

DECEPTIVE VOWS
An original screenplay
by
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FADE IN:

INT. INSIDE A WOMAN'S PRISON - DAY

PATRICIA sits in her prison cell staring into space. GUARD #1 approaches Patricia's cell and opens it up. The Guard stands there with the cell door open as if to wait for Patricia to walk out.

GUARD #1

Patricia it is time for your therapy session. All the other ladies and the Doctor are already there waiting for you.

PATRICIA

I told you all I don't need no therapy!

GUARD #1

Patricia I don't want to argue with you about this everyday. Now you know that this is mandatory, so if you ever plan on getting out of here I suggest you go to your meetings peacefully.

PATRICIA

(with an attitude)

Fine, I will go to the stupid session!

Patricia gets up and storms out of her cell.

INT. A CLASSROOM INSIDE THE PRISON - DAY

Guard #1 escorts Patricia to the only remaining seat in the class. There are approximately ten women sitting at a group of tables that were brought together. At the head of the table is a gentleman peering over his glasses. The gentleman's name is DR. MORGAN. CAROL WITHERSPOON and SHARON WALKER are two of the ten other female inmates in the classroom.

DR. MORGAN

Patricia we are all glad you were able to make it.

PATRICIA

(mumbles, but audibly)

Yeah right.

GUARD #1
Excuse me young lady, what did you say?

PATRICIA
I was just saying. . .

GUARD #1
(cuts Patricia off)
Don't you start no shit in here because I will lock your ass down!

DR. MORGAN
That's okay, I will handle it from here. I think she will be all right now

Guard #1 backs up and stands with the other guards.

DR. MORGAN
Actually you all can leave. I am sure I will be fine here alone with them.

GUARD #1
But Doctor Morgan you. . . .

DR. MORGAN
I said I will be fine!

The four guards leave.

DR. MORGAN
(flips through his papers)
Okay it looks like we are up to you Carol Witherspoon. Remember we are all like friends and family here. No matter what happens outside these walls, we are family here. The thing that connects all of you is your past. Now I want you to remember we are not here to judge each other. We are here to help one another. In a way I guess you help each other out by sharing your experiences. Having said all that, we will start with Carol and work our way around the table.

Carol pulls the box of tissues next to her as tears well up in her eyes.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Well, I have told my story so many times before, but it still hurts. I will say that the sessions have helped me a lot. That is actually why I came back to the sessions. I feel a certain freedom to express what happened to me. Anyway, I will try to make this short. My name is Carol Witherspoon and I am here because I killed my abusive husband John.

SHARON WALKER

(rubs Carol's back)

It's okay Carol.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

One night he came in drunk and started beating me. I was used to the beatings but that night he attacked my son. I just flipped out. I went to my son's room and got his Louisville Slugger bat and beat my husband John to death with it.

DR. MORGAN

Are you okay Carol? Are you sure you want to go on?

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Actually that is pretty much the whole story. The police came and arrested me. The question a lot of people ask is, "Why did you stay in your abusive relationship for five years?" I had four kids to think about. I kept asking myself, where would I go? How would I provide for them when I never had to work before?

DR. MORGAN

Believe me, I know the situations can become very complicated. Most women don't really see a way out of their situation. The question is: how do we stop this vicious cycle of violence from continually occurring? We know who, what, where, how and why it occurs, but we do not know how to stop it.

SHARON WALKER

Well in my case my husband just wouldn't let me go. He just kept on stalking me. I tried everything to escape him. I mean I even moved countless times. No matter where I went he would find me. Hell a restraining order is not even worth the ink and paper it uses. By the time the police got there he was always long gone, and there was no way to prove he harassed me. I blame the judicial system for not doing enough.

DR. MORGAN

(writing notes)

So you all believe the judicial system fails to do enough to stop this problem, right?

SHARON WALKER

Yeah I do. One time my husband punched me in the eye. I had a black eye, which was swollen almost shut. Sacramento's finest came and took my husband away for assault and battery. Would you believe he was back out in less than seventy-two hours? I got sick of the abuse and left him. As I said before he refused to let me live in peace even after I moved away from him.

Sharon pauses to wipe her tears.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

It's okay Sharon you can do this. Just let it go girl.

SHARON WALKER

I moved back with him and poisoned him to death. It was called premeditated murder. Sad thing was I didn't regret killing him. I knew he would never stalk or abuse me again. I have done ten years now and I still don't regret killing him. I just regret doing time for it. By the way I didn't say my name. I am Sharon Walker.

DR. MORGAN

Thank you for sharing your story with us Sharon, and you too Carol. Your stories were remarkable and powerful. Okay, it looks like we have time for one more story. Patricia we are up to you.

PATRICIA

I pass!

DR. MORGAN

Are you sure you want to pass?

PATRICIA

Yes I am sure! I don't have anything to say!

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Ladies, you are not going to help your situation by holding on to the pain you feel. You will feel a lot better if you let it go.

PATRICIA

Will you all just leave me alone? I said I don't want to do this. Why can't you fucking people understand that?

SHARON WALKER

Patricia you don't know how . . .

DR. MORGAN

(cuts Sharon off)

Remember what I told you all? We are not here to judge each other. If she doesn't feel like talking she does not have to. We can not force anyone here to talk.

SHARON WALKER

(with an attitude)

Fine, it is her life!

Patricia jumps across the table and grabs Sharon.

PATRICIA

You don't even know me bitch!

Several women try to pull the two ladies apart. Suddenly, about ten prison guards rush into the room and separate Patricia and Sharon.

They put some sort of cuffs or wrist restraints on Patricia and Sharon and escort both of them out.

GUARD #1

So Dr. Morgan, now you see why we stay in here.

DR. MORGAN

(looking puzzled)

Well this is the first time this has ever happened.

GUARD #1

Effective immediately, today's session is now officially closed. So ladies let's move out.

DR. MORGAN

Okay ladies, you heard. Hopefully we can continue this session tomorrow.

GUARD #1

I wouldn't bet on it!

INT. PATRICIA'S CELL - NIGHT

Patricia is having a nightmare as she lies in her bed. She twists and turns violently and she is sweating profusely.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANDRE AND PATRICIA'S HOME - ONE YEAR EARLIER- DAY

ANDRE ROBINSON, Patricia's husband, walks towards her with a mean expression. He has both fists balled up. Patricia begins to back up slowly, but ends up in a corner. Her husband grabs her by the throat with his left hand, pins her against the wall and begins beating her violently with his right hand.

INT. PATRICIA'S CELL - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Patricia begins to scream out loudly. Her cries break the night's silence.

PATRICIA

No Andre! No Andre! I'll do whatever you want!

An INMATE, who is Patricia's cell mate can be heard shouting at Patricia.

INMATE

Girl what the hell is wrong with you? Are you crazy or something?

Patricia awakens from her nightmare. She sits straight up like a dead person arising and begins breathing heavily.

GUARD #2 (O.S.)

Cell Block "C" ladies keep it down!

INMATE

That bitch is crazy!

GUARD #2 (O.S.)

I said keep it down! If I have to come in there somebody is going to the hole!

INT. DR. MORGAN'S OFFICE - MORNING

A guard brings Patricia to Dr. Morgan's office. This time she has on the wrist restraints and shackles.

GUARD #1

Here she is Dr. Morgan. You should be okay with her this time.

DR. MORGAN

(Straightening his desk)

Please take the restraints off of her.

GUARD #1

Are you sure? It's sort of against policy.

DR. MORGAN

I am positive.

Guard #1 starts to unshackle Patricia but then puts them back on.

GUARD #1

Doctor I think I better leave them on.

DR. MORGAN

I really don't think they will be necessary.

GUARD #1

Sorry Doctor Morgan, but It's for your own safety.

(MORE)

GUARD #1 (cont'd)

I'll be right outside in case you
have any problems with her. As for
you young lady, don't you dare
start no shit in here!

The guard turns and walks outside. Patricia sucks her teeth
and flips off the guard once the guard turns her back to walk
out.

DR. MORGAN

Hello Patricia.

Patricia does not respond, but she does look around the room.
She then looks down at a picture that is sitting on Dr.
Morgan's desk. The picture is of Dr. Morgan, his wife, his
daughter and his son.

DR. MORGAN

As I said in the session, nobody is
going to force you to talk about
your story, and if you don't want
to talk about what happened to you,
that is fine.

PATRICIA

(picks up a picture)
Is this your family?

DR. MORGAN

Yes it is. That is my wife Julie,
my son Jerry and my daughter
Cheryl. Why do you ask?

PATRICIA

I was just curious.

DR. MORGAN

Patricia I want to get straight to
the point. I brought you here to
tell you that I may have to release
you from the sessions. I simply
cannot let one person destroy this
program. There has been too much
success here with the program.

PATRICIA

You know that I will be stuck in
this hell hole longer, right?

DR. MORGAN

I don't have anything to do with
that.

PATRICIA

What do they want from me? I don't want to tell my damn story! I just want to forget about it.

DR. MORGAN

Unfortunately that is not what the state wants. They feel there has to be some sort of rehabilitation for any woman that has gone through what you went through. They mandate this program and frankly I agree with them.

PATRICIA

Okay fine! I will go through the session, but I do not want to do it with the other inmates.

DR. MORGAN

Is that what this is all about? You don't want to do this with the other inmates?

PATRICIA

I really don't want to do it at all, but if I have to do it, I would rather not do it with them.

DR. MORGAN

So basically you would like to have private sessions, right?

PATRICIA

Yes, that is exactly what I want.

DR. MORGAN

I will see what I can do. Now I am not going to make any guarantees, but I will see what I can do. Now if I do this for you, you are going to have to promise me that there will be no more outbursts.

PATRICIA

Don't worry Dr. Morgan. If you can do this you won't have any more problems out of me.

DR. MORGAN

Okay Patricia. I will see you on Friday to let you know what happens.

(MORE)

DR. MORGAN (cont'd)
Keep in mind that this is our last
ditch effort to rehabilitate you
and get you through this state
mandated program.

PATRICIA
Okay Dr. Morgan. I have one more
question.

DR. MORGAN
What is it Patricia?

PATRICIA
How old is your baby?

DR. MORGAN
He is about eighteen months old
now, why?

PATRICIA
I just wanted to know. . . Anyway I
will see you Friday.

INT. THE PRISON CAFETERIA - AFTERNOON

Patricia is sitting at the table all by herself. Carol
Witherspoon approaches with a tray of food.

CAROL WITHERSPOON
Do you mind if I sit here?

PATRICIA
No.

CAROL WITHERSPOON
(With a puzzled look)
No to sitting down here or no you
don't mind?

PATRICIA
No I do not mind if you sit here.
You're Carol, right?

CAROL WITHERSPOON
Yeah that's me.

PATRICIA
Well I am sure you probably know me
already, but my name is. . .

CAROL WITHERSPOON
Patricia.

PATRICIA

I told you.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Anyway, I just want to cut through the chase and ask you what your problem is.

PATRICIA

I don't know what you are talking about.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Oh I think you do.

PATRICIA

Look, I just do not believe that they can help me. Shit, do you think anyone gives a damn about what happened to us?

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Maybe they do and maybe they don't, but we are going to have to trust somebody, right?

PATRICIA

To tell the truth I just want to forget about it. It hurts so bad and I do not want to keep re-living it over and over.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

So do you think holding it all in is going to make the pain go away?

PATRICIA

I don't know. All I know is that I am confused.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Do you think you are the only woman that has gone through this shit? Every last woman in the program has a story to tell. Some of the stories are different, and some of the stories sound very much alike, but they all have terrifying stories to tell.

PATRICIA

Yeah I know. I heard your story and it sent chills up and down my spine.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

I am sure your story is just as terrifying.

PATRICIA

I don't know, I guess so.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Well I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to feel ashamed of what you did. What it all comes down to is you were protecting yourself. Shit it was you or him.

PATRICIA

Yeah he definitely would have killed me. I am sure of that.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

I want you to know that I tried to bottle up the rage inside myself. It began to tear me apart from the inside out. I even thought about ending it all. I did not get any relief until I told my story. Now I feel like I can help other women get through the pain. Trust me Patricia, you will feel so much better if you just let it go.

PATRICIA

I am sorry, but I guess I am just not like the rest of you. It does not make me feel any better to talk about what happened to me. In fact I think it makes me feel worse. I tried going to one of these programs when my husband first started beating me. Some of the women in that program were beaten half to death. I had terrible nightmares for weeks. After that I just never wanted to go into any programs.

GUARD #2

Okay you two Princesses, you need to hurry up so the next group can come in and eat.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Okay Patricia, I guess I will talk to you later.

PATRICIA
(dumps her tray)
Okay, take it easy. Which Cell
Block are you in?

CAROL WITHERSPOON
I'm in Cell Block "C."

PATRICIA
Okay I will see you later Carol.
I'm in "C" too.

CAROL WITHERSPOON
That's cool. Remember to stay
strong girl

PATRICIA
Oh I will.

INT. DR. MORGAN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Patricia has a conversation with Dr. Morgan. It seems
Patricia has finally come around to tell her story.

DR. MORGAN
Okay Patricia you wanted private
sessions so here we are.

PATRICIA
I actually changed my mind about
that.

DR. MORGAN
What do you mean you changed your
mind? I had to pull a lot of
strings to get you these sessions.
I don't have time for games. Now I
have quite a few women in here who
really do want my help. So what is
it going to be Patricia, do you
want my help or not?

PATRICIA
Yes Dr. Morgan I want your help. In
fact I am ready to tell my story.

DR. MORGAN
That's really great news Patricia.
What changed your mind if I may
ask?

PATRICIA

Well basically I had time to think about what you and some of the girls in the program were saying. If I can just stop one woman from going through the hell I have been through it would help me get through this.

DR. MORGAN

I am sure it would help you with the healing process too. (Looks at his watch) Well there is a group session in two hours; do you want to tell your story to me or the group?

PATRICIA

I will tell it to you first. I think it will help prepare me to tell it to the group. I guess you can call this a practice session.

DR. MORGAN

Okay Patricia that sounds like a good idea. Do you mind if I tape the session?

PATRICIA

No I don't mind.

DR. MORGAN

Are you comfortable?

PATRICIA

Yeah I'm fine. I just want to get this over with.

Dr. Morgan pushes the record button on the tape recorder and speaks into the microphone.

DR. MORGAN

I am Doctor Morgan from Hanford Women's Correctional Facility. It is the sixteenth day of November nineteen ninety-two. The time is zero eight hundred hours. I am interviewing Patricia Robinson, a victim of domestic violence, who is doing time here for killing her husband.

He gives Patricia the thumbs up sign to signify the start of the session to Patricia.

PATRICIA

Well my name is Patricia Robinson and I am serving time here for killing my husband like Doctor Morgan said. I decided to tell my story in hopes it will start the healing process and I figure it might help other domestic violence victims. So I guess I will start from the beginning and tell the whole story. It all started back about two years ago. . .

Patricia stares straight ahead. We fade out on Patricia and flash back to that summer and the events leading to that fatal confrontation with her husband.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Patricia and her two best friends, YVETTE and VANESSA, are sitting at a restaurant table outside eating lunch and talking.

PATRICIA

Yvette how is your husband?

YVETTE

Oh he's doing fine.

VANESSA

You hanging out with us tonight too?

YVETTE

I have to see if my husband has something planned.

PATRICIA

Damn girl when is the last time you "rolled" with us?

YVETTE

About two or three weeks ago, why?

PATRICIA

You used to hang with us more often before.

YVETTE

Well I am married you know, so I can't always hang with you guys. You two are single.

PATRICIA

That's right and ready to mingle!

YVETTE

Oh really? When is the last time you had a date Patricia?

PATRICIA

It has been a while but I'm cool with that. Shit I need to find me a strong man.

VANESSA

There are plenty of strong men out there.

YVETTE

I guess she needs a "thug in her life."

PATRICIA

No not a thug, just a strong man.

YVETTE

She always attracts those weird ones though.

PATRICIA

They haven't really been weird, just a little different.

YVETTE

Whatever! Girl I keep telling you that if you don't loosen up you are going to die single.

VANESSA

Why do we always end up arguing about our men or lack thereof?

YVETTE

I don't know you two usually like to start this mess.

VANESSA

Anyway, you still going to the movies with us later?

YVETTE

Yeah I guess so, what time did you say it starts?

VANESSA

(Looks at her watch)
Well it looks like we got about two hours for the next show.

PATRICIA

Then we better get moving because I need to get some shopping done.

VANESSA

Girl we have two hours. Besides I thought the plan was for us to go shopping after the movie so we wouldn't have to rush.

YVETTE

How much time do you think I have out here? I have to get back to my husband.

PATRICIA

Why? He isn't going anywhere. He'll be home when you get there. Then again maybe not.

YVETTE

(takes out her phone)
You two are tripping but I will tell you what I am going to do. I will call Roger right now.

Patricia and Vanessa look at each other and shake their heads. Yvette can be heard talking in the background.

PATRICIA

So what did he say?

YVETTE

(Closing her flip phone)
He said I could hang with you guys this afternoon but he does have plans for me this evening. Satisfied?

VANESSA

What I need to know is where are we going when we leave here?

PATRICIA

Well we can just do some light shopping. We'll go to the movies and then we can call it a day. How is that?

YVETTE

It sounds good to me. How about you
Vanessa? You down with that?

VANESSA

Yeah I am cool with that.

YVETTE

Okay well let's bounce.

INT. ANDRE ROBINSON'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Andre Robinson is lying in his bed sleeping. He is obviously having a dream or nightmare. We fade out on Andre and fade into his dream.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANDRE ROBINSON'S CHILDHOOD HOME - EVENING

It is now twenty years earlier. Andre is a twelve-year-old boy. He is under a kitchen table crying and trembling as he watches his father beat his mother.

He darts from under the table and grabs his father by the leg and tries to bring him down. His father knocks him down and stands over him with his fists balled up. Andre's POV: His father bends down towards him and reaches out to grab him.

INT. ANDRE ROBINSON'S APARTMENT (PRESENT) - THAT MORNING

Suddenly Andre wakes up. He is breathing hard and is soaked with sweat. His alarm clock is ringing. He takes his pillow and throws it clear across his room. He gets up and starts throwing things and tearing things apart in his room in a fit of rage.

INT. PATRICIA'S PARENTS' HOME - MORNING

Patricia has breakfast with her mother DONNA and her father CHARLES. They have a conversation as Donna sets the food on the table and Charles reads the newspaper.

CHARLES

(Puts down the newspaper)
Smells good baby.

DONNA

Thanks honey.

PATRICIA

Daddy you are going to be late
again.

CHARLES

(Looks at his watch)
Actually I'm doing pretty well this morning.

DONNA

That's certainly good news.

CHARLES

Honey I haven't been late all week.

DONNA

Yeah but you were late twice last week.

CHARLES

By the way I may be working late this evening. I need to catch up on some work.

DONNA

Okay I guess your dinner will be in the refrigerator.

PATRICIA

I am going over to Vanessa's house right after work so I won't be home either.

DONNA

How is she doing?

PATRICIA

Oh her and Yvette are both fine.

DONNA

It's hard to believe you three have been friends for so long. It's been what, about twelve or thirteen years?

PATRICIA

Actually it's been more like fifteen years because I have known them since we moved to The Bay Area.

CHARLES

That's right you were ten years old.

DONNA

How is Yvette's husband doing? Last I heard he was worried about getting laid off.

PATRICIA

Roger is doing fine but he's still worried.

CHARLES

That is certainly some bad news. I sure hope things work out for him. I been there before and it ain't no fun.

PATRICIA

Tell me about it.

DONNA

So what about you Patricia, still nobody special in your life?

PATRICIA

No, not yet.

CHARLES

Good she needs to stay focused.

DONNA

Honey she is twenty-five years old. We can't expect her to stay single for the rest of her life. I mean don't you want some grand kids?

CHARLES

Yeah I guess that would be nice at some point if she can find the right man.

DONNA

(Pats Patricia's back)

Don't worry Patricia, you will meet "Mr. Right."

PATRICIA

Oh I am not worried momma.

INT. AN OFFICE CUBICLE AT PATRICIA'S JOB - MORNING

Patricia is at her job sitting at her desk in an office cubicle. Andre comes in to repair her computer.

ANDRE
(Peaks in her cubicle)
Hello

PATRICIA
May I help you?

ANDRE
I am the Computer Repair
Technician, your receptionist sent
me back here.

PATRICIA
Oh come on in. (Pause) It's this
computer right here.

As Andre bends down to take a look at the computer, Patricia takes his Identification badge, which is hanging around his neck, and pulls it closer to examine it.

PATRICIA
(Somewhat flirtatious)
Andre Robinson. That's a nice name.
I like that.

ANDRE
Thank you.

PATRICIA
(Holds out her hand)
Oh I'm sorry, I am Patricia
Campbell.

ANDRE
(Shakes her hand)
Hello Patricia Campbell.

PATRICIA
Well let me get out of your way so
you can do your job. You need
anything?

ANDRE
No I'm okay. By the way you're not
in my way.

PATRICIA
I need to take a break anyway. I
will be in the break room if you
need me or you can just ask anyone
from the office.

ANDRE

You all have coffee back there right?

PATRICIA

Yeah we sure do, you want some?

ANDRE

Yes I could use a cup or two.

PATRICIA

Okay I will go get you a cup.

ANDRE

That's okay; I shouldn't be too long here. I will head back there after I finish.

PATRICIA

Then maybe I will see you back there, but if not, you have a good day.

ANDRE

You too, it was nice meeting you.

INT. THE OFFICE BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Patricia is sitting at the table having a donut and coffee. Andre does show up a few minutes later. Patricia's eyes light up like a deer in headlights.

PATRICIA

Oh you made it back. Help yourself. I made fresh coffee and there are some donuts on the table.

ANDRE

(Pouring coffee)
Thanks.

PATRICIA

So did you find out what was wrong with my computer?

ANDRE

Yeah and I actually took care of it. It's working fine now.

PATRICIA

So how long have you been doing that?

ANDRE

(Sips coffee)

About four or five years. What about you, how long have you been here?

PATRICIA

I don't know, about two years or so.

ANDRE

(looks at his watch)

I guess I better take this with me. I need to get going. (Pulls a business card out) Here is my card. Feel free to call me.

PATRICIA

(Takes the card)

Can I ask you a somewhat funny question?

ANDRE

Go ahead.

PATRICIA

Would I be calling you for business or pleasure?

ANDRE

Well I will put it this way. You can call me anytime. That's if you're single of course. I mean I didn't see a ring so I hope I am not being too forward.

PATRICIA

No you're not being too forward. I will give you a call, of course if you are really single and I am not going to get cussed out by some woman if I call.

Andre laughs and shakes his head.

ANDRE

Don't worry you won't get cussed out. I am really single. I wouldn't give you my number if I weren't.

PATRICIA

That's definitely hard to believe. You are attractive and you seem to be a nice guy.

ANDRE

But it is true I am single.

PATRICIA

Okay I guess I will have to believe you. When is a good time to call?

ANDRE

I should be settled in around eight or nine.

PATRICIA

I will call at nine.

ANDRE

That's cool; I look forward to talking to you.

EXT. PATRICIA'S HOME - SEVERAL DAYS LATER - EVENING

Patricia is getting ready to go on a date with Andre. Her parents notice how bubbly she is. She is singing and dancing around the house.

CHARLES

Okay Patricia, tell us what's going on.

PATRICIA

Nothing is going on daddy, why you asking me that?

CHARLES

Well you have been dancing around here like you won the Lottery.

PATRICIA

I just have been in a good mood that's all.

DONNA

Yeah right Patricia, tell us all about him. I have seen that look before and it's definitely because you met somebody.

PATRICIA

(Rolls her eyes, sighs)
It's just a guy named Andre I met on the job last week.

DONNA

You met him last week and. . .
Continue Patricia.

PATRICIA

I met him and he seems to be a nice guy.

CHARLES

Yeah they all seem nice at first!

DONNA

When do we get to meet him?

PATRICIA

Mom I don't know. Let me get to know him first, I just met him myself.

CHARLES

What does he do, does he work with you?

PATRICIA

No he works on computers. He is some sort of Computer Technician I think. He came to my office to repair my computer.

CHARLES

(Opens a Newspaper)
A Computer Technician? I like this guy already! I would really love to meet this guy Patricia.

PATRICIA

(Mumbles but audibly)
Yeah I bet you would.

CHARLES

What did you say?

PATRICIA

Oh I was just talking to myself.

CHARLES

Watch it young lady.

PATRICIA

(Puts on her sweater)
Well I am getting ready to head over to Andre's house.

DONNA

Are you coming back home?

PATRICIA

Mom!

DONNA

What?

PATRICIA

Of course I'm coming back home.

DONNA

What time should we expect you?

PATRICIA

I should be home by eleven.

DONNA

At least tell us where he lives.
Hell this guy could be a damn
Serial killer or ax murderer for
all you know!

PATRICIA

I doubt it! Could you two just
relax? I will be fine. It's not
like it's my first date.

DONNA

(Throws her hands up)
Okay Patricia, have a good time.

INT. A RESTAURANT - EVENING

Patricia walks into a very nice and romantic restaurant with Andre. A WAITRESS leads them to their table. The tables have lit candles and there is also a fireplace flickering in the background. The sounds of soft music can be heard playing in the background.

WAITRESS

(Hands them their menus)
Can I get you two anything while
you check out your menus?

PATRICIA

I will just have some diet seven-
up.

WAITRESS

How about you sir?

ANDRE

I'll have a glass of Champagne.

WAITRESS

Okay I will get that for you right
away.

The waitress leaves.

PATRICIA

So tell me something about yourself
Andre.

ANDRE

What do you want to know?

PATRICIA

Everything about you I guess.

The Waitress comes back and gives Andre and Patricia their drinks.

WAITRESS

(Sets the drinks down)
Are you folks ready to order?

ANDRE

Go ahead Patricia.

PATRICIA

I'll have the steak and lobster
special.

WAITRESS

(Writing on a pad)
How would you like your steak
cooked?

PATRICIA

I would like it well done.

WAITRESS

Would you like a baked potato or
wedges?

PATRICIA

I think I'll have the wedges with
your Caesar's salad.

WAITRESS

Okay and you sir?

ANDRE

I'll have the Honey Barbecued Ribs,
a baked potato and Cole Slaw.

WAITRESS

(Collects the menus)
Okay I'll be back shortly.

The Waitress walks away.

ANDRE

Patricia you haven't even said whether you like this place or not. I mean I went out of my way to get this place for us.

PATRICIA

Oh I'm sorry. (Pauses, looks around) It's real nice and romantic in here. I like it a lot. Believe me I appreciate this. It's a great first date that's for sure. If you are trying to win me over and impress me, you certainly are well on your way.

ANDRE

Good because we're going Dutch.

PATRICIA

We're doing what?

ANDRE

Got you!

PATRICIA

(Punches Andre's arm)
Andre, that's not funny!

ANDRE

(Laughs)
I wouldn't do that to you.

PATRICIA

I would hope not! Just look at the prices on this menu.

ANDRE

So you want me to tell you about myself right?

PATRICIA

Yes I do.

ANDRE

Well gee where do I begin? I mean my life would be a best seller if it ever became a book. It would be called, "The Trials and Tribulations of Andre Robinson."

PATRICIA

Oh really?

ANDRE

Yeah I think so. You see I actually came from a broken family.

PATRICIA

I'm sorry Andre I didn't mean to spoil the mood.

ANDRE

That's okay, I don't mind talking about it. I am well over it now.

PATRICIA

You sure? We can change the subject if you want.

ANDRE

Patricia I know it's early in this relationship or whatever you want to call it, but I feel comfortable with you. I feel fine telling you about my life.

PATRICIA

Well I kind of feel comfortable with you too which is unusual for me so soon. Anyway, since you feel okay talking to me, I'm all ears.

ANDRE

Hold on, here comes the food.

The Waitress comes back and sits Patricia and Andre's food on their table.

WAITRESS

Is there anything else I can get you folks?

PATRICIA

Not me, I'm fine.

ANDRE

Maybe some more dinner rolls and some more Champagne.

WAITRESS

Okay sir I will get that for you.

The waitress leaves.

ANDRE

Let me see, where should I begin?
Well basically I had a real rough
childhood. (Pause) Look I don't
know if this is a good time or
place to talk to you about this.

PATRICIA

Why?

ANDRE

It might spoil the mood.

PATRICIA

Oh come on Andre just tell me! You
said you was okay with it.

The Waitress comes back and places the dinner rolls and
champagne on the table.

WAITRESS

Can I get you folks anything else?

PATRICIA

No, we're fine!

The waitress is startled and jumps.

WAITRESS

Okay enjoy your meal.

The Waitress walks away rather quickly.

ANDRE

Patricia!

PATRICIA

What! I'm all ready to hear your
story but the damn Waitress keeps
coming back and interrupting you. I
want to hear what happened to you.
The Anticipation is killing me!

ANDRE

Well actually many kids go through
what I went through. Basically I
grew up watching my father abuse my
mother. He later started abusing me
too.

PATRICIA

That's terrible.

ANDRE

My mother finally fled with us after she couldn't take it any more. I never saw my father again and it's been over twenty-five years.

PATRICIA

So your mother raised you?

ANDRE

Yeah. We struggled to make ends meet but she always managed to keep a positive attitude and keep us focused.

PATRICIA

You have any brothers and sisters?

ANDRE

I have an older brother in Oregon and a younger sister in Los Angeles.

PATRICIA

You all stay in touch?

ANDRE

Yeah we call each other and visit each other sometimes.

PATRICIA

How's your mother? Is she okay?

ANDRE

She died a couple of years ago. She had a massive heart attack.

PATRICIA

Okay Andre, you don't have to go any further.

ANDRE

Oh I'm fine. Actually telling my story is somewhat therapeutic for me.

PATRICIA

Have you ever been married?

ANDRE

Yes I have, twice.

PATRICIA

You've been married two times?
You're only thirty-two so what
happened?

ANDRE

I guess I just wasn't ready to be
married.

PATRICIA

(jokingly)
You didn't kill them did you?

ANDRE

(Laughs)
No they're both alive.

PATRICIA

You have any kids?

ANDRE

No.

PATRICIA

Thirty-two with no kids or is it no
kids you know of?

ANDRE

No kids period and you?

PATRICIA

Nope I don't have any kids either.
No "baby mama drama" here.

ANDRE

That's cool. (Pause) So you don't
have a man in your life?

PATRICIA

No I have been single for about
three months, how about you?

ANDRE

Well I definitely don't have a man
in my life.

PATRICIA

(Laughs)
You know what I mean!

ANDRE

No I am single right now. (Pause)
So tell me a little more about
yourself.

PATRICIA
Oh Andre, maybe next time.

ANDRE
Girl you know you are wrong for
that!

PATRICIA
I know but I promise I will tell
you next time.

ANDRE
So you are saying there is going to
be a next time?

PATRICIA
Yeah I think so.

ANDRE
You ready to go dancing?

PATRICIA
Sure, where are we going?

ANDRE
I know you ain't thirty plus but I
like that club downtown. It's
really not to far from here either.

PATRICIA
Which club?

ANDRE
It's called Club Spice.

PATRICIA
I've heard of that club. I hear
it's pretty nice.

ANDRE
I'm sure we'll have fun.

PATRICIA
(Looks at her watch)
It's still kind of early.

ANDRE
Want to check out a movie?

PATRICIA
Yeah what do you want to see?

ANDRE
Let's go see "A Cop's Justice."

PATRICIA

That's the new action flick with Lucy Liu right?

ANDRE

Yeah it's supposed to be tight. I mean it got great reviews and the previews looked real good.

PATRICIA

Okay we can check it out. I like action flicks.

ANDRE

Good I like you already. I thought you might want to see that movie called "The Lost Love Diaries." I'm sorry but I just can't get into them "Chick Flicks." They bore me. I like to see someone get shot, stabbed or beat down.

PATRICIA

(Laughs)

You're crazy Andre. I can tell that already. Actually I do like love stories and Soap Operas but I happen to like action flicks too.

ANDRE

I hope you like to dance too.

PATRICIA

Oh I love to dance.

ANDRE

(Looks under the table)

It's a good thing you wore flat shoes.

PATRICIA

These are sort of my "do anything in" shoes. They look nice but they don't have a big-ass heel.

ANDRE

You'll be glad you wore them by the time I get finished with you, trust me on that.

PATRICIA

Is that so? I guess we'll see about that because I can get down on the dance floor.

ANDRE

Okay well let's get going. I guess we will both be "cutting a rug."

INT. CLUB SPICE'S DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Patricia and Andre are on the dance floor of Club Spice. Flashing and blinking lights illuminate the dance floor. Patricia is clearly the better dancer and is wearing Andre out. Other people on the dance floor stop and watch as a small crowd forms around them. Andre, clearly out-done and embarrassed, grabs Patricia by the arm and leads her back to the table.

INT. ANDRE'S CAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Andre appears to be exhausted. He rolls down his window and leans his car seat back to a reclining position.

ANDRE

Girl I should have known you would have all that damn energy.

PATRICIA

You sure should have, perhaps before you started running your mouth.

ANDRE

I guess those seven years I have on you caught up to me on the dance floor.

PATRICIA

Oh now it's an age thing right?

ANDRE

Yeah it looks that way. Hell if I was seven years younger they would be taken you out of here on a stretcher.

PATRICIA

(Looks at her watch)

Well Andre I had a good time but it's starting to get late. I better be getting back home.

ANDRE

(Re-adjusts his seat)

Okay Patricia I'll take you home. I mean I would hate to see your parents send a Posse out after me.

PATRICIA
I see you got jokes Andre.

INT. PATRICIA'S OFFICE CUBICLE - MORNING

A CO-WORKER brings Patricia a beautiful bouquet of long-stemmed red roses. Balloons are also attached and float freely above the bouquet.

PATRICIA
Those are for me?

CO-WORKER
Yeah the Florist just brought them in. They're from some guy named Andre. (Pauses, hands Patricia a card) This card came with them.

PATRICIA
Wow I got a card too?

CO-WORKER
Yeah and the words are so sweet.

PATRICIA
How do you know that?

CO-WORKER
Whoa I better be getting back to work.

PATRICIA
Yeah right, maybe you better. Girl you better stop reading other folks' mail too.

CO-WORKER
I'm sorry! I was just curious. This is the first time I ever saw a guy send you anything since you been here.

PATRICIA
Your point?

CO-WORKER
Look I need to get back to work. Congratulations.

Patricia's Co-worker walks away rather quickly to avoid a confrontation. Patricia just shakes her head.

PATRICIA

(Mumbles)

Yeah bitch, you need to go get a life and stop worrying about everybody else's business you trifling hoe.

Patricia reads the card and a big smile comes over her face. She smells the roses and reads the balloons. The balloons read, "Just Thinking of You."

INT. PATRICIA'S HOUSE - EVENING - ONE MONTH LATER

Patricia is on the phone with Andre. She hangs up and Donna and Charles just look at her like she's crazy.

PATRICIA

What?

DONNA

Can we use the phone sometime too?

PATRICIA

I'm sorry, Andre and I got carried away I guess.

CHARLES

You have been spending an awful lot of time with this guy.

PATRICIA

Well he seems to be real nice and I am really starting to like him.

CHARLES

Oh boy here we go again!

DONNA

What are you talking about Charles, you seemed nice when I first met you too. (Laughs)

CHARLES

Honey that's not funny!

PATRICIA

(Laughs)

Yes it is. Mom just clowned you.

CHARLES

Okay we will just have to see how this goes.

(MORE)

CHARLES (cont'd)

I hope I am not the one that has to say, "I told you so." Lord knows this wouldn't be the first time.

DONNA

Honey you need to think more positively. Maybe this guy will be the one for Patricia. Let's just try to be a little more supportive.

EXT. A SAN FRANCISCO FERRY - AFTERNOON

Andre and Patricia are on a Ferry. There is a beautiful view of the Bay Area including the Bay Bridge. Andre is holding Patricia around her waste as he stands behind her. They both peer over the ferry security rails enjoying the scenery.

INT. ANDRE'S CAR - NIGHT

Andre and Patricia have a conversation inside Andre's car. The windows are steamed up. Andre starts rubbing Patricia's leg.

ANDRE

So would you like to come over for a while?

PATRICIA

(moves Andre's hand away)
I don't think that's such a good idea.

ANDRE

Why? We have been together for about two months and you have not seen the inside of my place.

PATRICIA

Maybe I can come by tomorrow Andre.

ANDRE

That's what you always say.

PATRICIA

Well why do you always ask when it's late at night? I don't want to just be a booty call.

ANDRE

(Starts the car)
Okay Patricia I can take you home... You sure you don't want to just stop in for a minute?

INT. ANDRE'S HOME - LATER THAT EVENING

Andre and Patricia are wrestling wildly on Andre's couch. It appears to be heated passion as they practically tear each other's clothes off.

PATRICIA
(Breathing heavily)
Andre wait a second.

ANDRE
What's wrong?

PATRICIA
You have one of those things?

ANDRE
Yeah I have one right here.

Andre and Patricia make wild and passionate love. Andre collapses on top of Patricia.

INT. ANDRE'S HOME - THE NEXT MORNING

Andre is in bed with Patricia. Andre tosses and turns as he has another one of his childhood nightmares. Patricia wakes him up. He jumps up and practically pushes her out the bed.

PATRICIA
Andre it's me!

Andre sits on the edge of the bed to get his bearings.

PATRICIA
You were having a nightmare.

ANDRE
Yeah it was the recurring dream I have about my father coming after me.

PATRICIA
It's okay baby I'm here with you.

ANDRE
I'll be okay. I deal with this shit all the time.

PATRICIA
You sure you'll be okay?

ANDRE
Yeah I am sure.

Andre glances over to his alarm clock.

ANDRE (CONT'D)
Oh damn! I'm late for work!

PATRICIA
Andre, today is Saturday.

ANDRE
Oh that's right.

PATRICIA
You hungry?

ANDRE
Yeah why?

PATRICIA
Want to go to breakfast?

ANDRE
Why? I can make breakfast right here.

PATRICIA
Really?

ANDRE
Sure. Let's get a shower and then I will hook you up with a nice breakfast.

PATRICIA
Sounds good to me but let me call my folks to let them know where I am.

ANDRE
(Shakes his head)
Damn girl, again?

PATRICIA
Why do you get an attitude every time I call my parents or my girlfriends?

ANDRE
Patricia let's not spoil our time together. Please don't go there.

PATRICIA
What are you talking about?

ANDRE

Well you are not a sixteen year old but you are constantly calling your folks whenever we go out.

PATRICIA

Andre they are my parents and they worry about me. Especially when a guy they have yet to meet keeps me out all night.

ANDRE

Patricia that's bullshit! They don't need to know your every move.

PATRICIA

Why are we even arguing about this? It's not a subject for discussion. Now can I use your phone or not?

Andre takes the phone and sort of throws the phone towards Patricia.

ANDRE

Here's the damn phone!

PATRICIA

What the hell is your problem?

ANDRE

Don't ask me what my fucking problem is Patricia! I Just told you what my problem is.

Patricia slams down the phone and gets up to leave. She starts gathering her stuff as Andre stands in front of her to block her departure. Andre then grabs Patricia's right arm.

PATRICIA

(Pulls away from Andre)
Andre move!

ANDRE

Look Patricia, I am sorry. I guess I woke up on the wrong side of the bed. Can we start this over?

PATRICIA

Don't talk to me like that! I am not some slut from the hood.

ANDRE

I told you I am sorry now what do want from me?

PATRICIA

Just take me home Andre!

ANDRE

Fine I'll take you home! (Pause)
Better yet why don't you take the
bus or tell your parents to come
get you.

They pause momentarily as if to cool off. Andre puts his arms around Patricia and pulls her close to him. Patricia resists him at first but then gives in and wraps her arms around him. They both sit on the bed holding hands.

PATRICIA

Gee what was that all about? I mean
last night was so beautiful and
then we wake up ready to kill each
other.

ANDRE

I guess it's because I'm falling
for you and I am afraid.

PATRICIA

What are you afraid of Andre?

ANDRE

Well it just seems that everyone I
get close to either leaves me or
dies.

PATRICIA

That's not your fault. There is
absolutely nothing you can do about
what happened to you in the past.
At some point you will have to get
on with your life.

ANDRE

Yeah I know. Sometimes that is
easier said than done. (Pause) So
how about that breakfast, you still
hungry?

PATRICIA

Sure! Actually I'm starving.

ANDRE

Good, then I know you will enjoy my
cooking.

PATRICIA

By the way Andre I have strong feelings for you too. I was afraid to let you know because I thought it was kind of early in the relationship and I didn't want you to start treating me different.

ANDRE

(Hugs Patricia)

We're going to be okay baby.

EXT. SANTA CRUZ BEACH CALIFORNIA - AFTERNOON

Patricia, Yvette and Vanessa are sitting on the beach talking. The weather is very beautiful as children and families play in the sand and in the water.

PATRICIA

(Adjusting the umbrella)

I really like this guy.

VANESSA

We figured that much. Shit you done got worst than Yvette and you're not even married.

YVETTE

She might as well be married she practically lives with him.

PATRICIA

We still spend time together.

VANESSA

Yeah once in a blue moon.

PATRICIA

Look guys you know we will always be tight. We Just need to be supportive towards each other.

VANESSA

Yeah you have a point there but we have been friends for so long I guess we don't want any men coming between us.

PATRICIA

Well that hasn't happened to us so far. Yvette is married and you have been married before.

YVETTE

True.

VANESSA

You met our men whenever we were dating and you usually let us meet the men you were dating.

PATRICIA

What's your point Vanessa? Are you saying that because I haven't introduced Andre to you and Yvette?

VANESSA

Yeah that's why I am saying that.

PATRICIA

Don't worry you guys will get to meet him.

VANESSA

Every time you're out with us he calls you to come home. It seems like he doesn't want you with us.

PATRICIA

No it's not like that, he just likes to spend a lot of time with me.

VANESSA

Yeah right I bet.

Three well-built and attractive African-American men walk up to the girls. They are in their swim trunks. Their names are SEAN, RICK and BARRY.

SEAN

Hello ladies my name is Sean and these are my boys Rick and Barry. How are you all doing this fine day?

VANESSA

We're fine. What did you say your name is?

SEAN

I'm Sean and you?

VANESSA

I'm Vanessa and these are my best friends Yvette and Patricia.

RICK
So you all are just chilling?

PATRICIA
Yeah we're just relaxing.

BARRY
So what are you all up to? I mean
is it okay if we chill with you?

VANESSA
Sure have a seat.

YVETTE
(Whispers to Vanessa)
Why you being so fast girl?

VANESSA
Hey, ain't no rings on these
fingers. I can't help it If you two
are spoken for.

SEAN
Yeah, I guess we should have asked
if you all were spoken for. Not
that it matters now-a-days.

YVETTE
Well I am happily married and it
definitely matters to me.

BARRY
How about you two, you married?

VANESSA
Not me I am single with no kids.

PATRICIA
Well I am....

VANESSA
(Cuts Patricia off)
She's spoken for too. She ain't
married but she might as well be!

PATRICIA
Shut up Vanessa! You don't need to
talk for me.

EXT. SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK (CALIFORNIA) - AFTERNOON

Andre has followed Patricia and is on the beach boardwalk. He watches Patricia and her two friends through the coin operated public viewing binoculars.

ANDRE

Those two bitches! I don't want her
with them!

A lady who has a little girl looks at Andre strangely, pulls her child close to her and walks away rather quickly. Andre pulls out his cell phone and dials Patricia's cell phone number. He watches Patricia as she ignores her ringing cell phone. He shakes his head and storms away angrily.

ANDRE

I guess I am going to have to
straighten her ass out about them
two hos!

INT. PATRICIA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - AFTERNOON (4 MONTHS LATER)

Patricia, Vanessa and Yvette come into the house and flop on the couch. Patricia turns on the television with the remote.

PATRICIA

Can I get you guys anything?

VANESSA

Yeah I'll take some Champagne.

PATRICIA

How about you Yvette?

YVETTE

I'm cool.

Patricia pours Vanessa a glass of Champagne. She slightly leans across the table and uses her left hand to position herself. Her very noticeable engagement ring can now be seen.

VANESSA

Damn girl!

Patricia jumps and nearly spills the Champagne.

PATRICIA

What?

VANESSA

(Grabs Patricia's hand)
What the hell did you do to him? I
mean look at the rock on your
finger!

YVETTE

(Takes Patricia's hand)
Patricia you didn't.

PATRICIA

Yes I did. He proposed to me yesterday and I said yes. That's what I was going to talk to you all about.

VANESSA

Patricia you've only known that boy for what about three or four months?

PATRICIA

It's been six months "Ms. Know it all" and my man ain't no boy!

VANESSA

There she goes getting all defensive.

YVETTE

Patricia she's just saying that because her man acts like a boy.

VANESSA

Who the hell asked you? For your information my man doesn't act like no boy. In fact none of my men have acted like boys.

YVETTE

Well woopy-doo! None of them have been worth a shit either.

VANESSA

You're so funny, what about your husband?

YVETTE

What about him?

PATRICIA

Will you two stop acting like teenagers?

VANESSA

Well she started it.

YVETTE

I was just messing with you girl and I get you wired up every time.

PATRICIA

I was hoping to hear some good advice on marriage.

(MORE)

PATRICIA (cont'd)

It's not going to change my mind or anything but I thought I could get some advice from you guys.

VANESSA

Yvette should be able to help you there. She is married and she has always been the one able to hold on to her men the longest. I was only married once but you know it sure wasn't for long. I had to give that crazy fool the ax... Almost literally.

PATRICIA

Yvette that is true. You and Roger been together for a while now and you are the one always able to hang on to your men so school me girl.

YVETTE

Well there is no magic or secret recipe to a successful relationship or marriage. The fact is it is hard work. My relationship with Roger lasts because there is love, understanding, trust and respect. So if you're looking for a secret recipe there are your ingredients.

VANESSA

(Shakes her head)

Oh shit, I guess we got Doctor Ruth started!

PATRICIA

Vanessa shut up!

YVETTE

So you understand where I'm coming from Patricia?

PATRICIA

Yeah and I feel Andre and I have those ingredients.

VANESSA

Girl how the hell you know that after six months?

PATRICIA

Just trust me I know.

VANESSA

Girl please, I bet you don't even know his shoe size.

PATRICIA

Ten and a half hoe!

VANESSA

Damn he wears a size ten and a half? So does the shoe size thing apply to him?

YVETTE

What are you talking about girl?

PATRICIA

I know what she's talking about and it's none of her business.

YVETTE

So when do we get to meet this Andre? It's been six months and you're about to marry this guy.

VANESSA

Yeah that's true.

PATRICIA

(Reaches in her purse)
You all will get to meet him soon enough but meanwhile here's a picture of him.

Yvette takes the photo first.

YVETTE

This is him? Damn he's fine!

VANESSA

(Snatches the picture)
Let me check him out.

YVETTE

Vanessa!

VANESSA

He is fine. Does he have a brother?

PATRICIA

(Snatches the picture)
Yeah but he wouldn't want your ass!

VANESSA

No she didn't.

PATRICIA

I'm just kidding. His brother lives up in Oregon.

YVETTE

Hey Vanessa that ain't nothing but a short flight from here.

VANESSA

Sorry but I don't do the long distance thing.

PATRICIA

Girl you need to take what you can get and stop acting like you're all that.

YVETTE

So what did your parents say? I mean you did tell them right?

PATRICIA

They both think I lost it, but they're supposed to finally be meeting Andre on Friday.

VANESSA

I would love to be a fly on the wall.

YVETTE

Don't trip about that. Your parents will never feel you're ready to get married or be on your own. Especially fathers.

VANESSA

Shit my parents were glad to see my ass leave. I think they had a party when I left.

YVETTE

So you all haven't set a date yet?

PATRICIA

No not yet.

YVETTE

Well I guess a congratulations is in order.

PATRICIA

Thanks.

VANESSA
Yeah congratulations girl.

INT. PATRICIA'S PARENT'S HOME - EVENING

Charles and Donna impatiently await Andre's arrival. Charles reads the newspaper and Donna Prepares the meal.

CHARLES
(looks at his watch)
Honey I don't think they're going to show.

DONNA
Oh they'll be here. They probably got caught in traffic.

The front door opens and in comes Patricia and Andre. Andre is well dressed and well groomed and Patricia is looking very sexy.

DONNA
I told you.

They all just stand there looking at each other for a while.

PATRICIA
Oh I'm sorry, Andre this is my mother Donna and my father Charles. Mom dad this is Andre.

ANDRE
It's nice to finally meet you.

DONNA
You two have a seat. (Pause) Well Andre we have heard so much about you.

ANDRE
(Hugs Patricia)
I hope it was all good.

DONNA
In fact it has been all good.

CHARLES
So you plan on marrying my daughter right?

ANDRE
That's correct sir.

CHARLES
How old are you?

ANDRE
I'm thirty-two why?

CHARLES
I was just curious.

ANDRE
Look I'm sure you two have lots of questions for me, so feel free to ask me anything.

DONNA
Have you ever been married?

ANDRE
Yes I have, twice.

CHARLES
Twice?

ANDRE
Yes twice. That's not so unusual now a days is it?

CHARLES
What happened?

ANDRE
I guess I wasn't ready for marriage and commitment at that time but I know I am ready now.

CHARLES
So what do you do young man?

ANDRE
I trouble shoot and repair computers for companies.

DONNA
That sounds like a good career, how long have you been doing that?

ANDRE
About four years. I'd have to say it is a pretty good job. The technical fields really are doing good in the Bay Area right now. There's lots of money to be made.

CHARLES

What about your family?

ANDRE

Well I got an older brother in Oregon and a younger sister in Southern California and they're doing fine.

CHARLES

What about your parents, how are they?

ANDRE

I have not seen my father for many years and my mother Just died of a massive heart attack late last year.

DONNA

I am sorry Andre that's terrible. My husband didn't mean to open any old wounds.

PATRICIA

(Looks at her watch)
Andre we better get going.

DONNA

So soon?

PATRICIA

Yeah we have plans tonight.

Patricia and Andre stand up in preparation to leave.

DONNA

You all are not going to stay for dinner? I'm cooking my famous spaghetti.

CHARLES

(Jokingly)
Oh boy her famous spaghetti. You two better get going while you can.

PATRICIA

Dad!

DONNA

(Jokingly)
That's okay Patricia. He won't be eating tonight.

(MORE)

DONNA (cont'd)
Looks like he'll be going on
Donna's diet plan. Trust me he'll
be begging for my cooking.

CHARLES
(Laughs)
So I take it we will be seeing you
again soon.

ANDRE
Sure. By the way it was nice
meeting you two.

Andre shakes Charles and Donna's hand. He then leaves with
Patricia.

CHARLES
I can't pinpoint it but there's
something funny about him.

DONNA
Okay so you're telling me you don't
like him?

CHARLES
Well he just doesn't seem to be...

DONNA
(Cuts Charles off)
Let's not go there honey. You
haven't liked any of her
boyfriends.

CHARLES
Well I guess I haven't been wrong
about any of them because she is
not with any of them today.

DONNA
(Laughs)
Oh honey please. I'm going to
finish dinner.

CHARLES
Okay don't let me have to say, "I
told you so." Now I'm telling you
there is something funny about him.

DONNA
You don't think he seems to be a
nice gentleman?

CHARLES

Yeah maybe a little too nice. He's like a Choir Boy.

DONNA

Well I think he is a nice man.

CHARLES

That figures; I guess we'll never agree about her boyfriends.

Donna just shakes her head, sighs and walks away.

EXT. A CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Andre and Patricia have just been married. Donna, Charles, Yvette, Vanessa and some other family members and friends are present. Andre opens the front passenger car door to allow Patricia to get in. The car is decorated and the words "Just Married" can be seen on the rear window.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME-SEVERAL WEEKS LATER-EVENING

It is just weeks later. Patricia has come home from work early. She plops down on the couch to relax and turns on the television. Andre comes in from work and stands at the front door a while just watching Patricia.

ANDRE

What the hell are you doing?

PATRICIA

What do you mean what am I doing? I am relaxing.

ANDRE

(Turns off the television)
You can relax after you fix my God damn dinner!

PATRICIA

Andre why are you talking to me like that?

ANDRE

Look if you don't get your big ass in there and cook my dinner you are going to wish you had.

PATRICIA

Andre you can't. . .

ANDRE

(Cut's Patricia off)

I can't what? I am your fucking husband now. You are my wife and you will do what I say. Now that's just the way it's going to be around here. I let your big ass mouth and little attitude go on long enough. Now go cook my dinner before you piss me off.

Patricia wisely goes to the kitchen to cook dinner.

INT. VANESSA'S HOME - THE NEXT EVENING

Vanessa is in the kitchen preparing supper. Patricia and Yvette are in the living room watching television. Vanessa goes into the living room area.

VANESSA

So what is it that you wanted to talk to us about?

PATRICIA

Excuse me?

VANESSA

Hold on I am going to turn off the television.

Vanessa turns the television off.

VANESSA

I said what is it you wanted to talk to us about?

PATRICIA

Well Andre went off on me last night.

YVETTE

What do you mean he went off? Did he hit you?

PATRICIA

No but I thought he would.

VANESSA

What? You two haven't even been married a month yet.

YVETTE

Tell us exactly what happened girl.

PATRICIA

Basically he yelled at me,
threatened me and cussed me out
because his dinner wasn't ready
when he got home.

VANESSA

Oh he is probably one of those men
that want you to wait on him hand
and foot and still have time for
you to go to work and take care of
yourself.

PATRICIA

Well I was tired as hell when I
came home from work too. I Just
wanted to relax for a little while.
Shit I ain't no damn robot!

VANESSA

Girl you didn't see this coming?

PATRICIA

No, I mean we had little arguments
in the past but he has never
threatened me. He told me now that
we're married things are going to
change.

YVETTE

Trust me Patricia things do change
when you get married, but they
shouldn't change for the worst.
Hopefully they change for the
better. Things aren't always going
to be so easy and there will be
arguments and disagreements. That's
pretty much normal.

VANESSA

I knew that nigger was no good!

YVETTE

Vanessa!

VANESSA

What?

YVETTE

Look Patricia, you have got to
communicate with him. Remember what
I told you about the important
ingredients? Communication is one
of the most important ones.

(MORE)

YVETTE (cont'd)

Therefore You should be able to talk to him just like you're talking to us. Let him know how you feel about his actions.

PATRICIA

You sure? Just talk to him?

YVETTE

Yeah everything will be fine. He probably knows he was wrong and I can just bet you will at least get an apology from him.

VANESSA

Or if he is the ass hole I think he is you might get cussed out again.

YVETTE

Vanessa!

VANESSA

What!

YVETTE

Why do you have to always say some negative bullshit!

VANESSA

Look I need to go finish fixing dinner. You all have too much drama for me.

Vanessa heads for the kitchen.

YVETTE

Don't listen to her. You see she can't keep no man. Just go back and talk to him like I told you. He probably just had a bad day at work.

PATRICIA

Okay Yvette, I will give that a try.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - THE NEXT EVENING

Patricia has finished cooking Andre's dinner. She is still in her work clothes. She is notably exhausted as she rushes around the kitchen to put the finishing touches on the meal. Andre walks in the door and looks around. He sits on the couch and turns on the television.

PATRICIA

Hello honey, dinner is just about ready. How was your day?

ANDRE

It was fine. Now Bring my food in here.

Patricia brings Andre's food to him on a tray. She then sits next to him.

PATRICIA

You sure you want to eat in here? I had the dining area set up for us.

ANDRE

Yeah I am sure!

PATRICIA

Andre I wanted to talk to you. That is if you calmed down a bit since yesterday.

ANDRE

Talk to me about what?

PATRICIA

I wanted to talk about our little fight last night.

ANDRE

Well talk!

PATRICIA

I just think the way you spoke to me was wrong.

ANDRE

Is that so? Is that really what you feel? I think you are listening to your bitch-ass girlfriends. Either them or your parents.

PATRICIA

Andre! Please don't talk bad about my best friends.

ANDRE

I don't like them. They're a bad influence on you.

PATRICIA

What are you talking about Andre? You hardly know them.

ANDRE

Shut the hell up and don't spoil my evening.

PATRICIA

I thought we were going to discuss the argument we had last night.

ANDRE

There is really nothing to discuss. You will have my meal ready for me when I come home. No ifs ands or buts.

PATRICIA

But Andre you. . .

ANDRE

(Cuts Patricia off)

I said no buts! What part of that don't you understand?

Andre gets up and throws his plate of food across the room.

ANDRE

You satisfied? You spoiled my evening and you managed to piss me off all in a matter of minutes. Now clean that shit up and get me another plate of food!

Patricia just stands there looking surprised and in shock with her mouth wide open.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Move!

Patricia goes to the kitchen, gets the broom and dustpan and quickly cleans up the mess. She then brings him another plate of food.

ANDRE

You better wipe that look off your ugly face like real quick!

PATRICIA

Andre I shouldn't have to put up with this. I mean I did nothing to deserve this.

ANDRE

Just shut up and leave me alone. You already pissed me off once. Don't do it again.

Patricia storms away with an attitude.

PATRICIA

Fine!

Andre jumps up and grabs Patricia by the arm and pulls her back towards him.

ANDRE

I told you I am not going to put up with you sassing me!

PATRICIA

Andre you're hurting me.

Andre slaps Patricia in the face.

ANDRE

(Shakes his head)

Look what you made me do!

Patricia sits on the couch and cries. Andre watches for a minute but then feels remorseful. He sits next to her on the couch and rubs her shoulders.

ANDRE

I'm sorry baby. I didn't mean for that to happen. I just had a bad day.

PATRICIA

Andre what happened to us? We used to be so close now all we do is fight.

ANDRE

Nothing happened to us. We still love each other right?

PATRICIA

But Andre you hit me.

ANDRE

I know and I told you I'm sorry. It won't happen again. (Pause) Look Patricia you know I love you right.

PATRICIA

Yeah I know you love me.

ANDRE

You know I would never do anything to hurt you intentionally.

PATRICIA
I guess that's true.

ANDRE
Then you know that was not me a few
minutes ago.

PATRICIA
Honey we have to try to get along
better.

ANDRE
(Hugs Patricia)
Everything is going to be fine and
we'll be all right.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - EVENING

Yvette and Vanessa are over at Patricia's house. Yvette and
Vanessa play Dominoes as Patricia prepares dinner. Patricia
comes to the table to sit down and relax.

YVETTE
Girl what happened to your face?

PATRICIA
Oh I was running upstairs to my
apartment when I fell. I tried to
break my fall but I wasn't able to.

VANESSA
You serious? You fell on your face?

YVETTE
How the hell did you manage to fall
on your face?

PATRICIA
Look it just happened! It was an
accident. Now can we discuss
something else?

YVETTE
No we're not going to discuss
something else. We want to know
what really happened to you and
remember we weren't born yesterday.

VANESSA
Andre did that didn't he?

PATRICIA
Yeah he got a little upset and hit
me. You two satisfied?

VANESSA

Well you need to give him the "Al Green Treatment."

YVETTE

What are you talking about girl?

VANESSA

She needs to throw some hot grits on his ass.

YVETTE

Vanessa be quiet! (Pause) So what now Patricia? You know he has crossed the line now.

PATRICIA

I don't know, he did apologize to me and he did promise it would not happen again.

YVETTE

Yeah that's what they all say. Trust me, if he hit you once chances are pretty good he will hit you again.

PATRICIA

He loves me, he just has a bad temper.

VANESSA

Have you told your folks about this yet?

PATRICIA

No way! I don't want them getting all upset for nothing.

YVETTE

Patricia for nothing? You call getting struck by your husband nothing?

PATRICIA

It was just a little fight. We're going to be fine.

Andre comes in but the girls do not notice him standing there.

VANESSA

If you ask me I think he's crazy.
From what you said about his
childhood, he fits the profile of
boys that grow up to be men that
rape, kill, abuse and goodness
knows what else. His ass probably
needs some help.

Patricia and Yvette try to signal to Vanessa to shut up after
they finally notice Andre standing there.

ANDRE

I want these two bitches out of
here!

VANESSA

(Jumps up)
Who you calling a bitch?

PATRICIA

Vanessa no! Just leave.

VANESSA

You need to teach your man some
respect.

YVETTE

(Pulls Vanessa by the arm)
You going to be all right Patricia?

ANDRE

She's going to be just fine now get
out!

VANESSA

If you need anything girl just give
us a holler. We'll be over here in
no time. I ain't nothing but about
two seconds off his ass.

Andre escorts the girls to the door and slams it behind them.

ANDRE

I thought I told you I don't want
you with those two bitches.

PATRICIA

No you just said you don't like
them.

ANDRE

Well now I'm telling you, I don't
want you with them Anymore.

PATRICIA

But Andre they're my two best friends.

ANDRE

Yeah right. They pretend to be your friends so they can know all your damn business. They know more about you than me!

PATRICIA

We do discuss our problems and issues but that's what friends do.

ANDRE

Well you don't need to discuss our problems with them. It's none of their business what goes on in this house.

PATRICIA

Okay I won't discuss our problems with them anymore.

ANDRE

Well you need to include your nosey ass parents in that deal.

PATRICIA

Andre they're my parents. You can't expect me to. . .

ANDRE

(Cuts Patricia off)

Don't tell me what I can't expect you to do. I expect you to do whatever I tell you to do. I'm your fucking husband!

Andre walks up to Patricia.

ANDRE

(Pushes Patricia)

You have anything else smart to say?

PATRICIA

Andre! You promised me you would not do this.

ANDRE

You better get out of my face and sit your big ass down bitch!

PATRICIA
(Storms away)
Andre that's it!

Andre catches up to her, grabs her by the arm and spins her around with force.

ANDRE
Girl you just going to run over to your parents' house. You see they will put up with your dumb ass and spoil you but I am not going that route with you.

PATRICIA
Andre I don't deserve this! Now could you let me go please?

ANDRE
Oh you deserve every bit of this bitch!

Andre throws Patricia to the ground and starts walking towards her.

INT. VANESSA'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Vanessa is helping Patricia out by bandaging her bruises and supplying her with ice. Patricia looks like she was in a fight and lost all ten rounds. Yvette is also there to comfort her friend.

PATRICIA
He just had another bad day. He just needs to learn to control his temper and everything will be fine.

YVETTE
Patricia don't be so naïve. I mean Andre really beat you up this time.

VANESSA
You sure you don't want to be checked out at the hospital?

PATRICIA
No I am going to be fine.

YVETTE
Aren't you going to tell your parents about this?

PATRICIA

No way and you two better not tell them either!

YVETTE

You need to report this to the police.

PATRICIA

No that will just piss him off.

VANESSA

I think you need to get away from that crazy fool.

YVETTE

Vanessa!

VANESSA

What damn it! I can't say how I feel?

YVETTE

Girl you need to watch what you say to her right now.

VANESSA

Patricia what are you going to do now?

PATRICIA

I don't know. I'm just scared and confused right now.

VANESSA

If you want I can get some guys to tighten his ass up for you.

PATRICIA

No Vanessa I don't want you to do that. I still love him but I think he needs help.

VANESSA

Girl if you keep letting him beat on you you're the one that's going to need help. You know this is not going to stop right?

PATRICIA

(Puts ice on her face)

I don't know, maybe it will and maybe it won't.

Patricia's Cell Phone rings and she answers it.

PATRICIA

Hello mom. (Beat) Oh I am doing fine. (Beat) What do you mean that's not what you and daddy heard? (Beat) Okay I will be right over.

Patricia slams her flip phone closed.

PATRICIA

Tell me you all didn't! Please tell me you didn't!

YVETTE

Didn't what?

PATRICIA

Tell my parents about this.

YVETTE

We thought it was the best thing to do.

PATRICIA

Yvette I would expect something like that from Vanessa but you shock me.

VANESSA

Hey I'm sorry but like she said we thought it was the best thing we could do. We knew you wouldn't tell them.

PATRICIA

Thanks a lot! Now I need to leave because I have to go explain all this shit to my parents.

VANESSA

Girl why are you tripping? We just...

PATRICIA

(Cuts Vanessa off)

Look I'm leaving! I'll holler at you two another time!

Patricia gathers her purse and stuff and storms out of Vanessa's house.

VANESSA

I guess we pissed her off.

YVETTE

That's okay she'll get over it. I still say we did the right thing.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - EVENING

Andre throws Patricia on the bed and begins tearing at her clothes. Patricia struggles a little but then stops her resistance.

PATRICIA

Andre you don't have to hurt me.
I'll make love to you.

Andre slaps Patricia several times as he tears Patricia's clothes off.

ANDRE

Shut up! I'm going to treat you like the whore you are!

Andre rapes Patricia violently. You can see the ferocity in his face. Patricia just lays there motionless. As she begins to cry blood slowly flows from her nose. Andre just gets up and leaves when he's finished and slams the bedroom door. Patricia assumes the fetal position and cries out loudly.

INT. A BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER - LATE AFTERNOON

Yvette and Vanessa take Patricia to a Shelter. They take her to the Program Coordinator, GINA PERKINS.

GINA PERKINS

Hello my name is Gina Perkins and I am the Program Coordinator. I take it you are Patricia right?

PATRICIA

(Sarcastically)
Lucky guess or did the bruises give it away?

GINA PERKINS

These are your two friends umm. . .

PATRICIA

Vanessa and Yvette?

GINA PERKINS

Thank you. (Pause) Well we will take care of her from here.

(MORE)

GINA PERKINS (cont'd)
You two are welcomed to come by
during visiting hours. Once again
thank you for bringing her here,
you two did the right thing.

PATRICIA
Mrs. Perkins I don't know if I will
stay or not.

GINA PERKINS
Just relax Patricia everything will
be fine.

YVETTE
Okay girl you hang in there. We'll
be in touch.

Vanessa and Yvette both give Patricia a hug and then they
leave.

GINA PERKINS
Nice friends you have there.

PATRICIA
Yeah they really are.

GINA PERKINS
Well Patricia I guess we can start
with a tour of our facility. Maybe
you can meet some of the girls. Now
our most important rule is that you
have no contact with your husband
or significant other while you're
here. That's for safety reasons.

PATRICIA
Okay. I can understand that.

A young lady named MICHELLE WATTERS walks down the hall
towards Patricia and Mrs. Perkins. The young lady is in bad
shape and appears to have been battered violently. Mrs.
Perkins stops her to meet Patricia.

GINA PERKINS
Hello Michelle.

MICHELLE WATTERS
Hello Mrs. Perkins.

GINA PERKINS
Michelle this is Patricia, Patricia
this is Michelle Watters.

MICHELLE WATTERS

(Hangs her head)

Hello Patricia.

PATRICIA

(Puts her hand out)

Hello Michelle.

Michelle and Patricia shake hands. Michelle continues down the hallway very slowly as if she is a Zombie. Patricia and Mrs. Perkins continue walking.

PATRICIA

(Talking low)

Is that how some of the women here look?

GINA PERKINS

What do you mean Patricia?

PATRICIA

I mean she was in pretty bad shape.

GINA PERKINS

Oh some of our girls are in even worse shape. That's why we have a great Nursing staff here and a great counseling staff. Sometimes the internal and emotional wounds are far worse than the physical wounds we see. It's real important for us to help heal you from the inside out.

PATRICIA

Mrs. Perkins I don't think I belong here.

GINA PERKINS

Am I missing something? I mean your husband does hit you right?

PATRICIA

Yeah but Michelle looks like her husband tried to beat her half to death.

GINA PERKINS

Just because your husband hasn't beaten you up that bad yet doesn't mean he won't. In most cases the abuse gets progressively worse, sometimes until the woman becomes a fatality.

PATRICIA

Oh my husband is not going to kill me! You see my husband just needs to get some help for his emotional problems.

GINA PERKINS

Honey they all need help in some way. Some are too far gone for help. Patricia don't be naïve. The cemeteries are full of women who thought their man would never kill them. Besides you don't know. . .

PATRICIA

(Cutting Gina off)

Look Mrs. Perkins I appreciate all your concern but I just don't feel like I belong here. I think maybe I would be taking a seat or bed from someone who really needs help.

GINA PERKINS

Okay Patricia I can't force you to stay here. In order for you to get any help from us one has to recognize the fact they need help.

PATRICIA

(Putting out her hand)

Well thank you very much Mrs. Perkins. I appreciate your time.

Gina Perkins holds onto Patricia's hand after shaking hands with her. She then reaches in her pocket with her free hand and gives Patricia a business card.

PATRICIA

What's this?

GINA PERKINS

That's my business card. It has our eight hundred hot line number on there too. That number is staffed twenty-four seven. Feel free to call us anytime. Now I can't promise you that there will be space available for you later. Unfortunately there is never a shortage of battered women in this community. Many of them use our facility as a safe haven.

(MORE)

GINA PERKINS (cont'd)

You are welcome to use any of our resources or facilities at any time at no charge to you.

PATRICIA

Thank you Mrs. Perkins.

GINA PERKINS

You're welcome Patricia and by the way you can call me Regina or Gina. (Pause) So you be careful and don't hesitate to call us any time day or night.

PATRICIA

Okay I won't. Once again thanks a lot Ms... I mean Regina.

GINA PERKINS

You sure you don't want to stay for at least one night?

PATRICIA

No I think I will be fine Regina.

Patricia slings her luggage over her shoulder and heads down the long hallway. Gina Perkins just stands there with her hands on her hips as she shakes her head.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - EVENING

Andre has gone all out to welcome Patricia back home. He has cooked her a full-course meal with candlelight provided, put out balloons and a "Welcome home Patricia" banner and put on some soothing music. The sweet sounds of Teddy Pendergrass' "Close the door" can be heard playing softly in the background. Andre, standing over Patricia with an apron on, pours her some Champagne.

ANDRE

Baby I am so glad you came back home to me. I thought I had lost you forever. (Bends over and kisses Patricia) You know I love you right baby?

PATRICIA

Yeah I know you do Andre.

ANDRE

I just wanted to say I am sorry for the way I treated you and I wanted to make a solemn promise that I won't ever hurt you again.

Andre places a bouquet of roses on the table with a little card attached. Patricia reads the card aloud. She still has noticeable bruises from previous encounters with Andre. In fact her lips are so swollen her voice is distorted.

PATRICIA

"I love you now more than ever. You are special to me. With love always, Andre Robinson." (Pauses, eyes tear up) That's so sweet Andre.

ANDRE

Hold on baby I have something else for you.

Andre runs to the back room and comes back with a small box. He opens the box and presents Patricia with a beautiful Necklace.

ANDRE

You like it?

PATRICIA

(Tries on the necklace)
Andre it's beautiful.

ANDRE

I was going to wait until dinner is finished but I guess I couldn't wait.

PATRICIA

(Hugs Andre)
Thank you baby and I love you too.

ANDRE

Can you find it in your heart to forgive me?

PATRICIA

You promise you won't hurt me anymore?

ANDRE

Yeah I promise.

PATRICIA

Would you go to marriage counseling with me or maybe see a counselor to help you with your nightmares?

ANDRE

I don't need no damn counseling!
Patricia you think I'm loco huh?

PATRICIA

(Slides back her chair)
No baby I don't think you're loco I
just thought you might be able to
get help for your nightmares.

ANDRE

We don't need a Marriage Counselor
either. Our marriage is fine!

PATRICIA

Baby let's not spoil the evening.
I'm sorry I brought it up. Let's
just forget about it.

ANDRE

Yeah I think we better forget about
it.

PATRICIA

So what did you cook tonight baby?
Whatever it is sure smells good.

ANDRE

I made some baked chicken, corn and
rice.

PATRICIA

Yummy! Well let's dig in before I
starve to death.

INT. PATRICIA'S PARENTS' HOME - EVENING

Patricia is at her parents' home. Yvette and Vanessa are also there. They are all trying to convince Patricia to get out of her destructive relationship. Patricia has fresh bruises and wounds to go over the healing ones. She even appears to have stitches over her eye.

DONNA

(Shows Patricia a mirror)
Girl just look at your face. Honey
this is not love.

CHARLES

No it's a vicious cycle. He beats
on you, you come stay with us or
your friends and then you go right
back to him, for what?

PATRICIA

Because I still love him and I am not ready to throw the towel in on my relationship just yet!

CHARLES

Patricia this guy is no good for you and I think you know it.

VANESSA

Girl how long are you going to let this go on? Shoot the Police and the Paramedics go to your house so much they're talking about making your house one of their Sub stations.

YVETTE

Vanessa!

VANESSA

What?

YVETTE

You still don't think you need to go to a Battered Woman's Shelter? I'm sure you're starting to look just like some of those women. Remember the ones you said really need help?

VANESSA

I think he needs an attitude adjustment. I told you I know a few roughnecks on the east side that would take care of him.

Charles grabs a Louisville Slugger bat and heads to the door angrily.

CHARLES

Shit I can take care of his ass myself!

Donna catches up to Charles and snatches the bat away from him.

DONNA

Baby have you lost your mind?

CHARLES

Honey I just want to talk to him.

DONNA

With this?

CHARLES

Well what am I supposed to do? That son of a bitch is hurting Patricia!

DONNA

Baby you have lost your mind.

CHARLES

Honey I just want to go face to face with him and find out what his problem is.

DONNA

With a damn Louisville Slugger right?

CHARLES

Well what am I supposed to do? Just sit around and let him beat Patricia? I'm sorry but I just can't do that.

DONNA

Believe me you're not the only one who feels like doing this.

VANESSA

I know that's right!

DONNA

But baby this is not the answer.

CHARLES

It seems to me that violence might be all he does understand.

DONNA

Well I can't let you do this. What good would it do? You would be in jail and he would still be beating Patricia.

PATRICIA

Look I don't want any of you to get involved. He knows you all are trying to get me away from him and he is really pissed about it.

CHARLES

Oh really? He's pissed?

DONNA

So are you saying he might come
after us?

PATRICIA

I don't know if he would or not but
I know he gets pretty crazy
sometimes.

CHARLES

You need to get away from that
crazy fool!

DONNA

Charles is that necessary?

PATRICIA

There's something else I need to
tell you all.

DONNA

What's that Patricia?

PATRICIA

I am pregnant.

CHARLES

You got to be joking! Already?

PATRICIA

No daddy I'm serious.

CHARLES

Shit you two didn't waste no time!

DONNA

Patricia what were you thinking?

PATRICIA

I didn't want it to happen so soon
but it did.

CHARLES

Now you're going to be a part of
his life for a long time in some
way or another.

PATRICIA

Look I'm real confused right now so
can I just have a moment alone?
(Pause) Please!

CHARLES

Okay everybody let's give her some space.

Charles escorts Yvette and Vanessa to the door. Patricia just lays on the couch in the fetal position and begins to cry loudly. Charles and Donna try to console her.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - EVENING

Andre is punching and kicking Patricia. Patricia goes unconscious and lays motionless on the floor. Andre attempts to awaken her but to no avail. He then begins to pace the floor frantically. Suddenly there is a knock on the door. It is two Police Officers. OFFICER POWELL is a tough, black female officer and OFFICER MCNEIL is the less rugged male officer.

ANDRE

(Still pacing)
Who is it?

OFFICER MCNEIL (O.S.)

It's the Police open up!

ANDRE

(Opens the door slowly)
What's the problem officers? We didn't call the police

OFFICER MCNEIL

First of all I am Officer McNeil and this is my partner Officer Powell. We are here because we received calls from your neighbors about a four-fifteen taking place here.

ANDRE

What the hell is a four-fifteen?

OFFICER POWELL

Are you having a fight with your wife again?

Officer McNeil pushes by Andre and begins to walk into the living room to look around. He sees Patricia laying there unconscious.

OFFICER MCNEIL

She's in here! Hook 'em up!

Andre rushes in the living room with Officer Powell right on him.

OFFICER POWELL

Turn around and put your hands on
your head, do it now!

Andre turns towards Officer Powell with his fists balled up.

ANDRE

You don't have a right to be in my
house so get the fuck out bitch!

OFFICER MCNEIL

(On a Walkie-Talkie)

Dispatch this is Officer McNeil,
roll rescue to this location for a
female down and unresponsive.
Response is code-three. Standby for
status.

Officer Mcneil pauses and looks over at his partner as if he
knows what's coming next.

Officer Powell grabs Andre's arm and does a wrestling-type
take down. Andre hits the floor hard. She sits on his back
and handcuffs him.

OFFICER MCNEIL (CONT'D)

(On a Walkie-Talkie)

Suspect is in custody and we'll be
code-four after rescue arrives.

OFFICER POWELL

Perhaps you need a lesson in how to
treat women, more importantly you
better know who you're raising up
to. I am not your wife!

DISPATCHER (VO)

Ten-four Officer McNeil Dispatch
copies. . .

ANDRE

(Still trying to struggle)

My wife fell downstairs; I was
getting ready to call an ambulance.

OFFICER POWELL

Yeah right and she landed on her
face about a dozen times. Tell that
bullshit to the judge! Right now I
suggest you exercise your right to
remain silent.

Officer Powell reads the suspect his rights and escorts him
outside. Officer McNeil stays with Patricia.

OFFICER MCNEIL

Hang in there young lady help is on the way. (Talks on her Walkie-Talkie) Dispatch this is Officer McNeil, advise Rescue to step it up and give me an ETA.

DISPATCHER (VO)

Ten-four Officer McNeil, Rescue's ETA at the time of the call was ten minutes.

OFFICER MCNEIL

Ten-four Dispatch just have 'em step it up.

INT. TRI-COUNTY HOSPITAL - EVENING

Two Paramedics (PARAMEDIC #1 and #2) rush Patricia down a hospital hallway. Donna, Charles, Yvette and Vanessa are all present also. A Female Doctor, DOCTOR RICHARDSON, rushes along side the Gurney as the Paramedics stop briefly. Two nurses also are present.

DR. RICHARDSON

(Checking Patricia)

How long has she been out?

PARAMEDIC #1

About twenty to thirty minutes.

DR. RICHARDSON

What happened to her? Is this the car accident victim?

PARAMEDIC #2

Negative this is the domestic violence victim. Her vital signs are all within normal limits but we're having trouble waking her up.

DR. RICHARDSON

Does she have any allergies?

DONNA

None that we know of but she told us she's pregnant.

CHARLES

Is she going to be okay?

DR. RICHARDSON

We are going to try to stabilize her.

(MORE)

DR. RICHARDSON (cont'd)
 You two can go to the waiting area
 and I'll come get you as soon as we
 get her stabilized. (Pause) Okay
 take her to treatment room number
 four.

The two Paramedics take Patricia to treatment room four.

DONNA
 But we need to be there for her.

DR. RICHARDSON
 Just trust me Mr. And Mrs.
 Campbell, we're going to do
 everything we can for Patricia.
 I'll personally make sure you're
 kept up to date on any changes in
 her condition and I'll make sure
 you're there when she wakes up.

CHARLES
 (Hugs Donna)
 It's okay baby. Let's go to the
 waiting area and let them do their
 job.

Moments pass by. Charles and Donna pace the waiting room area
 almost wall to wall simultaneously. Dr. Richardson finally
 comes out and gives her prognosis. Charles and Donna rush up
 to her to hear the news.

DONNA
 How is she?

DR. RICHARDSON
 It looks like she's going to be
 fine. We still have more tests to
 run including a cat scan. We are
 going to keep her overnight but she
 is alert right now so you're
 welcome to visit her.

CHARLES
 How about the baby?

DR. RICHARDSON
 It's too soon to tell for sure but
 we will hopefully have more answers
 for you soon. (Pause) Okay she was
 a little disoriented at first but
 she is actually doing real well
 right now so come on back and talk
 to her.

(MORE)

DR. RICHARDSON (cont'd)
Dr. Richardson leads Patricia's
Parents back to the treatment room
area. Patricia's mother gives her a
big hug.

DONNA
You okay baby?

PATRICIA
I guess so. I feel like I went a
few rounds with Mike Tyson.

CHARLES
No, it was with Andre Robinson.

DONNA
What now Patricia?

PATRICIA
I don't know. I'm still afraid and
confused.

CHARLES
We don't have to talk about this
now. Why don't you get some sleep?

PATRICIA
It's okay dad. Where's Andre now?

DONNA
He was arrested.

CHARLES
He'll probably be out and back home
before you get out of here.

PATRICIA
I guess we need to try to work this
out.

DR. RICHARDSON
(Adjusting Patricia's IV)
Young lady I hate to get in your
business but I can't stand here and
listen to you without wanting to
give you some sound advice. Now I
wish I could show you some of the
pictures of women that come through
these doors nearly every day. Some
don't even make it. Do yourself and
your loved ones a favor, get out of
this situation before it's too
late.

(MORE)

DR. RICHARDSON (cont'd)
Things are not likely to get better
but they are likely to get worse.

DONNA
So what happens to her now Doctor
Richardson?

DR. RICHARDSON
I'm going to let you folks have a
moment with her. Like I said I
didn't want to seem like I was
getting into your business but if I
can just help one woman get out of
this type situation, or perhaps
even save her life, I have done my
job.

CHARLES
Oh no Doctor we appreciate your
input and concerns.

DR. RICHARDSON
No problem. I am going to step out
for a moment and then I will come
back and check on her. I did give
her something for her pain. It will
make her sleepy too.

Dr. Richardson goes to the door but then turns around to say
one more thing to Patricia.

DR. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)
I can help with healing your
physical injuries but I can't help
you with the emotional and
psychological trauma you
undoubtedly have. That usually runs
a lot deeper than your physical
trauma. (Pause) Okay I'll be back
in a while.

As Dr. Richardson leaves Officers McNeil and Powell arrive.

OFFICER MCNEIL
Is it okay if we interview her
briefly Doctor?

DR. RICHARDSON
It's okay with me but you'll have
to ask her how she feels.

Dr. Richardson leaves.

OFFICER MCNEIL

I'm Officer McNeil and this is my partner Officer Powell. We just wanted to talk to Patricia briefly.

DONNA

Patricia do you feel like talking to these two Officers?

PATRICIA

Yeah I'm okay with that. We have already met.

OFFICER POWELL

We have met. We are the two officers that responded to your house earlier this evening.

CHARLES

Is it okay if my wife and I stay?

OFFICER MCNEIL

Sure that's fine. She needs support right now. Are you family or friends?

CHARLES

Well we are family. I am her father Charles and this is my wife Donna. Thank you for following up on this.

OFFICER MCNEIL

No problem sir we are just doing our job.

PATRICIA

How can I help you two?

OFFICER POWELL

Well actually we wanted to ask you a few questions about what happened to you so we can do our report.

PATRICIA

Well basically it was no big thing.

OFFICER MCNEIL

What do you mean it was no big deal? You wouldn't be here if it were no big deal.

PATRICIA

Well I'm not going to have him locked up for this if that's what you're wanting.

CHARLES

Patricia what are you talking about? This guy beat you until you were unconscious.

DONNA

(Begins to cry)

No Patricia, you can't let this go on. He is going to keep hurting you.

Charles hugs his wife and tries to comfort her.

PATRICIA

Mom it's going to be okay.
(Pause)Where's he right now?

OFFICER POWELL

He's downtown being booked into the jail.

OFFICER MCNEIL

Yes and from his record you are not his first victim. It seems Mr. Robinson has a history of domestic violence charges from other cities involving his other now ex-wives.

PATRICIA

Yeah but they are still alive right?

OFFICER POWELL

Yes they are but what does that have to do with anything?

PATRICIA

Well everybody seems to think he's going to kill me or something. Andre is not crazy he just needs some help. I still honestly think he'll be okay after that. I mean I should at least give him the benefit of the doubt.

CHARLES

Oh at this point I say you've more than done that.

OFFICER MCNEIL

Well he would have to attend a mandatory stress and anger management course if we could get you to press charges against him. I mean he has been arrested for battering you at least four times already. Each time you refuse to press any charges.

OFFICER POWELL

Statistically the course only has about a ten percent success rate. Most of the Subjects go right back to battering, however I guess ten percent is better than nothing. The state mandates this program.

OFFICER MCNEIL

You see the old theory of, "lock 'em all up and throw away the key" does not apply anymore in this state. The state feels there has to be some sort of intervention or rehab for domestic violence suspects.

PATRICIA

So what do you want from me?

OFFICER POWELL

As we said before we would like some sort of statement from you about what happened. Please don't tell us you fell or ran into a wall. Don't bother wasting our time by trying to insult our intelligence.

PATRICIA

Nothing happened and he's not a criminal.

CHARLES

Patricia!

PATRICIA

You all don't understand. (Pause)
Now can I just get some rest? I am feeling real sleepy right now.

OFFICER MCNEIL

Okay Patricia we'll leave you alone.

(MORE)

OFFICER MCNEIL (cont'd)
 I'm going to leave you with my
 card. Feel free to call us anytime.
 I will write the number to the
 Domestic Violence Intervention Hot
 line. You can call them twenty-
 four seven.

PATRICIA
 So when will Andre be back out?

OFFICER POWELL
 Hopefully not before the ink dries
 on our over-all report. He is also
 getting booked on resisting arrest
 and assaulting an officer charges.

PATRICIA
 (Takes the card)
 Thank you Officers. I just need to
 get some rest. Whatever they gave
 me is kicking in right about now.

OFFICER MCNEIL
 Okay Patricia we hope to talk to
 you soon. Remember we need some
 sort of statement as soon as
 possible.

CHARLES
 Okay Officers, maybe another time.

Patricia just rolls back over into a fetal position and
 covers her head with her pillow.

DONNA
 (Rubs Patricia's back)
 It's going to be all right baby.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DR. MORGAN'S OFFICE (THE WOMEN'S PRISON) - AFTERNOON

We go back into Dr. Morgan's office and Patricia's session.
 Patricia grabs a box of tissues off Dr. Morgan's desk.
 Telling her story has made her emotional.

DR. MORGAN
 (Takes off his glasses)
 Wow Patricia that is a powerful
 story. Do you want to continue?

PATRICIA

(Looks up at the clock)
You have time? I mean am I your
only Inmate this afternoon?

DR. MORGAN

Oh don't worry I can make the time.

PATRICIA

We could pick it back up tomorrow
if you want.

DR. MORGAN

No go ahead, I would rather hear
more. Of course if you are up to
it.

PATRICIA

I think I can finish up in about
thirty minutes is that okay?

DR. MORGAN

Take your time. (Pause) Can I get
you some water or something?

PATRICIA

No but I might need a towel by the
time I finish.

DR. MORGAN

(Presses play)
That's okay Patricia just let it
out.

PATRICIA

Well Yvette and Vanessa always came
through for me when I was down.
They were always able to cheer me
up and keep me going. I remember
one night we went out dancing and
we . . .

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLUB ELEGANCE - NIGHT

Patricia, Yvette and Vanessa are at a Nightclub called Club
Elegance. Slow music can be heard in the background as DJ ROB
SMOOTH of radio station 104.9 FM spins oldies.

VANESSA

Girl you need to loosen up a bit.
We brought you out here to have
some fun and damn it you are going
to have some fun!

PATRICIA

(Pulls a small mirror out)
Girl I'll be okay. . . How does my
face look?

Patricia puts a little more make-up on her face.

YVETTE

Your face looks fine. I told you
the make-up would work.

Patricia looks around the whole club, nervously, as if she's
expecting someone.

VANESSA

Girl I told you to stop tripping,
that fool ain't going to show up
here! If he does we got your back
honey.

PATRICIA

Vanessa I really wish you wouldn't
diss my husband like that.

VANESSA

Hey I'm sorry but you know I can't
stand him.

YVETTE

Girls we didn't come here for this!

VANESSA

Yeah that's true. We came here to
party so let's do this.

YVETTE

I'll be right back. I need to talk
to the DJ. Remember Patricia, this
is our night.

Yvette returns and sits back down at the table. The slow
music fades out in the background.

DJ ROB SMOOTH

Don't forget to come on out and
enjoy Hip-hop and Reggae night at
Club Elegance every Saturday with
drink specials until eleven.

(MORE)

DJ ROB SMOOTH (cont'd)
 This next song is going out to
 Patricia Robinson from her best
 friend Yvette. It's called ladies
 night by Kool And The Gang. This
 is "Flashback Friday" and I am DJ
 Rob Smooth from FM one zero four
 point nine.

DJ Rob Smooth spins the record. Yvette and Vanessa pull
 Patricia onto the dance floor. The crowd opens up the floor
 as if to give the girls room. The girls do a dance routine.

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - EVENING

Andre sits Patricia on the couch and has her cover her eyes.
 He runs to the closet and brings out several boxes.

ANDRE
 No peaking!

PATRICIA
 Okay okay, I'm not!

He sets the boxes on the couch near Patricia and on the
 coffee table.

ANDRE
 Okay baby you can open your eyes
 now.

PATRICIA
 Wow what's all this honey?

ANDRE
 I come baring gifts.

PATRICIA
 I see.

ANDRE
 Go ahead and open them up.

PATRICIA
 (Tears open a box)
 Wow this is so beautiful. I love
 this.

ANDRE
 Really you like it?

PATRICIA
 (Hugs Andre)
 Thank you baby. I really love it.

ANDRE

Then I'm sure you'll love the rest.

PATRICIA

(Jokingly)

What's today? Did I forget our anniversary or something? I know it's not my birthday.

ANDRE

No baby I just wanted to show you how much I love you.

PATRICIA

(Hugs Andre again)

Oh Andre that's so sweet.

ANDRE

Honey go ahead and open the rest of your gifts.

PATRICIA

Okay baby.

Patricia opens her gifts one at a time. Each time she gasps with excitement.

She received two beautiful dresses, three pairs of very nice shoes, a nice watch and several other articles of jewelry of an unspecified value.

PATRICIA

Andre I'm speechless!

ANDRE

I guess that means you like the gifts.

PATRICIA

(Hugs Andre again)

I love everything. Thank you baby
(Pause) I feel bad because I didn't get anything for you.

ANDRE

I'm sure you have something I might like to have (Smiles, winks) maybe later tonight. Just me you and some Luther V.

PATRICIA

You nasty Andre (Pause) That's why I'm like this now.

ANDRE

(Holds Patricia's hand)
That's not the way it should have happened though. I was not in my right state of mind that night.

PATRICIA

(Eyes tearing up)
It's done Andre so let's not spoil the evening. We're going to move on. We both made the decision to keep the baby so that's what we're going to do. Nobody has to know how this baby was conceived.

ANDRE

Yeah I guess that's right (Pause)
Well you don't have to worry about cooking tonight.

PATRICIA

Why baby? You're not hungry?

ANDRE

No tonight's a Red Lobster night.
Dinner is on me.

PATRICIA

(Hugs Andre once again)
Thanks for everything Andre. You really made my day.

INT. DR. MORGAN'S OFFICE (THE PRISON) - AFTERNOON

Once again we go to Dr. Morgan's office. Patricia continues to tell her story. Dr. Morgan is still hanging on to Patricia's every word.

DR. MORGAN

So your friends and your parents were really the only people you had supporting you right?

PATRICIA

Yeah I pretty much wanted it that way. I was very ashamed.

DR. MORGAN

Well obviously that's not the end of the story so please continue.

PATRICIA

(Points to the clock)

Dr. Morgan I will miss afternoon roll call and kitchen detail.

DR. MORGAN

Don't worry about that, they know you're here. I'll let them know our session went over. (Pause) Just go ahead with the story. You got me all into this now. I mean it's a powerful story.

PATRICIA

Can you have them loosen these shackles a bit?

DR. MORGAN

Now you know they won't do that. They consider you to be a bit dangerous after your little run in with that other inmate.

PATRICIA

Maybe I am dangerous. Maybe I was around Andre too long.

DR. MORGAN

Patricia please continue with your story. You got me very much interested now. I mean as I said it is a very powerful story.

PATRICIA

Well basically he fooled me. I thought he was on his way to recovery. He was going to his Anger Management courses, we were going to marriage counseling and I actually thought he was part of that very small percentage of men that turn around. (Pause) The beatings completely stopped for about six weeks. He didn't even raise his voice to me.

DR. MORGAN

So there were no beatings for six weeks. How about the yelling and verbal abuse?

PATRICIA

Nothing. . . I mean he still had those nightmares but that was it.

DR. MORGAN

So what happened after the six weeks were over?

PATRICIA

I don't know. He just seemed to snap like all of a sudden. (Pause) I remember everything that happened that day like it was yesterday. It's a day I will never forget. It was a Friday and Andre had the day off. . .

Dr. Morgan's office fades out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PATRICIA AND ANDRE'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Patricia is now showing quite a bit and she is in her third trimester.

She wobbles around the house dusting and cleaning. Andre is sitting at the dining room table looking notably upset. Patricia gets her purse and attempts to leave.

ANDRE

Where the hell are you going?

PATRICIA

I'm going for a check-up. I am pregnant Andre remember?

ANDRE

Yeah but is it really my baby? Shit the way you were running the streets with those two whores makes me wonder. (Pause) Now close your mouth because you are straight busted. I know you were still running around with them.

PATRICIA

Andre we practically grew up together. I mean . . .

ANDRE

(Cuts Patricia off)

I don't care! I told you I don't want you associating with them! You never listen to me!

PATRICIA

Andre how can you say you're not sure if you're the father? That's a terrible thing to say to me. All you have to do is count back to the night you viciously raped me.

ANDRE

I never raped you bitch. You're my wife so your stuff belongs to me. Besides I only did it to you once and didn't even come.

PATRICIA

Andre I don't have time for this. I need to go see my Doctor. I can't miss these appointments.

ANDRE

I don't give a shit about no appointment! Now sit your ass down and shut up! You ain't calling the shots here I am.

PATRICIA

Andre I'm leaving right now.

Patricia walks to the door to exit. Andre rushes over and slams the door.

PATRICIA

Andre please!

ANDRE

(Pushes Patricia)
I said sit your ass down! Don't make me repeat myself. Patricia does what she is told.

PATRICIA

(Sits on the couch)
Andre we need to talk.

ANDRE

Talk about what?

PATRICIA

This marriage, this relationship.

ANDRE

What about this marriage?

PATRICIA

I can't take this shit anymore. I don't know, I thought you would change, but you will never change.

ANDRE

What the hell are you talking about?

PATRICIA

I want out of this marriage.

ANDRE

(Kicks over a chair)

You're not going no place. There's no place for you to run and no place for you to hide because I will find you. You are going to be my wife "until death do us part" just like you said in your wedding vows.

PATRICIA

Andre you really need to get some help.

Andre goes to the back and then comes back with a small black bag. He places the bag on the kitchen table and flops himself on a chair.

ANDRE

(Takes out a Revolver)

This is my help right here bitch! Andre pours some ammo onto the table.

PATRICIA

(Extremely frightened)

Andre what are you doing?

ANDRE

You see this gun holds six bullets. (Sets aside bullet #1) I have this one for your ugly ass, (Sets aside bullet #2) I have this one for your punk-ass father, (Sets aside bullet #3) I have this one for your bitch-ass mother, (Sets aside bullet #4) I have this one for your friend Yvette, (Sets aside bullet #5) I have this one for your bitch-ass friend Vanessa; shit I should put two in that hoe's ass!

He does not put the sixth bullet aside but he does load it into the gun. He spins the chamber.

PATRICIA

Andre please stop playing with that thing and put it away.

ANDRE

Last but of course not least, this last bullet is for myself. That's right bitch I am not afraid to swallow one of these.

PATRICIA

Come on Andre please stop this, you're scaring me.

Andre puts the gun to his own head.

ANDRE

You don't think I'll do myself?

Patricia gets up and slowly walks towards Andre. She is risking her own life and the life of her unborn child to prevent Andre from blowing his head off. Andre pulls the trigger four times. There is a distinct CLICK each time.

ANDRE

I got two more shots. One will take me out.

Andre pulls the trigger one more time. Once again fortunately there is just a click. Patricia continues to walk slowly towards him and puts her hand out.

PATRICIA

Andre please give me the gun. I love you and I don't want to lose you.

ANDRE

(Points it at Patricia)
Don't you come any closer; this one will not be a click!

PATRICIA

(Slowly backs up)
Okay Andre I'm backing up.

ANDRE

You want to leave me just like those other two bitches I was married to.

(MORE)

ANDRE (cont'd)

I'm not letting that happen again.
No way! If you go it's going to be
in a Body Bag.

PATRICIA

Andre I'm not leaving you, I told
you I love you. Baby I'm not going
anywhere.

ANDRE

Bullshit! Now sit your ass down you
trifling hoe!

PATRICIA

Andre I'm serious, I'm not lying.

Andre puts the gun down on the table. He gets up, pauses
right in his tracks, turns around and picks the gun back up
and puts it in his waste band.

ANDRE

(Waving his finger)
You want to leave me ungrateful
slut? I'll go pack your shit!

Andre leaves at least briefly. Patricia makes a mad dash for
the kitchen phone. She takes the business card that Officer
McNeil gave her out and dials the number on it.

PATRICIA

(Barely above a whisper)
Hello Officer McNeil this is
Patricia Robinson (Pauses, a little
louder) Patricia Robinson... No I
can't talk much louder(Pause) Yeah
he's here right now(Pause) Yeah and
he has a gun this time so please
hurry!

Patricia hangs up but then picks up to call her parents.

PATRICIA

(Still whispering) Daddy
he's at it again (Pause)
Yeah please hurry!(Pause)
I called them already
(Pause) But daddy he has
a...

Suddenly Andre's hand appears from around the wall and pulls
the cord from the phone startling Patricia.

ANDRE

Who the hell were you talking to?

PATRICIA

My father Andre, I can still talk to my parents right?

ANDRE

Not on my phone and he better not bring his ass over here to pick you up. I said you're not leaving.

PATRICIA

Andre I'm a little confused, I thought you said you were packing up my shit so I can leave.

ANDRE

I changed my mind so go sit your ass down!

PATRICIA

(sits down)

This has got to be some sort of kidnapping or unlawful detention.

ANDRE

This ain't no damn kidnapping, you're my wife! Look you can call it what you like but you better not leave.

Patricia just stands there momentarily so Andre forces her to sit in the seat.

ANDRE

You seem to have forgotten your most important wedding vow. Remember when you stood up there and said, "Until death do us part?" I believe in that vow. Those other two whores I married forgot about that vow too.

PATRICIA

Andre I think you're forgetting that there are other vows that go with that and I think they're all equally important. I believe, in fact I know, "to love and to honor" comes before that.

ANDRE

Yeah right Patricia, whatever! I said that it's the most important one to me because the only thing that should separate us is death.

PATRICIA

Look Andre I'm tired of trying to please you. You don't appreciate anything I do for you. Sometimes you treat me like a Queen and those are our best times together. Other times you treat me like street trash. You're like a Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Every day I wake up I wonder which one you're going to be.

ANDRE

Girl you need to stop watching all them damn talk shows and reading them stupid novels. You definitely need to stay away from those two crazy-ass friends of yours because they fill your head with all this shit. They try to make you believe I am some sort of monster and you feed into that crap.

PATRICIA

Well I am really starting to believe what everyone is telling me about you and I don't just mean my friends and my parents. Andre you will never change and I will never have any peace here. I don't want the baby coming up in a volatile environment. The vicious cycle stops here!

ANDRE

(Strikes Patricia)

Shut up! If my mother talked to my father like you're talking to me she would have been picking up her teeth. He taught me to do whatever it takes to control your woman. I used to hate him for hitting my mother. Later on when my mother pulled me away from him I started hating my mother. Once I started dating everything he told me started making sense. I think these nightmares are him talking to me from the grave.

PATRICIA

So your father taught you to abuse women basically.

ANDRE

He kicked my ass often too to toughen me up. He said I was not going to be no punk. He said if I couldn't control a woman by any means necessary then I am less than a man.

PATRICIA

Andre you really need some help and I don't think you're going to get it from that Anger Management Program.

ANDRE

You better not tell me what I need. I need an obedient wife!

PATRICIA

Well I called the police Andre and they are on the way.

ANDRE

Big deal you called the police. I'll be right back out and your ugly ass will be right here waiting for me, just like always. I told you nobody else wants you.

PATRICIA

Not this time Andre. I'm pressing charges on you this time. I just can't handle this anymore. I guess maybe then you can get the help you need.

ANDRE

You'll pay for all the shit you put me through.

PATRICIA

Andre the shit I put you through?

ANDRE

Yeah you heard me bitch!

PATRICIA

I will not live in fear of you. Furthermore I am not a bitch or a whore. I am a strong and beautiful African-American woman. Now I am going to wait here for the police to get here then I am going to gather up my things and go.

(MORE)

PATRICIA (cont'd)
When you get out this time I will
not be coming back. I don't want
this anymore.

Andre begins to choke Patricia.

PATRICIA
(Gagging, barely audible)
Andre I can't breathe!

ANDRE
I told you "Until Death Do Us Part"
and I meant it so if you want to
leave me Maybe I should kill your
ass!

Patricia struggles and fights to get Andre off her but she
appears to be slowly fading out. Suddenly there is a POP.
Andre loosens his grip and drops to one knee.

ANDRE
(Holding his stomach)
You shot me bitch!

He tries to grab Patricia again. Patricia starts pulling the
trigger repeatedly but the gun is empty and only clicks.
Andre collapses. Patricia screams and jumps around with the
gun still in her hand. Officer McNeil, Officer Powell and
several other uniformed officers bust into the apartment with
guns drawn.

OFFICER MCNEIL
Patricia put the gun down! Patricia
wisely drops the gun.

PATRICIA
He was going to kill me!

Officer Powell kneels down and checks Andre's pulse. She
looks up at the other officers and shakes her head no meaning
there is no pulse. She gets up and approaches Patricia with
her handcuffs out.

OFFICER POWELL
(Shakes her head)
Patricia I know you're pregnant but
I have to do this. It's standard
procedure to cuff all suspects.

OFFICER MCNEIL

(Talks on his two-way)
Dispatch this is Officer McNeil,
roll rescue to this location for a
man down and unresponsive with at
least one gunshot wound. Possible
one eighty-seven. Response is code
three. One female suspect in
custody.

DISPATCHER (V.O)

Confirming the male is down and the
female is in custody?

OFFICER MCNEIL

That's affirmative Dispatch!

Officer Powell handcuffs Patricia with her hands in front of
her.

PATRICIA

(Still hysterical)
He was going to kill me!

Officer Powell reads Patricia her rights.

PATRICIA

He was going to kill me!

Patricia's father comes running into the apartment with his
bat.

CHARLES

Did that son of a bitch hurt my
daughter?

Charles peers over and sees Andre laying on the floor in a
puddle of blood.

CHARLES

Oh my God, what happened?

PATRICIA

Daddy he was going to kill me.

CHARLES

Baby don't say anything else!

Officer McNeil takes the bat from Charles and starts moving
him slowly back out of the apartment.

CHARLES

Wait wait wait! Why are you all
arresting my daughter?

OFFICER MCNEIL

Your daughter is a suspect in the shooting of Andre Robinson.

Now you are welcome to come down to the station but this Apartment is now officially a crime scene and therefore off limits. Two Paramedics rush in to attempt CPR on Andre but it appears to be too late.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DR. MORGAN'S OFFICE AT THE PRISON - LATE AFTERNOON

We go back to Dr. Morgan's office where Patricia is telling her story. Patricia is visibly upset and crying.

PATRICIA

That's pretty much it. Now I am here doing time for it. I had a baby boy who I named Marcus since I have been incarcerated.

DR. MORGAN

Where is Marcus now?

PATRICIA

My parents have been taking care of him. They bring him here for me to see him sometimes. Now I do love Marcus Doctor Morgan but every time I see him I see Andre. He favors Andre a lot. Marcus also reminds me of the vicious rape. I never told anyone but you about how he was really conceived. Not even my parents. At first I didn't want him to see me in here but my parents said it was important to bond with him and establish a relationship with him. He's already starting out with no father.

DR. MORGAN

How does that make you feel? I mean it seems to me that raising Marcus is going to be a big challenge of course knowing what you went through and having him constantly reminding you of Andre.

PATRICIA

Well I would never take my anger out on him or abuse him, that's for sure.

(MORE)

PATRICIA (cont'd)

I hope he never experiences or witnesses the violence I experienced or the violence his father obviously experienced. I will raise Marcus right and teach him to respect women and treat women well. The vicious cycle ends here.

DR. MORGAN

How does finally telling your story make you feel?

PATRICIA

Oh God Doctor Morgan it feels great. It feels like I just lifted a huge weight off my shoulders. I guess I really wanted to tell it all along but didn't know how.

DR. MORGAN

Well it's certainly one of the more powerful stories I have heard. (Pause) So do you feel there are any long-term effects from the abuse and if so what do you feel they are?

She looks at the Doctor sort of confused.

PATRICIA

Well I do have nightmares about Andre coming after me.

DR. MORGAN

Those are probably similar to Andre's nightmares ironically. They may never go away.

PATRICIA

I wish they would go away. I'm getting used to them though and they don't really bother me as much anymore. I still feel like it was self defense. I kind of feel like Sharon Walker in a way. Andre is gone forever and will never put me or any other woman through this again. I just wish I didn't have to be here for it. I think if the cops would have got there a little sooner they would have seen Andre choking the life out of me.

DR. MORGAN
(Writing notes)
I see.

PATRICIA
So what is your assessment or
should I say diagnosis of me? Am I
crazy?

DR. MORGAN
Oh no Patricia I think you're fine.
I think you're very strong and
should be able to get through this.

PATRICIA
This program is brand new right?

DR. MORGAN
Well it's new to this prison but it
has been fairly successful in other
prisons throughout the country. You
just made it through the very first
and most important step in the
program. Telling your story.
(Pause) You feel ready to tell it
to the group?

PATRICIA
Yeah I feel like I can tell it to
the world.

DR. MORGAN
When would you like to tell your
story? (Pauses, checks his
calendar) Hold on, it looks like I
will be gone a couple of days next
week but I will be here Monday
Wednesday and Friday.

PATRICIA
Let's make it Monday. I don't want
to wait too long.

DR. MORGAN
(Writes on the calendar)
Okay should I pencil you in or ink
you in?

PATRICIA
What difference does it make?

DR. MORGAN

Well if I put you down I don't want to hear that four letter word come out of your mouth.

PATRICIA

I'm sorry Doctor Morgan but I do curse sometimes.

DR. MORGAN

I'm not talking about a four-letter curse word I'm talking about the one that's even worse around here. P-A-S-S.

PATRICIA

You won't hear me say that, I feel ready to do this.

INT. THE WOMEN'S PRISON - MONDAY MORNING

Patricia has just finished telling her story to the group. There isn't a dry eye in the joint except for Doctor Morgan's. There is a pause and silence for a few minutes. Suddenly the silence is broken with applause. The women give Patricia a standing ovation.

DR. MORGAN

I hope you all are applauding because it was a powerful story and not because she killed Andre.

INT. THE WOMEN'S PRISON - ABOUT ONE MONTH LATER - MORNING

Patricia is with her LAWYER. Two prison guards are also present and stand by with a watchful eye.

PATRICIA

I hope you have some good news for me. I am tired of this hell hole.

LAWYER

Right now I actually do have some wonderful news for you.

PATRICIA

What is it?

LAWYER

I personally wanted to take the opportunity to tell you that you have successfully completed this program and have been scheduled for release.

PATRICIA
(Getting excited)
Released from the program or
released from prison?

LAWYER
Actually you will be released from
both. You already completed the
state mandated program. You will be
receiving a full pardon from the
Governor. Patricia you will be
fully exonerated.

PATRICIA
Oh my God that's so great!

LAWYER
It seems Andre liked to tape you in
your home. I guess it was his way
of keeping an eye on you. He
actually had quite a bit of
footage, from a small surveillance
camera. The camera was rolling the
day of the shooting. It was sitting
in the evidence room at a precinct
for all this time. An officer
booked it into evidence and it was
sitting in a box all this time.

PATRICIA
None of that will go public right?!
I mean it won't end up on the
internet

LAWYER
Well, I am pretty sure it will stay
private. But there is a bigger
picture here. You will soon be
free!

PATRICIA
Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! I
can't wait to see Marcus, my best
friends and my mom and dad!

Patricia jumps for joy, hugs her Lawyer and begins to cry.

LAWYER
I am very proud of you. You deserve
this. Congratulations.

INT. EVENING SCOPE NEWS PROGRAM STUDIO - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

GOVERNOR WALSH, Dr. Morgan, the News Reporter, ROBERT CASSIDY, Patricia, Carol and the Lawyer are in a large television studio.

ROBERT CASSIDY

(Looks into the camera)

Good evening I am Bob Cassidy and this is the Evening Scope News Program. My guests include: Governor Walsh, Doctor Morgan from Hanford Women's Correctional Facility and Carol and Patricia who were recently released from Hanford under a new rehabilitation program. (Pause) I guess I'll start with you Doctor Morgan. How successful do you feel this state mandated program will be?

DR. MORGAN

I think the program has great potential. I mean it's a fairly new program for our facility so I cannot give you numbers or statistics but it has been successful in other states.

ROBERT CASSIDY

What do you feel will be the key to making your program more successful than other rehabilitation programs? We all know that many of these programs fail.

DR. MORGAN

Well I'm sure you would agree that we cannot just lock criminals up without giving them some sort of extensive and intensive rehabilitation. Prison alone will not address the physical and psychological trauma many of these women deal with.

ROBERT CASSIDY

What do you tell skeptics who don't believe any program can help these criminals? Why should society live in fear of these pedophiles, rapists and serial killers that you all insist on putting in these programs and releasing?

GOVERNOR WALSH

Look our prisons are already full. We continue to spend millions of dollars building more prisons. At the rate we're going there will be twice as many prisons as schools and colleges. That puts a heavy burden on our state. We feel it is of utmost importance to find programs like this so we can rehabilitate and successfully return prisoners back in society.

ROBERT CASSIDY

Now you two young ladies were tried and convicted in a court of law for taking the lives of your husbands. Now that's murder. Would any of you like to comment?

PATRICIA

Yes I would.

ROBERT CASSIDY

Go ahead umm Carol?

PATRICIA

No it's Patricia. I would like to say you left out one very important piece of information. They were our abusive husbands. We paid for what we did even though our sentences were shortened. This program has helped us cope with the mental anguish and pain we feel for what happened. Many of us were imprisoned by our husbands for many years and in most cases killed them only in self defense.

ROBERT CASSIDY

Why don't these women just leave?

CAROL WITHERSPOON

It's not always that easy Mr. Cassidy.

DR. MORGAN

There are many reasons women stay with there abusive husbands.

(MORE)

DR. MORGAN (cont'd)

Some believe their husbands will change, some are literally brainwashed by their husbands and some simply have nowhere else to go or nobody else to turn to. The psychological abuse can be life long. I have seen some of them whose state of mind could be likened to a "shell shocked" war veteran. Those of course would not be released.

GOVERNOR WALSH

Myself, my staff and an independent civilian review board check and review the files of every inmate set for release early from any program. We reject many files. For instance there was a third female that did very well in the program that we could not release.

ROBERT CASSIDY

Why?

GOVERNOR WALSH

She went back to her abusive husband specifically to kill him. She was charged with premeditated murder. This is not giving women the green light to kill their spouses or boyfriends.

ROBERT CASSIDY

I would like to thank all of you for talking with The Evening Scope News Program. I wish you two young ladies luck. (Pauses, turns back to the camera) In our next segment we will be talking to some high level Police Officers on the subject of Police Misconduct in the Bay Area. We'll be right back after a commercial break so please stay tuned. (Pause) Okay folks that's a wrap.

PATRICIA

What the hell is your problem?

DR. MORGAN

Patricia no!

PATRICIA

Well he just demonized us on national television! We already been through enough bull...

DR. MORGAN

Patricia!

PATRICIA (CONT.)

. . . Crap!

ROBERT CASSIDY

Hey I'm just doing my job. Those were tough questions that needed to be asked. Now I am sorry if I offended you but this segment is over. The network will be returning here in thirty seconds.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

(Pulls Patricia's arm)

Come on Patricia let's just go. He ain't worth it.

DR. MORGAN

(Gathers his papers)

Let's get going. We don't want any trouble.

The Governor leaves. The Doctor walks out with the girls. Patricia turns round and tries to head back, perhaps to curse Robert out. Doctor Morgan and Carol grab her and escort her out. The Police Officers arrive for the next segment and are seated.

ROBERT CASSIDY

(Adjusts his tie)

Boy am I glad to see you guys. I thought I was going to have to call you guys up here earlier. I bet that one will end up right back in prison.

DR. MORGAN

Patricia you have got to control that temper.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Yeah girl don't trip so much.

INT. A BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER - ONE WEEK LATER - EVENING

Patricia is concluding her speech to a group of battered women.

We pan around the room slowly and show their bruised faces. Ironically it's the same shelter that is run by Gina Perkins. Carol is also there.

PATRICIA

Remember what I said tonight. Every fifteen seconds a woman is abused in this country. Domestic Violence is one of the leading causes for injuries to women ages fifteen to forty-four. There are over two thousand women in prisons and correctional facilities for killing their abusive husbands.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Ladies don't become a statistic or a victim. Make a change in your life because he won't change.

GINA PERKINS

(Clapping her hands)
Thank you for coming out. Your speech was very powerful.

The battered women give Patricia and Carol a standing ovation.

GINA PERKINS

I have good news for all of you. Patricia has been kind enough to bring us copies of her best seller: "Deceptive Vows." She will be at the back table autographing copies. I read the book and it is certainly a wonderful book.

PATRICIA

My publicist told me that some Producers want to make my book into a movie.

Once again there is loud applause.

PATRICIA

They want to change the title to "A Scorned Woman" but I actually like "Deceptive Vows" better. Hey as long as they tell the story like the book and compensate me fairly for it I don't care if they call it "Shitty Vows."

The women all laugh.

PATRICIA

No seriously ladies, this goes beyond the money fame and glory. Now I do feel fortunate to have all this success, but I still have a mission. I promise to stay focused on that mission with "Military-Like" diligence.

The women once again give Patricia a standing ovation.

PATRICIA

I would like to introduce you all to my father Charles, my mother Donna, my son Marcus and last but definitely not least my two best friends Yvette and Vanessa. My family and friends have been there for me throughout this whole ordeal. I couldn't have made it without their continuing support.

The women applaud as Patricia signals her family and friends to stand up. Patricia, Carol and Gina make their way to the back. They shake hands and hug their way to the back. Patricia sits at the table and begins signing and giving out books. She is practically mobbed by the women.

CAROL WITHERSPOON

Well gee, I sure hope I can get a book or movie deal.

PATRICIA

Maybe you will and maybe you won't but what matters is we stay focused and on course.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA - EVENING.

Patricia steps out of a limo with her family, her friends and Carol. She walks on the red carpet along with various other stars and actors.

She just stands there a while and looks up at the movie Marquee that reads, "Deceptive Vows." A tear streams down her face. Hundreds of people are there yelling Patricia's name.

INT. PATRICIA'S NEW NICE HOME - MORNING

Marcus is having a temper tantrum on the floor of the living room. He is yelling and refusing to eat his food.

MARCUS

No I don't want to!

PATRICIA

Marcus get your ass in here now!

Marcus continues to yell and have his tantrum. Patricia throws the plate of food down and it crashes to the floor. She practically snarls showing her teeth. She goes after Marcus with her fists balled up. The action stops before she actually is seen doing anything to Marcus.

THE FINAL THOUGHTS: (CAN APPEAR ON SCREEN OR BE NARRATED)

Many of the laws that deal with the issue of domestic violence made major changes in the nineties. There were new laws put in place to better protect the victim and give Law Enforcement Officials more authority when investigating cases of domestic violence. A suspect can be arrested immediately if a victim shows any physical or visual signs of abuse. No questions asked. Great attention was given to this issue during the now infamous O.J. Simpson trial. Since then other laws have been implemented but domestic violence continues to be a major problem in today's society. If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship please have them contact their local Law Enforcement Agency, Social Service Agency or National or local Domestic Violence hot lines.

FADE OUT:

THE END