

CLIFF NOTES

FADE IN:

INT. DENNINGER PHILLIPS & HEWES - DAY

Phones RINGING, copy machines CHURNING out documents, Secretaries and Office Assistants scurry through the hallways.

ELEVATOR DOORS

DING open. A torrent of Ralph Lauren, Donna Karan, and Armani stampede across the lobby.

TATE KESSLER (26)

A fashion plate junior executive weaves his way through the herd. A curvy RECEPTIONIST approaches. Tate attempts to veer but --

RECEPTIONIST

Denninger said for you to meet him as soon as you arrived.

Tate checks his watch.

TATE

Is he pissed?

RECEPTIONIST

Conference room three.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM THREE

DONALD DENNINGER (59), the Agency's CEO; sits at the far end of the conference table. He closes his leather binder. CLICKS his Waterman Edson pen.

DENNINGER

Well, that should just about do it.

A room full of Suits close their laptops, stuff files in briefcases, begin to rise from the conference table when --

TATE

(rushing in)
Sorry everybody.

No response. No eye contact.

DENNINGER

(to Tate)
Nice of you to join us.

TATE
Mister Denninger let me --

DENNINGER
Sit down Kessler.

Denninger walks to the conference room door; closes it.

DENNINGER
(walking back to his chair)
Do I have to explain to you the finer
points of a 'recession', and the effects
it has on a firm like ours?

TATE
Sir --

DENNINGER
Shut up. If your mom -- God rest her
soul -- hadn't been my secretary for over
twenty years, I'd cut you loose like a
tangled fishing line.

Denninger returns to his seat.

TATE
But Sir --

Denninger waves Tate off.

DENNINGER
I don't want to hear it. Enough.
Against my better judgement...

Tate looks up; SIGHS.

DENNINGER
(reaching into his
briefcase)
Everything you need to know is in here.

Denninger slides a file across the table. Tate opens it;
scans a few of the pages.

TATE
What is this?

DENNINGER
Your last chance.

Off Tate's look --

TATE'S OFFICE

Nothing more than a cubicle with a window. Tate sits in his desk chair. He tosses a baseball up to the ceiling.

Tate's phone RINGS. He pauses, then continues tossing the ball.

The ANSWERING MACHINE kicks in.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Hey Tate, it's Cliff. Dude, I know you're there. Pick up the phone...c'mon man, it's important. It's about last night --

Tate snatches the receiver from the base.

TATE

What about last night?

CLIFF'S APARTMENT

CLIFF CONNERS (25), faded jeans and a sleeveless tee-shirt. He pins the phone against his shoulder as he tidies the living room.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

CLIFF

I think I left Robin's card there.

TATE

At 'DiFabio's'?

CLIFF

Yeah. It had to be there.

TATE

You go.

CLIFF

I can't...my car's in the shop. I'm stuck here 'till Robin comes back to get me.

TATE

Man, Denninger just dropped the 'Trans Global Airlines' account in my lap. I can't fuck this up.

CLIFF

Tate...buddy...I'm begging you. You know how she is about her cards.

(MORE)

CLIFF (CONT'D)

She expects them to have a longer half-life than a carbon-14 atom. If I can't produce that thing then I'm dead meat.

A pause.

CLIFF

Come on. I'll owe you big time. Anything you want.

TATE

Anything?

CLIFF

Anything.

TATE

You'll get Robin to give me Courtney's number?

CLIFF

You get the card...and I'll get you Courtney's number.

TATE

And you gotta get me and Courtney into 'Flicker'.

CLIFF

I'll leave your name at the door.

Another pause.

TATE

All right. What the hell. I'll do it.

Cliff pumps his fist.

CLIFF

Yes.

As Tate grabs his keys --

EXT. DIFABIO'S TRATTORIA - DAY

A little family restaurant nestled at the bottom of a concrete canyon. A sign hangs on the glass pane of the door: closed.

Tate jogs up the block to a WAITER (60's), setting up the sidewalk tables.

TATE
Excuse me, Sir.

WAITER
Si.

TATE
Do you know if anyone found a card here
last night?

WAITER
Ieri sera?

TATE
Yeah. Last night. Did any one leave a
card? In an envelope. Made of paper.
Capiche?

WAITER
Ah, si, si...carta...spazzatura.
(points to the alley)
Spazzatura!

Tate sprints around the corner. Stops when he sees --

A DUMPSTER

Plastic garbage bags balloon above the rusty sides.

Tate walks to the dumpster; flips the lid back. One whiff
and --

TATE
(turning his head away)
Ohhh God.

Tate muscled a couple of bags. Looks underneath.

A bag in the back corner opens up. A newspaper falls out.

Tate jumps; reaches. Almost. He jumps again. Nothing.

Tate grabs the side; jumps. He straddles the corner of
the bin. Struggles to maintain his balance.

Tate steps forward. He teeters. Tate ventures another
step.

His shoe slides off the bag; into some lasagne.

TATE
Awww...shit!

Tate falls forward; he reaches out to break his fall. His hand lands in a pile of baked ziti.

Tate crawls forward. He reaches. Grabs the newspaper; reads the date.

TATE

Yes.

Tate tosses the bag with the newspaper out of the dumpster.

A gravely voice from behind --

GRAVELY VOICE

Hey you! Get out of there!

Tate looks back. Sees --

A HOMELESS MAN

Missing teeth, full beard, soiled army jacket; approaches.

GRAVELY VOICE/HOMELESS MAN

You're gonna ruin my lunch. Damn punk kids. Find your own place to eat. This is my lunch box.

TATE

Sorry.

(jumping out)

I didn't mean to --

HOMELESS MAN

Better not've stepped in my dessert.

Tate dumps the contents of the bag out. He rummages through the papers.

TATE

It's not here.

(spreading the papers)

It's not here.

FEMALE VOICE

Of course not.

Tate stands. He wipes himself down. Straighten his collar.

ANGELA DIFABIO (22), long brown hair bounces with each step. A looker. She waggles a card as she approaches.

ANGELA
Isn't this what you came for.

TATE
Maybe.

Angela hands the card to Tate.

ANGELA
You know, all you had to do was knock on
the door.

TATE
But I talked --

ANGELA
Uncle Carlo? He wouldn't know.

TATE
But where --

ANGELA
Under the dessert cart. I thought
someone might come back looking for it so
I put it in the office.

Angela takes a business card out and taps it into Tate's
shirt pocket.

ANGELA
Next time try ordering off the menu.

She flashes Tate a perfect smile, then walks away.

INT. DENNINGER PHILLIPS & HEWES - LATER

Tate sprints out of the elevator. The Receptionist sees
Tate; stands.

RECEPTIONIST
(waving a note)
Tate.

Tate stops. Walks to her desk.

RECEPTIONIST
(handing him the note)
It's Mister Denninger. He wants to see
you before you leave. I hope you have a
change of clothes...

Tate mopes off.

TATE'S OFFICE

Tate sits at his desk. He opens the file named: TRANS GLOBAL AIRLINES.

Tate's phone RINGS.

TATE
(answering)
Yeah...yeah, I got it.
(pulls out the card)
Look, I'm kinda in the middle of something here...

CLIFF'S APARTMENT - SAME

Neat as a pin. Cliff stands at the front window; looks out as he talks on his phone.

CLIFF
She's on her way...just read it to me.
You know how women are...at least she'll think I read it...I'll just tell her I left it in your car...

TATE'S OFFICE - LATER

Tate hangs up. He puts the card back into the envelope. Flips it over --

THE ENVELOPE

...Cliff's name and a smiley face.

Cliff pulls the card back out. Opens it. His eyes focus on each word.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Tate walks through the empty garage lugging a stack of files under one arm. He pulls out his keys as he reaches his BMW 328i convertible.

TATE (ON HIS CELL)
Old man Denninger thinks I'm a genius.

Tate dumps the files on the passenger seat.

TATE
No, no...I owe it all to you.

Tate climbs in. Inserts the keys.

TATE

You what! You broke up with her! Why?

INT. CLIFF'S CAR - MOVING

Cliff's head swivels as he holds his cell to his ear.

CLIFF

I don't know. She just kept going on and on about that card and how I was the least romantic person she ever met. It got ugly. Anyway, at least I got my car back.

TATE'S CAR - THE FILES

...stacked on the passenger seat.

TATE'S VOICE

Listen to me. No, listen to me. You gotta go back to her. Now. Now...I don't care what I said in the past. This is now...and you need to go back to her and tell her how much you need her...in fact you tell her that you're going to take her away for the weekend.

A Trans Global Airlines ticket jacket lands on top of the files.

TATE'S VOICE

Anywhere you want. Yeah...old man Denninger was so impressed with my work on the Trans Global account that he laid a couple of tickets on me...that's right...anywhere you want. There's just one thing...

INT. TRANS GLOBAL AIRWAYS TERMINAL - NEXT DAY

Cliff's on his cell. He stands in front of the podium. A GATE AGENT types in front of the sign board which reads: FLIGHT #212, MIAMI. Passenger crowd the podium.

CLIFF (ON HIS CELL)

They're not tickets you fucking idiot, they're employee passes...we're flying stand-by. We'll be lucky if we make the flight at all...huh?...She ran into the bathroom crying when the Gate Agent told her that there was no way we'd be sitting together.

(MORE)

CLIFF (ON HIS CELL)

I know, I know...just make sure she
doesn't listen to the audio when they
start the movie.

ROBIN (24) walks out of the restroom. Her face is
flushed. She ties her red hair into a bun and secures it.

Cliff and Robin embrace.

ROBIN

I'm sorry. It's just that I just wanted
everything to be perfect.

CLIFF

It's okay. Everything's gonna be fine.
You'll see.

Cliff rolls his eyes.

ROBIN

You sure?

CLIFF

Yeah, sure.

The Gate Agent lifts the microphone to her mouth.

GATE AGENT

(into the microphone)
Passenger Connors to the podium.

CLIFF

(to Robin)
See, everything's going to be fine.

THE PODIUM

The Gate Agent studies her computer screen. Cliff and
Robin approach.

CLIFF

(to the Gate Agent)
Excuse me, you called our name - Connors.

She hands Cliff his boarding pass.

GATE AGENT

(indifferent)
Seat 17C
(to Robin)
...and you're in 14D. Enjoy your flight.

On Robin's look of dismay --

INT. FLIGHT 212 - CONTINUOUS

Robin and Cliff waddle into the main cabin. The FLIGHT ATTENDANT takes a look at their boarding passes.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
(pointing to the rear)
That way. Center section.

They continue past Passengers cramming their carry-ons into the overhead bins.

CLIFF
(to the Flight Attendant)
Is there a movie on this flight?

The Flight Attendant pull out the movie cartridge. Reads.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
'Cry, Cry Again'

ROBIN
Oh I love that movie!

CLIFF
I didn't even know that was a real movie.

They trudge on through the cabin until --

CLIFF
Ah, here we are. 14D.

14D is a bulkhead seat.

ROBIN
(holding up her carry-on)
What am I going to do with this?

Cliff opens a couple of overhead bins. All full.

CLIFF
I'll take it. I'll put it under the seat in front of me.

ROBIN
Just make sure I get my headphones before the movie starts.

CLIFF
What?

ROBIN

My headphones...I saved them from my last trip so I wouldn't have to pay for another set.

Cliff takes Robin's bag; does a death march to his seat.

MAIN CABIN - LATER

Cliff flips through the pages of the in flight magazine.

A DING rings over the intercom.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT'S VOICE

At the conclusion of our beverage service, we'll be playing a short promotional video and then our movie entitled 'Cry, Cry Again'...you may purchase headsets for five dollars. would appreciate it if you had exact change...thank you...

Robin stands; turns back to Cliff. She points to her ears. Cliff shrugs. He points to the beverage carts blocking both aisleways.

Cliff sinks into his seat; sips his soda. Smiles. He digs Robin's headset out of her bag. Puts the earpiece in each ear and reclines his seat.

Cliff closes his eyes. Listens

IN FLIGHT MONITOR

...shows a Trans Global jet floating through the clouds. As a heavenly melody begins. Lyrics begin to scroll.

At twelve seconds a CHOIR picks up the chorus.

CHOIR

Just-look-to-the-sky/Every time you go/You'll never travel alone/let-your-spir-it-fly/A salty tropic breeze/a sun baked sandy beach/moon-lit-star-ry-ni-i-ight/wel-come-to-our-world...

Cliff's eyes open; he sees the lyrics scrolling. Tears the headphones off. Yanks his seatbelt buckle. Stands.

Too late. The back of Robin's head rises above the seats like a phoenix. She turns around to Cliff. Tears streaming down her cheeks. Mouths the words - I love you.

FADE OUT.

