak WHEN SUDDENLY --

The NOTE is ripped from her hand.

Veronica looks up, shocked, as she is now --

Staring down the BARREL OF A GUN.

VERONICA

No way!

ABRUPT CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

AN UNCOMFORTABLE AMOUNT OF SILENCE...

THEN --

A CAR ENGINE REVS...

THEN --

A SINGLE GUN SHOT!...

THEN --

THE CALMING SOUNDS OF THE SUBURBS...

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Veronica's backpack lays by the curb.

INT. VERONICA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

It's empty. The dishes are clean. The Monday newspaper is neatly stacked on the table.

INT. VERONICA'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

It's dark, cold.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dark, cold.

EXT. UNKNOWN FIELD - OLD CAR - MORNING

The OLD CAR parked in an empty lot. A corn field not in harvest this time of year.

The driver side door opens and ALISON exits. She wears a GREY HOODED SWEATSHIRT and has BLACK GLOVES on. A CIGARETTE burns between her fingers.

Her features are identical to Veronica in every way. The main thing that tells us that this is not the Veronica that left for school this morning is her hair: it's BRAIDED into CORNROWS.

She finishes her CIG and quickly pulls the SWEATSHIRT HOOD over her head, shuts the door and moves to the...

TRUNK. Alison pops it open, removes a RED DUFFEL BAG.

She gets back into the OLD CAR. --

FROM A DISTANCE WE SEE Alison in the front seat removing her sweatshirt. A lifeless body sits in the passenger seat. Veronica.

INT. OLD CAR - UNKNOWN FIELD - MORNING

In the PASSENGER SEAT, Veronica, dead. Now dressed in Alison's clothes.

-- Alison positions the GUN in her sisters hand. -- She turns the REARVIEW MIRROR towards the passenger seat. -- Tapes a "SUICIDE NOTE" to the glove box.

EXT. UNKNOWN FIELD - MORNING

Alison, dressed in what Veronica was wearing to school plus a BLUE WOOL CAP on her head, walks away from the OLD CAR. She has the RED DUFFEL BAG with her.

EXT. SHERWOOD DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MORNING

Alison picks up Veronica's backpack, slings it over her shoulder.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The door opens and Alison walks in. She looks around the room, taking it all in. To her: this is a dream come true. A start of a new life.

She drops the backpack to the floor, moves to the closet, where she hides away the RED DUFFEL BAG.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING

Alison in front of the mirror, takes off her BLUE WOOL CAP, revealing her cornrowed braids.

She begins the process of removing them...

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Alison enters, now a spitting image of the Veronica that left for school this morning.

She taps the fish bowl, smiles at her little friend, drops some food his way.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - MORNING

Alison holds the RUNAWAY NOTE, there's blood on it. She sparks up her lighter and BURNS the note, reducing it to nothing but black ash that blows away in the wind.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Alison opens the trunk to Veronica's car, removes the spare tire.

She replaces the flat. Forever remaining cool, calm, and collected.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Veronica's car hood is up, Alison replaces the battery. She looks up for a moment and WAVES, politely acknowledging --

EXT. MR. FARLEY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Mr. Farley as he steps down his front porch and grabs his rake. He cranks out a nod in response to the wave.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Alison throws down the hood. She gets in the car. Starts it up. Backs out of the driveway.

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - STREET CURB - DAY

Veronica's car parks by the curb. The driver's side door opens.

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Alison at the front door. She's scared, nervous. She wants to knock but fear keeps getting the best of her.

Eventually, she musters up enough courage and RINGS the DOORBELL. She instinctively takes a step back, waits...

She's a ball of nervous energy. A second seems like an hour.

She goes to ring again -- BUT: The door opens, a hungover Tommy greets her.

TOMMY  
...hey...

Alison is speechless. She's bursting inside. With a smile on her face and a tear in her eye:

ALISON  
...hi...

TOMMY  
I owe you an apology.

Alison doesn't hear a word he says. She just leaps into his arms. An epic sized HUG ensues.

ALISON  
I love you...I love you...

TOMMY  
I love you too, babe.

ALISON  
That's all I want to say...and hear...

She HUGS him tighter. Making the most of the moment.

INT. TOMMY'S BEDROOM - DAY

There's a litter of clothes on the floor leading to Tommy's bed WHERE --

He and Alison lay under the covers, post coitus. Alison appears to be asleep. Tommy is staring at her. Studying.

Her eyes open, meeting Tommy's...they smile. Kiss.

CLOSE ON Alison. Happy as one can possibly be at any moment, ever.

ALISON (V.O.)  
They use to call me Princess, but my name was Alison. Alison Taylor --

Alison affectionately runs her finger down Tommy's cheek. He grabs her hand, holds it...holds it...kisses it...

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - DAY

Alison moves down the walkway to Veronica's car. She removes a pack of cigarettes from her back pocket. One stick remains and it's upside down. The lucky one.

ALISON (V.O.)  
I'll be found dead in a vehicle not far  
from here. Teenage suicide.

Alison lights the lucky cig. Inhales it: slow, deliberate.

ALISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
There's a note. It will explain  
everything...tragic.

She exhales. It feels like SLOW-MOTION...

I/E. VERONICA'S CAR - DAY

Alison gets in, starts the engine up.

ALISON (V.O.)  
The amazing irony here is that I died, my  
sister died. So...who's really alive?

She takes a long drag off her cig. Drops it out the window.  
Last one she'll ever have.

ALISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Well, I guess I'll see what I can get  
away with.

Alison looks at her reflection in the rear-view mirror,  
fusses with her hair a bit, smiles. THEN --

She sees VERONICA IN THE BACKSEAT. Their eyes meet.

Alison whips her head around: The backseat is empty. She  
checks the rear-view: nothing. She takes a beat, composes.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
(smiling)  
Bitch.

ELVIS COSTELLO'S "VERONICA" starts up, it plays on as --  
Alison shifts, P to D, accelerates.

Veronica's car drives away from Tommy's house...

SUBTITLES FADE UP:

"TO BE CONTINUED..."