

UPWARD MOBILITY

by

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SCENE 1: INT. AN OFFICE - AFTER CLOSE - EVENING.

SUSAN: (OVER A PHONE LINE) Matt, are you listening to me?

MATT: Yes, I'm listening.

SUSAN: Your Wife. Can't. Know. Do you understand? (BEAT) You've got to promise me!

MATT: (BEAT. HE BREATHEs AUDIBLY.) I have to have some explanation, Susan.

SUSAN: Then come up with something! You're meeting with a college friend. There's an event after work. Beers with the guys, I don't know. How about that church fundraiser you were talking about?

MATT: It's not a church.

SUSAN: You're so glum, Matt. I find this extremely exciting! Fate put us together – I really believe that.

MATT: It's a nonprofit that sometimes gets grants from church organizations.

SUSAN: Perfect, tell her that.

MATT: Nan would never believe it. And I never go out for beers with the guys.

SUSAN: Then say I'm the head of IT – (ABRUPTLY) Look I gotta go. You'll think of something. Have a name at the ready in case you need one, something less boring than "Susan". Call me "Gretchen from IT." You don't even know my last name. Anyway, I'll see you Thursday morning. Seven a.m. You're sure no one will be there.

MATT: Positive.

SUSAN: I'll only have an hour so we'll have to be quick. Gotta go!

(SFX: DIAL TONE.)

SCENE 2: INT. MATT AND NAN'S KITCHEN – THAT EVENING

(FADE IN: TWO WOMEN LAUGHING.)

NAN: Let's have another glass of wine, Kelly.

KELLY: Dear me, I've already had two. But OK, Nan, twist my arm!

(SFX: LAUGHTER. A REFRIGERATOR DOOR. LIQUID INTO TWO GLASSES.)

NAN: (GASPING) And did you hear the news about Paula and Andy? He's apparently left her for a woman in her twenties!

KELLY: You're kidding!

NAN: Can you imagine? With three kids, he just ups and leaves. After, what, fifteen years together?

KELLY: How awful. How did you hear?

NAN: It's all over the place. He's moved in with her!

KELLY: I have to say, Andy's always had that potential. I saw him get tipsy at a cocktail party two years ago and chat up the bosomy blonde hors d'oeuvres server like he was a horny college student.

NAN: Well, this is no bimbo. Recent med school grad, I'm told. Beginning her neurology residency at Mass General. That's so like a man! He develops his own career while Paula's at home with the kids, and

then jettisons her when she hits 40. Let me tell you, if Matt did anything like that, I swear I'd – I'd kill him.

KELLY: That's not Matt. Or Frank.

NAN: Thankfully! I know I can trust Matt. I just wish he wasn't such a grouch these days.

KELLY: Matt? A grouch? Since when?

NAN: Weeks now. Actually, more like a month or two. He won't tell me what the problem is, and when I prod him he's evasive and gets even grumpier. Maybe it's that we never go out anymore, to a movie or whatever.

KELLY: That's probably it. You know something, we should all get together.

NAN: We should! We should!

KELLY: For dinner, or something along those lines. Maybe at our house, or out somewhere.

NAN: We just need to get a new babysitter, Kelly. Now that Carla went off to college we have none. It certainly would help me to get a little time away from the kids. I tried to brighten everyone's mood last Friday night by making a nice dinner for us and opening a bottle of wine, but Matt came home late again and cranky. Missed dinner entirely!

KELLY: What time did he get home?

NAN: Past nine. On a Friday night! He says he's swamped at work trying to get everything ready for the upcoming move.

KELLY: Well I can tell you that Frank has been talking about this move for a long time, and since Matt's in charge of organizing it, it's no surprise he's tense.

NAN: Of course, and I understand that. It's just that Matt has to learn to leave his work at work and relax a little when he's home. I mean Frank doesn't come home late every night in a rotten mood, does he?

KELLY: (Mulling) No. But Frank does spend a lot of time with clients in the evenings and on weekends especially. So I don't want to give you the impression that he's not working hard, too.

NAN: Of course not, no. You've always said you don't see much of Frank on weekends. But at least you two do things together. Like go out to dinner and stuff.

KELLY: True.

NAN: Matt never takes me out. I know I know: we have kids, which makes going out hard. But Matt rarely even has dinner at home anymore. Sometimes, it feels like I see him just a couple of times a week, even though he sleeps in my bed every night. And then there's the damned moodiness!

KELLY: Gosh. Maybe he's depressed, Nan. Do you think he should see someone?

NAN: He would never. (SIGHING) I guess I should be more understanding of Matt. But it's hard on us. You'd think, at least, when he does get to be with his kids he'd enjoy it, but instead he just seems exasperated. And his behavior is really odd. One day recently, he

called and said he'd be late. No huge surprise. About an hour after we hung up, I realized I hadn't told him to pick up milk on the way home, so I called him and went to leave a message, but his voicemail was full. When I didn't hear back, I started to get nervous, and called again, both his work and his cell phones. No answer anywhere. I really began to worry. I was ready to call the police! And then, 11:00, he shows up. I was like, "what happened?", and he was like "what happened what?" "You never answered your phone, blah blah blah" and he was like, "it ran out of juice and I was working in the basement archives, so I couldn't answer my work line." I said, "Matt, you know what? If you call and say you're going to be two hours late but it turns out it's going to be four, it's normal to call your wife and update her."

(SFX: A DOOR OPENS IN THE DISTANCE.)

NAN: (QUIETLY) Finally he's home! (CALLING OUT) Hi honey.

MATT: (BLANDLY) Hi.

(NAN GETS UP AND MOVES OFF. THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION CONTINUES IN THE DISTANCE.)

NAN: You must be starving.

MATT: (SUBDUED) I'm not.

NAN: Let me make you something.

MATT: I'm fine.

NAN: How 'bout a sandwich?

MATT: (PRICKLY) I already ate.

NAN: Where did you eat?

MATT: Nowhere. I just popped into the market down the road from work
and got a prepared dish. I'm gonna shower.

(SFX: A FEW LOUD RAPS OF METAL FOOTSTEPS ON HARDWOOD.)

NAN: Matt, your bike cleats!

MATT: (LASHING OUT) Don't scold me! God, Nan, I hate that!

NAN: I'm sorry, honey, but...the floor...

MATT: Who cares about the damned floor! It's a scratched up ugly old
floor that hasn't been refinished in 25 years.

(SFX: IN AN INSTANT MATT HAS REMOVED HIS SHOES AND HAS TOSSED THEM
ASIDE.)

MATT: There, shoes off.

KELLY: (COWED) I'm sorry, Matt. But you've walked across the floor with
those shoes before, and—

MATT: (CUTTING HER OFF) So what? I couldn't have made the floor any
worse. (Beat) I hate this cramped, airless condo. But guess what?
We're stuck here! Can't sell it for what we owe.

(SFX: A BABY CRIES FROM A ROOM SOMEWHERE OFF.)

MATT: Now look what I've done!

NAN: I'll take care of Mimi. (BARELY AUDIBLE) Matt, Kelly's here.

MATT: What?

NAN: Kelly's in the kitchen.

MATT: Why didn't—? (PAUSE. APPROACHING.) Hi Kelly.

KELLY: Hi Matt.

MATT: I didn't know you were here.

KELLY: I'm sorry. I should have announced myself.

MATT: Of course not. (BEAT) It's...it's been a long day.

(SFX: THE TAP RUNS. WATER INTO A GLASS. MATT GULPS DOWN THIRSTILY.)

KELLY: Of course. You must be working like crazy on the move. I know what a huge deal it is. Frank's always on and on about "The Move."

MATT (PAUSING) Yes...Yes he's very excited. Well I have to get in the shower.

KELLY: I have to be going, anyway.

MATT: Don't leave on my account.

KELLY: No, it's late.

MATT: (PAUSE) Well, goodnight.

KELLY: Night, Matt.

(MATT EXITS. NAN RETURNS.)

KELLY: (CONT'D) Little Mimi OK?

NAN: Yeah, she went right back to sleep. (Quietly) That's worse than he's ever been. I mean maybe I shouldn't have snapped at him, but...

KELLY: You kidding me? If Frank came into our house with bike cleats on, I'd probably throttle him!

NAN: Yeah, but I'm sure your house is much nicer than mine.

KELLY: Oh, it's not, really.

NAN: Come on, I've seen pictures. Your house is so beautiful!

KELLY: That's so nice of you to say. I...I want to have you and Matt over. I just have to find a time that works for all of us.

NAN: Of course. That would be so nice, though.

KELLY: I'm so glad we became friends, Nan.

NAN: Me too, Kelly. Thank you so much for your support. It really means a lot to me.

KELLY: I'm going to speak to Frank. Maybe he doesn't even realize just how hard Matt's working.

NAN: No, don't do that. Matt wouldn't like that. I mean...he needs this job. We need this job. What if Frank thinks that Matt just can't hack it?

KELLY: Frank is very understanding, Nan. He might just not realize the stress Matt's under. Anyway, don't worry, I'll be discreet.

NAN: (EMBRACING) Thanks, Kelly.

(SFX: A DOOR.)

KELLY: Mmmm. Okay, talk soon.

SCENE 3: INT. FRANK AND KELLY'S BEDROOM – THAT NIGHT

(SFX: A NEWSPAPER BEING FOLDED)

KELLY: Goodnight, Frank.

FRANK: Goodnight, darling. Want me to turn out the light?

KELLY: You can keep reading the paper. You know I have no trouble falling asleep with the light on. Oh, remind me: what time are the guys coming to install the new countertop tomorrow morning?

FRANK: Early. I think they said 7:30.

KELLY: Then I definitely better get sleep.

FRANK: Finally: the last bit of the kitchen renovation. Just in time for next week's dinner party

KELLY: Mmm.

FRANK: You don't sound excited, Kelly. I just can't tell if it's the kitchen renovation or the dinner party that's bothering you.

KELLY: I'm sure the kitchen will look gorgeous when it's done. It's just been a long time dealing with this renovation and I'm a little tired of it now. And the dinner party, well...it's a lot of work.

FRANK: They'll both be worth it.

KELLY: (SETTLING INTO BED) Hey, Nan and Matt are having some issues.

FRANK: Really? Who told you this?

KELLY: I was there.

FRANK: Where?

KELLY: At their place. Nan was telling me about how tense he's been. It didn't sound too bad until he came home. He didn't realize I was there and they had a bit of a tussle.

FRANK: We have tussles every now and again.

KELLY: But this was different. He really lashed out at her. (BEAT) How is he at work?

FRANK: What do you mean "how is he?"

KELLY: Does he seem tense?

FRANK: I suppose a little bit. But the new building we're moving into and the timeline for getting the space ready and everyone packed up to move is pretty tight. And look, he wanted the responsibility. He asked to take on this project.

KELLY: Are you paying him more?

FRANK: For what?

KELLY: For managing the move.

FRANK: He's the operations manager. It's basically part of his job.

KELLY: How's he doing with it?

FRANK: He's doing great!

KELLY: Do you ever wonder if he's working too hard?

FRANK: Matt? No, I don't.

KELLY: Nan says he stays late at work every night while she is home with the kids. She says he rarely gets home before nine.

FRANK: Really!

KELLY: You didn't know that?

FRANK: How would I know that, honey?

KELLY: Well you're the president, Frank, and he reports to you.

FRANK: Yes, but I'm either out with clients or out with you, so how would I know that he's at work?

KELLY: Most people want their boss to know when they're working late. They don't hide it. (Testily) I thought maybe you'd know. Never mind.

(SFX: THE NEWSPAPER IS PUT ASIDE).

FRANK: I'm sorry, Kelly. Maybe I should be paying closer attention to Matt.

KELLY: Do you think you're paying him enough?

FRANK: Paying him more's not going to make him less tense.

KELLY: Maybe not, but...it might help them out. Financially, I mean.

FRANK: Did Nan suggest I'm not paying him enough?

KELLY: No, not at all, but, you know, they just so...struggle with money. They're in that little, cramped two-bedroom condo. They owe more on it than it's worth, you know.

FRANK: I know. You've told me before, several times. Maybe if she worked—

KELLY: (DISSMIVELY) Oh, come on, Frank.

FRANK You work, Kelly.

KELLY: Yes. I have a law degree. And I can set my own hours at this point in my career and bill a pretty darned good hourly fee. And I work out of the house. Nan? She's mentioned looking for work but she knows it wouldn't pay much. If she started working again she'd barely be able to cover the daycare costs. What's the point? And another thing, Frank: it bugs me that we can't have them over.

FRANK: Look, I explained this: I'm willing to take them out to dinner, but I just don't want to start having them over here. I don't like to socialize that closely with people I work with.

KELLY: You do it all the time. You play golf every weekend with someone or other connected to work.

FRANK: Clients. I have to do that. Matt's not a client.

KELLY: So why are you willing to take them out to dinner but not have them here? Is it the kitchen?

FRANK: (BEAT) No.

KELLY: It is. You don't want them to see the kitchen renovation. I knew it.

FRANK: I wouldn't feel this way, Kelly, if you didn't keep pointing out that they live in a crummy condo. I've become self-conscious about our home, which is ridiculous. Why can't we enjoy our own good fortune? We have the money we do because we work hard and

took risks. It's not our fault that they have money struggles, but it makes having them over feel kind of...I don't know...strange.

KELLY: Well it feels very strange to me to have a fancy dinner party to show off your brand new kitchen and not inviting one of your closest friends.

FRANK: You and Nan are that close?

KELLY: I feel like we are.

FRANK: Well, I just don't really feel so close to Matt that I want to have him here for dinner. Not right now.

KELLY: Well, that's silly. Anyway, one day Kelly's going to come here and see the renovation and everyone will have to be adults about it.

FRANK: Of course, honey.

KELLY: And, you know, you could help them out of their predicament. Make it easier for them to get out of that place they live in.

FRANK: Now how am I supposed to do that?

KELLY: Give him a raise.

FRANK: You know it's not that easy. Jeny does our HR. There are equity issues.

KELLY: You're telling me that he's doing a great job getting you guys ready to move. Tell him that. Make him feel good. Look in on him and see that he's not overburdened. And can't you give him a bonus or something? Surely you can.

FRANK: Well. I suppose I might be able to do that.

KELLY: I think our relationship would be a little tenser if we had their money struggles, Frank.

FRANK: (PAUSE) I know. Look, I'll...see what I can do about it. A salary increase or a bonus or something.

KELLY: Thank you, honey. I'm sure Jenny will be fine with it. (SNUGGLING UP) And it'll make you feel better too. Night, Frank.

(SFX: A KISS.)

FRANK: Night, Kelly.

SCENE 4: INT. MATT'S OFFICE – NEXT EVENING

FRANK: Knock Knock.

MATT: Oh, hi Frank. Still here?

FRANK: Yeah, I've been told by a certain person who's doing an expert job managing our move outta this old musty space that I have to have everything in my office packed up by this Thursday.

MATT: Sorry, but that's the only way we'll be successful with the move.

FRANK: You know I'm just ribbing you, Matt. Like I said, you're doing a great job. And let me add that I'm just about done packing myself up.

MATT: That's great. I appreciate it.

FRANK: I know how difficult this has been. I know how hard you've been working and how complicated it is getting this firm that keeps

growing and growing into new space that's going to grow with us. I want you to understand that I'm not blind to the work you're doing.

MATT: (QUIETLY) Well, thank you.

(AN UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE GROWS).

FRANK: (AWKWARDLY) Sooo...Just wanted to check in. See how you're doing. Anything that I can help with.

MATT: (PAUSE) Is this about last night, Frank?

FRANK: Last night?

MATT: I'm guessing Kelly told you that I...kind of had a quarrel with Nan when I came in.

FRANK: Oh yeah. That's right, I'd forgotten about that. But yes, now that you mention it, she did say something about that.

MATT: It's nothing, really. I'd just had a bad bike commute home. I was cut off, a car, a truck actually, cut me off. Nearly killed me. Really put me in a rotten mood, and, you see...I don't hide that sort of thing well.

FRANK: I certainly understand that. I don't know how you ride your bike among all those cars and trucks in the city. And you, a father. Little kids at home. You can't go getting run over, now can you.

MATT: No. No that wouldn't be good.

FRANK: (PAUSE) Matt, I was thinking...you're doing such a great job with us, and plans for the move are going so well, and much of that is because of you. And I think, Matt, after the move, sometime after

it, we should probably evaluate your position here and think about whether a promotion might be in order.

MATT: A promotion.

FRANK: Yes, that's right. With a pay increase. After the move. After we settle in, and see what's what. And look at our financials.

MATT: (PAUSE) Have you talked to Jenny about that?

FRANK: Jenny? I'm the founder and sole owner of this company, Matt. Jenny will be apprised, of course, but if I want to give you a promotion, I'll give you a promotion.

MATT: (PAUSE) Thank you, Frank.

FRANK: You don't sound happy.

MATT: Of course I'm happy. It's just that...well...Jenny told me just a month ago that we're keeping salaries flat this year because we've got financial issues.

FRANK: (BURSTS INTO LAUGHTER) That's nonsense!

MATT: She got it from Mark.

FRANK: (JOVIALY) She's misunderstanding. We've got cash-flow issues on the macro level. Need to buy a competitor or two and don't have quite the muscle we need. But promotions where they're warranted, such as in your case? We can do that.

MATT: Well, I just want to make sure everything goes smoothly.

FRANK: Of course you do. You know, I was thinking, Matt. What say we go out to get a drink. Celebrate our impending move. You like Scotch? 'Cause I sure do! There's a place down the road with a wide array of single malts.

MATT: I'm a Bourbon guy. (PAUSE) But it's very kind of you. I just...I can't. I would love to, though. But Nan and the kids are expecting me home for dinner.

FRANK: Of course they are. I think that's great! Go on home for dinner.

MATT: Maybe another time, Frank.

FRANK: Sure thing. Have a good night now, Matt.

MATT: You too, Frank. (CALLING OUT) Uh...Frank?

FRANK: Yeah.

MATT: You staying late?

FRANK: Yeah. A little bit. Just boxing a few more things for the movers. Shouldn't take me more than another half hour.

MATT: Ah, OK. Well, good. Glad to hear that. So I'm going to get going.

FRANK: See you tomorrow, Matt.

MATT: See you, Frank.

SCENE 5: INT. FRANK'S AND KELLY'S KITCHEN – LATER THAT NIGHT

(SFX: AN ENTRANCE DOOR TO AN AMERICAN MCMANSION OPENS AND CLOSSES. HARD-SOLED SHOES APPROACH, FIRST ON A TILE FOYER AND THEN A HARDWOOD FLOOR. EVERYTHING REVERBERATES IN THE EXPANSIVE ROOMS.)

FRANK: (APPROACHING) Will I love it?

KELLY: Oh my God, Frank! It's just amazing! I love the contrast between the slate and the poplar. The slate is so...(SEARCHING FOR WORDS) black.

FRANK: And the workmanship is superb. Everything is very tight, isn't it? The joints are seamless. Let's celebrate!

(SFX: A PAPER BAG.)

KELLY: Champagne. (CATCHES HER BREATH) Dom Perignon! Frank!

FRANK: We've been putting up with this for a long time, Kelly, and deserve the best. But do we have clean glasses?

KELLY: (LAUGHING) We do, believe it or not! They're boxed. I'll be right back.

(SFX: A CELL PHONE CHIRPS AS KELLY GOES OFF.)

FRANK: Is that your cell or mine?

KELLY: (OFF) Mine. Probably yet another text from Nan.

FRANK: How is she?

KELLY: Worse than yesterday. Really frustrated.

FRANK: Well at least she got her man home for dinner tonight.

KELLY: (RETURNING) No she didn't.

FRANK: She didn't? Matt told me he had to be home for dinner with the family.

(SFX: SUDDEN POP FROM A CHAMPAGNE CORK EXPLODING FROM THE BOTTLE AND HITTING A CABINET ACROSS THE ROOM. CHAMPAGNE IS POURED.)

KELLY: No, Matt called and said he wouldn't be home 'til later. He wasn't home when I left her place. And this text from her says "Still not home."

FRANK: Really!

KELLY: Nan's really quite upset. We were supposed to go out for drinks tonight.

FRANK: Oh, that's right. I'd forgotten about that.

KELLY: Well so did Matt, apparently. Nan had cleared it with him. He was supposed to be home to watch the kids. She called him and left a message, and then he called back and said he was still at the office. But she told me it didn't sound like he was at the office. He said he couldn't get back, that there was some snafu at work. I ended up helping Nan put the kids to bed.

FRANK: Wow. I'm so sorry. If I'd have known I'd have come over myself and watched the kids so you two could go out.

KELLY: Ha! You, babysitting!

FRANK: What?

KELLY: (PLAYFULLY) You've never changed a diaper!

FRANK: I'd learn to do that quickly enough. I think I'd be good with kids.

KELLY: (SWEETLY) I know you would.

FRANK: And you would too.

KELLY: Well, thank you. (BEAT) Our lives right now are so pleasant. You know, without them.

FRANK: Without kids?

KELLY: Yeah. We'd lose that, you know. Candlelit dinners at nice restaurants. Bottles of fine wine. And they're expensive!

FRANK: Babies are expensive?

KELLY: Kids are. A newborn baby goes through hundreds of diapers a month. And there's formula, and daycare, and eventually college.

FRANK: We can afford it.

KELLY: Can we? I've read that it'll be something like three hundred thousand dollars for an education by the time a baby born today is ready for college.

FRANK: Of course, of course, but the business has taken off, honey. We're about as financially settled as anyone we know. If we're ever going to have kids, now's the time.

KELLY: I guess so. Are we really in good financial shape? I'm never a hundred percent sure.

FRANK: We're in great shape. And Matt and Nan will be in better financial shape soon, too.

KELLY: Really!

FRANK: After the move, assuming everything goes well, I'm going to give him a promotion.

KELLY: Frank!

FRANK: And a bonus.

KELLY: Oh, Frank, that is so great!

FRANK: I'm glad you think so. Matt was unimpressed.

KELLY: Really?

FRANK: Didn't seem to excite him in the least.

KELLY: What if this is not about money? I worry about them, with Matt saying he's at the office, but it seems like really he's not. Nan's beginning to suspect something...devious. Earlier today, she told me that he smelled of alcohol last night. And then, when he was asleep, she looked in his wallet and there was a receipt from some tavern. Mc-something. McNally's, I think.

FRANK: McNulty's?

KELLY: Yes, that's it. You know it?

FRANK: I do. Nice place. Lots of deeply stained hardwood paneling.

KELLY: Where is it?

FRANK: It's in the Paramount Hotel. A few blocks down from our new building.

- KELLY: It's in a hotel? Oh, no!
- FRANK: Now don't jump to conclusions, Kelly. It's not a meat market or something. It's the sort of place that attracts a wide clientele. Anyway, it's a restaurant too. I take the senior staff there all the time. That's probably how Matt knows about it. We do lunch there once a month or so. Lots of business people use it.
- KELLY: Frank, there were several drinks. Two Bourbons. And a white wine.
- FRANK: That doesn't mean anything. I sometimes go out for drinks after work. You know that. With clients.
- KELLY: Does Matt take clients out?
- FRANK: That's not what I'm saying. I just wouldn't suspect anything because of a few drinks.
- KELLY: She's not worried about him drinking. She wonders about the white wine. Matt doesn't drink white wine. Frankly, most men don't. Not after work, at least.
- FRANK: Oh come on, you don't know that.
- KELLY: Name one guy you know who drinks white wine.
- FRANK: Well...let's see...I've seen Mark drink white wine.
- KELLY: Mark? We've been out to dinner with him and Ellen many times. Never have I seen him drink white wine.
- FRANK: Well, I saw him. Last year, at lunch.

KELLY: (LAUGHING) Last year?

FRANK: OK, fine, it's uncommon. But you just don't know.

KELLY: (BEAT) Frank, I think he may be having an affair.

FRANK: An affair! Matt? (LAUGHS) Come on.

KELLY: Why's he coming home late every night? And he's so testy with her!

FRANK: He told me he nearly got killed by a truck riding his bike home last night. That would make me testy.

KELLY: But why is he telling her that he's working late when you say that he isn't.

FRANK (SEARCHING) I don't know. Maybe he's at the new building making sure everything is fine there. And then he goes out for a drink afterward.

KELLY: Sure. Yeah, that makes sense, doesn't it? But wait, he said he was at office packing up, not at the new building.

FRANK: I don't know. (BEAT) Gosh, I can't see Matt having an affair.

KELLY: God, it would be so awful for Nan. (BEAT) Maybe we could find out.

FRANK: Find out what?

KELLY: What's going on. What he's doing at night. Who he's with.
(MUSING) How would one go about finding out something like that?

FRANK: I wouldn't know. I've never spied on anyone.

KELLY: Could you, say, go back to that hotel bar and ask around?

FRANK: No.

KELLY: (IGNORING HIM) What's it called?

FRANK: I'm not doing that.

KELLY: McNally's.

FRANK: McNulty's.

KELLY: What if you went back there? They must have a regular bartender, don't they? What's her name?

FRANK: I've never been there at night. Ever.

KELLY: Who tends bar at lunch?

FRANK: A guy named Mike.

KELLY: Maybe Mike tends bar at night.

FRANK: Doubtful.

KELLY: Maybe you can ask him.

(SFX: CHIRP FROM A CELL PHONE.)

FRANK: Kelly, I do not feel comfortable shaking Mike down for information on one of my employees.

KELLY: Another text. From Nan. (Reading) "Matt still not home. Tell me not to worry!" (PAUSE) Well I think she should worry.

FRANK: I don't want to get dragged into their marital troubles, Kelly!

KELLY: (SOOTHING) Of course not. You do whatever you think is right, Frank.

SCENE 6: INT. A BAR – NEXT DAY

(SFX: JUKE BOX MUSIC. CHATTER OF PATRONS.)

MIKE: Hello there, Frank! Been a while.

FRANK: Work's been crazy busy, Mike. We've moving, in fact. Did I tell you?

MIKE: No.

FRANK: Very exciting.

MIKE: You having lunch?

FRANK: I thought I would, yes. Still have the lobster roll?

MIKE: Sure do.

FRANK: I'll get that with fries.

MIKE: You want the beer menu?

FRANK: Johnny Walker Black. A side of ice water, please.

MIKE: (At a distance) So where are you moving to?

FRANK: Just down the road. About 5 blocks from here. We've had the space entirely renovated with a really sleek look. Meanwhile, we're renovated our kitchen at home, so I'm up to my eyeballs with

contractors. Renovating a kitchen is a much bigger job than I'd imagined. Kelly manages it day-to-day but she works too.

MIKE Total renovation?

FRANK Yes. Everything. Gutted. We lived in a hotel for about a week. Not too bad. Stayed at the Ritz so we managed to have some fun.

MIKE: Like a mini vacation.

FRANK: You got that right.

(SFX: A GLASS ON THE COUNTER)

FRANK: Thank you.

MIKE: Polished Granite Countertops in your kitchen?

FRANK: No, slate, actually.

MIKE: Slate! I've never heard of that as a countertop.

FRANK: Slabs of it. It's treated and sealed. Black as hell. An unbelievable look.

MIKE: Who's the contractor?

FRANK: Atlantic.

MIKE: Atlantic! Didn't those guys work on the big dig?

FRANK: Exactly.

MIKE: I thought they did strictly commercial work.

FRANK: They're working on our new office space, too. I asked them for a reference to do our house and they were like, "Oh, we can do that for you." I wasn't going to say no to that.

MIKE: Of course. So where are your partners in crime? Those guys you usually bring here?

FRANK: Working. Busy time, with the move. I just was checking out the new space and figured I'd grab a quick lunch here. (PAUSES TO DRINK) Did you work last night, Mike?

MIKE: Last night, night before. I've worked every night for the last 3 weeks. I don't mind it, to be honest. Since Helen passed away last year I'd rather be busy.

FRANK: Of course. Hey Mike, you know, one of the guys who comes to lunch with me, Matt's his name, kind of tall, six foot one or so, dirty blond hair?

MIKE: Got one of those things in his chin? A dimple?

FRANK: Cleft chin – yes that's him. I'm wondering. Have you seen him here recently after work?

MIKE: Uhhh... let me think...

VOICE: (DISTANT) Yo.

MIKE: Yessir.

VOICE: Harpoon.

(SFX: MIKE PULLS A PINT.)

FRANK: So, how 'bout it? Was my buddy Matt here?

MIKE (EVASIVELY) Yeah. Yeah, I guess he was here for a little bit.

FRANK: Who was he with?

MIKE: Geez, I'm not sure, Frank. I didn't get a good look.

FRANK: But he wasn't here alone, right?

MIKE: No, there was...someone else with him.

FRANK: "Someone else." Like, a female someone else?

MIKE: You on assignment here?

FRANK: Sort of.

MIKE: Frank, my job is to serve drinks. It's not to, you know, talk about who did what on this night or that while they were patronizing my establishment. What they had to drink, for example. And other stuff. You know what I'm saying?

FRANK: This is pretty important, Mike. There might be some not-so-great things brewing, and if so I'd like to put a stop to it before it gets too far.

MIKE: Not sure how I can help.

FRANK: You might start by telling me if you had ever see this, this "person" Matt was with before?

MIKE: (PAUSE) Not sure. Maybe one other time.

FRANK: OK. When you saw him and...the other person...did they seem amorous?

MIKE: They weren't pawing each other if that's what you're saying. (PAUSE) This isn't about a guy doing something wrong at work, is it, Frank?

FRANK: No. No, not at all. Mike, one more thing. Can you tell me anything distinguishing about this person.

MIKE: (UP CLOSE AND SECRETIVELY) Just between you and me, Frank.

FRANK: Of course.

MIKE: She was a specimen. Trim-and-fit. Blonde hair, as I recall. Wears sleek business attire. (BACKS AWAY AND SPEAKS NORMALLY) That's about all I can tell you.

FRANK: Thanks, Mike. I really appreciate it.

SCENE 7: INT. NAN AND MATT'S HOUSE – THE NEXT MORNING

(SFX: EARLY MORNING TELEVISION NEWS AT LOW VOLUME. A REFRIGERATOR DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING. LIQUID IN A GLASS.)

NAN: (Arriving from the bedroom) Matt, you're already dressed.

MATT: I realize that. I was the one who got myself dressed.

NAN: Why do you have to be such a smart-alec about it? Thanks for starting the morning off on the wrong foot!

MATT: (QUIETLY) Sorry.

NAN: All I was trying to say was, it's not even six thirty yet.

MATT: I just have to get in early.

NAN: In to work?

MATT: Of course work. Where else?

NAN: You know you're taking Jeremy into kindergarten this morning.
(PAUSE) You didn't forget, did you? (INCREDULOUS) You did!

MATT: Did I say I'd take him in?

NAN: Yes, you did. Matt!

MATT: Well, I'm sorry. I can't. I've got to get in to work.

NAN: Now?

MATT: Yes. I have things to do before Frank comes in.

NAN: (STUMBLING) But, but, your son. He is so excited because his Daddy is taking him into school for the first time in about a month. That's all he wanted to talk about last night.

MATT: (UNDER HIS BREATH) Jesus.

NAN: Where were you last night? You haven't seen either of your children in days!

MATT: Working. I told you I'd be working late. You think I like it? I'm just as sick of it as you are. And, by the way, I did see both kids last night.

NAN: When?

MATT: When I got home. I kissed them both goodnight.

NAN: Sorry, Matt. That's not seeing your kids. (DECISIVELY) I need you to take Jeremy in.

MATT: I can't. I told you. I have to get to work by seven. We're...we're moving tomorrow, Nan. Do you know the number of things I have to do to get us prepared?

NAN: No.

MATT: A ton.

NAN: You're going to break that child's heart.

MATT: (SHEEPISHLY) I'll talk to Jeremy tonight when I get home.

(SFX: THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR OPENING.)

MATT: (CONT'D; SUSPICIOUSLY) Hey, why do you have breast milk thawing in the fridge anyway? I thought you were saving frozen breast milk for nights when we get a sitter. Not that we have the money to go out.

NAN: I...I have an appointment.

MATT: This morning?

NAN: (BEAT) Yes.

(SFX: REFRIGATOR DOOR SLAMS.)

MATT: So this has nothing to do with Jeremy. It's a hair-cut, or whatever the hell. Nails or pedicure or, who knows, a massage.

NAN: (CROSSLY) I don't get massages, Matt.

MATT: Hair.

NAN: Yes, OK, hair. Alright? I get my hair done once every three months.

MATT: And you've got, what, a babysitter, then?

NAN: (BEAT) Charlotte's watching them.

MATT: What's that running us? She must be, what, eighteen bucks an hour? Twenty? Now that she's a mom herself she commands more money.

NAN: She was doing me a favor. Oh, forget it about it, Matt! Just go to work! Let me get my juice!

(SFX: REFRIGERATOR DOOR IS YANKED OPEN AND A MOMENT LATER SLAMMED CLOSED.)

MATT: Well, I'm sorry, but that's what I have to do.

(SFX: MATT'S CELL PHONE RING TONE. IT RINGS ONCE, AND THEN BEEPS.)

NAN: (SUSPICIOUSLY) Who was that?

MATT: Nothing. Work. Someone from IT who's helping sort out the move. I'll call from the road.

(SFX: NAN GOES TO LEAVE, AND STOPS ACROSS THE ROOM.)

NAN: By the way, if you get a call from us today, don't ignore it like you just did to whoever that was. Because it might not be me calling. It might be, oh I don't know, your son maybe? Calling to say hello to his Daddy, like he tried to do yesterday.

MATT: I didn't ignore any calls. My battery ran down yesterday, Nan.

NAN: So you couldn't plug it in?

MATT: I didn't have the cable.

NAN: (CAUSTICALLY) Didn't have the cable. I see. Well bring the cable today, Matt.

(SFX: A DOOR SLAMS IN THE DISTANCE. A BABY CRIES.)

FADE OUT

SCENE 8: EXT. A SCHOOLYARD – THAT MORNING

(SFX: THE SOUNDS OF CHILDREN. NAN ARRIVES BREATHING HEAVILY. A BABY COOING.)

NAN: Hi Ms. Roberts.

MS. ROBERTS: Hello. Ready for School, Jeremy?

JEREMY: Yes.

NAN: (HURRIEDLY) Alright, I have to run honey. Mommy has an appointment.

(SFX: A CELL PHONE RINGS.)

NAN: I'll pick you up after school. Love you honey!

(SHE GIVES HIM A QUICK HUG AND A KISS)

JEREMY: Love you, Mom.

NAN: (INTO CELL PHONE WHILE WALKING) Charlotte, hi!... Yes, I know, I'm so sorry, that's why I called you earlier. Are you at my place

now?... OK, can you wait ten minutes?... Um, OK, then, actually, in fact I'll be there in...in just eight minutes.

(SFX: THE BABY STARTS TO FUSS)

NAN: (IMPLORING TO CHARLOTTE) You can't wait eight minutes?

(SFX: NOW THE BABY BEGINS CRYING)

NAN: (PLEADING TO THE BABY) Mimi, not now! Please, sweetie. (TO CHARLOTTE) Matt was supposed to bring Jeremy to school, but he had to get to work early...I know, it's so frustrating! And he had promised! Look, I will get there in five...

(SFX: A CHIRP FROM A CAR DOOR UNLOCKING. DOOR OPENS. THE BABY IS CRYING IN EARNEST.)

NAN: But I'm already at the car, Charlotte... I know I'm already 30 minutes late, but... (RESIGNED) Oh, OK, thanks anyway... No, no, I realize that you're now late to drop off Anthony at his school because I'm late with Mimi... What's that?...Thanks, but I think coming back in half an hour to pick Mimi up won't really help much. My interv—my appointment is, basically, right now... (Quietly) Yes, I'll call you back once I reschedule my appointment... It's fine, it's not your fault, Charlotte... Alright, I'll talk to you later.

(SFX: A SEAT BUCKLE. BY NOW THE BABY IS SCREAMING. CAR DOOR CLOSES, MUFFLING THE SOUND OF THE BABY CRYING. BUTTONS ON A CELL PHONE. THE FAINT SOUND OF RINGING ON THE OTHER END.)

NAN: (CLEARING HER THROAT) Hi, yes, this is Nancy Murphy. I had an appointment today with Mr. Lawson...Yes, that's right, the part-time staff assistant position...Yes, I know I'm supposed to be there now.

You see, my daycare situation fell through, and...Yes, well is it possible to reschedule...?Yes, I'm sure there are many great candidates, but if I could just reschedule...I see...I see, yes. Yes, okay, well. I guess I'll just, I'll wait for your call then...OK, thank you very much, and please, please tell Mr. Lawson that I'm very sorry about this, it just was an extraordinary childcare situation...OK, thank you.

(SFX: CAR DOOR OPENS. THE BABY'S CRIES ARE PIERCING. DOOR CLOSSES AND WE ARE IN THE CAR WITH THE BABY. ENGINE STARTS UP.)

NAN: (EXASPERATED, SHE LASHES OUT). OK, Mimi, you're hungry, I got it!

(CROSSFADE)

SCENE 9: INT. KELLY'S HOUSE – THAT AFTERNOON

(SFX: ROOM AMBIANT. AN OCCASIONAL CAR ROLLS BY OUTSIDE.)

KELLY: Why didn't you tell me you were applying for a job, Nan? I could have watched the kids for you.

NAN: (SNIFFLING. SHE HAS BEEN CRYING). I didn't tell anyone. I've been out of the workforce for so long, Kelly...eight years now. I'm afraid I'll fail at this. What if I don't find work? Or do but then fall flat on my face?

KELLY: You're selling yourself short, Nan.

NAN: Am I? And anyway, how will Matt react? We need the money, but I won't clear much once you add in daycare. I'm worried he'll just laugh at me.

KELLY: Matt? No! He's not going to laugh at you!

NAN: Well, I want to see how interviews go before jumping up and declaring to the world, "I'm going to get a job." I especially don't want Matt to know. He's so brittle right now. Completely on edge. I don't want to push him off the cliff. And then there's the whole matter of whether he's actually working as much as he says, or, well...I don't want to even think about it.

(SFX: A BABY STIRRING.)

NAN: (CONT'D) Mimi's waking up. She's going to need to be fed soon.

KELLY: You can feed her here.

NAN: You don't mind?

KELLY: Of course not!

NAN: I'm so sorry for bursting in on you like this. I'm really not this crazy. I was just so upset. I ended up breast-feeding Mimi in the car, blubbering through the whole thing.

KELLY: Nan, I'm so sorry! You know you can count on me as a friend. If there's anything you ever need...

NAN: Thank you, Kelly. I really appreciate it. (LONG PAUSE) You know, I was thinking, there is something. (BEAT) I hate to ask, though.

KELLY: Anything!

NAN: (CLOSELY) Kelly...I just have to know...if Matt's having an affair.

KELLY: An affair! What makes you think that?

NAN: He's just acting so strangely. Coming home late every night. Leaving early without a good explanation. And then, this morning, a call came in on his cell phone from someone named Susan – I could see that much when I glanced at the phone. But instead of taking the call, he hit the ignore button. He told me that the call was from someone in IT. Is there someone in IT named Susan?

KELLY: I don't know.

NAN: I know it puts you in an awkward position, Kelly. But I have to know what Matt's doing. If he is having an affair...I swear I'd...!

KELLY: Nan!

NAN: No, I mean it. That would be the end!

KELLY: What can I do to help?

NAN: Maybe Frank can tell you if he's got someone in the IT department named Susan.

KELLY: Frank sometimes doesn't know those details.

NAN: But he must know this. Would you ask him?

KELLY: Of course.

NAN: And maybe, one day, Frank can hang around late to see if Matt's actually working or not. I can't do it myself. I can't just put the kids in the car and spy on him.

KELLY: I'll suggest it to Frank.

(SFX: BABY WAKING UP.)

NAN: Hi sleepy-head. You probably need your diaper changed, don't you.
(FEELING) Oh your diaper is full of pee-pee! (TO KELLY) Can I use
your bathroom?

KELLY: Of course. I mean, if you want, you can change her out here.

NAN: I have to use it myself anyway.

KELLY: Sure, it's...through the kitchen. (BEAT) Here, follow me.

(SFX: THEY CROSS THE ROOM AND THEIR SHOES HIT THE KITCHEN'S TILE FLOOR IN
THE DISTANCE.)

NAN: (STOPPING) Wow!

KELLY: (QUIETLY) Just renovated.

(A PAUSE AS THEY TAKE IN THE GRANDEUR OF THE ROOM.)

NAN: (BREATHLESS) I've never seen a kitchen like this. What is the
countertop made of?

KELLY: That's slate.

(SFX: THE BABY IS COOING.)

NAN: (ENRAPT) This is more spectacular than anything I've seen even in
magazines.

(SFX: A PAUSE, AND THEN FOOTSTEPS LEAD AWAY.)

KELLY: The bathroom's right this way.

SCENE 10: INT. A RESTAURANT – THAT NIGHT

(URBAN OUTDOOR AMBIANT: CARS; PEDESTRIANS IN HEELS; "TAXI". A DOOR OPENS, AND WE ARE TRANSPORTED INTO 'ROUGE', A SOPHISTICATED RESTAURANT.)

MAITRE D': Ah, Mr. Tolland. Right this way.

FRANK: Thanks, Charlie. Kelly been waiting long?

MAITRE D': Just arrived, sir.

FRANK: There she is! Hey...

(SFX: A KISS).

KELLY: Only five minutes late.

FRANK: That's good for me.

KELLY: I already know what I want.

FRANK: The crepes.

KELLY: Am I that predictable?

FRANK: You just had them just last week!

KELLY: (LAUGHING) Because they're so good! The artichoke and ricotta stuffing is absolutely superb.

FRANK: Well I'm going to be predictable too.

KELLY: Steak frites, medium rare! And you'd like to drink a cab.

FRANK: You got that right. Where's Louis? There he is!

LOUIS: (Approaching) Hello, Mr. Tolland. And how are you tonight Mrs. Tolland?

KELLY: Good, thanks, Louis.

FRANK: Louis, we need a bottle of wine. We're probably going to share an appetizer, maybe the salmon roulade, honey?

KELLY: That sounds great.

FRANK: Okay. And then Kelly's going to have the roasted artichoke and ricotta crepes, and I'm thinking of steak frites, medium rare. Now you know I'd love a cab.

LOUIS: A cabernet might be a little heavy for the crepes, but we have a California Pinot Noir that would pair pretty well with both.

FRANK: Pinot, huh? I'm not a big Pinot guy. A little too thin for my tastes.

LOUIS: Not this one. I have one we opened earlier today. You can try a glass of it and if you like it I'll open a new bottle.

FRANK: Sounds great!

LOUIS: (Off) Very good, sir.

KELLY: OK, now, before we start the pleasure portion of the evening, let's take care of a little business. Tomorrow—

FRANK: (CUTTING HER OFF) I'm meeting with clients tomorrow.

KELLY: Oh, Frank! Come on.

FRANK: I always meet clients on Saturday.

KELLY: You have to break this one.

FRANK: Break it? I'd love to but I can't. These are really important clients and it's been on the schedule for a long time.

KELLY: You didn't put it on our calendar.

FRANK: I didn't? Sorry, then.

KELLY: How long will you be gone for?

FRANK: All day, I'm afraid. It's golf.

KELLY: God, why don't you just offer to take these people out for lunch instead of golfing with them all day?

FRANK: Well, first of all, we're meeting in the morning to go over the new proposal. Our tee time isn't until 11. So it's not just golf. Also, look, these guys can eat at nice restaurants all they want. But they can only play at our golf club if they're my guests. They wanted to play golf and I want to make them happy. I'm sorry, honey.

KELLY: (Sighing) I had exciting plans for us.

FRANK: Exciting plans! Do tell.

KELLY: I was thinking...Frank I was thinking that I'm ready to have a baby!

FRANK: That's wonderful, honey. That makes me so happy.

KELLY: And I was thinking, tomorrow, maybe...

FRANK: That maybe you'd have the baby tomorrow? It doesn't work that way.

KELLY: (LAUGHING) You know what I mean. (Beat) I'm ovulating.

FRANK: You women are so in touch with your bodies.

KELLY: No, I have a test kit.

FRANK: Then what about tonight?

KELLY: Frank, we're drinking wine and it's been a long day. I'll be asleep before we even get home.

FRANK: OK, how about this? I'll call and see if I can move tomorrow's tee time to the afternoon and just present the proposal after golf. This will leave us the morning together.

KELLY: OK, that sounds like a plan. On one condition, however.

FRANK: What's that?

KELLY: You tell me if you have someone named Susan in your IT department.

FRANK: That's easy. I don't. But why do you ask?

KELLY: Matt ignored a phone call from someone named "Susan." He said it was from the IT department and he'd return the call later.

FRANK: She must have gotten the name wrong.

KELLY: Or Matt's having early mornings and late nights with someone named Susan. Frank, would you stop by McNulty's tonight on the way home and see if Matt's there? Please.

FRANK: (SIGHING) Sure. It'll give me a chance to check out the new office and see how the move went today.

KELLY: That sounds great.

LOUIS: (APPROACHING) Mr. Tolland. Give this Pinot a try and let me know what you think.

SCENE 11: EXT. THE OFFICE – LATER THAT NIGHT

(SFX: A CAR PASSES IN THE DISTANCE. A CELL PHONE RINGS. WE HEAR KELLY ON THE PHONE LINE.)

FRANK: Hi Kelly.

KELLY: Are you at McNulty's?

FRANK: Haven't gone yet. I'm outside the new office.

KELLY: God, I'm just about asleep. What's up?

FRANK: Well, it turns out that Matt seems to be at work still.

KELLY: That's great news! That's what he told Nan he was doing.

FRANK: I didn't say he was working. I mean I can see the light on in his office and I know that there's someone in there because I can see shadows against the drawn shade. Here's the thing, though: he's not alone.

KELLY: What?!

FRANK: There's someone else in there with him.

KELLY: Isn't that normal? The move was just today. Who else would be working?

FRANK: Not sure. Not Mark, I know that. Not Jenny. Maybe, I don't know, Susan from IT.

KELLY: Do you think so?

FRANK: It's just a feeling. I don't want to go waltzing in there right now. It would be extremely awkward.

KELLY: God, Frank! You'd think they'd get a hotel. But this makes sense. Matt can't afford a hotel.

FRANK: Wait, the light just went off. Let me just see who he's with.

(SFX: A CAR ENGINE STARTING FROM INSIDE THE VEHICLE.)

FRANK: (CONT'D) I'm just going to back down the road a little.

(SFX: CAR MOVING. WHINE OF REVERSE GEAR. GEAR SHIFT AND THE ENGINE STOPS.)

KELLY: (ANGRILY) If you ever do anything like this to me, Frank, I promise you I'm not staying with you.

FRANK: Don't take it out on me. I haven't done anything. OK, here comes someone. It's the girl.

KELLY: Have you seen her before?

FRANK: Yes. I recognize her! (BEAT) Wait a minute, she's in the cleaning crew.

KELLY: Well maybe that's who was in Matt's office. Some people from the cleaning crew.

FRANK: Sure. Sure, that makes sense. But...actually I don't think so. See, they always do our offices first, like at six o'clock, not nine o'clock. She's walking down the street, heading for the bus, I think.

KELLY: What about him?

FRANK: Not yet. Wait, here comes another person. Another woman. She's coming this way. The lights just flashed on a car. She's getting in. Okay this one drives a black Lexus sedan. And here comes Matt out the door. He's coming this way, too. Oh no, I think he's going to spot me. (PAUSE) Good, he just went down Kirkland Street.

KELLY: Is the girl still there?

FRANK: Yes. Her car is idling.

KELLY: Did he look over at her?

FRANK: He gave her a cute little wave.

KELLY: Oh, Frank! This is awful! Oh poor Nan!

(SFX: CAR STARTING.)

FRANK: OK, I'm going to pass by her car.

KELLY: Note her license plate.

(SFX: THE CAR STARTS MOVING.)

FRANK: Will do. (BEAT). Looks like M70 BRT.

KELLY: Got it. I can run that number, see what comes up.

FRANK: There she is. I'm passing her now. I definitely don't know who she is. Blonde hair.

KELLY: Young, I suppose. Mid-twenties?

FRANK: It's dark, I don't know. Alright, I'm coming home. See you in about half an hour.

SCENE 12: INT. MATT'S HOUSE – LATER THAT NIGHT

(SFX: A REFRIGERATOR DOOR. LIQUID IN A GLASS. NOW HEAVY GUZZLING. HEFTY GLASS DOWN ON THE COUNTER. MATT IS BREATHING HEAVILY FROM PHYSICAL EXERTION.)

MATT: Oh. Hi.

NAN: (ARRIVING; SHE IS EXTREMELY SARCASTIC) Matt, you're home!

MATT: Yes, finally.

NAN: I wasn't sure we'd even see you today.

MATT: Well I'm here, Nan.

(SFX: FOR A MOMENT, ALL WE HEAR ARE THE SOUNDS OF TWO TENSE PEOPLE USING THEIR KITCHEN WITHOUT SPEAKING. MATT POURING MORE WATER AND DRINKING. OPENING THE REFRIGERATOR TO PUT SOMETHING BACK, TURNING ON THE KITCHEN FAUCET AND RINSING SOMETHING OUT.)

NAN: How was the bike commute?

MATT: Fine. Fast.

NAN: Of course. On a Friday night at—what is it? Ten o'clock? Ten thirty!
(BEAT) Frank's not paying you enough.

MATT: No he's not.

NAN: I don't think he knows how much you're working.

MATT: What do you mean by that?

NAN: Was he at the office tonight?

MATT: Frank? (LAUGHING DERISIVELY) No. I don't think he's ever worked a Friday night. Unless you count dinner out as "work."

NAN: Did you tell him?

MATT: Tell him what?

NAN: That you'd be working late tonight?

MATT: He's not my therapist, Nan. He just wants to know that things are getting done.

NAN: Well how else is he going to know?

MATT: Know that I'm working late? Why does he need to know? Why would he care?

NAN: Because he's your boss.

MATT: Trust me, he doesn't think about my hours. All he cares about is getting more contracts to feed the pile of money he and Kelly burn through.

NAN: How do you know how much they spend? You've never even been to their house.

MATT: Like you have.

NAN: Don't be such a smart-ass. (BEAT) I have been there.

MATT: When?

NAN: Today.

MATT: Today! You kidding me? Invited to the Manse? What was the occasion?

NAN: The 'occasion' is that I'm friends with Kelly.

MATT: I see. And is their place simply spectacular?

NAN: It's a nice place, OK? Kitchen especially. Freshly renovated.

MATT: Slate countertops?

NAN: He's told you?

MATT: Sort of. He doesn't mean to show off, but Frank sometimes has a hard time keeping quiet about the way he spends money. Even when he tries to hide it, it's impossible not to notice his penchant for the finer things in life.

NAN: God, Matt, you've developed such a chip on your shoulder. Sometimes I wonder if you work as much as you do because you just can't bear your run-of-the-mill domestic existence. Would Frank even know if you hadn't worked tonight?

MATT: (PAUSE) Yes, he would.

NAN: How?

MATT: Certain things wouldn't get done.

NAN: Such as?

MATT: (STUMBLING A BIT) The-the move...

NAN: Oh, come off it, “the move”! I’m so tired of the damned “move”!

MATT: You think you’re tired of it, how do you think I feel? I’ve gotta go in tomorrow.

NAN: Tomorrow!

MATT: Now what?

NAN: It’s Jeremy’s last soccer game. You know this.

MATT: (GROANS) Oh, God, that’s right!

NAN: Dammit, Matt! Get your act together!

MATT: What’s time’s the game? Eleven? I can probably make that.

NAN: Probably?

MATT: I just...I need to pop into the new office to meet with...Gretchen from IT. Just to make sure nothing has gone wrong with the infrastructure.

NAN: “Gretchen from IT.”

MATT: (BEAT) Yes.

NAN: Fine. Go meet with “Gretchen from IT.” But if you’re not at Jeremy’s game, I’m not defending you. You’ll have to explain it to him yourself.

SCENE 13: INT. FRANK AND KELLY’S HOUSE – NEXT MORNING

(SFX: FRANK AND KELLY BREATHING DEEPLY, RELAXING, SIGHING.)

KELLY: That was so nice.

(SFX: A KISS.)

FRANK: Mmm. It was.

KELLY: Meet you here same time tomorrow, sailor.

FRANK: You got it. (BEAT) Hey, where you going?

KELLY: Getting my laptop. I want to show you something. A picture.

(SFX: TAPPING ON A KEYBOARD AND MYRAID COMPUTER NOISES.)

KELLY: You recognize this person?

FRANK: Ummm. (PAUSE) Yeah, I think so. I'm not sure where, though.

KELLY: How 'bout last night? In the black Lexus sedan outside your office.

FRANK: (CATCHING A BREATH.) Yes, that's her! How did you find her?

KELLY: Ran the license plate. Her name is Susan Eliot. Sound familiar?

FRANK: I don't think so.

KELLY: You've met her.

FRANK: I have?

KELLY: Last Christmas. At Dave's holiday party. She came with that friend of Dave's, the surgeon. The place was all abuzz about her being there. She's a rising star in state politics. Might be the next Suffolk County D.A., maybe one day the state's attorney general. I've met her several times. Massachusetts Bar Association functions. I saw the name when I ran the number and I thought, "Oh God, no!"

FRANK: Is she married?

KELLY: Ha, not hardly! She's got a bit of a reputation, to tell you the truth. Doesn't let her ascent up the career ladder stop her from dating, if you know what I'm saying.

FRANK: She sleeps around?

KELLY: Something along those lines. She occasionally appears in the social pages of the paper. Charity events, that sort of thing. Often brings a tall, handsome gentleman with her.

FRANK: Like our friend Matt?

KELLY: Mmm. Susan would love to toy around with him for a bit. She's the type of person who'd lure a guy in just to prove to herself how easy it is. Then, it's bye bye, leaving a wrecked marriage in her wake.

FRANK: You're leaping to wild conclusions.

KELLY: Am I? It's not that outlandish, Frank. You do remember that Matt and Nan were at Dave's holiday party last year.

FRANK: (BEAT) OK. So what?

KELLY: I have a vague recollection of Susan and Matt talking together over a glass of wine. Susan wouldn't soon forget those chiseled features of his.

(SFX: LAPTOP IS CLOSED WITH A SNAP.)

FRANK: So what's your plan?

KELLY: (GETTING UP AND MOVING AWAY) Susan lives in a brownstone building in the South End. There's a café across the street. I think I'll get a coffee, read the paper, relax. If she comes out, I'll follow her. She where she goes. See if she has a secret rendezvous with a certain gentleman who's married to my friend.

FRANK: (LONG PAUSE; GRAVELY) I don't like this, Kelly. What if she sees you?

KELLY: She doesn't know me.

FRANK: I thought you said you met her at Mass Bar Association functions.

KELLY: Years ago, and I'm sure I was just a passing face in the crowd. A dime-a-dozen divorce lawyer, not a rising star in state politics.

FRANK: Why is this so important to you?

(SFX: A CHURCH BELL CLANGS IN THE DISTANCE. IT TOLLS NINE MORE TIMES DURING THE ENSUING DIALOGUE, INCREASING IN VOLUME WITH EACH PASSING TOLL.)

KELLY: Nan wants to know, Frank. She needs to know. And frankly, if this was happening to us I'd want to know, too. If you were risking everything we have—our relationship, our future, our happiness. For what? For sex? To move up the ladder? If Matt's having an affair with Susan Eliot, Nan has to know.

FRANK: (PAUSE) Well be careful. (GETTING UP) You could get in serious trouble if this assistant D.A. discovers you're following her.

KELLY: And where are you off to?

FRANK: I'm gonna have a look at the new digs, see how things went yesterday.

(SFX: 7TH TOLL OF THE BELL.)

MATT: Susan, it's Matt. I'm sorry, I'm running late. I'll be at the office by 10 o'clock.

(SFX: 8TH TOLL OF THE BELL.)

NAN: (FRANTICALLY) Kelly! It's Nan. Call me. I found something down in the basement!

(SFX: 9TH TOLL. IT IS 10 A.M. AS THE ECHOES FADE, A STANDARD CELL PHONE RING TONE RISES.)

KELLY: (ANXIOUSLY; ALMOST FRIGHTENED) Frank, where are you? I've been waiting outside your office building for ten minutes, trying to reach you! I see your car here so I know you're here. I followed Susan and this is where she ended up. (BEAT) Frank, Nan called. She found a gun. A loaded gun in a locked cabinet in the basement of their home! My God, Nan is petrified! Frank, I'm coming in.

SCENE 14: INT. THE NEW OFFICE –MORNING

(SFX: A DOOR.)

MATT: (ENTERING) Here is the inner sanctum, Frank's office. I think we can find—(HIS VOICE CATCHES; PAUSE) Frank.

FRANK: (CALMLY) Hello Matt. Who's your friend?

SUSAN: Call me Gretchen.

FRANK: Hello Gretchen, though I doubt that's your name.

SUSAN: I didn't say it was.

FRANK: My name is Frank Tolland. I'm the owner of this establishment. I hope I'm not intruding.

MATT: Oh, come off it, Frank!

(SFX: DOOR OPENS.)

FRANK: Kelly, you've found us. Meet Matt's friend, "Gretchen."

KELLY: Susan, you mean. We've met, actually.

SUSAN: We have?

KELLY: Don't worry, I'm easy to forget.

FRANK: They were planning on christening my office, it seems.

KELLY: I hope you two are mortified. How could you do this to Nan, Matt?

MATT: (CONFUSED) To Nan?

(SFX: DOOR OPENS.)

MATT: (CONT'D) Nan! What in the world...?

NAN: "What in the world" is right, Matt. (VICIOUSLY) You son of a bitch!

SUSAN: (SUDDENLY TERRIFIED). Oh my God, please, no!

NAN: (EXPLODING) And I'll use it, honey!

MATT: Nan, no, what are you thinking?

NAN: Who is she, Matt?!

SUSAN: (STUMBLING) I—I—I'm an attorney for--

NAN: (SCREAMING) An attorney, is that it, Matt? A working woman?
Someone more interesting than YOUR OWN DAMN WIFE?

MATT: What are you talking about?

NAN: I'm talking about her!

KELLY: Put the gun down, Nan. That's not going to solve anything.

NAN: A gun won't solve anything? I said if this happened I'd put an end to
it.

KELLY: (SCREAMS) No!

(SFX: MATT GRUNTS, LUNGING. A STRUGGLE. THE GUN FIRES. SCREAMS. NAN IS
SOBBING.)

MATT: I've got it. Is anyone hit?

ALL: No/I don't think so/etc.

(SFX: NUMBERS ON A CELLPHONE KEYPAD).

SUSAN: I'm calling 911.

MATT: No, don't!

SUSAN: Your freak of a wife pulled a gun and tried to kill herself, Matt.
She's out of her mind!

MATT: (ANGRILY) She's not a freak! She's been driven to this by all the
damned secrecy.

(SFX: NAN IS WEEPING STILL.)

MATT: Nan did you think we were having an affair? Honey, I wouldn't do that to you.

NAN: Then why the secret rendezvous?

MATT: I was building a case.

KELLY: A case against who?

(A LONG PAUSE)

MATT: Against Frank.

KELLY: Frank?!

MATT: How was dinner last week at Rouge? How was the...

(SFX: PAPER)

MATT: (READING)...let's see...steamed mussels?

KELLY: How would you know what we had?

MATT: And, then...Frank would have had the skirt steak, so you must have had the roasted artichoke and ricotta crepes with spring vegetables. (BEAT) Am I right?

KELLY: Frank? What's he talking about?

FRANK: (ANGRILY) I don't know what the hell you're driving at, Matt, but I'm sick of this B.S.

MATT: I have the receipt, Kelly. (BEAT) Frank put in for reimbursement.

KELLY: Our dinner receipt?

FRANK: I think you've got it wrong, Matt. You're mixing up receipts. Or dates.

(SFX: PAPER.)

MATT: I think not. "Dinner meeting. Rouge. Re: Marshfield Bridge. Thursday October 5th." Isn't that where you went with Kelly?

KELLY: Frank, did you charge our dinner to...?

FRANK: It was a meal expense, Matt. Perfectly legit. I bounce a ton of ideas about work off Kelly. She's a resource to me. It's a wonder she doesn't draw a salary.

MATT: Then why does the reimbursement claim say you met with "Jerry Gilbert."

FRANK: You're out of line.

MATT: Am I? It's not just the meals, Kelly. He's been running your home renovation through the business too.

KELLY: Our home renovation!

FRANK: That's nonsense, Matt.

MATT: We paid a bill, about 4, 5 weeks ago. Invoice number 5196. Atlantic. A double stainless sink.

FRANK: For the kitchen in this sparkling new office space we're in! Anyone want to come down the hall with me and have a look?

MATT: But the same bill had a fireclay and porcelain sink on it, too. Did you have a terra cotta glazed sink just installed in your home, Kelly?

KELLY: (QUIETLY) Yes.

MATT: The fact is virtually every penny of your kitchen renovation was paid by our firm. The demolition. The plumbing. The electrical. The finish, including slabs of slate at something like 60 bucks a square foot. Take a look around, Kelly. Take a look at all the poplar cabinets and slate highlights. Look over there – the stainless drawer pulls. Tell me they aren't the same ones you have in your newly renovated kitchen.

KELLY: (QUIETLY) They might be.

MATT: They are. And we paid for them. I've looked at invoices. I've actually counted drawer pulls.

FRANK: Big deal, drawer pulls! What a laugh!

MATT: The whole renovation! And that's just the tip of the iceberg. What about the bribes to state officials to win—

FRANK: (CUTTING HIM OFF) Enough of this garbage! What are you trying to blackmail me, you dirty bastard? You go out there, sleeping around, cheating on your wife, your family. Bringing this floozie into my office to have sex.

SUSAN: You're going to regret you called me that. In my capacity as Assistant DA for Suffolk County, I'm investigating you for fraud and bribery, Mr. Tolland.

(LONG PAUSE.)

MATT: Do you think I really wanted to do this, Frank? Blow the whistle on your scheme to run personal expenses through the system? Tell

authorities about your penchant for greasing political palms? I had no choice!

FRANK: Ha!

MATT: It's true. It was so plain what was going on that I would have been sucked right down the toilet with you as soon as someone else inevitably discovered what I already knew.

FRANK: What do you get out of this?

MATT: (ANGRILY) Nothing! Except a trip to the unemployment line. This company is about to fold anyway.

FRANK: Nonsense!

MATT: You've driven it into the ground. If you haven't gotten the message yet, Mark is resigning. He confided: he told me the business had grown too quickly. We were way beyond our means.

FRANK: Dammit, I'm closing a deal for five million dollars this afternoon!

SUSAN: Then you might want to disclose that you're under investigation.

FRANK: I'll do nothing of the sort!

MATT: You should take Susan's advice, Frank. You're in enough trouble here. Don't make it worse and lengthen to your jail sentence.

FRANK: I'm not going to jail!

MATT: Maybe not. A good lawyer will help. Either way, how are you going to resurrect this firm's reputation while trying to defend yourself in court? And for what, Frank? You'd have had a very nice life if you'd

done it all above board. Maybe you'd even have grown the company enough to get yourself what you really wanted: upward mobility. The chance to mingle with the elite. Instead, you couldn't wait, so you bought your way in, draining the firm dry in the process and avoiding taxes to boot.

FRANK: I offered you a raise. And a bonus. You ungrateful jerk.

MATT: To shut me up? Anyway, it was too late. You could have offered me a million dollars but it would have done no good. You know, you must be crazy if you think any of this benefits me. "Hello out there, anyone want to hire a whistle-blower?" At least you don't have children relying on you. I've got two kids, Frank. It's an expensive life to find yourself with no job.

FRANK: You made your bed, now lie in it! Come on, Kelly.

(SFX: THE DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES WITH A BANG.)

SUSAN: Well, Matt. I think we can go ahead and get this to the grand jury ASAP. Criminal charges will put an end to Frank's corrupt activity in short order. You should be proud. I know I am.

MATT: I know this sort of thing enhances your career, Susan, but it does nothing for mine. And keep in mind that my marriage has suffered a great deal because of this. Making me promise not to tell Nan about our meetings. Calling me at 6:30 in the morning to tell me that you're going to be a little late on Thursday, and then not showing up at all. Deciding at the last minute that we'd have to meet this morning.

SUSAN: I'm a busy person.

MATT: I have a life too, you know. I've got a family.

SUSAN: You've done a great service to your community. I'll be back in touch.

(SFX: DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES.)

NAN: Why didn't you tell me, Matt?

MATT: I know, I should have! Nan, I'm so sorry for being such a jerk. It's just that, I didn't see a way out. We've been backed into a corner. I was tense and confused.

NAN: And why the gun?

MATT: Nan, I've had a gun for a long time. From way before we were married. I know how opposed to guns you are, so I—I didn't tell you.

NAN: You've had a loaded gun in the basement for eight years?

MATT: It's in a locked cabinet!

NAN: The key was in the key dish with all the others.

MATT: I'm sorry. I'll get rid of the gun.

NAN: No you won't. I will!

(LONG PAUSE.)

MATT: I'm so sorry, Nan.

(THEY EMBRANCE. NAN BEGINS WEeping IN RELIEF.)

MATT: (CONT'D) It's not going to get any easier for us. I don't know that we have a way out of our financial predicament. Just making the mortgage any buying necessities is going to be hard.

NAN: (EMBRACING HIM.) I might have a way to help out, Matt. If you're willing to listen.

MATT: Of course.

NAN: It involves me. And a job. And you and some Daddy time with the kids.

MATT: Do you have a job in mind?

(SFX: DOOR OPENS.)

NAN: I have an interview. On Tuesday.

MATT: An interview! That sounds promising.

(SFX: DOOR CLOSES.)

THE END.