

CINEMA PURGATORIO

Written by  
Chris White & Emily Reach White  
and  
Geoffrey Gunn

PRODUCTION DRAFT

6 August 2013

© 2013 Chris White &  
Emily Reach White

Chris & Emily White  
15 Cool Springs Drive  
Greenville SC 29609  
(864) 907-5545

1 EXT. ART HOUSE CINEMA - NIGHT 1

A restored main street cinema sparkles.

On the marquee:

**INTERPLAY FILM FESTIVAL  
TONIGHT!  
"SPINNING" \ "TAKEN IN"  
WE VALIDATE PARKING!**

A HANDFUL of trendy 20-somethings mill about outside the movie theater as we head inside --

2 INT. ART HOUSE CINEMA - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT 2

Behind a vast cinema screen, NEIL SHAW (late 30s), stressed, but otherwise affable and LIZ SHAW (early 30s), brainy with a dash of glamor, tussle in hushed voices with SETH (20s), the so-hip-it-hurts festival honcho.

Behind them, the final black and white frames of "Taken In" flicker by --

NEIL

How are we supposed to connect with our audience if we can't talk to them after the screening?

SETH

Tweet your heart out, man. Social media drives audience engagement these days.

NEIL

We tweet plenty, Seth.

LIZ

The program says "Q&A to follow." Our fans came out tonight for a live, festival experience. With real, live filmmakers.

SETH

What fans?

Seth, Neil, and Liz glance into the darkened theatre --

IN THE SEATS, there are only SIX PEOPLE, and half of them are ASLEEP.

BACKSTAGE.

SETH (CONT'D)

You only sold two tickets. I comped the rest.

NEIL

Look, we owe it to those two people, then. You owe it to those two people as a patron of the arts and an advocate for handmade, independent films.

SETH

Look, you know I love your work. It's so...deeply felt. I got you your two screenings. I got you two drink tickets each for the after party. And I got your parking validated. What more do you want?

LIZ

We want to talk about our film!

SETH

I've only got one mic! Dos' screening next door is sold out, man. There's a lot of influential bloggers in there. That's the Q&A that matters tonight. Not just for Dos, but for all of us.

LIGHTS GO UP in the theater. The movie has finished.

ONE FAN (JEFF DRIGGERS, who we'll meet a little later on), stands and claps loudly. A one person standing ovation. The rest quietly filter out.

SETH (CONT'D)

See? They loved it. No questions asked.

Seth bolts. Neil and Liz shake their heads.

NEIL

Remind me never to enter a film festival again.

LIZ

They did *nothing* to market and promote our screening. Nothing.

NEIL

They'll say anything to get filmmakers to show up, but when we do...it's like this.

Liz steals a glance back at the lighted theatre. Suddenly, a bright idea:

LIZ

Let's do our own Q&A. We don't need a mic. Just you and I...with the people. *For* the people.

NEIL

Won't we seem desperate?

LIZ

Desperate or *brave*?

He looks at her. She's dead set on it.

NEIL

(smiles)

Let's do it.

Neil takes Liz's hand and leads her out onto the stage --  
But NOBODY has waited for them. The theater is EMPTY. Ouch.

3

INT. ART HOUSE CINEMA - LOBBY - NIGHT

3

The poster for "TAKEN IN" comes down.

Neil rolls it up and packs it into a box of DVDs held by Liz.

DOS (O.S.)

Neil and Liz Shaw!

Neil and Liz turn. Approaching from the candy bar is DOS MIDLER (30s), vaguely European and sporting a long silk scarf, and BREE CARRINGTON (19), a bohemian, free-spirited twirling girl.

DOS (CONT'D)

As I live and breathe, how are you?

Neil and Liz simultaneously swallow the bile coming up as a reaction to Dos' natural smarminess.

NEIL

Really good, Dos. So good.

LIZ

How are you?

Dos presses his hands together and gives the Shaws a sultan's bow.

DOS

Suffering the sweet agonies of the artist. But then again, aren't we all? Did you hear my screening sold out in record time?

NEIL

They timed it? I mean...somebody put a stopwatch on it?

DOS

People say they like my work, but I never imagined. I suppose when you have a lovely young ingenue as your star...people prick up.

Dos nods at Bree.

DOS (CONT'D)

Have you met Bree Carrington? *She* is moving to Los Angeles!

LIZ

Los Angeles. That's in California, right?

Neil offers a hand, followed by Liz.

NEIL

Neil. My wife, Liz.

LIZ

Nice to meet you.

BREE

Thank you I'm a really big fan I mean really I absolutely love your work and when Dos told me you had a film in the festival I was like so excited I might get to meet you!

DOS

And now you have. Let's not keep the Shaws, my dear. It looks like they have quite a few DVDs to pack up and take home tonight.

BREE

(shrugging Dos off)  
What's it like creating films together like creatively creating?

LIZ  
It's like...I don't know. Like  
we're getting away with something.

BREE  
Oh my god that is so romantic.

Liz struggles to keep the box of DVDs balanced --

LIZ  
Yeah. It's pretty hot.

Dos puts an arm around Bree, pulling her away.

DOS  
Come, my dear. Let's leave these  
two to their romance. *Teeming  
throngs await!*

Dos ushers Bree away to his sold out screening. Before they  
disappear, Bree turns back, placing her hand to her head,  
mock telephone --

BREE  
(mouthing the words)  
Call me!

Neil looks at Liz, shrugs. She shoves the box of merch into  
Neil's arms.

4 INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

4

The trunk of the Shaw's car SHUTS, loaded up with unsold  
posters and DVDs.

At the back of the car, Neil turns to Liz.

NEIL  
How is it that after spending two  
years on the road with this movie,  
guys like Dos are still winning?

LIZ  
He's not winning, and we're not  
losing. It's a heist, remember?  
We're getting away with it.

NEIL  
Bonnie and Clyde.

Liz puts a hand on Neil's cheek, tender.

LIZ  
It'll be okay.

NEIL  
We're barely making ends meet.

Liz nods, frowns, shrugs.

5 I/E. SHAW'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

5

The car winds down the parking garage ramp toward the exit.

NEIL  
When did every self-indulgent short  
film become "a meditation on?"

LIZ  
"A meditation on the nature of evil  
and the compromises we all make."  
Quit your meditating! Tell us a  
*story!*

NEIL  
In stories, stuff actually happens.  
(after a beat)  
The good guys finally win the big  
prize, the guy gets the girl...

At the automated exit terminal. Neil inserts his parking  
ticket.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
You've got to be kidding.

LIZ  
What?

NEIL  
Got ten bucks?

LIZ  
I thought that kid said he  
validated our parking.

NEIL  
It expired. Ten minutes ago.

Liz sighs, finds a crumpled ten dollar bill in her pocket.

LIZ  
The one DVD we sold tonight.

NEIL  
We sold a DVD?

LIZ  
To a drunk grandpa. Had to write my  
phone number on the sleeve.

Neil takes the bill, turns back to the parking terminal.

NEIL  
(under his breath)  
Fucking film festivals...

TITLE CARD: **CINEMA PURGATORIO**

6 INT. SHAW'S KITCHEN - DAY

6

A BLENDER whirs to life. Fruit and yogurt turning into a smoothie.

HOPE SHAW (15), Neil's daughter from his previous marriage, sits at the table. She sports a faded La Dolce Vita T-shirt and has her eyes glued to her laptop.

HOPE  
There's nothing about last night's  
screening. Just a bunch stuff about  
some guy named...Dooze? Does?

Liz, pouring herself a smoothie from the blender, corrects.

LIZ  
*Dose.*

HOPE  
Buncha blog posts and tweets about  
his movie "Spinning." Nothing about  
"Taken In."

LIZ  
Maybe you should post something  
then. You've seen it. You liked it.

HOPE  
Throw away my journalistic  
integrity on a puff piece for you  
and Dad's movie? I'm up for all-  
county newspaper next year.

Neil shuffles into the kitchen, still in pyjamas.

NEIL

Did someone say all-county newspaper?

HOPE

Liz wants me to sacrifice my journalistic integrity for cheap PR.

LIZ

No. I --

Neil holds up a hand and jumps in to save her.

NEIL

No point in arguing with a Shaw about integrity. True to yourself, no matter what, right?

HOPE

Mom says it's stubbornness.

NEIL

It's stubborn...*integrity*. A dogged determination to live truthfully. At all costs.

Liz rolls her eyes. Hope closes her laptop and stuffs it into her bookbag.

HOPE

Gotta go. Don't let the bastards get you down, kids.

LIZ

(reaching, helpful)  
Be nice today, Hope. Make a new friend.

HOPE

(sarcastic)  
Yay me.  
(calling back as she leaves)  
I'm at Mom's tonight. See you Friday!

Neil starts making a cup of coffee.

LIZ

She adores me. I can tell.

NEIL

You're doing great.

Liz downs as much of the smoothie as she can in one gulp.

LIZ  
Gotta run. Oh! Don't forget,  
today's Local Yokels.

NEIL  
That's today?

LIZ  
Yep. Wear the sports coat. Makes  
you look professional.

Liz kisses Neil, grabs her bag and heads out --

NEIL  
How about an ascot? And Groucho  
glasses. Smoking a strawberry  
cigarillo?

Neil stands alone in the kitchen, his coffee finally ready.  
He takes a sniff of what's left of Liz's smoothie. *Ewww*.

7 INT. DR. SCOTT'S EXAM ROOM - DAY

7

Legs in stirrups, Liz is with DR. SCOTT (40s), a warm and  
handsome clinician who conducts an gynecological examination.

DR. SCOTT  
How's the movie biz?

LIZ  
More of a cottage industry right  
now, but we like what we do.

DR. SCOTT  
If you do what you love, you never  
work a day, right? Your husband  
makes movies. I get women pregnant.  
(he winks)  
All done!

Dr. Scott wheels back, stands, and removes his examination  
gloves at the sink.

LIZ  
So what's the word, Doc?

DR. SCOTT  
(turns around, sits)  
Please. Call me James.  
(MORE)

DR. SCOTT (CONT'D)

Liz, you have what we call "ovulation irregularity." Though it might also be a witch's curse. Too early to tell.

(he smiles)

Clomid is the starter infertility drug, and if couples don't see results within six cycles, we step up to injectables. You're at seven?

LIZ

Yes. Injectables...are more?

DR. SCOTT

They are. But I never recommend them until your partner comes in for testing.

LIZ

Neil's made a baby before. So I doubt it's him.

DR. SCOTT

That was fifteen years ago.

Dr. Scott points at her, then lets his finger droop, making a sad trombone sound.

LIZ

No. He's still...he's good.

Dr. Scott winks, smiles.

8 INT. DR. SCOTT'S RECEPTION AREA - DAY 8

Liz stands at the RECEPTIONIST'S desk in the doctor's office. She hands the receptionist a debit card, then:

LIZ

Oh, wait! That's the wrong...I have a separate account for this.

The receptionist smiles, trades cards with Liz.

9 INT. TV TALK SHOW STUDIO - DAY 9

The brightly lit set of "Local Yokels," as local a television talk show as it sounds.

NELLS MARKER, (60s), jovial with a weatherman's charm, and his female co-host, BOO GALLIVAN (late 30s), Sears catalog chic, throw to their segment with Neil --

NELLS

Well, if you're like me, this next spot will have your skin crawling when you first hear it, but trust me, it's not contagious.

BOO

Oh, Nells! You didn't!

NELLS

They're called viral videos, and they're taking over the Internet like the plague. We have local viral video maker Neil Shaw in studio to tell us more about this crazy new trend.

Neil's face goes pale. Has he really been booked for this?

BOO

Thanks for joining us this morning, Neil. We understand you and your wife have been making these little viral videos for some time now.

NEIL

Thanks for having me, but...we don't actually make viral videos. We make...little films.

NELLS

We all know it's not the size that counts, right, Neil?

BOO

Oh, Nells! You didn't!

NEIL

No, when I say little, I mean budget. With these cameras today, it's possible for anyone to get out there and make a really good-looking movie...

BOO

It's sounds so easy!

NEIL

Well, it's...tougher than it sounds. But yeah. We don't do cats riding vacuum cleaners.

BOO

Aw. That's a shame.

NELLS

Sounds like *somebody* should've booked you for the next segment on the Lowcountry Boil 48-hour Film Festival.

NEIL

I'd be happy to stick around but I've got a...a double root canal scheduled, so...

BOO

Think you might enter that film festival? Represent your hometown?

NEIL

Liz and I don't really enter 48-hour festivals. Those are more for emerging filmmakers and hobbyists.

NELLS

(reading from his notes)  
Says here Bill Murray's a judge. And first prize is five thousand simoleons.

NEIL

Must be a different Bill Murray...

NELLS

(shows him the paper)  
"Lowcountry Boil 48-Hour Film Festival. Featuring judges Bill Murray, soap star Kelly Keller, and film critic Michael Dunaway.

BOO

Who ya' gonna call? Ghost-busters!  
Doo-doo-doo-doo!

NELLS

Thanks for stopping by, Neil!  
(to camera)  
Remember you can see all of Neil's viral videos on our website.

BOO

(to camera)  
When we come back, we'll meet another local filmmaker who has screened at several film festivals already this summer, Britt Little!

The camera reveals BRITT LITTLE, a sprightly teen sitting at attention in the chair next to Neil.

10 INT. TV TALK SHOW STUDIO - DAY

10

LATER.

Neil stands off-stage reading the flyer. He shakes his head, crumples the paper up into a tight ball.

JEFF (O.S.)  
Coach Shaw?

Neil turns. JEFF DRIGGERS (20s), fresh-faced and eyes full of optimism, holds out an awestruck hand.

Neil doesn't recognize the kid, but accepts the handshake.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Jeff Driggers. Camp Truffaut? It's been a while --

Neil squints, almost remembering.

NEIL  
My film camp for home schoolers? That's gotta be ten, fifteen years ago. Wait, I remember now...

JEFF  
I'm still friends with all those guys. We watch that little movie we made every year. I just wanted to say I really loved "Taken In."

NEIL  
You saw it?

JEFF  
Yeah, at the film festival last night. Amazing. Sucks you weren't there for a Q&A. I had so many questions!

NEIL  
You work here at the station?

JEFF  
(nodding)  
Gopher. But I'm still working on films in my spare time. That's my true passion. You were really a big influence on me.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)  
 (re: the crumpled flyer)  
 Y'all going to enter the 48-hour  
 film festival? I bet you'd win it!

NEIL  
 Well...we're, Liz and I are trying  
 to take our work to the next level.  
 48's are...not really where we are  
 right now.

NELLS (O.S.)  
 Driggers!

JEFF  
 Sorry. Gotta get back to work. It  
 was so great to see you! If it's  
 okay with you, can we keep in  
 touch?

NEIL  
 Sure.

NELLS (O.S.)  
 Driggers!

JEFF  
 Awesome!

Jeff dashes off. Neil watches him go, then reconsiders the  
 crumpled up flyer for the 48 hour film festival.

11 I/E. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING]

11

Liz, dressed in a PURPLE DINOSAUR costume from the neck down,  
 pulls her hair back with a red kerchief.

LIZ  
 We don't do 48's. Even the winners  
 are losers.

NEIL  
 I agree. But. *Bill Murray*. And five  
 grand. Think about what that means.  
 Fewer birthday parties, more time  
 writing.

LIZ  
 I don't mind. The parents know me.  
 The theater lets me use the costume  
 for free.

NEIL  
 You have an MFA. It's humiliating.

LIZ  
It's not that bad. Besides, I like kids.

Neil pulls over, parks the car.

NEIL  
We'd go down with a plan. No matter the theme, we make a movie Bill Murray will love.

LIZ  
Where would we stay? How do we afford it?

NEIL  
Emergency fund.  
(a beat)  
If anybody gets Bill Murray, it's us. We've seen Lost in Translation fifty times. We call up the old gang, head to Charleston, and knock his socks off.

LIZ  
Jen's got her programming business now. And when's the last time you talked to Alan?

NEIL  
Jen never says no. And Alan's always up for adventure.

Liz puts on her head. She's a purple and green dinosaur now.

LIZ  
(muffled)  
I don't know.

NEIL  
You said we were going to be all right, but you didn't know how. Maybe this is the how.

LIZ  
(muffled)  
What if we lose?

NEIL  
What if we win?

LIZ  
(muffled)  
I'm going to be late.

Liz leaves.

NEIL'S POV

Liz walks down the street, slowly getting into "character."

12

EXT. HAWAIIAN SHAVED ICE STAND - DAY

12

Neil sits at a weathered picnic table next to a parking lot shaved ice stand. Across from him, MARTY and MIKEY RUTT, 50s, brothers, seasoned horror movie men.

MARTY

What are the three genres of independent feature films that always, *always* make money?

NEIL

(thinks)  
Well. Probably...porn.

MIKEY

(slurps his ice)  
Not including porn.

NEIL

Three categories.

MARTY

Always make money.

NEIL

Horror?

MIKEY

(smiles)  
That's one.

NEIL

And...I don't know. Romantic comedy?

MARTY

No. Horror. Christian. And Gay.

Neil looks at the brothers. Are they joking?

MIKEY

Christian films always make a shit-ton of money. Gay films too. And horror.

NEIL

Okay.

MARTY

"Coffins From Hell" combines all three genres. It's the first-ever Gay-Christian-Horror movie.

MIKEY

Bam.

NEIL

And...I would A.D. for you guys?

MARTY

You got it. Mikey and I are kinda like the Coen brothers...

MIKEY

(interrupts his brother)  
Lookit, we've seen your movies. They seem very professional.

NEIL

Thank you.

MARTY

So you'll do it? We start next month.

NEIL

I need to talk to my wife, about it...check my schedule.

MIKEY

Speaking of her...she acts, right? How cool is she with side boob?

NEIL

Side boob?

MARTY

Very tasteful side boob.

MIKEY

Very tasty. She'd play the lesbian nun with a death wish.

NEIL

Let me think about it.

MARTY

What's to think about? You want to make movies? We make movies.

NEIL  
I'll call you Monday.

13 EXT. PARTY HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY 13

Liz, dressed as the birthday dinosaur, DANCES and throws BALLOONS to a teeming mass of wild CHILDREN.

14 INT. PARTY HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY 14

The party's winding down.

OUTSIDE, the kids still run, high on sugar.

INSIDE, Liz, human head, dinosaur body, picks at a veggie tray while the PARTY MOMS and PAULA, Liz's sophisticated, Sex in the City friend, sling back sangria.

PARTY MOM 1  
He fiddles around with his fishing gear and his boat and his grill. Those are all "hobbies," but anything I want is a "luxury item."

PARTY MOM 2  
*Exactly.* Dave will invite all the guys over and not even *think* about cleaning the house. It's like he was born with half a brain.

PAULA  
That's why you have to appeal to his other brain.

The ladies giggle. Liz tries to keep up between carrot sticks.

LIZ  
I know, right?

She makes a "blow job" gesture with her hand and mouth. The women are struck dumb.

PARTY WOMAN 3  
Hey, that's how I got my hardwood floors. Held out for the good stuff.

PARTY WOMAN 2  
Your floors are *gorgeous*.

Glasses clink. Cheers to that. Liz forces a laugh.

PARTY WOMAN 1

So Liz, Paula tells us you work for your husband. Movies, right? Anything I might've seen?

LIZ

We've screened at some regional festivals. We distribute the films ourselves...on our website: We-Made-These-Films-dot-com. You should check it out.

PARTY WOMAN 2

I could never, *never* work for my husband.

LIZ

Actually, we work together. I write. He directs. We both edit. We're a team.

PARTY WOMAN 3

Aw.

PARTY WOMAN 1

Y'all like my shoes?

The Party Women erupt into ooo's and ah's. Liz looks at her own purple dinosaur toes.

Paula moves close to Liz.

PAULA

You're *so great* with the kids. You and Neil thought about having kids of your own?

LIZ

We...have our movies. And Neil's daughter from his first marriage. It's complicated.

Paula takes out a small fold of CASH from her purse, and discreetly passes it to Liz.

PAULA

There's a little extra in there for you.

LIZ

I can't.

PAULA

Take it. I know it's hard for you  
and Neil. Buy yourself something  
nice.

Liz takes the money, smiles weakly. Thank you.

15

INT. SHAW'S HOUSE - NIGHT

15

Keys turn in the door, and Liz walks in.

Neil is ASLEEP on the couch, note pad on his chest.

ON TV, a film credit reel runs.

Liz looks at Neil, then at her reflection in a mirror by the  
door. Tired. Sleepy. In half a dinosaur costume.

She makes her way over to Neil. Spies the cases for "Lost in  
Translation", "Broken Flowers", and "Ghostbusters". She  
reaches down, picks through them.

Neil stirs. Opens his eyes. Groggy, a little surprised, but  
not heart attack inducing.

NEIL

Hey.

LIZ

Bill Murray marathon?

NEIL

Maybe.

LIZ

How were the Rutt Brothers?

Neil shakes his head.

NEIL

They want me to assistant direct a  
Gay-Christian-Horror film.

LIZ

(guffaws)  
Are they insane?

NEIL

Probably.  
(he smiles)  
But that's never stopped them  
before.

LIZ  
They pay though, right?

NEIL  
They do pay. Yes.  
(a beat)  
It's just...seeing them. It's terrifying. Is that going to be us in ten years? Chasing Hollywood dreams...taking meetings at a snow cone stand?

LIZ  
Look, I was thinking...maybe we should enter that festival.

NEIL  
(sits up)  
Can we afford to? I checked our accounts. We're way lower than I thought.

Liz looks away. Guilty. But not ready to confess. Yet.

LIZ  
We'll take cash. That way we won't overspend.  
(a beat)  
A win would do us good.

Neil pulls Liz down on the couch beside him.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
This could actually work. Bill Murray sees our film...

NEIL  
...Bill Murray *loves* our film...

LIZ  
...Bill Murray shares our film with the cool kids. Suddenly we're these small town heroes, the indie darlings we always make fun of.

He kisses her.

NEIL  
We'll give it 110%. We *win* this. Or come Monday morning, we quit this nonsense...start looking for real work.

He extends his pinky to Liz. She wraps her pinky around his.

LIZ  
One last heist.

They roll over on the couch together, one direction, then the other -- WHUMP! And onto the floor, the dinosaur costume breaking their fall.

16 INT. SHAW'S HOUSE - DAY

16

A WHITEBOARD goes up on the wall.

Neil uncaps a dry erase marker and writes "William James Murray".

Liz uncaps her marker and adds a few categories around the name. THEMES. GENRES. COMMON CHARACTER TRAITS.

More DVDs pile up beside the couch. "Groundhog Day", "Rushmore", "Life Aquatic", "Mad Dog and Glory", "Zombieland".

Liz and Neil take copious notes on the couch. Liz sips from a SMOOTHIE. Needing the boost, Neil steals a drink too. Liz raises an eyebrow. Neil shrugs. *What?*

Finally, the whiteboard is FULL of notes.

Liz looks at Neil, stars of eureka in her eyes --

LIZ  
I've got it!

LATER.

Liz hunches over her laptop, pounding out pages. In the background, Neil paces with his cell phone in his hand.

NEIL  
For the mercurial teen to play your daughter...what about Bree Carrington?

LIZ  
You want her to rub Dos' nose in it, or because she's hot?

NEIL  
She's hot?

He hadn't noticed. Liz rolls her eyes.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Hot or not, what she is...is a winner. Her films always win festivals. Always. And you know we can get her.

LIZ

All right. Get her.

Neil nods.

NEIL

And for the father...remember Nicholas Teasle? We met him at that sad little steam punk convention in Asheville.

LIZ

The guy from those 80's ninja movies?

NEIL

Yeah. He's always Facebooking me, asking what we're doing next. He could have just the right amount of gravitas for the father.

LIZ

He was kinda sexy, actually. Back in the day.

NEIL

I know he'd do it. Probably for nothing.

LIZ

Here. Take a look at this. Bill Murray enough for ya?

Neil looks over Liz's shoulder at the screen, reading.

NEIL

Brilliant. It's brilliant!

Neil kisses Liz and she smiles, pleased with her work and the reaction.

17

EXT. SHAW'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

17

The back of the car is open, full of gear.

Liz and Neil emerge from the house carrying more bags --

LIZ

I confirmed with Jen this morning. She has a lot of coding to do this weekend, but said she could do it remotely. You hear back from Alan?

NEIL

Sorta. He sent some kind of cryptic email. I'm sure he's good.

LIZ

And your aunt's cool with us using the beach house?

NEIL

Just so we leave it as we found it.

Neil and Liz toss the last of their bags in the back, close up the hatch. They turn. Hope stands at the end of the driveway, weekend bag on her shoulders. Sobbing.

HOPE

I didn't get it.

Neil hits himself in the forehead.

NEIL

(under his breath)  
Shit. I totally forgot.

LIZ

Didn't get what?

Hope hands her a piece of paper, a form letter.

LIZ (CONT'D)

(reading)  
"We received applications from hundreds of qualified students from all over the county. Unfortunately, we had to narrow our selections."

HOPE

All-county newspaper.  
(to Neil)  
You said I was a shoo-in.

Neil takes the letter from Liz, reads.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Where are we going?

Neil crumples the letter into a tight ball, punches it with his fist.

LIZ  
Film festival in Charleston.

HOPE  
Did you forget I was with you this weekend?

NEIL  
No. We just...

Neil looks at Liz.

HOPE  
(angry)  
Mom says that's typical. You're so self-absorbed with your career, you have no time for your own daughter.

NEIL  
I did not forget, Hope. Throw your bags in the car. We have to get on the road.

Liz forces a smile, nods.

HOPE  
Great. I can drown myself in the ocean. A fitting response to my latest career setback.

Liz goes to Neil. She pulls out an envelope of cash, counts it quickly.

LIZ  
It's okay. We can do this. She'll have a blast.

NEIL  
A kid like that is *ideal* for all-county newspaper. She's gifted, and those *fuckers*...they don't know how to encourage her. I should have home-schooled her.

LIZ  
She needs a win as much as we do. And she's gonna get it.

Liz and Neil shake on it.

- 18 I/E. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 18  
 Hope sets up in the backseat with her laptop and earbuds. She turns up her music and starts to write on her laptop.
- 19 EXT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 19  
 The Shaw's car pulls off onto the highway. Zoom!
- 20 EXT. JEN'S HOUSE - DAY 20  
 A sprawling, McMansion deep within a gated community.  
 The Shaw's car pulls up into the driveway.  
 Liz hops out and heads to the front door.
- 21 I/E. JEN'S FRONT DOOR - DAY 21  
 JEN MEYERS (30s) opens the door with great vigor. She's pretty as an actress, but a tad quirky for the camera.
- JEN  
 Ahh! So exciting!
- She hands a FULL CASE OF WINE to Liz.
- JEN (CONT'D)  
 My babies.
- Liz dutifully takes the box, peeking inside.
- LIZ  
 You know, it's just two days, Jen.  
 Down and back.
- JEN  
 (serious)  
 You think we need another case?
- Liz shakes her head. Jen hoists her bag up over her shoulder.
- JEN (CONT'D)  
 Let's roll!
- 22 I/E. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 22  
 Jen sets up in the backseat next to Hope, and takes on an identical pose, laptop on her lap, earbuds in her ears.

Neil looks at the pair in the rearview and shakes his head.

23 EXT. COFFEEHOUSE – DAY

23

The Shaw's car parks in front of a suburban coffee shop.

The gang gets out to stretch their legs. Liz checks on Jen, who stays in the car and doesn't take her eyes off the screen.

LIZ  
You want anything?

JEN  
Can't talk. Locked in. Double tall  
skinny latte. Extra hot.

LIZ  
Gotcha.

24 INT. COFFEEHOUSE – DAY

24

Liz and Hope head inside. Hope goes to the restroom and Liz joins the coffee line, pulls out her cash envelope, reaches in for a twenty.

SOMEONE taps her on the shoulder. She turns around. It's DR. SCOTT.

LIZ  
Dr. Scott.

DR. SCOTT  
Please, call me Jim. Let me get  
this.  
(To the BARISTA)  
Whatever she's having and the  
biggest coffee you sell.

LIZ  
Oh...no. I don't think...

DR. SCOTT  
Please. It's my pleasure.

LIZ  
Okay. Two regular coffees, one  
double tall skinny latte, extra  
hot, and a vanilla chai.

DR. SCOTT

I've been meaning to call you.  
There's a treatment being developed  
out in Colorado. It's 90% effective  
for women in their 30's. You should  
fly out with me next month. We  
could split the airfare. Share a  
room.

Liz is shocked. Share a hotel room?

DR. SCOTT (CONT'D)

I'm *kidding*. You'd be out of pocket  
a few thousand bucks, max. Probably  
less. But I need to know by Monday.

LIZ

Dr. Scott. That's still a lot of  
money. To be honest, the Clomid  
kind of cleaned me out.

DR. SCOTT

We can always work something out.  
Monday. Let me know. Say yes.

Dr. Scott winks and takes his order to go. Liz takes a moment  
to collect herself. A familiar voice shatters the moment.

HOPE

What's Clomid?

Liz turns. Hope stands beside her. But how long as she been  
standing there?

LIZ

Oh. It's uh...allergy medication.  
You now how bad I get.

HOPE

Think Doctor Feelgood could score  
me some Lortabs?

Liz: is she joking?

BARISTA (O.S.)

Two regular coffees, double tall  
skinny latte, extra hot, and a  
vanilla chai!

Liz and Hope pick up their order and head back to the car.

25 EXT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 25

The Shaw's car cuts down another swath of blacktop --

26 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY [DRIVING] 26

The Shaw's car weaves down a dusty, bumpy road.

27 I/E. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 27

Neil peers into the distance, double checking the GPS.

LIZ

You sure this is the right way?

NEIL

Alan said we couldn't miss it.

Liz sees something out the window.

LIZ

Oh my god. Is that?

NEIL

That's it.

Neil cranks the wheel and pulls over.

28 EXT. ALAN'S HOUSE - DAY 28

Alan's house is a small, cluttered house on a wild plot of land. It could easily be photographed for an outsider art exhibition.

ALAN RAY (40s), sporting a platinum mohawk, tank top and jean shorts, works on the porch, pounding SOMETHING on a wooden table with a wooden mallet.

Neil and Liz hops out of the car.

NEIL

Alan?

ALAN

Neil? Liz? What are you doing here?

LIZ

We're here to pick you up. 48-hour film festival. Bill Murray. Remember?

Neil and Liz make their way up to the porch. Alan seems strangely nervous.

ALAN  
Didn't you get my email?

NEIL  
The one that said the hawk has landed?

ALAN  
Yeah, man. Landed as in nested.

SWEETIE (O.S.)  
Alan? Who's out there?

Alan's girlfriend, SWEETIE (20s), emerges on the front porch, earthier than dirt, sporting a BABY BUMP and a BABY on her hip.

ALAN  
It's Neil and Liz, Sweetie.  
Remember? From my filmmaking days.

Sweetie throws a contemptuous look at the Shaws.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
Neil, Liz, my fiancée, Sweetie.

NEIL  
Nice to meet you.

LIZ  
What a precious little one!

Hope is there, too. She looks at the mound of STUFF Alan was pounding. It's a sticky blob of something. She pokes at it with a finger.

HOPE  
What's this?

SWEETIE  
Sorghum paste.

NEIL  
This is my daughter, Hope.

SWEETIE  
(softens)  
Y'all hungry? We were just about to sit down for some lunch. Why don't you join us?

Neil and Liz look at one another. The merit of a free lunch is not lost on them.

29

INT. ALAN'S HOUSE - DAY

29

Plates of less than appetizing raw vegan food appear on a long, rustic table.

Neil, Liz, Alan and Sweetie sit at one end of the table, while Jen and Hope sit at the other end, laptops open, earbuds in.

NEIL

Wow. This looks...interesting. What is it?

ALAN

There's some fresh sorghum, some beet greens with lemon juice, minced dry beans, and raw brownie for dessert. We grow and prepare all of it ourselves.

Hope pulls her earbuds out for a moment, pokes at the food curiously, then discreetly pushes her plate away with one finger and resumes her typing.

Jen meanwhile, still in the coding zone, scarfs down the food with reckless abandon.

NEIL

That's really something.

Neil takes a big bite.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Very...chewy.

Sweetie beams.

SWEETIE

No-trace shopping. You grow your own, the government can't track ya.

At this Hope perks up.

HOPE

Off the grid!

SWEETIE

(smiles slyly)  
What grid?

(MORE)

SWEETIE (CONT'D)

(then)

So where y'all headed?

LIZ

Actually, we're on our way to Charleston for a 48-hour film festival. And we were hoping Alan would join us.

Sweetie LAUGHS. Neil and Liz exchange glances.

SWEETIE

You didn't tell them?

LIZ

Tell us what?

ALAN

I gave up photography when Sweetie and I got engaged. We've gone back to the earth, together.

HOPE

Nice.

ALAN

Godshonesttruth...I've never felt better. I'm eating right, sleeping well. I'm even studying to become a raw vegan chef.

NEIL

But you're such a talented shooter, Alan. And we need you. We need you to shoot our movie for this film festival. Bill Murray's a judge, and we've written something specifically for him. This could be the big breakthrough we've always dreamed about.

ALAN

Bill Murray?

SWEETIE

Alan has his own dreams now, here with me and his children. And besides, photography, movies...it's a digital footprint. It can't ever be erased.

JEN

(suddenly)

She's right there.

(MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)

You want to see naked pics of Morgan Freeman on the set of The Electric Company?

LIZ

No. We don't.

SWEETIE

We live life raw and in the now, now.

ALAN

It was like once I put away my camera, I could finally see what was already in front of me. Life. Alive. In the now.

NEIL

We're right here in front of you, in the now, and we need your help.

This touches Alan. He thinks.

LIZ

It'd only be for a couple of days. Then you can go back to being in the now. But right now, we need to bring back the good old days...for our future.

Alan looks at Sweetie. She shakes her head.

ALAN

(bowing his head)  
Neil saved my life once.

Neil hasn't heard this story before. No one has. Alan's spinning a yarn.

ALAN (CONT'D)

We were kids. Used to scavenge golf balls on a course in our neighborhood.

NEIL

(playing along)  
I loved those old balls.

ALAN

One day I nearly choked to death on a golf ball. A Titleist, I think. Damn thing popped out the ball washer and went straight down my esophagi.

SWEETIE  
 (concerned)  
 Oh baby...

ALAN  
 I went blue. Woulda died if my  
 buddy Neil here hadn't pried it out  
 with a tee tool.

Sweetie is misty-eyed.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
 (he looks at Sweetie)  
 It's just a couple of days, baby.  
 I'll be back.

SWEETIE  
 (to Neil)  
 You take care of him. You promise  
 me.

NEIL  
 (solemn)  
 I always have.

ALAN  
 You're the best, Sweetie.

Alan plants a deep, sexy kiss on Sweetie. So drawn out it  
 makes Neil and Liz and everyone else a little uncomfortable.

30 EXT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY 30

Neil tosses Alan's last bag in the car and slams the door  
 shut.

NEIL  
 It's good to have the hawk back.

Alan straightens his mohawk.

ALAN  
 Call me the phoenix. Now let's go  
 make a kick ass punk rock movie,  
 brother.

PRELAP boisterous, adolescent PUNK ROCK --

31 EXT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 31

The Shaw's car drives along the highway to a punk rock  
 soundtrack.

32 I/E. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 32

Alan, wedged between Jen and Hope in the back seat, air drums vigorously --

33 EXT. CHARLESTON CITY LIMITS - DAY [DRIVING] 33

The Shaw's car passes the "Welcome to Folly Beach" sign.

34 EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY [DRIVING] 34

The Shaw's car pulls up at Neil's aunt's beach house.

35 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY 35

Neil, Liz, Alan, Jen and Hope make their way through the spacious beach house, each laden down with boxes, bags, suitcases, and supplies.

ALAN

This place is great!

LIZ

You can thank Neil's aunt and uncle's investment advisor.

JEN

WIFI password?

NEIL

I think it's Monkey-Sea...one word.  
And sea, spelled like the ocean.

IN THE KITCHEN

Jen reads from a piece of paper posted on the refrigerator.

JEN

"Welcome to the beach!" Blah,  
blah...blah, blah, blah. "Internet  
password." Now we're talking.

Hope is right behind her copying down the code.

IN THE HALLWAY

Liz waves Neil over to where she stands in the hall.

LIZ

I'm thinking you and I will take  
the master.

(MORE)

LIZ (CONT'D)

We'll put Jen in the cousins' room with Bree and Hope, and give Alan and Nick the other bedroom.

NEIL

Sounds good. What time is that kick-off party tonight?

LIZ

Seven. At the Riviera.

Jen appears in the hall with her suitcases.

JEN

Where do I throw my stuff?

LIZ

There's a bedroom with two double beds. You'll be there. With Bree and Hope. Is that okay?

JEN

Do they snore?

NEIL

No. Just very gassy.

JEN

Ew. You're joking right?

NEIL

I am, yes.

Jen hustles down the hall to her assigned room, shaking her head. Neil turns to Liz.

NEIL (CONT'D)

I just remembered. We stayed here on our honeymoon.

LIZ

Yeah.

NEIL

(whispers)

We did it in every room.

Alan shouts from the stairs:

ALAN (O.S.)

Up or down?

LIZ  
 (to Alan)  
 Down. There's a bedroom.

NEIL  
 (whispered)  
 Up or down?

ALAN (O.S.)  
 Great light in this place!

LIZ  
 (to Alan)  
 Oh good!

Neil drags Liz into the master bedroom, shuts the door.

36 INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

36

A cocktail party in a super-cool, renovated tobacco warehouse. Crowded with the tragically hip who mingle happily. High on the wall a banner:

"LOWCOUNTRY BOIL 48-HOUR FILM FESTIVAL"

Neil and Liz, older and a step less hip than the rest, make their way through the room. On their heels, Hope, Jen and Alan. Across the room, they spot Dos Midler chatting up a WOULD-BE TWIRLING GIRL.

NEIL  
 Son of a. Of course he's here --

LIZ  
 Stop, drop, and roll --

They try to walk away, but it's too late. Dos has spotted them. He makes his way over and bows, sultan style --

DOS  
 Oh my god, Neil. And the  
 desperately gorgeous Liz Shaw!

LIZ  
 Dos! What a surprise.

Neil salutes Dos like he was a military officer.

NEIL  
 Dos. What's the word?

DOS

Oh, you know. Looking for a new agent. Commercials and videos keep my mortgage paid and my slip at the marina, but *whales tail*, I need to feed my soul, too.

Hope is there. And Dos is drawn to her.

DOS (CONT'D)

And who might you be, an actress?

Hope blushes. Neil steps forward.

NEIL

This is my daughter, Hope.

Dos takes her hand, kisses it gallantly.

HOPE

You smell like pancakes.

Dos steps back, frowns.

ALAN

(to Dos)

That accent...you German?

DOS

My grandmother was. Oma dated Goebbels.

ALAN

No kidding?

DOS

Why would I kid about a thing like that?

ALAN

My grandma dated Fran Tarkenton.

JEN

All this hot air is making me parched. Anyone else thirsty?

Liz raises her hand and they head towards the bar. Hope follows.

NEIL

So you making a 48-hour film Dos, or just putting in an appearance?

DOS

Well, I won so easily last year. Little story about an anorexic cannibal and a closeted gay teen stuck in an elevator together. The cannibal convinces the teen to come out. The teen convinces the cannibal to start eating again...you know the story. But, if you're entering...I never say to no to competition with a formidable adversary.

NEIL

We could just shoot pistols in a back alley.

Dos laughs, utterly fake. He wags a finger.

DOS

Oh Neil! Consider the cinematic gauntlet thrown! We will have our pistols at dawn when the lights go down for the final screening.

Dos chuckles and walks off with Would-Be Twirling Girl.

Alan pats Neil on the back.

ALAN

Don't sweat it. We don't kick his ass figuratively, we'll do it literally.

Neil nods when something across the room catches his eye. It's JACKIE MILLER (30s), a very striking-looking female filmmaker.

NEIL

Be right back.

Neil starts heading Jackie's way --

A SERVER offers an hors d'oeuvre. Shrimp. Alan shakes his head.

ALAN

Got any raw vegan options?

The Server raises an eyebrow. A *what?*

37

INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

37

Liz and Jen pick up small cups of wine at the open bar. Hope does too, but Liz quickly takes hers and hands it to Jen who gladly accepts.

They turn and see soap star KELLY KELLER and fellow judge, Paste Magazine film critic MICHAEL DUNAWAY chatting in the corner.

JEN

Hey! You're Kelly Keller! And you look *hot!*

KELLY

Thank you! Who are you?

JEN

I'm Jen. I produce for my BFF Liz.

LIZ

(to Kelly)

Hi, I'm Liz Shaw.

(to Michael)

Liz. And this is my step-daughter Hope.

(to Hope)

Michael and Kelly are judges...with Bill Murray.

MICHAEL

You're a filmmaker?

JEN

She and her husband are all kinds of talented.

KELLY

(friendly, to Hope)

Don't you just love Charleston?

JEN

(with a wink)

Anywhere but New York, am I right?

KELLY

Actually, "The Naked Cape" shoots in Burbank.

JEN

Oh wow! SoCal! Gorgeous. Where do you live...

(reads his name tag)

...Michael?

MICHAEL  
Atlanta. I write for Paste.

JEN  
So. Who do we bribe?

Everyone laughs at Jen's joke, then:

JEN (CONT'D)  
(narrows her eyes)  
Seriously.

38 INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

38

Neil taps Jackie on the shoulder.

NEIL  
Jackie?

JACKIE  
Neil! Oh my god!

Jackie air kisses Neil on each cheek.

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
It's been too long! You here for  
the competition?

NEIL  
I am. You too? I thought you were  
strictly features these days.

JACKIE  
You know me, I've always been a  
dilettante at heart. A little of  
this, a little of that. Rules,  
commitment, it's too much for me.  
Right now it's the short film  
milieu that stimulates me. I think  
it's the future of cinema.

Liz spots Neil from across the room. She makes her way over  
to where he's chatting up Jackie.

NEIL  
I don't know. I love ninety, a  
hundred, minutes. I feel good in  
that space. My stories fit there.

JACKIE  
(shaking her head)  
The audience is leaving you behind,  
Neil.

(MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
(conspiratorial)  
But I'll wait for you to catch up.

Liz cuts in.

LIZ  
(to Jackie)  
Hi. I'm Liz. Neil's wife. I don't believe we've met.

JACKIE  
Jackie Miller.

Jackie offers up another pair of air kisses.

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
Neil and I were in a screenwriting lab together just after college.  
(to Neil)  
God that was forever ago. But you haven't changed a bit.  
(wistful)  
Those beautiful brown eyes...

LIZ  
So do you live down here?

JACKIE  
God no! New York and L.A., but I *had* to come down though, you know? Met Bill at a Christmas party last year. He told me to look him up in Charleston. He lives here now, you know.

NEIL  
I'd heard that, yeah.

JACKIE  
You were totally right about Tarantino, by the way. Came to my senses years later.

NEIL  
Yeah?

JACKIE  
I remember being in a foul mood when we went to see RESERVOIR DOGS. Wasn't it raining?

NEIL  
Yes! Plus, we were starving and couldn't find that sushi place.

JACKIE  
That movie is pure genius.

LIZ  
(to Neil)  
You hate Tarantino. And Sushi.

NEIL  
I respect his talent...

JACKIE  
Well, you remember what Fellini  
said. "It's easier to be faithful  
to a restaurant than to a woman."

An awkward break in the conversation. Then:

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
Well. I'll see you two around. I'm  
here all weekend. Once the  
fireworks are over, we should get  
together.

Jackie says we, but only has eyes for Neil.

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
Ta-tah!

Jackie spins and disappears into the crowd. Liz hands Neil  
her drink.

LIZ  
*Ta-tah!*  
(beat)  
Bless her heart.

ACROSS THE ROOM

On a dais set up directly underneath the Lowcountry Boil  
banner, ROSCOE WILLIS, a seasoned Hollywood ex-pat and  
director of the festival, taps a MICROPHONE.

ROSCOE  
Testing, testing.

THE CROWD turns. Including NEIL and LIZ, now joined by Jen  
and Alan.

ROSCOE (CONT'D)  
Good evening everyone! Welcome to  
the Lowcountry Boil 48 Hour Film  
Festival. We're so excited about  
this year's turnout and can't wait  
to get started!

There are EXCLAMATIONS and CHEERS from the assembled audience. Liz and Neil join in the applause.

Roscoe checks his watch. The minute hand is closing in on the hour --

ROSCOE (CONT'D)  
Okay, let's reveal the one-word theme for this year's festival and send you off to make movies!

More applause, a hoot and holler mixed in as well.

ROSCOE (CONT'D)  
This year's Lowcountry Boil 48 Hour Film Festival theme is...

The INTERNS whip a white sheet off a easel to Roscoe's left, revealing the word:

"INDIGENEY"

ROSCOE (CONT'D)  
Indignity. Er, In...genuity? Wait, wait. In...dige...nity. *Indigeney*.

Jen leans over Neil and Liz's shoulder.

JEN  
What the squawk does indigeney mean?

ALAN  
It's like that movie. Double Indigeney.

Liz shushes the pair.

LIZ  
Don't worry about it. We've got it covered.

Roscoe checks his watch again. 8 o'clock, on the dot.

ROSCOE  
The Lowcountry Boil 48 Hour Film Festival is now officially under way! Good luck to you all, and we'll see you with your films Sunday night at eight o'clock sharp!

The CROWD starts to quickly disperse. Neil whispers to Liz amid the kerfuffle --

NEIL

He didn't mention Bill Murray, did he?

LIZ

I think he did. Didn't he?

HOPE

(reading from her phone)  
It's not a real word. Indigenous, that's a word...of or from a specific place. But indigeney is made up.

NEIL

They do that at these things...make normal words sound more creative.

HOPE

That's annoying.

LIZ

You'll get used to it. C'mon. We've got a movie to make!

Neil nods. Alan and Jen are already high-fiving and raising their glasses. Here we go!

39

INT. NEIL AND LIZ'S BEACH HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

39

Liz sits cross-legged on the bed, hard at work with paper, pen and laptop. She's dressed for sleep, wearing a gray TAKEN IN T-shirt and eyeglasses.

LIZ

Last scene. The three of them standing there, staring out at the ocean. Is it enough? Or will people want more?

Neil enters from the bathroom with a toothbrush in his mouth. He too is dressed for bed, T-shirt and underwear.

NEIL

Ambiguous endings are a staple of the late Murray canon. Remember the board? "Lost in Translation," "Broken Flowers," "Zombieland." Well, maybe not "Zombieland." Though you can argue his character's arc is pretty ambiguous.

He goes back to the bathroom, spits, rinse, returns. On the bed, Liz rubs her eyes, closes her laptop.

LIZ

I'll take another look at it first thing in the morning. I'm wiped.

Neil jumps on the bed beside Liz.

NEIL

We did good on money today. Yeah?

Neil puts his arm around Liz, kissing her on the head. Liz grabs the cash envelope, always at her side, and peruses it.

LIZ

Mm. Yeah.

(beat)

Hey babe...if I gave you a ridiculously awesome blow job would you let me get new hardwood floors?

NEIL

(confused)

Do we need new floors?

LIZ

No. One of Paula's friends said she had to blow her husband to get new floors.

NEIL

That's romantic. Wonder what she'd do for a swimming pool.

LIZ

But seriously. If I wanted something. Something big. What would I have to do to get it?

Neil looks at her, bemused. Is she joking?

NEIL

I guess you'd have to blow that chick's husband.

(a beat)

Is he cute?

LIZ

I'm serious.

NEIL

Once we win this thing, we'll be set, creatively and financially.

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

I won't have to work on the Rutt Brother's Gay-Christian-Horror flick, and...Bill Murray will be our BFF.

Liz bites her lip and nods.

LIZ

I know.

She leans over, turns out the light and pulls up the covers.

NEIL

In the meantime, we could get started on that new washer and dryer you've been talking about.

LIZ

Not tonight. Gotta get up early and finish the script.

A long pause. We heard the surf just outside the windows.

NEIL

Fine.

(a beat)

Guess I'll have to get started on my own washer and dryer then.

Liz laughs.

40 INT. GIRLS BEACH HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT 40

Jen SNORES loudly on her bed.

Across from her on the other bed, illuminated by her laptop screen, Hope turns up the volume on her earbuds.

ON SCREEN, Hope types "CLOMID" into a search engine. ENTER.

Hope's eyes NARROW at the results --

41 EXT. BEACH HOUSE - MORNING 41

The sun rises over the beach. A perfect day on the make.

42 INT. BEACH HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING 42

Script pages pop out of a small printer.

Liz collects them and staples the bundle together.

Neil, Alan and Jen wolf down breakfast. Pop Tarts for Jen, fruit salad for Alan, coffee for Neil.

NEIL

(to Alan)

So I'm thinking we stay on the 50 --

Hope crosses, earbuds in, sunglasses on. She makes a surgical strike for a Pop Tart.

HOPE

Can I go down to the beach?

NEIL

Sure. Keep your phone with you.

She salutes, heads out the back door with a huge towel and a book.

A KNOCK echoes loudly from the front door. Heads turn --

NICK TEASLE (50), wearing a a bolo tie with his cowboy shirt and jeans, appears.

NICK

Somebody order an actor?

Jen almost chokes on her Pop Tart.

JEN

Oh. My. God. It's Sensei DiMarco!

NICK

Ah. You know my work.

JEN

(laughs)

Know it? I love it! "American Karateka 2" is one of my all time favorites! You're a bad, bad man.

NICK

Only to my enemies.

Nick winks. Jen swoons. Neil and Liz jump in.

NEIL

Nick, great to see you again. We're so happy you could make it.

NICK

Happy to be here. How could I say no to the beach?

LIZ

Liz. And you met Jen. This is Alan,  
our shooter. We're just waiting on  
our actress --

A BELL rings. More heads turn.

BREE (O.S.)

Hello?

LIZ

Speak of the starlet.

Bree sashays into the kitchen, while behind her, JEFF  
DRIGGERS follows, carrying her numerous bags.

Neil and the gang exchange pleasantries with Bree --

NEIL

Nice to see you again. Liz you've  
met, this is Alan, Jen, and --

Nick jumps in, taking Bree's hand, kissing it.

NICK

Nick Teasle. Enchantee.

BREE

Aw.

JEN

Watch him. He'll flip ya.

Jeff Driggers, persona non grata, drops the bags.

JEFF

Nicholas Teasle? The Nicholas  
Teasle? Wow!

NEIL

And you are?

JEFF

It's Jeff, Coach Shaw. Jeff  
Driggers. Remember? From Camp  
Truffaut. And the studio the other  
day.

NEIL

Right, right.

BREE

Jeff loves you I mean loves loves loves you he texted me the other day and was like what's going on saw your movie at Interplay and I was like I'm headed to the coast to make a movie with the Shaws want to come and next thing I know Jeff's like OH MY GOD I love that guy!

Jeff BLUSHES.

JEFF

So Charleston, right? Great town. And Bill Murray! Wow!

NEIL

Well, thanks for bringing in Bree's bags, Jeff. We're just about to have our first production meeting.

Neil turns away. Jeff doesn't move.

JEFF

Well, uh, actually I was wondering if I could...offer my services to do a behind the scenes featurette. Totally free. You know, to show people the master at work. And maybe I can crash here for the weekend. Don't want to miss anything!

NEIL

I'm flattered. We're flattered. But it's kind of a full house --

JEN

Oh lord. Behind the scenes with these people is nuts.

NICK

Speaking of nuts, did I mention I'm allergic to nuts?

LIZ

You have a camera?

JEFF

Yes ma'am. A buddy of mine and I have our own production company. I've got all the gear I need.

LIZ  
 Might be useful to have some  
 process footage. And a second  
 camera. You're hired.

NEIL  
 We move fast, so keep up, okay?

JEFF  
 Yes sir!

43 INT. BEACH HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

43

Liz passes out printed copies of the screenplay. In the background, Jeff is already set up with his camera, recording.

LIZ  
 Okay. Our film is called, "Nous  
 Nous Réunissons," or...translated  
 from the French, "We Meet."

BREE  
 Ooo I love it!

LIZ  
 Basically, Nick's character is a  
 successful water sports equipment  
 salesman whose life is turned  
 upside down when a former lover,  
 me, shows up and informs him that  
 they have a love child...Bree.

JEN  
 (to Nick)  
 Then he kicks her ass! Sensei  
 DiMarco style!

Silence drops on the room.

JEN (CONT'D)  
 What? I'm joking. Joking.

NEIL  
 (clears his throat)  
 We're shooting in black and white.

ALAN  
 Well, in color. We can make it  
 black and white in post. Or just  
 keep it color.

NEIL

No. I want to *shoot* in black and white. No options.

Alan shrugs. Fine with him.

NEIL (CONT'D)

And. All dialogue is in French.

LIZ

But don't worry if you're not a fluent speaker. I've written out each line phonetically, and included the English translation in a column next to it in your script.

NEIL

We know this is a pretty ambitious script. I should add that it's supposed to be a comedy. So even though the lines will be read very straight, the effect will be lots of laughs from our audience.

LIZ

It's subtle.

NEIL

But we know we can pull it off. If you'll trust us, Liz and I guarantee you'll be proud of your work and the film as a whole.

JEN

Yay!

NICK

I am just...*thrilled*.

BREE

It's like literature even though I can't really read it you know it's totally literate.

NEIL

It is. Liz did a great job.

A collective woot and the company is off and running.

LIZ  
 (to Neil)  
 We can't shoot this in French.

This is the Shaw's movie set, first shot of the film. It is simple: a cameraman (Alan), sound recordist (Jen), and two actors (Liz and Bree).

Liz and Neil are having a private conversation in the corner of the beach house living room. Alan, Jen and Bree are having their own conversation behind them.

NEIL  
 Come on. Your French is perfect.

LIZ  
 Bree can't do it. It's going to ruin the film.

Neil steps away from her.

NEIL  
 Okay guys, let's do another take.

JEN  
 Places for 3c!

NEIL  
 (to Bree)  
 This time, let's just do the scene in English...make sure the acting is solid.

BREE  
 You don't want me to say the lines in French?

NEIL  
 Not this time. Alan. Let's roll on this one.

ALAN  
 Will do.

NEIL  
 (to Liz)  
 Let's go through this in English, see how it goes, acting-wise...then we'll try it in French again.

Liz positions herself in front of Bree. Alan finds his shot, a hand-held close up on Bree.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
Stand by.

JEN  
Quiet, please!

NEIL  
Let's roll sound.

JEN  
Speed.

NEIL  
And roll camera.

ALAN  
3c, take four. Camera  
is...speeding.

NEIL  
You got this Bree.  
(a beat) )  
Action!

Liz is focused, serious, "in the moment":

LIZ  
I saw him. Yesterday. At a cafe.

And Bree is perfect.

BREE  
And he asked to see me?

LIZ  
Yes.

BREE  
(she cries)  
Oh mother...I can't.

LIZ  
He loves you, Talia. He just  
doesn't know it yet.

NEIL  
*Cut!* How was that for camera?

ALAN  
Great.

NEIL  
Sound?

JEN

Great. Hope you don't hear my  
sniffles.

NEIL

Bree. That was very nice. Liz?

LIZ

It felt good.

NEIL

Back to one. This time, en  
français!

The cast and crew reset. Bree dabs her eyes with a tissue.

BREE

(to Liz)

How's my makeup?

LIZ

Looks good.

JEN

Stand by. Quiet, please.

NEIL

Roll sound.

JEN

Speeding.

NEIL

Roll camera.

ALAN

3c, take five. Camera, speed!

NEIL

Et...l'action!

LIZ

(exquisite French)

Je l'ai vu. Hier. Dans un café.

Bree, reaching:

BREE

Ella demmanday me, voila?

LIZ

(after a beat)

Oui.

BREE  
 (a screech)  
 Oh mare! Jay nu pew, je ne pews!  
 Pa!

NEIL  
*Cut!*

45 INT. BEACH HOUSE VARIOUS - DAY 45

MONTAGE. Filmmaking in progress.

SLATE claps.

LIZ emotes in BLACK AND WHITE.

Neil NODS. Good performances.

BREE twirls and twirls and twirls.

ALAN gives a thumbs up to Neil. *Good Take.*

JEFF captures the filmmaking on his behind the scenes camera.

NEIL  
 And cut!

A SCENE breaks. Jen lowers the boom pole

JEN  
 That's lunch everybody!

46 INT. BEACH HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY 46

Food hits plates.

AT THE TABLE, Jen, Nick, Jeff, Bree, Alan, and a sun-kissed Hope chow down.

AT THE COUNTER, Neil and Liz review the morning's footage.

AT THE TABLE:

Loose conversation between bites --

NICK  
 (to Bree)  
 So you're moving to L.A.?

BREE

Yeah I have a friend there who knows this guy who's being courted by like a dozen agents right now he made this web series that won all these festivals and I was like *show him my headshots* and my friend was like you know I'm not sure if that's cool right now but then I get a like from some guy on Instagram I don't know and it's *him!*

JEN

I'm confused. Are you confused?

AT THE COUNTER:

NEIL

I think it's working.

LIZ

French would have been a master-stroke.

NEIL

I know. But still.

AT THE TABLE:

Bree turns up her nose at a bottle of water.

BREE

(to Hope)

You know this is really bad for your skin right can we get some Aqua Couture they like take all the minerals out of it and it actually feels like wet glass going down your throat.

JEN

I'll see what I can do.

Hope takes it all in. She adores this Bree girl...never met anyone like her.

NICK

(to Bree)

I could listen to you talk all day *long.*

Bree shrugs. Hope beams. Jen tries not to gag.

NICK (CONT'D)

You ever do plays?

BREE

Oh I *love* theatre just being out there on stage fully exposed naked just you and the audience *I love it so much!*

JEN

Last time I was naked in front of an audience, I *did not* love it so much.

ALAN

Neither did they.

Jen throws a piece of food at Alan.

NICK

Nothing to be ashamed of. We're all God's beautiful creatures. Especially in the buff.

Hope laughs out loud.

NEIL AND LIZ squeeze into the mix.

NEIL

Once we finish up here, we're heading on down to this great cafe Jen scored for us to grab the Nick and Liz scene before we lose the light. So Bree, you're on hold 'til we get back.

BREE

Cool. I'll going to grab my stuff and go tweet on the porch.

HOPE

I'll stay here with Bree.

BREE

(to Hope)

Oh my god you should totally be my personal assistant!

Hope beams. The girls split.

NEIL

(to Liz)

Are we approving this?

LIZ  
Hope's found a friend!

NEIL  
That's what I'm worried about.

NICK  
C.B. I was looking at the script,  
and I had some ideas.

LIZ  
Ideas?

NICK  
Yes, about the last scene.

Neil and Liz exchange worried glances.

NICK (CONT'D)  
See, I think my character is  
totally freaked out, as we all  
would be in the situation, so he  
runs away and ends up in you know,  
well like the last shot in "A  
Clockwork Orange."

NEIL  
An orgy?

NICK  
Exactly!

LIZ  
That's, uh, a really interesting  
idea, Nick.

NICK  
I *know*.

NEIL  
I think Liz really wanted this  
image of a family at the end. But,  
if we have time, we'll definitely  
try to fit in your idea.

NICK  
That's what I like to hear!  
Collaboration!

Nick gets up from the table. Liz leans in to Neil --

LIZ  
You're not seriously--

NEIL  
Not a chance in hell.

47 EXT. CHARLESTON OUTDOOR CAFE - DAY

47

The gang (Neil, Liz, Nick, Jen, Alan, and Jeff) arrive at the gate of a picturesque cafe, but are stopped by a SNOOTY MAITRE D' --

SNOOTY MAITRE D'  
I'm very sorry, but we can only allow one film shoot at a time.

JEN  
I spoke to the manager last night. He said no problem. Where's the manager?

SNOOTY MAITRE D'  
I'm very sorry, madam, but he's not in. If you'd like to wait, by all means, I'll let you know when the other crew is finished.

LIZ  
It's a 48-hour film festival! We don't have time to wait.

The snooty maître d' shrugs. Not his problem.

Nick cracks his neck, leans in over Neil's shoulder.

NICK  
You want me to take this guy out?

Neil steps up to the maitre d' --

NEIL  
Look, we don't even want to shoot inside. We'll take a spot on the corner of the patio. In and out in an hour. You won't even notice us.

The maitre d' pretends like Neil isn't there, when behind the maitre d' appears JACKIE.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
Jackie?

Jackie lights a cigarette and breezes over.

JACKIE

Neil! You shooting here too? It's gorgeous. Total Rembrandt inside.

NEIL

That was the plan, but this gentleman won't let us in.

JACKIE

Ugh. I know. Tight ass. We totally lucked out. Somebody had it booked, and we bogarted their reservation. Oh. Wait. That was.

LIZ

Us.

JACKIE

Oh honey, I'm sorry. We just started. You want to come back in a couple hours?

Just then, DOS MIDLER exits the cafe, joining Jackie.

DOS

The Shaws!

Dos saunters over and offers up a bevy of pretentious air kisses. None of which find their particular mark.

DOS (CONT'D)

My team is taking five. Can you believe this location? I feel so blessed to be shooting in the Holy City.

LIZ

Saints be praised.

Dos holds his hands up like a frame, capturing Liz's sour expression --

DOS

You're a goddess in this light!

LIZ

Dos. What do you say we steal a few quick shots while you take five with your team?

Dos holds up his hand. SOUND echoes on his earpiece.

DOS  
 If you'll excuse me. My cast. Three  
 kids from L.A. You'd think they'd  
 never experienced humidity before.  
 Ciao!

Dos leaves. Neil looks at Jackie, disappointed.

NEIL  
 Him? You're working with *him*?

Jackie stubs out her cigarette. Shakes her head helplessly.

JACKIE  
 I know. It's just today. Script  
 supervisor. Look, I'll tell him to  
 pick up the pace.

DOS (O.S.)  
*Jackie!*

Jackie sighs, shrugs, leaves.

NEIL  
 Dammit.

LIZ  
 What now, brown eyes?

NEIL  
 Screw it. Let's shoot at our backup  
 location.

JEN  
 What back up location?

NEIL  
 Fine. Anywhere. Let's just get  
 moving, we're losing light!

48 EXT. LESS SCENIC CHARLESTON LOCATION - DAY

48

Nick and Liz sit at a far less photogenic outdoor cafe table.  
 Alan and Jen circle them with a camera and boom mic. Neil  
 hovers, locked on his actors' faces.

Liz sips her coffee, thinks.

LIZ  
 We have a child, Roman. A daughter.

Nick's face: first a smile, then bemusement. Suddenly it is  
 shock. Then, eases into the pain of a deep, abiding loss.

NICK  
I knew. Somehow...I always knew.

NEIL  
*Cut!* Great! Nick that was  
fantastic.

Alan shakes his head.

ALAN  
I went soft on her close-up. Looked  
like we were going into a dream  
sequence. Can we do it again?

NEIL  
Okay. Everybody, back to one.

The crew regroups --

JEN  
Neil, Liz. Po-po, twelve o'clock.

Neil and Liz spin, having different interpretations of twelve  
o'clock. Finally they spot what Jen has seen.

A POLICE OFFICER is making his way towards them.

OFFICER DOWNER  
You have a permit to film here?

Neil and Liz look at one another. *Nope.*

NEIL  
Hi officer. We're just finishing  
up. One last take and we'll be on  
our way.

OFFICER DOWNER  
Do you have a permit?

LIZ  
Theoretically, yes. This is for the  
48-hour film festival. Pretty sure  
it's a city sponsored event.

OFFICER DOWNER  
It's not. Had a lot of complaints  
about you film crews today. Now if  
you don't mind, I'll need you to  
vacate the area.

NEIL  
Listen. I know exactly where you're  
coming from. You're doing your job.  
(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

We are too. It's incredibly important we get this right. What's the harm in letting us get one more shot off?

OFFICER DOWNER

The law's the law. I won't ask you again.

Jen drops the boom pole, boozy and incensed. She can stand on the sidelines no more.

JEN

Are you kidding me, Chips? It's the fucking Lowcountry Film Festival! Cut us a break! You want to write us a ticket, go ahead! But we're not moving. Now, if you'll excuse me, we've got a movie to make.

Jen picks up the boom pole and swings it back to the scene --

THWACK! Only one problem. It clips Officer Downer in the head on the way around.

Officer Downer's not happy. He takes out his BILLY CLUB, cracks it on the back of Jen's knee, and puts her in a chokehold.

OFFICER DOWNER

You're under arrest for assaulting an officer!

JEN

What? What'd I do?

49

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY

49

Jen sits on one side of a jail window booth. Liz sits on the other side. They hold telephone receivers to their ears.

JEN

I swear I told that cop to duck.

LIZ

It's okay. They said because your blood alcohol was so high, the assault charge has been reduced to drunk and disorderly.

JEN

How much is bail? Let's blow this joint.

LIZ  
About that...

JEN  
You're not leaving me here.

Liz looks away.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Oh my god. You are leaving me here.

LIZ  
We don't have the money.

JEN  
I do. Put it on a card and I'll  
write you a check when I'm out.

LIZ  
I mean, we're totally maxed out.  
I've...I've been going to the  
fertility clinic...and, you  
wouldn't believe how much it costs  
these days to conceive. Don't tell  
Neil though. He doesn't know.

JEN  
Jiminey H. Crickets!

LIZ  
I know. What am I doing? Look, I  
need to get back. They'll release  
you from the drunk tank after  
twelve hours.

JEN  
Wait. You're really leaving me  
here?

Liz frowns, shrugs. She hangs up and leaves. Jen holds the  
phone in disbelief.

50 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

50

Liz steps outside. Neil waits for the news.

NEIL  
Where is she?

LIZ  
Inside.

NEIL  
Is there a problem?

LIZ  
(breezy)  
She told me to save the bail money.  
Says she's okay. Besides, she only  
blew a .17. It's just overnight.

NEIL  
Overnight? It was an accident.

Liz looks away, thinks.

LIZ  
Security in that place is lax.

Neil looks at her her. What is she getting at?

LIZ (CONT'D)  
(dead serious)  
What if we go back in? You chat up  
the woman at the desk, I'll slip  
back into the holding area. There's  
a closet with all the jumpsuits.  
Classic "Star Wars," right? I'll  
pretend to be a prisoner...

NEIL  
This is a joke, right? You're  
joking.

She's not joking.

LIZ  
(forces a laugh)  
Of course I'm joking! She'll be out  
in the morning. They even give her  
a ride home.

Neil looks at his wife. Is she okay? Still, there's a movie  
to shoot.

51 EXT. CHARLESTON "BATTERY" - DAY

51

Golden hour at Charleston's glorious Battery. Bree and Nick  
lit perfectly with the sun's fading, golden rays. The crew  
hovers close. Jeff Driggers operates the boom mic, Liz holds  
a silver reflector.

Bree pouts, looks out at the water.

BREE

I always pictured you like Jonah,  
trapped in the belly of some huge  
fish, banging on the ribs, trying  
to get out and come back to us.

NICK

In a way, I guess...I was.

BREE

No you weren't, Roman.

NICK

I'm here, aren't I?

BREE

(thinks, then)

I don't know. In my mind's eye  
you'll always be lost at sea.

Nick reaches out to Bree, takes her by the shoulders, leans  
in to kiss her...on the mouth? No. On the forehead.

NEIL (O.S.)

*Cut!*

Liz whispers to Neil --

LIZ

What's he doing? He knows he's  
supposed to be the father, right?

NEIL

Apparently not.

(to Nick and Bree)

I want to do that again. Few small  
changes.

LIZ

Yeah, it was a little sexy there,  
right at the end, Nick.

NICK

Sexy?

BREE

It was different it seemed like you  
were about to kiss me.

NICK

I did kiss you.

BREE

No like on the mouth it seemed like  
you were about to kiss my mouth.

Nick looks at the crew to back him up. No support.

LIZ

It did.

NICK

Oh god! I'm so sorry.

NEIL

We'll just do it again. Everything  
else was nice.

ALAN

Camera's ready for take four.

NICK

(laughing maniacally)  
*Oh my god! That's funny! Oh geez.*  
It was like I was going to kiss  
her!

NEIL

It's fine, let's just grab one  
more.

NICK

(crying with laughter now)  
Holy moly, that's a *totally*  
different movie!

LIZ

Yeah. It would be...

NEIL

Okay, here we go. Everybody settle.

NICK

(goofy, still laughing)  
Hiya pops, how about a kiss on the  
mouth? Oo-la-la!

Neil is getting frustrated, trying to get Nick to settle.

NEIL

Settle.

LATER.

Nick and Bree re-run the scene --

NICK  
I'm here now, aren't I?

BREE  
(thinks, then)  
I don't know. In my mind's eye  
you'll always be lost at sea.

Nick gives Bree a tender, fatherly kiss on the forehead.

Neil, eyes on the monitor, nods, biting his knuckle. The shot is PERFECT.

NEIL  
And cut! Perfect. Great job  
everybody. That's a wrap for today.

The crew starts to strike. Neil and Liz confer --

LIZ  
(happy)  
Yeah?

NEIL  
(smiles)  
Yeah.

52 EXT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT 52

The moon hangs over the sky and ocean.

53 INT. BEACH HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT 53

Neil and Liz hover over a laptop.

NEIL  
Well, we missed a few things, but I  
think it's going to hold together.  
We knock out the ending tomorrow,  
and rally back here to finish the  
edit in time for the screening.

Neil stretches back and rubs his eyes.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
That five grand is going to feel so  
good in our pockets.

Liz forces a grin, a wave of guilt hitting her.

54

EXT. BEACH HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

54

Nick holds court on the deck with the rest of the cast and crew. Hope, now dressed in clothes from Bree's suitcase, is typing away on her laptop.

Alan nibbles a healthy mix of raw nut meats, while the rest unwind over a few plastic cups of wine.

NICK

...and so the director says, kick the kid in the balls for real, but don't tell the kid I told you. Say it was an accident. So I look at the director and tell him right to his face, I'm a third degree black belt in American kenpo. I don't do accidents.

Jeff, drunk, absolutely rapt, chimes in --

JEFF

So you really didn't kick the kid in the balls? I read on the Internet you did and they had to surgically re-lower one of them.

NICK

Can't believe everything you read on the Internets, kid. I kicked the stunt double in the balls. That guy had it coming.

Nick glances at Bree --

NICK (CONT'D)

Didn't know how to treat the ladies, if you know what I mean.  
(turns to Jeff)  
Watch the scene on Youtubes. The kick lands on an over the shoulder shot, then cuts to the kid hitting the ground. The pain was all acting. That kid had real talent.

JEFF

Wow.

HOPE

I'm totally updating this story on Nick's Wikipedia page.

Neil and Liz appear on the porch and sit down.

NEIL

Great day shooting, everyone. Few more shots tomorrow, and we'll be in the home stretch.

JEFF

Did you know Mr. Teasle never actually kicked that kid in the nutsack in "American Karateka 2"?

NEIL

Liz and I were *just* talking about that, weren't we?

LIZ

We were.

Bree downs her wine, hands the empty cup to Hope, and stands.

BREE

Anyone up for a midnight swim?

LIZ

Not tonight. I'm dead. But you kids go on ahead.

NEIL

Er, Hope. It's bedtime.

HOPE

Aw. Come on.

BREE

It's totally okay Hope we'll hit it hard in the morning that fan page isn't going to launch itself.

Disappointed, Hope exchanges air kisses and a hug with Bree, heads back into the house.

ALAN

(drunk)

Didn't bring my trunks. Everybody okay with full frontal?

Alan runs off toward the dunes, and he is completely naked by the time he hits the wet sand.

BREE

Oh god that is *not* what I had in mind!

NICK

I'll protect you!

Nick and Bree dash to the water.

NEIL

Call time is eight o'clock!

Neil pours glasses of wine for himself and Liz.

LIZ

I forgot about Alan's proclivity to get naked when he drinks.

NEIL

Should I ask him to keep his pants on?

LIZ

I trust Alan with his pants off far more than I trust Nick with his pants on.

ON THE BEACH, we see Bree timid near the water as Nick and Alan splash around like morons.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Your twenties are tough on a girl. Desperate to be taken seriously, terrified you'll be left out. Paranoid you won't get some guy's clever reference or understand his joke.

NEIL

Hey. That's my daughter's boss you're talking about.

LIZ

(smiles, then)

There are so few women to count on when you're twenty. Your friends are like you, confused. Your mother is in denial. You're still her baby.

NEIL

So...you become an actress and take up twirling?

LIZ

Some of us do.

(she smiles, toasts Neil)

That's why they twirl. Looking to find their center.

Jeff, drunk, fumbles with his CAMERA, trying to capture the moment --

NEIL

Mother, this is one weird little family we've put together.

Jeff almost falls out of his chair. Neil hurries over to help him up and take care of the camera.

NEIL (CONT'D)

I think it may be bedtime for you, too little buddy.

JEFF

I love you, guys.

Neil helps Jeff back inside.

Liz discreetly pours out her wine after Neil leaves with Jeff.

ON THE BEACH, the rest of the "kids" frolicking in the moonlit surf.

55 EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY 55

The sun rises over the beach.

NICK, dressed in his kenpo outfit, does improvised Tai-Chi movements, preparing for the day.

56 INT. BEACH HOUSE BEDROOM - DAY 56

Bree stirs under the covers. She glances at the clock, at the manly effects on the night table. Feeling a little embarrassed, she sneaks out of the room --

57 INT. BEACH HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY 57

Liz polishes the script on her laptop.

Behind her, through the open door in the HALLWAY, Bree tiptoes past.

Liz checks over her shoulder, catching only a fleeting glimpse of Bree.

58

INT. BEACH HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

58

Alan chops fruit for his breakfast. Neil drinks coffee, going over the shot list.

NEIL

We hit downtown first, then back here. The beach. Wrap before lunch.

ALAN

Then edit on your laptop?

NEIL

Yep.

Alan shovels some fruit into his mouth.

NEIL (CONT'D)

How is it you're a raw vegan chef if you don't actually cook anything?

ALAN

Technically, I prefer to call myself a food collage artist, but when I say that, people think I make macaroni art. Chef makes everything more buttoned up.

NEIL

Well, you've still got great hands with the camera. Shame to see you hang it up.

The familiar sound of the front door opening echoes through the kitchen --

JEN appears, fresh from her jail stint. She bee lines for the fridge.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Jen! You made it!

Jen doesn't acknowledge Neil. Instead, she takes a cold bottle of Pinot Grigio out of the fridge, uncaps it and takes a long swig from the bottle.

JEN

Don't ask. I won't tell.

Jen walks to the sink, takes another swig of Pinot Grigio, swishes it like mouthwash, then spits it out into the sink. She splashes another couple glugs into her hands and uses the Pinot Grigio to wash her face.

Neil and Alan watch. When Jen finishes, she seems completely refreshed.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Who's ready to make a movie?

59 EXT. CHARLESTON STREETS - DAY

59

Liz and Nick, stand facing each other as Neil directs. Alan hovers nearby. Jen holds a long boom pole, at the ready.

Bree and Hope flirt with Jeff Driggers in the background.

NEIL  
(to Liz)  
Well, you're not going to swallow his whole head, but...you know, I think it's a serious kiss. With implications.

Liz looks away. She disagrees.

NICK  
(to Neil)  
Implying that she wants him, right?

NEIL  
Well, I mean, it's been twenty years. So it's not like she expects them to live happily ever after.

NICK  
(nods knowingly)  
Right. Purely sexual.

Neil sighs. This is not what he had in mind.

LIZ  
(to Neil)  
So she just wants to fuck him?

Neil frowns. Nick shrugs, nods.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
It's not at all what I wrote, but if it's what you want...you're the director.

NICK  
(to Jen)  
Can I get a water. And a breath mint?

Hope waves, nods, runs to the car...the picture of a Hollywood P.A.

Liz, Neil and Alan talk while Nick wanders off to wait for his water. Jeff hovers nearby, shooting.

NEIL  
(under his breath)  
I know it's not a sexual thing,  
babe.

LIZ  
Tell *him* that.

NEIL  
I did. He's got some bug up his ass  
today.

LIZ  
It's Bree. I think they got pretty  
personal last night.

Hope hands Nick the bottled water and a mint. Bree keeps her distance, and avoids Nick when he tries to approach her.

NEIL  
Are you kidding? It's a 48-hour  
film festival. We've barely been  
together 24 hours.

ALAN  
Kids these days.

LIZ  
Nick's pretty far removed from  
being a kid. He could be her  
grandfather.

ALAN  
Yeesh.

Hope walks up.

HOPE  
What's so yeesh?

Neil motions with his head to Bree twirling for Jeff.

LIZ  
Actor drama.

HOPE  
Bree and Nick?

The adults are shocked.

NEIL

What do you know about Bree and Nick?

HOPE

Enough.

Hope walks back to her boss.

NEIL

I'm going to lose custody.

(to Liz)

Alright. Back to one. And this time, no tongue. Cool?

Alan and Jen maneuver their gear into place, and Liz takes her mark, across from Nick, a sour look on her face.

CUT TO:

Close on Nick.

NICK

(weeping)

She's my daughter, dammit. My own *flesh and blood!*

NEIL (O.C.)

Cut. No tears. Let's try another one...

CUT TO:

NICK

(a whisper)

She's my daughter. Damn. It. My own flesh. And blood.

NEIL (O.C.)

Cut. Can we get another, Nick?

CUT TO:

NICK

(incredulous)

*Her?* She's my daughter. My damn daughter, dammit. *Flesh and blood.*

NEIL (O.C.)

Cut! Not so deliberate.

CUT TO:

NICK  
 (laughing)  
 She's my daughter. Isn't that damn  
 hilarious? My own flesh and blood!

NEIL (O.C.)  
 No. Cut. He isn't amused...

CUT TO:

NICK  
 (sexy)  
 She's my daughter? Damn. My own  
 flesh and blood. Just...damn.

NEIL (O.C.)  
*Cut!*

60 EXT. CHARLESTON STREETS - DAY

60

Neil and Liz, far off and away from the crew, huddle over the script, engaged in an INTENSE DEBATE.

Close, Jen approaches Jeff who is shooting footage of Bree, happily modeling for him while she waits.

JEN  
 We're taking five. Gonna knock this  
 thing out, load up, drive over to  
 the beach for the last shot.

JEFF  
 Think we'll finish in time?

JEN  
 We have to.

JEFF  
 He was really fun, back in video  
 camp.

JEN  
 Still is.

JEFF  
 Different though. Less...free.

JEN  
 How old are you, Jeff?

JEFF  
 Twenty-five.

JEN  
You married, got any kids?

JEFF  
(laughs)  
No.

JEN  
What do you do for a living?

JEFF  
I'm an intern. But I have a  
business partner, too.

JEN  
Cute. Look. I'm sure Neil was  
"freer" when you two were buds back  
in the day, but I can assure  
you...that difference you're  
noticing? It's not existential.  
He's a grown-up, Jeff.

Jeff looks hurt. He looks back at Liz and Neil, their  
argument gone frosty over the last script pages.

Not knowing what else to do, Jeff aims his camera at the  
couple.

61 EXT. BEACH HOUSE DUNES - DAY

61

White sand dunes near the beach house.

Alan hovers near Nick, Liz, and Bree who stand, arm-in-arm,  
staring out towards the sea.

The shot is magical, but the roar of the waves makes the  
actors' dialogue indecipherable...though each is speaking  
full voice, almost shouting.

Neil and Jen stand behind Alan. Hope is there too, on script.  
Jen looks at Neil, points to her headphones, shakes her head.  
Jeff Driggers captures it all with his handheld camera.

NEIL  
*Cut! Cut!* Sound is shit.

NICK  
I can project.

NEIL  
It's the waves, the surf. It's too  
loud, shooting on the beach.

LIZ

We have to see the characters find hope at the end...the, the ocean is that metaphor. It's Fellini turned on his head.

JEN

(to Liz)

All I'm getting is crashing waves.

LIZ

We can ADR it.

ALAN

(to Neil, shrugs)

Picture looks great.

Neil looks at his watch.

NEIL

We're totally out of time.

BREE

I can project!

LIZ

Cut the dialogue. Trust the picture.

NEIL

But Bree's line is critical. It's the whole story.

Liz stares at Neil, hard. He throws his hands.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Fine. We'll just forget everything you wrote.

LIZ

I'm trying to help us solve the problem.

NEIL

The problem is writing a dialogue scene on a beach!

LIZ

Which is why I'm cutting it!

Neil motions to Alan and Jan.

NEIL  
 Just...roll, Alan. No sound, Jen.  
 We'll shoot what we can.

Neil runs over to his actors.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
 You guys just stand...look out into  
 the ocean.

NICK  
 What's my motivation?

Neil: *Really?*

NEIL  
 You're looking for sharks.

NICK  
 Sharks? Nice. I like it.

NEIL  
 (to Alan, frustrated)  
 I need three close-ups. Then, some  
 kind of high and wide from the  
 dunes.

Alan frames the first close-up.

LATER.

Black and white close-ups are grabbed. Sand and wind blows in  
 the actors faces, straining their performances.

Neil watches, dour.

Liz refuses to make eye contact with Neil between takes.

Overhead in the sky, clouds churn, and seagulls circle.

62 INT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY

62

Neil, Liz, Alan, and Jen ride back to the beach house in  
 silence. Nerves are frayed, people are irritable.

In the backseat, lodged between Alan and Jen, is Jeff  
 Driggers.

JEFF  
 So. Anyone seen the new Woody Allen  
 film?

Silence.

63

INT. BEACH HOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY

63

A wall clock shows four o'clock. Time's running out.

At the dining table, Neil, Alan, Jen, and Liz are crammed around Neil's laptop looking at the edit.

Jeff Driggers hovers as usual, recording it all.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN, the final frame rolls up, followed by the customary *Fin*.

SILENCE. Then --

NEIL  
It's not funny.

LIZ  
It's wry.

NEIL  
It's too subtle.

ALAN  
I like it!

JEN  
Nick's deadpan is hilarious.

NEIL  
I finally got him to stop "acting,"  
and he *stopped acting*.

LIZ  
Do we have another shot that can  
get us out of the sequence?

ALAN  
I like it. It's...different.

NEIL  
We needed a joke. A quip...like  
Nick saying, "They ain't got one of  
those in Pittsburgh."

LIZ  
Fine. I'll go back in time and  
write in a crack about Pittsburgh.

NEIL  
It's not Pittsburgh that would make  
it funny. It's a line that says he  
just doesn't get it...

ALAN

I don't know. Kinda reminds me of Bergman's comedies.

Puzzled looks from the team.

JEN

(stands)  
Moving on...

LIZ

We should end on my close-up.

Liz points at the frame she prefers.

LIZ (CONT'D)

There. That's your final image.

Neil scrolls ahead in the timeline to an close-up image of Nick.

NEIL

It's funnier on him.

Liz grabs the mouse, scrolls back to the previous frame.

LIZ

But it's her story. It's about her journey.

NEIL

I see it more as his story. He's the one who changes.

LIZ

No! It's about this woman looking for a father for her child.

Neil thinks about this for a few moments. Then, he shakes his head.

NEIL

That's not the story. This is a story for Bill Murray, not overly hormonal women kvetching about children and families. Gah. Nobody wants to see that.

Liz snaps. She tosses the wireless mouse against the dining room wall and it shatters.

LIZ

*Fuck!*

Alan and Jen scramble to resuscitate the broken mouse.

NEIL

What?!

LIZ

I am trying to help you fix this.  
*I'm not blind.* I can see that the  
film is shitty...

NEIL

It doesn't matter what you intended  
the story to be! We have what we  
shot. And right now, we have to  
finish the fucking movie. I am the  
director. I call the edit. And I  
say it works, close-on-Nick.

Liz glares at him. Neil glares back.

LIZ

You may know movies, but you don't  
know shit about anything else!

Liz storms out the door to the porch.

NEIL

Liz! Liz, wait!

Neil charges after her.

64

EXT. BEACH HOUSE PORCH - DAY

64

Neil and Liz charge out onto the porch.

LIZ

*It's always your story.*

NEIL

We shot the screenplay that *you*  
wrote. The film *you* star in! I am  
trying to make *you* look good, in  
*your* film. Don't make this all me.

LIZ

*This whole thing was your idea!*  
*"I know Bill Murray. I get him. I*  
*can win this."* Meanwhile I scramble  
to make the budget work and make  
*you* look legit...so *you* can play.

NEIL

I...I'm doing all of this, every bit of it, *for you*. Something great for you and me and Hope.

LIZ

How heroic...how *brave!*

NEIL

The only way we ever pull off these *impossible* projects is by me being this, this...overwhelming tidal wave of optimism. No matter who or what gets in our way.

LIZ

Well I'm sorry to have gotten in your way. I apologize for stepping out of line. It would be nice though, if you could figure out a way to pay your child support.

NEIL

If you're worried about money, we can always dip into our emergency funds...

LIZ

*There are no emergency funds!*

NEIL

What do you mean?

LIZ

I...I spent it. On something I want.

NEIL

What? What *do* you want?

LIZ

I want a baby. How's that for optimism?

Neil is stunned.

LIZ (CONT'D)

So do whatever the fuck you want with your shitty little movie with your name on it.

Liz barges back inside.

NEIL

Liz!

SLAM! The only answer Neil gets.

Neil stands on the porch, alone. After a beat, he looks up and notices Jen, Alan, and Jeff pressed to the window, watching, waiting for his reaction.

NEIL (CONT'D)

What are you looking at?

The gang slowly backs away from the window --

65 INT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY 65

Neil hops inside. Alone. He bangs his head on the steering wheel.

66 INT. BEACH HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY 66

Liz sits on the bed, hands around her knees, rocking, trying to keep from crying.

67 INT. BEACH HOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY 67

Jen, Alan, and Jeff stare at the laptop with the unfinished movie.

JEN

Anybody know how to work this thing?

Shrugs all around.

68 INT. CHARLESTON BAR - DAY 68

Neil sits down at the bar.

NEIL

Whisky. Neat. On second thought, make it a double.

A familiar shape takes the seat next to Neil: Jackie Miller.

JACKIE

This seat taken?

NEIL  
(shocked)  
Hey!

Jackie sits down, eyes the BARTENDER.

JACKIE  
Dirty martini, extra olives.  
(to Neil)  
You wrapped?

NEIL  
Yeah. You?

JACKIE  
Waiting on the render. Dos is  
really packing a lot of CGI into  
his show. It's overkill if you ask  
me, but don't tell him I said it.

NEIL  
Your secret's safe with me.

Drinks arrive.

JACKIE  
Cheers.

Neil downs his double in one gulp.

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
Want to know another secret? I've  
been hoping to get you alone ever  
since I ran into you at the launch  
party.

Neil looks at her: Really?

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
I have an idea for a film.  
Something you and I could write  
together, co-direct. There's this  
guy in L.A. who's dying to produce  
my next feature.

NEIL  
Really?

Jackie nods with bedroom eyes and a suggestive nibble of her  
olives.

JACKIE  
I think it'd be fun to work  
together.  
(MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)

I've always thought our skills were very complimentary. Whenever we used to talk, there was always this spark. This unbridled...creative...energy.

NEIL

(dismissive)  
We were kids.

JACKIE

We were good together.  
(a beat)  
Let me tell you the story...or as much as I have. Time for another drink while I whisper in your ear?

Neil looks at his empty glass, at Jackie's double entendre ready lips.

NEIL

Sure.

69

INT. BEACH HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

69

Jen knocks on the door. Liz looks up from the bed.

JEN

You okay?

LIZ

Fine. I think.

Jen sits down on the bed next to Liz.

JEN

It's going to be okay.

LIZ

(not so sure)  
The films, Hope's schedule, keeping his ex happy, the budget...it all revolves around *Neil* and what *Neil* needs. It's like I'm just this...this invisible person...this invisible female...

JEN

It could be worse. You could an invisible female all alone in a 4,000 square foot house.

LIZ  
I didn't mean...

JEN  
I know you didn't. You may feel powerless, Liz but...*damn girl*. I would trade lives with you in a heartbeat.

LIZ  
We're broke, Jen. No prospects, no options. My last three vacations have been on a plastic chair in my own backyard.

JEN  
Vacations, schmaycations. I've done five countries in five years, but tell you what. Not one of those trips was as exciting as making films with you and Neil.

LIZ  
(rolls her eyes)  
"Neil, you're a genius! Neil, I love your work! Oh, Liz...it's so cute that you work on your husband's films."

JEN  
You want me to validate the shit outta you? Or you want me to be your best friend?

LIZ  
Both. Or...validate my shit. Do that.

JEN  
You're *awesome*, and I think you know it. But you're better with Neil. And he's better with you.

Liz looks at Jen, shakes her head.

LIZ  
He doesn't even know me.

JEN  
Then keep explaining yourself. He loves you. He'll learn.

(beat)

(MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)

Now, we going to finish this film  
and blow Bill Murray's mind, or  
what?

Liz nods, maybe even cracks a smile.

70

INT. CHARLESTON BAR - DAY

70

Jackie, tipsy, winds up her pitch --

JACKIE

...and then she wakes up, and it  
turns out...it was all a dream.

Jackie waits for Neil's reaction.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Do you love it?

NEIL

The whole movie? Just a dream?

JACKIE

Uh-huh. Brilliant, right? None of  
it ever happened. My L.A. friends  
are crazy about it.

Jackie puts a hand on Neil's leg.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Wanna do it?

Did she mean the movie, or "it"? Neil pauses.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

We've still got a couple hours  
before the screening.

Jackie takes out a pen and writes down a room number on a  
cocktail napkin.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Half an hour. I'll leave first.  
Don't want any rumors to start.

Jackie leaves Neil at the bar. He looks at the napkin,  
thinking. Considering.

71

INT. BEACH HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

71

Liz sits at the dining room table, editing the film. The  
mouse, wrapped in duct tape kind of works, kind of doesn't.

Jen sits down beside Liz at the computer with two cups of coffee. Liz takes the coffee, and continues working on the film.

Jen watches Liz work. BLACK AND WHITE IMAGES from the film playback on-screen.

72 EXT. CHARLESTON HOTEL - NIGHT 72

The cocktail napkin with Jackie's room number is in Neil's hand.

He looks at the napkin, at the hotel entrance. Thinking, debating.

A FAMILY walks into the hotel past him. A happy family, HUSBAND, WIFE, TODDLER.

Neil takes on last look at the cocktail napkin, throws it away, and leaves.

73 INT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT 73

A DVD ejects from the laptop. A HAND writes the title "NOUS NOUS RÉUNISSONS" in Sharpie on the disc.

Liz and Jen look at one another.

LIZ

Here we go.

74 EXT. LOWCOUNTRY BOIL SCREENING EVENT - NIGHT 74

The marquee reads "LOWCOUNTRY BOIL SCREENING - TONIGHT!"

75 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT 75

The CROWD is buzzing, young and super-hip.

Dos Midler and Jackie Miller sit together. Dos is smiling, but Jackie has a sour look on her face and is constantly checking her phone.

Other FILMMAKERS and their FRIENDS fill the small screening room.

Liz, Alan, Jen, Jeff, Nick, Hope, and Bree take their seats.

Bree sits between Hope and Jeff, awkwardly shutting out Nick, who was trying to sit next to her.

Jen scans the stage and the crowd, looking for any sign of Neil --

LIZ  
 (to Jen)  
 I don't see him anywhere. Do you see him?

JEN  
 Who? Bill Murray?

LIZ  
 No, Neil.

IN FRONT OF THE SCREEN, Roscoe Willis taps the mic.

ROSCOE  
 Good evening, ladies and gentleman,  
 and welcome to the first annual  
 Lowcountry Boil 48 Hour Film  
 Festival!

The Crowd CHEERS.

Jen claps and continues looking around the room.

JEN  
 (to Liz)  
 Wait, isn't that Bill?

Jen points. Liz follows her finger. A BILL MURRAY-ESQUE MAN in a Hawaiian shirt stands with his back to the crowd, talking to a few individuals.

LIZ  
 I think you're right.

Jen punches Liz on the shoulder.

JEN  
 Sweet!

ROSCOE (O.S.)  
 ...We've got a lot of really great films for you tonight, thanks to some really, really talented filmmakers. But before we start the show, I'd like to thank our sponsors...

Liz's smile fades. She searches the theater, looking for Neil, but doesn't see him anywhere. She's getting anxious.

ROSCOE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 ...The City of Charleston, Trite  
 TV, and of course, Westbrook  
 Brewing, who've happily supplied  
 the bar...

On stage, Roscoe wraps up --

ROSCOE (CONT'D)  
 We're going to screen the films,  
 then after, we'll have a short  
 panel with our judges and announce  
 the winners. All right. Now,  
 without any further ado, I present  
 to you, the films!

The house lights DIM, and Liz is still looking for Neil, but  
 there's no sign of him.

The PROJECTOR flickers to life --

MONTAGE:

ON-SCREEN, a close-up of feet walking in the surf --

THE AUDIENCE reacts --

ON-SCREEN, an awkward martial arts fight between GUYS IN  
 SUNGLASSES --

NICK nods in approval --

ON-SCREEN, a CLOWN dances for tips on the street --

THE AUDIENCE claps --

LIZ shakes her head, dismissive, then looks around, searching  
 for Neil, but there's still no sign of him.

ON-SCREEN, "Nous Nous Reunissons" begins --

Jen, Bree, Nick and Alan CLAP loudly and WOOT --

76

INT. BEACH HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

76

Liz, dead serious.

LIZ  
 I saw him. Yesterday. At a cafe.

BREE  
 He asked to see me?

LIZ

Yes.

77 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT 77

THE AUDIENCE watches --

78 EXT. BEACH HOUSE DUNES - DAY 78

Nick, Liz, and Bree stand, arm-in-arm, staring out towards the sea.

Close on Bree. She turns her head, looks at Nick.

Close on Nick. He looks at Liz.

Close on Liz staring into the sea, holding as the sound of the waves crashing grows. Fade to black.

FADE TO BLACK.

79 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT 79

THE AUDIENCE claps. Not enthusiastically, but not dismissively either.

Jen nods at Liz.

JEN

Not bad!

Liz starts to stand up.

LIZ

I'll be right back.

ON-SCREEN, the next film starts, and a familiar voice echoes out into the theatre --

NEIL (O.S.)

The hardest part of making films is probably the constant fear that it's all bullshit.

Liz FREEZES. On-screen, it's Neil. It's THEM.

The TITLE CARD comes up --

**LOWCOUNTRY BOILING**  
**a film by Jeff Driggers**

Liz sits back down. Stunned. Jen, Alan, Nick, and Bree turn to look at Jeff. He shrinks back in his seat, guilty --

ON-SCREEN, a series of the Shaw's lowest moments on the shoot flashes by, complete with narration by Jeff --

80 EXT. CHARLESTON STREETS - DAY

80

Neil, Nick, and Liz argue.

JEFF (V.O.)

Neil Shaw was the coolest grown-up I ever met. He owned a professional video camera and ran a film camp for homeschool kids in the summer. But then, something happened.

NEIL

Well, I mean, it's been twenty years. So it's not like she expects them to live happily ever after.

NICK

Right. Purely sexual.

LIZ

So she just wants to *BLEEP* him? That's fine. It's not at all what I wrote, but if it's what you want...you're the director.

81 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

81

THE AUDIENCE leans in. It's a car crash playing out in front of them, and they can't look away.

Jen looks at Jeff --

JEN

(mouthing the words)  
Dead meat.

ON-SCREEN, more traumas play out --

82 EXT. CHARLESTON STREETS - DAY

82

JEFF (V.O.)

Was it the Charleston heat? The demanding actors?

NEIL  
 (under his breath)  
 I know it's not a sexual thing,  
 babe.

LIZ  
 Tell him that.

NEIL  
 I did. He's got some bug up his ass  
 today.

LIZ  
 It's Bree. I think they got pretty  
 personal last night.

83 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

83

Bree FUMES in her seat.

Nick SQUIRMS.

Liz, Jen, and Alan glare at Jeff --

But he's NOT in his seat. He's in the AISLE, making a hasty  
 retreat.

Liz, Jen, Alan, Hope, Nick and Bree follow after him --

ON-SCREEN, the expose continues --

84 INT. BEACH HOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY

84

NEIL  
 That's not the story. This is a  
 story for Bill Murray, not overly  
 hormonal women kvetching about  
 children and families. Gah. Nobody  
 wants to see that.

Liz snaps. She tosses the wireless mouse against the dining  
 room wall and it shatters.

LIZ  
*BLEEP!*

85 EXT. CHARLESTON STREETS - NIGHT

85

Liz, Jen, Alan, Hope, Bree, and Nick stumble out onto the  
 street outside the theatre, but there's no sign of Jeff.

NICK  
Driggers!

Liz tries to restore order.

LIZ  
Forget it. Everybody just calm  
down. We're all a bit raw, but  
after the screening, we'll find  
Jeff, and we'll tell him how we  
feel.

JEN  
I'm calling my lawyer.

LIZ  
Jen. No.

JEN  
That motherfucker's gonna burn.

Bree turns to Liz --

BREE  
God, Liz! I had no idea he was  
going to do something like that.

LIZ  
It's okay.

BREE  
(to Hope)  
Please don't be mad at me...I  
didn't know.

Nick is already warming up his fists --

NICK  
Forget the law. I'm ready to open a  
can of whoop ass on that shit turd!

Behind the gang, NEIL APPEARS.

NEIL  
What'd I miss?

LIZ  
Neil!

Liz runs to Neil and stops a step short.

NEIL  
Hey babe. I'm sorry.

LIZ

It's okay.

Jen marches over.

JEN

I'll tell you what you missed. That  
Driggers kid stabbed us in the  
back!

NEIL

What?

From inside the THEATRE, a THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE echoes --

The whole gang turns in disbelief --

JEN

No--

They run back inside --

86 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

86

Neil, Liz, Alan, Nick, Hope, Jen, and Bree enter back into  
the theatre.

The lights are up, and the applause is dying down.

IN FRONT OF THE SCREEN, stand Roscoe and the judges, Michael  
Dunaway and Kelly Keller. Michael takes the mic --

MICHAEL

Hey guys. Wow. What a film! First  
off, let me just say that we are  
blown away by the level of talent  
here...

KELLY

Yes, so many talented filmmakers!

MICHAEL

When we found out that Bill Murray  
wasn't able to make it...

BACK OF THE HOUSE, Neil and Liz's jaws drop --

KELLY

...he had important business  
matters to tend to, apparently.

MICHAEL

Well, we knew our job would be much tougher. But. There was no question when we saw this last film, the gorgeous little documentary "Lowcountry Boiling." And from your reaction, you guys knew it too.

KELLY

"Lowcountry Boiling" is an extraordinary glimpse into the lives of each of you. With it, the filmmaker has captured something truly fantastic.

MICHAEL

The real work of no-budget, no-name, no-nonsense filmmaking.

KELLY

So without further ado, we present the first annual Lowcountry Boiling 48 Hour Film Festival grand prize to *Jeff Driggers!*

The AUDIENCE cheers loudly. But the world goes quiet for Neil and Liz and their gang.

LIZ

You wanna watch this?

NEIL

Hell no.

87 INT. CHARLESTON BAR - NIGHT

87

An empty bucket of beer sits on the table.

Neil is still shell-shocked, stunned, feeling the burn of humiliation and failure. Liz sits near him, almost touching, but afraid to get too close. Alan and Nick are there, surly, at the end of the table.

NICK

I didn't trust that kid. Not for a second.

Jen has her arms around Bree and Hope like a mother. Bree sniffles quietly, finally at a loss for words. Hope too is touched, sad. Feeling the loss.

JEN

He's gonna pay. Don't you worry.  
When my lawyer's done with him, he  
won't have a spleen to stand on.

LIZ

(to Neil)

It's too bad you missed our film. I  
actually kind of liked it.

NEIL

(to Liz)

I saw it.

Liz looks at him, confused.

NEIL (CONT'D)

I slipped in the back.

(a beat)

You were right. About the ending.

LIZ

It didn't matter. We still lost.

NEIL

It's because we didn't have Bill  
Murray. We wrote a Bill Murray  
movie with no Bill Murray.

LIZ

No, that's...no, I didn't know what  
I was writing, really. Until we  
were shooting.

(a beat)

Thing is, I really like our film.

Suddenly, Dos Midler is there, fuming mad.

DOS

Why it's the goddamn-fucking Shaws!

JEN

(stands, threatens)

*I will cut you, Douche.*

Neil looks up, sees Dos. Frowns.

DOS

Why the hell did you let that *child*  
follow you around like that?

ALAN

You're just pissed that shitty  
movie of yours didn't win.

DOS

He should be disqualified. And so should you. I cannot wait to unleash my next blog post.

Suddenly, Hope slams her soda glass down and stands, stares down Dos.

HOPE

You *still* smell like pancakes! Do you ever *bathe*?

Dos is stunned. Everyone at the table is stunned.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Seriously. You are the *worst* kind of pretentious, fake-artist. My dad and Liz are like...*a thousand times* better than you. In every way someone can be better than someone else.

DOS

(to Neil)

Can you not control your own daughter?

HOPE

*No one likes you or your movies!* They're just afraid of you. Because you sound all important when you talk. And you dress like someone who's supposed to be cool. And you flatter everyone in this despicable way...it seems nice but it's a lie!

LIZ

(whispered)

Honey. That's enough...

HOPE

(shouts)

*I'm just gettin' started!*

NEIL

Dos, go. Hope...thank you.

Dos turns on his heel, leaves. Nick starts a slow clap and soon it turns into raucous applause and cheers. Hope reluctantly grins.

HOPE

Guess I told him.

Hope hugs her dad and step-mother.

NICK

Friends, I can tell you from experience...the only thing worse than critical disclaim is the pain and humiliation of artistic regret.

Everyone looks at him, confused. Nick winks, knowingly.

NEIL

Thank you for that, Nick.

NICK

(he bows)

You're welcome. And with that...Alan. Shall we?

Alan and Nick stand.

ALAN

See you all back at the house.

JEN

Call time...I mean, departure time is 8 AM.

ALAN

(to Neil and Liz)

Whatever we do next...I'm in. 110%. You were right Neil. This is too much living to quit. I'll work it out with Sweetie.

He smiles, a warm hug with the Shaws, and Nick and Alan are gone.

BREE

Liz, I want to thank you. That part you wrote for me was beautiful. And acting with you was an honor.

LIZ

Oh Bree, that's not necessary...

BREE

But it is. I don't care if we lost. I admire you guys so much. It's such a blessing you guys can do this together.

(a beat)

My parents had one of those marriages of convenience.

(MORE)

BREE (CONT'D)  
 Eventually it was work that split  
 them up. Well...at least your work  
 brings you together.

Bree looks lovingly at Liz, Neil, and Hope.

BREE (CONT'D)  
 Yours is a marriage of  
 inconvenience.

Liz can't help it. She laughs.

BREE (CONT'D)  
 You know what I mean?

LIZ  
 I do. Thank you for saying that.

Bree smiles, nods. Jen puts her arm around Bree, rounding her  
 up. Hope joins in the group hug.

JEN  
 Train's leavin' the station. See  
 you guys back at the house.

NEIL  
 Sure.

Jen, Hope, and Bree leave. Neil looks at Liz.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
 Want to stay for another round?

LIZ  
 I'm up for it if you are.

Liz empties out the last of their cash from their weekend  
 budget envelope.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
 Looks like just enough. I've got to  
 powder my nose.

Neil scoops up the cash and heads to the bar --

88

INT. CHARLESTON BAR - NIGHT

88

Neil walks up to the bar, waves to the BARTENDER.

NEIL  
 Two of whatever this'll get me.

Neil hands over his cash. A second customer walks up beside him.

It's BILL MURRAY.

BILL MURRAY  
(to the Bartender)  
Got any Sailor Jerry? It's a spiced  
rum.

The Bartender nods and goes to get the drink. Neil looks over and realizes who is sitting next to him. He adjusts himself in his seat, pulls his shoulders back, and tries to sober up.

NEIL  
Where were you?

BILL MURRAY  
Where was I? When? When Kennedy was  
shot?

NEIL  
The film festival. Tonight. You  
were supposed to be a judge.

BILL MURRAY  
They sent over the robe, it didn't  
fit. Besides, black makes me look  
fat.

NEIL  
My wife and our friends I came down  
here for you. We made this  
film...because they told everybody  
you were going to be a judge.

Bill Murray says nothing, just sips his drink.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
I knew it was bogus.

BILL MURRAY  
(friendly)  
How was your film?

NEIL  
We lost. No one laughed. It was a  
comedy.

BILL MURRAY  
Hate I missed it.

NEIL

It doesn't matter.

(a beat)

You have no idea how badly I needed this. I put my marriage on the line. My career.

(a beat)

I needed you to be here.

BILL MURRAY

I am here. Let's get a picture. For old times' sake.

NEIL

(almost to himself)

I needed you to pick me. My film. I needed to win.

BILL MURRAY

You and your *needs*...I don't think this is going to work out.

Neil looks at Bill Murray, he smiles.

BILL MURRAY (CONT'D)

You just spent a weekend in Charleston making a movie with your wife and your buddies. You sure you didn't win?

Bill Murray stands up, looks at the Bartender.

BILL MURRAY (CONT'D)

(to the bartender)

He's got this.

He then leans over and whispers something in Neil's ear, then walks off. Neil watches him go.

LATER.

Liz returns from the bathroom.

NEIL

You're never going to believe what just happened.

Another day dawns on the beach house.

Nick works through another Tai-Chi routine on the beach. Now with Jen.

90 EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY 90

The gang packs up the car.

91 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY 91

Neil and Liz take one last walk through the house. It's like they were never there.

LIZ

You going to tell them about Bill Murray?

NEIL

Nah.

LIZ

It's a great story.

NEIL

Maybe one day we'll make that Bill Murray movie.

LIZ

Sounds like a plan, C.B. What did he whisper to you again?

NEIL

He said he loves me, but he needs to be with his wife and kids.

LIZ

Not such a terrible fate.

NEIL

Says you.

92 INT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 92

Neil, Liz, Jen, and Alan drive home --

93 EXT. SHAW'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING] 93

The Shaw's car drives away from Charleston.

94 EXT. JEN'S HOUSE - DAY 94

Liz helps Jen get her last bag up onto the front steps.

JEN  
So Neil's cool with the baby?

LIZ  
Yeah. We both realize it may take a while...and some cash. But we'll get there.

JEN  
Good.

LIZ  
We need a little time off. Make some money instead of movies.

JEN  
Fair enough. But still...call me.

LIZ  
Absolutely.

They embrace.

95 EXT. ALAN'S HOUSE - DAY

95

Neil with Alan on his front porch, the last bag of his gear delivered from the car.

Alan and Neil hug.

ALAN  
Next time, brother.

NEIL  
You know it.

Alan leans in and whispers --

ALAN  
And next time, we're having steaks. This vegan thing is killing me!

NEIL  
We all make sacrifices. Sometimes it's for the better.

Alan nods.

ALAN  
Travel safe.

Neil salutes, and Alan jogs up to his house --

96 INT. SHAW'S HOUSE - DAY 96

Liz, Hope, and Neil step inside and drop their bags.

Tired, a little sunburnt.

Neil walks over to their whiteboard full of Bill Murray research. He picks up a rag and starts erasing the plan.

97 EXT. SHAW'S HOUSE - DAY 97

The leaves begin to turn --

98 EXT. SHAW'S FRONT DOOR - DAY 98

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

Neil opens the front door. Jeff Driggers stands there.

NEIL  
(stunned)  
Jeff.

JEFF  
Hi.

Liz walks up, stands behind Neil. She's surprised, too.

LIZ  
How did you get our address?

JEFF  
Jen.

NEIL  
You talked to Jen?

He nods.

LIZ  
And you still have your spleen?

He hands Neil a folded piece of paper, a cashier's check for \$5,000.

NEIL  
(raises his eyebrows)  
What's this?

JEFF

It's the prize money from the festival. I want you and Liz to have it.

Neil hands his wife the check. She looks at it, then quickly passes it back to Jeff.

LIZ

We can't take this.

JEFF

I'm sorry about the film. I don't know what came over me. I just, I had to... I didn't think I'd win.

LIZ

Why not? People love to watch crazy assholes do themselves in.

JEFF

My film won because you guys aren't crazy assholes. People love you. They love how real you are in my film.

NEIL

I don't think so.

JEFF

Jen told me you guys have been trying to have a baby. That you'd planned to use your winnings from the festival to make that happen.  
(earnestly)  
That money is to help you do that. And if there's any left over...for your next film.

Neil shakes his head. Liz puts her arms around him.

DISSOLVE TO:

99

INT. SHAW'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

99

The Shaw's house, lit up for Christmas.

Dozens of FRIENDS wander around the house, many gathered at the TV screen which plays "Taken In".

NEIL

(to his Friends near the screen)

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

We've pretty much shot all of our films in black and white. But for this new one, we're going to color.

ALAN

It's going to be hot.

NEIL

I've told Alan that I want Christopher Doyle color...

ALAN

As long as Wong Kar-wai directs...

Everyone laughs. Alan's girlfriend Sweetie walks up with a toddler and a newborn baby.

SWEETIE

We gotta get home, Al. These kids are sleepy.

Suddenly Hope sweeps in, energetic.

HOPE

There you are!

She grabs the toddler who squeals with delight, runs off into the party maze.

ALAN

(to Sweetie)

Give me fifteen.

Sweetie nuzzles close.

SWEETIE

You've got ten.

Nick and Jen, arm-in-arm, clink wine glasses with Neil's parents CLIFF and JUDY.

NICK

Your son is a genius.

JEN

So's his wife!

JUDY

I keep telling them we're looking forward to that Beverly Hills mansion.

CLIFF

As long as they're happy...

Suddenly, Jen squeals. She darts across the room to where Bree and Jeff stand flirting under the mistletoe.

JEN  
You made it!

BREE  
*OhmygodJen!* I flew in on the red eye this morning!

JEFF  
Lucky for her I'm producing the early morning news now. Got to there airport just in time.

NICK  
(too Bree)  
How's life in the big leagues, kiddo?

BREE  
It's tough. But I know I'm in the right place.

JEN  
(suddenly)  
Have you talked to Liz about the next film, you gotta do it!

BREE  
We had lunch today. I wouldn't miss it!

Dr. Scott talks to Liz animatedly. He motions another FRIEND over and points to Liz's belly, which is just starting to show a little baby bump.

DR. SCOTT  
Neil says they may name the baby after me.

LIZ  
I don't know, Jim. "Doctor" sounds a little pretentious for a first name.

They all laugh. Liz is glowing, happy. She looks up and sees Neil, staring her down from across the room. He stands at the screen with his parents.

JUDY

I don't like the end...this woman  
and her illegitimate daughter  
standing on the beach with that  
loser guy?

Neil smiles at his wife.

NEIL

(to Judy)

They're happy, mom. It's perfect.

Liz smiles back.

THE END