

Script Walking in the Rain

By

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INT. JOHNSON HOUSE, FRONT ROOM (FLASHBACK) - DAY

WHITNEY JOHNSON (LENOX) [Female, 9-10 y/o, brunette] is walking past a shelf above which a rugged wood and wire cross hangs. WHITNEY runs her hand along the shelf, stopping just shy of the cross and staring up at it.

DADDY [MALE, MID 30'S, STRAWBERRY BLOND]

(speaking without being seen)

Time for church, Whit!

WHITNEY looks away from the cross to examine the dust she's rubbed onto her fingers from the shelf. Rubbing the dirty fingers onto the front of her white dress and leaving a stain, WHITNEY looks back to the cross. DADDY comes into the room to take WHITNEY's hand. He kneels in front of WHITNEY. He pulls a pocket square out of his suit jacket and wipes at the smudge on WHITNEY's dress. DADDY takes WHITNEY'S hand and pulls her along behind him, while WHITNEY covers the stain on the white dress with her clean hand and keeps her eyes on the cross.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

WHITNEY (JOHNSON) LENOX [Mid 30's, brunette] is standing with one hand on the mantle of the fireplace, her other hand gripping a robe closed near her heart. She's staring at a mosaic cross glued onto a charger and displayed on a charger stand.

WHITNEY LENOX

Chad. Leave. NOW, please.

CHAD PARRON (MALE, LATE 30S TO EARLY

40S, COCKY)

I'll call you-

WHITNEY

No... I'll see you at work.

CHAD glances out the front bay window and then back to WHITNEY.

CHAD

If you're worried about your phone,
I'll use Snap-

WHITNEY

I'm not worried about my phone,
Chad. I'm worried that my husband
is going to come in here and find
you talking about my phone, though.

(CONTINUED)

CHAD

Right...

WHITNEY keeps her eyes on the mosaic cross and leans away as CHAD attempts to kiss her cheek. WHITNEY'S eyes stay on the mosaic cross even as her husband, KIT LENOX [Male, mid 30's, shoulder-length wavy/curly hair and scruff] comes in through the front door. Kit carries a bottle in a paper sack in with him. He stares at WHITNEY.

EXT. JOHNSON BACK VERANDA (FLASHBACK) - DAY

DADDY [Mid 40's] is swinging slightly on a porch swing, while WHITNEY [16-17 y/o, brunette with vivid red streaks] examines him peripherally.

DADDY

Life is real hard, Whit. You're gonna do a lot of things wrong. Stuff you'll regret - some of it... Some people do things that are worse than what others do wrong. And some people won't be able to forgive everything. But, God doesn't see you for the wrong things you'll ever do. HE loves you more than I ever can, Whit.

WHITNEY shakes her head, bursting into tears, and DADDY gets up to embrace WHITNEY.

WHITNEY

God's gonna have to have extra patience to deal with me, because I'm not a good person, Daddy. I'm not! I've never been like you.

Through her tears, WHITNEY sees MOMMA [Female, Mid 40's] glaring at her over DADDY's shoulder.

MOMMA

What kind of advice is that? She embarrasses us more than I could have ever IMAGINED...and you give her a HUG?

WHITNEY

Daddy, why did you ever marry such a HARPY?

DADDY

Whitney Carol Johnson!

(CONTINUED)

MOMMA

(pointing at WHITNEY)
You know what I ask the Lord in
prayer?

DADDY

Wait a minute now!

MOMMA

How did I raise a WHORE for a
daughter?

INTERCUT BETWEEN WHITNEY AND KIT

WHITNEY

Dinner is almost ready.

KIT stares at WHITNEY for a moment longer, nods, and then walks through the kitchen out to the back deck with the bottle. Tears run down WHITNEY's cheeks. Covering her face, WHITNEY leaves the living room, headed away from KIT. The sound of the shower spray hitting tiles breaks the silence.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

WHITNEY is standing in the archway that opens to the living room and cuts open to frame a view of the hallway guest room. KIT's footsteps squelch to a sudden stop as he crosses the border of the kitchen and the dining room, which leaks into the living room. KIT sways a little, then holds up the bottle in his hand.

KIT

(slurring)
's raining.

WHITNEY

That thing's tonight.

KIT

You look nice. What thing?

WHITNEY

Bobby and Tonya's barbecue.

KIT

Well-

WHITNEY

Bobby's your friend!

(CONTINUED)

KIT

Do I LOOK like I should be...going
anywhere? You, on the other hand-

WHITNEY

Have some coffee-

KIT

You've always... Your beauty has
always been...so bold.

WHITNEY

Bold? What was bold was marrying
one of the most beautiful men on
the planet! Ah! You almost smiled!
You should! You're still prettier
than me-

KIT

Can't you just say thank you?

KIT takes a swig from the bottle. WHITNEY sighs.

WHITNEY

I'm sorry, okay? I've always been
insecure about my-

KIT

You've never seemed-

WHITNEY

-everything. Well... I am. Okay,
you're staying? I'll tell-

KIT

They already know, Whit.

KIT shrugs.

KIT

Have fun.

WHITNEY heads for the front door. Opening it, she steps out,
then turns back with one hand on the hinge.

WHITNEY

Try to eat something.

KIT

I love you, Whit.

WHITNEY

Love you, too. Don't wait up...

KIT

(to the closed door)
I know.

INT. KANE HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

WHITNEY

Has anyone else-?-

TONYA KANE (Female, Early 40's, Blonde) raises her eyebrows dramatically.

WHITNEY

-I'm sorry-Ever asked you
about...Bobby?

TONYA shrugs, continuing to whip and pour into a small bowl.

TONYA

Wait, I'm picking up something
here-like...Why isn't he a pretty
boy, right?

WHITNEY frowns hard, dropping her hands at her sides.

WHITNEY

No, I know that-at least for me...
It's not all about looks-

TONYA

Oh! Well, thank you for that! From
the woman who married just about
the most beautiful man there is...
Bobby's just-

WHITNEY

Is this the craziest thing you've
ever heard or something? Or, people
just lie to you all the time? All
I'm saying...is that I get
like...the whole...HORMONE thing-

TONYA

What the-?-

WHITNEY

Like...isn't that what you and
Bobby are like, the PERFECT example
for? That it's not all about looks?
At least not on YOUR side!

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

What...are you TALKING about?

WHITNEY

So you're one of those Christians that doesn't believe in science? That, like, we're animals..? So, basically, hormones and instincts we're not even aware of are at play in love-

TONYA

You have the NERVE to put that in quotation marks?

WHITNEY

What?

TONYA

Love!

WHITNEY

Of course! The girl who doesn't believe in science believes in love-!-

TONYA

Who says I don't believe? You do?

WHITNEY

Well, you're freaking out, because I asked you something that seems fairly obvious! Like that's the worst thing anyone ever said to you-

TONYA

You're talking about my husband!

WHITNEY

BOBBY? Are you SERIOUS? The worst thing anyone ever said to me-and the person who said it to me was my MOTHER-is that I was her ENEMY! That's right! One day she embarrassed me-coming out to the bus stop in a child-sized, YELLOW rain coat with an UMBRELLA-

TONYA

It was raining, right? That sounds sweet-

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

It was barely raining. It was sprinkling, and she... She marched up to the doors when they folded open...with that...THING. She opened it up right there...and expected me to HOLD it!

TONYA

How'd you become her enemy?

WHITNEY

I ignored that...thing...and her. I marched up the hill to our back porch where Daddy used to sit and swing and talk to me... She jogged after me with it... She told me once we got inside... I'll never forget. She pulled back the silly hood on that terrible yellow slicker, breathing hard, and looking like she didn't know WHAT to do... And she declared: I'll NEVER meet you at the bus again. So I was like, Fine-

TONYA

Of course you were-

WHITNEY

And she was like, I'll never walk you out to the stop in the morning ever again either. Great... It was later, when she was giving me a heap of shite over my science vocabulary quiz that wasn't for two weeks, by the way... She turned and looked at me from her desk... She was making me stand there and wait to be quizzed... She said, You're my enemy. You think I'm mad at you. I am. Because you hurt my feelings. There's things you can't take back. You look back, and you see, Something changed that day. Remember this day.

TONYA

What did you say?

WHITNEY

There ARE things.

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

You said-

WHITNEY

She basically said, There IS things, and she was riding me, so... But anyway, when you're finished beating the chicken and storming around the kitchen blustering..! Why don't you also stop acting like you don't know Bobby's stocky-

TONYA

He's TALL, for goodness sakes! He can't be-

WHITNEY

He could hit the treadmill more. Wouldn't hurt him... He's DEFINITELY older, but then you probably like that. Unquestionably, YOU'RE FANTABULOUS-looking, so...

TONYA

You shrug. Like everything you're saying is nothing... But why wouldn't you? You made your own MOTHER an enemy, and you didn't care-

WHITNEY

I didn't say that.

TONYA

That's how you act. You get drunk and start spewing all over my husband. At my house. You know what they call people who judge other people like you're judging Bobby? Shallow.

WHITNEY

Fine. So be it.

TONYA

Bobby is a self-made man. He treats me like a princess-

WHITNEY

A lot of men do that with their wives.

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

What is that supposed to mean?

WHITNEY

It's not the only way to judge a man. Some might say it's not the BEST way.

TONYA

So, how is Kit treating you-when he's not hitting the bottle? This sounds like jealousy, to be honest. Is that why you're pouring out all of this...hatred on Bobby, right now?

WHITNEY

I'm...asking you a question. You're overreacting. People say I'm harsh. I always have been. Not very nice. Not a good girl. I don't...make it pretty-

TONYA

Air quoting again?

WHITNEY

Yes-air quoting hate. Air quoting prettying it up... My harsh questions about your husband aren't hate, Tee. They're not even the worst kinds-

TONYA

Of hate? And don't you mean, It's not even the worst KIND of hate? Why are you so mean?

WHITNEY

Momma would hate to hear we have even that in common-grammar mistakes. She prided herself on teaching me the logic of English... And sometimes...I hate myself like she hated mistakes-hers and mine... No, don't say anything. I'm answering your question: Sometimes self-hatred is the worst kind, because you don't always aim it at yourself. And, because it gives no mercy.

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

Okay. Now I'll answer YOUR question. About what I see in Bobby... Unlike a lot of other men, he's not lost-out there forever looking for another thing. He's not UNCERTAIN about anything-what he wants from LIFE and THAT he wants ME. I don't need that. Aaand...he TALKS! About his feelings-without me PRODDING him. And he's COHERENT about it. He has a PHILOSOPHY about life, and I'd never heard anything like that...from all the boring, pretty, rudderless herd of men I've known!

WHITNEY brings the tumbler in her hand near her mouth, but hesitates to drink as TODD and ASHLEY enter and begin winding between counters and the island toward TONYA. Watching TODD, hands in pockets, following ASHLEY, WHITNEY's drink arm slowly lowers.

WHITNEY

It's fine if you don't like pretty...

TONYA

Don't mutter under your breath please, Whit-

WHITNEY

That's how it's done. That's pretty much what muttering is.

TONYA

Heeey, yaaa'll! Thanks for coming back to the dungeon to see me!

ASHLEY (FEMALE, MID TWENTIES, PRETTY)

(laughing, reaching in to hug TONYA around the neck)
We wouldn't miss it!

TODD pauses, waiting his turn to hug TONYA, and glances over at WHITNEY. WHITNEY tilts her head, squinting her eyes at him. He smiles, and, smiling back, WHITNEY pours her glass into the sink.

ASHLEY

Todd? Aren't you going to say Hi?

(CONTINUED)

TODD (LATE 30S TO EARLY 40'S, HANDSOME)
Of course! If you quit hogging her.

ASHLEY
Hogging? That sounds rude, Todd.

WHITNEY
(loud and matter of fact)
Just like the man himself...

TONYA
Whitney!

WHITNEY
Yes, ma'am? Oh ignore me, honey.
I'm drunk. Remember?

TODD
If you'll excuse us-

WHITNEY
I won't. But y'all toodahoo now.
And leave the kitchen here to us
truth tellers.

TONYA
I'm sorry, Ashley-

WHITNEY
Let TODD be sorry-

TONYA
Dammit, Whitney! Shut. up!

WHITNEY stares TODD down as he escorts ASHLEY from the kitchen.

TONYA
No one wants-DESERVES to be treated
that way.

WHITNEY
You think she knows? What's that
look? I know I've done wrong. So
does he. I'm asking... Do you think
SHE knows? Because-

TONYA
I can't even...

WHITNEY

-if so, I can go on and stop pretending...

TONYA

You are SUCH-

WHITNEY

I'm gonna stop you from calling me an asshole and then regretting it.

TONYA

But you said it anyway!

WHITNEY

Asshole. Yes, I said it...and maybe I am one. Cheated on Kit. With Todd. Yes, I did it. I'm not the one who thinks I'll go to hell for it. Because I believe-

TONYA

In Jesus.

WHITNEY

We were ALL hell-bound, right? But that's what the cross is about right? Not to crucify me on...

TONYA

I'm sorry... I just...

WHITNEY

I'm not. I'm not who you want me to be. And not even who I want me to be. But I'm trying to believe that God loves me anyway. It's just hard when my FRIENDS can't handle me messing up.

TONYA

I'm not just YOUR-I'm ASHLEY's friend, too.

WHITNEY

I know. And I...did it...with her boyfriend. Why are you laughing?

TONYA

I'm not.

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Well, then what's that...SOUND
you're making?

TONYA

I laugh at terrible things. I can't
help it.

WHITNEY

Oh! Oh! THAT'S-

TONYA

What?

WHITNEY

THAT'S the connection. THAT'S what
Bobby likes about you- HEY! First
you BEAT the chicken, now you THROW
the chicken?!

TONYA

You know what?

WHITNEY

What? It's called a joke. Laugh.

TONYA

You've always been funny... But if
you keep it up-with all this
garbage you're involved in...

WHITNEY

I'm going to hell. I know-

TONYA

No, you're right about that. That's
not what it's about, and I have to
stop saying that... But if you keep
it up, you won't be funny anymore.
You'll just be one of those masks.

WHITNEY

My face is gonna freeze?

TONYA

Yeah... Because you're bitter.

WHITNEY

That's... That hurts.

TONYA

Who do you wanna be?
Some-some...woman...who thought she

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONYA (cont'd)
 could live in the center of
 some...selfish world? With this
 man? And that man? And whoever else
 after that? You're gonna get old.
 And you won't have anything to show
 for it. You get wrapped up in these
 people and... And the grass is
 greener...for awhile. Till reality
 sinks in. And reality always sinks
 in. And it's ugly. Marriage is a
 choice that says, I love you more
 than all your...crap. And baggage-

WHITNEY
 And drunkenness? And lack of
 ambition. And sitting around being
 melancholy? And...becoming some man
 I don't even know? Some...SHADOW of
 my love?

TONYA
 I don't know...

WHITNEY
 No you don't. Todd, Chad,
 whoever-they're distractions. From
 what he used to be. Kit. He used to
 be...beautiful. He was always
 brooding. But...he was good... I've
 always known myself. That's why I
 chose him-so he could check my
 worst impulses. Now he's worse than
 any impulse I've ever had.

TONYA
 Is he? Does he cheat on you?

WHITNEY
 No. He sits in a chair...or, on the
 steps...and drinks.

TONYA
 Does he do what you're doing? What
 you JUST did-to Ashley... Because
 YOU did something...YOU shouldn't
 have done. And now you want to put
 blame-

WHITNEY
 I don't blame him for what I'm
 doing. I don't know if I even blame
 him for what...he...IS right now...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY (cont'd)

Some hard things came at him, and he couldn't handle it. Neither could I, I guess...

TONYA

So you want ME...to...IGNORE this. You wanna soften me up to accept and approve of your behavior. It's getting to a point where I can't be a part of this.

WHITNEY

A part of what? ME?! Just say it! Just-Hi, Bob.

BOBBY KANE (MALE, EARLY TO MID 40S, BIG

AND TALL)

Whitney.

WHITNEY

Big Bobby Blue-Eyed Kane! You say it like I'm dead and you came to my funeral. Sheesh.

BOBBY

Not at all. Hey, babe.

TONYA

Hey.

BOBBY

Everything okay in here? Is Kit -?-

WHITNEY

Nope. Couldn't, um, make it...

TONYA

The meat's ready for the grill, honey! I'm finishing up with the sides.

BOBBY

Smells delicious, babe. No, no, I've got it. Hand that to me. Thank you.

TONYA

You're welcome.

WHITNEY

Will y'all get a room already?

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

We've got one, Whit. All eleven of them are ours, okay?

BOBBY

And rest assured, Whitney, we use them.

WHITNEY

You're coming in loud and clear. Gross.

TONYA

We love each other, Tonya! That's what you do when you-

WHITNEY

Oh my-What am I, TEN?! I don't wanna say this in front of Bob, here, but just because you know my dirty laundry doesn't mean you get to LECTURE me about having SEX with the husband you own! THAT'S...INSANE...as well as inappropriate.

TONYA

Appropriate?

WHITNEY

I thought you cared about that. See, I'm the messy friend-the one that does things to The Reality TV Housewives Reunion Level wrong. YOU, on the other hand, are Normal Friend, who's doing it all right. Inappropriate doesn't fit in there. And Dany is, of course, Cinderella.

TONYA snorts with laughter.

TONYA

You don't get to be funny right now.

BOBBY

Ladies, if you'll excuse me-

WHITNEY

By all means.

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

He's not really talking to you.
He's being nice.

BOBBY

I look forward to y'all joining us
outside soon.

TONYA

We're coming, honey. Send the moms
in to help us finish up. We'll get
the sides ready to serve and be
right out.

BOBBY

Will do.

WHITNEY

Later... Do you ever stop
slobbering and staring at each
other?

TONYA

I hope not.

WHITNEY

I married this beautiful, genuinely
good-hearted man, who used to do
AMAZING things... He could-

TONYA

He got SICK, Whit-

WHITNEY

And he gave up. Vertigo. Migraines.
Medical discharge... He won't take
another job-not if it won't let him
helm or steer a boat... But he
CAN'T do that anymore!

TONYA

I know... Maybe-

WHITNEY

I thought, If we don't have kids...
And, really, that's turned out to
be for the best-for the kids that
don't have to live out our mess...
But that's not it. He got sick. I
stood with him. He can't drive a
car...because of the medicine
they're giving him for
some...goddamned, fucking illness

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY (cont'd)

that no one can diagnose...or, properly treat! Well, he's not SUPPOSED to drive-until he finishes this course... But he has too much pride. He's right to be proud, but a fool to let it keep him from being the man he is. He needs to work. He needs to provide. His heart can't handle him drinking all the time and not doing his part.

TONYA

I'm sorry...

WHITNEY

So am I. I married an alcoholic who hides in the bottle like his mommy taught him to. He got thrown into deep water, and my man who's been swimming since before he could remember learning, just...sank like a rock. He used to save others, but now he can only sit on the beach and watch it all fall apart. It's been raining since the day I got that call and went to the hospital. I don't even remember driving over there... You remember-?-

TONYA

I remember.

WHITNEY

We're both gonna drown, if-

MOM [Female, Late 60's, poised, elegant] enters with a few other ladies.

TONYA

Hey, Mom! Hey!

MOM

My son said you needed some troops to finish up and get this barbecue outside!

TONYA

Yes, ma'am. Thank y'all for coming in from the party-

(CONTINUED)

MOM

Of course! What can we do, darling?

EXT. KANE HOUSE, SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Tiki torches flame around a brick paver patio dotted with giant tree trunk/stump tables. White holiday lights are strung elaborately to create a party and dining space.

TONYA

Do you like her?

BOBBY

Whitney? Yeah.

TONYA

I think the party was a success, don't you?

BOBBY

That's obvious. What are you really thinking and not saying?

TONYA

That...I wish I could say, She's harmless. But she's not. I wish I could say, She's well-intentioned. But I don't think she is.

BOBBY

I think you have to decide if she's your friend-

TONYA

Is she allowed to be?

BOBBY

Baby, of COURSE she is. That's not what marriage is-domination and obedience.

TONYA

What's friendship?

BOBBY

A choice. The same thing as marriage. LOVE. Forgiveness. Mercy.

TONYA

What about discipline and correction?

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY

I would just leave that to God.

TONYA

Really?

BOBBY

We're not really good at that, babe... God...strikes me as someone who knows how to flow in our veins and speak to us as naturally as our own heartbeat. Not a finger-shaking father ready to put us in time out or banish us to a corner with a dunce cap... Whitney knows she's doing wrong. Even better, she knows God.

TONYA

She can be p-r-e-t-t-y mean. You have no idea-Why are you grinning like that?

BOBBY

I have some idea how mean she can be, babe... But look at her life.

TONYA

I don't know if that's an excuse, even though I love her.

BOBBY

None of us have an excuse. We only have the cross.

TONYA

For some reason, I want to argue, but... Amen. I see your face, Bobby. What are YOU thinking and not saying?

BOBBY

Just remember that people like WHITNEY make us feel like we're better...until we stub our toe on something and realize we're not.

TONYA

You know I-I totally... I absolutely respect...and APPRECIATE how nice you are to Whitney. Even if she doesn't deserve it. But she really pisses me OFF sometimes. And

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONYA (cont'd)
then I don't feel like feeling
sorry for her anymore. If your
husband is a drunk, divorce him. If
you have problems, you can't
just...sleep with other men to
console yourself. Hey! How come you
aren't saying anything?

BOBBY
Windbags talk when they've said all
they have to say. And I want to
hear what your heart is telling
you.

EXT. GIDEON SUBDIVISION TRAIL (MOVING) - DAY

DANY GIDEON [Female, Late 20's to Early 30's, Brunette,
Pretty] is running as she speaks into a Bluetooth headset.

DANY
Long time, no hear...from! You
laugh-

INT. LENOX TRUCK (MOVING) - DAY

WHITNEY is driving as she speaks into a Bluetooth
transmitter for her vehicle.

WHITNEY
Late for work. Driving downtown,
instead of taking the train
today...

INTERCUT TO DANY

DANY
And that's why you're laughing?

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

WHITNEY
That's why I'm freaking out. My
anxiety is seriously a ten out of
ten right now. I was LAUGHING,
because of your grammar.

INTERCUT TO DANY

(laughing)

DANY
It's been like, FOREVER!

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

WHITNEY
Yeah... But that's because you're
my buzzkill-

INTERCUT

DANY
What?

WHITNEY
Is that shock or upset? Don't be
offended; being a buzzkill is a good
thing! It-

DANY
How?

INTERCUT

WHITNEY
Well... When you're trying to get
high on your drug of choice,
Buzzkill ruins it. And she...be
you.

INTERCUT

DANY
Buzzkill though?

WHITNEY
Would you prefer I call you a
mirror for when I don't want to see
my reflection?

INTERCUT

DANY
Awww... I'm so sad to hear you say
that. That's such a hard place to
be in.

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Aaand you're the stern rebuke with
no words.

DANY

I WANT to be your FRIEND.

INTERCUT TO DANY

WHITNEY

You are. It's just that I can't go
downtown and sleep with a boy
whenever I feel like I need a
distraction...and talk to you, too.

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

DANY

I'm not gonna lie. That sounds
great!

DANY and WHITNEY both burst into laughter.

INTERCUT TO DANY

(sobering)

DANY

But...what happens to our souls, if
we're living out our most
destructive fantasies?

INTERCUT

WHITNEY

Guilt. Shame. Consequences.

(sighing)

Yup.

INTERCUT TO DANY

DANY slows to a stop, putting her hands on her hips. After a
brief stretch, DANY starts walking.

DANY

I texted you.

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

WHITNEY

Please drive your car. Please.
Ma'am. Thank you! Yeah, um, I
don't, uh, think it would be any
fun at all to hang out with Tonya
and me. Together. Or, just me,
myself...

DANY

Why do you say that?

WHITNEY

I'm not her favorite person right
now. And, uh, I'm miserable right
now, actually. Kit confronted me.
He was really nice about it,
but...he got in my face.

INTERCUT TO DANY

DANY stops again, near a bench, hesitates, and sits down.
She waves and mouths a silent greeting to a person walking
by with a dog.

DANY

What happened?

WHITNEY

He turned off the service on my
phone and froze my checking account
when I went out for drinks with a
boy.

DANY

Oh my-

WHITNEY

Ironically, he forced me to spend
the night with him.

DANY

What?

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

WHITNEY

I couldn't use my debit card to get
home-

(CONTINUED)

DANY

Ugh! Rideshare?

WHITNEY

Yeah... I have to tell you something... Even still, Kit brings light and air and calm. Even when he's doing stuff like this, I just love him. And I hate him-for being so patient with me. He's never violent. And you know I deserve it-

DANY

I would never think-

WHITNEY

Tonya would.

DANY

Listen... I don't know what happened between you two, but I'm angry, too. With you! Even though I love you.

WHITNEY

Okay. I know you're mad. And you question everything I'm doing... I guess MY question is, What if you can't have the man you want? Because you don't deserve him... Because even though you could easily forgive him... Your own sins are unforgiveable. Even GOD must look at me and-

INTERCUT TO DANY

DANY

The BIBLE says, He doesn't EVER look at your sin, Whit. You're clean of all sins forever. Even though it'll no doubt be harder for Kit... He's sweet. He's loved you since high school more than words can express. You're so lucky.

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

WHITNEY

I know. And I screwed it all up. I screwed him up-

INTERCUT TO DANY

DANY

No. He chose. He chose badly. Now he has to choose to put the bottle down before he kills himself.

WHITNEY

I know. But he wants to fix things. I don't deserve it to be fixed. He's been good and responsible and honest all his life. And this is his reward. Getting sick. Getting pushed out of the military. Honorably... Me...

INTERCUT TO WHITNEY

DANY

You have a choice to make, too.

WHITNEY

What?

DANY

Are you gonna accept God's forgiveness and quit looking to be punished? Are you going to accept God's unconditional love and, from there, try to fix your marriage? Or, are you going to let the devil keep holding your face down in your own guilt?

WHITNEY

That's a great question... But I can't answer it.

DANY

The truth is, You HAVE to.

INTERCUT TO DANY

DANY

Before you and Kit were EVER sexual...you were FRIENDS. He was the coolest, hottest boy in school. But before-No. ABOVE that, he saved you. He had your back. He trusted you. He protected you. He was your friend... And friendship requires a lot, a lot of grace. And a lot, a lot of UNSPOKEN forgiveness that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANY (cont'd)
you can't brag about and pretend
you're a martyr. THAT'S what your
love is about with Kit. To find
that... That's not easy to find.

INT. GIDEON HOUSE, FRONT ROOM OFFICE - DAY

TONYA
What are you doing?

DANY
Looking at my imagination.

TONYA
On the computer monitor?

DANY
Hearing their voices. Knowing their
secrets and fears and everything
they don't say.

TONYA
But...you write what they say.

DANY
I have to sit here like this
sometimes. Just staring. And
thinking. So...when I actually
write what my characters are
saying... It hasn't just occurred
to me, ya know? It's been brewing.
Steeping. Settling into my soul.
And then I know who they are...and
what they'd say in real life.

TONYA
And what they wouldn't say.

DANY
Exactly.

TONYA
That must be the artist's mind. I
don't get it. But I admire it.

DANY
Let me make you some tea, speaking
of that.

TONYA
How 'bout you make YOURSELF some
tea. I'll have a Pepsi.

(CONTINUED)

DANY

It's not good for your teeth...
I'll have to loan you a toothbrush-

TONYA

I don't borrow tooth-

DANY

It's still in the packaging,
sweetheart.

TONYA

Anyway... If anyone's gonna
make-gonna PREPARE beverages for
us, it's gonna be me. How are you
feeling today?

DANY

You forget...or, maybe never knew-

TONYA

What?

DANY

That I was raised to have food for
guests-cake, sandwiches, etc.-on
hand, should they stop by. As they
often did when I was growing up...

TONYA

When I was growing up, I would
always smell something cooking
after school, but with everything
you're going through...

DANY

Everyone's going through something,
Tonya, and I'm not giving the devil
any more ground. I will drive. I
will cook. Hopefully, I will stop
being drained of my blood on a
regular basis.

TONYA

Oh God! Is THAT still going on?

DANY

Giant vials at least once a week...
But I put makeup on today. I got
dressed. I cooked for the
guests-you, so far... And I'm-

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

Looking at your imagination.

DANY

Also known as, figuring out what God wants me to write next.

TONYA

What's that process like? What's that face?

DANY

Me thinking. It's like a bridge. Sometimes I'm about to get on. Sometimes I'm getting off. And, sometimes there are slats missing off this treacherous rope bridge. And I have to wait-till God is finished constructing it. In the meantime, my sense of legitimacy wanes. So, I make food for potential visitors, clean the house, and do the laundry.

(smiling)

Sometimes I make sure Jake smells dinner cooking when he gets home.

TONYA

You have such great self-awareness.

DANY

I haven't always... Anyway, my writing process is different every time. My last project was just...DOWNLOADED into me. I don't think He's gonna give it to me the same way this time. I've been sitting here. Thinking. Waiting.

TONYA

Mysterious ways...

DANY

But I've started. It's coming...in bits and pieces that I'll have to put together like a puzzle so I can see what's still missing or hanging out, not making any sense.

TONYA

Wow.

(CONTINUED)

DANY
I have to be honest: I'm writing
about you this time.

TONYA
Really?

DANY
Yeah, I-

TONYA
I trust you completely.

DANY
Thank you.

TONYA
What food did you make for your
guests, namely, me?

DANY
For Tonya Kane, I made cake. You
snort. Why?

TONYA
Cake?! That's FOOD?

DANY
Absolutely! And if you're not
eating any-

TONYA
Who said that? You snort. Why?

DANY
Are you going to go in there and
make us some cake and tea...and
Pepsi or, what?

INT. GIDEON HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - DAY

TONYA
What does Jake think?

DANY
He believes in miracles, too.

TONYA
So..? He does or, doesn't want you
to have the surgery?

(CONTINUED)

DANY

There are two treatment plans, Tee.
ONE includes surgery.

TONYA

Do you want me to shut up?

DANY

Oh, Tonya! I never want that!

TONYA

I know you're not-But are you being
sarcastic?

DANY

No. I love you.

TONYA

But love doesn't mean you want to
hear what someone says all the
time.

DANY

Well, it does for me! I'm never
startled when you call. I never
intentionally avoid you. And I care
about everything you say.

TONYA

You really are Cinderella. Listen!
You even GIGGLE like her.

DANY

Who? Cinderella? Whit called me
that, didn't she?

TONYA

She did.

DANY

Don't be mad at Whitney. I mean I
can't tell you what to be. But...
She's in a LOT of pain.

TONYA

So are you, right? But
somehow...you're STILL Cinderella.

DANY

And Whit's still a funny, honest,
honest, honest, funny FRIEND of
ours, Tonya. She needs our love and
our prayers more than anything.

TONYA

We're not talking about Whitney-

DANY

We can be, if you want to.

TONYA

I don't want to... Your surgery?

DANY sighs.

DANY

They think I should have a section of my intestine removed. I think: I will never allow myself to live with a colostomy bag. Cinderella doesn't have a colostomy bag. Before thirty. Does that sound like life to you? I want to ride a bike with my friends through Illinois. I want to ride with them through southern France! I want to do an IRONMAN triathlon for goodness sakes! How do I do that, Tonya? How do I DO that with a colostomy bag? I believe in miracles. That impossible things can happen! Jacob believes in miracles. We don't want to hear from people who put a but after their faith right now... I need people to BELIEVE. I need people WHO believe. Does that make sense? Is that fair?

TONYA

I love you. And I agree that you will be made like new inside your body, in the name of Jesus Christ. Okay?

DANY

I KNOW you do. That's why I'm even talking to you about it. Jake and I are really...just...gathering Spirit-filled believers around us right now.

TONYA

You said there's another treatment option?

(CONTINUED)

DANY

Yeah... Well, and insurance doesn't cover it, so the doctors are trying to arrange it, but... There is Humira.

TONYA

Oh! Good! I mean, insurance sucks, but a pill-

DANY

No, honey. It's...an injection. A pretty REGULAR injection... A pretty EXPENSIVE injection... That's not yet covered... Until...forever...

TONYA

What do you mean...until forever?

DANY

I would have to inject...for the rest of my life.

TONYA

There must be an upside..?

DANY

Our understanding, from our doc...who is consulting with a specialist at University of Chicago Medicine-a specialist who we can't see with our insurance-

TONYA

Are you serious?

DANY

It's okay... Our doc and the specialist think that the other treatment plan might actually...keep me from having these kinds of issues in the future-

TONYA

Oh wow!

DANY

Yeah... I have to stay on top of it. And stay on top of my diet. And all of those things... And, at the end of the day, I can't control the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANY (cont'd)
auto-immune part of it, right? That
my body is betraying me,
essentially... But I can live...a
watchful life... Looking at your
face and hearing myself say that
for like, the THOUSANDTH time-

TONYA
Oh, don't cry!

DANY
I don't want that either! So...

TONYA
Neither do I. Neither do I.

DANY
Well... God doesn't have to obey
natural laws, right? Not if He MADE
them!

TONYA
I don't know what to say... I wanna
say the right thing... Amen?

DANY
Well, it has to be true. Because I
don't wanna live like this. And I
don't wanna die... And...it has to
be true...because we're talking
about Jesus Christ.

EXT. PARRON HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

CHAD opens the front door. WHITNEY walks up the driveway,
shifting a large purse onto one shoulder with a cell phone
in one hand and keys in the other hand.

CHAD
You're cute when you squint like
that.

WHITNEY
Right now I don't know where my
aviators are. I'm always cute. What
do you want?

CHAD
Why are you in scrubs?

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

They're good for pajamas, and while I DO know some of what you want from me-

CHAD

Which is?

WHITNEY

You might also want me to work-after this lovely lunch you've cooked up...

CHAD

Okay, but what do I want from you?

WHITNEY

Ha! You don't deny it. You mean, What ELSE? I just told you. Work. Hours of me spent cleaning teeth and making appointments. Taking xrays... That sort of stuff...

CHAD

I'm married. I don't ALWAYS want sex from you.

WHITNEY

You're a genius.

CHAD

What does that make you?

WHITNEY

About to go home, if you don't shut up and wine and dine me first.

CHAD

I'm your boss. You can't talk to me like that.

WHITNEY

Chadwick, is this what we're really gonna do today? There are better ways to spend my time. And YOURS, too, if you'll use your brain...and the other thing.

CHAD

You-

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Chad, I'm not in the mood.

CHAD

What's your problem?

WHITNEY

How is this day a problem for me?
Let me count the ways: My husband
went out last night and bought the
liquor store, put it in his
saddlebag, brought it home, and
started drinking the liquor
store-all before the sun came up.
He was yelling.

INT. LENOX HOUSE (FLASHBACK)- DAY

WHITNEY

I have work to do.

KIT

Whitney.

WHITNEY

Please-

KIT

Don't go.

INTERCUT BETWEEN CHAD AND WHITNEY

WHITNEY

I had to keep our neighbors from
calling the cops because it was too
loud...AGAIN.

INTERCUT BETWEEN WHITNEY AND KIT (FLASHBACK)

WHITNEY

Don't do this. Give me back the
keys.

KIT

What else do you want from me-?-

WHITNEY

You can't do this kind of stuff.
You-you can't turn off my phone and
freeze my debit card account. You-

(CONTINUED)

KIT

What do you want me to do?

WHITNEY

Stop drinking.

KIT

Stop...doing what you're doing.

WHITNEY

We both know-

KIT

Stop. I can't...listen to this.
Just...stop.

WHITNEY

I will when you do... I have to go.

KIT lays the keys down without a sound. He walks out the back door.

INTERCUT BETWEEN CHAD AND WHITNEY

WHITNEY

And then I trekked out here in the middle of
God-Knows-Why-This-Place-Even-Exists-And-All-The-Houses-Look
find you. Here. Giving me shite.
Okay? And it's only not even noon!

CHAD

But I didn't make lunch.

WHITNEY

What'd you MAKE?

CHAD

Breakfast.

WHITNEY

Healthy?

CHAD

Strawberries. Avocado. A
smoothie...

WHITNEY

Eggs?

CHAD

I can scramble some with that
Everything Bagel seasoning you
like...

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Okay.

INT. PARRON HOUSE, FOYER - DAY (MOVING)

WHITNEY throws a coat over a banister and takes off shoes, following CHAD down a hall into a kitchen.

INT. PARRON HOUSE, KITCHEN/DINING - DAY

WHITNEY

I see you have the Tiffany crystal out. Anything to drink?

CHAD

You know where it is.

WHITNEY

You know you COULD take it out of the pantry at the same time you take out this overpriced stemware.

CHAD

She bought it-

WHITNEY

Kristen. The MEDICAL ESTHETICIAN... Too GOOD for mere cosmetics-

CHAD

Let's not talk about her, okay?

WHITNEY

Of course. May I use your tangerine oil in my Absolut and La Croix?

CHAD

Sure. I don't have cheese for the eggs... Is that okay?

WHITNEY

Do you know anything about me? I mean, that isn't anatomical?

CHAD

What?

WHITNEY

It's fine. Should I just take this up to the bedroom?

(CONTINUED)

CHAD

Sure.

WHITNEY

Sure. Okay, well, then you may
wanna wait a minute on those eggs.

CHAD

Why?

WHITNEY

Why? Well, whatever you wanna do...
If you don't mind eggs on Princess
Kristen's white sheets...fine with
me. Might as well bring the avocado
and strawberries, too...

CHAD

You can be such a-

WHITNEY

Well at least I'm good in your
wife's bed, right? A good outlet
you can be your honest, douchebag
self with. Right?

CHAD

You call yourself a Christian?!

WHITNEY

You call yourself a HUSBAND? As I
was saying, I'll see you upstairs.

CHAD

Actually, I'd like you to leave.

WHITNEY

Fine.

CHAD

Yeah.

WHITNEY

Am I fired?

CHAD

Not from work.

WHITNEY

Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CHAD

Whitney... You're very good at your job. And you're very smart... I'm sorry.

WHITNEY

Thanks. I'm sorry, too. That I checked the Christian Hypocrite box. None of the rest of it is real anyway... Thanks for not firing me.

CHAD

Your job never hinged on this.

WHITNEY

THIS...is because we're sick. I'm sad that we ruined a perfectly good friendship... But I'm relieved that it's over.

CHAD

I heard I'm not the only one-

WHITNEY

Goodbye, Chadwick and the exorbitant, stupid glasses. Thanks for keeping it classy.

CHAD

You, too.

WHITNEY

Genius.

CHAD

(shouting at WHITNEY's back as she walks away)
You already said that!

EXT. KANE HOUSE, PARKWAY, NEAR THE STREET - DAY

WHITNEY is walking down the sidewalk toward her truck. TONYA is following her.

TONYA

I need to know what's going on with you. The truth. What are you doing to save your marriage?

WHITNEY

You sound like, If I don't give you the right answers, we might not be friends anymore.

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

I hear you're not going to church anymore?

WHITNEY

Do you want my Christian Card? Whatever... I'M not going, but Kit still goes. He thinks we should...get some marriage counseling. Through church...

TONYA

Why should people in relationships with you do their parts? You aren't holding up your end!

WHITNEY

Whoa! Do I need my boxing gloves? I thought this was a study of Save me a Seat, but... Are we FIGHTING?

TONYA

I'm trying to talk to you. I've been trying. To talk. To be your friend. But-

WHITNEY

Sooo my marriage falls apart...and that means...I'm not a good friend?

TONYA

Your marriage falls apart? That's because, When Kit got sick and lost his job, you cut him off like a limb gone bad, jumped into bed with a bunch of different boys-

WHITNEY

Wow!

TONYA

-and then lied to all of us about it. THEN you have the nerve to come to my house with your Bible-

WHITNEY

(glancing at the book in her hand)

We Saved You a Seat by Lisa-LisaJo-

TONYA

You come and pretend everything's normal? What are you ON? Or are you just the most selfish woman alive?

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Well... I don't have to come to
your stupid house-

TONYA

Mature-

WHITNEY

You come at me...with
your...MACHINE GUN mouth...and
what?

TONYA

I think you'll finally tell the
truth is what! I think you'll
actually grow up, wake up, and
stand by your man! Quit making a
fool of him!

WHITNEY

Whatever!

TONYA

Whatever. Don't come to my house
anymore, okay?

WHITNEY

If I don't come to this thing,
you're gonna miss this
whole...SHOUTING at me in front of
strangers and all your neighbors
thing-

TONYA

Bobby... Kit... For some reason,
they put up with you, but I can't-

WHITNEY

Put UP-?-

TONYA

Yes! With your lies and disrespect!
You bring another person into your
home, and then you pity yourself.
Maybe THEY pity you! But you're a
wrecking ball! And you refuse to
let God fix you! Enough!

WHITNEY

I'll take my problems out of your
perfect presence then...

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

It's always something with you!
Dany could DIE, but YOU... The
other girls didn't like me. Momma
was too strict. Daddy died-

WHITNEY

How dare you?

TONYA

It's not enough that you got to
MARRY the prom king who, it just so
happens, serves-served this
country-

WHITNEY

And is NOW a drunk-!-

TONYA

Who made him that way?

WHITNEY

HE did!

TONYA

You-!-

WHITNEY abruptly turns and walks away.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

WHITNEY is on a cell phone, holding it between her ear and
shoulder as she moves quickly to the bay window. She
snatches back a panel of the window covering, her eyes
searching until they freeze, staring at what they've found.

WHITNEY

No. This is NOT a good time.

EXT. LENOX NEIGHBORHOOD, THE STREET IN FRONT OF LENOX HOUSE
- DAY

CHAD is walking up the long driveway, talking on his cell
phone and staring at LENOX HOUSE. He smiles as WHITNEY
rushes out the front door of LENOX HOUSE, her cell phone
hand drooping with the cell phone still in it.

WHITNEY

You can't be here.

CHAD

Well I am! I missed-

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Go home and miss HER. Be happy to see HER. Miss HER from...wherever. Just turn around and-Damn. Stop smiling. Look like my boss.

CHAD

Well, I am so-

WHITNEY

No, Chad. I didn't tell you to look clever. Now, what I need you to do is look like you're about to meet my husband. The veteran. Right. Now.

(Holding up her phone and pressing a button to end the call)
I was just about to call you.

KIT steps off the sidewalk in front of LENOX HOUSE and into the grass, approaching CHAD and WHITNEY. Slowly, he comes to a stop, looking back and forth between them.

KIT

(looking Chad up and down)
Why? Do we have an intruder?

CHAD smiles and chuckles. KIT smiles, crossing his arms over his chest, holding the neck of a bottle deftly with one hand.

CHAD

(nervously)
Intruder?

WHITNEY

This is Chad. My boss. This is my husband, Kit.

CHAD

British. She never said...

KIT

My wife? Why would she talk about dual citizenship or my naturalization-in the course of work?

CHAD

She didn't. She wouldn't. We never-

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

We've never sat down and... Why shouldn't you meet my boss at some point, right?

KIT

For dinner?

WHITNEY

I made dinner...for us... Which is why I was trying to text you. It must have slipped my mind-

KIT stares at WHITNEY. Eventually his eyes drift away. KIT takes a big swig from the bottle in his hand, smiles at nothing, and starts to slowly walk away.

KIT

(without looking back)

That's hard to believe.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

KIT sits near the window next to the eat-in kitchen table, beside CHAD. KIT stares out the window while CHAD follows WHITNEY with his eyes as she serves and refills glasses.

KIT

(interrupting indistinct chatter)

How long have you been working for--What's your name? Chad? How long have you been working for Chad? I mean...because it's good I finally met him, right?

Without waiting for an answer, KIT takes his bottle out onto the deck.

WHITNEY

(sitting down abruptly)

What do you want, Chad?

CHAD

What do you think?

WHITNEY

I think I'm married. I think it's over. I think you shouldn't be here, because-

(CONTINUED)

CHAD

Why are you whispering? He's got to be passed out, whatever he's doing out there. Wandering in the woods? Why would you put up with someone who's gonna probably stumble back tomorrow covered in burs, not remembering what happened tonight? Because he's a veteran? Because he's...good-looking?

WHITNEY

Oh. Who should I be with? You?

CHAD

I, at least-

WHITNEY

At HIS least, Kit is a better human being than you, Chad. I'm serious. Don't let your innate sense of rivalry make you fight for a woman you don't care about-

CHAD

I care-

WHITNEY

He may not want me anymore, but I belong to him. He won my heart. Not with valor or his pretty face. He's so much more than that. Now, go. And don't ever come back, okay?

CHAD

Or what? He'll kill me?

WHITNEY

Just...stop acting like a stalker. Okay? Don't eat anymore food. Go home.

CHAD and WHITNEY stare at each other. Eventually, CHAD stands up.

CHAD

(slowly taking his jack from the back of a kitchen table chair and heading out of the kitchen)
Well-

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

(to her hands folded over her plate)
Goodbye, Chad. Drive safe.

(to the empty room)
God? What am I doing?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL (FLASHBACK) - DAY

KIT [16-17 y/o, short hair with scruff] pulls a girl [16-17 y/o] out of WHITNEY's [15-16 y/o] face in a hallway lined with lockers. An adult [40's, male, black] takes the arm of the girl and walks her, yelling indistinctly, down the hall as other 15-17 year olds look on. KIT, running his hand through his cap of curls, smiles and shrugs at WHITNEY, who stares stonily at him, chest heaving and tears in her eyes.

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE (FLASHBACK) - DAY

DADDY [mid 30's] opens the front door to KIT [16-17 y/o], who's standing on the front porch with his hands in his jean pockets. DADDY looks questioningly over his shoulder to WHITNEY. KIT's gaze moves to stare at her.

EXT. JOHNSON HOUSE, BACK VERANDA (FLASHBACK) - DAY

WHITNEY and KIT are swinging on the porch swing.

KIT

She said... If I'm gonna defend
you...maybe I should find another
girlfriend.

WHITNEY

What do you think?

KIT

I agree... What are you doing
tonight?

WHITNEY

Church.

KIT

When?

WHITNEY

Now... I want to warn you though,
Don't think this makes me a good
girl.

(CONTINUED)

KIT

Can I come?

WHITNEY

Where?

KIT

To church.

WHITNEY

What?

KIT

With you.

WHITNEY

Really?

KIT

Why not? Is that...not allowed
or-?-

WHITNEY

You're beautiful. And...everybody
loves you... Why would you want to
be in church?

KIT

Why do you? Or...is he forcing you?

WHITNEY

Daddy? No... He says... God loves
me...no matter what.

KIT

And you believe that?

WHITNEY

I want to. But it's hard-when your
momma thinks you're trash.

KIT

I...want to be with you.

WHITNEY

You don't have to come to church to
do that-

KIT

I want to.

EXT. GROCERY PARKING LOT - DAY

KIT parks his motorcycle and heads into the store.

INT. GROCERY - DAY

KIT walks through the store, headed toward the alcohol aisles of the grocery. KIT passes CHAD. A few aisles past CHAD, KIT pauses. KIT looks around and then continues to the bottle he's looking for. KIT brings a bottle to the self-checkout section. CHAD is at a kiosk in the same section. As KIT presses a button, he looks over at CHAD then completes his purchase. GROCERY EMPLOYEE I approaches KIT.

GROCERY EMPLOYEE I
Photo I.D., sir? Thank you.

KIT

(distracted)

Yeah. Sure. Thank you.

GROCERY EMPLOYEE I
Well, you're very welcome!

CHAD heads out of the self-checkout section with a bag. KIT follows him.

EXT. GROCERY PARKING LOT - DAY

Walking behind CHAD, KIT clears his throat, and gestures toward the other man. As CHAD reaches his truck, KIT slows down, his eyes racing all over the vehicle.

EXT. LENOX NEIGHBORHOOD, THE STREET IN FRONT OF LENOX HOUSE
(FLASHBACK) - DAY

KIT walks down the street toward Lenox House, casually admiring CHAD's truck.

EXT. LENOX NEIGHBORHOOD, THE STREET IN FRONT OF LENOX HOUSE
(FLASHBACK) - DAY

KIT drives his truck past CHAD's truck, noting it as he pulls into the driveway.

EXT. LENOX NEIGHBORHOOD, THE STREET IN FRONT OF LENOX HOUSE
(FLASHBACK) - DAY

KIT parks his motorcycle on the street and walks the rest of the way to his front yard, where CHAD and WHITNEY are standing together, speaking indistinctly. WHITNEY sees him and holds up her phone. CHAD puts his own phone in his back pocket. KIT examines the truck in his driveway.

EXT. GROCERY PARKING LOT - DAY

KIT walks up to CHAD's truck. CHAD rolls down the window.

CHAD
Can I help you?

KIT

(through CHAD's open driver side window)
Seems like you've maybe been
helping my wife a little.

CHAD

(starting to raise the glass in the window)
Wife? I don't know what you mean.

KIT puts his hand on the glass to stop the window from
rolling up.

KIT
Whitney. Whitney Lenox.

CHAD
Oh. Whit. Yes. She's my-

KIT

(pushing his face into CHAD's driver side window)
Wife. MY wife.

CHAD
What I meant to say-I'm Whit-Mrs.
Lenox's boss. We met-

KIT
I remember-

CHAD
Dinner, yes-

KIT
No. Your truck. Parked on MY
street. Every day. For months now.
I see your ring-

CHAD
And I see yours... Mr.-uh-Lenox.
Silicon. You must be-

(CONTINUED)

KIT

Don't worry about what I was...
CHAD, wasn't it? I don't park on
YOUR street and come to see YOUR
wife when you're not home! Do I?
You think I'm an idiot?

CHAD

Now, Mr.-

KIT opens the bottle he bought and pours the contents into
CHAD's lap. Then KIT throws the bottle across the cab of
CHAD's truck, so that it hits the passenger side window,
cracking it. KIT storms away as CHAD cowers.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

KIT gets his prints taken. Cuffed, KIT has an inaudible
discussion with an officer who's standing behind a desk
before the seat in which KIT is seated. KIT bows his head,
crying silently. BOBBY arrives.

UNCLE OFFICER

Looks like we woke you up-

BOBBY

I wanted to get down here as fast
as I could and resolve
any...discrepancy-

UNCLE OFFICER laughs loud and long.

UNCLE OFFICER

No...DISCREPANCIES, Mr. Kane. Mr.
Lenox here-He dumped a bottle of
drink on someone in the local
grocery parking lot, then smashed
his window.

BOBBY

Oh my-

UNCLE OFFICER

Now, now, No need to blaspheme.
That boy he soaked is my nephew.

BOBBY

Jesus-

UNCLE OFFICER

-is the Lord.

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY

Amen.

UNCLE OFFICER

Amen.

UNCLE OFFICER nods and considers KIT for a moment before putting on glasses to examine the computer monitor on his desk.

UNCLE OFFICER

He served.

BOBBY

Yes, sir. Discharged Honorably.
Medical Discharge.

UNCLE OFFICER

He's got no record. Does he have
someplace to go?

BOBBY

Yes, sir. I'll take him home with
me. My wife is getting a room ready
for him as we speak.

UNCLE OFFICER

(standing)

Good. He'll need some solid food,
ya take my meaning?

BOBBY

Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

UNCLE OFFICER

(bending at the waist, and looking into KIT's face)

Thank you for your service. A
grateful nation thanks you.
Now...you get yourself some help,
ya hear? And God bless you.

(patting KIT's shoulder)

God bless you.

KIT wipes his face, nodding.

EXT. PARK - DAY

UNCLE OFFICER and CHAD sit side by side on a bench as joggers, walkers, and families with kids and dogs use the park.

CHAD

He threw a bottle at me!

UNCLE OFFICER

True. I only have one question: Did you throw yourself at his wife, and does your wife know about that?

CHAD

That's two questions.

UNCLE OFFICER

Would Kristen care if I asked you one or two questions about how you've been spending your time, Chadwick? Is Kit Lenox's wife worth that trouble? He'll pay, son, but we don't have to make it messy. Do we, son?

CHAD

No, sir. We don't.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

WHITNEY is standing just outside the kitchen, arms crossed. KIT has a travel bag resting on his hip.

WHITNEY

So...where are you staying? You can't... Well, you can, of course, do whatever you want, but-

KIT

I'm not going to my mum's place.

WHITNEY

Then..?

KIT

Bobby-

WHITNEY

Bobby? And Tonya? She actually texted me. But I didn't know you were staying there... She said you and Bobby are training. Tough Mudder?

(CONTINUED)

KIT

Half.

WHITNEY

Half? Half... What?

KIT

Tough Mudder Half, like...a half marathon...

WHITNEY

Oh.

KIT

Yeah. Like, every day, thirty reps. Four sets. Seven exercises... So...

WHITNEY

Oh! So, no running? I could-

KIT

No... You have to be able to run at least, like...ten...

WHITNEY

Ugh!

KIT

Yeah... Or, twelve miles, Whit...

WHITNEY

No...

KIT

I know... Well... This is me and Bobby's thing.

WHITNEY opens her mouth, but only nods.

KIT

I saw the doc... He says...since there's no sign of the vertigo... And I haven't had a migraine. I haven't had a drink since the, uh, arraignment... He's taking me off the meds. All of them. I can, uh, drive...

WHITNEY smiles without teeth.

KIT

(grinning slightly)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KIT (cont'd)

Legally...

WHITNEY

I'm so glad you're gonna be
safe...and well...

KIT

(sobering as he stares at WHITNEY)

We-I go with them to church now...

WHITNEY

Oh...

KIT

Yeah... I stopped for awhile,
but... Anyway, they like the
Saturday service...

WHITNEY

Oh! Oh... Great! That's... Is that
part of detox? Up in...Rockford?

KIT

Yeah... So Saturdays, I meet with a
group at a local...counseling and
recovery center... Church is at
five... It's a little strict,
but...

WHITNEY

It sounds like it's working out...
It's gonna... It's gonna be great.

KIT

It's hard. But I...have to do
this...

WHITNEY

I know... It's just... I don't... I
never... I love you, Kit. I can't
tell you how...sorry I am. I don't
wanna hurt you any more than I
already have.

KIT

I know. But, I broke your heart.
And you broke mine. I have to go
now. I...have to get better. I have
to get strong. I can't do that
here. Around you... I, um... I'm
still too angry. And I have...to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KIT (cont'd)
see how to, uh, stop feeling so
angry. Because I can't be this
angry and not drink.

WHITNEY
And you can't drink anymore.

KIT
No. I can't. Everything has to
change.

WHITNEY
I know.

WHITNEY walks away, and KIT places something on the eat-in
kitchen table.

INTERCUT EXT. CEMETERY (FLASHBACK) - DAY

It's raining, and WHITNEY [18-19 y/o, shaved head] is
standing in front of a headstone. She stares, teeth
chattering and with her hands in her pockets. WHITNEY
abruptly leans forward, stands back up, stares for a few
more teeth-chattering moments, and stalks away. WHITNEY
doesn't look back and see KIT bending to pick up whatever
she laid down at the foot of her father's headstone. KIT
pushes it into a pocket, staring after WHITNEY in the
downpour.

INTERCUT LENOX HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

KIT hesitates, then abruptly leaves out the back door.
There's a long pause as the back storm door claps shut. Then
WHITNEY bursts into the kitchen. She looks out after KIT and
then starts to leave the kitchen again. She sees what KIT's
left behind on the eat-in kitchen table and freezes.

KIT(VOICE OVER)
You didn't think you wanted these
then, but you need them.

WHITNEY sinks into a chair, holding up what KIT's left with
shaking hands-three water-damaged photos: A black and white
profile of young MOMMA [16-17 y/o]; a faded photo of WHITNEY
[infant] in MOMMA's [mid 20's] arms and looking down into
WHITNEY's face; a family photo of DADDY, MOMMA, and WHITNEY
[9-10 y/o] on a clean, wide beach with lake frontage and a
pier angling in behind them. KIT's brief message is in
WHITNEY's hands, too. A key is on the table.

WHITNEY lays KIT's note beside the key on the table. She looks over her shoulder toward the way KIT has recently gone. The explosive sound of his motorcycle starting up makes WHITNEY jump. She goes to the front bay window to watch him ride away.

INT. BREAKFAST PLACE - DAY

TONYA, DANY, and WHITNEY are standing in the waiting area. TONYA and WHITNEY are avoiding eye-contact, while DANY looks back and forth between the other two women.

TONYA

Is it not enough that they have a very limited gluten-free menu, but we eat here EVERY Wednesday and only here-?-

WHITNEY

Is it not enough that you are, basically...BOARDING my husband like some adopted pet and not even keeping me updated-

DANY holds up a blinking, buzzing device.

DANY

That's us!

TONYA

Yay!

TONYA, DANY, and WHITNEY follow a woman to a booth. TONYA and DANY squish into one side, and WHITNEY slowly eases down onto the other side. The hostess lays menus and silverware rolled in thick napkins down on the tabletop. As a waitress sweeps up to the edge of the table, WHITNEY turns her cup over, and the waitress fills it silently, before sweeping away again.

DANY

Okay, I think I should start out by saying-

WHITNEY holds up her hand.

WHITNEY

Unless you have an announcement about...how you're feeling..?

DANY shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Just brokering the peace between
Tee and I, right? Trying to...

DANY

Pretty much...

WHITNEY

Okay, well, Tonya, I'm sorry. I
really am.

TONYA

Thank you for saying that.

WHITNEY

I should tell you...I already told
Cinderella... Kit drinks, but-

TONYA

He's not drinking now.

WHITNEY

Right.

WHITNEY opens her mouth, saying nothing for a moment.

WHITNEY

I was...saying... I shoot
destruction into my veins. And like
any addict, I push it till I
overdose. Till I push every single
good thing out of my life-

TONYA

Addicted to destruction? Or, do you
mean self-pity? Meanness? That
sounds more accurate. I mean, to
me.

WHITNEY

I told you, Dany-

TONYA

I KNEW it! You didn't even
apologize on your own-not till DANY
told you-

DANY

We have our own way of talking
about things-

(CONTINUED)

TONYA
Psychobabble-

DANY
And you both have your own issues
and ways of...pushing each other's
buttons-

TONYA
Oh! Oh wait. Priceless. What are my
issues?

WHITNEY
She's trying to peacemake
here...even though she tried to
tell me she couldn't-

TONYA
Oh why? Because of ME? Because of
MY issues?

WHITNEY
No, actually, you are
PSYCHOLOGICALLY incapable of
admitting you're ever wrong-

DANY
Whit-

WHITNEY
I'm sorry. No. She needs to hear
that she thinks she's perfect,
cannot truly forgive or accept an
apology... AND...she's
self-righteous!

TONYA
Who is?

WHITNEY
You are!

TONYA
Really? So this is what you talked
about, Dany?

WHITNEY
Leave Dany out of it!

TONYA
DANY, you KNOW that I didn't start
this. This is NOT a matter of tit
for tat! I've only ever wanted

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONYA (cont'd)
to...just...be FRIENDS! Respect!
Honesty! You-

DANY
I can speak for myself. I had surgery, but I'm not disabled or confused. Yes, Tee, Whitney and I discussed all of this. And I know how it all began. True. But a lot of water has gone under the bridge. And...you're not letting Whit speak.

TONYA
I'm not?

DANY
No. You're being so hostile that she can't say it...how she said it to me. Whit, say it how you said it to me. The lake...

TONYA looks back and forth between DANY and WHITNEY.

WHITNEY
It feels like... Grace is like, Lake Michigan.

TONYA
Huh?

WHITNEY
We're supposed to be standing in a lake of grace-

DANY
We are! As Christians, we spiritually STAND in God's grace.

WHITNEY
I know... But doesn't the spiritual realm ever feel mythical to you?-?

TONYA
No-

WHITNEY
When everything's going wrong? When you are, literally, effing it all up?

(CONTINUED)

DANY

I know what you mean.

WHITNEY

In those times, doesn't it feel like the world is right?

TONYA

What do you mean?

WHITNEY

Like... You have to earn everything-love. Friendship. You have to apologize to be forgiven.

TONYA

Well, we DO repent-

DANY

Wait a minute, Tee!

TONYA

Well, we do.

DANY

Yeah, but repentance is REALLY about changing your mind! It's not about...begging.

WHITNEY

But sometimes we make people beg-before we forgive them or, before we believe they're sincere... Anyway, I've tried believing like Daddy taught me-that we are saved and don't stay saved or have a relationship with God by cleaning up and never being messy.

DANY

We don't need to do anything but believe. The blood of Jesus makes us clean-

WHITNEY

You SAY that... WE...SAY that... But you know how sometimes you don't know if God is stronger than the devil or, more amazing than the world or...the universe that HE created?

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

Right..?

WHITNEY

Well... Anyway, that's my thing with grace. I think maybe there was a time-like, when I was first born-when I was submerged in God's grace. But then... I did SO much... Throughout my whole life... And all that stuff kept bringing me closer and closer to the beach. Further out of God's grace, till I had like, one foot in the waves and one on dry ground... But now...there's no more grace to cover someone as messy as me... You ever feel like that?

TONYA

Yeah.

DANY

Yeah. Yeah, I have... I do.

WHITNEY

Maybe I rehash this too much, but... My mom calling me a whore... THINKING that about me-that that's all I was about... Then, Daddy DYING... Well, it just threw me right out of the lake. God is still in the water... But I've been on the beach ever since then. With friends. With Kit. With...Momma, I guess... But really, alone. With nothing to live for. No reason to try... It's not that I don't believe in God. It's just... He's for other, better people. So are you.

(swiping at tears)

So is Kit.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

WHITNEY is rinsing a mason jar in the kitchen sink. She stills and the jar fills to overflowing with suds, then runs clean, spilling over the sides of the glass container. Tears run down WHITNEY's face.

There's an open letter laying unfolded on its torn envelope.

(CONTINUED)

MOMMA (VOICE OVER)
I can see now...that I failed you.

EXT. CLEAN, WIDE BEACH WITH LAKE FRONTAGE AND A PIER JUTTING OUT INTO THE WATER (FLASHBACK) - DAY

MOMMA [Mid 30's, brunette] stares at the vast lake before her.

MOMMA (V.O.)
I acted like I was strong... But I was almost always angry and afraid.

MOMMA turns her head to look at DADDY [Mid 30's] and WHITNEY [9-10 y/o] enjoying the beach together.

MOMMA (V.O.)
So afraid... Not angry at you-the way you thought I was...but because I knew the world.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Viewers see the handwriting on the sheets written in ink, spread open on the kitchen table as water continues to run down the sink. WHITNEY sinks down before the letter into a chair.

MOMMA (V.O.)
The world wouldn't understand or care about your heart. Your intentions...

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE, FRONT ROOM (FLASHBACK) - DAY

WHITNEY [16-17 y/o, brunette with vivid blue streaks] is sitting on the floor before a shelf, above which a rugged wood and wire cross is displayed. Arms wrapped around her knees, WHITNEY stares up at it.

MOMMA (V.O.)
So I wanted you to ACT right, so the world would love you.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

WHITNEY sits on the sofa before the fireplace with the mosaic cross and charger stand displayed on the mantle. WHITNEY is examining the photos KIT saved from the rain and left behind when he moved out.

(CONTINUED)

MOMMA(V.O.)

I was afraid that boy would destroy
you...and you...him.

INT. WHITNEY'S CHILDHOOD CHURCH, THE SANCTUARY (FLASHBACK) -
NIGHT

KIT [16-17 y/o] and WHITNEY [16-17 y/o] sit side by side
between MOMMA and DADDY staring straight ahead. Both WHITNEY
and KIT have their hands on the seats of the pew, almost,
but not quite touching. KIT and WHITNEY turn to look at each
other. MOMMA turns to look at WHITNEY.

MOMMA (V.O.)

I never believed God's love could
save you both.

EXT. JOHNSON BACK VERANDA (FLASHBACK) - DAY

WHITNEY [16-17 y/o, brunette with vivid red streaks] sees
MOMMA through tears, as she lets DADDY embrace her. Words
indistinct, MOMMA glares at WHITNEY, as her lips move. MOMMA
looks back and forth between DADDY and WHITNEY.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

WHITNEY's head makes tiny left to right movements as she
reads the letter in both of her hands and sits on the sofa
in front of the fireplace.

MOMMA (V.O.)

I could never accept that GOD loved
you...loved ME without doing
anything right.

EXT. JOHNSON PROPERTY (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Arms crossed, MOMMA watches KIT and WHITNEY from the back
veranda. KIT sits [16-17 y/o] on a motorcycle, listening to
a smiling WHITNEY [17-18 y/o]. WHITNEY's arms are also
crossed as she talks with KIT.

MOMMA (V.O.)

That He could see your hearts
whether the WORLD could or not... I
didn't want to let the love of God
save you from everything I was
afraid of... I thought I had to be
the one to save you.

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE, MOMMA'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK) - DAY

MOMMA [Mid 30's] is sitting at her desk while WHITNEY [9-10 y/o] stands beside it, hands at her sides and balled into fists.

MOMMA(V.O.)

I thought I had to be hard...

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE, FRONT ROOM (FLASHBACK) - DAY

WHITNEY [9-10 y/o] is holding DADDY's [Mid 30's] hand. Then, DADDY kneels to use a pocket square to wipe a smudge on the front of WHITNEY's dress.

MOMMA (V.O.)

But your strength has always been
that you could see how weak you
are. How much you need God...

EXT. JOHNSON BACK VERANDA (FLASHBACK) - DAY

WHITNEY [16-17 y/o] is letting DADDY embrace her, with her right cheek pressed to his chest.

MOMMA (V.O.)

You've always understood that-what
you weren't and couldn't be without
Him.

EXT. CLEAN, WIDE BEACH WITH LAKE FRONTAGE AND A PIER JUTTING
OUT INTO THE WATER - DAY

MOMMA [Mid 60's] stares at the vast lake before her.

MOMMA (V.O.)

But I held on to my false sense of
security, all the while getting
harder and harder-like glass...till
our whole family shattered. I think
I broke Daddy's heart and infected
us like the leukemia in his
bones...

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

WHITNEY rocks as she continues to stare at the letter in her hands from the sofa in front of the fireplace. Tears drip onto the lined sheets.

MOMMA (V.O.)

And I could finally see the lie for
what it is. How much time I've

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MOMMA (V.O.) (cont'd)
wasted believing I had to be God
and FIX you and everything else...
Now I finally understand; I can
admit the flaws...and trust
GOD...to be GOD.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

WHITNEY is laying on her side on a neatly made bed with her scrubs on. Her eyes are wide awake in the dark. Suddenly, her eyes close. The photos KIT left behind are scattered in front of her.

MOMMA (V.O.)
It's even beautiful-falling down on
my knees and letting His light
shine out of all my cracks.

EXT. LENOX RESIDENCE, BACKYARD DECK - DAY

WHITNEY is walking back and forth with one hand pressing into her lower back as she holds a cell phone to her ear.

WHITNEY

(speaking into the cell phone)
You know, I love autumn like anyone
else, but I also love the heat.
I'll take summery for as long as I
can get it.

TONYA

You sound like you're in a good
mood.

WHITNEY

I'm cleaning it up out here. Since,
um, he moved in with you guys...
His whole life used to be part of
mine! Now it's all hearsay and
gossip. He doesn't answer my...
Anyway...we haven't barbecued...or,
done anything normal-I haven't, I
should say. And I realized, If I
want to, I'm gonna have to do it on
my own. Alone. So...I am.

TONYA

I... You should...

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Is everything okay? Are YOU okay?

TONYA

(clears throat)

Uh, I should... I want
to...apologize, too-

WHITNEY

Oh-!-

TONYA

-to you.

WHITNEY

Uh... Well-

TONYA

You were right. Bobby...was
right...

WHITNEY

So were YOU, Tonya... I have
been...EVERYTHING you said I was. I
got my husband ARRESTED for
goodness sakes!

TONYA

Well, we ALL-

WHITNEY

Some people do things that are
worse than what others do wrong. My
DAD knew it... And we BOTH know
that not every wife gets her
husband arrested.

TONYA

Not compared to what you've done, I
regret things of my own, Whit. We
all have things we regret. Things
that burn in our hearts every time
we think of them.

WHITNEY

You don't do things like the things
I've done, Tee. I'm trying to
forgive myself like God does,
but...it's hard.

(CONTINUED)

TONYA

It's not our place to judge. Right?

WHITNEY

Right. But you were always allowed to feel how you felt...and not put up with my mess.

TONYA

As BOBBY says, Friendship is love, forgiveness, and mercy. And YOU had every right to expect those things from me... And I should have told you-as a friend-

WHITNEY

What is it, Tonya? What's going on?

TONYA

Kit...

WHITNEY

Is he okay? He doesn't take my calls or return texts! What-?-

TONYA

Yes! Yes! He's okay. I'm sorry. You-you said we-that we're boarding him, but not updating-

WHITNEY

Yeah, I remember my tantrum! WHAT. IS. GOING. ON?

INT. LENOX HOUSE, HALLWAY BATHROOM - DAY

WHITNEY is looking into a steamy mirror. She wipes a hand across the glass, then continues to brush her hair. WHITNEY straightens her blouse. Staring into the mirror, WHITNEY sits the brush down, as the doorbell rings.

INTERCUT EXT. LENOX RESIDENCE, BACKYARD DECK - DAY

WHITNEY slides the outdoor table over and pulls up the matching chairs.

TONYA(VOICE OVER)

Kit moved into his own place.

INT. HOSPITAL (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Holding a leather jacket in both hands, KIT enters automatic doors and approaches a desk manned and surrounded by people in scrubs and white coats. A woman in scrubs glances up, speaking indistinctly. KIT responds, speaking indistinctly.

TONYA(V.O.)

But before that... Mary... His mom died.

MARY [Female, White-haired, Late 60's], unconscious, is being examined. An endotracheal breathing tube is in. KIT and NURSE I, a woman in scrubs, a hair cover, and a face mask, stand to one side, looking on. KIT is wearing surgical cover apparel over his street clothes and a face mask.

KIT

(staring at MARY with tears standing in his eyes)

I don't understand why she would have been in the attic...trying to do anything with the electrical wiring... On her own... All she had to do was call me...

NURSE I

(looking over at KIT)

At any rate, she was electrocuted at some point in the process. A neighbor found her. She'd fallen through the ceiling by then...and hit her head-

KIT

(not looking away from MARY)

Is the breathing tube absolutely necessary?

NURSE I

There was swelling of the tongue and other complications, and yes, I'm afraid so, Mr. Lenox.

NURSE I stares at KIT a moment longer before turning back to observe MARY and other busy hospital staff.

TONYA(V.O.)

When she woke up, she was complaining of pain.

(CONTINUED)

MARY is moving her head, agitatedly on the pillow. KIT leans close, smoothing MARY's hair back away from her perspiring face with both his hands.

KIT

Mum, they took the trach out.
You'll feel better soon...

MARY

(in a rough voice)

No, I... I need something to drink,
son. Tequila... ANYTHING! Get
me-Please! Son! Help me! It hurts
so much-!-

KIT

The doc is coming, Mum. They'll
give you something for the pain-

TONYA(V.O.)

But by the time they came-

KIT is standing back with his face mask in one hand, gripping his hair away from his face with two fists. Tears are coming down his face as he stares at an unconscious MARY.

KIT is ushered out of the room by NURSE I as the hospital staff tries to resuscitate MARY. Gripping his arm, NURSE I speaks to KIT urgently and indistinctly. KIT stares into space, nodding weakly when NURSE I shakes him. NURSE I hesitates then reenters MARY's room. KIT leans against a wall.

TONYA(V.O.)

They worked on her for four
hours...

WHITNEY(V.O.)

He moved into Mary's house?

TONYA(V.O.)

No. But that's when he moved out.

INT. LENOX HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

WHITNEY is clipping earrings in as she heads toward the front door. The bell rings again.

WHITNEY

(unlocking the door and turning the knob)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY (cont'd)

Sorry!

WHITNEY opens the door and her expression freezes.

WHITNEY

Kit!

WHITNEY doesn't move as KIT steps inside; she just lifts her chin to stare up at him. Hands at his sides, Kit stares down at WHITNEY.

KIT

(at the same time as WHITNEY)

You went blonde-sort of...

WHITNEY

(at the same time as KIT)

You cut your hair.

WHITNEY reaches up to touch her hair.

They call THIS ombre-

KIT

Like, guy...in Spanish?

WHITNEY

(laughing)

Cause guys like it? No, Kit... It's spelled the same, but without an h. This is just a blend-my dark color gradually blending to blonde.

(shrugging)

For fun... A change...

KIT

(shrugging)

Well, a lot HAS changed-

KIT freezes as WHITNEY slowly lifts her hand to touch his cheek.

WHITNEY

You shaved... I love your long hair... But this is nice...

KIT stares at WHITNEY. She steps back.

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY

Come in... I didn't know-obviously-that you were coming. I heard about your mom, and I'm sorry.

KIT

Am I interrupting something?

WHITNEY shrugs.

WHITNEY

I'm barbecuing. I've been grilling out a lot...since you left... Anyway, I got a letter. From MY mom... It all came on me at the same time... Then I heard about Mary... I guess I'm coming back to life...

KIT

What did she say-your mum? I mean... Can you talk?

WHITNEY

I'd love to... And if it was, like, ONE person coming, I would, but...

KIT

You're having a party then?

WHITNEY

Kind of. A cookout. Is-?-

WHITNEY shrugs.

WHITNEY

I would have asked if it was okay-

KIT

I haven't been been around. I know that.

WHITNEY

No... I get it-

KIT

No, you don't. I should have...reached out earlier-

WHITNEY

No... I'm not being nice when I say, The only thing it makes sense

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY (cont'd)
for you to have done with me...is
run the other way. That, or to
serve me with-

KIT
I don't want that.

WHITNEY inhales and exhales a shaky breath.

WHITNEY
You don't?

KIT
I don't want to divorce you, Whit.

WHITNEY
What do you want?

KIT sits down, perching on the arm of the living room sofa.

KIT
Doc put me off my meds... Mary
died... I need to look at you-look
into your eyes... I need to talk to
you. About everything-my mum.
Yours... What we want going
FORWARD. Are we going to get
counseling together? Do you want me
anymore-

WHITNEY
I WANT you, Kit Thomas Lenox-

KIT
-like I want you? Whitney. Carol.
Lenox.

WHITNEY
It's been raining on me since I
convinced myself that I was too
dirty for God to clean. And I
messed up so bad that...I feel
ASHAMED even THINKING you could
forgive me. But I love you.

(crossing her arms)
My friends will be here any minute,
and I need to have something
grilled. But...I want you to
know... I read Momma's letter. And
I've been thinking about it.
Looking at those pictures you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WHITNEY (cont'd)
left... And I realize how seriously
messed up I've always been-way, way
before you got sick...

WHITNEY swipes at tears.

WHITNEY
Some things mess you up... They
break you in ways that... Nothing
else can ever be right until the
things that are broken get fixed.

The sound of doors slamming and voices approaching make KIT
glance out the bay window and come to his feet.

KIT
That's what I want to talk about.
We can be different. Maybe we've
changed already... I want to walk
in the rain with you, Whit-if it's
raining.

WHITNEY
I never thought God could love
me...and I never thought you
SHOULD... What I did to you... I've
been making choices like that since
I was a little girl-very BAD
choices...

WHITNEY wipes tears away again, glancing toward the bay
window.

KIT
I'm glad you're not going out on a
date-

WHITNEY
Kit... That...behavior is not a
part of my life anymore. You said
YOU'VE been getting counseling.
I'VE been-

KIT
I'm glad, but I didn't mean it like
that! I meant... I wanted to take
you out...

WHITNEY
Really?

KIT

I can't promise anything, but I want you, too, Whit. I want to start over-as who we are now... Who we're BECOMING now... I thought, months ago, that that would be impossible. But then a still small voice said, All things are possible. Believe... I do.

WHITNEY blinks and tears wash her face. She smiles and chuckles a little.

WHITNEY

You always have. That's who you are.

KIT reaches out to cup the side of WHITNEY's face in his hand, then drops his hand and heads for the front door. KIT leans out against the storm door, until WHITNEY takes his place, holding it open as he walks away. WHITNEY watches him, smiling as her friends approach, greet her, and head inside LENOX HOUSE.