The Coffee Car

An original screenplay

by

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THE COFFEE CAR

LOGLINE: A wealthy New York City socialite becomes destitute when her husband dies in an accident at work. She learns to become self-sufficient in a dog-eat-dog world while struggling with her values, the loss of her social status, and her husband's secret life.

SYNOPSIS: Heather Poyser, a woman of means, married to Rick, the CEO of a large industrial manufacturing company, appear to lead the good life. They own a Manhattan Brownstone on the upper East side, a house in the Hamptons and drive luxurious imported Italian cars.

One day Rick is called to fill in for an employee. His company has a deadline to meet and is unable to find anyone on short notice. Rick covers for him after promising Heather he would not.

Rick, an epileptic, has a seizure while welding, sets himself on fire and dies. Heather, broken hearted, soon discovers that she is completely broke. Rick has somehow squandered all their money.

The cars are repossessed, the homes go into foreclosure, and Heather's snobby friends snub her. To add insult to injury, Heather discovers that Rick has been in contact with a woman in Las Vegas.

Feeling betrayed, Heather's curiosity leads her to seeking this woman out, only to discover that it is not what it seems, and that infidelity was not the motivating factor in Rick's relationship with the other woman.

Rick had a gambling problem which led to Heather's bankruptcy. Now Heather has to get a job which proves more difficult than she could have imagined.

Through commuting on the train every morning, sitting in the Coffee Car, Heather meets a group of women who work in Manhattan and befriends them. She comes to rely on them for support.

She meets Jeff, a man she cannot stand, and he slowly grows on her. She goes to museums with him, but tries not to become emotionally involved because she believes he has no money. Heather still wants her former status and wealth.

She loses jobs, is almost evicted, and breaks up with Jeff because he is poor. After some soul searching she realizes that she is in love with Jeff, and people have to be more important than money. After they get back together, Jeff tells her that he has a profession. Her old friends come back, all but one, who snubbed her when Rick died. For the first time, she feels fulfilled, happy, and is ready to move on to the next chapter of her life.
FADE IN:

INT. LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK – HOUSE IN THE HAMPTONS – LUXURIOUS KITCHEN – NIGHT

HEATHER,(45), straight, short, precision cut brown hair, and RICK POYSER,(46), paunchy, brown hair, grey temples, drink coffee. Rick’s cell phone rings. He answers.

    RICK
    Hello? Carl, what?...How short of staff are we?...I’ll be there first thing in the morning.

Heather tops up her coffee, motions to Rick with the pot.

    RICK (CONT’D)
    No thanks, Heather. There’s no one else available? Yeah.

Rick shuts off his phone. He looks at Heather, still standing with the coffee pot in her hand.

    HEATHER
    And so ends our vacation.

    RICK
    You can stay in the Hamptons if you want. You have your own car or we can drive the Bugatti back to Manhattan tonight. There’s a big problem at work.

    HEATHER
    I gathered as much. What is it?

    RICK
    My chief welder has a broken arm. We have a contract with a strict deadline.

    HEATHER
    What’s it for?

    RICK
    Government military equipment. Carl can’t find anyone who’s qualified, so it looks as though I have to fill in.

Heather looks very worried.

    HEATHER
    You’re not considering that. It’s dangerous and illegal.
RICK
It’s only for a few days.

HEATHER
Please hire someone else? I have a really bad feeling about this.

RICK
Stop it! I won’t do any welding.

HEATHER
You’re telling the truth? Promise?

RICK
I would never lie to you.

EXT. VAN CORTLANDT GOLF COURSE – NORTH BRONX – DAY

Heather and SABRINA,(45), stunningly beautiful, CARLOTTA,(43), long brown hair, tanned and LAURA,(46), black hair, blue eyes, play golf.

SABRINA
I prefer Piping Rock to Van Cortlandt.

HEATHER
Vanny is only a subway ride away, and it’s every bit as good as Piping Rock.

Sabrina looks at the others and rolls her eyes. Laura takes out a 9 - iron and swings, then looks up.

LAURA
I’m sure as hell never riding the subway.

CARLOTTA
You’d end up being mugged for your clubs.

LAURA
But I’d have my irons to brain them with.

SABRINA
It may be as good a course, dear, but it’s public, so the type of people they allow to play are, well, not exactly up to the standards of Locust Valley.

Sabrina takes her 7-iron and takes a swing, sending her ball much further than Laura’s.

CARLOTTA
What she means is the clientele is, well,...
HEATHER
You mean not White? You know, Locust Valley, where you live has a nick name, ‘White Shoe’, because only WASPs live there and join that elitist club.

SABRINA
Your point being?

Carlotta swings her 7-iron, her golf ball goes 110 yards.

HEATHER
I want to play golf where it’s inclusive. Segregation is wrong.

SABRINA
Private clubs have more prestige.

HEATHER
Vanny is equally prestigious.

SABRINA
I don’t agree, dear. Even Cole Porter golfed at Piping Rock and was so impressed, he incorporated Oyster Bay into one of his songs.

CARLOTTA
That’s true. The wealthy and dignitaries played and vacationed there. The Vanderbilts, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

LAURA
In all fairness to Heather, Giuliani, Babe Ruth, and Willie Mays played here.

HEATHER
So, famous people and those who lived one hundred years ago give clubs prestige?

Heather sends her golf ball a mere thirty yards away.

SABRINA
Well, actually,...

HEATHER
That was meant to be rhetorical, Sab.

SABRINA
What I was going to say was that the Three Stooges also played here.

Laura and Carlotta laugh.
CARLOTTA
That’s par for the course.

HEATHER
Let’s finish up. You’re all insufferable.

Laura and Sabrina leave in one cart while Carlotta and Heather drive away in the other.

INT. VAN CORTLAND GOLF CLUB FRONT DESK - NORTH BRONX - DAY
Carlotta and Laura go to the locker room, Heather and Sabrina stop at the desk. The CLUB MANAGER, (40) stands.

HEATHER
Hi, what do I owe for today?

Heather digs into her pocket and pulls out a credit card.

CLUB MANAGER
Mrs. Poyser, correct?

HEATHER
Yes.

CLUB MANAGER
Let’s see. There are four of you at $31.00 each, there’s the $4.00 reservation fee, parking, $3.00, two golf carts at $37.00 each plus tax on the carts at 8.88 percent. That equals... let’s see. That will be $211.57 in total.

Heather hands him a credit card, turns to Sabrina.

CLUB MANAGER (CONT’D)
Excuse me, Mrs. Poyser?

HEATHER
Yes?

CLUB MANAGER
Your card’s been declined. Do you have another?

HEATHER
That’s odd. There must be a mistake.

Heather hands him another card. She turns to Sabrina.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
So strange. This is embarrassing.
The manager hands her card back to her.

    CLUB MANAGER
    This one isn’t going through either.

Heather hands him a third credit card.

    HEATHER
    Here. I know this one is good.

The manager tries the third card. He shakes his head and hands it back. Heather looks at Sabrina.

    HEATHER (CONT’D)
    Sab, can you spot me for today? I’ll have to straighten this out when I get home.

Sabrina hands a credit card to the manager.

    SABRINA
    I know my card will go through. You’re lucky I’m doing this. My policy is never a borrower nor a lender shall I be. I hope I get it back.

    HEATHER
    For God’s sake, Sabrina. I’m your friend.

Sabrina pays and they head to the locker room.

INT. MANHATTAN BROWNSTONE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Heather and Rick sit in a well appointed room.

    HEATHER
    Are you going to tell me why none of my cards was accepted today?

    RICK
    I must have forgotten to pay the bills.

    HEATHER
    All three of them?

Rick doesn’t answer her.

    HEATHER (CONT’D)
    Rick, are you listening?

    RICK
    Stop nagging me!

Rick stands and walks out of the house, slams the door.
Heather stares at him as he leaves.

INT. OYSTER BAY, LOCUST VALLEY - SABRINA’S HOUSE - DAY

Carlotta, Laura, Sabrina and Heather drink highballs.

CARLOTTA
I think you’re overreacting. Maybe Rick did forget to pay the credit card bills.

LAURA
It’s been known to happen.

HEATHER
He’s been so secretive lately. I think he might be having an affair.

SABRINA
Personally, I wouldn’t put it past him.

CARLOTTA
That’s a bit of a leap, just because he didn’t pay some bills.

HEATHER
That’s not all. I heard him whispering on the land line. I picked up the other phone and it was a woman. Then Rick said, “I think Heather’s on the line. Hang up.”

Heather cries. Carlotta puts her arm around her.

CARLOTTA
It will be okay. Don’t jump to any conclusions until you know for sure.

HEATHER
What am I supposed to think?

SABRINA
You’ll figure it out, and when you do, we’ll be there for you.

HEATHER
This is so out of character for you.

SABRINA
And just what is that supposed to mean? I’m always kind and considerate.

The three women raise their eyebrows, smiling.
SABRINA (CONT’D)
Well, I am. I consider myself to be as good a friend to you as you are to me. Now, let’s change the subject. It’s becoming all too maudlin.

HEATHER
Just when I think you have a heart, you revert back to type.

SABRINA
Why, thank you. Now, look over there.

Sabrina points to a grey leather footstool.

SABRINA (CONT’D)
Frank and I smuggled it out of Africa on our safari trip. Isn’t it marvellous?

HEATHER
What is it?

SABRINA
It’s an elephant leg footstool. Look closely. It even has its toenails.

Laura feels the stool. Heather is disgusted.

HEATHER
How could you? Elephants are endangered.

SABRINA
Whether or not I bought the footstool wouldn’t have made a difference. The beast was already dead.

LAURA
I agree. Not buying it wouldn’t have changed the outcome.

CARLOTTA
Did you get the umbrella stand and three legged coffee table to match?

SABRINA
They have those? Damn! That’s disappointing. I wish I had known.

HEATHER
Don’t any of you understand? You are enabling the slaughter of elephants and are responsible for more poaching because you bought the stool.
CARLOTTA
They’re being killed anyway. Why not put
their legs to good use?

SABRINA
I think it looks nice in my drawing room,
regardless of what you think.

Heather’s cell phone rings. She answers, eyes on Sabrina.

HEATHER
It would have looked a lot better on the
elephant! Hello? What? I’m on my way.

Heather stands, runs out the front door.

SABRINA
Well, talk about rude! Did you hear what
she said about my stool? Sometimes she
can be so insensitive.

There is a silent pause.

SABRINA (CONT’D)
Honestly, what do you think of Heather?

Laura and Carlotta look at one another.

CARLOTTA
Once, when we were lost in Flatbush, she
actually got out of the car to give a
beggar some money. Shocking.

LAURA
I overheard her say that she felt guilty
for being wealthy, while there are hungry
homeless people. We all know they’re
indolent ne’er do wells who won’t change.

CARLOTTA
If they wanted to work, they would.

SABRINA
I beat her at chess every time. She
claims to have attended Bearley School in
the Upper East Side. I checked. She
didn’t go there. It wouldn’t surprise me
if she went to Public School 69.

LAURA
Are you serious? That school is in what
is now practically the Bowery!
CARLOTTA
The horrid way she plays tennis and golf makes me wonder if she grew up in a Queensbridge housing project.

SABRINA
Thank you. I’m so relieved that you two think like me. If I ever find out that she’s been lying to us about her social standing, I’ll cut her loose.

LAURA
We do have an image to preserve. After all, we are high society.

SABRINA
Precisely.

CARLOTTA
What do you think about Rick?

LAURA
He’s definitely having an affair.

SABRINA
Yes. My Frank would never sleep around.

LAURA
He knows what side his bread is buttered on. He’ll never step out of line.

SABRINA
What do you mean?

LAURA
Everyone knows that Frank had no money when you married him. You’re family was,... is loaded, so to speak.

SABRINA
What has one have to do with the other?

LAURA
Would you risk losing a business your spouse set you up in, and all this for a one night stand or a fling?

SABRINA
How dare you imply that the reason Frank doesn’t stray is my money!

Carlotta and Laura look at each other, raised eyebrows.
LAURA  
It’s just that Frank wasn’t born into old money, as the rest of us were.

CARLOTTA  
Calm down, Sabrina. Laura’s on your side...Speaking of money, do you suppose Rick’s spending all his money on that woman he was talking to on the phone?

SABRINA  
Absolutely! If Heather leaves him before he squanders all their assets, she’ll come out ahead in the divorce settlement.

INT. HOSPITAL - TRIAGE - DAY

A NURSE,(50), overweight, puts her arm around Heather.

NURSE  
Mrs. Poyser, I’m so sorry to have had to tell you.

Heather collapses, sitting on a chair.

HEATHER  
How did my husband die?

NURSE  
Here comes his doctor, now. Ask him.

DR. MAYER,(40), dark curly hair, shakes Heather’s hand.

DR. MAYER  
I’m Dr. Mayer. I was the attending physician when your husband was brought in today. I’m so sorry for your loss.

HEATHER  
What happened?

DR. MAYER  
Apparently he set himself on fire with a welding gun during an epileptic seizure.

HEATHER  
He was welding?

DR. MAYER  
He sustained burns to over 90% of his body, succumbing shortly after arriving in emergency.
HEATHER
Wasn’t he wearing inflammable clothing?

DR. MAYER
No. Did you know he was epileptic?

HEATHER
Of course. We both knew. He promised me he wouldn’t do any welding. He lied.

DR. MAYER
Mrs. Poyser, I must see another patient right now, but if you need anything, call me. I’m so sorry I couldn’t save him.

Heather is left standing alone in the hall.

INT. BANK OF AMERICA - MANAGER’S OFFICE - DAY

The bank manager, JOSEPH WETHERALL, (55) sits across from Heather, cutting up credit cards.

JOSEPH WETHERALL
I hate doing this, but I have no choice. There is another matter of urgency.

HEATHER
What’s that?

JOSEPH WETHERALL
You’ve already received numerous notices, so this won’t come as a surprise. Both houses are now in foreclosure.

HEATHER
(crying)
I had no idea. Rick’s car was repossessed last week. My beautiful little Enzo will probably go next.

JOSEPH WETHERALL
It was a Bugatti Veyron, correct?

HEATHER
Yes. I was so afraid to drive it in case I dented it or put a scratch on it.

JOSEPH WETHERALL
I used to love looking at that car whenever Rick came into the bank.

HEATHER
I’m beginning to think that he loved that
HEATHER (CONT’D)
piece of metal more than he loved me.

JOSEPH WETHERALL
There may be a solution. If you can come up with the money on one of the houses, you might be able to keep it.

HEATHER
How much would it take?

JOSEPH WETHERALL
No payments on either house have been made for six months, nor the house taxes so, you’re looking at around $180,000.00 to stop foreclosure on the Brownstone.

HEATHER
I don’t have that kind of money.

JOSEPH WETHERALL
You might be able to sell your paintings, auction some things off, perhaps?

HEATHER
All our paintings and furniture were leased. They have to be returned. What about my personal savings account?

JOSEPH WETHERALL
It’s frozen. You are in a lot of debt.

HEATHER
Please don’t do this to me? I need to find a place to live and have transportation to find a job.

JOSEPH WETHERALL
I can leave $5,000.00 in your account.

Joseph Wetherall hands her a piece of paper.

HEATHER
What’s this?

JOSEPH WETHERALL
The welfare office phone number.

Heather’s face turns blank.

HEATHER
Is this what I’m reduced to?
JOSEPH WETHERALL
It’s for temporary aid. In your situation, take it, you’ll need it.

Heather stands. Joseph Wetherall stares sadly at her.

HEATHER
Thanks anyway.

INT. WEINSTEIN AND CHERNICK ATTORNEYS – LAWYER’S OFFICE – MANHATTAN – DAY

Heather, her lawyers, ARI WEINSTEIN, (55), and NATE CHERNICK, (60) are in conference.

NATE CHERNICK
I don’t enjoy being the bearer of bad news but I’m afraid the insurance company won’t budge on their decision.

HEATHER
The letter you sent them didn’t help?

ARI WEINSTEIN
The insurance company sent the application for us to peruse. Your husband falsified documents and lied on his application.

NATE CHERNICK
What Ari is trying to tell you is that your husband failed to divulge that he was epileptic, and he did welding without wearing mandatory fireproof clothing.

ARI WEINSTEIN
The insurance company has refused to honor his life insurance policy.

NATE CHERNICK
They are within their rights to dissolve the contract.

HEATHER
In his will, he left me everything.

NATE CHERNICK
There isn’t anything left. He cashed in his RRSP’s, mutual funds, pension, stock options, and frittered that money away somehow, and he’s managed to drain the bank accounts.
ARI WEINSTEIN
He doesn’t have anything to show for the millions of dollars you both once had. Do you know where all that money went?

HEATHER
No, I don’t. But, he’s co-owner and CEO of the welding company. Aren’t I entitled to half of the business?

Ari and Nate hesitate, then look at Heather.

NATE CHERNICK
I can see that you don’t know. Around eight months ago Rick sold his shares to some offshore investors.

HEATHER
I have nothing. I’m bankrupt.

ARI WEINSTEIN
I know this is difficult for you, so we discussed your bill before you arrived. The work we’ve done is pro bono.

HEATHER
Thank you both so much.

INT. WELFARE OFFICE - DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN - DAY

Heather, extremely well dressed is seated. A woman next to her looks her up and down.

WELFARE WOMAN
If you don’t mind me asking, are you someone’s lawyer?

HEATHER
I’m applying for welfare.

The woman laughs.

WELFARE WOMAN
With those threads, you don’t stand a chance in hell of getting approved.

A man pokes his head out from behind a cubicle.

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
(yells)
Mrs. Poyser?

Heather walks over and sits down in front of him.
MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
(CONT’D)
So, how can I help you today?

HEATHER
I’m embarrassed. I need money but I’m not like the other people here.

The man snorts.

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Yeah, you are. Otherwise you wouldn’t be here.

HEATHER
You don’t understand. My husband and I were wealthy and he died...

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Yeah, yeah, everyone has a sob story to tell. I don’t care. Fill out the forms.

HEATHER
You’re not very sympathetic.

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Should I be? Look at your clothes. They could feed a family of four for a month.

HEATHER
Why is everyone remarking on my clothes?

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
You don’t appear to be in need.

HEATHER
My clothes are all I have. I’m flat broke. I can’t eat my clothes, can I?

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Okay, lose the attitude. Here, start filling these out.

He hands Heather some paperwork.

HEATHER
This is not where I want to be.

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
None of the others want to be here, either. They’re down on their luck too.

HEATHER
Maybe some of them don’t want to work.
MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Maybe they enjoy living under a bridge,
unable to enter a store, or restaurant.

HEATHER
If they wanted those things, they would
find meaningful employment. This is just
temporary for me.

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Good for you. Everyone here has said that
at some point. You’re no different.

Heather scowls and writes on the forms.

HEATHER
Will you be issuing a check today?

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
If you’re approved, six to eight weeks.

HEATHER
How do you expect me to live between now
and then?

MAN IN WELFARE OFFICE
Excuse me? I was under the impression
you’d be getting a job soon.

HEATHER
You should be a stand up comedian.

Heather hands him the forms, stands and walks away.

INT. NEWARK, NJ - APARTMENT - GREAT ROOM - DAY
Heather holds box cutters, sits on a large moving box
surrounded by boxes in a small, run down apartment.

HEATHER
Better start unpacking!

EXT. NEWARK, NJ - TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY
The commuter train pulls into the station. Heather boards
a car with a picture of a steaming cup of coffee and the
words, “Coffee Car Fresh Made Beverage & Snack Service”.
INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

Heather finds a seat across the aisle from three other women, same age.

Heather eavesdrops on AMY,(44) red hair, freckles.

AMY
The funniest thing happened to me yesterday. I saw an old friend I hadn’t seen in years. We hugged.

Heather leans in to hear over the noise of the train.

AMY (CONT’D)
When we parted, I noticed that I was missing my Chanel brooch. You know, the one with the diamonds that Joe gave me before the bum decided to split.

Heather is becoming more interested in the story. DAWN, (45), shoulder length blonde hair, petite, giggles.

DAWN
I wouldn’t have thought he’d give you a diamond pin after he left.

JUDY,(43), very tall, willowy, black hair, smiles.

JUDY
Didn’t he leave you with six children?

AMY
That’s right, the dog. He left for work one morning and never came back. Turns out he had a floozy in Vermont.

DAWN
So what about the brooch?

AMY
Stop interrupting and I’ll tell you.

Amy giggles. Heather smiles, enjoying the conversation.

AMY (CONT’D)
My pin was gone. I had all the security guards down on their hands and knees looking for it. It must have been kicked or stood on by someone walking by.

JUDY
Grand Central is very crowded.
AMY
I was going to be late for work, so I gave them my number in case it was found.

DAWN
Did they ever find it?

AMY
No. When I got undressed for bed, there it was, stuck in my bra, the pin sticking out. It had been there all day!

The three women laugh.

JUDY
You didn’t feel it?

AMY
No. And they called me to tell me they had looked all day. Isn’t that hilarious?


AMY (CONT’D)
Hi, I’ve never seen you on the Coffee Car. Do you usually sit somewhere else?

HEATHER
Today’s my first day.

AMY
Here’s an extra seat. Come on. Sit here. I’m Amy, this is Dawn and that’s Judy.

Heather stands and sheepishly moves to the four seater.

HEATHER
I’m Heather.

Train pulls into Grand Central Station. The women rise to disembark. Amy turns to Heather at the door.

AMY
If you’re going to be on the train every day, sit with us in the Coffee Car.

HEATHER
Why the Coffee Car?

JUDY
With the length of this train we’d never be able to find each other otherwise.
HEATHER
I’ll sit in the Coffee Car then. Bye.

The women wave, go off in different directions.

INT. COFFEE CAR — DAY

Amy and Judy board, sit with Heather. An African American, MAUREEN,(49), tall, graceful, sits beside them.

MAUREEN
Hello ladies. I haven’t seen you for awhile. Dawn not coming today?

JUDY
We never know who’s going to show.

AMY
Heather, I’d like you to meet Maureen. She rides the coffee car most days.

MAUREEN
Hello. As you two know, Alexander, is now over six feet tall and very strong.

Maureen turns to Heather.

MAUREEN (CONT’D)
He’s my son and he has Down Syndrome. He’s not high functioning and tends to get violent sometimes.

AMY
Where did he hurt you this time?

MAUREEN
I bruised my arm myself. I have told him repeatedly that I have to catch a train to get to work on time.

JUDY
His father should be helping.

MAUREEN
That ship has sailed. Why do you think he left? He couldn’t handle the stress.

AMY
So what happened with Alexander?

MAUREEN
I was livid, so I dragged him out of bed, pulled him down the stairs while he
MAUREEN (CONT'D)
fought me all the way. By the time I got him dressed and out the door, I was frazzled and my heart was pounding.

JUDY
You shouldn’t have to go through that on your own.

MAUREEN
He’s my son. It’s not a choice. After I dropped him off I sat in the car shaking. The train pulled out so I thought to myself, what the hell? I went home and spent the day catching up on my reading.

AMY
Good for you. We all need a mental health day sometimes.

MAUREEN
I need a mental health year. My ex is taking Alex this weekend. I’m thinking of having a little pot-luck dinner get together. My place, Sunday? Who’s in?

AMY
I’ll be there. What time?

JUDY
Count me in.

Maureen turns to Heather.

MAUREEN
You’re invited also. Give me your cell number and I’ll text the directions.

HEATHER
Are you sure? I hardly know you. Actually, I don’t know you at all.

MAUREEN
Then it’s settled. Be there, late afternoon and we’ll get to know each other better. I make a wicked Sangria.

AMY
She does. Brandy, red wine, vodka, rum and grand marnier with a shot of sprite. It’ll knock you flat on your ass.

MAUREEN
I’m on a budget. I don’t use Grand
MAUREEN (CONT’D)
Marnier anymore. I’ve substituted triple sec. It’s cheaper and it’s just as good.

Heather gives Maureen her number. The train arrives.

AMY
Heather, do you collect driftwood?

HEATHER
I’ve never done that.

AMY
If you’re not busy Saturday, I’m going to Maine to get some.

HEATHER
What do you do with it?

AMY
Come and see. I make wall hangings and all sorts of crafts. I’ll pick you up at 8 AM and we’ll spend the day, maybe even the weekend. How does that sound to you?

HEATHER
Amy, I hate to admit this, but I’m kind of short on funds right now...

AMY
So, it’s my treat.

HEATHER
I can’t accept money from a stranger.

AMY
You are a friend, and I want you to come.

HEATHER
I can’t even afford lunch money.

AMY
It’s taken care of. I’m living pay check to pay check, too. So I know what it’s like. Okay?

HEATHER
I barely know you. Why are you being so nice.

AMY
Haven’t you ever had friends before?
HEATHER
Obviously not.

AMY
Then it’s settled.

HEATHER
Sounds great. Will we be back in time for
Maureen’s pot luck?

AMY
We’ll make a point of it.

EXT. OLD ORCHARD BEACH - MAINE - DAY

Heather runs ahead of Amy, both in capris, holding flip-
flops. They have bags with pieces of driftwood.

HEATHER
Amy, check this out! It’s huge.

Heather holds up a long, twisted piece of driftwood.

AMY
It’s perfect. It has a face of an animal.

Heather puts her piece into her bag.

HEATHER
What’s Judy’s story?

AMY
Judy’s husband died of liver cancer three
years ago. They didn’t have any children.
That’s when she came on the Coffee Car.

HEATHER
And Dawn?

AMY
Dawn is the fortunate one. Her husband
owns a chain of jewelry stores. He’s
actually a lapidary.

HEATHER
Wow. She does have nice jewelry.

AMY
He goes on diamond buying junkets all the
time. Sometimes he takes Dawn with him.

HEATHER
Where do they go?
AMY
They used to go to South Africa and Amsterdam, but they’re more enlightened now and only go to Canada. No blood diamonds there.

HEATHER
They’ve funded civil wars.

AMY
Right. You can’t always know what to avoid, so you just do your best with the knowledge you have.

HEATHER
I try my best. They sound like very conscientious people.

AMY
Not everyone is inconsiderate. I wish that all zoos and aquariums would be closed and the animals released back into their natural habitats.

Amy, excited, jumps up and down.

AMY (CONT’D)
And I want execution for rhino and elephant poachers and large cat hunters.

HEATHER
A bit extreme?

AMY
They’d only do it once. It’s mystifying why anyone would kill an elephant. You’d have to be a troglodyte not to be aware, or worse, if you know and don’t care.

HEATHER
I know some who couldn’t disagree with you more.

AMY
Are they brain dead or just assholes?

Heather laughs aloud.

HEATHER
Both. I used to believe that there was something wrong with me, that somehow I was the one who was out of step.
AMY
I can tell that you have integrity. Don’t ever second guess your beliefs.

HEATHER
Amy?

AMY
Hmmm?

HEATHER
Mind if I ask you a personal question? The women on the Coffee Car seem put together, yet only Dawn is married.

AMY
We all were at some point. People change, grow apart, and become disillusioned. It’s not a reflection on either person.

HEATHER
I suppose. I guess you’re wondering about my situation.

AMY
If you had wanted to share the sordid details with me, I’m sure you would have.

HEATHER
I’d like to tell you now. My husband once told me that he would never lie to me.

The waves become bigger and louder as they crash on the beach next to the two women who continue to walk.

INT. JUMPIN’ JAKES SEAFOOD CAFE – DAY
Heather and Amy eat lobster and crab cakes.

HEATHER
This is good. I haven’t had lobster in years.

AMY
Why not?

HEATHER
Rick was allergic to all shellfish.

AMY
What was preventing you?
HEATHER
I never got around to it. You adjust to another person’s habits, and you lose yourself a little. After awhile, you don’t care anymore.

Amy stares out the window for a brief moment.

AMY
I wish my husband had been allergic to shellfish.

HEATHER
What?

AMY
I wish he had been allergic to anything, deathly allergic. I could have saved myself a lot of grief by just poisoning the SOB. He certainly had it coming.

Heather stifles a laugh.

AMY (CONT’D)
And, I could have gotten away with it. After all, it wouldn’t have been actual poisoning, would it? Especially since I could have claimed not having previous knowledge that crab, or whatever, would put him into anaphylactic shock.

HEATHER
Didn’t he carry an epi-pen?

AMY
You’re not listening. He wasn’t allergic to anything. I enjoy imagining him dead. It helps get me through the day.

HEATHER
Sometimes, when I think about the other woman and the lying, I, ... never mind.

AMY
You what?

HEATHER
I lie in bed and fantasize about killing him. Does that make me bad?

AMY
It makes you delusional. In case you’ve forgotten, he’s already dead.
Heather smiles, looks out the window.

AMY (CONT’D)
Have you ever played Texas Hold-Em?
Tonight we’re getting some rum and cokes
and we’re gambling for pennies.

INT. SEA CLIFF HOUSE MOTEL - NIGHT

Amy and Heather, inebriated, sit on a queen sized bed, cards laid out. A huge pile of seashells and driftwood on the desk. Half full bottle of rum on the night stand.

AMY
Ante up. We’ll each put in $2.50.

HEATHER
We’re in the big leagues now. I’ve never stayed in a 3 star motel. In fact, I’ve never stayed in a motel, period.

The women play poker while talking and drinking.

AMY
Is that a fact?

HEATHER
Gambling for pennies? Drinking cheap rum and cokes? Inexpensive motel? Rick would be spinning in his grave, if he knew.

AMY
You’re not used to slumming?

Heather giggles uncontrollably. They pour more rum.

HEATHER
You never told me about your blind date.

AMY
I wish I had been blind when he showed up at my house. It was the night from Hell.

HEATHER
Why?

AMY
He looked exactly like one of the characters from Star Wars.

HEATHER
Han Solo, Luke Skywalker? Which one?
AMY
Jabba the Hutt.

Heather lies back on the bed, laughing.

AMY (CONT’D)
It wasn’t funny, Heather. The gym isn’t open enough hours for him to work off what he ate for Christmas.

HEATHER
I think I’m going to wet myself.

Heather, laughing, goes to the washroom. Amy counts pennies, drinks, pours more. Rum bottle almost empty.

AMY
If Rick could only see you now!

Heather emerges from washroom.

HEATHER
Do you have a tampon I could borrow?

Amy rummages through her purse, hands her one.

AMY
It’s all yours, and for the record, I don’t want it returned.

Heather bursts into laughter, runs into the bathroom.

HEATHER (O.S.)
At least I’m not pregnant!

Amy follows Heather, stands outside the bathroom door.

AMY
(shouting through the door)
Let’s go swimming.

Heather exits the bathroom.

HEATHER
I didn’t bring a suit.

AMY
Neither did I. We won’t let that stop us.

EXT. SEA CLIFF HOUSE MOTEL POOL – NIGHT

Heather and Amy, naked, splash, laugh, yell, do cannonballs off the diving board.
AMY
(yelling)
Let’s jump off together this time.
The two women hold hands, run and splash into the pool.

HEATHER

Weeeeee!

Two security guards enter pool area shining flashlights.

SECURITY GUARD #1
Get out of the pool now, ladies.

INT. TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH POLICE STATION – NIGHT
Amy and Heather sit in their bathrobes in an office.

HEATHER
This is another fine mesh you’ve gotten ush into, Shtanley.

Amy and Heather giggle. An officer enters.

OFFICER
I’m releasing you and there’s a cab waiting outside. I suggest the two of you go back to your motel and sleep it off.

Heather and Amy stand and walk past the officer.

OFFICER (CONT’D)
I’m doing you a favor because you seem like nice ladies.

AMY
Thank you, sir. We’ll behave. Promise.

HEATHER
(saluting)
Tanksh, Oshifer, I mean Oshifer.

OFFICER
Good. I don’t want to hear that you’ve been disturbing the peace again.

Heather and Amy head for the door.

HEATHER
I’d like you to ekshplain how I ended up with thirty sheven shentsh and you had four dollarsh and shikshty three shents when I wush winning the poker hand?
AMY
I thought you were too drunk to notice.
It’s incredible that you can still do
math after all that rum.

HEATHER
I had a good educashun, shun.

The two push out the door at the same time, stumble,
trip. The officer shakes his head.

INT. SEA CLIFF HOUSE MOTEL - DAY

Heather and Amy are lying down. Heather turns to Amy.

HEATHER
My head is killing me. I feel sick.

AMY
Hangover. Too much rum. I don’t think I
can make it to Maureen’s today.

HEATHER
Fine by me.

INT. SABRINA’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FRANK (49), short, stocky, black hair, moustache, pours
two drinks while Sabrina sits, cross legged.

SABRINA
Honestly, Frank, I don’t think that
Heather fits in with our social group.

FRANK
I thought she was your friend?

SABRINA
She was when she had money, but now she
can’t keep up. She’s become destitute.

FRANK
All the more reason she needs our help.
It’s not her fault Rick left her in this
mess. I’ve always liked Heather. I wonder
how I could be of any help?

Sabrina scowls. Frank hands her a highball.

SABRINA
This isn’t any of our concern. Now, about
the family room.
SABRINA (CONT'D)
Would you prefer pale grey walls with
navy or golden yellow accents? I saw the
most beautiful wallpaper the other day.
It’s all the rage again, you know.

Frank, disgusted, leaves the room, drink in hand.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN - GLASS SKYSCRAPER - DAY
Heather, navy suit, enters building, holding briefcase.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN - RED BRICK SKYSCRAPER - DAY
Heather, light grey suit, enters, holding briefcase.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN - BROWN BRICK SKYSCRAPER - DAY
Heather, taupe suit, enters, holding briefcase.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN - YELLOW BRICK BUILDING - DAY
Heather, brown suit, enters, holding briefcase.

INT. FRANK’S OFFICE - HEAD FIRST FASHIONS - MANHATTAN - DAY
Heather sits in front of Frank.

HEATHER
Thanks Frank. I’ve applied everywhere.

FRANK
It’s just an entry level job. Sorry I
couldn’t offer you something better.

HEATHER
Sabrina never told me what you did.

FRANK
We manufacture high end designer clothes.

HEATHER
Right here in this little office?

FRANK
Of course not. All the sewing is done in
a factory in the garment district. This
is the head office. You’ve probably heard
of some of the labels we carry. What am I
FRANK (CONT'D)
saying? You probably own them. Once a year we donate our seconds to shelters. Sab and I attend the charity banquets. Think you’re going to enjoy it here?

HEATHER
This is great. When you called out of the blue yesterday, I was in shock.

FRANK
We’re friends. Don’t ever forget that. Here, I want you to have this.

Frank hands Heather an envelope. She opens it, pulls out a few bills and quickly puts them back.

HEATHER
What’s this for?

FRANK
A few Benjamin Franklins, to tide you over for the next little while.

HEATHER
I can’t accept this. There are four hundred dollars in here.

FRANK
It’s just a little something to help out a friend who’s down on her luck. It’ll be our little secret. There’s no need for Sabrina to know, all right?

HEATHER
How will I pay it back?

FRANK
You are not required to pay me back. By not taking it, you’re insulting me. That’s not something you want to do on your first day of work. Go start filing.

Heather hugs Frank, puts the envelope on his desk.

HEATHER
Frank, I won’t forget this.

Heather returns to filing and smiles.

Frank sits down and is on the phone, leans back on his black leather swivel chair facing the window.

Sabrina enters, looks at Heather, walks over to Frank.
Sabrina pulls back on the chair, tipping it so Frank practically falls over backwards. Frank swings around.

**FRANK**
Heeey! What’s the idea?

Heather turns around to see what’s going on.

**SABRINA**
What the hell is Heather doing here?

**FRANK**
Working. Something you might want to try.

**SABRINA**
Don’t get smart with me! You knew very well that I was opposed to you helping her in any way, shape or form!

Heather leans on the cabinet, arms folded, watches Sabrina in disbelief, jaw open.

**SABRINA (CONT’D)**
Get rid of her, or else!

Frank squirms in his seat, looks uncomfortable.

**FRANK**
Please lower your voice, dear. We’ll talk about this at home.

**SABRINA (SHOUTING)**
We’ll talk about it now! Do as I say if you know what’s good for you. I’ve had it with your insubordination.

**HEATHER**
Enough with the histrionics!

Sabrina gives Heather a dirty look, pushes past her.

**SABRINA**
You’re in my way. Move!

Heather doesn’t move, stands between Sabrina and the door. Sabrina walks around her. Heather stops her.

**HEATHER**
Stop. We’re going to settle this. Frank, whatever you were going to talk about tonight, say it now.
FRANK
Heather, now you know this was just a temporary job, and honey, I’d never do anything against your wishes.

Heather, shocked, cannot utter a word. Sabrina is angry.

SABRINA
But you did. You went behind my back and hired her. Next thing I’ll find out is the two of you are sleeping together!

FRANK
Don’t start fabricating stories. I love you and only you.

HEATHER
Are you seriously going to fire me?

FRANK
Sabrina’s right. I hired you against her wishes. I’m sorry.

Sabrina sneers at Heather.

SABRINA
That’s my Frank. I knew you’d comply.

HEATHER
Acquiesce is a better word. Frank, you’re spineless and completely whipped by your wife, whom I once considered to be a friend. And Sabrina, you’re nothing more than a malevolent, self-centred nasty shrew.

SABRINA
Never in all my life...

HEATHER
Then maybe the time has come for you to hear the truth.

SABRINA
Frank? Aren’t you going to defend me?

HEATHER
I’m not finished. You think that you are so enlightened. I’ve yet to meet anyone as intolerant, uninformed and completely oblivious to current events, as you. And the way you lead Laura and Carlotta around by the nose is despicable. You’re an antiquated, slow thinking snob.
SABRINA
Uuuh, uuuh!

Heather goes to Frank, looks him square in the face.

HEATHER
Don’t bother firing me. I quit.

Frank hands her the envelope and winks. She walks out, slams the door. Frank smiles, Sabrina is desperate.

SABRINA
Did you hear what she called me? Aren’t you going to say anything?

FRANK
What’s left to say? She did a good job.

INT. HEATHER’S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Heather opens closet door, pulls out a box marked, ‘Rick’s Files’, dumps it on the floor, sits down.

Heather separates files into two distinct piles.


WOMAN’S VOICE, (O.S.)
Hello?, Hello. Ricky?

Heather throws the phone, puts her hands over her face.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

Heather walks up to the server, stack of resumés in hand.

HEATHER
I’d like a medium sized coffee, please.

JEFF CROSS, (50), handsome, hands her a paper coffee cup.

JEFF
Help yourself to any of the blends.

HEATHER
Thanks.

Heather pulls down on the lever on the coffee carafe marked, Columbian, filling it to the top.
JEFF
Not leaving any room for cream?

HEATHER
I take it black.

JEFF
I’ve never seen you before. I work the later train most of the time.

HEATHER
Uh huh.

JEFF
Are you on this train very often?

HEATHER
I am. Why do you want to know?

JEFF
I’m bad at small talk. When I see a pretty lady, I’m curious.

HEATHER
You’re right.

JEFF
About what?

HEATHER
You’re bad at small talk.

Heather sits down in the four seater, her back to Jeff.

AMY
I see you’ve met Jeff?

DAWN
He’s very good looking.

JUDY
He’s looking over. I bet he likes you.

HEATHER
Oh, please. I’m not interested in some schlep who works on a commuter train selling lousy coffee.

AMY
Well, excuse us, Miss La-Di-Da.

HEATHER
I’m not in any mood to talk to anyone trying to hit on me today. I was forced
HEATHER (CONT'D)
to quit my job yesterday. See my stack of
CV’s? You’re not going to believe this.

The loud CLACKETY-CLACK of the train drowns out Heather.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY
Amy, Dawn, Judy, and Maureen in their usual four seater.

AMY
Heather’s become a good friend of mine.

DAWN
Correction. Ours.

The two other women nod in agreement.

AMY
She’s our friend and has been dealt a bad
hand. To top if off, Sabrina’s absolutely
vitriolic, sabotaging her like that.

JUDY
I agree. I wish we could help her.

Jeff closes, locks the coffee bar, sits with the women.

JEFF
I overheard you. Was that the woman who
was here yesterday with resumés?

AMY
Heather. She’s a wonderful person, just
off her game right now.

JEFF
She seemed angry.

DAWN
She’s not ready to meet men right now.

JEFF
I was only being friendly. She
practically bit off my head.

DAWN
Jeff, how’s the new business?

JEFF
Investing in this venture was risky, but
I may finally see some return on my
capital. In about a year I hope to see a
light at the end of the tunnel.
JUDY
What do you get paid for working here?

JEFF
Not much. Around $11.00 an hour, but I get coffee, train and subway paid.

AMY
Train pass, $400.00, 3 hours a day at $33.00, that’s $660.00, and coffee? An extra thousand a month? Are they hiring?

Jeff laughs.

JEFF
If you’re serious, they’re always looking.

AMY
Hell, who wouldn’t be?

EXT. DAWN’S BACKYARD – NEW JERSEY – DAY
People sit, stand, drink, eat. Heather, white sundress.

DAWN
Glad you could make it today. I host these functions a few times a year.

Jeff approaches, Heather becomes uncomfortable.

HEATHER
Thanks for the invite. Listen, I think I’ll go...

Before she can finish, Jeff is right beside her.

JEFF
Hello. Great day for a garden party.

DAWN
Jeff, you’ve met Heather, haven’t you?

JEFF
Not formally introduced but we met on the train. By the way, have either one of you tried my Swedish meat balls?

Jeff swings his arm around to point. His hand knocks Heather’s glass, spilling red wine on her dress.

HEATHER
You’ve got to be kidding me.
Jeff runs to the kitchen, yelling back at Heather.

JEFF
I’m sorry. Stay there. I’ll help you.

HEATHER
How can he possibly help...this?

Dawn looks at her dress, assesses the damage.

DAWN
It’s not that bad. Club soda will fix it.

Dawn goes into the house. Jeff runs out, carrying a bottle of club soda and a tea towel.

JEFF
I’ve got it, Heather.

As he nears her, he trips, spills club soda down her front. The soda penetrates, her nipples become visible.

JEFF (CONT’D)
(laughs)
Oops! I bet you didn’t expect to enter a wet T-shirt contest today, huh?

Jeff rubs her chest with the towel. Heather backs away.

HEATHER
Stop! What do you think you’re doing?

JEFF
Helping?

Dawn emerges from the house.

DAWN
Everyone, coffee and tea is ready. Come in and help yourselves.

JEFF
Would you like me to get you a cup of coffee? Black, right?

HEATHER
What are you planning to do with it? Scald me?

Heather enters the house, leaving Jeff alone.
INT. DAWN’S HOUSE - DAY

Heather approaches Dawn.

HEATHER
Listen, Dawn, I think I’m just going to leave. Thanks for having me and I’ll see you on the train.

DAWN
I could lend you something to wear.

HEATHER
No, that’s fine. I kind of want to go home anyway and catch up on some reading.

DAWN
Sorry it turned out like this.

HEATHER
I have to get away from that doofus.

DAWN
Jeff? He’s really a hell of a nice guy, if you’d give him a chance.

HEATHER
I’d be hospitalized after a week, if he didn’t kill me first.

INT. WARREN HEALTH AND RACQUETBALL CLUB - NEWARK, NJ - NIGHT

Jeff and TOM (50), sweaty, stand by lockers, holding racquets.

JEFF
I’ve found the woman of my dreams.

TOM
Who is it this time?

Jeff wipes his face with a towel.

JEFF
This time I’m serious. I mean it.

TOM
So, where did you meet her?

JEFF
The train.
TOM
How long have you been seeing her?

JEFF
I’m not seeing her, yet. She hates me.

TOM
That’s a good start.

JEFF
I spilled red wine on her white dress.

Tom cringes.

JEFF (CONT’D)
I tried to save her dress from staining, tripped, spilled a bottle of club soda on her and her dress became see-through.

TOM
You’re sure you like this woman?

JEFF
It wasn’t intentional. I really knew she didn’t like me when I tried to wipe the stain off the front of her dress. She thought I was trying to get personal.

TOM
I can’t imagine what gave her that idea!

JEFF
She’s magnificent. I just don’t know how to get her to like me.

They slam lockers, head to showers with shampoo, etc.

TOM
You realise this isn’t going to end well.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

A huge line-up. Jeff is selling pastries and coffee. Heather enters, passes by Jeff, sits by her friends.

JEFF
Hi Heather. Are you all cleaned up from the weekend?

Everyone in the line-up turns to stare at Heather, who puts her head down in embarrassment.
HEATHER
What the hell is wrong with that man?

DAWN
He’s a little socially inept, but otherwise, he’s a pretty good guy.

HEATHER
So says you. Sorry I left, but I was soaking wet.

AMY
Have you found a job yet?

HEATHER
No, but I have an interview this morning.

MAUREEN
Dawn, didn’t you say that your husband is expanding his number of stores?

DAWN
Heather wouldn’t want to work there.

Heather turns to Dawn, eager upon hearing the news.

HEATHER
Yes I would. I’d love to. Uh, where?

DAWN
His jewelry store. He pays well, and provides benefits including health care.

Heather practically jumps up and down with excitement.

HEATHER
Please tell your husband I want to work there.

Jeff finishes up and sits with the women.

DAWN
It’s not for another year, at least.

HEATHER
That’s okay. Tell him anyway.

JEFF
I know of some immediate work available.

HEATHER
Doing what?
JEFF
I’ll even tell my friend to hire you, on
one condition.

HEATHER
Here it comes.

JEFF
Let me take you to dinner and I’ll make
sure you get the job.

HEATHER
That’s not sweetening the deal.

JEFF
It’s catering banquets.

HEATHER
I could do that temporarily.

A customer is at the counter. Jeff stands to serve him.

JEFF
I’ll pick you up Friday at 7 PM.

HEATHER
No job is worth that.

Jeff finishes with his customer, cleans up his station.

AMY
Why don’t you go out with him?

The other women nod in agreement.

HEATHER
Him? Are you serious? He’s a bit of a
loser, and an utterly clumsy oaf. No way.

AMY
If it doesn’t work out all you’ve lost is
one night.

MAUREEN
And you never know who you may meet.

DAWN
You might be pleasantly surprised and
find that you do like him.

HEATHER
I’ll go, just to get you off my back.

Jeff closes the coffee bar, sits with the women.
JEFF
What’s the verdict?

HEATHER
Oh, all right. If I have to I’ll go out with you on Friday.

JEFF
You don’t have to sound so enthusiastic. It’s not root canal.

Heather writes down her cell number, hands it to Jeff.

HEATHER
There. Give me a call for directions.

The train stops. Heather quickly heads for the door.

JEFF
Did any of you ladies feel that cold breeze or was it just me?

AMY
She’s nice once you get to know her.

JEFF
I have my doubts.

INT. HARMONY BANQUET HALL - NEW JERSEY - NIGHT

Heather, black skirt, white button down shirt, black panty hose, black flat shoes. Puts white linen tablecloths on large tables. ROBERT, (55) shouts orders at SHERI,(28), and Heather.

ROBERT
Hey, new girl. Straighten out that tablecloth. It’s hanging on one side. Sheri, hustle, hustle. Let’s go ladies, we don’t have all night.

Heather straightens out the tablecloth, hurries into the kitchen for cutlery, napkins. Sheri finds wine glasses.

HEATHER
Sheri, is he always this demanding?

SHERI
Yeah. He’s even more uptight tonight.

HEATHER
What’s tonight?
SHERI
Some charity for clothing the homeless, or something.

Heather’s face falls.

SHERI (CONT’D)
Hey sister, are you feeling okay? You’re as white as a sheet.

Robert pokes his head into the kitchen.

ROBERT
Are you two on strike? Let’s move it. The guests are arriving in ten.

Heather puts cutlery, dishes on gurney, rolls it out, sets tables. Sheri places floral centerpieces on them. Robert puts out name placers. The guests arrive, find their designated tables and sit down.

Heather goes into the kitchen, re-enters carrying a tray of hors d’oeuvres. Sheri opens bottles and pours wine.

Heather sees Frank and Sabrina sitting across from one another. Frank gives her a feeble wave.

SABRINA
Who are you waving to? Is it Darren?

Frank looks down and doesn’t answer. Sabrina swings around and looks straight at Heather, who stares back.

Heather, flustered, drops the tray of hors d’oeuvres.

ROBERT
Clean up that mess and get back into the kitchen. I want to have a talk with you.

Robert stands over Heather, watching her with his arms folded, tapping his foot.

As Heather bends down to clean the food off the floor, Sabrina walks over to Robert and her.

SABRINA
Good help is so hard to find.

Robert nods in agreement. Heather fumbles around, trying to pick up the pieces of the hors d’oeuvres.

ROBERT
Anything I can do for you, Ma’am?
SABRINA
No, not at all. I thought I knew this individual, Helga, isn’t it?

Heather stands and looks right at Sabrina.

HEATHER
You know damn well who I am.

Robert stares, slack jawed. Heather gives a steely stare.

SABRINA
Pity you couldn’t be sitting with us at our table. Apparently the old adage has come to fruition. The bottom feeders slip into the abyss while cream rises.

HEATHER
So does shit!

Sabrina turns, walks back to her table. Robert takes Heather by the arm and pulls her aside.

ROBERT
You’re fired! You’re slow, sloppy, and that display of rudeness to a most distinguished guest is unacceptable. Just who did you think you were talking to?

Heather takes off her apron and tosses it to the floor.

HEATHER
I know exactly to whom I was speaking. Distinguished? That’s a laugh. I used to be as wealthy as she.

ROBERT
Sure you were! She happens to be one of New York City’s elite. You need a lesson in respect.

HEATHER
No, Robert. People have to earn respect. It doesn’t come with a bankbook.

ROBERT
Get your things and don’t come back. Your pay check will be mailed to you.

Heather walks away with tears of anger and frustration.
INT. HEATHER’S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Heather rummages through Rick’s files, phones a number using Rick’s cell phone.

HEATHER
Let’s get to the bottom of this right now. 702-555-4592. Good, it’s ringing.

Heather waits until a woman with southern drawl answers.

WOMAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
Hi Ricky. It’s been months, honey.

HEATHER
Honey? Who the hell are you?

WOMAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
Ah might be askin’ ya the same question.

HEATHER
I’m Rick’s wife. Who are you?

There is a pause, a sucking in of air from the woman.

WOMAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
You’s Heather, huh?

HEATHER
How do you know that?

WOMAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
I’s BEV SCOTT. But ya’ll can call me Bev. Ricky never stops talkin’ about ya.

Heather is confused.

HEATHER
He didn’t? Doesn’t?

BEV (O.S.)
Thass right. He dotes on you. How is Ricky anyways? Is he there?

HEATHER
No. How you can be so nonchalant when you’re having an affair with my husband.

BEV (O.S.)
When I’m what?

HEATHER
You heard me.
BEV (O.S.)
Honey, I don’t know where ya got that silly notion in that pretty little head of your’n that we was anythin’ but platonicals. Is you callin’ ‘bout the money?

HEATHER
Platonicals?

BEV
Don’t you know what that means, hun? It’s when you’re just friends and don’t diddle each other.

HEATHER
Yes, yes,...what money?

BEV
I tol’ Ricky that it was goin’ to be difficult for me to git it, but I’m tryin’, I really is.

HEATHER
The two of you really were platonic?

BEV
Good grief. Just what did Ricky tell ya? Listen, why don’t the two of youse come for a visit, and it’ll be just like old times, c’cept ya’ll be here of course.

HEATHER
I, uh, we have some spare time in two weeks. How about if I come, we come then?

BEV
Sounds peachy, sugar. Call me when you git to Vegas. I wondered when I was goin’ to git to meet Ricky’s better half. Bye.

HEATHER
Bye.

Heather scratches her head, a look of confusion on face.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

Judy, Dawn, Heather, Maureen, and Amy sit three in one four seater, and two across the aisle in a four seater.

AMY
How was your first banquet shift?
HEATHER
I was fired.

The four women snicker, trying not to laugh.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
It’s not funny. I dropped a tray of hors d’oeuvres and then reacted to Sabrina’s insults. My boss overheard and fired me.

DAWN
The same Sabrina?

HEATHER
The one and only.

AMY
What was she doing there?

HEATHER
Frank’s company was there. They donate clothes to homeless organisations.

MAUREEN
What a coincidence!

HEATHER
There are no coincidences. According to Carl Jung, it’s synchronicity.

AMY
Or in your case, just bad luck.

Heather sees a woman working the coffee bar.

HEATHER
Where’s Tweedle Dum today?

AMY
Is that any way to talk about your future husband?

HEATHER
In your dreams.

EXT. HEATHER’S APARTMENT – DOOR – NIGHT

Heather finds eviction notice on door. She phones Amy.

HEATHER
Hi Amy. My rent’s due and I’m being evicted. What should I do?
INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

The train pulls into Central Station. As the women disembark, Jeff grabs Heather’s arm.

JEFF
Heather, may I talk to you for a moment?

HEATHER
If you’re about to ask me out, the answer’s no.

JEFF
That’s not what I was going to ask.

HEATHER
Oh, I see.

JEFF
The ladies and I took up a collection to help you out. It’s not much but it will pay your rent this month and there’s some extra for you to go to Las Vegas.

HEATHER
You did that, for me?

JEFF
Not just me. All of us discussed it and decided you needed some help.

Heather looks at the envelope, then at Jeff, smiling.

HEATHER
I can’t believe this. You’re all so kind.

JEFF
We’re friends, aren’t we? Go find out about this other woman.

INT. PETROSSIAN BAR - BELLAGIO HOTEL - LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

Heather sips coke, faces lobby, straining to see every attractive woman walking by. A chubby, blotchy faced, greasy haired woman comes over, sits across from her.

BEV
I just know’d it was ya’ll from your pitchers.

HEATHER
You’re Bev!?
BEV
Indeedy. Where’s Ricky?

HEATHER
First, what’s your connection with Rick?

BEV
I guess Ricky is ascared to tell ya. See, Ricky and me has a gamblin’ problem.

HEATHER
Gambling?

BEV
How do you think he lost all that money? It sure weren’t on booze or fillies, and I mean the two legged kind.

HEATHER
That’s a relief... I suppose.

Bev waves to the waiter.

BEV
What does one have to do around here to get a libashun, hun? Cartwheels?

A waiter comes over to the table.

WAITER
What would you ladies like?

BEV
We’d like to be friends. Haha. Bring whiskey, straight up.

HEATHER
I have a drink, thanks, anyway.

WAITER
Do you have a preference for either bourbon or scotch?

BEV
Big bottle of Jack Daniels. Gotta love that Tennessee stuff. They know how to run a still. My daddy had a good one, till them damn revenuers shut him down.

Bev turns to Heather after the waiter leaves.

BEV (CONT’D)
What are you drinkin’, hun?
HEATHER

Coke.

BEV

No shit! Honey, you gotta drink somethin’ with a kick. I’m partial to Jack Damage.

Bev lets out a cackle of a laugh.

BEV (CONT’D)

Get it, get it? Jack Damage?

HEATHER

Yes, I got it. What I don’t get is what my husband has been doing, with you?

BEV

It started out with the slots, progressed to the ponies during the day, then blackjack, and craps, until finally, baccarat. Ever played baccarat, honey?

HEATHER

Can’t say that I have.

The waiter hands Bev her drink. Bev stops him.

BEV

I might be askin’ you to bring me the bottle, sugar. Don’t be hidin’ it on me.

The waiter walks away.

BEV (CONT’D)

Gotta keep a close eye on these guys. When you’re payin’ top dollar in these gin joints, ya hafta make sure they’re pourin’ it from the right bottle, and not givin’ ya the cheap stuff.

HEATHER

Is it expensive?

BEV

Bet your ass it’s expensive.

HEATHER

It’s more costly in bars, I suppose.

BEV

I never pay.

HEATHER

I’d still like to know what Rick was
HEATHER (CONT'D)
doing here with you?

BEV
Ricky’s been keepin’ little secrets from you, ain’t he, that bad boy!

HEATHER
In more ways than you know.

BEV
Now, what was I sayin’ before?

HEATHER
Baccarat.

BEV
Right. Good when you’re winnin’. Ya get hooked when suddenly you’re up sixty thousand or so, then you crash and burn.

HEATHER
Was Rick ever up that much?

BEV
Sure was, lotts times. See, it’s like a drug. The rush is exhilaratin’.

HEATHER
Explain the game to me.

BEV
Sure thing hun. Then we hit the tables. I really dasn’t, with my addiction and all, but what the hell? It’s simple. Each hand has two cards and a maximum of three. Cards less than ten are at face value. Aces are worth one. If it is a double digit, you drop the left digit so face cards have no value.

HEATHER
Wait, I think I’ve got it.

BEV
So, when the dealer gives you a total of 8 or 9, you can’t take another card. If it’s less than 5, you get another card. If you have a 9, and the dealer has an 8 or less, you win.

HEATHER
Do you win often?
BEV
Some nights I’s up, some nights I’s down.
Ricky played them big tables.

HEATHER
Meaning?

BEV
Ricky would play the one hunnerd thousand minimum tables. Too rich for my blood.

Heather gulps, loses the color in her face.

HEATHER
Did he ever win?

BEV
Not often. He lost over a million in one night. It was a sight to behold.

HEATHER
Jesus Christ! What was he thinking?

BEV
He loved to play, ‘specially with me.

HEATHER
Were you and Rick, romantically involved?

BEV
Man, I hate that I can’t smoke in here. Takes all the joy outta drinkin’ and gamblin’... Now what kind of a dumb assed question is that?

HEATHER
I was just wondering.

BEV
I told ya, Jeezus! If I dint like ya and ya wasn’t Ricky’s wife, I’d slap the taste right out of your mouth.

HEATHER
Excuse me?

BEV
Hell no, we wasn’t involved sexily. Yuk! We was purely hands off each other.

Heather raises an eyebrow.

HEATHER
Thank God for that!
BEV
I may be a lot of things, but I ain’t no skank. If ya don’t believe me, ask him yourself when he gets here.

HEATHER
He’s not coming, Bev. Rick is dead.

Bev lets out a stream of breath.

BEV
Wondered why he weren’t answerin’ my calls. Cancer? Heart?

HEATHER
Nothing like that. It was an accident.

BEV
Poor bugger. I guess you’s here to collect the money.

Heather looks surprised.

HEATHER
Tell me about it.

BEV
Ricky bailed me out a lot.

HEATHER
Jail?

BEV
Shit. Ya don’t know nothin’, do ya?

HEATHER
I’m sorry. It appears I don’t.

BEV
Ricky helped me out when the bosses was breathin’ down my neck.

HEATHER
Who?

BEV
When ya owe the casino the kinda money I owed and ya can’t pay up, they tend to get a might fidgety, ya know?

HEATHER
Care to elaborate?
HEATHER
Would you like to tell me what happened?

BEV
I lost at baccarat. Ya have to place ten thousand dollar bets. I was down to nothin’ on one of them losin’ streaks.

HEATHER
Why didn’t you simply stop betting?

BEV
You don’t gamble, do you?

HEATHER
Afraid not.

BEV (CONT’D)
It wern’t no retric question.

HEATHER
Rhetorical.

BEV
Yeah, what you’se said. Ricky slipped me fifty thousand and I bet it all and lost.

HEATHER
Rick gave you fifty thousand dollars?

BEV
Lent. Isn’t that why you’se here? To collect from me?

HEATHER
Not really, that’s not...

BEV
Cuz I ain’t got it. Can’t get blood from a stone, Mama always said. I told Ricky lotsa times. I’m in hawk up to my boobs.

Heather cringes at the analogy.

BEV (CONT’D)
Hey, I was goin’ to try to hit ya up for a loan. I dasn’t even know how I’s a goin’ ta pay for Jack.

HEATHER
What are you saying?
BEV
Jack, Jack Daniels. Are ya good for it?
Cuz I ain’t doin’ dishes, honey.

Heather holds her head in her hands, shocked.

BEV (CONT’D)
Well, what d’ya say?

HEATHER
If you don’t have the money, I’ll just waive it. Besides, no court of law would,... without evidence. Forget about the money. Consider it a gift.

BEV
You’re all right, like Ricky said ya was.

Heather motions for the waiter. He walks over.

WAITER
Yes?

HEATHER
I’m ready to pay. What do I owe?

The waiter places a vinyl billfold on the table.

WAITER
Whenever you’re ready.

The waiter leaves. Heather opens it. Her face turns pale.

BEV
Ya’ll right?

Heather continues to stare at the bill.

BEV (CONT’D)
Ya sure is concentratin’, like you was countin’ the hairs on a hog’s back.

Heather looks around for the waiter. She calls him over.

BEV (CONT’D)
Somethin’ wrong?

WAITER
Yes?

HEATHER
Is this amount correct? You seem to have made a slight error.
WAITER
No, it’s two dollars for the coke, one hundred for the bottle of Jack Daniels.

Heather chokes.

BEV
Thanks a lot, sister. I’m glad ya offered to pay, cuz I sure don’t have it.

Heather hands her debit card to the waiter who leaves.

HEATHER
You’re welcome, Bev. I’m leaving now. Thanks for the information and it was...nice, or something, meeting you.

BEV
Now don’t ya go cheapin’ out. Leave the guy a nice tip. Ricky always did.

HEATHER
Sure, I will. Bye now.

Bev scampers off with her bottle. Heather stares at her.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

Dawn, Amy, Judy, Maureen, and Heather are on the train.

AMY
How did your trip to Vegas turn out?

HEATHER
Rick wasn’t cheating on me after all. I had him pegged all wrong.

DAWN
What was his connection with that woman?

HEATHER
She was some sort of gambling partner he lent money to when she was losing.

AMY
If they weren’t intimate, why would he lend her money?

HEATHER
Beats me. She isn’t the kind of person Rick would have befriended, normally.
MAUREEN
Why not? Aside from the gambling?

HEATHER
She’s an alcoholic hillbilly. It’s all so confusing.

AMY
You’re sure she wasn’t lying?

HEATHER
If you had seen her, you wouldn’t ask. I believed her when she said they were strictly ‘platonicals’.

The women laugh. Heather shakes her head in disbelief.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
I wish I had taped the conversation.

AMY
So do we.

JUDY
At least he wasn’t cheating on you.

HEATHER
My husband had another bizarre life. It’s left me discombobulated.

DAWN
Are you sorry you went?

HEATHER
No, In some ways, I’m relieved. In other ways, I’m baffled. But, more important, I’m disappointed that Rick couldn’t have confided in me, that he didn’t trust me.

AMY
Are you going to be okay?

Heather smiles.

HEATHER
I think so. A weight has been lifted. I want to thank all of you for chipping in to help me with my trip.

The women look at each other, confused. Jeff leaves cubicle, jumps into the conversation.

AMY
We didn’t...
JEFF
It was our pleasure, right ladies?

Jeff winks at the other women. Heather does not see.

HEATHER
I’m so happy I don’t drink. Have you any idea what Jack Daniels costs these days?

The train pulls into the station and the women, except Heather, exit. Jeff taps her shoulder.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
Yes?

JEFF
How are you?

HEATHER
Better, and thanks for everything. I’ve been very rude to you and I’m sorry.

JEFF
Are you a magician? Because every time I look at you, everyone else disappears.

HEATHER
Is there something wrong with you?

JEFF
No, but there’s something’s wrong with my cell phone. Your number isn’t in it.

Jeff grins a silly grin and Heather shakes her head.

HEATHER
Have you had much success with women capitulating to your pick up lines?

JEFF
No, unfortunately. That’s why I’m giving them a last shot on you.

HEATHER
Lucky me.

JEFF
Listen, I know we got off on the wrong foot, and the job didn’t work out, so I was wondering if you’d like to meet today for lunch? No cheesy lines, I promise.

Heather hesitates, then sucks in a big breath of air.
HEATHER
I have a job interview at ten, so I
suppose, sure, where and what time?

JEFF
The Greenwich Village Bistro, 13 Carmine
Street, say, at twelve thirty?

HEATHER
Sounds good.

JEFF
It’s a quaint little place, good
atmosphere, great prices. I go there
quite often with my sons.

HEATHER
I’ll be there but if something unforeseen
comes up, give me your cell number.

Jeff reaches into his pocket, hands Heather two cards.

JEFF
Write down your number on the back of one
of these in case I need to call you.

HEATHER
Didn’t I already give you my number?

JEFF
I lost it.

HEATHER
I should have known.

JEFF
You can see right through me.

Heather smiles.

HEATHER
It’s not that difficult. You’re
transparent. Here’s my number, again.

Heather leaves the train. Jeff jumps up, happy, and bangs
his head on the door-jamb. He rubs the top of his head.

JEFF
Owww.

INT. GREENWICH VILLAGE BISTRO – DAY
Heather and Jeff eat lunch.
HEATHER
This French onion soup is amazing.

JEFF
The food here is great.

HEATHER
And the beer! Watermelon beer? Who’d have thought?

JEFF
It’s an experience. What exactly are you looking for in a job?

HEATHER
A means to an end, nothing specific.

JEFF
Gotcha. Know the blonde you sit with?

HEATHER
Dawn?

JEFF
While you were in Vegas, I overheard her saying her husband’s business is hiring. You might want to ask her about it.

HEATHER
Already have. What about you?

JEFF
What about me?

HEATHER
Aren’t you interested in finding a job?

JEFF
I have one.

HEATHER
I know, but...

JEFF
But what?

HEATHER
You’re satisfied with what you’re doing?

JEFF
I’ve never been more settled in my life.

HEATHER
Whatever makes you happy, I guess.
A customer, BARRY, (50) walks by, looks at Jeff.

BARRY
Hey, Jeff? Long time no see.

Barry shoots a glance at Heather.

JEFF
Take a seat. We’re almost finished.

Barry remains standing.

BARRY
Have to run. Who’s your charming friend?

JEFF
Barry, meet Heather. Barry’s one of my oldest friends. We met in Kindergarten.

BARRY
Nice to meet you, Heather. Hope this big lug is treating you properly.

JEFF
Yeah, yeah, yeah, get out of here.

BARRY
How’s the new career going?

JEFF
Great. I’ve never been happier. I’m so glad I got out of that rat race.

Heather furls her eyebrows, confused.

BARRY
Good for you. I might be looking for something similar in the near future.

Heather looks at Barry with a confused expression.

BARRY (CONT’D)
Nice meeting you, Heather, Bye.

HEATHER
Bye.

JEFF
Are you free this afternoon?

HEATHER
Yes, I am. What did you have in mind?
JEFF
Since we’re in Manhattan, we should take advantage. Do you like art galleries?

HEATHER
Love them.

ESTABLISHING SHOT OF METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - OUTSIDE

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - 1000 5TH AVENUE - DAY

Heather and Jeff wander around the gallery.

JEFF
John Singer Sargent’s work is incredible, don’t you think?

Heather and Jeff stand in front of a portrait, entitled, Charles Deering, at Brickell Point, Miami, 1917.

HEATHER
I adore his use of light and shadow, and the colors, so rich and vibrant.

Jeff looks at Heather, admiringly.

JEFF
I’m glad you like him. Sargent is one of my all time favorites.

HEATHER
He’s fast becoming one of mine.

Jeff takes Heather’s arm and they exit the art gallery.

ESTABLISHING SHOT - GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM - EXTERIOR

INT. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM - MANHATTAN - DAY

Heather and Jeff stop at the Frank Lloyd Wright exhibit.

HEATHER
I’m partial to Frank Lloyd Wright. My father built our house with his design.

JEFF
Did he build it himself?

HEATHER
You name it, he did it, framing, electrical wiring, drywall, plumbing.
JEFF
Where is he now?

HEATHER
Dead. Both my parents died in 9-11. They had never been to the World Trade Center and wanted to make a day of it by eating breakfast there.

JEFF
Talk about bad timing!

HEATHER
It was a long time ago, sort of.

JEFF
I can’t imagine.

HEATHER
I was pretty bummed out. I took long walks over the bridge.

JEFF
Where were you going?

HEATHER
Nowhere. A couple of times I even contemplated jumping.

JEFF
Did you get help?

HEATHER
I suppose I should have, in retrospect.

JEFF
What did Rick say?

HEATHER
Never told him. Our marriage wasn’t great. Wow, I’ve never told anyone that before.

Jeff hugs Heather.

JEFF
I’m so sorry.

HEATHER
Let’s move on. Are you familiar with Franz Marc?

JEFF
He’s one of my favorite artists.
HEATHER
Me, too. Everyone loves his blue horse.

JEFF
I like his yellow cow.

HEATHER
Artists who paint outside the box excite me. Picasso was a genius, from fractured faces to one line drawings.

JEFF
There will never be another painter quite like Pablo Picasso.

HEATHER
My sentiments, exactly.

Jeff looks at his watch.

JEFF
Heather, I hate to break this up, but I just remembered I have to meet my son. I’m running late. Call you later?

Heather nods and waves as Jeff runs off.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY

Dawn and Amy are seated when Heather sits down.

HEATHER
Where are the others today?

DAWN
They took an earlier train.

HEATHER
Jeff reminded me about your husband’s stores. Is he hiring yet?

DAWN
Not yet. Who’s Jeff?

HEATHER
Coffee Car Jeff.

AMY
Surely you can’t mean Tweedle-Dum?

HEATHER
He’s not so dumb.
Dawn and Amy smile knowingly at each other.

DAWN
You’re talking to him now?

HEATHER
We went for lunch on Tuesday and I’m seeing him on Saturday afternoon.

AMY
What did I say again?

HEATHER
It’s just an afternoon in the park.

AMY
That’s how it starts.

HEATHER
Listen, this is between us, but as nice as he is, he’s complacent about work. I’m used to men with more drive. He’s not a potential boyfriend or husband.

DAWN
I was never under that impression.

HEATHER
How can you say that?

AMY
You’re coming off as a bit of a snob.

HEATHER
Look how I’m struggling to make ends meet. I want a man who isn’t and I won’t apologize for that.

DAWN
Wow! I never thought you’d say that.

HEATHER
Surely you know what I’m referring to, Dawn. Your husband has the qualities, and the bank book, that I’m looking for.

Amy stares blankly at her and then frowns.

AMY
That’s terrible. Money isn’t everything. People matter, not things.

HEATHER
I’ve been rich, and I’ve been poor, and
HEATHER (CONT’D)
I’m telling you Amy, I like being rich a whole lot better.

AMY
I understand, but to blow someone off because he’ll never be a billionaire?

HEATHER
I do have standards, and I’m not lowering them just because a person is nice. He has to have goals and aspirations.

AMY
He has goals for the future.

HEATHER
I’m just not seeing it, Amy.

Amy is about to say something when Heather turns to Dawn.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
Dawn, tell me about the job.

DAWN
When you didn’t get back to me I didn’t think you’d want to work there. He needs an accountant. I wasn’t sure you if you were qualified.

HEATHER
I’m not. I doubt I’ll ever get any work.

Dawn texts her husband. She waits for the answer.

DAWN
Sorry Heather. He needs someone with experience and a degree. There aren’t any sales persons jobs available right now.

HEATHER
If I had wanted a sales person’s job I would go to Walmart to be a greeter.

AMY
There you go, judging again. It’s honest work and it’s all some people can get. You sound like your old friend, Sabrina.

Heather frowns at this remark.

HEATHER
I don’t mean to, but Walmart? Seriously?
Dawn looks at Amy and they look horrified.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK LOOP - NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Heather and Jeff ride bicycles through the loop. The sun is beginning to set. Jeff and Heather pull over, stop.

JEFF
Maybe we should take the bikes back and grab a bite to eat.

HEATHER
I’m hungry and it is getting dark.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NEW YORK CITY

Heather and Jeff stroll through the park, eating hotdogs.

JEFF
How’s your smokie?

HEATHER
The sauerkraut was a good recommendation.

Jeff points to a group of clowns performing slapstick skits. In doing so, he hits Heather’s hotdog, spills mustard and ketchup on her pastel pink sweater.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
Oh, for...

Jeff takes his napkin and tries to wipe it off.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
Don’t touch me there. I’ll wash it when I get home. I hope mustard comes out.

JEFF
There’s something you don’t know about me, Heather. I’m a bit of a klutz.

HEATHER
(sarcastically)
No. You’re making that up.

JEFF
It’s true. Did you know Simon and Garfunkel performed in Central Park?

HEATHER
I know. I saw them on September 19th, 1981. I love Simon and Garfunkel.
A disheveled, emaciated man, sits, stares at Heather, an open hat in front of him. She slows to look.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
Jeff, wait a minute. I have to go back.

They return to the hotdog stand. Heather gets in line.

JEFF
Are you still hungry?

HEATHER
It’s not for me.

Heather scans the menu board, steps up to the counter.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
Two foot long smokies, with everything, French fries, ketchup packs, two cans of soda and a couple of bags of trail mix.

Jeff watches her. The hot dog vendor hands her a small box. They return to the man. Heather gives him the box.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
I thought that you might like a meal and I just happen to have this extra one.

The man, gaunt, deep set grey-blue eyes, is aghast. He reaches in, unwraps the silver foil from a hotdog.

HOMELESS MAN
Gee, thanks, lady. Are you sure?

HEATHER
I’m sure.

HOMELESS MAN
I don’t know what to say. No one has ever been this kind to me before.

HEATHER
Someone gave me a hand once when I needed help. I’ll never forget that.

HOMELESS MAN
You’ll always have good fortune. I’m going to eat tonight. Thank’s lady.

Jeff and Heather walk away.

JEFF
Heather, It’s none of my business, but aren‘t you a little strapped for cash?
HEATHER
My grandmother used to say, “When it’s gone, it’s gone,” meaning it’s only money and I’ll get more, somehow. Besides, he needs it more than I.

Jeff looks at her, smiling.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY
Dawn, Amy, Heather and Judy sit in their usual seats.

HEATHER
Well, I still don’t have a job.

DAWN
On the bright side, Sam’s opening a store in Hoboken in six months. If you complete the AGS diamond grading system course he may hire you as an assistant.

HEATHER
I appreciate that, but I need one now.

Jeff pours a dark Columbian roast, hands it to Heather.

JEFF
A gift from me to you.

As Jeff hands her the coffee, the train lurches and he spills it on Heather’s sweater.

Heather wipes off her shoulder, takes the coffee.

HEATHER
Thanks. For nothing.

JEFF
Sorry, didn’t mean that. Are you burnt?

HEATHER
I’m quite all right, in spite of you.

JEFF
At least now you can’t say that I never gave you anything.

The women laugh.

JEFF (CONT’D)
Do you want to go see ‘On the Waterfront’ on Saturday night?
HEATHER
I saw that years ago. Where is it playing?

JEFF
The Film Forum in the South Village. They show all the classics.

HEATHER
I’d like to see that again, sure.

JEFF
Then it’s settled. Dinner and a movie, because you need to eat.

HEATHER
Thanks for the coffee.

JEFF
Not necessary. You already thanked me.

HEATHER
You don’t have to spill food on me every time you want to talk to me, you know.

JEFF
Can I help it if I’m shy?

Jeff walks back to the coffee bar to serve a customer.

AMY
Wow. This is getting serious.

HEATHER
No, it’s not. We just seem to like the same things and hang out together.

DAWN
Oh, I see.

JUDY
I’d say that you two were dating.

HEATHER
Well, we’re not.

AMY
Denial!

HEATHER
Stop it. It simply isn’t the case.

AMY
That’s your story and you’re sticking to
AMY (CONT’D)
it, right?

HEATHER
Right!

AMY
It’s been over eighteen months since you
lost your husband. It’s about time you
stepped out a little.

HEATHER
Thanks for the advice, Mom!

EXT. FILM FORUM THEATRE – SOUTH VILLAGE – NIGHT
Large number of people spill out onto Houston Street.

JEFF
Did you enjoy it?

HEATHER
Marlon Brando at his best.

JEFF
What caught you about the movie? The
oldies are very different.

HEATHER
The naturalness in which they played
their roles.

JEFF
Such as?

HEATHER
What gave it verisimilitude was when Eva
Marie Saint dropped her gloves and Marlon
Brando picked them up. Instead of handing
them back to her, he played with them,
folding them, peeling back the fingers.
It’s exactly what someone might do.

JEFF
You wanna hear my philosophy of life? “Do
it to him before he does it to you.”

HEATHER
That’s the way Terry interpreted life
only because he had been pushed around so
much. It summarized a lifetime of having
to scrap for every morsel and every bit
of self-confidence.
JEFF
Edie’s world view is the opposite. Everybody cares about everybody else.

HEATHER
Which do you believe to be true?

JEFF
They’re both accurate, depending on your life experiences. What’s your take?

Heather bites her lower lip, hesitates to answer.

JEFF (CONT’D)
Well?

HEATHER
I’m of two minds. Before Rick died, I was Edie, naive, trusting, and lived in a protective bubble in a pretty world.

JEFF
And now?

HEATHER
The truth? It is a dog-eat-dog world, and if you’re weak, you don’t survive.

JEFF
But you said that you were of two minds?

HEATHER
I’d like to believe that everyone has good intentions and is kind to everyone else. Silly notion, isn’t it?

JEFF
That’s Utopia. It doesn’t exist.

HEATHER
We have the potential though.

JEFF
On the flip side, we have the potential for great evil. One only has to look at historical figures. Take Vlad the Impaler, Ivan the Terrible, Genghis Khan, Attila the Hun, Caligula, Nero, Robespierre, and Leopold II of Belgium.

HEATHER
What did he do?
JEFF
He killed ten million Congolese, about 50 percent of their population.

HEATHER
How do you know all this?

JEFF
I did a paper on it in history class.

HEATHER
Oh, interesting.

JEFF
Tomas de Torquemada during the Spanish Inquisition tortured Jews with methods you can’t imagine. No horror movie made to date can rival what he did to humans.

HEATHER
In the last century, the obvious ones.

JEFF
Sure, Stalin, Hitler, but the grand prize goes to Emperor Hirohito. Twenty million Chinese, millions of other Asians and millions more dead during World War II.

HEATHER
And the list goes on.

JEFF
Do you still believe that humans are kind and inherently good?

HEATHER
Seems to me it’s all men who are the perpetrators.

JEFF
Mostly. Ever hear of Elizabeth Bathony? Totally obsessed with blood, she tortured and killed 650 girls, ate their flesh, forced them to eat each other, drank their blood, and even bathed in it.

HEATHER
That’s so gross.

JEFF
She is the most prolific of serial killers. Women aren’t exempt.
HEATHER
Statistically, there are more men.

JEFF
Of course. What I’m trying to point out is that the way we treat others in our species is despicable.

HEATHER
I enjoyed the movie, and now I feel horrible. You’re so depressing.

JEFF
You got me started on a passion of mine and I went too far. Sorry.

HEATHER
What passion is that? Serial killers and war mongers throughout history?

JEFF
The study of human nature. It’s fascinating. That’s what I like about the movie, different POV’s regarding the human condition.

HEATHER
I’d still like to think that most humans are basically decent and the ones we’ve spoken about are few and far between.

JEFF
Everyone has the capability to be evil. Stalin was quoted as saying, “Death is the solution to all problems. No man, no problem.”

HEATHER
That’s pretty dark, Jeff.

JEFF
On some level. The human race can’t continue much longer due to over population. The wheels are in motion.

HEATHER
And yet I still see young people having more than one or two children.

JEFF
People who have large families nowadays have their heads in the sand. It’s obscene.
HEATHER
Maybe humans have run their course. It’s time for another species to take over.

JEFF
Couldn’t agree with you more.

INT. COFFEE CAR - DAY
All of the women are on the train. Jeff is not working.

AMY
I had morphine with my third baby, due to a C-section after some horrific complications which I won’t go into.

DAWN
Were you breast feeding?

AMY
Yes. I nursed all my children. But that isn’t the story I’m telling.

JUDY
Doesn’t morphine go into the milk?

MAUREEN
That can’t be good.

AMY
Oh, for God’s sake. He grew up to be just fine. Morphine makes me hallucinate. When I was leaving the hospital, the nurse said to take anything on the baby’s cart.

HEATHER
Such as?

AMY
Diapers, wash cloths, shampoo, soap, etc.

MAUREEN
They did that when I took Alexander home.

AMY
Are you going to let me finish? Christ! I asked her if I could take the navel cleaner I’d been using to clean the umbilical cord stump. She said, “Show me.” I opened the door and pointed to the glass tube and stick taped to the inside, She huffed and puffed and said, “That’s the rectal thermometer!”
The women burst into laughter.

**AMY (CONT’D)**

If you’ve ever tried to laugh after abdominal surgery, you know just how painful that can be.

**MAUREEN**

Did your son get a navel infection?

**AMY**

He’s grown up fine, thank you.

**JUDY**

You were on morphine while nursing? I have to Google that. Doesn’t sound right.

**AMY**

Get over it. That wasn’t the point.

**HEATHER**

You’ve made my day. Navel cleaner!

**AMY**

How are you and Jeff getting along?

Heather stops laughing, bites her lip.

**HEATHER**

Tonight I’m going to tell him it’s over.

**AMY**

Why?

**HEATHER**

It’s complicated, but it has to be done.

INT. BAGATELLE’S FRENCH RESTAURANT – GREENWICH VILLAGE

Heather and Jeff dine.

**HEATHER**

Why would someone, such as yourself, be so complacent about working in such a dead end job as the Coffee Car?

**JEFF**

I love that job.

**HEATHER**

Really?
JEFF
What are you driving at?

HEATHER
Nothing.

Heather looks down at her plate.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
There’s something we have to discuss. Look, these past few weeks have been
great, but I don’t think we should see
each other anymore.

JEFF
Why?

HEATHER
I can’t get involved with you.

JEFF
What’s wrong with me?

HEATHER
There’s nothing wrong with you.

JEFF
Then why not go out with me?

HEATHER
Why should I?

JEFF
We get along well, or so I thought.

HEATHER
I don’t intend to end up with a barista
earning $11.00 an hour on a commuter
train.

Jeff stares at her in horror. A long, awkward pause.

JEFF
Money shouldn’t be a criteria for a
relationship.

HEATHER
When you haven’t got any, it’s the only
thing.

JEFF
I feel sorry for you.

Heather stands.
HEATHER
Please, don’t say anymore.

JEFF
Don’t worry, I’ll stay away from you.

Heather stands and walks out of the restaurant.

INT. COFFEE CAR - NIGHT

A cold and rainy night. Jeff sits down across from Amy.

AMY
Hey, big guy. We haven’t seen you in weeks. Sorry to hear about you and Heather.

JEFF
Her values are skewed. Besides, she doesn’t want to see me anymore. I changed commuter trains because I can’t face her.

Amy’s cell phone rings.

AMY
Hi, Heather. What’s up?

Jeff watches Amy, interested.

AMY (CONT’D)
I took the last train home tonight.

Amy listens.

AMY (CONT’D)
You’re going where? In this weather?

Amy clutches at Jeff’s sleeve. Jeff whispers.

JEFF
Where’s she going?

AMY
Which bridge?

Amy turns to Jeff, still holding her phone.

AMY (CONT’D)
She hung up. She’s going to the bridge to think.

There is a pause.
JEFF
Oh, God, not the bridge.

AMY
Do you think she’ll do anything?

JEFF
Did she say which bridge?

AMY
She said that Simon and Garfunkel sang about it.

JEFF
Bridge, bridge, which one? Most people commit suicide off the Brooklyn Bridge, not the George Washington bridge.

AMY
Bridge Over Troubled Water! That’s it.

JEFF
That’s meaningless. All the bridges are over water.

Jeff grabs his cell phone and punches in something.

JEFF (CONT’D)
Here it is, Amy, the 59th Street Bridge. The Queensboro Bridge. Ed Koch, you know?

AMY
She’s going for a walk to clear her mind.

JEFF
At night, in the rain! Were you aware that she contemplated suicide once before?

AMY
Shit! In that case, let’s go now.

JEFF
I’d rather do this alone, if you don’t mind. This has something to do with me.

EXT. QUEENSBORO (59TH STREET) BRIDGE - NIGHT

Jeff runs on the bridge. Hard rain, blowing wind. Heather’s up ahead, leaning on the rail. He shouts.

JEFF
Heather, stop!
Heather does hear him or look up. Jeff runs faster.

JEFF (CONT’D)  
(shouting louder)  
Heather, Heather?

Heather looks up and Jeff is 10 feet away, walking now.

HEATHER  
What are you doing here?

JEFF  
Saving you.

HEATHER  
From what?

Jeff inches slowly, not letting her notice his proximity.

JEFF  
Please don’t do anything rash.

HEATHER  
How did you know I was here?

JEFF  
Amy is worried about you.

HEATHER  
That Amy! Always interfering.

JEFF  
I know you hate me, but don’t end it like this. Please don’t jump because of me.

HEATHER  
Don’t what? Kill myself, over you?

JEFF  
Heather, we have to talk.

HEATHER  
I don’t hate you and I’m not about to jump.

JEFF  
You’re on a bridge, at night, and you contemplated jumping once before...

HEATHER  
I came here to do some soul searching and I’ve come to a conclusion.

Jeff is upon her, grabs her arm, pulls her towards him.
JEFF
I’ve got you, you’re safe.

HEATHER
I’m not suicidal. Listen, Jeff,... I enjoyed our time together.

JEFF
So did I. Am I that bad a person?

HEATHER
Of course not. I think we should try.

JEFF
But you said...

HEATHER
I know, I said a lot of things. But, I realise now that you were right. People do have to be more important than things and money. I see that now.

JEFF
Heather, I’ll never be as rich or successful as Rick. I’ll never own a Bugatti, or a home in the Hamptons, but, like Rick, I’ll never cheat on you.

HEATHER
I don’t want to be without you.

JEFF
Really? Come home with me tonight. No strings attached, I promise.

HEATHER
I’ve been trying so hard to stand on my own two feet..to be independent.

JEFF
I know you have. Don’t worry about finding a job right away.

HEATHER
I can’t live off you. You’re broke.

Jeff looks at her, confused, shakes his head.

JEFF
From the start I knew we had something.

HEATHER
We do. You spill food on me and I’m left wet and covered in stains.
Jeff lowers his eyes, embarrassed.

JEFF
I’m going to have to work on that a bit.

Heather hugs him, they kiss. It pours hard, they run arm in arm on bridge, laughing as they get soaked.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK – NEW YORK CITY – EVENING

A clear night, warm. Heather and Jeff walk.

HEATHER
I left because of your job. How superficial was that?

JEFF
You mean my job on the Coffee Car?

HEATHER
What else would I mean?

JEFF
Is that what you think I do?

HEATHER
Isn’t it?

JEFF
It’s what I do on my way to work.

HEATHER
You never told me you had another job.

JEFF
You never asked.

HEATHER
I just assumed…

JEFF
Nah. Forget about it. Heather, two years ago I was made President of U.S. Bank Corporate Payment Systems.

HEATHER
Don’t you have to have a degree for that?

JEFF
I do. I’m a CA with a Masters in history.

HEATHER
I’m very embarrassed right now.
JEFF
They said the management acumen I had demonstrated over the years in banking made me the ideal choice to take the reins.

HEATHER
What an opportunity! You must love it.

JEFF
I hated it. What the corporation didn’t take into consideration was that my wife had just died of cancer the week before.

HEATHER
I can relate.

JEFF
I had ulcers, headaches, and slipped into a deep depression. I wore my bathrobe and never left the house. They fired me.

HEATHER
You must have been devastated.

JEFF
Au contraire! I did the happy dance. I was finally free, out of the rat race.

HEATHER
But you said you were working?

JEFF
My oldest son and wife had me over for dinner. My four year old grandson complained that all the video games were only for the big kids.

HEATHER
I wasn’t aware.

JEFF
It led me to thinking, so I went home, crunched numbers and researched the internet. Three-quarters of children under ten have a mobile device. This spells big money if you can create design applications just for kids.

HEATHER
Wow. I never thought of that.

JEFF
Neither had I so I ran it by my sons. We
JEFF (CONT’D)
design kid-friendly apps.

HEATHER
I don’t want to sound skeptical, but aren’t most parents trying to wean their children off video terminals?

JEFF
Sure, so we only design educational ones promoting good health.

HEATHER
A bit of an oxymoron, wouldn’t you say?

JEFF
No. Here’s why. After fifteen minutes, the game switches to a big stuffed animal who will only resume their game where it left off after five minutes of exercise.

HEATHER
And it works?

JEFF
Like a well oiled machine. So far parents like it and the kids love the exercises.

HEATHER
I can see how it would work.

JEFF
We’ve been receiving nothing but praise from parents, accolades from the press, and now, the money is pouring in.

HEATHER
I must say, I’m impressed.

Heather stops walking, listens to a busker, drops five dollars in his guitar case. Heather stops dead.

JEFF
What’s the matter? Do you feel ill?

The color drains from her face. Sabrina, Carlotta, and Laura lock eyes with Heather.

HEATHER
Those women used to be my friends.

JEFF
Would you rather we went the other way?
HEATHER
No. Let’s keep going.

SABRINA
(shouting)
Yoo hoo, Heather? It’s me, Sabrina.

Heather and Jeff are face to face with the women.

SABRINA (CONT’D)
Didn’t you hear me? I called your name.

HEATHER
I thought I heard some shrill bird.

SABRINA
(points to the busker)
Very funny. Always the kidder! Still slumming with winos and bums, I see.

HEATHER
There it is! What do you want, Sabrina?

Sabrina puts her arms around Heather and squeezes hard.

SABRINA
Come now, let’s let bygones be bygones.

Sabrina looks Heather up and down.

SABRINA (CONT’D)
I don’t know how you manage to always look so good on such a limited budget!

HEATHER
There it is again.

SABRINA
There what is, dear?

CARLOTTA
We miss you and don’t care if you’re poor.

SABRINA
Let’s not go too far, Carlotta.

JEFF
Heather, aren’t you going to introduce me to your friends?

HEATHER
Jeff, meet Sabrina, Carlotta, and Laura.
Jeff reaches out and shakes each of their hands.

SABRINA
I suppose you're finally over that philandering misogynist husband of yours.

Heather bites her lower lip, a look of fury on her face.

LAURA
I would never tolerate the indiscretions he had with women. Would you, Sabrina?

SABRINA
In one way, you’re fortunate he died. Infidelity should be punishable by death.

Sabrina laughs at her own remark. Heather and Jeff are angry, Laura and Carlotta appear uncomfortable.

HEATHER
I don’t have to dignify your toxic comments with an explanation, but, in his defense, Rick wasn’t cheating on me.

Sabrina sneers and rolls her eyes at the other women.

HEATHER (CONT’D)
What was that look for?

SABRINA
Come off it, Heather. Denial!

LAURA
We’ve decided to let you back into the fold. Isn’t that right, Sabrina?

SABRINA
I’ve decided that we’ll make allowances on your behalf since it wasn’t entirely your fault. The two of you can even come to our country club as our guests.

CARLOTTA
Once or twice. We can’t make a habit of it, can we, Sabrina?

LAURA
Lord knows neither of you can afford it.

HEATHER
I see you two are still under Sabrina’s influence. Don’t either one of you have a single thought of your own?
SABRINA
Just because your life is in the toilet,
don’t take it out on them. They know that
I am their natural born leader.

Carlotta and Laura balk, take a step back from Sabrina.

JEFF
Honey, what ever made you think that
these reprobates were your friends?

SABRINA
Well! I’ve never been so humiliated and
insulted in all my life.

JEFF
Judging from what Heather has told me,
and after what I’ve been privy to just
now, this isn’t the last time someone
will take a verbal swing at you.

Sabrina tugs at Carlotta and Laura’s sleeves, trying to
pry them away from Heather and Jeff.

SABRINA
Girls, let’s go.

The two women hesitate, not moving.

SABRINA (CONT’D)
Laura? Carlotta?

Laura shakes her head from side to side.

CARLOTTA
I’m with Laura. I am not your girl. Don’t
tell me how and what to think.

SABRINA
This is mutiny. How dare you side with
that ill mannered pauper?

Sabrina makes a horrible face at Heather, glaring.

HEATHER
I must say, Sabrina, you’ve mastered that
Joan Crawford chain saw face perfectly.

Laura and Carlotta stifle a laugh.

JEFF
Sabrina? Can’t say meeting you was a
pleasure, but it was definitely an event
I’ll not forget soon.
Jeff waves at Sabrina who walks away, not looking back.

CAROLTTA
Heather, you were so calm. How did you keep your cool back there?

LAURA
No one ever talks to her like that.

HEATHER
I was good, wasn’t I?

CAROLTTA
Laura and I are really sorry about the way we treated you. Can you forgive us?

HEATHER
I’ve always liked both of you and I don’t hold a grudge.

CAROLTTA
Is it really true that you commute into the city every day by train?

HEATHER
Yes. I sit in the car that sells coffee and pastries. That’s where I met Jeff and some great women. You know, without my train gang, I’d be lost.

LAURA
Sure, but you two led the good life. What happened to Rick was tragic.

HEATHER
Certainly, for him, but my life wasn’t all that great. We weren’t getting along. I was stagnating. Rick died, and I began to live. The Coffee Car saved my life.

The three women hug and start to cry.

JEFF
This couldn’t be any more schmaltzy, could it? ..I know just the place for the best ice cream and the opportunity to become better acquainted.

The three women link arms and walk with Jeff.

FADE OUT.