

On the Corner of 85th and Fifth

Written by

Aleksandra Harbour

703-989-5448

Registered, WGAE

INT. KOHS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

BARBARA STYLES is sitting on a sofa by the window, reading a book. She is a 25 years-old graduate student, pretty but unassuming.

The living room is luxurious, professionally staged and decorated. The apartment belongs to the KOH family, a wealthy doctor and his wife. Barbara is babysitting for their two sons, KEVIN and ETHAN. They are 12 and 9 years old. Kevin is typing on a chrome book while Ethan is playing the Nintendo Switch.

KEVIN

Hey Barbara, we did an experiment at school to measure crystal size at different cooling temperatures. Is the crystal size dependent or independent variable? I always get them confused.

BARBARA

(looking up)

Ummm...dependent. Remember, it depends on the independent variable, in your case on the temperature.

KEVIN

Thanks.

BARBARA

When is your project due?

KEVIN

Monday, but I want to get it done
before the weekend.

BARBARA

Smart.

Barbara closes her book and checks the time on her phone. It is 7:15 PM. The Kohs are late. She sighs and looks out the window.

BARBARA'S POINT OF VIEW - 85th STREET - EVENING

Outside, a limo pulls up in front of the building across the street. Barbara has a good view from the first-floor window.

A handsome MAN in his early thirties exits the car. Barbara perks up. He is dressed formally, but relaxed. He is clearly wealthy, judging from his attire and means of transportation. Barbara observes with intent curiosity. As he is walking towards the building entrance, he immediately rushes to help an elderly lady with her groceries.

INT. KOHS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING - BACK TO SCENE

Barbara smiles and continues to observe but is startled by the sound of keys and doors opening. The Kohs are home.

Barbara puts her book in her backpack and proceeds to leave the room.

BARBARA

Bye boys, have a nice weekend.

KEVIN

(without looking up)

Bye Barbara

Ethan continues to play on his Switch without answering.

Barbara enters the hallway. MRS. KOH is walking towards her while DR. KOH is sorting through the mail piled up on the side table.

MRS. KOH
Sorry we are late.

BARBARA
No worries. The boys were great as always.

Mrs. Koh reaches inside her purse and hands Barbara money.

DR. KOH
Barbara, when is your defense?

BARBARA
Oh, it's next month. I still have several weeks to complete the experiments and finalize my dissertation.

DR. KOH
Well, if you need a second set of eyes, don't hesitate to ask.

BARBARA
Thank you, Dr. Koh, but I wouldn't want to bother you, unless you need a cure for insomnia.

MRS. KOH
Oh, he would love to read it. It would be like another scientific journal for him. He reads them all the time! Right honey?

DR KOH
Absolutely!

BARBARA
Well, I may take you up on it!

Barbara opens the door to exit.

BARBARA

Enjoy the country house this weekend!

MRS. KOH

Thank you, Barbara. I will call you
about next week.

EXT. 85TH STREET - EVENING

Barbara exits the building. She looks over in the direction of HIS building, but he is not there anymore. Regardless, she smiles and hurries East towards the subway.

INT. NYC SUBWAY - GREEN LINE STATION - EVENING

Barbara hurries down the stairs into the subway station, 86th Street green line. Lots of people are entering and leaving the station. Typical Friday evening in Manhattan. Barbara works her way through the crowd and passes the turnstile. She walks by a street musician on a guitar. He is playing David Bowie's "Rebel Rebel". Even though in a hurry, she stops to listen. He has a small crowd gathered around him. She enjoys the performance for a few moments. In the distance she hears the sound of an approaching train. She hurries towards the platform.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - EVENING

The doors almost close on Barbara as she enters the train and finds an empty seat. Then she pulls out her textbook and focuses on the chapter in front of her.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - LATE EVENING

Barbara enters her apartment. It is small, but cozy, neat, and nicely decorated. Her roommate ALEXA is lying on the living room sofa and looking at her phone.

BARBARA

Sorry I'm late Alexa. The Kohs came
home late.

ALEXA

No worries, Barb, we still have more than enough time to get ready. Night clubs don't start happening until midnight anyway!

Barbara sits on the sofa, releasing a sigh. She looks tired.

BARBARA

We are going so late? You know I had a long day at the lab, and then babysitting. I'm sure you had a long day at work too. Are you sure you want to go clubbing?

ALEXA

I still don't understand why you continue to babysit...It's not like you don't have enough on your plate already.

Alexa gets up and walks to the kitchen. The kitchen is open to the living space. A half full bottle of wine is sitting on the counter.

BARBARA

You know I've been watching the boys for over 6 years. They are like family now. Plus, it's only several times a week, and the extra cash is nice.

Alexa takes two glasses out of the cupboard and opens the wine bottle.

ALEXA

(while pouring the wine)

Come on! You need to get out of the house and have some fun! You're only 25 but act 60! Being with Jeremy for 8 years has made you an old maid, you need to get over him and start having fun again!

Alexa walks over and hands a glass to Barbara. She sits next to her.

ALEXA

I want to meet a nice guy tonight! I'm tired of the dating apps and the creeps I end up going on dates with. I want to meet a guy, you know, the old-fashioned way, at a club!

(a moment; then
introspectively;)

I think my parents met in a club or a bar, or something like that, and they've been together for 30 years...

Barbara kind of rolls her eyes, then smiles.

BARBARA

I saw my fantasy guy today. He was helping a neighbor, an old lady, with her groceries.

ALEXA

Of course, he was! The fantasy guy, the perfect man of your dreams. Or any woman's dreams. Handsome, wealthy, and kind. Only, you don't even know him! I am sure he is volunteering at a homeless shelter right now!

BARBARA

I need something to distract my thoughts. Fantasizing about someone is a great way to get over a breakup.

(then with a more
serious tone)

BARBARA

I am surprised I've never seen him with a girl.

ALEXA

Hm, he is probably keeping her hostage at his place. Actually, he is most likely one of those psychopaths who appear perfect on the outside, but have body parts stashed in their refrigerator!

They both laugh.

ALEXA

Come on, you'll meet a nice guy tonight
and forget all about Jeremy and all
about the fantasy boy!

They toast and take a sip of wine.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Barbara is sitting at a bar, sipping a cocktail. The club music is loud, lights flashing. She is wearing skinny jeans and a cropped top, her dark brown hair falling to her shoulders. She is dressed sexy, but with taste and class.

In contrast, Alexa is wearing a miniskirt and a bra-like top. Her outfit does not leave much to the imagination. Her dark curly hair is in a ponytail. Both Barbara and Alexa are pretty and very attractive girls, but Alexa gets more attention from guys due to her outfits and flirtatious ways. This does not bother Barbara because she is not very comfortable with excessive attention and prefers to be in the background.

Alexa is off to the side, talking to a GUY, apparently having fun. Barbara looks bored as she is watching them and taking in the club scene. Alexa and the guy proceed to the dance floor, leaving Barbara alone. An OLDER GUY across the bar, probably 20 years her senior, smiles at Barbara and raises his glass in a small toast. Barbara is annoyed. She gets up, gets her purse, and leaves the club.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Barbara is in the kitchen, sipping her coffee and reading something on her phone. The door unlocks and Alexa walks in. She is still wearing the same outfit from the night before, only her hair is down, and her makeup smeared. A big smile on her face. She raises her arms up in the air.

ALEXA

I am in love! I had the best night
ever!

BARBARA

(indifferently)

Oh yeah? Did you spend it with the guy you met at the club?

ALEXA

His name is Pericles, and he is great, and he is really into me!

BARBARA

What's his name?

ALEXA

Pericles, he was named after a Greek god...I think. He's Greek. Anyway, he invited me to his birthday party next week and told me to bring a friend. You have to come Barb! I am sure he has lots of cute friends. Promise me you'll come?

Barbara picks up her backpack and walks towards the door.

BARBARA

I don't know, I have to go to the lab now. We can talk about it later.

ALEXA

Going to the lab on a Saturday?..Ok, I'll tell you all about last night when you come back.

Barbara rushes out the door without a response and closes the door behind her, leaving Alexa behind. Alexa stares at the shut door for a second, but quickly recovers and collapses onto the sofa with a big smile on her face.

INT. UNIVERSITY LABORATORY - DAY

Barbara is wearing a lab coat over her clothes, a head covering, and plastic gloves. She is standing over a maze with a mouse in it, conducting an experiment. SAMMY, a postdoc, is on the other side of the lab. He is sitting at a desk, typing on his computer.

CLOSE ANGLE ON THE MAZE

The mouse is finding its way out of the maze. Barbara is talking to the mouse.

BARBARA (O.S)

Come on Sebastian, you can do it. There
you go...almost there...

The mouse exits the maze and eats a treat placed at the
exit. Barbara looks at her stopwatch.

BARBARA

5 seconds faster than last time,
Sabastian. Good job buddy. The drug may
be having an effect after all...

Sammy stops typing and turns around towards Barbara.

SAMMY

Barbara, are you still naming them? You
know that will make you attached, which
makes it harder when it's time to...

And he draws a line across his neck, as a sign of death.

Barbara is focused on jotting down her notes.

BARBARA

I know Sammy. I know and I don't care.
Actually, I name them on purpose. I
want to get attached. I don't want to
treat them as objects. They are living
things and they deserve to be mourned.

(addressing the mouse
affectionately)

Right little Sebastian?

Sammy smiles. He rises and walks over closer to the area of
the lab where Barbara is doing her work.

SAMMY

Hey Barbara...now that it's been several
months since you and Jeremy broke up...I
was thinking...umm...maybe you and I could
go for a drink?

Barbara looks up and turns towards Sammy. All of a sudden
alarmed.

BARBARA

What? Are you asking me out?

SAMMY

Why not? We are both single, we get along well...hmmmm...

He pauses, as if trying to remember what else they may have in common.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

...we both like reading sci-fi books...and I think you're pretty.

BARBARA

Don't you have a girlfriend?

SAMMY

Yeah, but I'm pretty sure she's cheating on me. Plus, I don't think we are really a good fit anyway. I think you and I would be a much better fit.

Barbara takes off her gloves and starts walking towards the sink.

BARBARA

Because we look good on paper? There is much more to a "good fit" than getting along well and both liking sci-fi books. And shouldn't you break up with your girlfriend first before you ask someone else out?

Barbara is visibly annoyed. Sammy is thinking about what she has just said. Barbara is washing her hands and continues talking, but this time in a lower voice, and more to herself.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Plus, I am not interested in dating right now. I don't have time for the drama, and the effort, and the games...I need to focus on finishing my dissertation and getting out of this lab.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DIFFERENT DAY

Barbara is paying at the checkout. She only has a few items. She collects the paper bag packed by a YOUNG CASHIER, thanks him, and walks out of the store.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Barbara exits the grocery store and starts walking towards her building. Her phone rings. She takes the phone out of her back pocket. The caller ID says "Mom".

BARBARA
(into the phone)

Hi Mom

She listens to her mom on the other end of the line for a few moments. She is clearly irritated by what she's hearing.

BARBARA
Mom! You can't continue to get upset about everything Dad says! When will you realize that he is not in his right mind, he has Dementia!you know I can't visit before my defense in August, you should get on a plane and come here, you deserve a break.....of course you can leave him for a few days, you choose not to. you can hire help for a few days.....whatever your choice...love you mom, I'll call you later.

She hangs up the phone. She has reached her building. She unlocks the front door and enters the building.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Barbara puts the paper bag on the kitchen counter. She pulls out the laptop from her backpack, puts it on the counter, and opens the title slide of her defense. While unpacking the groceries, she starts practicing the presentation.

BARBARA
WHAT is Cerebral Amyloid Angiopathy?

She then asks the same question with a slightly different intonation in her voice.

BARBARA

What IS Cerebral Amyloid Angiopathy?

INT. RESTAURANT - DIFFERENT DAY

The Manhattan restaurant is busy. Barbara is sitting at a table with 10 other people. On her left sits Sammy, on her right her advisor PROFESSOR RISTICH. It is Professor Ristich's retirement lunch. Everyone is eating, conversing, and having a nice time. At that moment, an OLDER COLLEAGUE of Prof. Ristich asks for everyone's attention.

COLLEAGUE

Well, it's happening, our beloved Professor Ristich is retiring... though she can still change her mind! Even after we say farewells and spend a lot of money on this expensive retirement meal! We won't ask for our money back.

(facing the professor)

Please, change your mind?

Everyone chuckles and professor Ristich shakes her head.

COLLEAGUE

Well, thank you for your dedication over the last 40 years in the Department of Neurosciences and the groundbreaking research in the field of Dementia. By discovering the gene responsible for this ruthless disease, we are now able to have hope of finding a cure. Your work will not only have a potential to change lives of thousands of people suffering from Alzheimer's, but your expertise, your leadership, and your friendship, has already changed the lives of the people sitting at this table. So, we are all forever grateful and wishing you a happy retirement.

Everyone claps.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

(in heavy Eastern
European accent)

Well thank you all. As you know this was not an easy decision for me to make...but what makes it easier is knowing that my lab and my research will be in good hands...

She looks over at Sammy.

PROFESSOR RISTICH (CONT'D)

...with Sammy taking over the research. And hopefully, Barbara will come to her senses and decide to stay in the lab.....instead of looking for some fancy job at some fancy pharmaceutical company that pays the big bucks! Who really wants that? Don't we all strive to be poor academics trying to save the world?

Everyone laughs. From the corner of her eye, Barbara spots her ex-boyfriend JEREMY with his girlfriend entering the restaurant. They are being escorted to the bar area. The girlfriend is very attractive, dressed in a short dress with high heels. The type of girl that turns heads.

SAMMY

Hey Barb, isn't that your ex-boyfriend with his new girlfriend?

BARBARA

Yes, Sammy, it is, thank you for noticing. Excuse me...

She gets up and heads to the restroom.

INT. LADIES ROOM - DAY

Barbara stares at herself in the bathroom mirror. She adjusts her hair, puts on lip gloss, and with a sigh, opens the door to exit.

INT: RESTAURANT HALLWAY - DAY

Barbara walks out of the restroom and is startled to see Jeremy standing there.

JEREMY

Hey Barb, I thought I saw you there sitting with Professor Ristich.

BARBARA

Oh, hey Jeremy.

JEREMY

How you've been? I meant to call and check in on you. But you know how busy life gets...

BARBARA

That's ok, you don't need to check in on me, I am doing fine.

JEREMY

You are still on track to graduate next month?

Before Barbara has a chance to answer, Jeremy's girlfriend appears. She is facing Jeremy and does not acknowledge Barbara.

GIRLFRIEND:

Oh, there you are, I was wondering where you disappeared. Our table is ready.

JEREMY

I'll catch up with you later, Barb.

And he walks away with his girlfriend.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Barbara exits the grocery store. She has a grocery bag in one hand and the phone in the other. She is walking towards her building and talking on the phone.

INT. ALEXA'S OFFICE - INTERCEPT

Alexa is in her private office, dressed in professional attire and sitting at her desk.

ALEXA

(into the phone)

I am so happy that you changed your mind about tonight!

BARBARA

(into the phone)

You know I have to babysit till 9?

ALEXA

That's perfect! I'll pick you up, it's on the way anyway. What made you change your mind?

BARBARA

(lying, but not get it)

Nothing really...I just...I just feel like going out all of sudden!

ALEXA

(knowing there is more to the story)

Barb?

BARBARA

Ok, I ran into Jeremy and his new, whatever she is, at Professor Ristich's retirement luncheon. Anyway, I think having some fun would be helpful.

ALEXA

You'll forget all about him, I promise!

Barbara sits on a bench next to her building. Brief silence.

BARBARA

Are you sure about this guy of yours? Pericles?

ALEXA

Yes! Why?

BARBARA

I just worry that you may be rushing into things. I just don't want you to get hurt, that's all.

ALEXA

I won't. I have a good feeling this time. But thank you for worrying about me. So, you have to wear something very sexy tonight!

BARBARA

Wait, what?

ALEXA

Come on, get out of your comfort zone!

BARBARA

I am comfortable wearing sexy clothes, I just don't feel like it a lot of times.

ALEXA

Well, tonight is the night you should feel like it! There will be lots of cute guys. And don't wear something like your normal sexy, wear something ... "slutty sexy"!

BARBARA

So you want me to dress like a slut and go babysitting?

A colleague of Alexa's is knocking on her office window.

ALEXA

Just figure something out, ok? Gotta run. Love ya!

BARBARA

Love you too

Barbara hangs up the phone and continues to sit on the bench, thinking. She doesn't feel like going out, but Alexa may be right. What's the harm in having some fun?

INT. KOHS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Barbara is sitting with Ethan and Kevin Koh on their living room sofa. They are watching Star Wars on TV. The volume is loud. Han Solo and Chewbacca are traveling at lightspeed in their spaceship.

ETHAN

Weeeeeee!

BARBARA

That would definitely make me throw up,
I'm getting dizzy just watching it.

ETHAN

I can't wait to travel at light speed
when I'm an astronaut. And I won't
throw up!

KEVIN

(condescendingly)

Astronauts don't travel at lightspeed,
stupid!

ETHAN

Well, they might in the future! You are
stupid!

BARBARA

Ok boys, that's enough, let's watch the
movie.

Barbara checks the time on her phone. It is 8:45 PM. She
yawns.

MRS. KOH (O.S)

Star Wars, our favorite!

Barbara turns to see Mrs. Koh standing in the living room.

BARBARA

Oh hi, I didn't hear you come in.

Barbara rises.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

There is only like 20 minutes left. I
know it's past their bedtime, but they
were begging me to finish.

Ethan

Please mom can we finish, pleeeeeaaaase!

MRS KOH

That is fine, I suppose.

Mrs. Koh hands Barbara the money and thanks her.

BARBARA

Bye. Have a nice weekend!

The boys are focused on the movie and don't even notice Barbara leave.

INT. KOHS BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

The elevator doors open, and Barbara exits into the lobby. She texts Alexa: *"I'm done. I'll meet you on the corner of 85th and 5th."*

Alexa immediately responds: *"Ok. I'll be there in 15"*.

Barbara walks into the powder room located in the lobby.

INT. POWDER ROOM - NIGHT

Barbara stares at her reflection in the mirror. Her hair is pulled back in a high ponytail. Her makeup is subtle. She has a t-shirt and a long green skirt on. Surely not the sexy look Alexa was asking for. Barbara takes the t-shirt off and pulls her skirt up over her strapless bra. Her skirt now becomes a short dress. The new outfit reveals the knee height boots. She puts on red lipstick, adjusts her hair, and checks herself out in the mirror again. Now she looks very sexy.

BARBARA

(to herself)

Too much? Ah...what the hell... she said sexy.

EXT. 85TH STREET - NIGHT

Barbara exits the building and moves towards the corner of 85th and Fifth. Her purse, large enough to hold her t-shirt and a few personal items, is around her shoulder. She passes by two younger men. They pause in their conversation to check her out. At first, that makes her feel uncomfortable. But then decides to own her sexy look and proceeds to walk with confidence.

As she arrives to the meeting spot, her phone buzzes. It's a text from Alexa: "*Stuck in traffic, we'll be a few minutes late.*"

Barbara adjusts her dress. Then adjusts her boobs for a more pronounced cleavage.

INT. MERCEDES-BENZ - NIGHT

DAVID JONES and MARY HARBOR are riding in the back seat. David is the handsome man Barbara was observing a week earlier. Mary is David's assistant, a lady in her late fifties. They are chatting. Rather, Mary is talking, and David is half listening and half thinking about his day. Mary is complaining about the crime rise in NYC and the city just not being what it used to be.

MARY

Have you heard about the guy who randomly approached a family in Central Park, husband, wife and two small kids, and pulled down his pants in front of them? What kind of a sick person enjoys exposing himself to a family with little children?

(pause)

I'm telling you, David, New York City is at a point of no return. Everyday there is something crazy in the news. It might be a good time to leave the city for good.

EXT. 85th STREET - NIGHT

The black Mercedes is driving west on 85th Street and pulls over in front of David's building.

INT. MERCEDES-BENZ - NIGHT

MARY (CONT'D)

Great, now we even have hookers working the streets of the Upper East side!

David looks to the right, over Mary's shoulder, and sees a girl in a very short green dress adjusting her cleavage. He assumes she is a prostitute.

MARY (CONT'D)

Anyway, you need to relax, unwind. Go do something fun. The stress is going to kill you, David. The deal will close, don't worry. They said they would call us soon. It is only 9 AM in Singapore.

DAVID

Thanks, Mary, for always looking out for me. You have a good night yourself.

David affectionately squeezes Mary's arm and opens the car door to exit.

EXT. 85th STREET - NIGHT

David exits the car. The car drives away. As he starts walking towards the entrance to his building, he hesitates and turns towards the girl on the corner. She is still standing at the corner, looking right at him. He pauses for a few seconds. Something about her draws him in. Despite himself, he crosses the street to meet her. His discomfort is apparent.

DAVID

(uncertain)

Hi...I'm David...David Jones...

Barbara stares at him without saying anything. She is stunned by his approach.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Um...I live right here, on the 20th floor.

He points to his building.

DAVID (CONT'D)

If you are available maybe you could come upstairs for an hour or two or...if you want...

Suddenly realizing his intentions, Barbara smiles and looks at the ground. Then looks at him with the intention of clarifying the misunderstanding.

BARBARA

I'm n...

But suddenly pauses and says.

BARBARA

I'm Barbara

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barbara and David enter his apartment. Barbara enters first, David behind her. She looks around curiously. The space is an open, living area with a kitchen and a dining table. Décor simple and modern. Floor to ceiling windows with a spectacular view of New York City.

David walks to the kitchen and opens the fridge.

DAVID

Would you like something to drink? Or eat?

BARBARA

White wine would be great.

Barbara bends over to pat a tabby cat that has come to greet its owner and check out the stranger.

BARBARA

What's your cat's name?

DAVID

(uncorking a bottle of wine)

Sunshine

BARBARA

(affectionately, towards the cat)

Hi Sunshine, you're so sweet!

David grabs a wine glass from the cabinet and pours the wine. Barbara gets up, walks over to the kitchen, and takes the glass. They smile at each other, uncomfortably.

BARBARA

You have a very nice place. Have you lived here long?

DAVID

For about 5 years in this apartment. But I've lived in this building all my life. Where do you live?

BARBARA

Williamsburg.

(clarifying)

In Brooklyn.

DAVID

I hear that area is up and coming, though I haven't been there much. Do you like living there?

BARBARA

Yes, I do.

Barbara smiles and while sipping her wine, walks over to the floor-to-ceiling window overlooking Central Park.

BARBARA

This is a spectacular view. You can see the Met, the Museum of Natural History, even the Hayden Planetarium.

DAVID

You can see the Planetarium, but you can't see the stars in the city sky. I guess it's a good compromise. Though seeing stars would be much nicer.

Barbara points at the telescope positioned next to the window.

BARBARA

How about with the telescope?

DAVID

Not really. There is too much light pollution in New York City. The best time to do stargazing is in the winter, when the air is dryer and less turbulent. But even then, it's hard.

I'm pretty sure I managed to see the red dot of Jupiter once, and more dots around it that I decided were its moons.

Barbara continues to look out the window and sip her wine. David is looking at her affectionately from the kitchen. A brief period of silence. Neither of them is sure what to do next.

DAVID

Barbara, you'll probably think I'm lying when I tell you this...and I'm sure you've heard this a million times but.... but I've never done THIS before and not sure...ummmmm... don't want to do anything that would make you feel uncomfortable.

She looks at him for a brief second. His presence and the intensity with which he is looking at her almost takes her breath away. He is lean and tall. His light brown hair, probably nicely tailored at the beginning of the day, now loosely falls over his ears. His attire is casual, gray pants and a white shirt. Without saying anything, she turns back to gaze out the window.

DAVID

You are very beautiful.

He moves towards her. Barbara is flattered by his compliment. But then apprehensive by his approach.

He is now standing right behind her. He puts his hands on her hips. Barbara freezes, not sure whether to allow him to continue with his advances or not. Her face shows intrigue but also alarm. He gently plants a soft kiss onto her neck, and for a brief second, she closes her eyes allowing herself to enjoy the moment, however quickly opens her eyes, uncertain about the situation.

At that moment, his cell phone rings. He takes the phone out of his pocket. Sees "Mary" on the caller ID.

DAVID

Excuse me, but I have to take this.

He steps aside and picks up the phone call. Barbara's face shows relief.

DAVID

Yes Mary

(beat)

They want to talk now? Ok, give me a few minutes. I'll call you back.

He puts his phone back in his pocket. Contemplates for a brief second, and then turns to Barbara.

DAVID

I'm so sorry Barbara, but I have an important phone call I need to take. Maybe we can get together some other time?

BARBARA

Of course, no problem.

She puts the glass of wine down and starts walking towards the door. Almost in relief.

DAVID

Wait, I hate to have wasted your time. Here...

Barbara pauses as he reaches into his pocket. He takes out his wallet and opens it.

DAVID

I would like to compensate you for the time you spent with me. I don't know how much it costs...hmmm...I only have \$300 dollars in cash. I feel so silly now inviting you up here without even having...

BARBARA

(interrupting)

Don't worry about it, it's ok. You don't need to pay me.

DAVID

No, I insist.

He takes her hand and puts the cash in her hand. While continuing to hold her hand:

DAVID (CONT'D)

And I really like you and would like to see you again. Will you give me your phone number?

He lets go of her hands, takes his phone out of his pocket, and hands it to her. She takes it, types her number into his phone, and hands it back to him.

They both smile looking at each other for several seconds. The attraction between them is undeniable. He then, as if awakening from a dream and realizing that he has things to do, says with a sense of urgency:

DAVID

I'll call for a car. I can also walk you outside.

BARBARA

No need, I'll be fine. Thank you.

INT. DAVID'S BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

Barbara presses the button for the elevator. She looks at the cash in her hand. She is amused and almost starts laughing. The elevator doors open, and she walks in. The doors close behind her.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The next morning, Barbara is on her laptop, sitting on the living room sofa. Alexa comes out of her room.

BARBARA

Hey! Good morning!

ALEXA

Good morning! What happened to you last night? All I got was a vague text not to pick you up and then you didn't answer your phone. I was worried. She gives Barbara a big hug and sits next to her.

Barbara closes the laptop, looks up and starts retelling Alexa the events from the night before.

BARBARA

You won't believe what happened. I met the handsome fantasy guy. His name is

David. He approached me while I was waiting for you and invited me to his place.

Alexa is amazed. Her eyes wide open.

ALEXA

And you went?

BARBARA

Yes. Actually, he thought I was a hooker and invited me over, I think for sex.

Alexa is even more amazed. Her eyes even wider.

ALEXA

Wait, what? And you went along with it?

Barbara nods.

ALEXA

Did you sleep with him?

BARBARA

We went to his place, chatted for a few minutes, and then his phone rang, and he had to go. So, nothing really happened.

ALEXA

I can't believe what I'm hearing! Who are you, Barbara Styles?

Alexa continues with the questioning.

ALEXA (CONT'D)

Would you have slept with him?

BARBARA

I don't know. Anyway, he took my number.

ALEXA

Will you go again if he calls you?

BARBARA

I don't know, maybe. Besides being
suuuuuuper hot, he does seem very nice
and the whole thing was kind of...

As looking for the right word,

BARBARA (CONT'D)

...intriguing, pretending to be somebody
or something else.

ALEXA

Well, if he is so hot, then he must be
some kind of perv hiring a hooker.

BARBARA

Maybe, but not necessarily,

(then jokingly)

Richard Gere was not a perv in Pretty
Woman

ALEXA

You are right, I forgot all about that
based-on-real-life movie!

BARBARA

Anyway, he gave me \$300!

ALEXA

What! You slut!

They both laugh.

BARBARA

How's Hercules?

ALEXA

It is Pericles and he is great! We
have the best time together. And if
your prostitution career doesn't pan
out, he has a lot of cute friends I can
introduce you to.

BARBARA

If Zeus is available, I'm interested.

ALEXA

Haha, very funny.

INT. UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM - DIFFERENT DAY

Barbara is standing in front of a large screen, presenting her defense. She is on the last slide. It is titled "Conclusions" and accompanied by several bullet points.

BARBARA

So, in conclusion, this model provides a platform for further investigation of chronic, non-pharmacological hypertension on CAA.

Using a remote control, she progresses to the next slide titled "Questions".

BARBARA

I would now be happy to take any questions you might have.

Barbara is directing the statement at Dr. Ristich, who is the only person sitting in the audience.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

You are ready Barbara. Just finalize your dissertation and you will have your PhD next month, what you do with it afterwards, it's up to you. But I'll tell you, anyone who gets to hire you is very lucky.

Barbara is unplugging her laptop and packing her things.

BARBARA

I can't even think that far. It's all still surreal.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

Have you started sending your resume?

BARBARA

No, not yet.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

What are you waiting for?

BARBARA

I need a break. I want to unplug and relax for at least a few weeks, do nothing.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

You'll do nothing when you die.

BARBARA

I'll be dead when I die. Can't enjoy life when I'm dead.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

hmmm...knowing you you'll get restless after two days of doing nothing.

BARBARA

Maybe.....I'm also going to Florida to visit my parents later in August.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

Does your mom know that you've given up on your dream of finding a cure for your dad?

BARBARA

Probably not. You know he is the reason I got into the neuroscience field, and don't get me wrong, I'm glad I did, but I can't have my dad's condition dictate my life anymore.

Barbara is now packed, her backpack on her shoulders.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Anyway, can I take you for coffee, or lunch? I owe you for having to sit

through my presentation over and over again.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

You don't owe me anything. Go home and relax.

BARBARA

No time for relaxing just yet. Have to finalize the dissertation.

She gives Professor Ristich a hug and walks out of the room. The professor smiles. Her affection for Barbara is obvious.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Barbara walks into her apartment. She places her backpack on the kitchen counter and proceeds to make a cup of tea. While waiting for the water to brew, her phone buzzes. It is Alexa.

ALEXA (TEXT)

Hey Barb, I am having a drink at Café Milano, wanna come?

BARBARA (TEXT)

Can't, just got home from the lab and have to work on my dissertation.

ALEXA (TEXT)

Come on girl, I'm all alone, you can write tomorrow.

BARBARA (TEXT)

Sorry, really can't.

ALEX (TEXT)

Crying face

Barbara takes the backpack in one hand and the tea mug in the other and goes to her room.

INT. BARBARA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

She sits down at her desk, takes her laptop and books out of the backpack. She boots up her laptop and begins to review her dissertation document. Her phone buzzes again. She is visibly annoyed.

BARBARA
(to herself)

Ah...she's persistent, what does...

But before she finishes the sentence, she looks at her phone and realizes that the text is not from Alexa, but from an unknown number.

UNKNOWN NUMBER (TEXT)
Hi, this is David from last Friday.
Hope you are doing well.

Barbara quickly puts her phone down, almost as if making sure nobody else sees the text. Her eyes wide. Then she smiles and thinks for a few seconds and types.

BARBARA (TEXT)
Hi

DAVID (TEXT)
I was hoping I could see you again. I know it's a short notice, but are you available tonight?

BARBARA (TEXT)
Busy tonight...sorry.

DAVID
I understand.

Barbara waits for a few moments. She is looking at her phone and anticipating another text. After no more texts are received from David, she starts typing again.

BARBARA (TEXT)
But I am free on Friday.

She is hesitant to send the message and has her finger on the "send" button for a few moments before pressing it.

DAVID (TEXT)
7 PM?

BARBARA (TEXT)

See you then.

DAVID (TEXT)

Looking forward to it 😊

Barbara puts her phone down. She shakes her head in disbelief of her actions.

BARBARA

(talks to herself out
loud)

What are you doing Barbara! Have you
lost your mind!!!!

After a few moments, she collects herself and goes back to reviewing the dissertation. As she attempts to focus on her schoolwork, she is distracted by a thought. She opens a new tab and googles the following phrase: "how much do high end prostitutes get paid in Manhattan". She scrolls through different articles and sees numbers from \$500 to \$1000 per hour and \$5000 per night. She shakes her head in disapproval of her actions, closes the google tab, and tries to focus again on writing her paper.

INT. GROCERY STORE - MORNING

Barbara is with a basket in her hand, shopping for toiletries. She comes across the section where condoms are sold and pauses. She looks left and right, and after confirming that nobody is around, she puts a pack in the basket. At the checkout, the young cashier who typically checks her out, greets her and gives her a quick look after scanning the box of condoms. She smiles at him, tries to conceal her discomfort.

INT. BARBARA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Barbara is in her room, on her laptop, talking via Skype with her parents. The cameras are on. Her mom is sitting next to her dad, who is in a wheelchair and has a happy birthday party hat on.

BARBARA

Happy birthday dad! Are you having a
good day?

DAD

Excellent day, excellent.

MOM

Do you know how old you are?

DAD

62

Mom shakes her head.

BARBARA

No dad, you are turning 71!

DAD

Are you crazy! 71? No, no, I'm 62.

MOM

See, he's 62. And how old am I, Edward?

DAD

You...you are 66.

MOM

See Barbara, he's 62 and I'm 66. What can I tell you?

BARBARA

Hey Dad, did you get my card and the muffins I sent?

DAD

Muffins?

MOM

Edward, you had them this morning. Remember, the chocolate chip muffins?

DAD

Yes! I did...oh...

He leans over and says something to the mom that Barbara is not able to hear.

MOM

(directed at dad)

Right now?

Dad nods his head. Mom seems annoyed by what he's told her.

MOM

(to Barbara)

He's been constipated for days, and he has to go right now! Sorry Barb, you know how dangerous constipation is for old people. I have to take him...ok Ed, ok...we're going.

BARBARA

OK, love you guys. We'll talk later.

Barbara waves, but Mom and Dad disappear from the screen bickering. Without a goodbye.

Barbara hangs up and lays down on her bed. After a few moments of thinking about her parents, she remembers her upcoming date and walks over to her closet. She picks out several articles of clothing. Facing the mirror, she holds several articles over her outfit, trying to decide what to wear.

EXT. Upper East Side Manhattan - Evening

Barbara exits the subway at the 86th and Park Avenue station. She is wearing a skirt that falls a few inches above her knees and a tank top. She looks beautiful and sexy, but toned down compared to the "slutty" outfit from the previous week.

She walks to 85th Street and Madison Avenue and stops at the corner, hesitating. She can see David's building from where she's standing. She is now uncertain about her decision to meet him at his apartment. Instead of walking toward the building, she turns around and walks to a restaurant across the street. At the entrance to the restaurant, she pulls out her phone and selects "David" from her contacts. She texts something and enters the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Barbara is sitting at the bar, sipping a drink. David enters the locale. He is dressed casually, in shorts and a t-shirt, his hair slightly damp from a recent shower. Barbara waves at him from the bar and points to the empty chair next to her. He walks over and sits on the chair. He smiles at her.

BARBARA

I got you a drink.

And she points to the cocktail in front of him.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I hope you like gin and tonic, seemed like a safe choice.

DAVID

Thank you but, I'm ok.

David looks around the bar. The place is crowded and loud. A typical happy hour on a Friday evening. Barbara can tell that he is displeased.

BARBARA

You don't like happy hours?

DAVID

Not particularly. I don't drink and don't like loud places.

His gaze returns to her face. He smiles again.

DAVID

Did you change your mind about coming over?

BARBARA

No...I just...I just wanted to make sure that...

David raises his eyebrows, inquisitively.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

...that you are as handsome and as nice as I remember.

DAVID

And?

Barbara blushes. All of sudden she is tongue tied. His proximity is having an effect on her. David responds after not receiving an answer for a few moments.

DAVID

Well, you are as pretty and as nice as
I remember you...

Leaning over until his face is a few inches from hers, he says in her ear:

DAVID

You know, I've been thinking about you
all week.

Barbara is mesmerized by his sent. Her heart is going to jump out of her chest. She takes a sip of her drink. The small intake of alcohol seems to provide her with renewed courage, and she finally responds.

BARBARA

You know what, I don't like loud places
either.

INT. DAVID'S BUILDING HALLWAY - EVENING

David unlocks and opens the door to his apartment. Barbara is next to him.

DAVID

Please come in

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Barbara walks in past David and leans against the wall, several feet from the door. David closes the door, and after pausing for a few seconds, walks over to her. His eyes on her the entire time. He leans over her and lightly traces the contours of her neck with his long fingers, down to her shoulder. She is looking at him with excitement and longing. The chemistry between them is overwhelming. She closes her eyes and tilts her head, inviting him to kiss her. He presses his lips against hers, initially tenderly. Then, they start kissing passionately, both moaning with pleasure. As if they have known each other their entire lives and have patiently waited for this very moment.

He hikes up her skirt, slides down her underwear. Then turns her around against the wall and proceeds to make love to her. After several minutes of passion, he is finished, and both are breathless. They proceed to adjust their clothes.

DAVID

(panting)

Sorry...I wasn't expecting to...

BARBARA

(also panting)

I guess I should get going now...

DAVID

No, no...please stay! Are you hungry? I can order some food.

Then he looks at her sincerely. Their eyes are locked.

DAVID

I would really like for you to stay.

Barbara smiles at him.

BARBARA

Ok.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Barbara and David are eating Chinese Food at the dining table, located next to the kitchen island. Barbara is drinking a glass of wine, while David has a glass of water. David's cat Sunshine is sitting at the table on one of the chairs. David is feeding her small pieces of chicken in between his bites. Low music is playing in the background, Radiohead's OK Computer album.

DAVID

So, are you originally from the city?

BARBARA

No, I grew up in Long Island, in the Great Neck area.

DAVID

Assuming you came to the city for better... umm ...business opportunities?

BARBARA

You can say that. How about you? You mentioned that you lived here your entire life?

DAVID

Yes, born and raised in Manhattan. In this very building. The family apartment is on the 8th floor, where I grew up, but nobody lives there anymore.

BARBARA

What do you do for a living?

DAVID

I sell and buy commercial real estate. A business I inherited from my dad. He is now retired, somewhere, traveling the world, I guess. I don't really hear from him much.

BARBARA

How about your mom?

DAVID

She died a few years ago. So, it's just me. How about your family?

BARBARA

I'm an only child, a miracle child. My parents were told they couldn't have kids, and then I happened when they were both in their forties. They are now in Florida. My dad is ill, and my mom takes care of him. I don't see them much.

After a few minutes of silence.

BARBARA

This album is very melancholy; doesn't it make you sad?

DAVID

No...for some odd reason melancholy music makes me happy. I know that sounds strange.

BARBARA

No, it doesn't, I get it.

Barbara gets up, goes to the island where the bottle of wine is sitting and pours more wine in her glass. She leans against the island and sipping her wine asks him flirtatiously.

BARBARA

So, you don't drink, do you have any vices, Mr. Jones?

DAVID

I work a lot; some would call that a vice.

He gets up and walks up to her. He takes her glass of wine and puts it on the island. Getting his face closer to hers, he says playfully:

DAVID (CONT'D)

Maybe you can be my vice? Assuming you want to see me again.

Barbara backs away, all of sudden serious.

BARBARA

Can I ask you a personal question?

David nods

BARBARA

Why do you...

(a moment)

...hire me to be with you.

Barbara is uncomfortable with using the word "hire".

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I mean, you are handsome, successful, I'm sure you don't have a problem getting girls to be with you.

DAVID

(playfully)

Not as pretty as you.

And leans over to kiss her. However, she backs away again.

BARBARA

(firmly)

Yes, as pretty as me, or prettier.

He now gets serious and backs up.

DAVID

I am not in a situation right now to have a relationship.

BARBARA

You don't need to have a relationship to have sex, I am sure you know that.

DAVID

But I'm not like that...I don't want to have one-night stands or give anyone false hopes or hurt anyone's feelings.

He lights up again.

DAVID (CONT'D)

But with you it is different, I know that you have no expectations and that you are with me because I'm paying you.

He goes back to being flirtatious.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Though I do hope that you like me at least a little...

He then kisses her neck. She gives in. She closes her eyes and relaxes under his warm breath.

DAVID

mmmm... I love the smell of your skin.

He pulls down the straps of her tank top, revealing her full breasts. He picks her up and seats her on the kitchen island. He continues to kiss her body, working his way down to her breast and stomach. He then takes off her underwear and puts his head between her legs. She hunches her back and starts to breathe heavily. The music continues to play in the background.

Later that evening Barbara comes out of the bathroom and picks up her purse from the kitchen counter. There is also a stash of money sitting on the counter.

DAVID

The car is waiting for you downstairs,
and here is the amount that you
mentioned.

She looks at the money, hesitates for a few seconds, but then takes it and puts it in her purse.

DAVID

Barbara, can we plan for the next time
NOW? Are you free on Wednesday? Or if
you need to look at your work
schedule.....calendar first.

BARBARA

(without hesitation)

I can come on Wednesday.

DAVID

Great! And maybe I can cook dinner. I
make a really mean lasagna you know...

BARBARA

Oh...

DAVID

Yes, you'll see, I'll be your best
client and you'll only want to spend
time with me.

Barbara gives him a funny look.

BARBARA

My best client?

DAVID

Sorry, that was a stupid remark.
Anyway, the point is that I really
enjoyed tonight and want to see you
again soon.

BARBARA

I'll see you on Wednesday.

And she leaves.

EXT. DAVID'S BUILDING - NIGHT

A black Cadillac is parked in the front. The DRIVER is standing by the car. Barbara exits the building.

DRIVER

Miss Barbara?

BARBARA

Yes.

The driver opens the passenger door, and she enters the car. The driver gets in the car. The car pulls out and turns the corner of 85th and 5th.

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Barbara is smiling looking out the window. Expression of joy and excitement on her face...

INT. DINER - DAY

Barbara is having brunch with Alexa and her boyfriend Pericles. He is handsome with dark wavy hair, in his late twenties. They are finishing up their meal. Alexa is talking about something that happened at work.

ALEXA

...and then I told her that if she didn't deliver by next Friday, I would have no choice but to consider other options. You just can't rely on people to do their jobs anymore.

PERICLES

You did the right thing. Everyone's looking for a handout nowadays.

Pericles's Greek accent is apparent.

A young pretty waitress approaches the table and puts the check in the middle of the table. Pericles grabs it immediately, waving off Barbara who is offering her credit card.

BARBARA

Thank you.

PERICLES

I would never let a girl pay.

Barbara dislikes his macho sentiment, while Alexa is pleased with it. She gives Barbara a proud glance. Barbara notices Pericles checking out the waitress who is walking away with the bill. She looks at Alexa, but Alexa is oblivious.

PERICLES

So, I hear you test Dementia drugs on genetically modified mice. So, you genetically modify them to give them dementia and then you drug them? That sounds kinda fucked up.

BARBARA

Well, the idea is to find a cure that can...

PERICLES (CONT'D)

(interrupting)

Plus, as a grad student, don't you get paid like nothing? To be doing such fucked-up research and be treated like cheap labor, must be hard. How do you even make ends meet?

ALEXA

Well, Barbara has a few other gigs on the side.

Alexa winks at Barbara, who gives her a funny look, understanding the insinuation. Pericles is unaware of their inside joke.

PERICLES

Oh yeah, like what?

BARBARA

(rising)

Well, I babysit and a few other things. Anyway, it was very nice to finally meet you Pericles, but I have to go.

ALEXA

Where are you going?

BARBARA

I have some shopping to do.

Barbara kisses Alexa on the cheek and walks away.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Barbara is riding the subway. She is observing an affectionate couple chatting and kissing across from where she is sitting. She smiles and gets up to exit the train at her stop.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

The streets are busy with crowds of people. A typical New York day in Manhattan. Barbara enters a big shopping mall.

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Barbara walks past several stores and stops in front of a lingerie shop.

INT. LINGERIE STORE - DAY

Barbara enters the store, pauses at the entrance, unsure which way to proceed. A SALESGIRL approaches her.

SALESGIRL

Can I help you find something?

BARBARA

Well, I'm looking for lingerie,
obviously...

(then, almost as
whispering)

You know, something sexy.

She looks around the store. It is all lacy, sexy lingerie pieces.

BARBARA

You know, I don't think I'll have any problem finding what I'm looking for! I will let you know if I need help. Thanks!

SALESGIRL

(politely)

My name is Jessica if you need anything.

Barbara thanks her and proceeds to browse the store. She looks through several items hanging on display. She picks out a lacy teddy and investigates it, as if not sure what she's looking at or how she would put it on. She picks out a few more items and without trying them on, checks out.

INT. BROKERAGE MEETING ROOM - DAY

David is standing at the end of a long conference table. He is in the room with two ASIAN MEN. Both Asian men are wearing dark suits and dark ties. David is wearing a gray suit, but without a tie. Stacks of documents and folder are on the table. The men look like they had just finalized an important meeting successfully.

DAVID

Well, thank you so much for flying out to close the deal. I am confident that this acquisition will bring great value to your operations.

FIRST ASIAN MAN

Absolutely! It's been a long process, but we've finally reached an agreement that aligns with our business goals.

SECOND ASIAN MAN

Agreed. We also appreciate your company's willingness to negotiate and find common grounds.

DAVID

Excellent! And I hear that your team has already started working on plans to renovate and customize the space to meet your specific goals. Please let us know if there is anything else we can

do to make this transition as smooth as possible for you.

They proceed to walk towards the door.

INT. BROKERAGE HALLWAY - DAY

David and the two Asian men walk to the elevators. Mary is also with them.

DAVID

Well, I hope you enjoy the rest of your stay in New York. When do you fly out?

FIRST ASIAN MAN

On Friday

DAVID

So, you have a couple of days to enjoy the city. Just let us know if you need any suggestions for dining or site seeing, or...

MARY

Actually, we will see each other tonight for dinner. I made reservations at Madison Park for 7 PM.

DAVID

Yes, that's right, dinner...

The elevator doors open. They shake hands and the two Asian men get in the elevator. The doors close.

DAVID

(turning to Mary)

Hey, I forgot about the dinner tonight...and I made other plans...

MARY

Other plans?

David nods. Mary looks at him suspiciously.

MARY (CONT'D)

Can't you cancel?

DAVID

I can't. You'll go, right? And have Dominic go instead of me. He loves fancy dinners, and he is a great conversationalist.

David starts moving down the hallway, towards his office.

DAVID (CONT'D)

And tell them I send my apologies...I got sick or had a family emergency or something.

MARY

Ok, but don't forget about the band next Friday night. Please don't make "OTHER" plans.

DAVID

I won't.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Barbara and David are finishing up a meal at the dining table. They are laughing about something they had just talked about.

BARBARA

Mmmmm, once again, great lasagna. You'll have to give me the recipe.

DAVID

The recipe is top secret, I would have to kill you...

BARBARA

And the secret is you bought it frozen from Whole Foods and popped it in the oven for an hour?

DAVID

Nope, I made it all from scratch.

BARBARA

All? Like how many layers back are we talking about? How about the pasta? From scratch?

DAVID

(jokingly)

Oh yeah. Kneaded the dough, rolled the pasta...

BARBARA

Oh...and the tomato sauce?

DAVID

Of course, fresh tomatoes peeled, crushed, and simmered all day.

BARBARA

And of course, you milked the cows yourselves to make the cheese. Otherwise, I'm not impressed.

DAVID

Of course, I labored all day.

David gets up, picks up the plates and puts them in the sink, while Barbara is sipping on her wine, observing him. Then he walks over to the living room, dims the lights, and sits on the couch. Alternative rock music is playing in the background. Barbara gets up and leans against the kitchen island. She is wearing a wraparound black dress with high heel sandals.

DAVID

You look beautiful in that dress. Why don't you come over here?

BARBARA

You may like what's underneath even better.

Barbara unties her dress at the waist and opens it. She has her newly purchased black lacy teddy underneath. She takes the dress off and lets it fall to the ground. The song "Super Massive Black Hole" by Muse starts playing in the

background. She starts walking seductively towards David. He watches her mesmerized. She stands in front of him, slowly straddles him and takes his shirt off. His body is lean and muscular. His green eyes are on fire. She kisses his lips and then his neck. He closes his eyes and moans out of pleasure, and she then proceeds to ride him.

MONTAGE:

Over the next week, Barbara meets David in his apartment several more times. A montage of scenes shows Barbara trying out seductive lingerie in front of her mirror, Barbara entering David's apartment, Barbara and David engaging in sex, and money being exchanged.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Barbara and David lie naked in his bed. Her back rests on his chest. He is smelling her hair.

DAVID

You were amazing tonight.

BARBARA

(jokingly)

Well, had to step up my game for my best client.

She sits up and puts on one of David's shirts. She notices a framed picture on the side table. She takes it in her hand for a closer look. It is of a younger David, with a woman, whom she assumes is his mom, and an adolescent boy with a graduation cap and gown on.

BARBARA

Is this your mom?

DAVID

Yes, and my brother.

BARBARA

I didn't know you had a brother.

DAVID

I used to have a brother. He died 7 years ago.

BARBARA

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. What happened?

DAVID

He decided that he couldn't do life anymore and jumped off our balcony, from the eighth floor. Actually only a few days after that picture was taken. He was only 18.

BARBARA

Oh...

David takes the picture from Barbara and looks at it.

DAVID

He looks so happy in this picture. He had us all fooled. We didn't know that he needed help, we didn't know that he was being bullied at school. Even after school was over, after graduating, the online bullying didn't stop. We only learned about it afterwards. He never gave us a chance to help him.

Barbara's eyes are on David, sad. David's mood is now somber. Vulnerable.

DAVID (CONT'D)

My mom died a few years later, I believe it was from a broken heart. And that's when my dad decided to disappear into the world. Anyway, I blame myself sometimes. I should have known something was wrong, but I was too busy making money, living a big life...while my baby brother was quietly suffering and contemplating suicide.

(looking up at Barbara)

But it's too late now, I can't save him now. I can only use his tragedy to help others.

BARBARA

How?

DAVID

By raising awareness about bullying, especially on-line bullying, and dangers of social media. Every year I put on a fundraiser for an organization that educates kids and parents on how to be safe on-line. It is actually in a few weeks...which reminds me...do you like live music?

BARBARA

Yes?

David's mood brightens.

DAVID

If you are not busy on Friday night, I would like to hire you... in a different capacity.

BARBARA

(Curiously)

Yes?

DAVID

I will be checking out this band to potentially hire for the fundraiser, and I need a second opinion. Do you want to come with me?

BARBARA

To listen to a live band? Hell yeah!

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE ALONG CENTRAL PARK - DAY

It is a clear sunny day in New York. The traffic on Fifth avenue is moving slowly.

INT. YELLOW TAXI - DAY

David is riding in the back seat and talking on the phone with Mary.

DAVID

(into the phone)

Can we ask for different dates?

INT. MARY'S PRIVATE OFFICE - INTERCUT

Mary is sitting at her desk, talking to David on speaker.

MARY

David, the next availability may not be for months! This is not the type of thing you ask to postpone. For any reason! You can't afford to wait another week, let alone months!

DAVID

I just don't want to miss the fundraiser.

MARY

The fundraiser will be a success regardless. Don't worry about it. Don't you have confidence in me? I can't even believe we are having this discussion.

DAVID

I do have confidence in you.

MARY

Ok then, this conversation is over. Bye David.

DAVID

Bye.

David puts down his phone and looks out the window, with deep worry. Then he gets impatient with the stop and go traffic.

DAVID

(addressing the driver)

Excuse me, can you please pull over at the light, I'm going to walk the rest of the way. It is a nice day outside.

DRIVER

No problem. It surely is a nice day for a walk. 80 degrees in July! Does not happen often in New York City.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

The taxi pulls over. David exits and starts walking down Fifth Avenue towards 85th Street. He is still deep in his thoughts; he is not aware of his surroundings. A very attractive girl walking towards him recognizes him.

GIRL

David Jones?

David looks at the gorgeous girl in front of him, not sure if she is addressing him, not sure who she is. She repeats.

GIRL

David Jones? It's Johanna, Johanna Pena.

DAVID

I'm sorry, but I don't...

JOHANNA

Dr. Pena's daughter. We met at my family's fundraiser a few months ago? I actually gave you my business card, I thought you'd call. But maybe you've lost it?

DAVID

(vaguely remembering)

Oh yeah, Johanna, how are you? I...

At that moment, from the corner of his eyes, he spots Barbara with the Koh boys. She is holding them by their hands. They are crossing Fifth Avenue, walking towards Central Park. David instantly forgets all about the girl he is having a conversation with.

DAVID

(to Johanna, brushing her off)

I have to go.

And he walks away, leaving Johanna behind, who is stunned by his rudeness and disinterest. She is clearly not used to men being indifferent to her charms.

David picks up his pace and starts walking after Barbara and the boys. They stop at an ice-cream stand at the entrance to Central Park, and Barbara buys each boy an ice-cream. David stands a safe distance away and observes. He is intrigued. Barbara and the boys enter the park, the boys hopping ahead of Barbara, as she is trying to keep up. David keeps up with them as well, still staying a safe distance behind.

Barbara and the boys stop at a small playground that has a couple of swings and slides. She sits on a bench and the boys proceed to go up and down the slide. She eats the leftover ice-cream the boys handed her before running to the slide. She has one in each hand and eats them both, alternating between the two hands.

KEVIN

Come on Barbara, come on the slide with us!

BARBARA

No, no, no... I'm good.

BOTH BOYS

Come on, come on.

They come and grab her by the hands, make her get up and climb up the slide. She is reluctant, but playful at the same time. They all go up and down the slide several times, laughing and having a fun time together.

David is observing Barbara with the boys, and he smiles at the scene he is witnessing.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - DAY - LATER

Barbara walks into her apartment. She is surprised to find a beautiful bouquet of flowers on the kitchen table. She finds a note that says "Hope you are having a wonderful day. Can't wait to see you tonight. From David".

She is pleased.

EXT. AN INTERSECTION IN GREENWICH VILLAGE - EVENING

The city is alive. Crowds of people on the street. David is standing at an intersection, waiting for Barbara. He spots her walking in his direction. He beams at the sight of her. She is wearing ripped jeans with a cute top and flat sandals. He is also wearing jeans with a black t-shirt. Barbara approaches.

BARBARA

Sorry, I'm late...a very busy day.

DAVID

It's fine, you're only 5 minutes late.
That does not even count as late.

BARBARA

I like to be very punctual.

DAVID

You know, I could have picked you up,
but you said no. You look very nice by
the way.

Barbara smiles. She is still getting used to receiving frequent compliments.

BARBARA

Thank you. And thank you for the
beautiful flowers.

They start walking.

DAVID

The owner of the club we are going to,
his name is George. He is sort of my
assistant Mary's boyfriend, though it's
not official and she would never admit
that they are seeing each other.
Anyway, Mary suggested to hire the club
house band. She says they are really
good.

BARBARA

Live bands are always fun.

DAVID

We try to do something different every year. Last year we had a magician, the year before a DJ.

BARBARA

Has Mary been working for you a long time?

DAVID

I've known Mary my entire life. She's always been part of the business, in one way or another...

BARBARA

(fishing)

Is she younger? Or older?

DAVID

(teasing her)

Why, are you jealous?

BARBARA

No! of course not, just curious.

DAVID

She was my mom's best friend. She's always been like a second mother to me. She looks out for me. Ah, we're here.

They walk past a long line of people waiting to get inside the club. They approach the roped off front door. A BOUNCER, large in size, is checking people's IDs and letting them in.

DAVID

(to the bouncer)

I'm David Jones, George Goldman is expecting me.

BOUNCER

Go ahead.

And he removes the rope and waves them in.

INT. CLUB - EVENING

Barbara and David move down the stairs into the underground area where the band is playing. It is a small venue, with tables around a small stage and a small area in front of the stage where people are dancing. The band is playing a cover of "A Sky Full of Stars" by Coldplay. David and Barbara are standing at the entrance and taking in the scene.

GEORGE, a man in his 60s, spots David from inside the club and works his way through the crowd to reach him.

GEORGE

Hey David!

DAVID

Hey man, great to see you.

They shake hands.

DAVID

This is my friend Barbara, Barbara this is George.

GEORGE

(shaking hands with
Barbara)

Hey Barbara. I am so glad both of you were able to come. I hope you love the band. I saved a special table reserved for you, follow me.

David and Barbara follow George as they make their way through the crowd. George takes them to a table located right in front of the stage. They sit next to each other, facing the band.

GEORGE

Let me know if there is anything you need. Alicia here..

(pointing to the
waitress standing next
to the table)

...will be your server. She will take good care of you. Alicia, this is David and Barbara, anything they want, food, drinks.

DAVID

Thank you George.

GEORGE

I'll check-in with you later.

And he leaves.

ALICIA

(friendly)

Hello, what can I get you?

David looks at Barbara.

BARBARA

I'll have a Blue Moon.

DAVID

I'm ok for now, thank you.

Barbara turns to David.

BARBARA

This place is great! I can't believe
I've never been here before. Oh, I
love this song!

Barbara gets up and starts dancing to the cover of "Could you be Loved" by Bob Marley. David gets up and joins her.

MONTAGE:

Several shots of David and Barbara dancing, laughing, and having a fun time in the club. The band plays some of the greatest hits of the past several decades.

END MONTAGE

INT. CLUB - NIGHT - LATER

The band is done performing. People are exiting the club. Soft background music is playing. David and Barbara are standing at the bottom of the stairs by a small kiosk that sells merchandise.

DAVID

Which one would you like?

BARBARA

That one, in medium.

Barbara points to a t-shirt with the club's logo on it. The cashier hands her the bag with the shirt in it and David pays for it.

BARBARA

Thank you, I love it!

George comes behind them and puts his arms around both of their shoulders.

GEORGE

I hope you guys enjoyed the band.

DAVID

We did, they were fantastic.

GEORGE

(addressing David)

See you at the fundraiser?

DAVID

Actually, I won't be there, but Mary has it all under control!

GEORGE

I am sure she does. I am sure she does. You know Mary! Well, have a great night guys and very nice to meet you Barbara.

BARBARA

Bye George, nice to meet you as well.

EXT. STREET IN GREENWICH VILLAGE - NIGHT

Barbara and David move north towards Washington Square Park.

BARBARA

The band was phenomenal, you should definitely hire them. Thanks for inviting me, I had a lot of fun.

DAVID

You don't have to thank me, it was not a favor, it was a business transaction; I hired you for your ...ummm...expertise in judging live bands.

BARBARA

So, what will you tell Mary when George tells her that you came with a girl and when she asks about me?

DAVID

She won't ask, and if she does, I'll tell her the truth.

BARBARA

(fishing)

Which is?

DAVID

That I met a girl I enjoy spending time with, and I brought her to see the band and give me her opinion.

They stop.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Are you hungry?

BARBARA

Starving.

DAVID

(pointing to a joint in front of them)

This place here has the best falafel in town. Want to try?

Barbara nods. David opens the door for Barbara.

INT. FALAFEL JOINT - NIGHT

There are a handful of tables, only a few customers and one person behind the counter.

DAVID

You go sit down; how many do you want?

BARBARA

I'll have just one, and a water. Thank you.

Barbara sits at a window table, while David goes to order the food. She looks out the window with a smile on her face. Her expression radiates content and happiness. David

comes back with the waters and sits next to her. He hands her the water, she opens it and takes a sip.

DAVID

I saw you with the Koh boys today. So, you babysit during the day?

David seems amused.

BARBARA

How do you know the Kohs?

DAVID

Well, we've only been neighbors my entire life.

BARBARA

Oh, yes, I babysit occasionally. Why is that amusing?

DAVID

A prostitute by night and a babysitter by day. Sorry, didn't mean to laugh.

Barbara almost forgot about her presumed nighttime profession, but does not dwell on it, and ignores David's "funny" comment.

BARBARA

That's ok. I've been babysitting for the family for about 6 years. They are like family.

At that moment an older middle eastern man brings them their food. They thank him and bite into their food.

DAVID

(chewing)

Tell me more...

BARBARA

(chewing)

Tell you what?

DAVID

Tell me more about yourself. All I know is your name and where you live. And now I know that you are an occasional

babysitter. So, tell me more about yourself. Or would that be unprofessional on your part?

BARBARA

Ok, let me see...

(a moment)

I live with a roommate. Her name is Alexa and I've known her since we were kids. We grew up together. She is a great journalist, but there is always some type of drama in her life, mainly involving guys. She is desperately trying to find a boyfriend and keeps running into the wrong type of guys.

DAVID

How about your family? You mentioned your dad was sick?

BARBARA

My dad has Alzheimer's. He was diagnosed seven years ago.

DAVID

I'm sorry, that must be hard.

BARBARA

It is. At first, I thought I could help him, maybe even save him. This passion to save him guided my every decision in life, big and small. Everything I did was somehow related to helping my dad. But he wasn't getting better, just worse, and at the same time he was making everyone around him miserable. My passion to save him eventually turned into resentment and then realization that some things are out of our control, and that we can't fix them, no matter how hard we try.

David is focused on her, taking in her words, as if they somehow related to his life.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

My mom is always by his side taking care of him. She has no life; she is a full time caregiver. She won't even leave him for a couple of days to come and visit me.

Barbara bites into her falafel and looks up at David unaware that she has tahini sauce on her nose. David takes a napkin and wipes her nose. He is affectionate. Barbara is embarrassed. They both laugh.

EXT. STREET IN GREENWICH VILLAGE - NIGHT

Barbara and David exit the falafel joint and continue walking north. This time David puts his arm around her shoulders. They walk in silence, but they feel more connected than ever. They look like a happy couple going home after a fun night. Barbara looks up.

BARBARA

Tonight is supposed to be a good night to observe Delta Aquarids.

DAVID

What is that?

BARBARA

It is a meteor shower, observable in the summertime. It's supposed to be pretty spectacular.

David looks at her, surprised by her knowledge of this phenomenon.

BARBARA

Actually, I did see it once as a kid, at my grandparents' house. They lived on a farm in Connecticut. I must have been really young because both of my grandparents died when I was 4 or 5. But, I remember it like it was yesterday. There was just something magical about it - a light show in the sky. More spectacular than the fireworks...and quieter too.

DAVID

Unfortunately, as I told you before,
you can't see the stars, or any
astrological phenomena in the city sky.

They pause, both looking up. Barbara then turns towards
David, standing very close to him. He takes a loose strand
of her hair and puts it behind her ear.

BARBARA

I had a really fun time tonight.

DAVID

Will you come back to my place?

BARBARA

I would like to, but I really have to
go home, I have an early morning
tomorrow.

DAVID

What are you doing early on a Saturday
morning...sorry it's none of my business.
Of course, if you have to go, I'll take
you home.

They continue to walk. This time, without any physical
connection.

BARBARA

That's ok I can take the subway.

DAVID

There is no way I'm letting you take
the subway this late at night.

BARBARA

I can Uber.

DAVID

No way, I'm taking you home.

BARBARA

Are you worried about me?

DAVID

Of course, I'm worried, someone may
take you and then what will I do?

She smiles.

EXT. BARBARA'S BUILDING - NIGHT

David's black BMW pulls over in front of Barbara's building.

INT. DAVID'S BMW - NIGHT

BARBARA
Right here is good.

DAVID
I'll walk you to your door.

EXT. BARBARA'S BUILDING - NIGHT

They both get out of the car and walk to the entrance of her building. They stand facing each other.

DAVID
Should I walk you upstairs?

BARBARA
Probably not a good idea, my roommate is at home, and I have an early morning tomorrow...even though I would really like...

David interrupts her by giving her a kiss, almost as if he could not hold it in anymore. They share a long kiss. It is the first kiss of the night. Barbara reluctantly breaks away from his embrace.

BARBARA
Good night David.

And she unlocks the door and walks into the building.

David looks after her for a few moments, longing, then turns around and moves to his car.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barbara quietly enters, careful not to wake up Alexa. She sits on the sofa with a big smile on her face, thinking about the events of that evening. Then, she hears sobs coming from the other room. She crosses to Alexa's room; the door is ajar. Barbara slowly pushes the door open and sees Alexa crying on the floor. Barbara sits next to her.

BARBARA

Alexa, what is wrong?

ALEXA

He's ghosting me. He won't answer my texts...he's blocked me on Instagram. And I don't know why!

Continues to sob.

BARBARA

Oh Alexa, I'm so sorry.

ALEXA

I don't know what I'm doing wrong. No guy likes me for more than a few weeks. I'll never find a boyfriend!

BARBARA

You are not doing anything wrong.

Barbara hugs Alexa who continues to cry.

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - DAY

Barbara is typing notes on her laptop. Sammy is conducting an experiment under the hood.

BARBARA

(into her computer)

And that's a wrap. I'm done with the dissertation. If I read it one more time, I'll lose my mind. I just need to practice the presentation some more.

(looking up at Sammy)

Thanks for your feedback by the way.

SAMMY

You're welcome, it's all minor edits.
You're going to do great. You are
already ready!

BARBARA

I can't believe I'll be graduating in
10 days!

SAMMY

You still haven't started sending your
resume?

BARBARA

I'll do it after my trip to Florida. I
just need a break.

After a brief silence, Sammy takes off his goggles and
turns towards Barbara.

SAMMY

Hey Barb, I broke up with Suzie.

BARBARA

(enthusiastically)

Oh, good for you!

(then uncertain)

I guess?

SAMMY

Yeah, actually she broke up with me.
Said we didn't have chemistry together.
Said I didn't give her butterflies in
the stomach. Not quite sure what she
meant by that, but whatever. I am
single now, yay!

BARBARA

Yay!

SAMMY

So, do you think that you and I could
go out now? Now that I don't have a
girlfriend and we are both single?

Barbara rolls her eyes. She is annoyed.

BARBARA

No, we can't. Please don't ask me out again, Sammy. I'm not interested in you like that. I like you as a friend. Plus, I kind of started seeing someone...

(now more to herself)

who definitely gives me butterflies...which reminds me, I gotta go!

SAMMY

How about the...

Ignoring Sammy, Barbara picks up her stuff and walks out of the lab.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Barbara and David are lying in bed. Barbara has her head on his chest, he is softly stroking her bare back. The lights are dim. Soft background music is playing.

BARBARA

Tell me something about yourself, something that not too many people know about you, something personal.

DAVID

Let's see...I was engaged before.

BARBARA

You were? What happened?

DAVID

She left.

BARBARA

Why?

DAVID

I had a personal situation that she could not deal with or didn't want to deal with. A long story, but it was for the better. I realized then that she didn't care enough for me. I probably didn't for her either...Your turn?

BARBARA

My turn what?

DAVID

Don't play stupid, your turn to share something about yourself.

BARBARA

Oh, let's see...I throw up in cars, planes, boats, helicopters, basically on anything that moves.

DAVID

You don't throw up on me when I am moving under you. On the contrary, you seem to enjoy it.

BARBARA

Haha, very funny.

DAVID

Anyway, you cheated, you said something personal, that's not very personal.

David's phone rings from the nightstand. David reaches for it. It's Mary.

DAVID

Sorry, have to take this.

(then into the phone)

Hey Mary ...yes...what about it? The one with some type of saint on it? Can I call you back a bit later and we can talk about it? Ok, bye.

BARBARA

Everything ok?

DAVID

Everything is fine, one of our donors is asking to donate a different painting than the one we originally agreed on for the fundraiser.

BARBARA

How come you won't be attending the fundraiser?

DAVID

I'll be out of town, have to leave town
for a few days.

BARBARA

Anywhere exciting?

DAVID

Not really, Baltimore. Just work stuff.
A boring conference.

After a brief pause Barbara looks over at the clock on the
nightstand. The clock is showing 10 PM.

BARBARA

I should get going.

She gets up and starts dressing. David sits up in bed and
observes her getting dressed.

DAVID

Hey Barbara

(he hesitates)

I hope you don't take this the wrong
way...um...I don't really know your life
situation...but you don't seem like the
type who...and not that there is anything
wrong with your lifestyle...

He is struggling to articulate his thoughts, concerned
about offending her.

DAVID (CONT'D)

What I'm trying to say is that if you
need any type of help, for yourself,
your parents, anything, just want you
to know that you can ask me. It would
actually bring me great satisfaction if
I could help you.

BARBARA

Thank you, that's very sweet.

DAVID

I know that we don't know each other
very well, but I've spent enough time
with you to know that you are a smart
and caring person. A good person.

Barbara smiles.

BARBARA

You are a very good judge of character,
David Jones.

She picks up her purse and walks out of the bedroom. On her way to the door, she pauses by the kitchen island where David had left money for her. She hesitates for a brief second, but then takes the money and hurries out the door.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexa is lying on the living room sofa, looking at her phone. She hears the doors unlock. Barbara enters. Alexa briefly looks up at Barbara, and then goes back to looking at her phone.

ALEXA

Got a Pimp yet?

BARBARA

(playfully)

Shut up!

ALEXA

Just asking, don't know what I can expect from you anymore. You are full of surprises. Come here, what do you think about this one?

Barbara sits next to Alexa who shows her a picture of a guy on her phone.

BARBARA

(alarmed)

Are you on dating apps again?

ALEXA

Yeah, why are you asking like that?

BARBARA

Like what?

ALEXA

Like there is something wrong with it.

BARBARA

Because there IS something wrong with it.

ALEXA

And why is that?

BARBARA

(her tone is stern)

Seriously? Do I really need to tell you? It all ends up in either a one-night stand or dating some idiot who is not worth your time!

ALEXA

(defensively)

Hate to say it but look who's talking. A girl who gets paid for sex. I would rather have one night stands than be a fucking prostitute!

Barbara and Alexa are now in an argument.

BARBARA

Really? How is that any better? I would rather get paid for sex than have random strangers use me for one night.

ALEXA

First of all, they are not random strangers, but guys I like, and I want to sleep with. And they are not using me. How do you know I am not using them?

BARBARA

Using them for what? Incredible sex? I'm sure they take their time to please you in their drunken stupor. You might as well get money out of it, if nothing else.

ALEXA

That is not true!

After a brief pause.

BARBARA

(her tone softer now)

Let's be honest Alexa, every guy you go home with, you hope that it may lead to something more, and then you are disappointed when it doesn't.

Alexa looks at her, tearing up. Then she rises and goes to her room in silence and closes the door behind her.

Barbara sighs remorsefully.

BARBARA

Shit!

She gets up, knocks on Alexa's door and opens it slowly. Alexa is sitting on her bed. Barbara walks over and sits next to her.

BARBARA

I'm sorry...I didn't mean to be hurtful.

Alexa turns to look at Barbara.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I know it is hard to find the right guy and you deserve someone nice. You have so much to offer, Alexa. You are pretty, successful, caring...a great friend. Maybe he'll come when you least expect it...when you are not trying..

ALEXA

I'm also sorry. Please don't think that I'm judging you. I would never judge you. I think it's great that you are having fun and you seem happy.

BARBARA

I know it sounds crazy. But there is something liberating about being with him, I don't have to try to impress him, or worry about what I said, or whether I did the right thing or not. And since there are no expectations, there are no games, no pretending... I can just be myself, while pretending to be something else. I know that sounds contradictory, but somehow it isn't.

They hug. Alexa breaks the hug and looks at Barbara, as if she has just remembered to ask her something very important.

ALEXA

Have you cyber stalked him? Does he have a Facebook or Instagram account?

BARBARA

Well... yes, I tried initially, but there are like a million David Joneses. But regardless, I don't think he's the type who would be on social media honestly.

(a moment)

I really don't know what his deal is. He says he does not want a relationship, but at the same time spends so much time with me and seems to like me.

ALEXA

They all say they are not ready for a relationship until they meet the right girl. It's just an excuse. Look at George Clooney, supposedly an eternal bachelor, until the right one came along. Now wife, kids, the whole nine yards.

After a brief pause

ALEXA (CONT'D)

You are falling for this guy, aren't you?

BARBARA

I think I might be...

ALEXA

It is in our womanly nature to have expectations, even when we are just having fun. We can't just have sex for sex, we always want more.

BARBARA

I think that I do want more. But he was clear that he does not want a relationship.

ALEXA

Then you have to break it off before you get even more emotionally involved.....or tell him the truth.

BARBARA

I can't tell him the truth.

ALEXA

Why not? You have no chance of winning him over if he thinks that you are a prostitute. He is not going to fall in love with a prostitute. Real Richard Gear would have never fallen for a prostitute named Vivian. It just doesn't work that way in real life.

BARBARA

How can I tell him now after lying to him for weeks? I'm afraid that he'll break things off. I need more time to make sure he really likes me.

ALEXA

I really hope it works out Barb.

BARBARA

Thanks

And they hug again.

INT. NYC NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - DAY

Barbara is with the Koh boys, visiting a special exhibit on Sharks. They are standing in front of a life-sized model of a shark, about 20 feet long. The younger boy reads the description.

ETHAN

Megalodon, the biggest predatory fish of all time. Wow!

BARBARA

Did you know that sharks are older than dinosaurs?

ETHAN

Does that make them like gazillion years old?

BARBARA

Something like that.

Kevin rolls his eyes at his younger brother's childish remark.

KEVIN

Look at their teeth. Sharks never get permanent teeth, they replace them every few weeks, over and over, their entire life.

BARBARA

I didn't know that! So, they always have "baby" teeth. I wonder if they are constantly wiggly.

ETHAN

Wow, they must earn so much money from the tooth fairy!

KEVIN

The tooth fairy is not real, stupid!

ETHAN

You're stupid!

BARBARA

Ok boys, let's stop fighting, nobody here is stupid.

Barbara checks the time on her phone.

BARBARA

We need to get going, your dad is waiting to take you to your swimming lessons. Let's take one last picture, next to the shark.

Barbara points her phone at the boys as they smile for the photo.

EXT. NYC NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - DAY

As Barbara and the boys are exiting the museum, something catches Barbara's attention. It is a big poster advertising a new exhibit at the Hayden Planetarium called "Hidden Universe".

EXT. 85TH STREET - DAY

David is walking out of his building. He sees Barbara across the street with the Koh boys and Dr. Koh. Her back is turned, she doesn't see him. David stops at the door to observe. They are all chatting and then the boys get into a car parked at the curb. Dr. Koh hands some money to Barbara, puts his hand around her back and whispers something into her ear, in a way that could be interpreted as either innocent or affectionate. Barbara laughs. He then gets in the car. Barbara waves goodbye and the car drives away. She then turns around to see David looking at her from across the street. She smiles immediately and waves at him. She is excited to see him. He waves back. She skips across the street to meet him.

BARBARA

(enthusiastically)

Hi!

David answers with less enthusiasm.

DAVID

Hi, I wasn't expecting to see you today.

Barbara is taken back by his unusually cold tone.

BARBARA

Ok? Well, do you mind seeing me unexpectedly?

He smiles. His expression and tone warmer now.

DAVID

No, not at all, I am glad to see you.
Where are you going, can I give you a
ride?

BARBARA

I'm going downtown, but I'll take the
train. Thank you.

(a moment)

Do you want to walk with me to the
station?

DAVID

Ok, sure.

They start walking.

BARBARA

Where are you going?

DAVID

Having lunch with Mary, we need to
finalize a few details regarding the
fundraiser.

They both remain silent for a few moments.

BARBARA

Is everything OK? You seem to be off
today?

DAVID

Oh yeah, everything is great. I'm just
being silly, worrying about things I
should not be worrying about...at work...

BARBARA

(her enthusiasm is back)

Oh... Well, I'll I'm glad I ran into you
because I wanted to ask you if you'd go
somewhere with me tomorrow evening.

DAVID

Where?

BARBARA

It is a surprise. I'd like to invite you, as a friend. It's my treat.

DAVID

Ok!

David is now in a better mood. The invitation clearly lifted his spirits. They pause in front of the subway entrance.

BARBARA

Well, I'll see you tomorrow, I'll text you the details.

And she walks down the subway steps.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - WEST SIDE - EVENING - NEXT DAY

Barbara is sitting on a bench at the entrance to Central Park, across the street from the Museum of Natural History. She is waiting for David and eating popcorn. Her face lights up when she sees him walking towards her. She gets up and starts walking to meet him. He kisses her on the cheek.

DAVID

Are we going to the Museum?

BARBARA

Something like that. Here, I bought you popcorn.

And she hands him the extra bag of popcorn.

They start walking, eating popcorn. They pass a street performer, people biking, rollerblading, kids carrying balloons. The streets are vibrant.

BARBARA

Don't you just love the city?

DAVID

I do. I can't imagine living anywhere else.

BARBARA

Me neither! This is
where I want to spend my
whole life, grow old,
and die.

DAVID

(more to himself)
I will surely die here.

Barbara catches the subtle insinuation in his statement,
but is not sure what it means. They arrive at the Hayden
Planetarium.

DAVID

Are we going to the Planetarium?

BARBRA

Yes! We are going to the Space Theater
to see a space show!

DAVID

I've never been, actually, this is a
great surprise.

Barbara is pleased with David's reaction.

INT. SPACE THEATER - EVENING

Barbara and David walk into the theater. It is a big
hemisphere located in the top half of the spherical
structure where the planetarium is housed. They find their
seats. A few minutes later the lights dim, and the
projection of the show begins on the giant screen. The
documentary titled "Hidden Universe" is introduced as "the
experience that takes the audiences on an extraordinary
journey, deep into space". As the show starts with vivid
images of stars and star clusters, Barbara leans towards
David.

BARBARA

(whispering in his ear)
Who says that you can't see stars in
the city?

David smiles and reaches over for her hand. Holding hands, they continue to watch the show in silence, but they are unable to ignore each other's presence and the electricity that is building up between them.

EXT. PLANETARIUM - NIGHT

Barbara and David exit the planetarium. It is pouring outside.

DAVID

You stay here I'll get us a taxi.

David runs to the street and hails a taxi. David opens the door of the taxi and signals Barbara to come. She runs to the car.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Barbara enters the taxi, followed by David. They are both soaking wet. They laugh.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Barbara and David enter. Immediately, they start kissing passionately and taking each other's clothes off.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They make their way into the bedroom and collapse on the bed, with David on top of Barbara. They look into each other's eyes and David smiles for a brief second, before continuing to kiss Barbara and make love to her tenderly. They both climax at the same time as David collapses into Barbara's embrace and remains there, as both try to hold on to the feeling of ecstasy for as long as they can.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Barbara wakes up in David's bed. She needs a second to orient herself and realize where she is. She turns over and looks at the clock. It is 9 AM. She looks over at the door, David is standing there with a cup of coffee.

DAVID

Good morning.

BARBARA

I fell asleep, wasn't planning on spending the night.

DAVID

I am glad you did. First time you didn't turn into a pumpkin and disappeared at midnight.

He hands her the cup of coffee. She sits up in bed and takes a sip. The sheets cover up her naked body.

DAVID

Come on, get dressed and come to the kitchen, I made you breakfast.

INT. DAVID'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Barbara walks out of the bedroom with the cup of coffee in her hand and sits at the kitchen table. She is wearing the outfit from the night before. There is a spread of eggs, sausage, and pastries. She fills her plate with a little bit of everything and starts eating. David is also eating.

BARBARA

(eating)

Mmm, thank you. We'll have to do sleepovers more often.

Takes another bite.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

My clothes are still damp from last night.

DAVID

Would you like to borrow some of my clothes?

BARBARA

I rather not walk around in your XL t-shirt and shorts.

DAVID

Hey, it's New York City, no one would think anything of it.

After a brief silence, David says hesitating:

DAVID

Hey Barbara,

(he hesitates)

I wasn't going to say anything, but something's been on my mind, and I don't think I can put it to rest until I ask you.

BARBARA

(as she continues to eat)

What is it?

DAVID

When I saw you with Dr. Koh the other day, I...I saw him give you some money and put his arm around you. I couldn't help myself but speculate if he was one of your...ummm...your customers.

Barbara stops eating and is visibly upset. Eyes open, she can't believe what she's hearing.

BARBARA

What?

DAVID

Is that too far-fetched to speculate?

BARBARA

(flustered)

How can you even think something like that? I told you that the Kohs are like family to me. He was giving me money for babysitting and taking the boys to the museum, nothing else. Plus, plus he's old and ugly!

Barbara gets up and starts putting on her shoes. Now David becomes upset. He also gets up.

DAVID

Well, how am I supposed to know that all of your clientele is young and good looking?

(a moment)

I am not sure why you're getting so upset.

BARBARA

The question is why are YOU getting upset? Why would you even care if I'm sleeping with Dr. Koh in the first place? It's not like I'm your girlfriend. Remember, you don't want a girlfriend!

She heads for the door. David collects himself. His tone now softer.

DAVID

Wait, you're right. Sorry, I'm not upset with you at all. Why should I be? If anything, I'm upset with myself for... for allowing things to get out of hand.

Those words hurt Barbara.

BARBARA

I'm sorry that you see things that way.

DAVID

You have to go, don't you?

BARBARA

Yes

Barbara turns to walk out the door. Then she pauses for a brief second and sighs.

BARBARA

I hope to see you when you get back from your business trip.

And she leaves. David runs his fingers through his hair.

DAVID

Fuck

INT. UNIVERSITY LABORATORY - DAY

Barbara walks into the lab. She's changed out of her damp clothes and into something more comfortable.

BARBARA

Sorry, I'm late Sammy.

SAMMY

No worries, I just got here myself.

Sammy is distracted, looking at something on his phone.

Barbara walks over to her desk. Two big boxes with her personal items are sitting on top of the desk. She proceeds to pack a few remaining items.

BARBARA

(packing)

I can't believe that the defense is next week. And I'll never have to step foot into this lab again.

SAMMY

Don't make it seem like it's the most horrible place in the world.

BARBARA

No, no it isn't. But I'm ready for what's next.

SAMMY

Hey Barb, hmmm, trying to figure out this dating app, how do you filter for like...pretty but intellectual type?

BARBARA

You are on dating apps too? Dear god, what is up with everyone?!

SAMMY

So, you don't know?

BARBARA

No, I've never used dating apps.

(a moment)

But I know someone who has! Actually, you should meet my roommate Alexa, she is looking for a boyfriend!

SAMMY

Oh, yeah? What's she like?

BARBARA

She's pretty and very, very intellectual! I'll put you guys in touch.

Sammy is excited about this eventuality.

SAMMY

Oh, ok! Thanks Barb!

BARBARA

Here, here is her picture.

And she shows him a picture of Alexa on her phone.

SAMMY

Wow, you think she'll go out with me?

BARBARA

Sure she will. I'll put in a good word.

She winks at Sammy and picks up one of the boxes.

BARBARA

Ok, ready? I think I got everything.

Sammy puts his phone in his pocket and picks up the second box. They head to the door.

BARBARA

(exiting the lab)

Hey, don't ask me any hard questions, next week, ok?

SAMMY

You got it.

INT. BARBARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Barbara is lying in bed unable to go to sleep. David referring to their relationship as "getting out of hand" has her worried that he may not want to see her again.

She knows that's a very likely possibility. She repeats the words to herself and shrugs. She checks her phone - nothing.

She then gets up to sit at her desk and opens a drawer with stashes of hundred-dollar bills in it. That makes her feel ashamed. She then powers up her computer and goes to the website of the organization that David is raising money for, "Protect Kids On-Line". She scrolls through the main page and finds details for the fundraiser. It is the next day at 4 PM at Courtyard Marriott on the Upper East Side.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

That same evening David is also in bed unable to sleep. His packed suitcase is on the chair. Sunshine is sleeping next to him. He is reading a book, but he puts it down unable to concentrate. His face is thoughtful. He also checks his phone - nothing. After a few more moments of contemplation about the events of the day, he turns off the lights and tries to go to sleep.

EXT. JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Front entrance of the medical center. The sign at the entrance reads "Johns Hopkins Healthcare and Surgery Center". People are entering and exiting the facility.

INT. DR. CHAUDHRY'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. CHAUDHRY, a Pakistani man in his 60s, is sitting at his desk. He has an open folder in front of him, most likely David's medical chart. His assistant SHARON is standing by the door. David is sitting across from the doctor.

DOCTOR CHAUDHRY

You probably already know what to expect over the next few days, David, but I'll explain again just so there are no surprises. Today we'll conduct a series of tests to determine the health of your organs and your overall health.

We'll start with blood tests, various scans, pictures, heart exam... Ok?

David nods.

DOCTOR CHAUDHRY (CONT'D)

You are not aware of any illnesses, David? Any active infections, cancers, heart conditions? We have to know of anything that may impact the success of your transplant.

DAVID

No, there is nothing I'm aware of.

DOCTOR CHAUDHRY

And how do you feel?

DAVID

Most of the time I feel strong and healthy. Just normal.

DOCTOR CHAUDHRY

That is good. Your liver IS failing, but still in the early stages. Which does not mean that it can't progress fast. That's why we need to act soon.

(a moment)

I am optimistic that your tests will come back promising. If you turn out to be a good candidate, which I believe you will, then we'll conduct a psychological evaluation and make sure you fully understand the risks involved. OK? Are you ready to spend the next few days being probed and poked and photographed and questioned?

DAVID

I sure am, doctor.

DOCTOR CHAUDHRY

Great. Let's get started then. Sharon will take you for a wardrobe change and escort you to your first appointment.

David rises and follows Sharon out the door.

INT. COURTYARD MARRIOTT LOBBY - EARLY EVENING

Barbara enters the hotel lobby. She is wearing dress pants and a sleeveless button-down shirt, looking professional. She looks around and spots a sign for the fundraiser. Following the sign, she goes up an escalator and then down a long hallway. At the end of the hallway, she approaches a woman sitting at a desk, typing on her laptop. The woman looks up.

MARY

Hello, I'm Mary, are you here for the fundraiser?

BARBARA

Yes, I am.

MARY

Ok, great! What is your name?

BARBARA

(reluctantly)

Um...Barbara Styles

As Mary is looking at her computer, Barbara takes a peek through the door, into the fundraising banquet hall. It has around 20 round tables, each seating about 10 people. Guests are dressed in formal attire and dinner is being served. The stage is set up for a band, but the band is not playing just yet. Most likely after dinner, Barbara concludes.

MARY

Barbara Style, Barbara Styles...I don't have anything under that name.

BARBARA

Actually, I didn't register or anything, it was kind of a last-minute decision to come...I just found out about the fundraiser.

MARY

Oh, well that's no problem. We still have several tickets left. They are \$500 per person. Is it just you?

BARBARA

Actually, I don't want to attend the event, I just want to donate money. If that's ok?

MARY

Oh, sure.

Barbara reaches inside her purse for an envelope and hands it to Mary.

BARBARA

It's all in cash, it is \$10,000, or somewhere around there.

Mary is visibly perplexed, not sure what to do with the cash.

MARY

Oh...well, I will have to count it first..

BARBARA

As I said it is around \$10,000.

MARY

Yes, but I will need to know the exact amount in order to give you a receipt.

BARBARA

I don't need a receipt, please just take the money.

MARY

Oh, ok. Are you sure you don't want to at least look at our silent auction items? We have some great art pieces, vacations, spa packages, all well within \$10,000.

BARBARA

No thank you, and very nice to meet you Mary.

And Barbara turns around and walks away. Mary is perplexed. She is holding the envelope in her hand, as she is staring at Barbara walking away.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is sitting by the window with Sunshine in his lap. Mary is sitting at the dining table, having a drink and going over documents from the fundraiser.

MARY

(enthusiastically)

So, we raised \$150,000 in total! I'd call that a success. People really opened up their hearts and their wallets.

DAVID

People are finally starting to realize that this is a worthy cause.

MARY

Tina Stan's painting sold for \$20,000! And this one girl came out of nowhere and handed me \$10,000, in cash, without even attending the event.

David does not seem very interested in the conversation. He is staring out the window and petting Sunshine. Deep in thought.

MARY

David, are you listening? What is it? Is it the visit? They said you are a good candidate, and you are now on the waiting list. So that's at least something to be optimistic about.

DAVID

I've been reckless Mary. Irresponsible. I got involved with someone and took it too far, farther than I should have.

Mary walks over to him.

MARY

(with maternal warmth)

David, you are alive and allowed to live...a life...

DAVID

I am not allowed to hurt other people. I don't care about my feelings; it is

other people's feelings I'm worried about.

MARY

You do what you think you need to do, but if you end it now without any explanation, don't you think her feelings will be hurt inevitably?

DAVID

I don't know...there is a good chance that she does not feel the same way I feel about her. I hope. I have to end it now before it is too late.

INT. DINER IN BROOKLYN - EVENING

Alexa and Barbara are having a meal at a local diner. Alexa is chatting about a guy at work that she thinks may be interested in her.

ALEXA

...and then he said that I could carpool with him to his promotion luncheon. Which is not that unusual, but he only asked me, and there are at least 10 other people in the office who are also going. Do you think that's a sign that he likes me?

Barbara is looking at her phone, seems distracted.

BARBARA

Aha...

ALEXA

Barbara!

BARBARA

(startled, looking up at Alexa)

Sorry, what?

ALEXA

Did you even hear what I was telling you?

BARBARA

Yeah, ummm...some of it...sorry...

ALEXA

You keep checking your phone, what's going on?

BARBARA

He has not called me since he got back from his trip, and I know he got back three days ago.

ALEXA

Maybe he is busy.

BARBARA

Or maybe he just does not want to see me anymore. We had an argument last time, and now, now he's disappeared...

ALEXA

Welcome to my world.

BARBARA

And the worst part is that I miss him, and he is all I can think about. Actually, I think I may be in love. And I'm afraid that he does not feel the same way. Most likely he doesn't, how could he?

ALEXA

Then you have to find out. If there is even a small chance that you found something special, or someone special, you can't let it slip away without finding out. You'll spend the rest of your life wondering.

Barbara thinks for a second about what Alexa had just said.

BARBARA

Since when did you become an expert on giving relationship advice?

ALEXA

Well, years and years of bad experiences, I guess. If I can't help myself, maybe I can help others!

Barbara gets up abruptly.

ALEXA

Where are you going?

BARBARA

You are right, I have to find out!

ALEXA

What, right now?

BARBARA

What's the point in waiting?

EXT. DINER - EVENING

Barbara walks out of the diner. She looks up and sees something that seems like a shooting star. That gives her confidence that telling him the truth is the right thing to do.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - EVENING

David is making tea in the kitchen when his doorbell rings. He is surprised as he wasn't expecting anyone. He opens the door and is surprised to see Barbara.

BARBARA

Sorry I am intruding unannounced like this, but I have to talk to you. Can I come in?

DAVID

Of course. Please come in.

Barbara walks in, David closes the door behind her.

DAVID

I just got back a few days ago from my trip and haven't had a...

BARBARA

(interrupting)

David, I was prepared to never see you again, but I can't until I tell you the truth. And the truth is..

(she hesitates)

The truth is that I missed you over the last several days. And I hope that you missed me too...and..

DAVID

Barbara, I thought I made it clear that I could not be emotionally involved with anyone and that our arrangement..

BARBARA

(interrupting)

I know that you could never be with someone like me, or with someone who you think I am, but you see, I lied to you.

DAVID

Lied about what?

BARBARA

I am not really a prostitute.

DAVID

What do you mean? You took my money for sex, that's the very definition of being a prostitute.

BARBARA

I know, but I had never taken money for sex before. Actually, I've only been with one other person before you..

David stares at her perplexed.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

...and didn't really intend to take your money. You wrongly assumed that I was a hooker that night and I just went along with it, I was pretending.

David is visibly upset. This is the first time we see him really angry.

DAVID

Pretending? Do you know how fucked up that sounds? I'm not sure what you are trying to do here Barbara, but I don't like it.

BARBARA

I know it's messed up and I'm sorry! And initially I thought that maybe I could just have fun, and it was fun, but then I realized that I have fallen for you...hard..

David is confused and uncertain about his emotions and the truth he is hearing. Is it the truth?

DAVID

You falling for me was never part of our arrangement, Barbara.

Now Barbara becomes angry.

BARBARA

You and your arrangement. Can you for once not think of us as an arrangement and be honest about how you really feel about me?

DAVID

I can't. Sorry.

Barbara looks defeated and sad. This is not the outcome she was hoping for.

BARBARA

How silly of me to think that all of this could be more than just an arrangement for you. How silly of me to think that maybe you cared too..

DAVID

Listen Barbara, I just need some time to process all this. I am not sure what to think right now.

Barbara's eyes tear up. She turns around and leaves.

INT. DAVID'S BUILDING LOBBY - EVENING

The elevator doors open and Barbara exits. She is visibly upset, crying. At that moment Mary enters the building. Barbara crosses the lobby, past Mary, without noticing her. But Mary recognizes Barbara from the fundraiser and attempts to address her.

MARY

Oh, hi Mrs. Styles!

But Barbara storms out of the building without answering. Mary looks after her, bewildered.

INT. DAVID'S BUILDING HALLWAY - EVENING

Mary walks up to David's door and rings the bell several times. No answer. She tries the door, it is unlocked.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT

Mary enters and finds David sitting in a chair, head in his hands. He looks up as she walks in.

MARY

(alarmed)

David, what happened? Was Mrs. Styles here, with you? Is she the girl you are involved with?

David looks at her confused.

DAVID

Who?

MARY:

Barbara Styles. She stormed out of the building, crying. What happened?

DAVID

How do you know her?

MARY

I told you, she came to the fundraiser and donated \$10,000, in cash, remember?

DAVID

What! That was her?!

He puts his hands on his stomach, his face grimaced in pain.

Mary rushes to him.

MARY

David, David! Are you ok?

David collapses onto the floor.

INT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL - MORNING

Mary is sitting on a bench. The beeping of the hospital medical equipment is audible in the background. She is on the phone; the outgoing call is ringing.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT

Barbara is sitting on her couch, watching TV. Her phone rings. Unknown number. She answers the call.

BARBARA

(into the phone)

Hello?

A moment passes and Barbara is very alarmed at what she is hearing on the other line.

INT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY

Barbara enters the hospital and rushes to the reception.

BARBARA

I'm here to see David Jones, he was admitted yesterday evening.

MARY (O.S.)

Barbara!

Barbara turns around and sees Mary sitting in the waiting room. She walks over to her and sits on a chair next to her.

BARBARA

Is he going to die?

MARY

No, not today, and not tomorrow. But he is very ill. We don't know how long he has. His liver may function for another year, or it may decide to give out next month.

BARBARA

And the transplant?

MARY

He is now waiting for a donor. Again, they may be able to match him with a donor tomorrow, or it may be after it's, after it's too late. All we can do is wait and pray.

After a brief pause.

MARY (CONT'D)

He's shut everyone out of his life since the diagnosis, 6 months ago.

BARBARA

Is that when his fiancé left?

MARY

Yes, but even if she didn't leave, he probably would have left her. And not just her, he is trying to phase himself out of everyone's life so that his absence is less noticeable if he...if he does not make it. Less impactful, less hurtful. He is looking out for everyone else but himself.

Mary looks at Barbara.

MARY (CONT'D)

I called you because I know he cares about you. I haven't seen him care for anyone so much since his mother's death. I thought that you deserve to know, you deserve to make your own decision about how you feel about him after knowing the truth.

Barbara's eyes are sad. She is desperately trying not to tear up.

BARBARA

Can I see him now?

MARY

Yes, he is expecting you.

INT. DAVID'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Barbara enters David's hospital room. He is lying in bed dressed in hospital garbs, IV in his arm. He is pale.

Barbara smiles, tries not to appear shaken by his appearance and the news that she just heard. He is happy to see her.

BARBARA

Mary says you'll be going home in a few days!

DAVID

When I saw you that night on the corner of 85th and Fifth, you looked like you were put there just for me. Like my own personal angel.

Barbara walks over and takes his hand.

DAVID

I am sorry...

Barbara sits on the bed next to him.

BARBARA

What are you sorry about?

DAVID

You were not supposed to fall for me. I would have never invited you into my life if I had thought that there was any chance of hurting you.

BARBARA

Don't be sorry. I'm not sorry. And you'll be fine!

DAVID

Barbara, I may never...

BARBARA

Shhhh, don't talk. You need to rest. I need you to get better so you can go home and make lasagna for me...

(a moment)

...from scratch.

She lies next to him in bed.

DAVID

Ok, then you talk. Tell me everything about yourself and your life. Your real life.

EXT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL - DAY

Barbara exits the hospital and starts to walk. At first, her face is blank. Then, tears fill her eyes and start rolling down her cheeks. Not able to hold it in anymore, she starts sobbing. People who pass by her stare at her. Barbara does not notice anything around her and continues to walk and cry out loud.

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - DIFFERENT DAY

Barbara is in the kitchen, putting dishes into the dishwasher. Alexa is sitting on the couch.

ALEXA

I am going out with your friend Sammy tonight!

BARBARA

Oh, yeah? That's great! He's a nice guy.

ALEXA

He is quite a charmer, too. He's already showering me with compliments.

BARBARA

Oh...

Alexa notices Barbara's somber mood. She rises and walks over to Barbara, concern on her face.

ALEXA

Are you ok?

BARBARA

(nodding)

Yes, I am fine.

Alexa gives her a long hug.

ALEXA

Come on, I'll give you a ride.

INT. DAVID'S BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

Barbara rings the bell on David's door. Hears David's voice from inside the apartment.

DAVID (O.S)

Come in!

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

Barbara enters carrying two paper bags.

David is sitting on the sofa. He puts down a magazine he is reading and looks at Barbara. His face brightens up.

BARBARA

I brought you some fruit and chicken
noodle soup.

DAVID

Thank you.

She puts the bags on the kitchen counter and unpacks them.

She walks over to David and sits beside him.

BARBARA

You look much better.

DAVID

I feel much better. Especially now that
you're here. But why are you here?
Shouldn't you be getting ready for your
defense tomorrow?

BARBARA

When you get to know me better, you'll learn that I overprepare for things. I'm as ready as I'll ever be. Are you up for a walk? It is a gorgeous day outside.

DAVID

Yes, a walk would be nice.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Barbara and David are leisurely walking in Central Park. His hands are in his pockets, her arm around his. It is a clear sunny day.

DAVID

I used to take walks in Central Park with my mom all the time. It was one of my favorite things to do. From when I was a little boy, until my last days with her. We would always have lengthy conversations about everything and anything. I looked forward to what I may learn about her and she about me. Something about this park makes one open up.

BARBARA

Speaking of opening up, I have a confession to make.

DAVID

(jokingly)

I don't know if I can handle more confessions!

BARBARA

I had a crush on you before we even met!

DAVID

How's that?

BARBARA

I noticed you on several occasions when I was babysitting. Sightings of you always made me excited. I actually fantasized about you. So, it wasn't hard to say yes when you invited me over that night. I'm sorry that I lied to you.

DAVID

I'm glad you said yes. The past five weeks have been some of the happiest in a very long time. And it's because of you. It is so easy for me to be myself around you.

(a moment)

DAVID (CONT'D)

Hopefully now you know that paying for women is not something I tend to do, or have ever done actually, before you.

BARBARA

(smiling)

Well, it was a first for both of us. But I wouldn't judge you either way.

They sit down on a bench.

DAVID

Listen Barbara, I really care about you, and selfishly, there is nothing that I want more than to be with you. But at the same time, I don't want to see you hurt. I really hope that you leave today and do the right thing, the smart thing, which is say goodbye to me.

BARBARA

I am not going anywhere.

DAVID

You have to understand that even if I do get a transplant, and things go as planned, I may never be the same.

BARBARA

I understand. I understand all of it.

DAVID

If you are worried about me, and my feelings, you shouldn't be. I've come to terms with my destiny and what it means for me and my relationships with others. The last thing I want is for my misfortune to impact others. Especially you. I wouldn't blame you if you left. I would be happy for you. You have a bright future in front of you. You deserve to be happy.

BARBARA

I am happy right here next to you.

And she puts her head on his shoulder. He puts his arm around her, and they sit there quietly, enjoying each other's presence.

INT. UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE ROOM - NEXT DAY

Barbara is presenting her defense. She is standing in front of a large screen that is projecting her slides. She is wearing business attire, a dress skirt and a suit jacket. She looks poised and confident. There are about 15 people in the audience. They include Alexa and Sammy, who are sitting next to each other, and Professor Ristich.

On the projected slide is a graphical depiction of a brain, with various labels, and an enlarged picture of an artery. Several bullet points next to the pictures. Barbara is facing the screen and pointing with a laser.

BARBARA

CAA is a cerebral small vessel disease characterized by the accumulation of amyloid deposits in and around the small blood vessels of the brain.

When she turns around to face the audience, she pauses for a brief second as something in the room catches her attention. It is David who has come a few minutes late. He is standing at the back of the room. Their eyes meet. David

looks strong and handsome again, color has come back to his face. He smiles. She then regroups and continues with the presentation.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

CAA affects about 80% of geriatrics and is almost always comorbid to AD. Common causes of vascular cognitive impairment and dementia in elderly are.....

INT. UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Barbara is chatting with a group of people. She sees David chatting with Alexa and Sammy at the other end of the room. Their eyes meet.

BARBARA

Well thank you all so much for coming,
please excuse me.

INT. UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE ROOM - ANGLE ON THE OTHER SIDE
OF THE ROOM

ALEXA

...and we only went on our first date
yesterday! And I told Sammy, why didn't
she introduce us before? Who needs
Tinder when you have Barbara!

She notices Barbara approaching.

ALEXA

And here she is! Congrats girl. So
proud of you.

Alexa gives Barbara a hug.

Sammy extends his hand.

SAMMY

(shaking hands with
Barbara)

Congrats Barbara, you are the hardest
working person I know. You deserve
this.

BARBARA

Thank you, guys.

Sammy and Alexa then walk away, in an obvious attempt to leave David and Barbara alone. David and Barbara come face to face. David hands her a bouquet of flowers.

BARBARA

(smelling the flowers)

Thank you.

DAVID

Well Dr. Styles...You've come a long way since I picked you up on the corner of 85th and Fifth.

She smiles.

BARBARA

Thanks for coming. It really means a lot.

DAVID

I have to say I'm impressed. You are way smarter than me.

BARBARA

I'm just glad I didn't put anyone to sleep.

DAVID

Well, having a double espresso before coming certainly helped.

Professor Ristich walks over.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

Good work Barbara.

BARBARA

Professor Ristich, this is my friend David, David - my advisor, professor Ristich.

They shake hands.

Professor Ristich then turns to Barbara.

PROFESSOR RISTICH

I'm heading over to the luncheon, see you there?

BARBARA

I'll be there in a few minutes.

Professor Ristich walks away.

BARBARA

Would you like to join us?

DAVID

No, I think I'll go home and get ready for tonight. I have big plans.

BARBARA

Oh, what are you doing tonight?

DAVID

Well, it appears that we went from being business associates, to now being friends...

He looks over at the direction of Prof Ristich, attempting to insinuate the fact that Barbara introduced him as a friend.

DAVID (CONT'D)

So, I would like to upgrade our status...

BARBARA

Yes?

DAVID

By taking you out on our first official, proper date tonight. What do you think?

BARBARA

I would love that!

INT. BARBARA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Barbara is sitting at the kitchen table and chatting with her mom via Skype. She is holding up her diploma into the camera.

MOM

I am so proud of you! See Edward, Barbara got her PhD in Neurosciences. Her PhD! Don't you want to come and congratulate her?

BARBARA

That's ok mom, I'll see you guys in a few days.

MOM

(still addressing dad)

And now she'll be able to find a cure for you.

BARBARA

Mom, no, that is not what is going to happen.

The doorbell rings.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I have to go; someone is at the door. I'll talk to you tomorrow mom.

She rushes to the door and opens it. It is David. He is wearing a button-down shirt and dress pants. She is wearing a long floral dress.

DAVID

You look beautiful!

BARBARA

Thank you! So do you!

He approaches her and puts his hands on her hips and then they share a long kiss. David breaks away from the kiss, as if he remembered to mention something very important. With his hands still resting on her hips:

DAVID

We'll need to make up a story for when people ask, "so how did you two meet?" Me getting you off the street is probably not something we'd want to share with most people.

BARBARA

True, though we do have the most unique "how we met" story. But I agree, not for sharing. Hmm, we can just say that we met the old-fashioned way, at a bar!

All of sudden they hear a voice coming from Barbara's laptop. Barbara realizes that she had forgotten to hang up the conversation with her mom in her excitement to open the door for David. They both turn towards the computer.

MOM

Well, that's how me and your father met, at a bar, and we are still together!

BARBARA

Mom! You were supposed to hang up! And she rushes to the computer and hangs up.

BARBARA

(walking back to David)

Sorry about that, where were we?

DAVID

Ready for our big date?

BARBARA

Ready!

And they walk out the door.

THE END