

(Name of Project)

by  
(Name of First Writer)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by  
(Names of Subsequent Writers,  
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by  
(Current Writer, date)

Name (of company, if applicable)  
Address  
Phone Number

FADE IN:

1 TV SCREEN - BLACK AND WHITE MOVIE

1

...British, fifties, a melodrama. We're looking at an ACTRESS - glamorous, young - but very much in the back ground of the scene - a secretary typing at her desk.

REVERSE

A YOUNG BOY sits watching the film, his clothes and the room around him telling us this is England in the 1960's. He is staring raptly at the actress.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
All my life I've been a Looky-  
Loo.

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. GOLDEN GLOBES AWARDS - EVENING

2

SLOW-MOTION

We are CLOSE on an extremely handsome YOUNG MAN staring past us with a dazzling smile.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
My name's Sidney Young. I'm a  
hack. (Beat) Yeah, that...that  
isn't me.

We PAN right and down to our hero - SIDNEY YOUNG - thirties, an odd-ball with a knack for getting people to dislike him.

SIDNEY (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
This is me at the Golden Globe  
Awards in L.A. this year. That's  
my Armani tuxedo. That's a Rolex  
*Sea-Dweller 4000* watch I'm  
wearing.

Still in SLOW-MOTION we TRACK BACK and see that Sidney is at a table with several other people, all staring raptly past us to the stage which is out of shot.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Those people all around me -  
they're all famous. They're my  
friends.

Beside him sits a beautiful young blonde woman - SOPHIE MAES (20's).

SIDNEY (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
That's the actress Sophie Maes  
beside me there.  
(MORE)

SIDNEY (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 This morning she told me she was  
 going to let me have sex with her  
 if she won the Best Actress  
 Award.

Still in SLOW MOTION, Sophie suddenly covers her face with her hands and begins to stand.

SIDNEY (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 She just won the Best Actress  
 Award.

Sophie walks out of the shot. Still sporting the fixed smile, Sidney claps in SLO-MO along with everyone else in the room. We TRACK away from Sidney past tables of CELEBRITIES towards an EXIT.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 My life didn't used to be like  
 this.

We PUSH THROUGH the EXIT DOORS and find ourselves impossibly looking at...

3 EXT. LONDON - LEICESTER SQUARE - EVENING 3

4 SLOW MOTION TRACKING SHOT 4

...a crowd of FANS held back from us by a red rope, craning their necks to see us more clearly, waving, cheering, shouting, cameras flashing... Rain lashes down.

A CAPTION reads: *"Sidney's Life, One Year Ago. Bafta Awards. London."*

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
 Looky-Loos. That's what They call  
 you when you stand out in the  
 rain all night just to catch a  
 glimpse of Them going by.

REVERSE - CELEBRITIES walk down the red carpet, pausing to wave at the fans.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 I used to pretend it was  
 different for me because I was  
 getting paid by a magazine or  
 newspaper, whatever. But that's,  
 you know...I just loved watching  
 Them. I'd stand outside looking  
 in through the window and think  
 what it would be like to somehow  
 get *inside*. But there was only  
 one way to get in. You had to be  
 famous.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. SECURITY POINT - EVENING

5

Sidney stands talking to a young PR WOMAN at the security gate. He has a small, ugly PIG on a leash.

PR WOMAN

Babe?

SIDNEY

Babe Three. Yeah.

She looks doubtfully at the pig.

PR WOMAN

Babe was a little cute piglet.

SIDNEY

Harry Potter used to be a cute little piglet too. What do you want? Tempus Fugits...

PR WOMAN

He hasn't got any ID.

SIDNEY

How many Pigs are coming tonight? Look, I was told to bring him, hand him over to the producer, Bill Miller, inside. You want me to leave him here with you, that's fine...

PR WOMAN

No, you can't leave him with me. I've got...Hold on, I'll...

She looks around, helplessly. She begins to unhook the red rope. Sidney tries to hide his excitement.

PR WOMAN (CONT'D)

If you're positive that you're supposed to...

An OLDER PR WOMAN stalks over.

OLDER PR WOMAN

(icily)

Well, well, Sidney Young.

SIDNEY

(rumbled)

Well, well...clipboard Nazi-type woman.

She turns to the SECURITY standing beside them.

OLDER PR WOMAN

Neither of these pigs gets in.

CUT TO:

6 MOMENTS LATER

6

Sidney and the Pig are being "escorted" away from the red carpet by the Security.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
The Looky-Loo's dream is that one day they will somehow get to *mingle* with the stars. But the Industry can't allow any mingling. Stars have to be kept away from us, have to be *quarantined*, so they don't become *normal*. That's why security is so tight at award ceremonies.

They pass a ravishing CAMERON DIAZ walking the other way. She looks curiously at the pig as she passes. Sidney stares after her, longingly.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. STREET - SOHO - EVENING

7

Sidney opens the boot of a battered Toyota and takes out a SUIT BAG and HOLDALL. Beside him the pig is eating the remains of a burger on the ground.

SIDNEY  
Get in the car, Murdoch.

The Pig stares at him. He lifts him into the boot. The Pig starts to SQUEAL loudly. Sidney stares at him, uncertain what to do.

SIDNEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But after the awards come the parties - the Miramax Party, the London Party and, best of all...

CUT TO:

8 INT. SANDERSON HOTEL - EVENING

8

TRACKING through the doors and into the lobby of the exclusive hotel.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
...the Sharps Magazine Party - so exclusive that there are no passes, no invitations, no press.

We find Sidney checking in at the desk.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(to Receptionist,  
horrified)  
(MORE)

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
*How much? I only want to stay for  
 one night!*

CUT TO:

9 INT. LIFT - MOMENTS LATER

9

Sidney stands in the rising lift, suit bag in his hand, holdall at his feet.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
 This is where the movie stars can  
 finally relax, secure in the  
 knowledge they are among their  
 own kind.

We see the PIG'S SNOUT poking out of the zip of the holdall.

CUT TO:

10 INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

10

Sidney turns from the mirror to face us. He is wearing a WAITER'S UNIFORM of white shirt, waistcoat, and bow tie. He is also wearing a WIG and FALSE MOUSTACHE.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
 And that is when I strike.

He picks up a tray of canapés from the bed and looks down to where the Pig watches him from the floor.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 I want you in bed by ten. And no  
 porn.

He tosses the pig one of the canapés.

CUT TO:

11 INT. HOTEL - EVENING

11

Sidney, tray in hand, peers around the corner to the entrance to the hotel's roofed COURTYARD. The Older PR Woman we saw earlier stands at the door, a formidable presence. As we watch she greets an approaching CELEBRITY gushingly. Seizing his chance Sidney darts towards the door and, tray held aloft to cover his face, slips through into the courtyard beyond.

CUT TO:

12 INT. HOTEL COURTYARD - SHARPS PARTY - MOMENTS LATER

12

...as Sidney emerges from the washrooms, now dressed only in the white shirt and black trousers.

He scoops up a passing glass of champagne, checks his moustache and surveys the courtyard - a room full of *glamour*: tanned skin, diamonds, beautiful dresses, beautiful suits, champagne. He stands surveying the crowd of A-list celebrities in front of him, dazed.

SIDNEY  
(to himself)  
You can do this. You belong here.  
You're a star. You're a big,  
bright shining star...

CUT TO:

13 INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

13

The room is trashed - furniture over-turned, mini-bar open and broken bottles all over the floor. A weird squealing which could almost be human is coming from the bathroom.

ASSISTANT MANAGER (O.S.)  
Hello? Sir?

The squealing stops.

ASSISTANT MANAGER (CONT'D)  
Is everything alright?

The door opens and the Assistant Manager walks in and stands staring around him in horror. Behind him the pig emerges from the bathroom and slips out of the open door, across the corridor and straight into the open lift...

CUT TO:

14 INT. SHARPS PARTY - EVENING

14

Sidney is talking to a drunk Cameron Diaz.

SIDNEY  
No, when I'm in L.A. I stay at the Sunset Marquis, when I'm here I always stay at the Sanderson. It's, you know, I don't feel at home these days unless I'm in a hotel.

CAMERON DIAZ  
So what do you do?

SIDNEY  
Oh, I'm a writer. Movie writer.

CAMERON DIAZ  
Oh great.

SIDNEY  
Yeah. Got one in pre-production now.

(MORE)

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 You know it's really weird  
 running into you like this  
 because just the other day I was  
 talking with the producer about  
 who was right for the lead and I  
 said I thought you'd be  
 perfect...

She starts to laugh.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 No, seriously, you would,  
 because, you know, you have this  
 mixture of intelligence and  
 beauty and fragility that we're  
 looking for and, uh...

CAMERON DIAZ  
 (smiling)  
 What's the film?

SIDNEY  
*Tits of Fury.*

She laughs.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (smiling)  
 I'm joking, I'm just...It's a bio-  
 pic. About Greta Garbo. That's  
 why I thought of you. You have  
 those amazing cheek-bones  
 and...are they real? Have you had  
 plastic surgery?

CAMERON DIAZ  
 No. Have you?

SIDNEY  
 Me? No, hardly anything. A penis  
 reduction as a child, that's  
 pretty much...

She laughs again, snorting into her drink. Sidney can't  
 believe this - *she likes him!*

CUT TO:

15 INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - EVENING

15

The lift doors glide open and the Pig trots out and around  
 the corner. The PR Woman is still at the door to the  
 courtyard, berating one of her staff. The Pig sails past  
 them both, unnoticed, and disappears into the party.

CUT TO:



16 INT. SHARPES PARTY - EVENING

16

A YOUNG MAN sits drinking at a table. He slips a little bag of Ecstasy from his pocket and takes one.

UNDER THE TABLE

As the Young Man pushes the bag back into his pocket. The Pig sits at his feet watching as the little bag slips back out and DROPS to the floor. The Pig sniffs at the bag...

CUT TO:

17 SIDNEY AND NATASCHA

17

...still talking. The place is crammed now, and hot. Sidney wipes sweat from his forehead.

CAMERON DIAZ

Oh god, I'm drunk.

SIDNEY

Are you?

CAMERON DIAZ

I'm so drunk. I haven't eaten and...

SIDNEY

You feel okay? Because my room's just upstairs if you want to lie down or, or loosen any, you know, morals or...

CAMERON DIAZ

(laughing)

What is your name again?

SIDNEY

Clark. Clark Tuttle.

He takes a sip of his champagne and his moustache comes loose and hangs limply from his face.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

How'd you do?

Cameron stares at him in surprise but Sidney doesn't notice - he is staring past her to where there is something of a COMMOTION amongst the guests. The PR Woman is hurrying across the room, hissing into her ear-piece. Somebody screams. Then to Sidney's horror a group of guests scatter in panic and the cause of the commotion is revealed: the Pig charges into view, heading straight for him.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

(muttering)

Oh, shit...

The Pig suddenly skids to a halt and stares at Sidney with hot eyes. The PR Woman follows the Pig's gaze and spots Sidney.

OLDER PR WOMAN  
(into headset)  
Sarah, get security! It's Sidney  
fucking Young! The pig got in!

CAMERON DIAZ  
(fearfully)  
Who's Sidney Young?

Before Sidney can answer the Pig charges.

SIDNEY  
Oh, *shit!*

Sidney turns and legs it.

ACROSS THE ROOM

We are looking OVER THE SHOULDER of a tall grey-haired MAN who stands in the shadows watching Sidney run past. This is CLAYTON HARDING, his face hidden for the time being. He lights a cigarette with a thoughtful air and watches Sidney's flight, rolling the BOOK OF MATCHES between his fingers.

BACK WITH SIDNEY

...as the Pig catches up with him and lunges at his ankles. Sidney screams, trips and flies through the air, wig spinning free, hurtling straight towards a table of startled celebrities. We FREEZE FRAME.

SUPERED TITLE - "How To Lose Friends & Alienate People."

We hear the opening of David Bowie's *Star*.

CUT TO:

18 INT. HOTEL CORRIDORS - LATER

18

As the TITLES and song continue we see a protesting Sidney and Pig being escorted by Security through the endless corridors of the Hotel.

Titles End.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

19 INT. SIDNEY'S FLAT - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

19

A seedy flat in Shepherds Bush. Sidney lies in bed reading a newspaper in his underwear. A phone is RINGING in the next room.

Sidney begins to cut out a photograph from one of the papers - Sidney struggling with an irate Clint Eastwood and some Security Men. The phone continues to ring.

SIDNEY  
(calling)  
Will you get that? (Beat) Will  
you get the phone?

Sighing he gets up and scratching himself, stumbles through to...

20

LIVING ROOM

20

...which we see is, bizarrely, an OFFICE - full of an odd assortment of JOURNALISTS, desks, antiquated computers and an old fax machine. The walls are lined with past covers from Sidney's magazine - The Post-Modern Review. One bears a photograph of John Travolta with the title "*Scientology saved his career. But Kirstie Alley, Juliette Lewis, and Mimi Rogers are still fucked.*"

A JOURNALIST is talking on the phone by the door. The other phone is still ringing.

JOURNALIST  
Look, we don't *hate* celebrities at the Post-Modern Review, okay? We just don't think they should be taking themselves so seriously. For us a celebrity is a *text* to be *deconstructed*. Apart from Costner obviously. He's just a dick.

Sidney edges past him to where a LARGE WOMAN and a histrionic THIN MAN are in the middle of a argument, encouraged by the other members of staff.

THIN MAN  
(shrill)  
I wouldn't do this the honour of calling it a review. It's a puerile, personal attack in, in alcoholic prose, in which incidentally you manage to misquote both Derrida and Lyotard. I am a...

LARGE WOMAN  
(calmly)  
Girl.

THIN MAN  
...an *internationally respected* academic and...

LARGE WOMAN  
Prick.

THIN MAN  
...author of a very well received  
book on the history of culture  
and a...

LARGE WOMAN  
Fuckwit.

SIDNEY  
(threading his way past)  
Couldn't one of you answer the  
phone?

As the argument continues behind him he reaches the phone  
with a bored YOUNG MAN sitting by it.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Will you answer that? What do I  
pay you for?

YOUNG MAN  
You don't pay me.

SIDNEY  
Just get the phone!

The Young Man answers the phone.

YOUNG MAN  
Post-Modern Review.

THIN MAN  
Sidney, if she doesn't apologise  
I'm quitting.

SIDNEY  
(to the Large Woman)  
George can't leave. You'll have  
to apologise.

LARGE WOMAN  
Why can't George leave?

SIDNEY  
Because he owns the fax machine.

Sidney notices the Young Man is staring at him with a  
scared expression.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
What?

YOUNG MAN  
It's Sharps Magazine.

Sidney stops smiling.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)  
We're finished.

SIDNEY  
We're not finished.

YOUNG MAN  
They sue, we're finished.

SIDNEY  
Shut up. (To the others) Will you  
be quiet!

They ignore him and continue bickering. Sidney picks up the phone.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Sidney Young.

MAN (O.S.)  
(over phone, gravel  
voiced)  
This is Clayton Harding. I'm the  
editor of Sharps Magazine.

Sidney is visibly thrown but tries not to show it.

SIDNEY  
Ah, Lord Vader.

CUT TO:

21 INT. CLAYTON'S OFFICE - DAY

21

SHOOTING FROM BEHIND Clayton Harding's swivel chair - all we can see is Clayton's grey hair, his custom-built desk and the enormous office in front of him. He is smoking. As he talks he rolls a BOOK OF MATCHES between his fingers.

CLAYTON HARDING  
I saw you at my party, just  
before you ruined it with your  
little pig stunt.

SIDNEY (O.S.)  
(over phone)  
You liked that?

CLAYTON HARDING  
Sure. I especially liked the part  
where Clint Eastwood beat the  
shit outa ya.

CUT TO:

22 INT. MAGAZINE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

22

Sidney takes a slug of whiskey from a bottle on the desk, coughs a little.

SIDNEY

He was lucky he's old otherwise things could've got out of hand. So why you ringing? You want an apology?

CLAYTON HARDING (O.S.)

I think you owe me one.

SIDNEY

We're not scared of you, Harding. You want to sue, go ahead and sue. It's like Jimmy Stewart said, *(a poor Stewart impersonation:)* "You sit up there and you spin your little webs and you think the whole world revolves around you and your money. Well, it doesn't, Mr... Mr...

CLAYTON HARDING (O.S.)

Potter.

SIDNEY

"Mr. Potter..." You go ahead and sue if you want, but I warn you, if you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine. *(Starting to enjoy himself)* Destroy me and a hundred more will spring up in my place - men who care nothing for success, men who cannot be bought, men whose only loyalty is to...

CLAYTON HARDING (O.S.)

*(calmly)*

I want you to come and work for me at Sharps Magazine in New York.

Beat. Sidney stares to where the Thin Man is trying to get out of the door with the Fax Machine, the Large Woman struggling with him. The two fall to the floor. The rest of the staff gather around them.

STAFF

*(chanting)*

Fight, fight, fight...

SIDNEY

*(into phone)*

Um...could you say that again please?

CUT TO:

23 INT. CLAYTON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

23

From the phone in Clayton's hand we can still faintly hear the chant of "*fight, fight, fight...*"

CLAYTON HARDING  
I want you to come and work for  
me at Sharps. One year contract.  
See how you get along. Think  
about it.

He hangs up. On his desk we see a few copies the *Post-Modern Review* - glimpses of stars on the covers - Catherine Zeta-Jones, Orlando Bloom... Clayton's hand sifts one copy from the others and holds it up - the cover depicts CLAYTON HIMSELF - patrician handsome, stern, photo-shopped so that he appears to be lowering his pants and revealing his butt to the line of CELEBRITIES who stand behind him, cigars in hand, blowing smoke. HILARY CLINTON is first in line. A headline reads "*Clayton's Cronies - Waiting To Exhale.*"

Still shooting from behind we see Clayton's shoulders shake slightly, as a wheeze of laughter escapes him. He stops himself as an ASSISTANT walks in.

ASSISTANT  
Jennifer is here sir.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Okay. Thanks.

He hurriedly throws the magazine into a BOTTOM DRAWER of the desk and slams it shut. The Assistant walks back out. Clayton's shoulders shake briefly once more before Clayton manages to control himself.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. LONDON - MARBLE ARCH - FLAT - EVENING

24

The flat door opens to reveal SIENNA - attractive, fashionable, posh. Without much enthusiasm, she examines Sidney, standing on her doorstep.

CUT TO:

25 INT. FLAT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

25

Sidney has obviously interrupted a dinner party. The well-heeled guests have paused, a little awkwardly, mid-meal. Sienna and Sidney stand beside them. Sienna looks uncomfortable.

SIENNA  
New York?

SIDNEY  
New York. (Beat) It's a wonderful town.

SIENNA

Right. Well...I don't know what to say. That's a real job. You'll have to get your copy in on time, listen to people... be sober...

SIDNEY

I've accepted. I think Sharps Magazine needs me.

SIENNA

Plus your magazine's closing down, right?

SIDNEY

Right. That too.

He glances at the watching guests.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

Dinner party?

SIENNA

(tight)

Dinner party. Everyone - this is Sidney Young.

GUEST

I think I've seen you on TV. You're the one Kevin Costner tried to run over?

SIDNEY

(cheerfully)

Yup. Ooo - Pavlova. (Beat) Love Pavlova.

GUEST

(reluctantly)

I could move along if you'd like to...

SIENNA

(firmly)

He isn't staying.

SIDNEY

I'm not staying. I just wanted to...

He glances at the listening dinner party guests once more, self-conscious.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

Is there somewhere we could talk Sienna?

SIENNA

I'm in the middle of dinner. What is it?



SIDNEY

(awkward)

Well, okay...I wondered if...I wondered if you'd like to come with me to New York? I know we haven't been going out very long but...I sort of feel we...

SIENNA

(over-lapping)

We haven't really been "going out" Sidney...

SIDNEY

...sort of feel we...well, that's, we've had dates so...

SIENNA

(over-lapping)

Not really dates, more...

SIDNEY

...so I think...several meals and drinks and also *intimacy* so...

He turns to his audience with an embarrassed laugh.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

I don't want to get into semantics here but I think most people would say that we were going out...

He notices one of the GUESTS - a WOMAN - staring icily at him.

WOMAN

Hello.

SIDNEY

Hello.

WOMAN

We haven't been introduced. I'm Gill. Sienna's girlfriend.

Sidney stares at her. Silence.

CUT TO:

26

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE FLAT - MOMENTS LATER

26

Sidney is striding down the street. He is holding the pavlova. Sienna appears, running after him.

SIENNA

Give it back! Give me it *back!*

SIDNEY  
(upset)  
Go back to your Vagitararians.

SIENNA  
(furious)  
You are such a fucking loser!  
You're going to come back from  
New York with your tail between  
your legs!

Sidney starts to walk away again.

SIENNA (CONT'D)  
I only kept on seeing you because  
I felt sorry for you! (Yelling  
after him) You were a pity fuck!

Upset, Sidney strides on, clutching the pavlova.

SIDNEY  
(muttering to himself)  
You're a star. You're a big,  
bright shining star...

We hear the sound of an aeroplane engine build as we...

CUT TO:

27 AN AEROPLANE ROARS THROUGH THE BLUE SKY. 27

CUT TO:

28 EXT. JFK AIRPORT - DAY 28

Sidney emerges from the airport, wearing his crumpled brown suit, dragging his suitcase behind him. He stares around, excited to be here.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. NEW YORK - HELL'S KITCHEN - EVENING 29

Sidney drags his suitcase down the quiet street and stops outside an apartment block, checking the address.

CUT TO:

30 INT. APARTMENT - EVENING 30

An elderly Polish lady - MRS KOWALSKI - is showing Sidney around the small and cheaply furnished apartment.

SIDNEY  
Yup, this is good. This is...I  
can put my drum kit just over  
there and, uh...

She stares at him.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
That's a...that's just a joke.  
They're just little...congas.

MRS KOWALSKI  
This magazine you are working  
for? It is good?

SIDNEY  
It's Sharps Magazine. You know  
Sharps? It's sort of society,  
fashion, crime, finance,  
Hollywood celebrities...

MRS KOWALSKI  
(scornful)  
*Hollywood. Sodom and Gomorrah.*  
Now everybody is *celebrity*. You  
take out your breasts, you are  
*celebrity*.

SIDNEY  
(eyeing her chest  
doubtfully)  
Well, I think it depends on the  
breasts but...

MRS KOWALSKI  
(oblivious)  
In Poland, someone was famous  
because they had *done*  
something...Marie Curie...Pope  
John Paul...

SIDNEY  
Yeah, they don't make  
entertainers like that any  
more...

Mrs Kowalski cuffs the back of his head. Sidney is somewhat  
surprised by this familiarity, having only just met the  
lady.

MRS KOWALSKI  
When do you start work?

SIDNEY  
Tomorrow morning.

MRS KOWALSKI  
Well, you need to be fresh, make  
a good impression.(Leaving) Go to  
bed.

SIDNEY  
Just what I'm going to do...

CUT TO:

31 INT. BAR - EVENING

31

A drunken Sidney dances frenetically on a small dance floor made of squares of flashing color, compensating with enthusiasm for what he lacks in coordination. The women on the floor shuffle further and further away from him.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. STREET - EVENING

32

Sidney walks down the street, staring bright eyed at the city around him, in love with New York. A SEXY WOMAN in a short dress passes him. Sidney oggles her as she walks into a BAR.

CUT TO:

33 INT. BAR - EVENING

33

Sidney finds the Sexy Woman sitting at the bar. There is an empty stool beside her. Sidney sidles into it.

SEX Y WOMAN  
(to Barman)  
A Kona please.

Sidney gestures to the Barman to make it two. He sits trying to think of something to say. The barman returns with their drinks.

SIDNEY  
(raising his glass)  
Hi, my name's Clark. Or as the ladies like to refer to me, 'Hey you in the bushes!'

The Woman looks at him without expression.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Heh, heh...Simpsons...

She turns away. Sidney sips his drink, grimaces.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(To Barman)  
What the hell's that?

BARMAN  
That's a water sir.

SIDNEY  
Well that's...that's not right,  
is it? That's not...put a dash of  
beer in that.

While he's been talking a young woman returns to her seat on the other side of Sidney.

This is ALISON OLSEN (20's) attractive despite her lack of interest in her appearance. She has a NOTEBOOK and PEN in her hand.

ALISON  
(to Sidney, as she sits)  
I'm sorry but that seat is taken.

Sidney gets up and examines the stool.

SIDNEY  
Is there...am I sitting on the  
little sign, or...?

Not amused, Alison points to the drink on the bar in front of Sidney.

ALISON  
See the White Russian there? My  
friend is going to be here any  
second.

SIDNEY  
(to Barman)  
Can you reserve these seats?

BARMAN  
Nope.

To Alison's fury, Sidney turns back to the Sexy Woman.

SIDNEY  
So, where was I/ Yeah - Clark  
Tuttle. I'm a journalist.

SEXY WOMAN  
(a flicker of interest)  
Who'd you write for?

SIDNEY  
A little periodical you may have  
heard of called Sharps Magazine?

Alison shakes her head, gives a hollow laugh.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(ignoring her)  
Yeah, I'm, I'm Cultural Editor.

Alison gives another hollow laugh.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
I pretty much deal with the  
Hollywood celebrity angle,  
interviewing stars and...

ALISON  
That is so sad...

SIDNEY  
 (turning to her,  
 irritated)  
 Can I...? Do you...?

ALISON  
 That is so sad. You could pretend  
 to be a brain surgeon, or, or an  
*aid* worker. You pick a, a  
 journalist from an upscale  
 tabloid. That is so...

SIDNEY  
 No-one's pretending to be  
 anything, Missy...

He takes out a card from his wallet and waves it vaguely.  
 Alison takes the card before Sidney can put it away again,  
 glances at it and shows it to the Sexy Woman.

ALISON  
 This is a library card. (Reading  
 it) From *Glo-chester*...

SIDNEY  
 (snatching it back)  
 That's...not *that* one...and it's  
*Gloucester*. (*Searching wallet*)  
 I've got it somewhere so...Ahah!

He produces the PHOTOGRAPH of him being held in a headlock  
 by Clint Eastwood. It's been laminated.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (To Sexy Woman)  
 Okay. Who's that there with Clint  
 Eastwood?

SEXY WOMAN  
 Morgan Freeman?

SIDNEY  
 No, in the headlock.

The Sexy Woman gets up and walks away. Sidney watches her  
 go bitterly.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (bitterly)  
 Craptacular.

ALISON  
 Will you move along to the next  
 stool now?

SIDNEY  
 (as if considering)  
 Ummmmmm...No.

ALISON  
 Really? Well maybe when my friend  
 comes you'll change your mind.  
 (MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Because he happens to be a good  
deal taller than you and to  
have...

The Bartender re-appears with Sidney's beer.

BARTENDER  
Are you Alison?

ALISON  
Yes?

BARTENDER  
Your boyfriend just rang, said to  
tell you he wouldn't be able to  
make it tonight.

He walks off. Feeling like an idiot Alison grabs her coat  
and notebook. She starts to leave.

SIDNEY  
(conciliatory)  
Wait a minute...

She turns back.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Can I have his drink?

Alison leaves. A heavily made-up WOMAN slides onto a bar  
stool on the other side of Sidney. Sidney glances at her,  
smiles. He picks up his bottle.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Hi, my name's Clark. Or as the  
ladies like to refer to me, 'hey  
you in the bushes!'

The Woman laughs.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. STREET - LATER

34

Alison stands in a doorway, sheltering from the RAIN. She's  
been waiting a long time for a cab. At last a CAB draws up,  
letting someone out. Alison heads for it. Just before she  
can get there Sidney hurries up with the Woman and starts  
to get in the back.

ALISON  
Hey!

SIDNEY  
Well, look who it is...

ALISON  
I've been waiting. That's my cab.

SIDNEY  
 Wow. You just reserve *everything*  
 don't you?

He gives his address to the driver. Alison notices something about the Woman.

ALISON  
 Do you understand the concept of  
 Karma?

She inscribes a circle in the air with her finger.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
 What goes around, comes around,  
 asshole.

SIDNEY  
 (smiling)  
 Kiss my Chakras.

He closes the door and the cab drives off.

CUT TO:

35 INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

35

Sidney and the Woman dance drunkenly around the room to the music blaring from Sidney's stereo. The track finishes and they stand gasping for breath.

WOMAN  
 I'm gonna powder my nose. Why  
 don't you put on something a  
 little more romantic?

She staggers off down the hall. Sidney, giddy with excitement, searches through some CD's and puts on Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*. He sways, playing air-guitar for a moment. The music is suddenly switched off. He turns to find Mrs Kowalski standing beside the CD player, staring grimly at him.

SIDNEY  
 Mrs Lebowski...

MRS KOWALSKI  
 Kowalski. You know what time it  
 is? The music blaring, your door  
 open...

SIDNEY  
 (trying to seem sober)  
 Was it? Fuck. I mean, shit.  
 Sorry. I just...met an old friend  
 and brought them back...

The Woman staggers back into the room, her back to us. She is NAKED. She is also surprisingly muscular.



SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
...for a little...

He notices the woman. His gaze drops to below the waist.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
...penis.

Mrs Kowalski turns and takes in the view. Nobody moves.

CUT TO:

36 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING 36

A hung-over Sidney wakes up in his bed, light streaming through the window.

37 BATHROOM 37

He examines his reflection, psyching himself up for his first day.

SIDNEY  
You can do this! You can do this!

He hums the fanfare from the *Rocky* theme.

38 LIVING ROOM 38

Sidney walks into the room, still humming the theme tune, shadow boxing. He opens the blinds and turns to the couch.

The "Woman" wakes up from where she has been sleeping on the couch and gazes blearily at Sidney.

SIDNEY  
Quick coffee Bob and then you've got to go.

We hear the opening of Brian Ferry's version of *The 'In' Crowd* as we...

CUT TO:

39 EXT. TIMES SQUARE - MORNING 39

As the song continues we see Sidney swagger down the busy sidewalk towards us. He is wearing sunglasses and a T-Shirt emblazoned with a photograph of Keanu Reeves and the caption "Young, Dumb and Full of Cum." The T-Shirt is riding up a little over his belly.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
This is my city.

He stops at a gleaming chrome entrance and stares up at the Colliers Building towering above him.

CUT TO:

40 INT. COLLIERS BUILDING - ENTRANCE SECURITY - MORNING 40

As the song continues Sidney, still swaggering, is escorted through the formidable looking security by a thin and chic ASSISTANT. The entrance hall arches above them, a vast and impressive cavern of chrome and glass.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
This is *my* building.

CUT TO:

41 INT. LIFT - MOMENTS LATER 41

Sidney leans nonchalantly against the wall of the lift examining the Chic Assistant and two stunningly beautiful MODELS who are in conversation. Sidney manages to catch the attention of one of the models and flashes what he believes is a rakish smile. In return he receives an icy glare.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
These are *my* models.

CUT TO:

42 INT. SHARPS MAGAZINE - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER 42

The Chic Assistant leads Sidney down a curving, red carpeted corridor, past a chrome wall inscribed with the giant logo of the magazine. They reach a set of double doors which the Assistant opens for Sidney...

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
And this...

Sidney walks through into...

43 CLAYTON HARDING'S OFFICE 43

Harding swings around in his chair to glare at us, a cigarette in his mouth.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
...is *my* Boss.

CLAYTON HARDING  
What the fuck are you wearing?

The song grinds to an abrupt halt. Sidney loses a quantity of swagger. He examines his T-Shirt.

SIDNEY  
You like it? I brought you one.

He takes a T-Shirt from his satchel and hands it to Harding.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Thanks.

Casually he flings the shirt out of the open window behind him.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
Next time you come here dressed like that, you follow the shirt. You understand?

Sidney nods dumbly.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
Sit down. How was the flight?

SIDNEY  
(sitting)  
Good. Thanks for the business class tickets, Clay.

Harding regards him gravely.

CLAYTON HARDING  
That was a mistake. And don't call me Clay.

SIDNEY  
Oh. Well, if it's any consolation I got downgraded anyway.

CLAYTON HARDING  
(gravely)  
That is some consolation.

Sidney notices that the copy of The Post-Modern Review is on the desk - Clayton dropping his pants.

SIDNEY  
(nervously)  
Ha! That was just a little, uh... as it happens I'm a big fan of yours. Especially your earlier funny work.

For a moment Harding looks like he might throw his ashtray at Sidney, then he emits a bark of laughter. Sidney takes out a notebook and pen.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
It's true. You're actually a bit of a hero of mine and I really think together we can give this magazine back some *teeth*. Now I've got a few ideas that I'd like to...

CLAYTON HARDING

(interrupting)

You think you've arrived, doncha?  
(Beat) I hate to break it to you  
kid but you're only in the *First*  
*Room*. Don't get me wrong, it's  
not nothing - but it doesn't mean  
you've arrived. After a year or  
two you might find a secret door  
at the back of the *First Room*  
that leads to the *Second Room*. In  
time, if you're lucky, you'll  
find the door to the *Third Room*.

He gazes at Sidney through narrowed eyes.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)

There are Seven Rooms. (Beat) You  
are only in the First. (Beat)  
Doncha forget it.

Sidney has been listening with a frown of concentration.

SIDNEY

(sketching in the  
notebook)

Okay, so...So, you're saying...if  
that's Room One - is Room  
Two...is the door for Room Two *in*  
Room One? Like that? Are they  
connecting? Is it...are they  
*little* doors? Is that why you  
can't find them at first?

Harding exhales smoke and puts out his cigarette.

CLAYTON HARDING

Which brings us to the subject of  
your sense of humour. I had a  
look through your "magazine"  
here.

SIDNEY

What'd you think?

Clayton swivels in his chair and stares thoughtfully out  
over the Manhattan skyline.

CLAYTON HARDING

Oh, I thought it was...kinda  
*snarky*. And *bitter*. And...  
*witless*.

Sidney digests this. Clayton seems lost in thought.  
Finally...

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)

I'm going to try you out in the *I*  
*Spy* Section.

CUT TO:

44

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

44

Sidney is hurrying to keep up with LAWRENCE MADDOX (40's) as he strides down the corridor. Lawrence is Canadian, handsome, one of the golden boys of the magazine and arrogant with it. Other EMPLOYEES pass them as they walk, heads down, expressions serious. The place is a model of quiet, professional industry. Page

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(glancing at Sidney's  
clothes)

Well, Sidney. We've only just met  
but already I perceive I am in  
the presence of a rare comic  
sensitivity.

SIDNEY

Thanks.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
I know your little jinx gave you  
a certain *notoriety* back in *Olde  
England* but things are going to  
be pretty different here. Harding  
wants me to be your Rabbi, show  
you the ropes. Are you aware of  
what we do at I Spy?

SIDNEY

You photograph famous people when  
they're drunk?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(ignoring him)  
*I Spy* is the nation's window onto  
High Society. The Looky-Loos read  
us because...well, *They Weren't  
There*. The Glitterati read us  
because we tell them *They Were  
There*. For this system to work we  
have to know where *There* is. We  
have to know everyone and  
everything that's going on in the  
night-life of this city.

SIDNEY

So...when we go out to clubs and  
things...would that, would that  
be on expenses or...?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
This isn't a vacation. It's a  
*vocation*.

Maddox sweeps around the corner into an open-plan office  
area. Fact-checkers and Assistants buzz around.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
When we do go out you're going to  
have to wear something more  
suitable.

SIDNEY  
Okay. What do you mean by  
suitable?

Maddox gestures at Sidney's body.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Something that covers all of this  
up.

He starts to check messages on his desk. Sidney, trying to  
seem at ease, stares at a black and white PHOTOGRAPH on the  
wall.

SIDNEY  
Is that Mussolini?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(Beat.)  
No, Sidney, that's Richard  
Harper. The owner of this  
magazine.

SIDNEY  
Oh. Looks a little like,  
uh...(pointing to the child in  
the photograph, smiling) Who's  
this funny looking kid? Is that  
his son?

Maddox stares at him.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(Icily)  
That's his daughter, Elizabeth;  
now my wife.

A SUBTITLE materializes like a halo around Maddox's head.  
It reads: *Do Not Fuck with Me.*

SIDNEY  
(flustered)  
Really? Well, she's very...isn't  
she? Really, very...

Someone walks up behind Sidney.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Miss Olsen here takes care of the  
gallery openings, book launches  
and other intellectual fare. Can  
you find our new rookie something  
to do?

Sidney turns to find Alison behind him, eating an apple.  
Beat.

ALISON  
I hear the Cultural Editor's job  
is up for grabs?

CUT TO:

45

LATER

45

Sidney sits at his desk, tossing peanuts into the air, catching them in his mouth. Alison is sorting through some sheets of paper.

ALISON

(coldly)

So, what should I call you? Is it Clark Tuttle or...?

SIDNEY

That's my *nom de guerre*.

ALISON

Clark Tuttle?

SIDNEY

When I was a kid, I had this imaginary friend...

ALISON

Yeah, that doesn't surprise me.

SIDNEY

...Clark. I think I got it from the Superman comics. My alter ego. Anytime something got broken, or the bathroom got accidentally set on fire - it wasn't me. It was Clark.

ALISON

How old were you when you did this?

SIDNEY

I don't know, twenty, twenty one...

ALISON

(un-amused)

First job - we need a hundred and seventy five words to go with a picture of one, uh...(reading) *Todd Williams?* He's a...

SIDNEY

(automatically)

...up and coming actor. Bit parts in , *Flight of the Phoenix*, *King Kong* and *Brokeback Mountain*. Described by some as the new Tobey Maguire.

Alison stares at him as if he's a freak. She hands him the sheets.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
What's this? (reading) "Boasted,  
chuckled, flick, freeloader,  
fucking, funky, glitzy, golfer,  
honcho, hooker...?"

ALISON  
Banned words.

SIDNEY  
What?

ALISON  
(sitting at her desk)  
It's a list of words you're not  
allowed to use in the magazine.  
It's a rule.

SIDNEY  
Sister they haven't written a  
rule that I can't break.

ALISON  
Speaking of which how was your  
date last night?

SIDNEY  
He was a perfect gentleman. I  
take it you knew and decided not  
to tell me?

Alison inscribes a circle in the air with her finger and  
turns to her work. Sidney examines the staff around him,  
still tossing nuts.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
So fill me in on the people here.  
Who's single?

Alison ignores him.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Who's on smack? Who's the office  
weirdo...?

A tossed nut lands in his EYE.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Ahh, fuck. Salt. Oww.

He holds his eye open and tries to pour a little water from  
a bottle into it.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Ahh, fuck...went up my nose...

Alison stares at him pointedly.

CUT TO:



Sidney is on the phone. He is staring at some contact sheets.

SIDNEY  
Hello, is that the Parsons  
Gallery?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Yes, it is. This is Celia Parsons  
speaking.

SIDNEY  
This is Sidney Young from Sharps  
Magazine? We're running some  
photographs from your opening of  
the *Chris Blick* exhibition, and I  
just need to caption them. I was  
wondering if you could help me  
identify some of the people?

WOMAN'S VOICE  
(over phone)  
All right.

SIDNEY  
Thanks. So...Chris Blick. Man or  
woman?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
What?

SIDNEY  
Is Chris Blick a man or woman?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(beat)  
Are you sure you're calling from  
Sharps magazine?

SIDNEY  
Yes, I am.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(icy)  
Tell me Stanley, why have they  
given you this assignment if you  
don't know who one of the most  
famous painters in America is?

SIDNEY  
I...I don't really know.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(snapping)  
He's a man.

SIDNEY  
Okay. Is he an old man?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 (beat)  
 He's an *older* man, yes.

SIDNEY  
 (staring at a  
 photograph)  
 Okay, I've got two old men here -  
 so is he the fat one?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 (beat)  
 Do you realize that Clayton  
 Harding is one of my oldest  
 friends?

SIDNEY  
 (beat)  
 What's that got to do with it?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 Right.

She hangs up. Beat. Sidney looks around, hoping no-one was listening. He re-dials.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Parsons gallery.

SIDNEY  
 Is he the one with the wonky eye?

She hangs up again.

CUT TO

47 INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

47

Sidney stands drinking coffee with two of the magazines  
 FASHIONISTAS - INGRID and ANNA.

ANNA  
 I think I'd have to say Jennifer  
 Anniston. Because, when you meet  
 her, yes, she's got the homely  
 thing, but...she *glimmers*, you  
 know?

INGRID  
 Absolutely.

ANNA  
 (with reverence)  
 My God, she *glimmers*. And so  
 gracious. So, so gracious. (Beat)  
 So gracious.

Sidney takes in their robot-like countenances.

SIDNEY

(Beat)

Hey, so I heard you two went down  
into the basement and you found  
some kind of mysterious...pod?

They stare at him blankly.

INGRID

What basement?

CUT TO:

48

INT. LOBBY - DAY

48

Alison, coming back from lunch, gets into the lift. Before the doors can close, Sidney squeezes in. He's eating a HAMBURGER. The lift starts to rise. Through it's glass doors we see the different floors passing, different publications - each a hive of sober, hard work.

SIDNEY

(mouth full)

Jennifer Aniston's glimmery.

Alison recoils slightly, takes out a book and pretends to read. He stares at the journalists they are passing.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

This isn't what I expected.

ALISON

(reading)

What did you expect?

SIDNEY

I don't know. The Algonquin  
circle. Martinis. Quips. Look at  
them. Not one of them is drunk.

ALISON

It's called being professional.

SIDNEY

We're not working on the Marshall  
Plan here, you know? We're  
showbiz hacks. I tell you - it's  
a good thing I've come along.  
Gonna shake you all up a bit.

The lift stops and a TALL WOMAN enters. She is expensively dressed, wears Chanel dark glasses, an expression of granite and an air of superhuman *froideur*.

Alison exchanges the slightest of nods with her and stares tensely ahead. Only Sidney, busy chewing, is oblivious to the plunge in temperature.

For a moment there is only the soft whir of the lift. Then Sidney begins to choke on some burger. He wheezes for a moment, gagging.

The Woman stiffens slightly but shows no other sign of having noticed the revolting noises coming from behind her. Alison closes her eyes.

Sidney gives a violent cough and a chunk of chewed burger and coleslaw flies out of his mouth and lands on the back of the oblivious Woman's Prada jacket.

Sidney notices and raises a tentative hand to brush the offending item away.

Before he can move Alison silently takes his wrist in a vice-like grip.

CUT TO:

49

CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

49

Alison is haranguing Sidney.

ALISON  
(hissing)  
Are you *insane*? That was  
Lawrence's wife, Elizabeth! Her  
father owns Sharps!

SIDNEY  
(alarmed)  
That was *her*? *The Mussolini baby*.

He stops.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
What should I do? Should I go  
back and apologize?

ALISON  
No! Listen to me - if you want to  
keep your job, you do not  
*approach* Elizabeth Maddox, you do  
not *talk* to her, don't even make  
*eye-contact* with her? Okay?

SIDNEY  
Okay. Okay.

Alison shakes her head in disbelief.

ALISON  
Why did Clayton hire you?

SIDNEY  
You really want to know?

ALISON  
Know what?

SIDNEY  
Sniper Magazine.

ALISON

What?

SIDNEY

When Clayton left college he edited this little magazine called *Sniper*. Fantastic. Took aim at every self-important celebrity and took them down. It was funny, it was fearless, didn't give a shit who it offended. It was like my magazine but twenty years earlier. That's why he's hired me. I *am* the young Clayton Harding. He looks at me and sees his glory days.

ALISON

(sarcastic)

His glory days? Clayton Harding is one of the most powerful, respected editors in the world.

Sidney stops to examine his reflection in a window.

SIDNEY

Yeah, but don't worry. I think I might still be in time to save him.

CUT TO:

50 INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

50

The phone is ringing. Sidney walks in from the bedroom, changing into his old brown suit. The answer machine kicks in.

SIDNEY (O.S.)

(over answer machine)

All our answering machines are busy. Please hold.

The machine BEEPS. Sidney smirks at his joke and is reaching for the phone when we hear the caller - an older man, an upper-class English accent.

OLDER MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(over answer machine)

Sidney? Are you there?

Sidney stops in his tracks, something complicated and fearful crossing his face.

OLDER MAN'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Sidney? Are you there?

Sidney tiptoes back out of the room.

OLDER MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)  
 If you're there Sidney, answer  
 the phone.

We hear the opening of *Fly Me To The Moon* by Julie London

CUT TO:

51 INT. TOWN CAR - EVENING 51

Sidney sits in the car beside Alison and Maddox, staring out the window, entranced by the bright lights as they pass by...

CUT TO:

52 EXT. HOTEL - FUND-RAISER PARTY - NIGHT 52

The rooftop swimming pool of a hotel. Flowers everywhere, including in the pool. Guests mill around drinking. We TRACK THROUGH, eavesdropping on conversations...

We find a Wealthy Teenager holding court.

WEALTHY TEENAGER  
 Zambia, yeah. It was beautiful  
 but...those poor starving  
 children? I mean I would kill to  
 be that thin. But without the  
 flies and shit? And then we did  
 like all of Europe. I had my  
 birthday in Athens.

MAN  
 Oh, great. Did you go the  
 Parthenon?

WEALTHY TEENAGER  
 I don't really remember the names  
 of all the clubs...

We find TWO GUYS talking.

FIRST GUY  
 I had a meeting last week with  
 the new development guy at  
 Warners - Todd Jacobs?

GUY TWO  
 Jacobs. Is he that black guy?

FIRST GUY  
 You know, I didn't really notice?

We find an older BUSINESSMAN talking.

BUSINESSMAN  
 Nobody goes there anymore. It's  
 too crowded.

Finally we find Sidney working his way through the throng to where Alison stands.

SIDNEY  
(mouth full)  
There's a couple of hundred  
grands worth of food here and I  
swear I'm the only person eating  
it. You want some?

Alison recoils. Sidney does a little nerdy dance to the music as he eats.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
This place is amazing. It's wall  
to wall totty.

ALISON  
Wall to wall what?

SIDNEY  
Totty. Babes. Sexually attractive  
women.

ALISON  
Do you *mind*?

SIDNEY  
What? I'm not talking about you,  
am I?

Maddox joins them. A man passes, nods respectfully at Maddox.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Look at that. All night people  
have been treating us like we're  
royalty. In London, the  
journalist's motto is "Everybody  
hates us and we don't care."

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Well, now you're one of the High  
Priests of what's Hot and what's  
Not. So what were you two talking  
about?

ALISON  
Sidney was just marvelling at the  
abundance of "Totty" here.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
(enjoying this)  
*Uh-oh.* I don't think Miss Olsen  
approves of you, Sidney. But  
don't take it personally. She  
doesn't approve of any of us. She  
came all the way from Port Huron  
with dreams of interviewing  
Pulitzer prize-winners and the  
like.

ALISON  
(calmly)  
Drop dead.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
I believe she thinks she's  
wasting her talents.

Sidney watches some beautiful women pass, dripping diamonds.

SIDNEY  
I shouldn't be here. I get thrown  
out of places like this.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
This? This is a McDonalds. I hate  
disease parties.

ALISON  
(off Sidney's puzzled  
look)  
Fund-raisers.

Someone's CELL PHONE RINGS. All of the guests automatically check their cells.

An OLDER WOMAN walks over - a faded beauty, drunk.

OLDER WOMAN  
Lawrence Maddox? Oh my  
goodness... Long time.

Maddox examines her coolly.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Rachel!

Lawrence barely bothers to conceal the fact he doesn't remember her.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Rachel. How are you?

RACHEL  
Well, I'm just wonderful.  
Wonderful. How are you?

Lawrence smiles and looks around him without answering. Rachel tries again.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Funny I should run into you. I've  
just done this great little film  
called *Five Boroughs* and it's you  
know, low-budget, first-time  
director but very, uh, moving  
and... Hey, maybe you could do a  
little...?

A handsome YOUNG MAN appears beside them. Maddox instantly turns away from Rachel.



LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(smoothly)  
Angelo, good to see you.

Rachel hovers, embarrassed by her abrupt dismissal.

ANGELO  
Isn't this great? Everybody's  
here!

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Everyone's here!

ANGELO  
We've got like a thousand people.  
And then the journalists...(To  
passing woman) Hey Julie, looking  
great!

They both wave enthusiastically at the WOMAN passing.

ANGELO (CONT'D)  
(as she goes)  
Jesus, she's really put on  
weight.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
She's a fucking eye-irritant.

ANGELO  
Are you having a good time?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
I'm having a *great* time. The  
whole thing's amazing. You've  
done an *incredible* job.

Rachel slips away. Sidney watches her go, feeling for her.

ANGELO  
Okay, I'm mingling but do *not* go  
away. Angelo shall return.

He glides away.

SIDNEY  
(to Maddox)  
You know that was Rachel Stewart?  
She's a fantastic actress. Hasn't  
done anything for years, but, in  
her day...

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(coolly)  
I'm sure.

SIDNEY  
Seriously, I've heard about that  
film. I think she's going to make  
a come back. We should get there  
first, do a profile or something  
before everyone else...

Maddox isn't listening. Instead he greets a YOUNG MAN wearing a MONOCLE with a smile of perfectly modulated sycophancy. His young, harried looking ASSISTANT hovers beside him.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Bradford, great to see you.  
Children, I'd like to introduce  
you to Bradford Fraser, in my  
opinion the most exciting new  
director in American cinema. From  
*Enfant terrible* to *roi soleil*...

Bradford nods, frowning, looks around.

BRADFORD  
I think this is the worst  
fundraiser I've been to in my  
whole life.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
It's a rat fuck, isn't it?

Sidney walks away.

CUT TO:

53

ANGLE ON RACHEL

53

...standing at the parapet, staring out over the city with red eyes. Sidney appears beside her.

SIDNEY  
Excuse me? Are you Rachel  
Stewart?

Rachel turns to look at him.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
This is sort of embarrassing  
but...

He holds out a napkin.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Could I have your autograph?

Rachel, suspecting she is the target of ridicule, looks around to see if there's an audience.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
I'm a big fan.

RACHEL  
(hard)  
Is that so?

SIDNEY  
Absolutely. I must have seen  
everything you've been in.  
(MORE)

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 Those episodes of *The Love Boat*  
 and the *Bionic Woman*? *The Song*  
*Birds, In The Night*...I've even  
 seen your first ever TV  
 appearance. *The Twilight Zone* -  
 "*House of Mirrors*." Right?

RACHEL  
 (thrown)  
 Right...

SIDNEY  
 My all time favorite? *A Day Too*  
*Long*. (He means it) You were  
 really great in that.

Rachel stares at him. She hides her emotion with a bright smile.

RACHEL  
 (laughing)  
 What's your name, honey?

SIDNEY  
 Sidney Young.

She takes the napkin and pen, her face glowing.

CUT TO:

54

ANGLE ON A BRADFORD

54

...holding court to Maddox, Alison and some of the  
 Glitterati. Sidney joins them, eating more food.

BRADFORD  
 (pompous)  
 I mean, yes, Bergman was a role  
 model. But you have to get past  
 that. You have to inspire  
 yourself. *I am my role-model. I*  
*want to be me...*

He stares reverentially into space, handing his empty glass  
 to his waiting assistant who immediately replaces it with a  
 full one from a passing tray. Sidney watches him with  
 dislike.

SIDNEY  
 (suddenly)  
 Greatest film ever made?

BRADFORD  
 I'm sorry?

SIDNEY  
 What's the greatest film ever  
 made? (To Alison) Go on. Have a  
 guess.

ALISON  
(irritated)  
Well, that's...I don't think  
there *is* one single film that...

SIDNEY  
Have a guess.

BRADFORD  
(sneering)  
Yes, have a guess - what *is* the  
greatest film ever made?

ALISON  
(embarrassed)  
I don't, uh...well personally I  
love *La Dolce Vita* but...

SIDNEY  
Incorrect. *Con Air*.

ALISON  
(beat)  
I beg your pardon?

SIDNEY  
Uhuh, *Con Air*. It's got  
everything. Malkovich for your  
acting chops, Nicky Cage for  
action, Buscemi for comedy, John  
Cusack for the Gays. It's a  
smorgasbord.

The group study him, trying to work out if this is irony or  
idiocy. Maddox is staring daggers at him. An extremely  
thin, fashionably dressed woman smiles at him.

WOMAN  
I don't think we've been  
introduced?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Mister Young, this is Eleanor  
Johnson, Queen of New York.  
Eleanor this is Sidney Young.  
He's from England and he's our  
very own Idiot Savant. Without  
the Savant.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
Well, it's always nice to have  
fresh blood at these things. (To  
Maddox) Which reminds me, I'm  
launching the *It-Girl-de-jour* -  
Sophie Maes, I want you to meet  
her. New film, *Cooper Union*  
coming out, the buzz is A-  
*mazing*, and she's gone from these  
little indies, suddenly she's  
getting offered tentpoles.

(MORE)

ELEANOR JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
The release is tied in with the  
roll-out of the Reebok campaign,  
we've Louis Vuitton interested.  
This train is pulling out of the  
station Lawrence.

SIDNEY  
(to Eleanor)  
So, you're a publicist?

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
I don't really like that word,  
Sidney.

SIDNEY  
What should I call you?

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
You can call me Eleanor.

She stares past him, across the pool.

ELEANOR JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
There she is. (calling ) Sophie  
darling!

They turn to see a young blonde woman standing across the  
pool from them. This is SOPHIE MAES - a natural beauty,  
statuesque, no make-up, hair simply pulled back.

ELEANOR JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
(calling)  
Come and meet Lawrence.

Sophie tries to walk around the pool to join them but finds  
she can't work her way through the crowd. She turns to her  
right but finds her way similarly blocked.

She hesitates for a moment and then with a shrug climbs  
down into the pool, the water up to her chest, and begins  
to walk through the floating flowers towards them.

Sidney stares at her, TRANSFIXED. Alison notices this with  
some contempt.

Gradually everyone notices Sophie and stops to look.

Having reached the other side, Sophie ascends the pool  
steps, laughing, her dress clinging to her: Venus rising  
from the waves. The Photographers appear, snapping merrily  
away.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
(murmuring)  
Oh, this one will go far.

CUT TO:

55

INT. HOTEL - LATER

55

Sophie, Eleanor and Sophie's ENTOURAGE are striding through the hotel's corridors, on their way out. Maddox, Sidney and Alison are with them. Some PHOTOGRAPHERS are still following them, snapping away at Sophie and her wet dress.

ELEANOR JOHNSON

(on cell phone)

Where's the car? What's it doing  
at the back? Forget what I said.  
I want the car at the front. Now.

Sidney finds himself walking alongside Sophie and Maddox, trying not to stare at Sophie's breasts.

SOPHIE MAES

...I just think it's terrible the  
way we're still exploiting  
animals. That's why, you know,  
I won't wear fur or leather, I  
won't wear make-up, I'm  
vegetarian.

SIDNEY

I'm with you...

Sophie turns to him with a vague smile.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

I won't eat anything with, you  
know, eyebrows.

He snickers nervously.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

Or if it can chuckle. I won't eat  
animals that can chuckle.

SOPHIE

I'm sorry, I can't understand  
your accent?

SIDNEY

(embarrassed)

Nothing, just, uh...So you're an  
actress? Have I seen you in  
anything?

SOPHIE MAES

I don't know. Have you?

SIDNEY

(beat)

No. (Trying again) So you haven't  
won any Oscars yet?

SOPHIE MAES

No.

SIDNEY  
Because I would certainly  
nominate you for best supporting  
dress! Huh, huh, huh....

SOPHIE MAES  
(struggling to  
understand him)  
I haven't been nominated for  
anything.

SIDNEY  
No, I'm just...I'm saying you  
look...

They have reached the front entrance of the hotel. Eleanor  
steps between them.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
(To Sophie)  
Are you ready dear? This is it.

The front doors glide open to reveal a LEGION OF PAPARAZZI  
waiting outside. As Sophie steps outside there is a sudden  
roar of photographers shouting and the night sky blazes  
white as HUNDREDS OF CAMERAS FLASH SIMULTANEOUSLY.

REVERSE - the group framed in the entrance-way - blinded  
by the glare, squinting. Only Sophie has her eyes open,  
smiling, looking like a star.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. OUTSIDE HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

56

The Paparazzi are still crowding around the group as they  
make their way to the waiting car.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
(to Alison)  
We're going on to the Circle  
Club. I'll see you tomorrow.

ALISON  
(tight)  
Okay. Good night.

Maddox slips his jacket around Sophie's shoulders.

SOPHIE  
Aren't you cold?

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
I'm from Canada, land of ice and  
snow.

They get into the car. Sidney tries to follow them.

SIDNEY  
Budge up.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Where are you going?

SIDNEY  
I'm coming to the club.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Sorry, you're not on the list.

He closes the door and the car glides away. The Paparazzi hurry back to the entrance as another celebrity emerges, leaving Alison and Sidney staring after the car.

SIDNEY  
(fuming)  
That's... that turns my stomach.  
Pawing her like that. He's old  
enough to be her father.

ALISON  
(irritated)  
No he isn't.

SIDNEY  
Yes he is. I started producing  
sperm when I was thirteen, so you  
know, technically...

ALISON  
For your information he wasn't  
pawing her! He was just doing his  
job! In case you haven't noticed  
Sharps has to have a star on the  
cover every month. And most of  
those stars are clients of  
Eleanor's. So do not piss her  
off.

SIDNEY  
She's a flak. Hacks don't take  
orders from flaks.

ALISON  
(bleakly)  
Maybe not in London...

SIDNEY  
(staring after them)  
"Doing his job." The man had no  
blood left in his upper body...

ALISON  
(snapping)  
Will you be quiet?

She tries to hide how upset she feels. The car disappears into the distance.

SIDNEY  
Do you think she'd go out with  
me?



ALISON  
Who?

SIDNEY  
Sophie Maes. You think she'll go  
out with me?

ALISON  
No.

SIDNEY  
What do you know? A lot of these  
starlets are lonely. They spend  
their time looking for a man.

Alison starts to walk away.

ALISON  
This is New York, Sidney. Women  
only date men who are  
successful...

SIDNEY  
I'm going to be successful.

ALISON  
(as she goes)  
...and tall.

CUT TO:

57 INT. SHARPS MAGAZINE - I SPY AREA - MORNING

57

Sidney sits in front of his computer reading the on-line  
*New York Post Page Six*. A story on the previous night is  
accompanied by a large picture of Sophie in her clinging  
dress. Sidney stares at the picture, entranced.

Alison sits at her desk, watching him with contempt. Maddox  
appears beside them.

SIDNEY  
Have you seen this? She's  
everywhere.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
About last night. Word of advice.  
Don't harass the celebrities.  
Okay? Oh, and next time you want  
to do the hilariously ironic *I*  
*love Con Air* skit would you  
mind...?

SIDNEY  
I wasn't being ironic...

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
...would you mind *not* involving  
me, especially in the presence of  
Bradford Fraser who happens to be  
very important.

SIDNEY  
 Yeah, I could tell by the way he  
 was dressed as a Prussian Nazi.  
 It doesn't bother you that he's  
 twelve years old, wears a  
*monocle*?

Angry, Maddox opens his mouth to retort but catches himself  
 and strides away.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 (as he goes, muttering)  
 Idiot.

SIDNEY  
 (muttering)  
 Wanker.

CUT TO:

58 INT. SHARPS MAGAZINE - CORRIDOR - MORNING

58

Sidney walks down the corridor. He slows, his expression  
 changing suddenly.

SIDNEY'S P.O.V - Elizabeth Maddox is walking down the  
 corridor towards us, face set.

Sidney hangs up, keeps on walking, staring to one side of  
 Elizabeth.

As they draw level, the heel of one of Elizabeth's shoes  
 snaps off and she lurches sideways, colliding with the wall  
 before sprawling onto the floor in front of Sidney.

Sidney hesitates for a fraction of a second and then steps  
 over her prone form without a word and keeps on walking.

CUT TO:

59 INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

59

Sidney catches up with Alison who is walking with other  
 journalists to a staff meeting.

SIDNEY  
 (shaken)  
 Elizabeth Maddox just fell over  
 in front of me and I didn't help  
 her up.

ALISON  
 (Beat)  
 What did you do?

SIDNEY  
 (beat)  
 I stepped over her.

She briefly considers this.

ALISON  
You did the right thing.

She walks off.

CUT TO:

60

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

60

Clayton heads a monthly staff meeting. A rather smug Maddox is just finishing a pitch.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
...so finally Brad's people have  
got back to me and they've  
agreed. We've got the whole  
afternoon, before the shoot.

People clap. Harding nods approvingly.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Good work Lawrence, well done.  
Okay, well, if that's it for...

He starts to get up.

SIDNEY  
So, I was thinking...

Clayton, pauses, frowning. Sidney turns to the room, cocksure.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Paris Hilton. I thought wouldn't  
it be funny if I do a profile on  
her as if she's this complete  
recluse, this hermit...(laughing)  
I try and track her down and, you  
know, "Who is the elusive Paris  
Hilton and why is she so  
publicity shy?"

He laughs for a moment. No one joins in.

CLAYTON HARDING  
That's first room stuff, Sidney.

He turns to go and then remembers something.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
By the way - was this you?  
(reading)"This place is so  
glitzy, boasts Todd Williams, up  
and coming actor, golfer and all  
round funky honcho with a flick  
of his hair and a wink to the  
hooker on his arm..."

SIDNEY

Yes.

CLAYTON HARDING

You were given a list of words  
that you were told not to use.

SIDNEY

Yes.

CLAYTON HARDING

And so you used every single one  
of them?

SIDNEY

Yeah, but...(laughing) I mean  
it's a stupid list, Clay. Who  
thought up a list like that?

Clayton stares at him. Sidney stops laughing.

CLAYTON HARDING

(calmly)

Call me Clay one more time and  
see what happens.

Harding stalks out of the room. Blushing, Sidney stares  
after him, nodding vaguely. As he gathers his notebook he  
becomes aware of the smirks on the faces of Maddox and the  
others as they leave.

CUT TO:

61 INT. BREAK AREA - AFTERNOON

61

Alison sits with her notebook and pen. Behind her some of  
the magazine's glamorous *Fashionistas* - VICKY, INGRID and  
ANNA - are examining some clothes.

VICKY

No, I'd love these but I'm so fat  
I couldn't...

INGRID

Don't be crazy!

ANNA

Oh please!

Alison glances at the anorexic looking women, irritated by  
their twittering, Ingrid notices her.

INGRID

(To Alison)

Alice?

ALISON

Alison.

INGRID

Tell Vicky she isn't fat.

ALISON

She's so thin we could put a string on her and fly her like a kite.

The Women consider this, trying to work out if it's a compliment.

INGRID

By the way - post-shoot clear out. Got some Gucci pants here that are too big for us. You wanna try them?

ALISON

(tightly)

No, thanks.

She looks up as Sidney sits heavily beside her.

SIDNEY

(seeing the notebook)

What's that?

ALISON

Go away.

SIDNEY

Is it a diary? Am I in it?

ALISON

It's...it's a novel I'm working on, alright?

SIDNEY

Wow. Novel. How long you been doing that?

ALISON

A year or so. Look, I don't mean to be rude Sidney but...what the hell do you want?

SIDNEY

Listen, you know how things work around here. How am I going to get something in the magazine?

Alison stares at him.

ALISON

Why do you care? Really. You wanna be a journalist, okay. But out of all the things in the world you could report on - politics, war, economics, you pick "show-biz?" Seriously, what do you think you're going to get out of working for Sharps?

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)  
I want to understand your  
motivation.

SIDNEY  
My motivation? Okay. (He  
considers) I want to be  
successful.

ALISON  
Why? There has to be a level  
beyond that.

SIDNEY  
Okay, I want to be successful, so  
that I can hang out with  
celebrities, so I can get  
mistaken for a celebrity myself.

ALISON  
But why? What's the deeper *need*?  
Sidney considers.

SIDNEY  
I want Sophie Maes to have sex  
with me.

Alison stares at him in disgust.

ALISON  
You know what I think? I think  
you want to be near stars so you  
can feel important. I think you  
have self-esteem issues. I think  
maybe daddy didn't give you  
enough love.

Sidney flushes, stung, tries to hide it.

SIDNEY  
(a poor Jodie Foster)  
"You see a lot, Dr. Lecter. But  
are you strong enough to point  
that high-powered perception at  
yourself?" If it's all so shallow  
what are you doing working for  
Sharps?

ALISON  
(depressed)  
I don't know.

Sidney stares through the glass partition to where MADDUX  
can be seen walking past.

SIDNEY  
Strutting around like he's top  
dog. Well, let me tell you - Lady  
Boy's days are numbered. There's  
only room for one Hot Shot on  
this magazine. The gloves are  
coming off.

We hear the opening of Brigitte Bardot's *Moi Je Joue* as we...

CUT TO:

62 INT. LIFT - DAY

62

Sidney is pitching to Clayton in the lift.

SIDNEY

Okay, we pick the ten outed celebrities we'd most like to see shut up about the fact they're gay. We call it *Get Back In The Closet*.

CLAYTON HARDING

(getting out the lift)  
First Room, Sidney. First room.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. OUTSIDE CIRCLE CLUB - EVENING

63

A small group of GLITTERATI pass the immense line of hopefuls waiting outside the club and are ushered inside by the DOORMAN at the entrance. Sidney walks confidently up, pretending to talk into his cell. The Doorman stands in his way, impassive. Still talking Sidney turns and walks away as if nothing has happened.

CUT TO:

64 INT. LIFT - DAY

64

Sidney standing with a MODEL-TYPE in the lift. He takes a LAMINATED PHOTOGRAPH from his wallet and shows it to her.

SIDNEY

(pointing at the snap)  
Guess who that is with Clint Eastwood.

MODEL

Morgan Freeman?

SIDNEY

No, not...why's everyone say...?  
There! In the head-lock!

CUT TO:

65 INT. EXECUTIVE WASHROOM - DAY

65

Sidney pitches to a closed cubicle door. He is holding a LARGE PIECE OF CARD on which is drawn a TREE decorated with the heads of various CELEBRITIES.

SIDNEY  
It's a Shag Tree. It illustrates  
all of the sexual pairings of  
Hollywood's top stars and how  
they interconnect...

He pushes the card under the cubicle door.

CLAYTON HARDING (O.S.)  
(from inside the  
cubicle)  
First Room.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. OUTSIDE CIRCLE CLUB - EVENING

66

The same DOORMAN is chatting to a guest, his back to the entrance. Seizing his chance Sidney scuttles into view and tries to slip past. Without even turning the Doorman blocks the way with a huge arm. Sidney meekly retreats.

CUT TO:

67 INT. SHARPS OFFICES - CORRIDOR - DAY

67

An attractive WOMAN stands drinking a cup of water from the cooler. Sidney sidles up.

SIDNEY  
Caroline. Looking very lovely  
today. Well, the parts that are  
showing. I guess under your  
clothes you could have a lot of  
weird scars or a fake ass or  
something. Heh, heh...

Without even looking at him the Woman walks off.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(trailing off)  
...heh...Simpsons...

CUT TO:

68 INT. CLAYTON HARDING'S OFFICE - DAY

68

Another day, another pitch. Clayton is reading a magazine.

SIDNEY  
Celebrity Trash Bins. The  
contents of celebrity garbage  
bins are revealed and readers  
have gotta guess who the refuse  
belongs to... Five bottles of  
Jack Daniels, a court order, and  
a copy of Mein Kampf? Mel  
Gibson!



Clayton, still reading, holds up a sheet of paper on which is written "First Room."

CUT TO:

69 EXT. OUTSIDE CIRCLE CLUB - EVENING

69

Sidney approaches the Doorman, takes a ten dollar bill from his pocket and hands it to the Doorman. The Doorman crumples the bill up and throws it away. Without a word Sidney begins to walk away. He comes back and picks up the crumpled note and then heads off again.

CUT TO:

70 INT. BAR - EVENING

70

Sidney is talking to a YOUNG WOMAN who is staring at him with some fascination.

SIDNEY  
So, yeah, I mean, I don't think  
of them as "celebrity friends."  
They're just friends of mine who  
happen to be celebrities.

Sidney's sure he's finally succeeded. She can't take her eyes off him!

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
So maybe some time we could go  
out, I could introduce you to...?

YOUNG WOMAN  
(calling to friend)  
Joanne! Come over here! This  
guy's got English teeth!

Her FRIEND joins her and they examine Sidney's mouth.

CUT TO:

71 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

71

Harding is eating his lunch. He looks up and finds Sidney staring down at him with puppy-dog eyes. Beat. Harding sighs.

CLAYTON HARDING  
If I give you an interview will  
ya leave me the fuck alone?

Sidney smiles. The song ends.

CUT TO:

72

INT. STUDIO - DAY

72

Nathan Lane shakes hands with Sidney as he sits down.

NATHAN LANE

Nathan Lane. Nice to meet you.

SIDNEY

Great to meet you Nathan. I'm a big fan. I love that rat thing you played in The Lion King.

NATHAN LANE

(pleasantly)

Actually he isn't a rat.

SIDNEY

(absently, checking his notes)

Uhuh... Now, I've been reading some of your clippings and I think you're probably quite a private man. Am I right?

NATHAN LANE

Well...

SIDNEY

Which is fine, but today, I think it would be great to get *behind* the mask.

NATHAN LANE

(beat)

Uh, I don't think there really is a *mask* as such, and I don't wanna be a pain, but what I really wanna talk about is the new play, keep it about the work, you know? Is that okay?

SIDNEY

Absolutely. Of course. So, first question - are you Jewish?

Nathan stares at Sidney.

NATHAN LANE

I don't see what the relevance of that is.

SIDNEY

Okay. Next question. The rat thing - that's gotta be Disney's first gay animal, right? So, I was wondering - are you a homosexual?

Beat. Nathan looks like he might hit Sidney.

CUT TO:

73

INT. I SPY AREA - DAY

73

Sidney is on the phone. He has been idly applying magic tape to his face, contorting it into a grotesque grimace.

The headline of a magazine open in front of him reads:  
*"Everyone Loves A Lord: Why British Titles Drive New York Women Crazy."*

SIDNEY

I'd like to apply for an American Express card please? (Beat) Hon. Sidney Young. (Beat) As in Honourable. H-O-N. (Beat) It's a British title.

Across the desk Alison watches him with contempt.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

The Queen? Yeah, I know the Queen. Just fill in the form will you?

Maddox approaches him.

LAWRENCE MADDOX

I just got a call from Nathan Lane's manager.

SIDNEY

I was just trying to...probe.

LAWRENCE MADDOX

(angry)

You wanna probe become a proctologist, okay? You can't ask musical comedy stars whether they're Jewish or gay. In the future, just *assume* they're Jewish and gay.

Sidney suddenly notices Sophie Maes and Eleanor Johnson walking towards them. Sophie looks more STYLED than before. She is holding a Chihuahua. Sidney hurriedly yanks tape from his face.

SIDNEY

(in pain)

Oh, fuck...!

LAWRENCE MADDOX

Hey! Cuba!

He pets the dog, who greets him enthusiastically.

SOPHIE MAES

(to Lawrence)

He likes you.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 (smiling smoothly)  
 Well, I'm one of the Friends Of  
 Cuba.

The two laugh. Alison hides her annoyance by frowning down  
 at some paper-work.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
 So how's it feel to be a star?

SOPHIE  
 No, don't! It's so embarrassing!  
 That picture's everywhere now.  
 And I had no idea the dress was  
 so see-through! And people are  
 talking like it was some kind of  
*stunt*.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 (smoothly)  
 Such a cynical age. (To Sidney)  
 Hello again.

SIDNEY  
 Hello! Didn't, didn't know you  
 were coming in...?

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 Just a little lunch with  
 Lawrence.

SIDNEY  
 (jealous)  
 Oh great. That's great.

SOPHIE MAES  
 Lawrence? Could I leave Cuba  
 here? He doesn't like Italian  
 restaurants.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 Of course you can. He can stay in  
 my office. Sidney? Fetch Cuba a  
 bowl of water, will you?

Sidney stares at him.

SIDNEY  
 (forcing a smile)  
 Of course.

CUT TO:

Eleanor is getting a cup of water from the cooler. Sidney  
 joins her, waiting to fill the dog's bowl.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
*That* is a lovely ring. Where is  
 that from?

Sidney looks at the wedding ring he wears on his little  
 finger.

SIDNEY  
 (embarrassed)  
 It was my mother's. She gave it  
 to me.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 (smiling)  
 That's sweet. Don't tell me -  
 you're supposed to give it to the  
 girl who's the One, right?

Sidney looks even more embarrassed.

ELEANOR JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
 (laughing)  
 I'm *right*? I was only joking! Oh,  
 that is so *romantic*.

She stares at Sidney for a moment with a synthetic smile.

ELEANOR JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
 So, listen...You've met Bradford  
 Fraser haven't you, Sidney?

SIDNEY  
 Uhuh.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 He has a new movie coming out  
 soon and Lawrence is over-  
 stretched as it is. How would you  
 like to write a story on him?

Alison, at the photocopier nearby, listens.

Sidney smiles, filled with hope.

SIDNEY  
 A story? Absolutely. That  
 would...I'd love to...

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 (softly)  
 Well, great. Maybe we could get  
 together and discuss the angle?

SIDNEY  
 Okay. (Beat) What do you mean?

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 Well, I'd need to know how we're  
 going to present Bradford, check  
 the story, so on.

SIDNEY  
(Beat)  
You want copy approval?

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
(smiling)  
Any stories written about my  
clients need to be in their best  
interest, that's all.

Alison listens, her face registering her distaste.

Sidney looks over at Sophie, struggling with himself.  
Finally...

SIDNEY  
(reluctantly)  
I'm sorry, Eleanor, I don't...I  
don't work that way.

Alison stares with surprise at Sidney. He just went up in  
her estimation.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
(amused)  
Sidney dear, think of it like  
this: you write about one of my  
clients, you are borrowing some  
of their "star-light" to help  
sell your story. All I'm saying  
is quid pro quo.

Sidney is unable to hold back a snicker.

SIDNEY  
Their *star-light*?

Eleanor's face hardens.

75                      MOMENTS LATER

75

Sidney watches Sophie, Maddox and Eleanor as they walk  
towards reception. Alison joins him.

SIDNEY  
He's fucking her.

ALISON  
(hotly)  
He is not.

SIDNEY  
Is so. He's just the type to have  
an affair. But it's okay. I'm  
going to win her back. Once I get  
my hooks into a girl, they never  
get free. I'm like ring worm.

CUT TO:

76

INT. MADDOX'S OFFICE - LATER

76

Sidney cracks open the door and peers inside. Cuba sits in the middle of the floor, staring at him. He emits a low growl.

Sidney slides into the room.

SIDNEY  
Hello Cuba. I'm Uncle Sidney,  
come to see how you are. You  
wanna play? You wanna little  
play?

He takes a RUBBER BALL out of his pocket and holds it up for the dog to see.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Fetch!

He tosses the ball in the air. Cuba runs after it and trots back, stumpy tail wagging, the ball in its teeth.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
That's it! That's it!

He strokes the dog.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
We're gonna be best pals aren't  
we? You're going to like me more  
than that prick Maddox, aren't  
you? Fetch!

He tosses the ball again which promptly bounces off the wall straight out of the half open window.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
No!

Cuba is already running towards the window...

Sidney's yell slows and distorts as we move to SLOW MOTION...

Sidney springs forward, leaping onto the desk and then in one bound onto a FILING CABINET by the window, sending it rocking slightly forward.

Cuba, bounding forward, jumps into the air...

Sidney just manages to slam the window SHUT as...

BACK IN NORMAL TIME...

Cuba bounces off the glass with a yelp and drops to the floor.

Sidney heaves a sigh of relief.

Then a METAL SCULPTURE on the tilted filing cabinet slides forward and drops with a TERMINAL THUD ON THE DOG BELOW.

Silence.

Sidney stares down to the floor.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(softly)  
Cuba?

CUT TO:

77 INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

77

Sidney stands at the lift holding a bulging bag.

SIDNEY  
(waiting for the lift)  
C'mon...C'mon...

Alison walks past, sees him and does a double-take.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(seeing her coming)  
Shit, shit, shit...

ALISON  
That's my bag.

SIDNEY  
I'm just...just borrowing it.  
I'll bring it straight back.

ALEX  
What are you talking about? Give  
it back.

She reaches out to take the bag. Sidney holds on desperately.

ALISON  
Stop it! Give me the...

She tugs violently, pulling the bag open. A small PAW lolls out. Alison freezes staring at it. Silence.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
(softly)  
Oh my God.

SIDNEY  
(whispering)  
It was an accident.

ALISON  
Oh my God.



SIDNEY  
I was just trying to make  
friends. Please don't tell her.  
Please don't tell her.

SOPHIE MAES (O.S.)  
(calling)  
Cuba? Cuba?

Startled, Sidney jabs at the lift button, desperate for escape. We hear footsteps and voices approaching.

Panicking, Sidney looks wildly around then darts over to a window, jerks it open and empties Cuba out of it, slamming it shut just as Sophie, Eleanor and Lawrence walk around the corner.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Alison, have you seen Cuba?

ALISON  
(bewildered)  
W-What?

She darts a glance over to where Sidney stands with his back to the window, gazing at her pleadingly. From behind him comes a faint creaking sound.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
(snapping)  
Sophie's dog! Have you seen him?

Sidney hangs his head, awaiting the *coup de grace*.

ALISON  
Uh...no. I thought he was in your office.

Sidney stares at her in amazement.

Behind him Cuba's reproachful face appears at the window, staring in at us as he rises into view, lying on a WINDOW CLEANING CRADLE. A Window Cleaner, stands at the other end of the cradle, bobbing his head to the music in his headphones.

Alison stares at the dog in horror while the others talk, oblivious.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Don't worry, he can't have got far.

SOPHIE MAES  
(wailing)  
Cuba? Cuba!

Cuba trundles on up to the sky.

CUT TO:

78

INT. CLAYTON HARDING'S OFFICE - DAY

78

Clayton stands at the window. He is DRUNK. There is a knock at the door and Sidney walks in.

SIDNEY  
(nervously)  
Clayton? Have you got a minute?

Clayton lights a cigarette, stares out of the window.  
Sidney comes in.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Did they find that rat yet?

SIDNEY  
No...Not yet. I think maybe he  
got out the building?

Sidney hovers.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Congratulations on the Man of the  
Year thing. How was the lunch?

CLAYTON HARDING  
I don't know. Thousand dollars a  
plate, all I could taste was ass.  
I'm kissing their ass, they're  
kissing my ass. (Beat) I get this  
dream sometimes. Someone's set  
fire to the building - Colliers -  
Sharps magazine - the whole  
thing, it's going up in flames.  
My analyst thinks it's an anxiety  
dream. I never tell him how happy  
I am watching the fucker burn.

Sidney isn't sure what to say. Finally...

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
What do you want?

Sidney takes a deep breath.

SIDNEY  
I want to do a story on Bradford  
Fraser. Not a puff-piece.  
Something funny, but with teeth.  
The kind of thing Sniper would  
have done. Everyone's treating  
him like he's a genius and he's  
an idiot. It's Emperors New  
Clothes and someone's got to have  
the guts to say it and I want it  
to be me.

Clayton notices the CLOSET-DOOR beside him and opens it. He  
stares at the rows of blue shirts hanging in there. He  
takes an armful out and examines them.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Look at these things. How'd I get  
a closet full of blue fucking  
shirts?

SIDNEY  
Um...I don't know.

CLAYTON HARDING  
I don't know either. This is an  
office for Christ's sake! Why've  
I even got a fucking closet?

He drops the shirts.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
Do it.

SIDNEY  
(he can't believe it)  
Do it?

CLAYTON HARDING  
Fuck it. Yeah. Do it. He's an  
annoying cunt. Go take him down a  
peg or two. This is your shot.

SIDNEY  
Thanks Clayton!

CLAYTON HARDING  
You're my little Hit man.

SIDNEY  
(beaming)  
I'm your little Hit Man!

CLAYTON HARDING  
Go do it!

SIDNEY  
(happily)  
Okay!

He scuttles out. He ducks back around the door.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
You could call me *The Jackal*!

CLAYTON HARDING  
Out.

SIDNEY  
(happily)  
Okay!

He ducks back out again.

CUT TO:

79

INT. TRIBECA GRAND HOTEL - NIGHT

79

Sidney is waiting in the lobby. A slightly spaced YOUNG WOMAN approaches him.

ASSISTANT  
Mister Young?

SIDNEY  
Yes?

ASSISTANT  
I'm Sophie Maes' assistant. I'm afraid Sophie isn't here right now.

SIDNEY  
(looking past her)  
Look I know she's in. I'm not a stalker. I just know she's upset about losing her dog and...

ASSISTANT  
(firmly)  
She isn't here.

SIDNEY  
(sighing)  
Well, can I at least check that she got my present?

ASSISTANT  
Okay. Did you send the flowers?

SIDNEY  
(snorting derisively)  
Flowers? Yeah, 'cos she doesn't get enough flowers, does she? No, I sent her the fish.

The Young Woman looks suddenly nervous.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Oh.

SIDNEY  
Gold-fish. In a bowl. Did she get them?

YOUNG WOMAN  
Yes, but...they were dead.

SIDNEY  
(beat)  
All of them?

YOUNG WOMAN  
Yeah. It was kinda shocking. Were they dead when you sent them?

Sidney stares at her.

SIDNEY  
What? No, they were... Who sends  
people dead fish?

YOUNG WOMAN  
(Beat)  
The Mafia?

CUT TO:

80 INT. BAR - EVENING

80

Alison sits at the bar, staring at her notebook, a pen held  
in her hand. A WHITE RUSSIAN sits on the bar beside her.  
Sidney slides onto the stool beside her. She looks up and  
sees he is holding a glass bowl of water with three dead  
fish in it.

ALISON  
My God, you're like a serial  
killer.

SIDNEY  
This wasn't me. I'm taking them  
back to the shop. (Beat) I...I  
laid him to rest. Cuba I mean. I  
took him over to...

ALISON  
(quickly)  
I don't want to know.

SIDNEY  
Okay. (Beat) Well, I just...I  
just wanted to say...about not  
telling them...I really  
appreciated it. It was good of  
you and, and...you know...not  
many people would, uh...

He seems so awkward that Alison softens a little.

ALISON  
It's okay.

SIDNEY  
(Beat)  
Why didn't you?

ALISON  
(Beat)  
I don't know.

The BARMAN arrives, stares at the bowl of fish  
disapprovingly.

BARMAN  
Can I help you?

SIDNEY  
(following his gaze)  
Just a straw please.

Stony-faced, the Barman walks off. Despite herself, Alison smiles. Sidney smiles back. He notices the White Russian.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
So...you waiting for your  
boyfriend?

ALISON  
(uncomfortable)  
Uh, yeah, so...

SIDNEY  
What's he do, the mystery guy? Is  
he a hack too?

ALISON  
(Beat)  
No. Actually he's a poet.

SIDNEY  
Really? What's he look like?

ALISON  
(laughing)  
What?

SIDNEY  
Just most writers you see aren't  
really good-looking, are they?  
Spend their time stuck in a room,  
end up looking like Golem. Is  
he...?

ALISON  
He's very handsome, thank you.

SIDNEY  
(gloomily)  
Right.

ALISON  
You know what I don't understand?  
You're desperate to get a story  
in the magazine - so why wouldn't  
you play ball with Eleanor, write  
the puff-piece?

SIDNEY  
I resent being bribed to gush  
sycophantically about a star,  
okay? I *choose* to gush  
sycophantically.

Alison stares at Sidney trying to figure him out.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
It's okay anyway. Clayton's given  
me a story. I'm on my way.

ALISON  
(smiling)  
Well, that's good.

Sidney smiles back at her. They look at each other...it's almost the start of a MOMENT...

The suddenly on the TV above the bar, a MOVIE TRAILER begins. Distracted Sidney turns to watch - it's Sophie Maes' new film - *Cooper Union* - Sophie, glamorous with just the right amount of dirt on her face, leading twenty thousand women in a turn-of-the-century strike.

Sidney looks back to Alison but she has turned away, suddenly awkward.

SIDNEY  
(embarrassed)  
Okay, well...better get going. (Leaving) You take my advice, you'll get yourself a boyfriend who's going to show up once in a while.

He leaves. Beat. Alison stares at the empty stool beside her.

CUT TO:

81 INT. MEETING ROOM - MORNING

81

Clayton is rounding up another staff meeting. Sidney sits trying to contain his excitement.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Which makes it...a half page left. Lawrence? Any ideas?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Yeah. Rachel Stewart, fabulous sixties actress, one of my all time favourites. Just made a wonderful movie called *Five Boroughs*. I think she's poised for a come-back and I think we should get there first, do a profile.

Sidney stares at him in disbelief. He looks over to Alison who avoids his gaze.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Sounds good. Let's do it. Okay that's it people.

SIDNEY  
Uh...Clayton?

CLAYTON HARDING  
What?

SIDNEY

What about my story on Bradford Fraser?

Clayton frowns down at some papers, feigning distraction.

CLAYTON HARDING

What? Oh, yeah. That's...that's not going to work.

Sidney can't believe it. Clayton gets up to leave.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)

Oh, and for those who haven't heard, Alison is going to be running the I Spy section from now on as Lawrence here has just gone up in the world. He is replacing Tony Roberts as Deputy Editor of Sharps.

Lawrence smiles modestly as the room applauds. Sidney looks like he is going to implode.

CUT TO:

82 INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

82

Maddox passes Sidney in the corridor. Sidney glares after him. Suddenly...

SIDNEY

Rachel Stewart? One of your favourite actresses? You'd never fucking heard of her! That was *my* idea!

Lawrence stops and turns back.

LAWRENCE MADDOX

So it was. You have any more good ideas don't forget to bring them to my new office.

He is about to walk on but remembers something.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)

By the way, there've been complaints about you skulking around the water-cooler, trying to talk to women. It's inappropriate behaviour.

SIDNEY

(livid)

What? You spend half your time chatting up the staff!

LAWRENCE MADDOX

When I do it it's called flirting.

(MORE)



LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
 When you do it it's called sexual  
 harassment. Consider this an  
 official warning. I won't  
 tolerate sexist behaviour.

He walks off. Sidney glowers after him.

CUT TO:

83 INT. LAWRENCE MADDOX'S OFFICE - DAY

83

Lawrence is holding a meeting in his new office - half a dozen heads of departments sit around drinking coffee. Lawrence sits behind his desk, enjoying his new authority.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 I know that wasn't Tony's way of  
 working but Tony isn't deputy  
 editor any more. I am, and I'm  
 making changes.

There is a knock at the door and Sidney walks in with an attractive WOMAN in a long coat.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
 What?

SIDNEY  
 Uh, Lawrence? This lady's been  
 looking for you?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 (to the woman)  
 Can I help you?

WOMAN  
 Are you Lawrence Maddox? The new  
 deputy editor?

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 Yes?

WOMAN  
 Well, I've just come to say  
 congratulations on your  
 promotion.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
 (mystified)  
 Thank you. I'm sorry, you are...?

WOMAN  
 I'm Picolina. I'm your present.

Picolina produces a Beat-Box from behind her back and switches it on. She drops her coat to reveal underwear and stockings underneath.

Maddox stares in frozen horror as the STRIPPER dances over to him, removing her bra. The rest of the staff stare, transfixed.

SIDNEY  
(with mock horror)  
Uh, Lawrence? This is...this is  
sort of inappropriate isn't it?

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
What the fuck...? Miss, I'm sorry  
but...

His words are muffled by the bra the stripper drapes over his face. Gleefully, Sidney dances in the background. He produces a camera and starts to snap away.

SIDNEY  
Oh God, this is...this is  
awful...

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Are you...!

Before he can finish the sentence The Stripper leans over the desk and buries his face in her cleavage.

At the same time the office door opens and an immaculately dressed WOMAN backs into the room leading two immaculately dressed YOUNG GIRLS.

WOMAN  
And this is where Mister Maddox  
works...

She takes in her daughter's puzzled expressions and turns.

HER P.O.V - Sidney and the rest of the staff stare at us, rabbits caught in headlights. After a beat Lawrence peers around the Stripper, a rictus smile on his face.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Hello, Mrs Harding. Girls...

CUT TO:

84

INT. OUTSIDE CLAYTON'S OFFICE - LATER

84

Sidney sits waiting. Through the glass partition we can see Clayton and Eleanor Johnson in the office. They are apparently discussing a mock-up of a new cover for Sharps. After a moment Eleanor comes out of the office and sweeps past Sidney without a glance. Clayton appears in the doorway.

CLAYTON HARDING  
(to Sidney)  
Get in.

CUT TO:

85

INT. CLAYTON HARDING'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

85

Sidney sits in front of Clayton.

CLAYTON HARDING

You know, when I told my wife I'd hired another Brit, she was excited. She still thinks you're all like something from *Pride and Prejudice*. But you Sidney ...you're like a British person born in New Jersey.

SIDNEY

I didn't know it was *Take Our Daughters To Work Day*. I didn't even know there was a *Take Our daughters To Work Day*. (Beat) I'm sure your girls didn't see very much. Picolina was bending over and...

CLAYTON HARDING

Shut up! (shaking his head) Why did I hire you?

Sidney stares at his feet. Suddenly...

SIDNEY

I don't know - why did you hire me?

CLAYTON HARDING

I had an attack of nostalgia. It's passed.

SIDNEY

What was wrong with my story?

CLAYTON HARDING

What?

SIDNEY

My Bradford Fraser story. What was wrong with it?

CLAYTON HARDING

It wasn't good enough. Plain and simple.

SIDNEY

It wasn't good enough?

CLAYTON HARDING

No! Christ sake, you've got...

He snatches the article from his desk.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)

(reading)

"His assistant's main duties included "scoring his cocaine and haggling for his transvestite prostitutes." Who told you that?

SIDNEY

His assistant did. Shortly after he fired her for refusing to have a three-way session with him and the transvestite prostitute. I also got it corroborated by a transvestite prostitute friend of mine.

CLAYTON HARDING

(Beat)

You have a transvestite prostitute friend?

SIDNEY

Bob. He says Bradford's favourite fantasy is where he's a trash-can and you have to dump your "trash" in him. And by "trash" he means...

CLAYTON HARDING

I don't want to *know*! And the readers don't want to know! That's the point. All they want is a Cinderella Ball where everyone's beautiful, wise and kind. Okay?

SIDNEY

You said I could do something with teeth! You said...

CLAYTON HARDING

Forget what I said! I'm trying to run a fucking magazine here!

Sidney stares at him, angry and disappointed.

SIDNEY

"A free press is the last defence against the Tyranny of Stupidity."

CLAYTON HARDING

(irritated)

Save me your tin-pot philosophy, okay?

SIDNEY

It isn't mine. It's yours. First issue of Sniper.

Clayton stares at him.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (he can't help himself)  
 Looks like I was too late to save  
 you after all.

CLAYTON HARDING  
 (furious)  
 You're on thin fucking ice  
 Sidney! In case you haven't  
 noticed you're in the grown up  
 world now, and if you can't  
 stomach that then get the hell  
 out. You're on your last life  
 here, you understand? One more  
 fuck up like today and you're  
 gone.

Sidney walks out.

CUT TO:

86 INT. OPEN-PLAN OFFICE - DAY

86

Sidney walks back through the magazine's open plan area. CO-WORKERS stop whatever they're doing and watch him pass in silence. Then, slowly, one of them begins to CLAP. Someone else joins in. Then someone else. Soon they're all clapping. Someone gets up on their desk, then another...

Sidney smiles faintly then...

BLINKS out of HIS DAY-DREAM.

Everyone around him is working as always, paying him no attention.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. CLAYTON HARDING'S HOUSE - THE HAMPTONS - DAY

87

We are TRACKING through Magazine Staff, celebrities, politicians and children as they mill about the lawns of the sprawling mansion, enjoying the Fourth Of July celebrations which are in progress.

We find Sidney, wearing unfashionable shorts, socks and shoes. He is talking to Alison.

ALISON  
 You hired a *stripper*?

SIDNEY  
 In revenge. Only in revenge.

ALISON  
 I thought you wanted to be a  
 success here?

SIDNEY

I *do*! It's just...(ruefully) It wasn't me. It was Clark.

Alison laughs.

ALISON'D)

Right. That Sidney could be a real winner if only Clark didn't keep screwing things up for him...

SIDNEY

(depressed)

He's not going to print anything I write.

ALISON

What did you expect? Bradford's one of Eleanor's clients. I told you. They're Untouchables.

SIDNEY

I thought Clayton was different. I really did. (Beat) The only thing I'm good at is pissing people off, and he won't let me do it. (Beat) *"My glory walks hand in hand with my doom."* (Off her look) Troy.

He stares around him at the other guests.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

Everybody hates me here. You're the only one who'll talk to me.

ALISON

You cornered me.

SIDNEY

(a little embarrassed)

No, I mean it. You're the only person who's been, you know, uh...really, uh...abusive to me.

Alison laughs again. They smile at each other.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

You want another drink?

ALISON

(beat, smiling)

Alright. I'll have a beer.

Sidney walks off. Alison catches sight of someone and the smile fades from her face.

HER P.O.V - Elizabeth Maddox stands talking to another guest, wearing her ubiquitous dark glasses and icy demeanor.

Alison watches her unhappily.

CUT TO:

88

EXT. BAR - DAY

88

Sidney is getting a drink at the bar that has been set up in the grounds. Suddenly he stiffens, watching as Sophie Maes, looking spectacular, walks over to where Maddox and his circle are talking nearby.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Sophie, my darling. Looking  
ravishing as always.

Whilst the two are engaged in kissing cheeks, Sidney takes a credit card from his wallet and drops it surreptitiously by Sophie's feet.

JOURNALIST  
(to Maddox)  
You know what I read the other  
day? Your collection of poems -  
*The Hollow Heart*? Man, they're  
great.

Sidney reacts to this, feeling troubled for some reason.

SOPHIE MAES  
You wrote poems?

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
In another life.

The BARMAN brings Maddox his drink.

BARMAN  
Your White Russian, sir.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Thanks.

Sidney stares at the drink, feeling like he's just been punched in the stomach. Maddox notices him.

LAWRENCE MADDUX (CONT'D)  
Well, well, if it isn't Sidalee.

Maddox notices the card at Sophie's feet.

LAWRENCE MADDUX (CONT'D)  
(picking it up)  
What's this? "Hon Young".

SIDNEY  
That's...that's mine.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
But your name's not "Hon".

SIDNEY  
(reaching for it)  
It's short for "Honourable".

LAWRENCE  
(whisking it away)  
As in, "the Honourable Sidney Young"?

SIDNEY  
Can I please...?

LAWRENCE  
(holding it out of  
Sidney's reach)  
So how come it says "Hon Young"?  
They made you sound like some  
Korean medical student.

SIDNEY  
They screwed it up. Please.

LAWRENCE  
Sidney baby, you don't wanna go  
faking a British title to impress  
Sophie. It's the Fourth of July.  
(Handing back the card): We're  
celebrating the fact that we  
threw a bunch of British  
aristocrats out.

Sidney smiles tightly. Suddenly...

SIDNEY  
Why don't you shut up, Maddox?

Beat. The others look to Maddox to see how he will react.  
Maddox smiles dangerously.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Careful Sidney. Remember - if it  
wasn't for us you'd all be  
speaking German.

SIDNEY  
You're Canadian. If it wasn't for  
us you'd be speaking fucking  
French.

Sophie giggles. Maddox doesn't like this but before he can  
answer Sidney walks off.

CUT TO:

Alison is about to walk into the bathroom when she hears  
the sound of muffled sobbing and stops. She peers through  
the slightly open door.



HER P.O.V - Elizabeth Maddox stands at the mirror, staring at her reflection. For once she is not wearing her dark glasses and we can see her eyes are red raw from crying.

CUT TO:

90

A LITTLE LATER

90

Elizabeth walks out of the bathroom, dark glasses back in place, her face a mask once more. She walks off.

Alison slips out from a nearby room and watches her go, miserable with guilt.

CUT TO:

91

EXT. HOUSE - LATER

91

Sidney is staring over to where Alison and Maddox are standing by some trees, deep in conversation. Maddox is tossing nuts into the air and catching them in his mouth.

SIDNEY  
(muttering to himself)  
Choke. Choke.

He puts his fingers to his temples as if to channel telekinetic powers.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Choke...choke...

Sidney realizes Harding's wife is passing with her two daughters.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Hello, Mrs Harding. Lovely party.

With a look of alarm she shepherds the girls away. A tall older man dressed in white with a long white beard appears next to Sidney.

OLDER MAN  
How are you?

Sidney nods gloomily.

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)  
Has anyone ever told you before  
that you have an unusually dark  
aura?

SIDNEY  
Yup.

OLDER MAN  
You should walk with bare feet as  
much as possible, earth all that  
negative energy.

Sidney examines him.

SIDNEY  
So...you're a wizard or...?

OLDER MAN  
I'm a spiritual healer.

SIDNEY  
You can make a living doing that?

OLDER MAN  
Oh God no. I'm Clayton's dentist.

They stare at the party for a moment.

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)  
You want to do some coke?

SIDNEY  
Um...no, thanks.

CUT TO:

92

LATER

92

Rachel Stewart stands talking to some other guests. Sidney notices her and walks over.

SIDNEY  
Hey! Hello again?

Rachel smiles at him distantly, clearly not remembering him.

RACHEL  
Hello. (Turning back to the others) No, Lawrence is a wonderful writer. I really felt like he got to the heart of me.

Sidney snorts. Rachel turns back to him, faintly irritated.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, have we...?

SIDNEY  
Sidney. Sidney Young. We met at...

Another GUEST walks past Sidney and kisses Rachel.

GUEST  
I saw *Five Boroughs* the other day and wept!

Sidney hovers for a moment, ignored, and then walks away.

CUT TO:

93

LATER

93

Dusk. The guests have gathered on the lawns to watch the fireworks. There are *oohs* and *aahs* as the rockets light up the sky. Suddenly...

SIDNEY (O.S.)  
*In-ger-lernd!*

Puzzled the guests turn to where a drunk Sidney is standing on the balustrade of the porch of the house.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
*In-ger-lernd! In-ger-lerrrrrrnd!*

He spots HUGH GRANT amongst the crowd, watching him, puzzled.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
*You! Grant! Come on! In-ger-lerrrr...*

With that he slips from the balustrade and crashes into the shrubbery below.

CUT TO:

94

LATER

94

Sidney limps through the trees, dabbing at a scratch on his face. He passes Alison who is sitting on a tree-swing, lost in thought, swigging absently from a bottle of wine.

ALISON  
You okay?

SIDNEY  
What?

ALISON  
I said are you okay?

SIDNEY  
I'm fine. Yup. Fine. (Beat) You?

ALISON  
Yup. (Beat) No, actually. I hate my life so, you know, I'm gonna get drunk.

Sidney nods, vaguely. They stand in awkward silence for a moment. Then...

SIDNEY  
Right...See you...

He walks off. Beat. He walks back into frame suddenly.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (furious)  
 HOW COULD YOU?

ALISON  
 (startled)  
 What?

SIDNEY  
 How the...You...you *hypocrite!*  
 Since I've met you you've done  
*nothing* but complain about  
 working for Sharps, how *dumb* it  
 is, how *trivial*, what a *prick* I  
 must be to care about any of  
 it... All that time you've been  
 having an affair with *Maddox!* I  
 mean...Maddox for Christ's sake!  
 The Man With Hidden Shallows!  
*Jesus!* I mean, I used to think  
 you were...I was starting to...I  
 mean, I thought you were uptight  
 and your clothes are shit but  
 still, you were...but now? You've  
 gone right down in my estimation.  
 I mean...Maddox? He's married!  
 How can you live with yourself?

Alison stares at him, pale, blinking back tears.

ALISON  
 (Quietly)  
 I couldn't. That's why I've  
 broken up with him.

SIDNEY  
 Well, that's no...that's, you  
 know...(Beat) You broke up with  
 him?

Alison walks off. Beat. She walks back.

ALISON  
 Which leg did you hurt?

SIDNEY  
 (pointing)  
 This one.

Alison kicks the leg.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 OW!

She walks off again.

CUT TO:

95

EXT. POOL - EVENING

95

Sidney lies beside the pool staring darkly into the water and nursing the beginnings of a hangover. We hear faint music and laughter from where the party continues in the house behind.

He notices the reflection of the starry sky in the water and reaching out gloomily to hold one of the stars. The reflection dissolves into ripples. When the water settles Sophie Maes reflection stares back at him. She's drunk and a good deal of the Greta Garbo mystique seems to have evaporated.

SOPHIE MAES

You know what? There's something very damaged about you.

Sidney stares at her reflection, not sure what to say.

SIDNEY

Huh...

Sophie lies down beside the pool, plays with a strand of her hair.

SOPHIE MAES

Like an animal that's been hit by a car or something. Like a deer or...like a pig maybe? When they walk funny and the other animals keep away from them. Little limpy pig. I'm drawn to sick animals. That's why I picked Cuba - because he had like psychological problems? (Her eyes well with tears) Poor little Cuba. Where is he now?

SIDNEY

(beat)

Huh...

She wipes her eyes, rolls onto her back.

SOPHIE MAES

Jesus, I'm wasted. Are you wasted? I'm wasted.

Sidney watches her.

SIDNEY

Congratulations on becoming incredibly famous by the way.

SOPHIE MAES

Thanks.

SIDNEY

(Beat)

What was it like?

SOPHIE MAES  
What was what like?

SIDNEY  
Everything.

She rolls her head to look at him solemnly.

SOPHIE MAES  
Weird. It's happening so fast  
and...it's like it's nothing to  
do with me. It's like I'm not  
even really here.

She laughs softly.

SOPHIE MAES (CONT'D)  
Am I here?

SIDNEY  
You're here.

She turns back to like at the stars.

SOPHIE MAES  
I'm so hungry.

SIDNEY  
Would you...would you like me to  
get you some food?

SOPHIE MAES  
Are you crazy? There might still  
be a photographer around.

They lie in silence for a moment.

SOPHIE MAES (CONT'D)  
(dreamily)  
You know what would be nice  
though? Some coke.

She rubs her face, close to falling asleep.

SOPHIE MAES (CONT'D)  
Probably just as well I haven't  
got any. Coke always makes me so  
horny.

Sidney opens his mouth but cannot speak.

CUT TO:

SIDNEY  
 (out of breath)  
 Wizard! Wizard Dentist Man! Need  
 Wizard Dentist Man!

CUT TO:

97                    DRIVE                    97

Sidney has virtually dragged the Dentist out of his car before he could drive off. He is handing Sidney a wrap.

SIDNEY  
 I will never, never, never forget  
 this. *Thank you!*

He starts to hurry away.

98                    OUTSIDE HOUSE                    98

Alison is weaving unsteadily towards the drive.

Sidney hurries past then slows and stops, staring back at her.

99                    ALISON'S CAR                    99

Alison stands rooting in her purse for a tip to give the VALET MAN who is holding open the door of her car for her, the engine running.

SIDNEY  
 What are you doing?

ALISON  
 None of your business...

SIDNEY  
 You can't drive. You need to go  
 and sleep this off somewhere.

ALISON  
 Firstly, you are a stupid asshole  
 and I hate you and Secondly...  
 Secondly...

She muses on what she was going to say next. Sidney looks over his shoulder, imagining Sophie waiting for him.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
 Secondly...

SIDNEY  
 Yeah, okay. Listen, you try  
 driving in this state you're  
 gonna kill yourself.

ALISON  
Yup. That's the idea.

Beat. Suddenly she bursts into tears. Surprised, Sidney stands, uncertain what to do.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
(swaying forward)  
I've got to go. Got to go.

Sidney holds her to stop her falling. He stares back at the pool and then down at Alison.

CUT TO:

100 INT. ALISON'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

100

Sidney is driving. Alison is still drunk.

ALISON  
(slurring)  
I had it all planned out. A - get the hell out of Port Huron, come to New York. I was full of the possible. B - do the serious journalism to pay the bills while I worked on the novel. C- Win the National book Award. E...

SIDNEY  
D.

ALISON  
D - become the new Mailer, the new Joan Didion. Then I took the internship at Sharps and I met Maddox and he was...he was so...He isn't the person you think he is, okay? That's just a front. He thinks he's let himself down by giving up the poetry and he's unhappy. And the marriage is a sham, I mean... I just...I couldn't end it. I just couldn't and...

SIDNEY  
(can't take anymore)  
Look, I don't need to hear this.

ALISON  
(stung)  
Fine.

She begins to root through her bag.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Need a cigarette. Where are my fucking cigarettes?



SIDNEY  
You don't smoke.

ALISON  
Oh yeah.

She looks at her reflection in the window.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Do you think I have low self-esteem? Am I afraid of a *real* relationship? Do I think an affair is all I deserve? I mean, okay, he's handsome and successful and he's great in bed...

SIDNEY  
(irritated)  
Could you just be quiet?

He realises she has started to cry.

ALISON  
When I told him I couldn't see him any more...I don't know if he cared. I love him and, and I don't know if he cares!

Sidney watches, moved.

SIDNEY  
I'm sure that's not true. Men just aren't very good at showing how they feel.

ALISON  
(sobbing)  
I'm so fucking sophisticated! I mean there's not even a little bit of Port Huron left, right? I've got the haircut and the job and I've got the parties and I've even, I've even got the affair because that's what sophisticated fucking people do!

SIDNEY  
Alright. Alright. Don't, you know, get snot everywhere...

ALISON  
Oh G-God...

SIDNEY  
What?

Alison lurches down out of sight and is sick on Sidney's shorts.

CUT TO:

101 INT. CAR - LATER

101

Sidney is driving through Manhattan, the windows down.  
Alison is asleep.

SIDNEY  
Alison? What's your address?  
(Beat. Shaking her) Alison?

Alison snores loudly. Sidney sighs.

CUT TO:

102 INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

102

Sidney staggers up the stairs carrying Alison over his  
shoulder. Alison is moaning.

SIDNEY  
(hissing)  
Shut up will you? You'll wake the  
old witch up.

He stops suddenly and turns.

Mrs Kowalski glowers at him from the doorway. Sidney  
freezes - a sickly smile on his face.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Did...Did we wake you?

ALISON  
(suddenly wailing  
drunkenly)  
OH GOD! I'M A WHORE! I'M A WHORE!

An ELDERLY MAN appears behind Mrs Kowalski staring at  
Sidney. Long Beat.

SIDNEY  
(numbly)  
Hello Dad.

CUT TO:

103 INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

103

Sidney, Mrs Kowalski and Sidney's father - RICHARD YOUNG -  
sit drinking coffee. Richard has an absent-minded air,  
wears a somewhat shabby jacket. Sidney seems to have almost  
physically shrunk in the presence of his father.

Some music is playing in the next room. Alison dances  
drunkenly past the doorway, wearing Sidney's jacket.

ALISON  
(as she goes by)  
Love this song...

The three stare after her. Sidney coughs.

SIDNEY  
She, uh, she isn't actually a  
prostitute.

RICHARD YOUNG  
(mildly)  
Oh, good.

Alison dances back into the room.

ALISON  
Sooo, Sidney's dad. Good to meet  
you. I'm Alison. I'm from Port  
Huron. (To Mrs Kowalski) And you  
must be Sidney's mom?

MRS KOWALSKI  
(shocked)  
No I am not!

ALISON  
Oh, okay. My dad married again  
too, so that's cool. (To Richard)  
You wanna dance?

RICHARD YOUNG  
No thank you dear.

ALISON  
Okay. (feeling something in the  
pocket of the jacket) What *is*  
that?

She produces the wrap of coke that the elderly man had  
given Sidney.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Oh, hey, is that....?

She stops herself. Everyone stares at the wrap.

RICHARD YOUNG  
I think it is probably cocaine my  
dear.

Sidney closes his eyes.

SIDNEY  
It wasn't actually for me. I was  
going to give it to this young  
actress...

He realises this isn't helping and trails off.

ALISON  
(trying to change the  
subject)  
So, hey, visiting your boy.  
That's nice. You must be pretty  
proud of him, huh?

SIDNEY  
(dying)  
I think you should lie down  
Alison.

ALISON  
He's doing just *great* at the  
magazine.

Alison ruffles Sidney's hair clumsily.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
First we all thought he was kinda  
creepy because he was always  
hanging around the water-cooler,  
hitting on women...

SIDNEY  
Really Alison, I think...

ALISON  
But I think that was pretty much  
an act. So, Mister Sidney,  
whatcha doing here?

RICHARD YOUNG  
(smiling)  
Please, call me Richard. I've  
written a little book so I'm  
doing a few talks.

ALISON  
A book! Hey - *I'm writing a book.*  
What's yours about? Don't tell me  
- it's a thriller, right?

RICHARD YOUNG  
(laughing)  
No, nothing so interesting I'm  
afraid. I'm a philosopher.

ALISON  
(surprised)  
Philosophy? Really? Have you  
written any...

Alison stops dancing, stares at him, something occurring to  
her.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Oh my God...Richard? R.C. Young?  
You're R.C Young? (To Sidney)  
You...you didn't say...

Sidney avoids her eye.

RICHARD YOUNG  
(To Sidney)  
I'd love to hear what you think  
of the book if you have time to  
read it.

Alison snorts with laughter.

ALISON  
What would Sidney know about  
philosophy?

RICHARD YOUNG  
Well, he does have a Masters in  
the subject.

Alison stares at Sidney. She breaks into a snorting laugh again.

ALISON  
You're *shitting* me! Sidney?  
He...he likes Con Air!

She stops laughing, hit by a sudden wave of nausea.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
I...I don't feel very well.

Mrs Kowalski stands up.

MRS KOWALSKI  
Come on. It is time you went to  
bed. (To Sidney) You can sleep on  
the couch.

ALISON  
Okay. Better go before I find out  
something else I don't know about  
Sidney.

Mrs Kowalski turns to Richard.

MRS KOWALSKI  
It was a pleasure to meet you  
Lord Young.

Alison stares at Sidney who smiles weakly.

CUT TO:

104 LATER

104

Richard and Sidney sit alone.

SIDNEY  
You should have said you were  
coming.

RICHARD YOUNG  
(wryly)  
That would have required you  
answering one of my calls.

SIDNEY  
I've been pretty busy.

RICHARD YOUNG

Which reminds me, I was talking to a publisher friend of mine the other day. He mentioned that they were planning a series of introductory texts on philosophers. I wondered if you would be interested?

SIDNEY

(annoyed)

I have a job, dad.

RICHARD YOUNG

Of course, of course. I picked up a copy of your magazine at the airport.

Sidney stiffens a little.

RICHARD YOUNG (CONT'D)

Most enjoyable. (Beat) I particularly liked the actress who remarked that she'd never driven a horse before.

SIDNEY

(irritated)

Why've you always got to do this? It's...it's...

RICHARD YOUNG

It was just a joke Sidney...

SIDNEY

Actually it's not. Because you're saying that what I do for a living is worthless and...

RICHARD YOUNG

I don't think it's worthless. I just think, in your heart, you know you could do more with your life than...

SIDNEY

(angry)

More? Sharps is one of the most respected magazines in the world. There's a million hacks who would kill to be where I am now. You know who I interviewed recently? Nathan Lane.

RICHARD YOUNG

I don't know who...

SIDNEY

I KNOW you don't know who that is! You don't know who *anyone* is! You thought Brad Pitt was a cave in Yorkshire!

(MORE)

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 But *most* people do know who they  
 are, okay? And most people  
 wouldn't think that a journalist  
 who gets to mix with stars like  
 that was a, a *disappointment!*

RICHARD YOUNG  
 (pained)  
 I don't think you're a  
 disappointment Sidney. I would  
 never think that.

Silence. Richard stands and picks up his coat.

RICHARD YOUNG (CONT'D)  
 (sadly)  
 I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset  
 you.

Sidney watches his father, struggling with himself.

SIDNEY  
 (quietly)  
 Things haven't really been that  
 great. I don't know what it is.  
 (Beat) I'm not... getting ahead.

Richard stops, turns back to his son. Beat.

RICHARD YOUNG  
 (gently)  
 If you're not happy...

SIDNEY  
 No. I'm fine. I know I can make  
 it.

RICHARD YOUNG  
 Einstein said "Try not to become  
 a man of success but rather to  
 become a man of value."

Sidney doesn't answer.

RICHARD YOUNG (CONT'D)  
 The young lady next door...  
 Alison? She wouldn't have  
 anything to do with your desire  
 to stay would she?

SIDNEY  
 What? No. We're just friends.

RICHARD YOUNG  
 (smiling)  
 I saw the way you looked at her.

Sidney considers this, knowing it's true.

SIDNEY  
 She doesn't feel that way about  
 me. New York women don't date  
 losers.

RICHARD YOUNG  
 (smiling)  
 I suppose not. But Alison is from  
 Port Huron, isn't she?

Sidney stares at him.

CUT TO:

105 BEDROOM - LATER

105

Sidney peers into the room to check Alison is okay. She  
 lies asleep on the bed, moonlight bathing her face. She  
 looks beautiful.

Sidney stands staring at her for a moment and then tip-toes  
 back out of the room.

CUT TO:

106 INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

106

Alison wakes up in the bed and stares around her. She has  
 no idea where she is. Then she remembers.

ALISON  
 (closing her eyes again)  
 Oh shit...

CUT TO:

107 KITCHEN - LATER

107

Sidney is cooking, humming, happy that Alison is here.  
 Alison sits at the table, feeling dreadful.

ALISON  
 I don't remember very much but  
 I'm so, so sorry. I'll get myself  
 together and get going...

SIDNEY  
 Why? No, you're all right.  
 It's...it's nice to have the  
 company.

ALISON  
 (remembering)  
 Oh God...your father. And that  
 woman.



SIDNEY  
Mrs Kowalski? Don't worry about  
it. The last woman she caught me  
with had a penis, so you  
know...you're a big step up.

ALISON  
Thanks.

She notices a black and white photograph of a glamorous  
WOMAN on the shelf. We recognise her as the woman on the TV  
at the beginning of the film.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Who's that?

SIDNEY  
(Beat)  
That's my mother.

ALISON  
Get outa here!

SIDNEY  
Yeah, I don't take after her...

ALISON  
Wow! Was she a model?

SIDNEY  
Actress.

ALISON  
Wow. Movies?

SIDNEY  
Some. British, small parts...

ALISON  
Is she...

SIDNEY  
No, she died when I was young.

Without thinking he fiddles with the ring on his finger.

ALISON  
Must have been pretty neat having  
your mom in the movies.

SIDNEY  
Yeah, I suppose. I used to see  
her on the TV every now and then  
when I was growing up. Sort of  
weird.

He carries the plates over to her.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Here we go! English fry-up. Cures  
all known hangovers.

Sidney puts a plate of bacon, eggs and sausages in front of her. Alison stares at it, going green.

ALISON  
I'm going to be sick.

CUT TO:

108 LIVING ROOM - LATER

108

Sidney is tidying. He upsets Alison's bag from the couch and its contents spill onto the floor - the NOTEBOOK is amongst them.

Sidney stares at it, hesitates and then, unable to resist, opens it up to reveal...a blank page.

Puzzled he flicks through the notebook - it's all BLANK. Alison walks into the room. Sidney looks up guiltily.

SIDNEY  
Sorry, I was just...uh...(He  
*can't think of an excuse*)  
...rooting through your private  
possessions...

Alison sits on the couch.

ALISON  
I haven't got very far. Can't get  
seem to get started. But that's  
me for you. Pretty much too  
afraid to actually *do* anything,  
you know? Only thing I've ever  
jumped into was going out with  
Maddox. And look what a mess  
that's been.

She puts her things back in her bag.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Sorry, just whining...I'll jump  
in the shower and then I really  
will get out of your hair.

Sidney watches, not wanting her to go.

SIDNEY  
Oh, I forgot...I got you a  
present.

He hands her a bag. Surprised she opens it and takes out a record. It's the Nino Rota sound-track to *La Dolce Vita*.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
I was just walking past this  
music shop on the corner and I  
saw it. I thought it might cheer  
you up.

Alison is deeply touched.

ALISON  
That's...I don't know what to  
say.

Sidney takes the record and puts it on the turntable in the corner of the room. He selects the *finale music* - it's funny and sad, glamorous and romantic... They listen to it for a moment. Sidney starts to dance a little. He cha-cha's over to her and holds out his hand.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Are you kidding? I could be sick  
on you again.

SIDNEY  
C'mon...

Alison reluctantly gets up. They dance ironically. Alison laughs a little. Gradually they get more into it, enjoying the music - a man in shorts and a woman in pyjamas, cha-cha-chaing, a summer breeze wafting in through the open windows behind him...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

109 INT. I SPY AREA - DAY

109

Rain lashes against the window. Alison sits at her desk, trying to work. She looks up and catches Maddox watching her with soulful eyes from his office.

She looks quickly away, unsettled.

Sidney sits at his desk surreptitiously watching her,  
SMITTEN.

CUT TO:

110 INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

110

Alison comes around the corner and finds Maddox waiting for her. She tries to walk past. His manner is very different from the usual suave Maddox.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Please, Alison...please talk to  
me.

ALISON  
I don't have anything to say.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Then listen to me. I can't stand  
it. I can't stand not being with  
you. It's killing me.

Alison examines him. He looks desperate, miserable. She wavers.

ALISON  
You'll find someone else.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
I don't want anyone else! I want you! Because you know what I'm really like, you know I'm a mess and you love me anyway. Don't you?

Alison tries to get past.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
I'll leave her.

Alison stops, stares at him.

ALISON  
(getting upset)  
No, you won't.

She pushes past him and hurries away.

CUT TO:

111 INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

111

Rain lashes against the window. Alison drinks coffee.  
Ingrid and Anna are examining a rack of clothes behind her.

Ingrid is holding up a dress.

INGRID  
Hey, Alice? *Alaia*. You like?

ALISON  
I'm good, thanks.

INGRID  
Honey, everyone needs to change their look every now and then. Especially if they have a new man in their life.

ALISON  
(embarrassed)  
What are you talking about?

CUT TO:

112 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ROOM

112

Sidney is just about to enter the room.

INGRID (O.S.)  
Well, that English guy is always  
hanging around you these days,  
right?

Sidney freezes, listening.

CUT TO:

113 BREAK ROOM

113

Alison blushes fiercely.

ANNA  
(laughing)  
Tell me it isn't so.

ALISON  
(annoyed)  
Don't be stupid. We're just  
friends.

ANNA  
Thank God. Can you imagine? He's  
such a creep.

CUT TO:

114 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ROOM

114

Sidney listens sadly to the women laughing inside.

CUT TO:

115 BREAK ROOM

115

Alison stares at the Fashionistas, annoyed by this.  
Oblivious, Anna holds up some trousers against herself.

ANNA  
These are gorgeous, but I'm just  
too fat.

INGRID  
Oh don't be crazy! Alice? Is Anna  
fat?

ALISON  
(bright)  
Not at all. Why, she's so thin I  
could just take her little  
spindly body and snap it over my  
knee like a dry fucking twig. Oh,  
and for your information Sidney  
Young has got more going for him  
than most of the men in this  
place.

She gets up to leave, the others gawping after her.

CUT TO:

116 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ROOM

116

Sidney gives a slow smile of wonder - *she likes him!*

Suddenly he realises Alison is about to walk out the door and catch him listening. Panicking he opens the nearest door and runs in, falling straight down a short flight of stairs and out of sight. Alison walks out of the room and away, oblivious.

CUT TO:

117 INT. SIDNEY'S FLAT - EVENING

117

E.C.U - On Sidney, staring at us.

SIDNEY

Hey Alison, I was wondering if you wanted to...(Beat. Starting again) Hello there. Listen I was wondering if you wanted to see a movie or...a meal...or...(Beat, starting again.) Alison. You wanna go on a date?

We see he is staring at his reflection in a mirror. He slips in a pair of PLASTIC FANGS and smiles toothily.

CUT TO:

118 CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

118

The SHARPS HALLOWEEN BALL is in full swing - guests dancing in fancy dress. Sidney, dressed as Dracula, threads through the crowd. He spots Alison on the other side of the room, dressed as CAT WOMAN. He starts to make his way towards her, a little nervous.

He passes ELEANOR JOHNSON and BRADFORD FRASER. Bradford wears a collar-less floor length coat and his monocle.

SIDNEY

I like your costume Bradford.

BRADFORD

I'm not wearing a costume.

SIDNEY

Oh.

They walk on.

BRADFORD  
(muttering)  
Idiot.

SIDNEY  
(muttering)  
Wanker.

Sidney continues through the crowd to Alison. He puts his Dracula TEETH in.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
Haven't we met somewhere before?

ALISON  
That's why I don't go there any more.

They smile, but Alison seems a little nervous.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
I've been looking for you actually. There's, uh, there's something I need to...

SIDNEY  
(Mumbling through his teeth)  
Me first. Listen I was wondering if you want to go to the movies or maybe for a, uh....

ALISON  
(interrupting)  
What? I can't understand what you're saying.

Sidney pulls the plastic fangs out.

SIDNEY  
Sorry. I was just saying...

Maddox appears and gives Alison a glass of champagne. He kisses her.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Back in a minute.

He walks off again. Sidney stares dumbly after him.

ALISON  
(embarrassed)  
I wanted to tell you. Lawrence has left his wife. We're going to move in together.

She watches for Sidney's reaction.

SIDNEY  
(dying)  
Well...that's...that's great.

ALISON  
Yeah, so...maybe he does care  
after all, right?

SIDNEY  
Yup.

They stand in an awkward silence, watching the party.

CUT TO:

119 INT. WASHROOMS - LATER

119

A dejected Sidney stands washing his hands. Maddox walks in behind him.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
Hello Sidney. Someone said you'd  
come as a Count but I thought I'd  
misheard.

Sidney doesn't answer, turns to leave.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
So Alison told you we were  
getting together right? You must  
be happy for her, what with you  
being *friends*...

Sidney flushes. Lawrence takes in his reaction.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
(laughing)  
Oh Sidalee...I thought as much.  
Did you really think you and  
Alison...? Things really haven't  
worked out too well for you here,  
have they? You know what? You  
gave it your best shot, now why  
don't you go back home with your  
tail between your legs?

He walks out. Sidney stares after him, frozen by the echo  
of Sienna's words.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. OUTSIDE CLUB - NIGHT

120

Rain pours down. Eleanor and Bradford climb into a  
limousine and close the door. Sidney runs up.

SIDNEY  
Wait! Eleanor wait!

The window glides down.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
Yes?



SIDNEY  
Let me do the profile on  
Bradford.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
(amused)  
I don't think so.

The window begins to slide up. Sidney hangs onto it.

SIDNEY  
You get full copy approval. It'll  
be like you've written it!

The window stops. Eleanor stares at him, considering.  
Sidney looks past her to Bradford.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
(determined)  
Bradford - think about it, think  
how humiliating it will be for  
me. I'm begging you.

Bradford leans over, staring through his monocle at Sidney.

BRADFORD  
(Beat, enjoying this)  
You don't look like you're  
begging.

Beat. Sidney kneels down on the side-walk beside the  
limousine. The rain pours down on him. The limousine drives  
away. Sidney stares dumbly up at something across the  
street.

REVERSE

On the building across the street is an ENORMOUS BILLBOARD  
L'OREAL ADVERTISEMENT - SOPHIE MAES, in a gold ball-gown  
and make-up, hair coiffured in classic forties Hollywood  
style. Underneath is the slogan - *I'm Here...*

CUT TO:

121 INT. CLAYTON HARDING'S OFFICE - DAY

121

Sidney sits in front of Clayton.

CLAYTON HARDING  
Lawrence Maddox is no longer  
working for Sharps. Seems  
Elizabeth got sick of him  
screwing around and kicked him  
out.

SIDNEY  
*She kicked him out?*

CLAYTON HARDING  
 (ignoring this)  
 Now Richard Harper doesn't seem  
 to like the idea of employing an  
 ex-son-in-law. So he's gone. So's  
 Alison Olsen.

Sidney stares at him.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
 Don't worry about Maddox. He's  
 already lined up something with  
 Gotham. I'm gonna need someone  
 to hold the fort at I Spy.  
 Strictly on a temporary basis,  
 you understand? One more thing.  
 Eleanor Johnson rang this  
 morning, wondering if you'd like  
 to write a profile on Sophie  
 Maes.

Sidney stares at him.

CLAYTON HARDING (CONT'D)  
 Welcome to the grown-up world. I  
 don't know how you did it but  
 somehow you've made it into the  
 next room.

We hear the opening of *Pretty Vacant* by the Sex Pistols as  
 we...

CUT TO:

122 MONTAGE 122

123 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY 123

As the song continues we see Sidney interviewing Bradford,  
 complete with monocle.

CUT TO:

124 INT. STUDIO - DAY 124

Bradford is wearing a crown, being photographed on a  
 throne. Sidney and Eleanor are watching.

CUT TO:

125 INT. ELEANOR'S OFFICE - DAY 125

Eleanor is reading through Sidney's copy, making comments.  
 Sidney nods, taking notes.

CUT TO:

126 INT. SHARPS MAGAZINE - OFFICE - DAY 126

Sidney, Eleanor and a Photo-Editor are looking at the photo's from the shoot. Eleanor is pointing out a blemish on Bradford's face.

127 COMPUTER SCREEN - BRADFORD'S FACE IN CLOSE UP 127

...as we watch the blemish disappears.

CUT TO:

128 EXT. NEWS STAND - DAY 128

Sidney buys a copy of Sharps and flicks through it until he finds what he's looking for - a four page feature entitled Bradford Fraser - Long Live The King.

He stares at his byline at the top of the feature.

CUT TO:

129 INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY 129

Sidney is amongst the room full of writers and editors, pitching to Clayton who nods approval and passes on to the next item.

CUT TO:

130 INT. CLUB - EVENING 130

Sidney and Eleanor are talking with an ACTOR. Sidney is wearing a smart suit, fawning in a suitably restrained manner.

CUT TO:

131 INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - DAY 131

Sidney is interviewing the Actor, laughing sycophantically at something he has just said.

CUT TO:

132 INT. OFFICE - DAY 132

Sidney sits at his desk, looking very much the part now in another expensive suit, tapping away at the key-board and talking on the phone. A COURIER appears with a large GIFT for Sidney. Sidney stares at the box.

CUT TO:

133 INT. MOVIE PREMIERE - EVENING 133

Sidney is drinking champagne amongst the Glitterati, talking to a Producer. Angelo, the It Boy, walks past and high-fives him. Sidney throws back his head, laughing at something the Producer said.

CUT TO:

134 INT. BATH AND RACQUETS CLUB - DAY 134

Sidney sits in the steam room, wrapped in a towel, sweating. Slowly the steam envelops him until he has disappeared.

135 END OF MONTAGE 135

CUT TO:

136 INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING 136

CLOSE ON SIDNEY'S PHOTOGRAPH - looking as cool as he can.

Alison sits alone reading Sharps, staring at Sidney's photo in the "Notes on Contributors" page. She smiles, then glances up, her smile fading. Maddox is walking towards her, drunk and sour faced.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
(noticing the magazine)  
Well, well...little Sidalee. I  
feel like a proud Pa. Listen, I  
can't stay. Anderson wants me to  
go to some photographers  
exhibition. Hot new talent blah,  
blah...

ALISON  
Right. (Beat) How hot is she?

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Who?

ALISON  
The new talent?

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Do you think you could drop the  
little wife routine? It's kind of  
in bad taste.

Alison stares at him sadly

ALISON  
I guess you're right. (Quietly)  
What goes around comes around.

Maddox is about to say something but changes his mind.

LAWRENCE MADDOX  
I'll see you back home. Don't  
wait up.

He is about to leave when he notices Alison's notebook on  
the table.

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
(irritated)  
And will you stop carrying that  
thing around with you? It's kind  
of embarrassing.

He walks off.

CUT TO:

137 INT. BAR - EVENING

137

Sidney is with Eleanor and Sophie, who now looks every inch  
the movie star.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
Sophie's going to get a Golden  
Globe nomination for best  
actress.

SIDNEY  
Wow. That's fantastic.(Beat)  
But...the nominations haven't  
been announced yet?

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
That is correct so we have  
absolutely no way of knowing  
whether or not she will be  
nominated. (Beat) So, when she is  
nominated we want Sharps to do a  
feature. Someone to cover the  
whole lead up, unrestricted  
access, the trajectory, the  
building of this unique brand.

SOPHIE MAES  
I'm going to have a logo.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
Here's the deal. Sophie wants you  
to do it.

Sidney stares at her and then at Sophie, stunned.

SOPHIE MAES  
(pleasantly)  
You can be my bitch.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 Happy Christmas, Sidney. This is  
 a cover story. I think a little  
 celebration is in order.

CUT TO:

138 EXT. OUTSIDE CIRCLE CLUB - NIGHT 138

Snow falls. Sidney climbs out of a limousine with Eleanor and Sophie.

The women breeze past the Doorman and into the club. Sidney hesitates on the thresh-hold, staring up at the sign above him as if it's a magic portal.

Sidney walks in.

CUT TO:

139 INT. CIRCLE CLUB - LATER 139

A surprisingly small, ultra A-list club, chic and ironic Christmas decorations.

Sidney walks past celebrities and beautiful people. He's arrived.

CUT TO:

140 INT. CIRCLE CLUB - NIGHT 140

Sidney stands with Kevin Bacon playing Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon. People stand around watching.

KEVIN BACON  
 Okay, uh...Clark Gable. Go!

SIDNEY  
 Clark Gable to Vivian Leigh (Gone With The Wind), Vivian Leigh to Marlon Brando (Street Car Named Desire), Marlon Brando to Robert DeNiro (The Score) Robert De Niro to Kevin Bacon (Sleepers)!

The crowd cheers.

CUT TO:

141 INT. CIRCLE CLUB - POWDER ROOM 141

A very drunk Sidney stands in a toilet cubicle with a YOUNG ACTRESS doing coke.

ACTRESS  
 Sexiest philosopher?

SIDNEY

Uh, tricky, but I'm gonna say  
Nietzsche. Huge moustache. The  
Tom Selleck of Nihilism.

ACTRESS

Um...most evil philosopher.

SIDNEY

Okay. Good. Evil genius  
philosopher...Hobbes, proto-Nazi,  
Heidegger - actual Nazi, Hegel -  
twat. Basically your H's...

ACTRESS

Most Hollywood philosopher?

SIDNEY

Uh...Bishop Berkely.

ACTRESS

What'd he say?

SIDNEY

*Esse est percipi.*

FIRST ACTRESS

What does that mean?

SIDNEY

If they 'aint looking at you, you  
don't really exist.

ACTRESS

(wearily)

Oh honey, tell me something I  
don't know...

Sidney stoops and snorts a line of coke.

CUT TO:

142 CIRCLE BAR - NIGHT

142

Sidney, giddy on champagne, coke and success is dancing  
with Sophie. He's at the centre of the world.

CUT TO:

143 INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

143

The doorbell rings. Sidney wearing a silk dressing gown  
wanders through the room from the bedroom and opens the  
door.

Alison stands outside, smiling at him.

ALISON

Hey.

SIDNEY  
(thrown)  
Hey.

ALISON  
Nice robe.

SIDNEY  
Thanks. It was a gift.

ALISON  
Ralph Lauren.

SIDNEY  
I did a little piece.

Beat. He still hasn't invited her in.

ALISON  
I just wanted to say I read your last story. Congratulations. I'm happy for you.

SIDNEY  
Thanks. How's things with you and...

ALISON  
(quickly)  
Good. Fine. Everything's...uh...I'm working for this little literary magazine. It's not the New Yorker but... (awkward) So, I've left you a bunch of messages...

SIDNEY  
Yeah. I've been pretty busy.

ALISON  
I thought so.

Alison stands awkwardly for a moment, smiling, then turns to go.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Okay, well...

SIDNEY  
(quickly)  
How's the novel coming along?

ALISON  
(laughing)  
Oh, well...still working on it.

SIDNEY  
Have you written anything yet?

ALISON  
Nope.



SIDNEY  
Well...keep at it. You're full of  
the possible.

Alison smiles, touched.

ALISON  
You know...

WOMAN'S VOICE  
Sidney?

Alison looks past Sidney to the bedroom door where the  
YOUNG ACTRESS stands in her underwear.

Sidney looks at her and back at Alison. He gives a little  
laugh.

SIDNEY  
(half joking, half  
meaning it)  
How did it all go so wrong?

Alison smiles, gives a little wave and walks away - before  
he can see how upset she is.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

144 EXT. LA - BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - DAY 144

Sophie and her entourage, including Sidney and Eleanor,  
climb out of a line of limousines and walk into the Hotel.

145 THE POLO LOUNGE 145

Power lunches in progress. Piano music playing.

Sidney sits drinking coffee. Across the lounge Sophie,  
Eleanor and a photographer are discussing something.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Hack. Am I right?

Sidney looks up surprised to see has been the object of  
scrutiny for his neighbor - a tortoise skinned ELDERLY MAN.

ELDERLY MAN  
Am I right?

SIDNEY  
Yeah.

ELDERLY MAN  
Yeah. I can always tell. Takes  
one to know one. Come to cover  
the rigmarole, huh?

SIDNEY  
That's right. You?

ELDERLY MAN  
Too old. Done it in my time,  
though.

He leans forward confidentially.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)  
First time I came to this hotel,  
fifty-four, I met Ben Hecht.  
There was a newspaper man. We got  
drunk, me and him, threw peanuts  
at Yves Montand. Ben didn't give  
a shit about anything!

He cackles and stares at the wealthy guests scattered  
around the pool.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)  
Yeah, they can buy an awful lot,  
but they never bought Ben Hecht.  
(To Sidney) Don't let them buy  
you, you hear?

Sidney stares at him, troubled.

SIDNEY  
Absolutely.

We hear the opening of *Virginia Plain* by Roxy Music.

CUT TO:

146 EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - NIGHT

146

We are swooping in towards the hotel and an enormous  
BILLBOARD ADVERTISEMENT for Sophie's new film, a re-make of  
*Singing In The Rain*.

We BOOM down from Sophie's fifteen foot laughing face to  
find Sidney standing on a slim ledge outside his hotel  
window. He is drunk and wearing only his underwear. He is  
also yelling with fear.

The window behind her is crowded with people shrieking with  
laughter.

Gingerly he edges back to the window and climbs back  
into...

147 HOTEL SUITE

147

It's a wild party. Music is blaring, people are dancing,  
drinking, laughing.

SOPHIE MAES  
You didn't do it!

SIDNEY

High.

SOPHIE MAES

You let me down!

SIDNEY

Too high! You couldn't do it. Too high.

Sophie calmly unzips her dress and steps out of it, standing in her underwear. There is applause from the on-lookers. Calmly she steps out of the window onto the ledge and disappears from sight.

The on-lookers crane out of the window, yelling encouragement.

After a moment Sophie appears at another window further along the wall and climbs back into the room to ecstatic applause. She stares imperiously at Sidney.

SOPHIE MAES

What are you?

SIDNEY

Your limpy pig.

SOPHIE MAES

What?

SIDNEY

I'm your limpy pig!

SOPHIE MAES

That's right! Okay, limpy pig. You need to pay a forfeit. Whatcha got?

SIDNEY

I've got my little limpy dance.

Sidney dances a little, jiggling up and down.

SOPHIE MAES

(suddenly)

Give me your ring.

Sidney stops dancing, his smile fading a little.

SIDNEY

I...I can't...

SOPHIE MAES

Give me the ring. I want it.

SIDNEY

I *can't*.

Sophie stares at him through narrowed eyes.

SOPHIE MAES

Okay, give me the ring and if I  
win tomorrow, I'll let you have  
sex with me.

The on-lookers shriek with delight.

Sidney stares at her. He looks past her to his reflection  
in the window - a drunk man in his underwear, swaying from  
side to side...

CUT TO:

148

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

148

Sidney is back in his own room, alone, a mess. He sits on  
the floor chopping lines of coke on the coffee table. He  
stares groggily at the space on his finger where his ring  
used to be.

SIDNEY

(muttering to himself)  
You're a star. You're a big,  
bright shining star...

He snorts a line and, leaning back, flicks blankly through  
TV channels - a sports programme, a news station, a sit-com  
re-run...

He snorts another line, flicks stations - more sports, a  
music video, a black and white movie...

Sidney stops, staring at the screen...

TV SCREEN - we're watching the fifties British movie we saw  
at the beginning of the film. Sidney's MOTHER is typing at  
the desk in the background. She gets up from the desk and  
walks into another office.

Sidney stares, frozen.

Sidney's mother passes the LEAD ACTRESS who is staring out  
of the window, smoking. She stares at her sympathetically.

SIDNEY'S MOTHER

(Celia Johnson accent)  
Don't worry Mary...you'll meet  
him one day.

LEAD ACTRESS

(smiling sadly)  
How will I know when I do?

SIDNEY'S MOTHER

Oh, when you meet the One, you'll  
know...

She walks on.

Sidney stares at the screen.

CUT TO:

149 EXT. BEVERLY HILTON - EVENING 149

A conveyor belt of limousines arriving outside the Hilton. Rain falls. Celebrities wave to the watching crowds as they make their way up the red carpet, cameras flash...

Sophie emerges from a limo, looking amazing. SHE IS WEARING A FUR WRAP. She makes her way up the carpet, Sidney walks behind, smiling vaguely...

CUT TO:

150 INT. BEVERLY HILTON - EVENING 150

Various celebrities are being interviewed. Sidney stands a little apart, lost in thought.

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Well, well... Look at you...

Lawrence Maddox stands beside him, something nervous in his manner now, the old confidence gone. He has been drinking.

LAWRENCE MADDUX (CONT'D)  
Made it all the way to the  
Seventh Room.

He holds out his hand.

LAWRENCE MADDUX (CONT'D)  
Congratulations. The wheel of  
fortune right? You go up, I go  
down. You're here with Sophie?  
How about doing your old Rabbi a  
favour and putting in a good word  
for me? Maybe a little interview?

Sidney absent-mindedly takes his hand, looking past him.

SIDNEY  
Is Alison here?

LAWRENCE MADDUX  
Alison? No, we went our separate  
ways. Actually she left me. How  
do you like that? Tells me she's  
in love with someone else.

Sidney stares at him.

LAWRENCE MADDUX (CONT'D)  
Nope, not you I'm afraid Sidalee.  
She threw us both over. She said  
she'd fallen for some guy called  
Clark. I mean...Clark.  
(MORE)

LAWRENCE MADDOX (CONT'D)  
 Can you believe it? But these are  
 the sacrifices we make, right? I  
 don't need to tell you. It's not  
 a vacation. It's a vocation. So  
 listen, about Sophie...

But Sidney is no longer listening.

CUT TO:

151 INT. GOLDEN GLOBES AWARDS - EVENING

151

SLOW MOTION - we move in on Sidney, sitting at the table,  
 listening to the Best Actress award. This is where we first  
 met him.

SIDNEY (V.O.)  
 This is me at the Golden Globes  
 this year. That's my Armani  
 tuxedo. That's a Rolex Sea-  
 Dweller 4000 watch I'm wearing.  
 I'm inside. I'm at the centre of  
 everything. I'm right where I  
 wanted to be.

Beside him Sophie covers her face with her hands and starts  
 to stand, having just won Best Actress.

Sidney stares at her hands - she is wearing his gold ring.

We move back into real time, sound swells up, thunderous  
 applause. Sidney claps along with the others.

Then he stands up and goes after Sophie.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (taking her arm)  
 I need my ring back.

Sophie turns back to him, her smile fixed.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)  
 I need my ring back.

As if puzzled by her inability to make it to the stage,  
 Sophie, still smiling, tries to pull her arm free. Eleanor  
 is instantly beside them, trying to disengage Sidney's  
 hand.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
 (smiling, hissing)  
 What are you doing? Let her go!

SIDNEY  
 My mother gave me that ring and  
 told me I had to give it to the  
 One. She isn't the One.

The applause is still going strong. TV Cameras move in on  
 Sophie as she starts to struggle, her smile slipping.

Sidney tries to pull the ring free from her finger.  
Officials move in.

ELEANOR JOHNSON  
What the fuck are you doing?

SIDNEY  
(yanking)  
Just...Will you...I don't want to  
have sex with you. (Beat) *I*  
*SQUASHED CUBA!*

Sophie stares at him for a moment then with a shriek  
launches herself at him. They tumble backwards.

The Officials rush upon them. There are gasps from the  
other tables, people standing up to see what's going on.

CUT TO:

152 INT. MRS KOWALSKI'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS 152

Mrs Kowalski sits watching the pandemonium on TV.

SOPHIE MAES (O.S.)  
(on the TV)  
*You fucking mother-fucking  
fucker!*

MRS KOWALSKI  
(grimly)  
Sodom and Gomorrah.

CUT TO:

153 INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 153

The Sharps *Fashionistas* are gathered watching the awards on  
TV in silent horror.

ON TV

Sophie kicks out at Sidney, ripping her dress in the  
process.

INGRID  
Oh God no...not the *Versace*...  
Security pile on Sidney...

CUT TO:

154 INT. AIRPORT LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS 154

Richard Young sits watching the awards on TV. He gives a  
small smile.

CUT TO:

155 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 155

Alison sits watching on a TV in the corner of the bar.

ELEANOR JOHNSON (O.S.)  
(On TV - losing it)  
You're finished! You're finished!

Alison begins to smile.

CUT TO:

156 INT. GOLDEN GLOBES AWARDS - CONTINUOUS 156

Sidney bursts free from the scrum of Security and begins to run across the room, overturning a table in the process, Officials racing after him.

Sidney races for the doors. He notices Bradford Fraser's startled face as he passes it. He stops, ducks back and slaps the back of Fraser's head, knocking the MONOCLE from his eye and onto the floor. Sidney stamps on the monocle and runs on. Bradford gapes after him.

157 ANGLE ON CLAYTON HARDING 157

...watching from his table as the people around him stand up to see the chase. He shakes his head in horror and then tries, and fails, to restrain a sudden bark of laughter...

CUT TO:

158 EXT. BEVERLY HILTON - NIGHT 158

Sidney is running down the street in the rain, his face bruised, his shirt collar ripped.

Beside him a steady line of limousines move in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

159 INT. LA AIRPORT - TICKET DESK - NIGHT 159

Sidney stands at the desk.

TICKET CLERK  
The next available flight is ten  
am sir. Get's you into New York  
six thirty pm.

Sidney sighs.

CUT TO:



160 INT. LA AIRPORT - NIGHT

160

Sidney sits in the almost deserted terminal waiting for the flight back to New York. He is still wearing his dishevelled tux. He looks down at his tightly clenched hand and slowly opens his fingers to reveal his RING.

CUT TO:

161 EXT. NEW YORK - NIGHT

161

Sidney is in a cab, still wearing his tux, his travel bag slung over shoulder. He stares out as the cab passes BRYANT PARK.

SIDNEY  
(seeing something)  
Stop the car!

CUT TO:

162 EXT. BRYANT PARK - EVENING

162

An outdoor CINEMA has been set up. LA DOLCE VITA is playing on a large screen. A crowd sit around the park, watching the movie.

Sidney stands scanning the crowd. He locates Alison sitting near the back.

She is WRITING IN HER NOTEBOOK.

Sidney smiles and starts towards her, then stops. She is sitting next to a MAN. Looking up from her notebook she rests her head on his shoulder.

Sidney watches, numb, then turns to walk away...

BOB stands in front of him in full drag, waving frantically. He starts to run towards Sidney, who sighs and closes his eyes - as if things weren't bad enough.

Then Bob runs straight past him. Sidney turns to see the Man next to Alison standing up to embrace Bob. The two kiss.

ON THE GRASS

Alison watches Bob and her friend embrace with a touch of sadness. Suddenly she realises someone is standing beside her. She looks up and sees Sidney.

She stares at him. Long Beat.

Sidney holds out his hand.

Alison hesitates and then takes his hand and stands up. Sidney kisses her. As he does so he takes the RING and slips it into Alison's coat pocket.

Then they begin to dance, cha-cha-chaing happily at the back of the park, as the music swells, lit by the flickering light from the screen as we draw back and then...

FADE TO BLACK.