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FADE IN:

EXT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

We pull down the facade of a down and dirty black-box bar on a busy east village street. In the window, a group of late 20s FRIENDS raise their shot glasses to HANNAH, intellectual and dressed a bit too well for this bar.

HANNAH (V.O.)

They say that in a different language you become a different person, but in Hindi I'd barely gotten a handle on the subjunctive and already I wasn't myself.

Shots go back.

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Hannah winces as she swallows the shot.

HANNAH

Well bon voyage to me.

GIRL FRIEND

(re:drink)

Do they have shots in India?

MALE FRIEND

Just for malaria.

GIRL FRIEND

Shit, Hannah. Please don't get malaria.

HANNAH

If I get malaria it will probably be from the bathrooms in this place.

HANNAH (V.O.)

I had decided to go off to India, on a lark, to learn Hindi. The idea seemed exotic at first. Now it seemed deranged.

Hannah looks over at the bar where a HOT GUY is staring at her. He smiles a half-smile. She smiles back. A SECOND GIRL FRIEND notices.

SECOND GIRL FRIEND

That guy is totally checking you out.

GAY FRIEND
Not her type.

HANNAH
I'm leaving in three days. Do I
have to have a type?

He smiles again at her. She smiles and waves a small "hi" to him...he nods his head to her. She coyly flips her hair and nods back. And then...in slow motion, the guy leans over and just keeps leaning over...

GAY FRIEND
Whoa...

GIRL FRIEND
Whoa!

And collapses onto the floor.

GAY FRIEND
Totally not her type.

Hannah rushes over.

HANNAH
What's wrong with him?

A fresh-faced, burly guy, MIKE, pushes through the group and starts to unbutton the guy's shirt, finding in his pocket a prescription bottle of--

MIKE
Oxy.

Mike slaps his face to revive the passed out addict.

HANNAH
Do you know what you're doing?

MIKE
I'm a fireman.

The Addict starts to come to. Mike helps him up on his feet.

MIKE
Okay Buddy, walk it off.

The Addict walks slowly out of the bar.

HANNAH
I thought he was flirting with
me...

MIKE

(laughing)

That guy can't see an inch in front of his face.

(off her look)

But if he could, he'd ask you the hell out.

A look between the two...chemistry. She smiles.

INT. NEW YORK TIMES BULLPEN - DAY

TIGHT on a story on a computer screen. HEADLINE: **Dark Energy Responsible For Expanding Universe.**

SIMON (O.C.)

We can't do this.

PULL OUT to find SIMON MCELVANE, 37 years old, science editor, staring at his computer screen. Simon is smart, if not a little shut down. A guy trying to make the best of things in a complicated world. Because of that, he puts all his pain into his stomach. He takes a swig of old coffee, grimaces, gets up with his mug and walks to an office on the edge of the busy news room where a deputy editor, BETH, 40s, attractive, no bullshit, sits.

SIMON

If we say some "dark energy" is controlling the world, every nut job on the planet is gonna jump on it. We're scaring people.

BETH

It's what the scientists call it, right?

SIMON

It's gratuitous, Beth. Besides, we've run at least three expanding-universe stories this year.

BETH

People love expanding universe stories. It makes readers anxious and titillated at the same time. It's like vampires.

SIMON

We're the New York Times. Our job shouldn't be titillation. It should be fact. The universe will expand over billions of years. Mangosteen is not a "wonder fruit".

(MORE)

SIMON (cont'd)

And contrary to what 13 year old girls want to believe, vampires are fiction.

NICK CHAPIN, 43, Styles editor, an Upper East Side boy raised with everything--St. Paul's, Harvard, a bruising wit and a passing heroin addiction, walks by.

NICK

And yet Beth is still able to suck out my soul.

BETH

Oh, Nick. So funny.

Simon shakes his head and walks away, Nick follows. They weave through the bull pen.

NICK

So, slacker, what's with getting here on time? You're usually so pathetically early to work.

SIMON

They're doing construction on 79th street. It took 10 minutes to get to the subway.

NICK

So maybe don't walk across 79th.

SIMON

(shrugging)

I like 79th.

(then)

We're going out to Sag Harbor to see my Dad for Thanksgiving if you want to join. It promises both turkey and infantilizing shame.

NICK

I'm anti-holiday.

SIMON

You shouldn't be alone, Nick. You should call your family.

NICK

You're cute. You know they haven't talked to me in ten years. Serves me right I guess, getting strung out and punching my Dad at Christmas Eve services.

SIMON
You are, oddly, kind-of my hero.

NICK
Besides, I've already made plans to
have days of dirty, dirty sex with
this girl I met in NA.

SIMON
Nice to see you're working on that
addiction stuff.

NICK
(reminding him)
Nine months no smack.

SIMON
Well, good for you.

They pass by RAIMY, 20-something, multi pierced copy
assistant.

SIMON
Raimy, what do I get my 15 year old
for Christmas?

RAIMY
Is she pierced?

SIMON
No, no. God no.

RAIMY
Then I got nothin'.

She hands Simon a stack of letters.

RAIMY
Hate mail for your anti-echinacea
piece.
(handing Nick papers)
Proofed Modern Love column.

Nick takes the pages and they keep walking.

SIMON
What's modern about love?

NICK
That anyone still believes in it.
This one's about a well-bred lass
and a hunky fireman.

SIMON
Harlequin romance.

NICK
Less bodice ripping, more
uncomfortable personal revelation.

SIMON
Just what the world needs. More
over-sharing narcissism.

NICK
Not everyone can spend their days
debunking diet pills.

SIMON
Call me old fashioned but if I'm
going to share my pain, It's not
going to be with strangers in the
pages of a newspaper.

NICK
Have you even read the column? Or
are you just being contrary.

SIMON
Not my cup of tea.

Simon takes another swig of his coffee. It burns his stomach.
He winces again.

SIMON
I have to go to the doctor.

INT. A SHRINK'S OFFICE - DAY

TIGHT ON DR. SCHUMACKER, a Dr. Drew-type shrink in his
Greenwich Village office.

DR. SCHUMACKER
So, how are you feeling?

REVERSE ON Simon and his wife ALEXA. Alexa wears a Pucci head
scarf that clearly hides a chemo-bald head. Alexa is a tough
ass and was once very beautiful.

ALEXA
Like shit.

DR. SCHUMACKER
Understandable.

ALEXA

If this is what they do for stage 2, then fucking kill me if I ever get stage 4.

SIMON

You're on a highly proven chemo regimen. You're not getting sick again.

ALEXA

True. I could die.

SIMON

Don't say that.

ALEXA

Okay, I'll just think it.

An uncomfortable silence.

DR. SCHUMACKER

So where we left off, we were talking about communication.

ALEXA

Ironic.

SIMON

Hold on. I think we're making progress.

DR. SCHUMACKER

Alexa?

ALEXA

We haven't had sex in six months, so that should tell you something.

SIMON

You're sick.

ALEXA

He won't say how he feels.

SIMON

This isn't about me. It's about you, getting better. We're gonna fight this.

ALEXA

(exploding)

Jesus! Stop it! Stop saying "we"!

(MORE)

ALEXA (cont'd)
 This isn't happening to us. This is
 happening to me!

Simon sighs, sits back on the couch.

DR. SCHUMACKER
 Simon, how are you feeling?

SIMON
 Tired.

INT. A CAB - MINUTES LATER

The cab weaves through midtown as Simon and Alexa ride in
 silence. Alexa stares out the window.

ALEXA
 I want a divorce.

SIMON
 Are you joking?

ALEXA
 I've talked to a lawyer. I'm moving
 out.

SIMON
 Because I don't think you're gonna
 die?!

ALEXA
 No, because I might. I might die,
 Simon. That's just a fact. And if I
 only have six months left, I'm not
 living it with someone who can't
 express basic emotions. I need more
 than that. I need to live, Simon.

SIMON
 Stop the cab. Stop the damn cab!

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The cab swerves to a stop. Simon gets out, slams the door. He
 sticks his head back through the window.

SIMON
 I'm pissed! That's how I feel!
 Pissed!

He turns and walks away.

OVER THIS we HEAR a couple LAUGHING.

INT. A SMALL ITALIAN BISTRO - NIGHT

Hannah and Mike sit at a small table, their heads close together. Mike wears an ill-fitting suit. Hannah finishes drawing something on a napkin.

HANNAH

It's your name in devangari.

MIKE

That's messed up.

Hannah reacts--not the response she expected.

MIKE

(laughing)

It looks like a girl's name. All those circles.

HANNAH

Yeah, I guess it does.

An awkward beat. There's chemistry here, but no intellectual connection...

MIKE

So, India huh. With elephants?

HANNAH

Yeah. I'm trying something new.

MIKE

Long way to go.

(then)

I've never been out of the country.

HANNAH

My Mom died last year. This is my first holidays without her, so y'know, I'm changing it up. I'm going to try and write a book about it.

MIKE

I don't trust reporters.

HANNAH

Oh, I'm not a reporter--

MIKE

A coupla months ago, we respond to this fire in Washington Heights.

(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)

I go up five flights, rescue this baby, I get downstairs and there's this guy there. From the Post. I try and hand him the baby, but he won't take it. He just wants a quote.

Mike shakes his head, swigs his beer.

HANNAH

You rescue babies.

Hannah is turned on. She smiles, looks down at her highball glass, self-consciously swirls the ice around in it.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. THE MONKEY BAR - NIGHT

TIGHT ON another highball glass, and two Alka Seltzers landing in it's water. They fizz.

Simon and Nick sit at a banquette. Simon swirls the Alka Seltzer in his glass. He downs it, winces.

NICK

She fucking someone else?

Simon looks to Nick, wtf?

SIMON

She has cancer.

NICK

So? I once fucked a girl in a wheelchair.

SIMON

Because you'd already fucked all the ambulatory girls?

NICK

I was the one in the chair. Skiing accident.

SIMON

(getting angry now)

I have feelings. But how is it possibly helping to lie there at night with her and say, "yeah, y'know, I'm scared shitless."

NICK

Are you?

SIMON

It doesn't help to say it.

NICK

Might help you with that nasty stomach ulcer.

SIMON

The guy she dated before me in college? He wrote her poetry and cried when he'd read it to her. She hated that. She told me she loved me because I was "stalwart".

NICK

Yeah. "Stalwart" isn't in anymore. It's the era of sharing, my friend. People break up on reality TV now.

SIMON

It's all bullshit! Putting a "sad face" in an e-mail when your life is falling apart is not real!

NICK

But it's comforting.

(then)

So, what now?

SIMON

She's moving out. Where is she gonna go? We can't work this out at home together?

NICK

You wanna work it out?

Two HOT GIRLS IN VERY SHORT DRESSES make their way towards the men. Nick waves them over.

SIMON

What is this?

NICK

This is sex, my friend. Something every man needs when their wife leaves them.

SIMON

Jesus. They're hookers. I'm not having sex with a hooker.

NICK

More for me.

Simon stands up.

SIMON
Going to the john.

INT. MONKEY BAR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Simon stares at his aging face in the mirror. He leans down out of frame to splash his face.

INT. ITALIAN BISTRO BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hannah lifts her head up from the sink, having drunk some water. She stares at herself in the mirror.

HANNAH
What am I doing?

EXT. BISTRO BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hannah emerges from the bathroom to find Mike waiting in the small, dark hallway. She holds the door open.

HANNAH
All yours--

And he grabs her up into a passionate kiss. He pushes her against the wall. It's hot. His hand goes up her thigh.

EXT. THE LIE - DAY

Simon's old Saab revs up as he enters the expressway. The leaves are changing.

INT. THE SAAB - DAY

Simon drives with his daughter MOLLY, 15, in the passenger seat. Molly is Chinese, smart, well-adjusted. A good girl.

MOLLY
So you're separating.

SIMON
I wouldn't call it that--

MOLLY
Are you moving out?

SIMON
No, no. No one's going anywhere.

MOLLY
So maybe you won't get a divorce?

SIMON
I hope not.

MOLLY
Me neither.
(beat)
But I think you might.

SIMON
Um, I think I would know that
better than you.

MOLLY
I live with both of you. Honestly,
your marriage is pretty
hideosyncratic.

Simon looks to Molly, raises his eyebrows, "tell me more".

MOLLY
Hideous and idiosyncratic.

SIMON
Nice. Don't use that on your PSATs.

They drive for a beat in silence.

SIMON
Let's not mention this to Gampy,
okay?

MOLLY
Okay.

SIMON
I'm feeling very holidayzical.

Molly smiles at her Dad, nods approval.

MOLLY
Holidayzical. Nice.

EXT. SIMON'S FAMILY HOME - SAG HARBOR - DAY

The Saab pulls up in front of a small clapboard house on the working side of this swanky summer town. Molly and Simon get out of the car and are greeted by Simon's younger sister, JULIE.

JULIE
You made it!

Julie is early 30s, spacey, happy. She hugs Molly.

JULIE
Hey, baby girl!

Julie whispers to Simon.

JULIE
Dad's got a new lady friend.

INT. MACELVANE HOME - DAY

Simon's Dad MITCH introduces DEANA to Simon and Molly. Both Mitch and Deana are in their mid-60s and aging hippies.

MITCH
This is Deana. She blows the shit
out of glass.

SIMON
(re: Molly)
Dad, come on, language.

MITCH
My adopted son, Simon. His adopted
daughter Molly--

SIMON
You don't always have to introduce
us that way.

MITCH
You two are the best things that
came out of this family. People
should know I had nothing to do
with it.

JULIE
Thanks, Dad.

MITCH
You got your Mom's looks. Be happy.

DEANA
I hope you all like quinoa. I
wanted to honor the Indians today
since no one else will.

MITCH
Where's Alexa?

SIMON
She ah, wanted to visit her folks.

INT. SCREENED-IN PORCH - DAY

Simon and Mitch stare out at Mitch's small back yard.

SIMON
How's business?

MITCH
No one's building houses anymore.
This year I barely got by putting
shelves up in summer people's
crappers. How 'bout by you?

SIMON
They haven't folded the paper yet,
that's a plus. I'm science editor,
so that's, y'know--prestigious I
guess--

MITCH
How long you gonna stay there?

SIMON
I guess 'til they kick me out.

MITCH
You don't get bored of the same
four walls?

SIMON
We don't have walls. We have
cubicles.

MITCH
See? No one pays for walls anymore.
(then)
I just thought you'd do more.

SIMON
Thanks.

MITCH
You wanted to travel, write about
everything. See shit.

Simon is saved from the moment when his cell phone rings. He looks at the number, picks up, walks away from his Dad.

SIMON
Hey.

INT. A MIDTOWN BAR - DAY - INTERCUT

Nick sits at the nearly empty bar nursing a scotch. He is drunk and slurring.

NICK
Happy fucking Thanksgiving.

SIMON
It's tomorrow. You okay?

NICK
I'm perfect. Alone and perfect.

SIMON
What happened to the girl from NA?

NICK
She canceled on me to go to a meeting. Addicts don't take holidays off?

SIMON
Maybe you want to go to a meeting too?

Nick signals the bartender for another scotch.

NICK
Et tu, Brutal?

SIMON
Or come out here. Get on a train, I'll pick you up.

NICK
Gonna pass. Even drunks don't do the Hamptons in the off season.

Nick clicks his phone off. Simon looks at his phone, concerned.

INT. MCELVANE KITCHEN - DAY

Simon walks in to find Julie and her Nigerian husband, UDO, cooking. Molly is peeling potatoes. Udo is easygoing, happy to be in America and be with his wife.

SIMON
Hey, Udo.

They embrace.

UDO
My favorite brother in law.

SIMON
How's the bookstore?

JULIE
Shitty.

SIMON
Language.

MOLLY
It's okay, Dad--

UDO
We're getting killed by Kindle.

MOLLY
I love my kindle.

UDO
And now I will have to kill you.

Simon opens a cabinet, looking around, as Mitch enters.

SIMON
Is there any Pepto around?

MITCH
You wanna get high?

SIMON
Jesus, Dad. No. You're still
smoking that stuff?

UDO
And selling.

MITCH
How do you think I afford my heart
medicine?

Simon shakes his head, grabs his keys and heads out.

INT. SAG HARBOR GENERAL STORE - EVENING

Simon scans the shelves. Finds a small bottle of Pepto
Bismol. An ATTRACTIVE BLOND eyes him from the next aisle.

BLOND
Simon?

Simon turns and is surprised.

SIMON

Kat?

This is KATRINKA DOWELL, mid-30s, effortlessly beautiful in that sexy, timeless way. We can feel their chemical attraction. Kat comes around to his aisle and touches his arm.

KAT

God I haven't seen you in ages. I mean, I see your byline in the Times, but how long has it been?

SIMON

I don't know. Twenty years?

KAT

At least.

SIMON

You still come out for the summers?

KAT

A week here and there. Turns out they don't give you summer vacay in your 30s. I hate growing up. Anyway, I'm just out for Thanksgiving. Staying in my parent's carriage house apartment. Just like Augusts past.

She flips her hair, laughs.

KAT

Except you and I will not be listening to Zeppelin and making out.

Simon laughs awkwardly.

KAT

Well look, good to see you. And feel better.

SIMON

I'm fine--

Kat looks down at the Pepto in his hand. She leans in, touches his arm and whispers in his ear.

KAT

If you want to chat, you know where to find me--

Kat brushes past him. The electricity of her is still there...Simon watches her go.

MIKE (O.S.)
You're really hot.

EXT. HANNAH'S STOOP - NIGHT

Mike and Hannah are making out in the shadows of her building.

HANNAH
(laughing)
I'm not letting you up.

They make out a little more. It gets hotter.

MIKE
Come on--

HANNAH
Where's the fire?

MIKE
Huh?

HANNAH
Just a joke--

MIKE
What d'you got to lose? You're leaving town tomorrow--

HANNAH
I have to go--

She turns and starts to walk up the stairs.

MIKE
Wait! Wait.

She stops.

MIKE
If I can get us on that roof up there, will you stay out with me?

He indicates a tall art-deco brick building across the street.

HANNAH
And how are you going to do that?

Mike flashes his charming smile. Hannah is intrigued.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - NIGHT

It's raining lightly. Cars whizz by. We find Nick, very drunk, weaving between the cars as they honk and put on their brakes. A car almost hits him. He hits the car's hood.

NICK

Happy fucking thanksgiving!

Nick almost falls, but then rights himself enough to continue weaving through the traffic, oblivious. It's scary.

EXT. SAG HARBOR BEACH - NIGHT

It's raining a little here now, too. Simon's Saab pulls into the empty parking lot by the dunes.

INT. SIMON'S SAAB - CONTINUOUS

Simon opens the Pepto, takes a big swig, grimaces as it goes down.

EXT. THE BEACH - NIGHT

Simon gets out of the car, pulls his jacket collar up against the cold mist. He breathes deep. Pulls out his cell phone and hits a button.

SIMON

(into phone)

Hey, it's me. Seeing how you're feeling. I mean, not about us, I mean, I know you had more chemo today--anyway. So, yeah. That's pretty much it. Happy Thanksgiving.

He pauses, out of anything to say. He clicks off.

EXT. SAG HARBOR STREET - NIGHT

The Saab passes through town--the houses small, simple, clapboard, close together, and makes a left...

EXT. SAG HARBOR STREET - NIGHT

Now the road opens up. This is where the rich folks live. Big summer shingled cottages, hedges to block out the world. The Saab pauses in front of a large house. The engine turns off.

A beat, and then Simon steps out of the car, warily looking up at the house.

TIGHT ON a small door with a plaque that reads "beware of quarter horse". It opens to reveal a happily surprised Kat.

KAT

Hey.

REVERSE ONTO Simon. She smiles and ushers him in. The door SHUTS.

INT. THE ART DECO BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

The front door OPENS. Hannah and Mike slide through, past a sleeping doorman. Hannah giggles.

Mike pushes the elevator button and the door opens. They get in the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The door shuts. Hannah turns to Mike.

HANNAH

Okay, so how are you getting us up on the roof?

Mike pulls out his key chain, brandishes one key.

MIKE

I got the fire key. I can take you anywhere.

Hannah smiles.

HANNAH

Key to the city.

He puts the key in the elevator panel and hits the top button. He turns back to her and grabs her again, pushing her up against the elevator wall. As it gets hotter, he turns the key and the elevator STOPS. They continue kissing...

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Simon paces around the small space. Kat watches him, amused. He fingers some old horse trophies, a shot gun case. He laughs.

SIMON

It's like a time capsule in here.

KAT

That's why I like it. Makes you feel like you're 15 again. Like it's all so easy.

(beat)

My mom has Alzheimers.

SIMON

Oh man, I'm sorry.

KAT

I thought she was just spacey from all the Vicodin she popped like mints. Then today she asked me how I was doing in college.

(then)

Truth is, she never knew me anyway. She never asked, I never told.

It's like you.

(off his look)

You're like this enigma. Like there are all these layers of you hiding.

SIMON

You give me far too much credit.

Kat approaches him.

KAT

Do I?

(then)

You seem sad.

She reaches up and touches his hair. A beat, and then he pulls her into a passionate kiss. They fall onto the musty 70s sofa. We PAN DOWN their entwined legs...

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

...and PAN UP Mike's legs...Hannah is now perched on the railing of the elevator, her legs around his waist. It is very heated. Her skirt is pushed up around her waist, he kisses her neck...

HANNAH

We're not on the roof--

MIKE

Fuck the roof.

And he rips off her panties, enters her. She moans.

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kat and Simon are both naked now. It's hot. Kat gets on top of him...Simon lets her...then stops her with his hands at her waist.

SIMON

I can't do this.

Kat reaches down to his crotch and smiles.

KAT
Oh I think you can--

SIMON
No, I'm--I'm married--

Conflicted, he sits up when...The DOOR OPENS. They both look up. There stands HENRY, Kat's preppy, 40-something HUSBAND.

KAT
Shit.

HENRY
What the hell?!

SIMON
(recognizing)
Henry Rockwell?

Kat scrambles to cover herself with her clothes--

KAT
I thought you were taking the
jitney tomorrow--

HENRY
I thought I would surprise my wife--

Simon scrambles to find his pants--

SIMON
You're married?!

Henry grabs a SHOT GUN from the case, points it at Simon.

PIERCE
Get the fuck out.

KAT
Jesus, Henry!

Simon, naked, backs towards the door, his pants in his hand.

SIMON
Take it easy, Rocky--

KAT
He doesn't like--

HENRY
Don't call me that!

He SHOOTS the gun into the rafters. Dust comes down.

SIMON

Shit!

Simon runs out of the apartment.

EXT. SAG HARBOR STREET - NIGHT

Simon emerges from the hedges, still naked and holding his pants in front of him like a fig leaf. He starts running. Henry chases, with the old gun.

They turn a corner onto MAIN STREET. Simon runs down the middle of the street, barefoot, naked...

HENRY

Get your townie ass back to your side of town!

Henry, winded, stops after a few blocks. Simon keeps running. CLOSE on his face. He is sweating...breathing heavily...

INT. MCELVANE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Simon slips in through the back door, still naked. He shuts the door and locks it, quietly to not wake anyone. He leans against the door, takes a deep breath. He is surprisingly exhilarated.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Mike's face, sweating and exhilarated. He now has Hannah turned around against the elevator wall and is fucking her from behind. Her arms are up against the wall of the elevator. She moans. He pumps against Hannah one last time...and comes. He collapses into her. They both breathe heavily, enjoying the moment. She smiles and starts to laugh.

MIKE

Hey. What?

HANNAH

There was this piece yesterday in the Times about the universe expanding. I think I just expanded my universe.

Mike laughs, reaches down to the elevator floor and hands her her panties.

MIKE

Yeah, you don't gotta go to India to have an adventure, huh?

HANNAH
 (correcting him)
 "have to".

MIKE
 Have to what?

Hannah laughs, pulling herself back up against him.

HANNAH
 Never mind.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

TIGHT ON the elevator doors opening, revealing Hannah and Mike kissing. They turn to exit and on their faces we can see they are surprised by what they see...

REVERSE ANGLE the lobby is FILLED with angry tenants all waiting for them. An OLD LADY in her bathrobe holding her dog, An INVESTMENT BANKER holding a briefcase...

INVESTMENT BANKER
 Who do you think you are, stopping
 our elevators for half an hour?!

HANNAH
 (sotto to Mike)
 Elevators? Plural?

MIKE
 Whaddya mean?

OLD LADY
 You don't even live here!

INVESTMENT BANKER
 That fire key stopped all the
 elevators in the system!

OLD LADY
 Mr. Mandel was stuck in the south
 elevator so long he urinated
 himself!

A mortified, old MR MANDEL waves her concern away.

HANNAH
 How do you know he had a fire key?

DOORMAN
 We watched you on the cameras.

He indicates a row of elevator cameras above him. Hannah blanches.

HANNAH
You were watching?!

MID 50S MATRON
We were all watching.

OLD LADY
You should put your underwear back on, young lady.

Hannah hides her panties behind her back, mortified.

INVESTMENT BANKER
I'm gonna call the police.

MIKE
Whaddya mean?

INVESTMENT BANKER
You broke the law.

MIKE
Whaddya mean?

The TENANTS starts getting agitated, mumbling to each other.

OLD LADY
Why does he keep saying that!

MR. MANDEL
Henrietta, calm down.

OLD LADY
I will not calm down!

A BABY in a sling starts crying. His HIPSTER MOM, with shaved head, is pissed.

HIPSTER MOM
You fucking woke the baby.

MR. MANDEL
Young man, language!

The three tenants start fighting. OTHERS join in. Hannah and Mike are momentarily forgotten. Mike turns to Hannah.

MIKE
Run.

He grabs her hand and they run out the door.

EXT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

As Mike and Hannah run down the street, hand-in-hand, they laugh. Hannah looks free, exhilarated.

INT. SIMON'S OLD BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON Simon's face, hit by morning sun. He winces. Opens one eye, then the next. Sits up.

His old bedroom is a time capsule. Two twin beds, a poster from a Marx Brothers movie, a Led Zeppelin poster, a small, neat desk. He looks over to the other twin bed, where Molly's belongings are strewn. Molly is not there. He looks at the clock: it's 11:46. Jesus. He gets out of bed.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Simon rattles in, looking for coffee. Julie is making something in a blender.

JULIE
Want a margarita?

Simon just looks at her--really?

JULIE
Don't judge. It's organic.

He goes past her to the coffee pot and pours a cup of coffee.

JULIE
Mom called.

SIMON
Yeah? How is she?

JULIE
She and Roy bought a new boat.
Guess what it's called.

SIMON
"I moved to Florida and became a
Jew and all I got was this lousy
speed boat"?

JULIE
"The Mrs. Moskowitz 3".

SIMON
He's had two other boats named
"Mrs. Moskowitz"?

JULIE
And two other wives.
(then)
She asked how you were.

SIMON
Nice of her.

JULIE
How are you?

SIMON
I'm good.

Simon drinks the coffee, winces. Julie doesn't believe him but doesn't push it.

JULIE
How's Alexa doing?

SIMON
I guess as well as can be expected
when you're having poison pumped
into what remains of your chest
every week.

JULIE
I used to fantasize about being
sick so that Mom and Dad would pay
attention to me.

SIMON
That's fucked up.

JULIE
That's the difference between us,
Simon. You were the kid who just
wanted to blend in, not cause a
fuss. Me, I was like, "bring on the
fuss"! I'm still waiting.

SIMON
Don't worry, Jules. Someday you'll
have a boat named after you, too.

Simon hears voices on the back porch and follows them.

INT. SCREENED-IN PORCH - MORNING

Molly and Mitch have their backs to us and are laughing.
Molly is lounged on an old wicker couch with a blanket around
her. Simon walks up.

SIMON

Hey--

They both turn to him. Molly has a joint in her hand.

SIMON

Whoa--what the fuck?!

She quickly stubs out the joint.

MITCH

Simon. Language.

Mitch cracks up.

SIMON

(To Mitch)

Getting a kid high? What is wrong with you?!

MOLLY

I asked. And I've been getting high since I was thirteen, Dad.

SIMON

What?!

MOLLY

It's Manhattan.

MITCH

That's one crazy-ass place.

Simon's cell phone rings. He looks at it.

SIMON

No one move. Seriously.
(picking up phone)
Hey Beth--

Simon crosses through the screen door to outside.

EXT. BACK YARD/BETH'S TRIBECA LOFT - CROSS-CUT

Beth is preparing thanksgiving in her expensive, white kitchen. Her 7-year-old DAUGHTER stands on a step stool, stirring soup.

BETH

Happy Thanksgiving.

SIMON

Not really. What's up?

Beth walks to other side of kitchen, to avoid her daughter hearing...

BETH
Nick's in rehab.

SIMON
Again?

BETH
Two homeless guys found him passed out on the GW Bridge. They found enough heroin on him to kill a horse.

SIMON
Jesus.

BETH
So look, you have to finish editing this Modern Love piece. Closes next Friday.

SIMON
I can't. I haven't even read the column, it's not my--

BETH
You're the only one Nick trusts, apparently. I'm e-mailing the story.

Beth HEARS the front door open. She looks up.

BETH
Gotta go. The ex and the new wife are here.

Beth puts on a fake smile and waves to TWO FASHIONABLE WOMEN who have entered with a pie.

BETH
Make it happen, Simon.

She hangs up the phone. He looks around, shakes his head. How did his life become like this? Deana yells through the screen door:

DEANA
We're about to start the Thanksgiving reading!

INT. MCELVANE DINING ROOM - DAY

The guests listen as Molly reads from a paper. Deana mouths the words along with her. Simon and Julie share looks across the table.

MOLLY

And so we enjoy this feast for the
Wampanoag Indians who provided the
first Thanksgiving only to be
brutally slaughtered by our
ancestors as a thank you.

Molly puts the paper down.

MOLLY

Rough.

DEANA

Thank you for reading, Molly.

Mitch raises an ugly, misshapen colored glass.

MITCH

To the Redskins.

DEANA

Mitchell.

They all raise clearly home-made, very ugly, wine glasses.

DEANA

Maybe don't clink.

MITCH

Deana blew them special for today.

ALL

(lying)

Oh they're lovely/beautiful, etc.

Molly can't help it. She cracks up. Julie and Udo follow suit. Mitch can't hold it in, either...

SIMON

Are you all high?

JULIE

No. Udo and I are just a little
drunk.

MITCH

I'm high as a kite.

SIMON
What kind of family is this?

UDO
A messed up one.

MITCH
(raising his glass)
To Udo.

DEANA
Don't clink!

SIMON
You know what would be great? If we could have one normal meal together. Someday. One.

JULIE
We're not normal.

SIMON
I am. I am savagely normal.

MITCH
Like that's something to be proud of.

DEANA
Please don't say "savage" on Thanksgiving.

A beat, and then Simon starts to crack up. He puts his glass down too hard on the table and it SHATTERS INTO PIECES. The sight of the ugly glass in pieces makes him laugh even harder. Molly, Udo and Julie join in. As does Mitch, much to Deana's chagrin.

INT. SIMON'S SAAB - HEADING BACK TO THE CITY - NIGHT

Simon and Molly ride back in silence.

SIMON
Just so you know, pot is just a hop skip to meth.

MOLLY
No it's not.

SIMON
Well just don't do it, okay?

MOLLY

Don't worry. I don't even like it that much.

SIMON

Okay, good. Because seriously, Mol, you're the best thing I got going.

MOLLY

Don't think that way. I'll just disappoint you.

SIMON

You know if you're scared about your Mom and me, you can tell me.

MOLLY

I'm not scared.

Molly looks out the window. Takes in the changing leaves.

MOLLY

I guess I'm just sad for all of us, a little.

SIMON

Yeah, me too.

They drive in silence.

MOLLY

Gamp's not gonna marry that woman, right?

SIMON

God no. Gampy thinks he's a free spirit like her, but really, he's just an angry, judgy Republican. Who grows and sells pot.

MOLLY

So he's a hippiecrate.

Simon laughs.

SIMON

Totally.

REHAB FACILITY - DAY

Nick and Simon sit on a pastel couch in a sunny room of this fancy rehab overlooking the hudson river. It could be a hotel, if it weren't for the heavy doors and nurses passing silently through.

NICK
Spiffy, right? It's like the
Mandarin Oriental.

SIMON
Except I had to leave my Advil
downstairs with security.
(taking in the view)
Though I suppose if you're gonna
hit rock bottom, best to do it with
a view of the river.

NICK
Sorry to disappoint, but this is
not my rock bottom.

SIMON
You were passed out on the GW
Bridge.

NICK
Upper road way, not lower. No
trucks allowed.

SIMON
You know I can't do this Modern
Love piece--

NICK
Consider it your own personal
rehab. You spend your days
debunking the world. But you can't
debunk love.
(then, musing)
That would make an awesome song
title.

SIMON
So you passed out on a bridge just
so that I could learn a lesson. How
giving of you.

NICK
I'm a selfish asshole.
(then)
You know, the term "modern"--they
used it to describe the time after
the middle ages.

SIMON
Because nothing says "modern" like
the plague and chastity belts.

NICK
 So this is your modern time. The
 time after your middle age. Your
 marriage is over--

SIMON
 No one said that--

Nick raises his eyebrows, "get serious".

NICK
 You can keep walking 79th street
 with all that construction, or you
 can take another route. This is
 your future. Take some chances.

Simon takes this in, doesn't answer. A NURSE comes up.

NURSE
 Mister Chapin, time for group.

NICK
 (rolling his eyes)
 Time for group.

Nick walks away. Simon looks out on the river...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SOHO HOUSE RESTAURANT - DAY

The river out the window.

REVERSE ON Simon and Hannah having lunch. Simon has Hannah's
 essay out on the table, a red pen open and resting on the
 papers.

SIMON
 I just want to go over this ending.

Hannah sneaks a peek at the papers.

HANNAH
 (insecure)
 That's a lot of red marks, there.

SIMON
 (putting it aside,
 insecure himself)
 Just commas, you know, grammar
 stuff. So nine months later you
 came back and looked him up--

HANNAH

Yeah, I called the fire house. And they told me he was on vacation in Europe.

SIMON

Really.

HANNAH

Yeah. First trip ever abroad. He booked it right after I left.

(then)

And turned out, the week he was away, there was a huge fire in Brooklyn. Six guys from his house died. He would have been there.

SIMON

You saved his life.

HANNAH

In a way, he saved mine.
Metaphorically--

A WAITER puts a drink in front of Simon.

WAITER

Stoli, rocks.

SIMON

Thanks.

(then, to Hannah)

So why didn't you see him again?

HANNAH

(shrugging)

Things had changed. I had changed, he had changed.

(then)

You should probably change his name.

SIMON

Y'know, they've done studies on Prairie Voles--they're like these little mice--anyway, once they mate, hormones are released. Oxytoxin and vasopressin. It's like...sexual imprinting. It helps them mate for life. They think the same thing happens with humans.

HANNAH

Yeah well, if there were a science to love I think a lot more people would be successful at it, don't you?

Simon takes this in. Changes the subject.

SIMON

Look, what I'm getting at is, if you weren't going to stay together at the end, I think this piece needs a bigger wrap up--

HANNAH

But there was no wrap up. That's kinda the point. It was one awesome night. I had never let myself go like that. Let myself feel the possibilities.

SIMON

He wasn't husband material.

Simon sips his drink. It goes down surprisingly smooth.

HANNAH

Who said anything about wanting a husband?

SIMON

Sorry. You're right.

HANNAH

Mike wasn't there to be a relationship, he was there to show me how I could attack my future. With no fear.

Simon takes this in.

HANNAH

What. You think I'm a crazy single girl, right?

SIMON

What d'you mean?

HANNAH

I mean, you're married, you look at me and wonder when is she gonna settle down, stop searching, when is she gonna "wrap it up"?

SIMON
How do you know I'm married?

HANNAH
You mean, besides the wedding ring?

Simon looks down at his wedding ring. Touches it. For the first time he doesn't feel like lying. He looks up at Hannah.

SIMON
Actually, I'm separated.

HANNAH
Oh Geez, I'm sorry--

SIMON
No, no. It's okay.

An awkward beat. Simon pulls the pages back in front of him and picks up the pen, makes a note.

SIMON
So okay, no wrap-up.

Hannah smiles.

INT. SOHO HOUSE - SIXTH FLOOR

Simon and Hannah get into the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Simon pushes L. The doors shut. An awkward beat when they both realize where they are. They ride down in silence.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - DAY

Simon gets out of the Broadway local subway station. He starts walking down Broadway. He looks up to see he is about to turn onto 79th street. He stops, and then starts walking north.

Seconds later, A TAXI RUNS THE RED LIGHT ON THE CORNER, HURTLES BY HIM ONTO 79TH STREET AND PLOWS THROUGH THE WINDOW OF A STARBUCKS.

The next few moments are surreal. Ambient sound goes away. As people run and converge on the accident, Simon stands on the corner and watches, removed. He is drawn by something and looks down at his arm. There is a little shard of glass stuck in his forearm. He pulls it out. A tiny drop of blood emerges. He wipes the blood away with his thumb, rubbing the blood between his thumb and forefinger, as though just now realizing he is alive.

INT. SIMON'S LIVINGROOM - SUNDAY MORNING

CLOSE ON Simon's arm, a band aid now covering where the glass had been. WIDEN TO find Simon waking on the couch. He rolls over, uncomfortable. He sits up slowly, rubs his eyes. He walks out of frame.

INT. HALLWAY - SIMON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He walks past his bedroom, where, the door ajar, he sees Alexa sleeping. Her exposed, bald head makes her look surprisingly small and vulnerable. He shuts the door and continues into the bathroom.

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

An Upper West Side pre-war doorman building. Simon walks out in casual Sunday-morning clothes.

HANNAH (V.O.)
Mike and I never saw each other
again. And that was okay.

INT. LOCAL COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Simon enters. As he does, he passes by an OLDER WOMAN at the counter, reading the New York Times. He is oblivious, but we see, looking over her shoulder, that she is reading the MODERN LOVE column with the headline "**Passage to India, by Way of an Elevator.**"

Without speaking, the DELI GUY hands Simon his usual to-go coffee. Simon smiles, and hands him his money. Behind him, an OLD MAN and his BLACK CARE GIVER share a booth and read the Times in silence. The OLD MAN reads the column as well.

HANNAH (V.O.)
It was apparent to me only sometime
after what that night had been: a
moment of pure, shining glee.

As Simon walks out he passes a HIPSTER sitting on a bench, also reading the paper. Simon remains in his own world.

INT. AN APARTMENT HALLWAY - SUNDAY MORNING

New York Times lay in front of apartment doors. A door opens, revealing Hannah in her bathrobe. She reaches down for her paper.

HANNAH (V.O.)
The kind that can happen only right
before everything changes...

The door across the way OPENS revealing a MID 30S GUY in boxers, also getting his paper. They smile at each other, both caught in their private moment...

INT. NEW YORK TIMES BULLPEN - SUNDAY MORNING

Simon enters the nearly-empty office, crosses to his desk and logs on to his computer.

He opens his E-MAIL IN-BOX and is startled by what he sees on screen...e-mail after e-mail of submissions for Modern Love columns. We see QUICK CUTS of words from the e-mails' subject lines: *I couldn't let go...grief...fatherhood... sadness... gave him up at 16...divorce...dizzy love...I hated her...loved him...felt...feel.* He pushes back in his chair and just stares at the sheer amount of emotion in his in-box.

SIMON

Holy shit.

INT. SIMON'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Simon packs some clothes up into a duffle.

HANNAH (V.O.)

It could only take full shape then.
Because such distilled purity can
be obtained only in retrospect...

He zips up the bag and exits, turning off the light. OVER BLACK We HEAR the front door slam.

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

Simon exits, his duffle over his shoulder.

HANNAH (V.O.)

...with time.

He pauses for a moment, perhaps unsure which direction to go. He turns and walks east. We watch him go away from us.

HANNAH (V.O.)

In an aftermath.

END OF SHOW

