

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

Written by
Lisa Cholodenko & Stuart Blumberg

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. SCREENPLAY © 2010 BY TKA ALRIGHT LLC/UGC PH. NO PORTION OF THIS SCRIPT MAY BE PERFORMED, PUBLISHED, REPRODUCED, SOLD OR DISTRIBUTED BY ANY MEANS, OR QUOTED OR PUBLISHED IN ANY MEDIUM, INCLUDING ANY WEB SITE, WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT OF FOCUS FEATURES LLC. DISPOSAL OF THIS SCRIPT COPY DOES NOT ALTER ANY OF THE RESTRICTIONS SET FORTH ABOVE.

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

by

Lisa Cholodenko & Stuart Blumberg

June 12, 2009 - WHITE
June 24, 2009 - BLUE REVISION
June 30, 2009 - PINK REVISION
August 3, 2009 - GOLDENROD REVISION

1 FADE UP ON: 1

The humming stillness of an American suburb on a summer's day: nannies push strollers, joggers jog, mailmen deliver, dogs are walked, kids shoot hoop in wide open driveways.

On a quiet, tree-lined street we pick up two young athletic-looking boys riding bikes. LASER ALLGOOD (15) and his friend, CLAY (15).

Like bats out of hell they pass block after block of charming, evenly spaced houses until they round a corner and drop their bikes in front of a large ranch house.

2 INT. CLAY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER 2

They walk inside. We HEAR a baseball game on TV in another room.

3 INT. CLAY'S, BATHROOM - LATER 3

Clay pounds on blue pills with a hammer, reducing them to powder. Laser watches.

LASER

I don't know, dude.

Clay cuts the powder into lines with a school ID card.

CLAY

B minus in geometry, yo! This shits the bomb!

Clay rolls up a dollar bill and takes a snort. Then hands the rolled up bill to Laser.

CLAY (CONT'D)

Add it up, son.

Laser takes the bill, bends over and snorts a line.

4 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - GIRL'S BEDROOM - DAY 4

Part Oxford reading room, part teenage girl's lair. Leaning against the bed we see JONI ALLGOOD (18). It's her room. She pours over a game of Scrabble.

Sitting next to Joni is her best girl friend, SASHA, (18). Sasha's checking out Joni's FACEBOOK PAGE.

Joni's best guy friend, JAI (18) sits across from her, calculating his next Scrabble move.

SASHA

Oh my God, Joni, there are so many hotties in your class. You are so gonna hook up the first week.

JAI

Just cause you're a 24 hour drive-thru doesn't mean everyone else has to be...

SASHA

Hey, she worked her ass off! She deserves some hot jock sausage!

Jai looks repulsed, and hurt.

SASHA (CONT'D)

(flip)

Whatever. Why don't you guys just do it and get it over with?

Joni and Jai blush. They're both too scared to admit their crush on each other.

SASHA (CONT'D)

What? I'm just asking.

JAI

Uh, maybe because we're friends...

SASHA

Oh, really...?

Sasha turns to Joni like an agent provocateur.

INT. CLAY'S HOUSE - TV ROOM - LATER

Laser and Clay wrestle on the floor while Clay's DAD watches a baseball game on TV. They bump into the couch. Clay's dad looks back, menacing.

CLAY'S FATHER

Hey, ladies! Take it down a notch.

The boys keep wrestling, wired from the pills. Again, they knock into the couch. Clay's dad spins around, pissed.

CLAY'S FATHER (CONT'D)

What did I just say?!

The Dad grabs Clay, pulls him off of Laser and over the couch. He gets his son in a headlock, forcing the boy's face into his big fat sweaty armpit. Both Dad and Clay enjoy the brutal play. Clay laughs manically.

CLAY

Let me go!

CLAY'S FATHER

Don't do the crime if you can't do
the time.

CLAY

Dad, your pits smell like burnt
ass! Get off me!

As Laser observes this male-bonding between father and son, we note a trace of longing on his face.

6 OMITTED. 6

7 OMITTED. 7

8 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - DINING ROOM 8

Joni, Laser and JULES ALLGOOD (40's) fair-skinned, attractive, sit before well prepared dinner. Still buzzing, Laser taps his fingers incessantly on the table.

JONI

Laser! Knock it off!

LASER

What?! I'm not doing anything.

9 EXT. HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - MAGIC HOUR 9

NIC ALLGOOD (late 40's) pulls up into the driveway beside a beat up white TRUCK covered in AA slogan bumper stickers.

10 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING 10

Nic enters. Drops her bag and heads for the table.

NIC

Hi guys. Sorry I'm late.

JULES
Don't worry. We just started.

NIC
27 fibroids. All in the lining.

She kisses Jules.

JULES
Honey, that's disgusting. We're eating.

JONI
Did you do that laparoscopically?

NIC
That's right, Smart Girl. And we got 'em all.

As Nic settles in...

NIC (CONT'D)
Hey, whose truck is that?

JULES
Mine.

NIC
Yours?

JULES
For the business.

NIC
What business?..
(getting edgy)
The gardening?

JONI
(protective)
Isn't it landscaping.

JULES
Yes, thank you very much.

NIC
(strained)
Okay...
(then)
Do we have any Cabernet left?

JULES
I didn't look, honey.

Nic gets up and goes to the kitchen for wine. Laser's cell phone RINGS. He answers it.

LASER
Hey, what's up?

Jules puts her hand on Laser's arm.

JULES
Laser, no phone calls at the table.

LASER
(into phone)
Lemme hit you back.

Laser hangs up. Nic re-enters with a large glass of red.

NIC
(sitting down)
Who was that?

LASER
Nobody. Clay.

Jules and Nic share a look. Jules starts making maternal windshield wiper strokes with her thumb on Laser's arm.

JULES
Can I ask you something?
What do you get from your
relationship with Clay?

LASER
What do you mean, "get"?

Laser looks down at Jules' thumb on his arm.

JULES
Do you feel like he's the kind of
person who will help you grow?

LASER
Mom, you're windshield wiping me.

NIC
Hey, did you start on those thank-
you notes for your birthday gifts?

JONI
Not yet. But I will...

NIC
I just think it's easier to knock
them out when it's fresh.

JONI
Yeah, I know, I'll do them tonight.

NIC
Great...I mean, you don't want to
have to start with an apology. You
know? Then it's embarrassing.

JULES
Okay, honey. She got it. Let it
go.

NIC
Okay, I'll let it go...
(then)
I mean, if it was up to you, our
kids wouldn't even write thank-you
notes, they'd just send out good
vibes.

Nic takes another swig of vino and smiles at Joni through
increasingly plum-stained teeth.

NIC (CONT'D)
I can't believe my baby's 18.

JULES
I know...

NIC
(devolving into baby talk)
Big girl. You're a big girl...

JONI
Mom...

Joni mimes wiping her teeth. Embarrassed, Nic starts licking
at her stained teeth.

11 INT. JONI'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

11

As Joni cranks out thank-you notes, Laser enters.

JONI
What?

Laser looks nervous.

LASER
Have you thought any more about,
you know, making that call...?

JONI
Yeah. I don't want to.

LASER
Okay...I was just wondering if you
changed your mind.

JONI
I haven't.

He starts to leave, but her answer bugs him. He turns back.

LASER
How can you not even be curious?

JONI
Sorry, Laser. I just don't want
to, okay? I'm leaving soon and I
don't want to deal with that right
now.

(co-dependent leak)
And also, that could really hurt
moms' feelings...

LASER
God, why do you worry about them so
much? They don't even have to know
about it!

JONI
Look, you can do it when you turn
18, okay?

LASER
I never ask you for anything.

Laser walks out of the room. Joni feels horrible.

12 INT. NIC AND JULES BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

12

Nic and Jules lay in bed watching TV, unwinding from the day.

NIC
I just don't understand why you
bought the truck *now*.

JULES
Because if I'm starting this
business I need something to haul
my equipment in.

NIC
Okay. It just seems a little
cart before the horse.

JULES
What does that mean?

NIC
Sweetie, you don't even have any
clients yet.

JULES
Well you're the one who's always
telling me to "act as if!"

NIC
(back peddling)
That's true. I do. You're right.

The women settle back. Nic sees Jules feels bad.

NIC (CONT'D)
Look, I'm sorry. It's good you
bought the truck. Its proactive.

Nic caresses Jules' arm, wanting to make it better.

NIC (CONT'D)
Hey...

Jules doesn't look at Nic. She keeps her eyes on the T.V.

NIC (CONT'D)
Wanna watch a movie?

Jules perks up. Nic immediately regrets her suggestion.

JULES
A movie-movie?

NIC
Yeah. We haven't done that in a
while.

MINUTES LATER -- NIC AND JULES

are cozied up side-by-side facing the TV.

ANGLE ON - THE TV

The volume is turned low on TWO NAKED MEN lying on a *chaise longue*. One guy fellingating the other.

13 INT. STAIRCASE - SAME

13

Joni tiptoes up a dark staircase and enters an office off the mom's bedroom. She heads for the desk and stealthy opens a drawer. She rummages though with clear intention.

She pulls out a FOLDER and studies the cover. We see the words: "***Pacific Cryo Clinic: Bringing your dreams to life.***"

14 INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

14

ANGLE ON - THE BED

We now only see Nic. Jules has slipped under the blanket, and is now between Nic's legs. We see Nic trying to get into it, but having a hard time.

NIC

I don't like the guys in this one.
They're too shaved.

JULES

Don't focus on it.

NIC

How about the one with the biker
gang?

JULES

We left it in Hawaii.

Jules wrestles with the blankets. Wants them out of her way.

NIC

(pulling them back up)
I'm cold, honey.

JULES

Sorry. I couldn't breathe.

Jules wrangles the blankets, trying to cover her partner. The transition is awkward and Jules gets caught in the top sheet. As Nic repositions herself, she leans on the VOLUME CONTROL BUTTON and suddenly the porn is blasting at full volume.

MAN IN MOVIE

Suck that fat cock mother-fucker...

NIC

Shit!! Where's the remote?!

MAN IN MOVIE

I'm gonna fuck that tight ass!...

Jules and Nic both dive for the remote. It's lost under the mass of bedding. They struggle to find it as the grunting and 70's disco music blares.

15 INT. OFFICE - JONI 15

Joni turns to the wall, confused. She hears the porno music pulsing though.

16 INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 16

Nic finally recovers the remote and hits mute.

NIC

Jesus Christ!

Nic flops back, traumatized.

NIC (CONT'D)

The whole neighborhood heard that!

JULES

No, they didn't.

NIC

Well, *that* was a vibe kill.

Jules looks defeated.

17 INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 17

Joni turns back to the file on the desk. She flips through some pages of documents and stops. CLOSE ON a PHOTO of a 4 YEAR-OLD BOY standing in a sandbox looking straight into a camera with a big, open grin.

MATCH CUT TO:

18 EXT. FARM - DAY

18

We see that boy, 35 years later, carrying a box of tomatoes and putting them in the back of a truck. This is PAUL, Joni and Laser's biological father.

19 INT. PAUL'S RESTAURANT - "WYSIWYG" - DAY

19

Paul walks in carrying the box of tomatoes. He approaches TANYA, (30's) the restaurant's super sexy hostess.

PAUL

How you doing, foxy?

TANYA

Mm, flapjack, you're smelling ripe.

PAUL

Oh, sorry...

TANYA

No, I like it. It's earthy.

PAUL

What can I say. I've just been out there, you know...hoe-ing.

(looking at the seating chart)

How's it looking tonight?

They stand close to each other, peering at the chart.

TANYA

Gonna be tight.

PAUL

Really...

Paul's cell rings. He gives Tanya a hand squeeze and heads for the kitchen, answering.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Hello.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hi, is this Paul Hatfield?

PAUL

It is. Who's this?

WOMAN'S VOICE
My name is Wendy Minter. I'm
calling from The Pacific Cryobank.

PAUL
Okay. What can I do for you?

WENDY
I just need to confirm that you
donated sperm with us between 1991
and 1993.

At the mention of the word sperm, Paul goes pale.

PAUL
Yeah...I did a little bit of that
back then...

20 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 20

Paul enters. The kitchen is humming with COOKS prepping for
the dinner rush. He looks around for a quiet spot.

WENDY
As you know the Cryobank has a
confidentiality policy which
prohibits us from releasing your
identity without your consent.

A cook, MARGO, approaches Paul to speak with him. Paul nods:
"Can't talk." Hands her the box of tomatoes.

PAUL
Uh-huh.

Paul heads to the back of the kitchen, searching for privacy.

21 INT. PANTRY - SAME 21

Paul moves into the pantry, finds the farthest corner.

WENDY (O.S.)
Well we've been contacted by a
young woman conceived using your
semen, and she's asked if you'd be
open to having contact with her.

Paul's speechless.

19 OMITTED 19

13.

22 INT. TANYA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 22

Paul and Tanya enjoy a hot, sweaty fuck.

23 LATER THAT NIGHT 23

Paul gets dressed while Tanya lays on her messy bed.

TANYA

You must of figured you'd get a
call at some point.

PAUL

Not really. I mean I was 19 when I
did it. It was so long ago...I
just figured no one actually used
my stuff.

Tanya moves closer to him, flirty.

TANYA

Why? I'd use it.

PAUL

(ignoring the innuendo)
This is so weird. I mean, a part
of me's really curious...

TANYA

So what are you gonna do?

PAUL

I don't know.

24 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - DINING ROOM 24

Joni and Jules play scrabble at the table. Joni's cell
rings. She grabs it off the counter and answers.

JONI

Hello?

25 EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY 25

Paul anxiously paces his overgrown back-yard on his cell
phone. He picks weeds as he talks. Conversation intercut.

PAUL
Hi, I'm looking for Joni Allgood.

JONI
This is she...

PAUL
Hi. This is Paul...
(clearing his throat)
Uh, your donor...?

JONI
Oh! Hi...

Joni shoots up out of her chair and starts leaving the room to get some privacy away from her mom.

PAUL
Is this a good time to talk?

JONI
(flustered)
Yeah...

JULES
Where are you going? It's your turn.

Joni doesn't answer. She just walks out to her backyard.

PAUL
So...
(doesn't know what to say)
How are you?

JONI
I'm good. How are you?

PAUL
I'm well, thanks.

Banal, awkward pause. Paul jumps in to fill the void.

PAUL (CONT'D)
So, Wendy at the Cryobank said you call--

Joni cuts in, nervous and businesslike.

JONI
 Actually, my brother asked if I'd call you because I'm 18 and he's only 15 which is too young to call-- anyway, he'd like to meet you...if you want to...

PAUL
 (thrown)
 Your brother?

JONI
 Yeah. Well, technically my half-brother. Each of my moms had a kid, you know, with your sperm...

PAUL
 No. I didn't know.

JONI
 Oh.

PAUL
 Both of them?

JONI
 Yeah.

PAUL
 Like in two?

JONI
 Uh huh. Like in gay.

PAUL
 Good deal. I love lesbians.

Paul cringes at his lameness. Joni doesn't know what to say.

26 OMITTED. 26

27 EXT. "WYSIWYG", PARKING LOT - NEXT DAY 27

Joni and Laser get out of the car and head to the restaurant to meet Paul. They're both clearly nervous.

JONI
 I just don't want you to have big expectations.

LASER

Will you quit saying that? I don't have any expectations.

JONI

Okay. I'm just saying he might be weird. I mean, he donated sperm...

LASER

Well if he hadn't done it, you wouldn't be here. So respect, yo!

28 INT. "WYSIWYG" - DAY

28

Paul sits alone at a table facing the entrance. He nervously checks the door as customers enter.

MINUTES LATER-

Joni and Laser enter the restaurant. They look nervous too.

ANGLE ON PAUL

He studies them for a beat, sees them looking around. Figures they must be "his kids." They look in his direction, spot him. He raises his hand, stands. They walk over.

The moment is rife. Paul holds out his hand to Joni.

PAUL

Joni. Hey. Nice to meet you.

JONI

Nice to meet you too.

Paul holds out a hand to Laser.

PAUL

And Laser, right?

LASER

Right.

PAUL

Very cool name.

LASER

Thanks.

PAUL
Thanks for making the trek all the way over here.

No one knows what comes next.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Cool, I got a table set up for us out here...

Paul turns and leads them out to the outdoor dining area.

29

EXT. OUTDOOR DINING AREA - MINUTES LATER

29

They all sit eating. Paul can't help but study their faces.

PAUL
Listen, feel free and ask me anything you want, okay?
(off their stares)
Or we can just hang out. That's fine too. Whatever you guys want.

LASER/JONI
Okay.

Paul presses on, trying to break the ice.

PAUL
Anything you want to ask me, Laser?

LASER
I...uh...I didn't really have any specific questions...

PAUL
(helping him out)
That's fine. I'd love to know about you guys. What about you, Joni? What are you up to?

JONI
Uh, well, I just graduated high school. I'm starting college in the fall.

PAUL
Oh yeah? Congratulations.

LASER
Joni's the brains in the family.
She won a National Merit
Scholarship.

PAUL
Shut the front door!

LASER
Yeah. And she got like an 800 on
her Verbal SAT.

JONI
Okay, Laser...

LASER
What? I'm just saying you're
really smart.

JONI
No, I just work harder than you.

PAUL
Don't stress it, Laze. School
wasn't my thing either and I turned
out okay.

LASER
(re: his name)
Laser.

PAUL
I'm sorry. Laser.
(beat)
So tell me about you, Laser. What
are you into?

Laser freezes. So his sister jumps in.

JONI
Laser's an amazing athlete.

PAUL
Oh yeah?

LASER
Did you play any sports in school?

PAUL
I played a little basketball in
junior high.

LASER

That's it?

PAUL

Pretty much. The whole "team" thing got on my nerves, you know like, "*Hey, let's go kick some ass, man!*" What about you?

LASER

I play some Soccer. Basketball. Baseball. You know, team sports.

Paul realizes he's put his foot in his mouth.

PAUL

Hey, I wasn't bagging teams in general. Teams are great. I'm just weird like that.

LASER

Yeah, I like teams.

We can tell Laser is growing frustrated at his inability to connect with Paul. Joni jumps in.

JONI

So this is your place?

PAUL

Yeah, I've been working on it for a while. I also have this organic co-op farm down the road. We use a lot of the stuff we grow there for the restaurant.

JONI

(excited)

That's so cool. I'm totally into local.

LASER

(busting her)

You are?

JONI

Uh, yeah Laser! I've been like trying to get moms to buy local for forever.

Laser tries again to reconnect.

LASER

So, like, do you raise pigs and stuff?

PAUL

No. No pigs...

(beat)

But it's a great spot. You guys should come check it out sometime.

JONI

Yeah...Definitely...

Excited, Joni turns to Laser. He seems uninterested.

30

EXT. WYSIWYG, PARKING LOT - DAY

30

The kids and Paul exit the restaurant. Paul walks to a classic BMW motorcycle. Lasers tries to hide his awe.

LASER

Is that yours?

PAUL

Yeah. You like motorcycles?

LASER

Yeah, but...our moms are kind of anti-motorcycle.

JONI

And by "kind of" he means they'd kill us if we ever rode one.

PAUL

That's too bad. They're fun.

Time to say goodbye. Again, no one knows the protocol here. After an awkward beat, Paul holds out his arms for hugs.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Well it was great to meet you guys.

He and Joni hug.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I hope this was okay.

JONI

Yeah...totally...thank you.

Now Paul and Laser share a somewhat awkward man-hug.

PAUL
Really nice to meet you, Laser.

LASER
Yeah.

Joni gives a quick wave to Paul. She turns to go and Laser follows. Paul watches them walk away. He looks stirred up by the meeting.

31 INT. JONI'S CAR - DAY

31

Joni and Laser head back home.

JONI
I just never pictured him that way.
I just...I don't know...He was so
cool and interesting. I can't
believe that was him...He was so
nice, you know?...

LASER
I guess...

JONI
You guess?

LASER
Yeah...

JONI
God, Laser! You're the one that
wanted to meet him so bad!

LASER
I know.

JONI
Well what did you think of him?

LASER
I don't know. He seemed kind of
into himself.

30 OMITTED

30

Nic and Jules are cuddled up affectionately on the couch watching cable. They see Laser on his way out of the house.

JULES

Hey bug, come here. We're watching
"Locked Up Abroad: Uganda."

LASER

I saw it. It was gnarly.

NIC

Where are you going?

LASER

Clay's.

Jules and Nic shoot each other a concerned look.

NIC

Don't be back late, okay?

LASER

I know.

JULES

Can I have a hug before you go?

LASER

Mom...

JULES

Just a quick one. Please!

LASER

Hug her. That's what she's there
for.

Laser leaves. Nic hits mute on the TV, looks at Jules.

NIC

Ugh. Maybe we should just sit him
down and ask him already.

JULES

What? "Are you and Clay fucking?"

NIC

"Exploring" is the word I'd use...

JULES

And what if he is "exploring?"
This is the age for that. Why
should we care?

NIC

We shouldn't...

(then)

I just don't understand why he's
exploring with that loser.

JULES

Look, we don't even know what the
deal is. We're jumping to
conclusions.

NIC

I feel like he has so much
potential and he's just wasting it.

Nic's comment hits a nerve in Jules.

JULES

What are you trying to say?

NIC

What do you mean, what am I trying
to say?

JULES

It feels like there's some subtext
here.

NIC

What are you talking about?

JULES

I don't know: Like mother like son?
Is that it? Both of us aimless,
wandering in the darkness, "wasting
our potential?"

Nic won't go there.

NIC

Okay, honey, you're on a whole
other tangent and I have no idea
what you're talking about.

JULES

Well, maybe it hasn't risen to the
plane of consciousness for you yet.

NIC
Yeah. Maybe not.

Nic clicks the volume back on, freezing Jules out.

34

INT. PAUL'S RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

34

Paul and Tanya sit at the bar, eating family-meal.

TANYA
So what were they like?

PAUL
Sweet. They were really good kids.
The boy's kind of a sensitive jock
and the girl's kind of innocent but
whip-smart and super cute.

TANYA
Sounds like you connected.

PAUL
Yeah, we kinda did.

TANYA
Where'd you leave it?

PAUL
We didn't really leave it anywhere.

Brooke, the sexy Wiccan volunteer, comes up to Paul bearing a basket of freshly-picked fruits.

BROOKE
Hey Paul.

Paul leans over the basket.

PAUL
Whatcha got? Oh cool. First
strawberries of the season.

BROOKE
Don't they look awesome? I thought
you should have the first taste.

And with that, she smiles, hands him the basket and leaves.

TANYA
 (mimicking Brooke)
 "I thought you should have the
 first taste...of my pussy."

Paul can't help smiling at the nasty talk.

PAUL
 Whoa...

35

INT. NIC AND JULES BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

35

Clay rummages through the top drawer of Jules' dresser.
 Laser stands behind him, uncomfortable.

LASER
 Dude, I don't think they smoke pot.

CLAY
 Hold up.

Clay freezes. CLOSE ON a row of sex toys including a fancy
 pink, Japanese "all-in-one" dildo and a few DVD's.

CLAY (CONT'D)
 Whoa!

Clay turns on the dildo. It starts to gyrate.

CLAY (CONT'D)
 Yo, it's alive!

LASER
 Dude, put it back!!

Laughing, Clay throws the dildo back in the drawer. Then he
 grabs one of the DVDs and spins back around.

CLAY
 Dude, we're watching this.

36

INT. LASER'S ROOM - DAY

36

Laser and Clay sit on the bed. They look at each other.
 Then Laser hits play.

ON SCREEN

We see a COP giving a young MAN a BLOW-JOB. Laser and Clay
 sit motionless, shocked, disgusted, riveted.

CLAY
Think the whole thing's like this?

LASER
Want me to fast-forward?

Clay doesn't answer. They just keep watching.

37 OMITTED 37

38 OMITTED 38

39 EXT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY 39

Jules pulls her truck into the driveway, almost running over Laser's bike.

40 INT. LASER'S ROOM - DAY 40

Laser and Clay are still watching the porn...as Jules walks in the room.

JULES
Laser, you left your bike out...

Laser reflexively grabs for the remote. As he fumbles for it, Jules sees what they're watching. She looks mortified.

41 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - KITCHEN - THAT EVENING 41

We enter a family conference already in progress.

Nic and Jules act calm but are inwardly mortified that their 15-year-old son found their porn.

NIC
Laser, your mom and I accept you and love you unconditionally? You know that, right?

LASER
Yeah.

NIC
And you know you can be open with us about anything.

LASER
Yeah, I know.

Jules steels herself for a frank discussion.

JULES
Laser, is there anything you want
to talk about?

LASER
Like what?

NIC
Anything. Anything on your mind.

Laser cracks his knuckles.

LASER
Well there is something.

Nic and Jules share a look. "Here we go."

LASER (CONT'D)
It's more of a question, really.

NIC
That's okay.

JULES
We won't judge you.

Laser looks at his moms. Nic and Jules brace themselves.

LASER
Why do you guys watch gay man-porn?

Nic and Jules look at each other, thrown.

NIC
Well, first I have to say we rarely
watch that movie--

Jules touches Nic's arm.

JULES
Honey...

NIC
And secondly, I really don't
appreciate you snooping around our
room. Was that Clay's idea? I
have to say again, I don't like
him. He seems untended...!

JULES

Honey, that's not what he asked--

NIC

(snapping)

Fine. Do you want to answer his question?!

JULES

Well, sweetie, human sexuality is complicated. And sometimes, people's desires can be...counter-intuitive...

(soldiering on)

For instance, since women's sexual responsiveness is mostly internal, sometimes it's exciting for us to see sexual responsiveness more, you know...

(beat)

...externalized.

Laser looks at them, still baffled.

JULES (CONT'D)

Like with a penis.

LASER

But like, wouldn't you rather watch two women doing it?

JULES

You would think that. But in most of those movies, they've hired two straight women to pretend and the inauthenticity is just unbeara--

NIC

Okay, that's enough! Laser, your mom and I have a sense there's some other stuff going on in your life and we just want to be let in.

LASER

What do you mean?

JULES

Are you having a relationship with someone?

NIC

You could tell us, honey. We'd understand and support you.

Laser looks confused. How did they find out about Paul?

LASER
I just met him once.

Nic and Jules share a worried look.

NIC
What do you mean once?

JULES
Did he find you on-line?!

LASER
What?!

NIC
Who did you meet once?

LASER
Paul! I met him with Joni.

NIC
Who's Paul?!

JULES
Why was Joni there?!

LASER
She set it up.

NIC
Forget the set-up! Who is Paul?!!

LASER
Our sperm donor.

Jules and Nic go white.

LASER (CONT'D)
Wait, did you guys think I was
gay?!

42 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

42

Joni has been pulled into the family conference. Nic and Jules are trying to remain as calm as possible. Nic slugs a gulp of wine.

JULES

Look, guys, we understand why you'd be curious about your biological father. That's totally natural.

NIC

But why didn't you tell us?

JONI

Because we knew you'd be upset.

NIC

WE'RE NOT UPSET!!

Jules calms her riled-up partner.

JULES

Honey...

(to Joni; expressing her
upset more calmly)

We just wish you'd have included us in your thinking. But what's done is done. You met him, and now you guys can move on--

JONI

(sheepish)

Actually...

(beat)

I want to see him again.

JULES

You do?!

You do?!

LASER

JONI (CONT'D)

(to Laser)

Yeah. I was gonna tell you.

NIC

Whoa! Whoa! No. No way.

(regaining dominance)

Nobody is seeing anyone until we meet him!

Joni looks at Laser. They knew this would happen.

NIC

Yeah, I get it. He's their biological father and all that crap but it still feels really shitty. Like we're not enough or something, you know?

JULES

Of course I know. I don't want to time-share our kids with someone. Especially when it's Joni's last summer home. No way.

When Jules leaves the room Nic pulls a clump of long, wet red hair out of the sink.

NIC

Jesus, Jules! The plumber was just here!

Nic throws the clump of hair in the trash.

44

INT. NIC AND JULES BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

44

NIC

(getting tactical)
Look, we need to be smart about this. If we act like grubby bitches, we're just gonna make it worse.

JULES

I know...

NIC

Let's just kill him with kindness and put it to bed.

JULES

I'm with you, honey.
(then)
We're gonna get through this, okay?

Nic smiles. She loves when Jules shows confidence.

NIC

I love you, chicken.

The women bump fists. They have a plan.

JULES

I love you too, pony.

45 EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON 45

Paul rides slowly down the street, checking addresses. He pulls over and cuts his engine in front of the Allgood house.

46 OMITTED 46

47 INT/EXT. ALLGOOD FRONT DOOR - AFTERNOON 47

Paul rings the bell. Waits. The door opens and Nic and Jules are there smiling with "kill him with kindness" faces.

NIC

Paul! It is so great to meet you.
I'm Nic. This is Jules.

Paul shakes their hands.

PAUL

Hi, great to meet you two.

JULES

I hope the traffic wasn't too bad.

PAUL

No, I've got my bike so...I just
sort of weave through.

Nic clocks the motorcycle, stifles the impulse to judge.

NIC

Great. Well, come on in.

As they enter, Paul holds out a bottle of wine.

PAUL

This is for you. I don't know if
you guys like wine...

Nic takes it.

NIC

Are you kidding? We love it.
(checking the label)
And a Petit Syrah. What a treat!
Let me get some glasses.

Nic leaves Paul by the stairs with Jules. Little silence.
Jules steals a look at him, unable to contain her curiosity.

PAUL
Beautiful house. How long you guys
lived here?

JULES
Almost ten years. Wait, has it
been that long?
(rambling nervously)
We moved right after Laser broke
his leg, I remember that because we
had a ramp for a while, so that
would have been...ten, no, nine?
No, ten years this fall.

Paul nods, smiling at her nervousness.

PAUL
Okay.

Laser and Joni enter. Joni lights up when she sees Paul.
Jules watches Paul hug her. Uncomfortable, she heads for

THE KITCHEN --

Jules finds Nic's pouring herself a sizable glass of wine.

JULES
You okay?

NIC
(not okay)
Yeah. Fine.

Jules feels her inner co-dependent swelling in her chest.

JULES
Go easy on the wine, hon. It's day
time.

NIC
Okay. And same goes for the micro-
managing...

48 EXT. ALLGOOD PORCH - AFTERNOON

48

Everyone sits at the picnic table.

JULES
I hope the food's okay. Joni told
us you own a restaurant.

PAUL
The food's great. Can't go wrong
with salmon and corn.

Nic finishes a glass of wine as Jules takes note.

NIC
So Paul, did you always know you
wanted to be in food-services
industry?

Paul smiles at Nic, trying to disarm her.

PAUL
Well, I always liked food.

NIC
No, I was asking because I remember
reading in your file, back when we
were looking for, you know, *sperm*,
anyway, you said you were studying
international relations.

PAUL
Oh yeah. Wow, that was a long time
ago. Yeah, I was considering it,
but then I dropped out of school.

JONI
You dropped out of college?

PAUL
Yeah, it wasn't my thing.

NIC
(squinting)
No? Why's that?

PAUL
It just seemed like a massive waste
of money after a while. I mean, I
wasn't "doing" anything. I was
just sitting on my ass listening to
people spout off ideas I could've
just as easily learned reading a
book.

Paul sees that his little rant may be alienating the moms.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'm not saying higher learning
uniformly sucks. I mean, college
is great for some people.
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Joni, I'm sure you're gonna love it. That's just me. I'm just weird that way.

(beat)

Which is probably why I ended up in the food-services industry.

LASER

See what he did there, mom? You said "food-services industry," then he said "food-services industry..."

NIC

Yeah, I got it, Laser. Thanks.

(apropos of nothing)

So, Paul, what about your social life?

PAUL

My social life?

NIC

You know, are you married, divorced, seeing anyone?

JONI

Mom!

NIC

What? We're getting to know Paul.

PAUL

No, never been married or divorced. I date a little, but I'm just kind of focused on my work right now.

NIC

Oh.

Paul wants a break from the heat.

PAUL

So, how'd you guys meet?

Jules smiles, embarrassed. Nic jumps in.

NIC

We met at UCLA. I was a resident in the ER and Jules had an emergency.

JULES

My tongue went numb.

PAUL

Really?

THUD! We turn to see Laser, pounding his head on the table.

JULES

Laser, that's not nice.

LASER

What's not nice is subjecting your kids to the same story 1000 times!

PAUL

(ignoring Laser)

What happened to your tongue?

JULES

I don't know. I just lost all the feeling in my face and tongue and I thought I might gag and then, you know...

PAUL

Choke? Die?...

JULES

Yeah...exactly...

NIC

Well it was pretty clear to me she was just having an anxiety attack and she'd be fine.

PAUL

So what'd you do for her?

NIC

Gave her a Vallium. Tried to get her to relax, talk, move her tongue around.

LASER

Mom, that's gross!

JULES

(ignoring Laser, to Nic)

Actually, she started teasing me and that really helped.

NIC

I was trying to distract you.

JULES

I know. And it worked. You were really funny.

NIC

You were really pretty.

Nic reaches over and caresses Jules' hand. Joni rolls her eyes, embarrassed.

JULES

So that's it. My tongue started working again.

NIC

And we've been glued at the hip ever since.

PAUL

That's a great story.

JULES

(beaming)
We like it.

Laser and Joni share a look.

PAUL

So Nic, I know you're a doctor. How 'bout you, Jules? What do you do?

Jules never likes this question.

JULES

Well, I, you know, I studied architecture in college...

PAUL

Right...

JULES

But I'm not an architect. I mean I was on my way to becoming one. But I quit before the kids were born.

PAUL

Well, that happens...

JULES

When they got a little older, I started a Balinese furniture import business...

PAUL
Right on.

JULES
Yeah. But that didn't work out.

PAUL
Well, business aren't easy--

JULES
Actually, I'm in the process of starting a new business.

PAUL
Good for you. What kind?

JULES
Landscape design...
(before he can respond)
But not like a gardener! I mean, yes, there's a gardening component to it, but the real work is to create unique, eco-friendly outdoor spaces that harmonize with the surrounding environment. Do you know what I mean?

PAUL
Absolutely.

In Nic's mind, Jules is drowning in verbiage. So she jumps in to save her.

NIC
Hey Paul, did Joni tell you about her graduation speech?

PAUL
No, she didn't.

NIC
It was incredible. So full of wisdom and hope...
(turning to her Joni)
Hon, go get it. I'm sure he'd love to hear it...

JONI
(blushing)
No, mom, I'm sure he wouldn't...

NIC
Sure he would. Come on. Go get
it...

JONI
(getting upset)
No, it's okay...

NIC
Sweetie, don't be embarrassed.

JONI
I'm not embarrassed! Jesus! Give
it a rest already!

This outburst stuns Nic into silence. Her daughter has never
spoken to her like this. Laser stands up.

LASER
I'll get the ice-cream.

JONI
(standing up)
I'll help you.

Joni and Laser leave the room. Nic pours herself the last of
Paul's Petit Syrah. Jules smiles, covering her anxiety.

JULES
(softly)
Honey, that's your forth glass.

NIC
Actually, it's my third. But
thanks for counting.

Paul turns to Jules, trying to revive the mood.

PAUL
Hey, I was just thinking. You
know, I bought this place last year
and the backyard's a wreck. Would
you be interested in working on it?

JULES
(insecure)
Oh, that's okay.

PAUL
No, seriously. I don't have time
to work on it myself.

JULES

Thank you. That's really sweet.
Why don't you think about it.

PAUL

Why? I just did.
(then)

I mean, if you're not up for it
that's okay--

JULES

(jumping on it)
No! I am!
(getting excited)
I'm up for it!...

Jules smiles at Nic: "Isn't this great? My first client."
Nic looks less than pleased.

49 OMITTED. 49

50 INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY 50

Nic pushes a cart piled high with gardening supplies. Jules
grabs a couple BAGS of fertilizer, throws them on top.

NIC

...I'm just saying, the plan was to
limit his involvement--

JULES

You're unbelievable. You're all
over me about getting clients, I
finally get one and you're--

NIC

He's not just a *client*, Jules.
He's our sperm donor! Have you
ever heard the phrase "Don't Shit
Where You Eat?"

JULES

Yes, and I think it's disgusting.

The two separate, go down separate isles. When they rejoin,
Nic is contrite.

NIC

I'm sorry. He just seemed sort
of...self-satisfied to me.

Jules grabs the olive branch.

JULES
Yeah, he was working the whole
"alternative" thing pretty hard.

NIC
(mimicking)
"I just need to get outside and
'do' things, not sit on my ass and
learn. But that's just me. I'm
weird that way."

They both laugh. Nic's funny sometimes.

51 EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - ECHO PARK - DAY 51

Jules drives slowly up the hill looking for Paul's address.
She sees the house and pulls in the driveway next to an old
truck and a motorcycle.

52 EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY 52

Jules and Paul walk through Paul's backyard, evaluating.

JULES
...We could do a kind of a Secret
Garden thing with trellises and
topiary...
(clocking his face)
...or something more Asian,
minimal, with a rock garden feel.
It's up to you...

PAUL
What do you think?

JULES
Personally, I'm tired of minimal.
I'm into more is more. Let's not
try to tame the space. I think it
would look great all lush and
overgrown and fecund...

PAUL
Fecund?

JULES
I'm sorry, you know, fertile...

PAUL
 No, I love that word. You just
 don't hear it that often.
 (thinking)
 More is more. Yeah. Let's do that.

Jules is staring at Paul.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 What?

JULES
 Sorry, I just keep seeing my kids
 in your expressions...

Jules looks more intensely at Paul's face.

JULES (CONT'D)
 You and Laser have the same mouth.

PAUL
 You think so?

JULES
 Yeah.

The observation strikes Paul. Suddenly, he's feeling a kind
 of fast-tracked intimacy with Jules he hadn't expected.

53

EXT. BACKYARD - ALLGOOD HOUSE - EVENING

53

Jules and Laser play Ping-Pong as Nic gets home with Chinese
 take-out for the family dinner.

NIC
 What's the score?

JULES
 Pretty close.

Laser cranks a forehand that whizzes past Jules.

LASER
 20-3...match point.

NIC
 So how'd it go today?

JULES
 Great. We settled on a concept.

NIC
What is it?

JULES
It's hard to explain. You have to
kind of see the space to get it.

NIC
(to Laser)
Laser, did you write Pup-pup a Get
Well card?
(off his silence)
Laser! What do I have to do?! I
bought you a card. I left it on
your desk. All you had to do was--

LASER
Mom, settle! I will...

NIC
Don't tell me to settle, mister.
And if it's not in the mail by
tomorrow morning, we're not going
to the Dodger game Saturday.

LASER
Whatever, I have other plans
anyway.

NIC
What other plans?
(off his silence)
I'm asking you a quest--

LASER
I said I'd do something with Paul!

Laser serves a rocket, whizzing past a flailing Jules. He
tosses the racquet on the table and leaves. Nic yells:

NIC
You used to be so cute!

54

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

54

We cut onto Paul and Laser, looking out at something. Laser
is holding a DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERA.

PAUL
This may not be a good idea.

CLAY (O.S.)
Are you filming?!

We cut to Clay on a skateboard on the ledge of a brick wall. He's preparing to ride the ledge, jump a dumpster and land his board on the ground.

PAUL
(to Laser)
He's not gonna make it.
(calling to Clay)
Clay, you're not gonna make it!

LASER
I think he may be right, dude.
Maybe this isn't such a good idea.

CLAY
Will you quit being a man-gina and
run the camera! I'm only doing
this once so keep my shit in frame!

Laser sighs, then holds up the camera. Paul looks at Laser, wondering why he puts up with this guy.

VIDEO CAMERA'S POV: We watch as Clay psychs himself up with an assortment of deep breaths and head-slaps. Finally, he starts down the ledge. He starts his jump, catches air and hits the edge of the dumpster and falls. We see him go into the dumpster and land with a nauseating THUD. Paul and Laser rush up and look over the edge.

PAUL/LASER
ARE YOU OKAY?!

There's Clay, his arm bent at a disturbing angle, in agony.

CLAY
Did you get that?!

LASER
Seriously, dude, are you okay?

CLAY
I'm fucking fine! Fuck! Did you
fucking get it?!

55 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE CLAY'S HOUSE - LATER

55

Paul and Laser walk over to Paul's truck.

PAUL
Maybe next time we can hang out
just you and me.

LASER
Clay's cool. He's just gets a
little amped sometimes.

PAUL
That's not amped. That's being a
dick.

LASER
He's not a dick, that's just his
way.

PAUL
Okay...I just didn't like the way
he was talking to you.

LASER
(defensive)
Well, you don't know him.

PAUL
(back-peddling)
You're right...I don't...

LASER
Hey, can I ask you a question?

PAUL
Sure.

LASER
Why'd you donate sperm?

PAUL
Well, it's a lot more fun than
donating blood.

Laser doesn't laugh. Paul realizes he's gonna have to give a
"non-joke" answer.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I don't know, I guess I thought,
you know, if I can help somebody in
need, somebody who wants a baby...

Laser's not really buying that.

LASER
So you did it to help people?

PAUL
It was a long time ago...

LASER
How much did you get paid?

PAUL
Why do you want to know?

LASER
I'm just curious.

PAUL
I don't know, like 60 bucks a pop.

LASER
That's it?

PAUL
It was worth more back then. You
know. With inflation...
(off Laser's look)
Hey, I'm glad I did it...

Laser doesn't quite buy Paul's altruism. He looks over at him, then away.

56 INT. JONI'S ROOM - DAY

56

Jai and Joni and Sasha play Scrabble. Sasha checks out the photos of Paul on Joni's phone.

SASHA
Hello? Donor Dad? Stone cold fox.

JAI
Must you take everything beautiful
and make it dirty?

SASHA
I'm just saying. Spermster's a
hottie. Is he single?

JONI
Okay, first of all, ewww. Second,
he's a really good person and I'd
prefer it if you didn't taint him
with your whore juice.

Sasha hops up, energized by the banter.

SASHA

Fair enough, hairy muff. I'm outta here. You love birds can split my letters...

Sasha splits and suddenly the room is thick with nervous tension.

JONI

You want to keep playing?

JAI

Sure.

As Jai incorporates Sasha's tiles into his own, we see Joni gathering her nerve to make a move. Jai probably feels it but in his nervousness he can't look at Joni.

JAI (CONT'D)

Sometimes I feel sorry for Sasha, you know...

JONI

Yeah...

Joni starts to move in, her face draws closer to Jai's, inch by inch.

Somehow, deep down, Jai can sense her moving towards him which exhilarates and freaks the shit out of him at the same time. To the point where he lets slip...

JAI

It's like she has to sexualize every experience, you know? It's just sad...

That stops Joni in her tracks.

JONI

Yeah, it is. It's really sad.

Jai's sabotaged the mood and they both know it.

Jules walks in to find Nic in sexy satin man-PJ's, sitting at the rim of a RUNNING BATH. There are candles burning.

JULES

Wow. What's this?

NIC
Come here. Sit down.

Jules takes a seat beside her. Nic holds her hand.

NIC (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I've been such a bitch lately. I know I'm not being my highest self.

JULES
Yeah, well...

NIC
You've been really patient with me. I just want you to know that hasn't gone unrecognized.

Nic gives her a long, sweet kiss. Jules is warming up.

NIC (CONT'D)
Get in.

CUT TO - JULES

In the tub, revelling in the warm bubbly water. Nic is sitting on the ledge, massaging her feet.

JULES
Oh god, chicken, that's the spot.

NIC
How's the water?

JULES
Perfect. You wanna come in?

NIC
In a bit. You enjoy it first.

Nic goes deeper with the massage. Jules' eyes roll back.

NIC (CONT'D)
Oh, I forgot the lavender salts.

Nic starts to get up. Jules grabs her hand.

JULES
No, don't stop...

NIC
No, I meant to put 'em in....

Nic gets up and sashays to the door.

NIC (CONT'D)
Don't move...

Nic exits. Jules sinks back, wishing Nic had stayed.

58 CUT TO JULES - MINUTES LATER 58

Still waiting. Getting impatient and upset.

JULES
Nic?!!

No response.

54 CUT TO THE KITCHEN -- 54

Nic is on her cell with a patient, a glass of wine in her hand. Jules walks in wearing a bathrobe. Nic turns. Raises a finger and mouths: "Sorry..."

NIC
No, we're planning on being here
through mid-August so...
(beat)
No, I promise, I'm not going
anywhere.

Jules' face drops; she turns and leaves.

59 OMITTED. 59

60 INT./EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY 60

Paul watches Jules work in his backyard. Luis hauls shrubs.

61 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER 61

Paul and Jules stand at the kitchen table, looking over her sketch for the yard.

JULES
Look, I'm gonna go to the nursery
in the morning so we should
probably make sure you're signed
off on the Bougainvillea...

Jules looks over at a pan on the kitchen counter.

JULES (CONT'D)
What's that?

PAUL
Strawberry rhubarb pie. Fresh from
my garden.

Paul hands her a fork and she takes a big bite. Her eyes
roll back in her head.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Good, huh?

JULES
Oh my god. That is criminal.

PAUL
Have more.

JULES
No, please, just take it away...

PAUL
You had one bite.

JULES
I have another you may as well just
tape it to my ass cause that's
where it'll end up.

PAUL
Hey now, don't go negative on your
ass.

Jules blushes at all this talk of her ass.

JULES
So...you're good with the plants?
(off his silence)
Look, we don't have to do that. We
could do go in a totally different
direction if you--

PAUL
No, I'm just thinking. Hang on.
(covers his eyes)
Yeah, I'm good with the plants.

JULES
Sorry. Sometimes I mistake silence
for criticism.

PAUL
I wasn't criticizing you.

JULES
No, I know...I just...
(beat)
Sometimes Nic can be a little
critical, you know. She's a
perfectionist.

PAUL
That doesn't mean you have to be
negative.

Jules looks away. We HEAR a knock from the back.

LUIS (O.S.)
Excuse me, Senora? Hello?

Jules turns, sees Luis standing at the glass door.

JULES
What's up?

LUIS
5 o'clock.

JULES
Yeah. Okay.

Jules wants Luis to leave her alone. But he's not going.

LUIS
Same time tomorrow?

JULES
Yes! Same time!

Luis leaves. Jules turns back to Paul, laughs nervously.

JULES (CONT'D)
Okay. I'm gonna take off too...

PAUL
(in Luis's accent)
Same time tomorrow?

Jules pushes Paul, laughing.

JULES
That's mean.

Paul hands her a Tupperware with some of the pie in it.

PAUL
Here, take this...

JULES
No!

PAUL
Just give it to the kids.

JULES
Okay! God, you're such a pusher!

Jules grabs the pie and gives him a kiss on the mouth, almost as a mistake. Before they know it, they're making out.

Jules snaps back, freaked.

JULES (CONT'D)
Whoa. I'm sorry. That was...I don't know where that came from...

PAUL
(freaked himself)
It's okay...

JULES
Okay. I'm gonna go now...

Jules starts backing away, acting as if nothing happened.

PAUL
Jules...?

JULES
(overcompensating)
...but I shall return!

Jules bolts for the door, clutching her pie. Paul watches her go, stunned by what just happened.

62 INT. NIC AND JULES BEDROOM - NIGHT

62

Nic's in bed reading a magazine. Jules gets in bed, paranoid. Nic puts her magazine down.

NIC
So how'd it go with Paul?

JULES
(jumpy)
What do you mean?

NIC
I don't know. Did you break
ground? Did you dig in? I don't
know the terms.

JULES
No, we just talked...conceptually.

NIC
Oh, so it was less of a "doing"
day, huh? Was he okay with that?

JULES
You know, maybe we should lay off
the Paul digs a little.

NIC
Okay. You're right.

Chastened, Nic looks back at her magazine. Jules rolls over.

JULES
And I also think we should start
composting.

63 OMITTED 63

64 EXT. URBAN FARM - ECHO PARK - DAY - MOS 64

Sweating and dirty, Joni and Paul pull radishes from the
ground. They're in a zone together. Paul takes off his sun-
hat and put it on Joni's head.

PAUL
You got your mom's fair skin. You
didn't get my Mediterranean
genes...

JONI
Thanks...

Joni's cell rings. She looks. Rolls her eyes.

JONI (CONT'D)
Ugh. Ignore.

Joni hits the ignore button, puts her cell away.

PAUL
Who's that?

JONI

My mom, Nic. She's making me insane.

PAUL

Why? What's she doing?

JONI

She's treating me like I'm 12. It's like she doesn't want to admit I'm an adult.

PAUL

She's your mom. That's her job.

JONI

What? To smother me to death? That's not her job.

PAUL

Well, if you want things to be different, you've got to make that happen. That's *your* job.

65

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MAGIC HOUR

65

Laser walks with Clay. Clay sports a homemade arm-cast for the skateboard mishap we witnessed earlier.

CLAY

That jump was cake, dude! I so could've made it.

LASER

You were like 20 feet short, dude! There was no way.

CLAY

Yeah, well if Paul wasn't there I could have landed it. That guy creeps me out.

LASER

Whatever.

CLAY

He's kind of a fag, dude. Tryin' to act all like your dad and shit.

Laser doesn't know how to respond so he ignores the comment. A stray DOG comes up to them. Laser stops to pet it.

LASER

Hey buddy. Good boy.

Laser sees the dog has no tags. He looks around for an owner. The dog nuzzles Laser for affection.

LASER (CONT'D)

I've seen this dog around. I wonder if he's lost.

CLAY

Let's pee on his head.

LASER

What?

Clay unzips his fly. It's difficult with the plaster cast.

LASER (CONT'D)

Dude, don't do that.

CLAY

Come on. Hold him...

Clay yanks the dog by his scruff.

LASER

Dude, Quit it!

CLAY

(mocking)
Duuude, quit it!

Suddenly, Laser gets it. His friend is the tool. He grabs the dog and smacks him to get him to run away.

LASER

Go! Run! Get out of here!

The dog TAKES OFF. Clay shoves Laser.

CLAY

Why are you such a fag?!

Laser shoves Clay back hard.

LASER

Why are you such a dick?!

Clay HITS Laser in the mouth. Laser touches his lip. Sees blood, and walks away. Friendship over.

66 EXT. URBAN FARM PARKING LOT - ECHO PARK - MAGIC HOUR 66

Paul and Joni walk to his motorcycle parked in the dirt lot behind them. Paul grabs his helmet off the bike, hands it to Joni.

PAUL

Here, put this on.

Joni takes the helmet and puts it on. Paul fastens the buckle for her. They get on the bike and take off down the hill.

67 EXT. ECHO PARK TO THE WEST SIDE - MAGIC HOUR 67

Paul takes Joni home on his motorcycle via Sunset Boulevard. She holds Paul tightly.

68 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING 68

The ladies sit in the living room watching TV.

JULES

Relax. She'll get home when she gets home.

NIC

Quit telling me to relax!

They go back to watching TV. After a beat, we HEAR a motorcycle pull up.

NIC (CONT'D)

What the fuck...!

69 EXT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 69

Paul and Joni climb off the bike. Nic storms out of the house to intercept them by the sidewalk.

NIC

Funny how someone *conveniently* forgot to tell me they were driving home on a motorcycle!

JONI

Mom...

NIC

You know how many people I've seen
come into the hospital paralyzed
from motorcycle accidents?!

PAUL

I'm a very safe rider...

NIC

That is *so* not the point I'm
making! Joni knows this is
something I'd never allow.

JONI

Mom, I'm 18 years old! I won't
even be living here in like next
month!

NIC

Yeah, well, you're living here now!

JONI

Yeah, well why don't you get a jump
on it and pretend like I'm not!

Joni storms off. Nic glowers at Paul.

NIC

She's never talked to me like that.

PAUL

(trying to soften it)

You know, Nic. If you eased up on
the restrictions, maybe there'd be
less tension...

NIC

(marinated in sarcasm)

Really? You think so, Paul? Is
that how it works?

Jules walks up to intervene.

JULES

What's going on?

NIC

Oh, nothing. Paul's just giving me
child-rearing lessons.

PAUL

I was just saying--

NIC
Listen, when you've been a parent
for 18 years, come talk to me!

PAUL
I was just making an observation.

NIC
Yeah, and I need your observations
like I need a dick in my ass!

Nic storms off. Jules follows. Paul watches, shell shocked.

70 OMITTED 70

71 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - JONI'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT 71

Nic knocks on the door. Get's no response.

NIC
Joni?
(silence)
I was just upset. You know how I
feel about motorcycles.

Joni opens the door.

JONI
(patronizing)
I know how you feel about them.
But I'm an adult now and you have
to respect that. Goodnight.

Joni closes the door on her.

72 OMITTED 72

73 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY 73

From his house, Paul watches Jules working on her knees in
the garden.

CLOSE ON Jules' thong peaking out of her jeans. Luis walks
across Paul's field of vision, interrupting his reverie.

74 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - LATER 74

Jules steps tentatively into Paul's house.

JULES

Paul?

Jules walks further into the house. She looks anxious. Paul opens his office door and sees Jules in the hall.

PAUL

Hey. What's up?

JULES

Look, I'm sorry about last night.
I'm really embarrassed.

PAUL

Don't be. She's the one who wiggled out.

JULES

I know, she's just going through a lot of stuff right now...

PAUL

Jules, it's okay. You don't have to defend her.

They stare at each other, unsure how to act.

JULES

And look, I just want you to know, about the other day, the kiss, that's not something I...do.

PAUL

Yeah, I sensed that.

She takes a step toward him, feverish.

JULES

I just wanted to clear the air.

They stare at each other. It's like watching two magnets.

PAUL

The air is clear.

Jules grabs Paul and starts smothering him with kisses.

It takes a second for Paul to get his bearings, but when he does, he starts kissing her back with equal fervor, pushing her up against the wall, wedging his hand between her legs.

JULES

Paul, I can't!

PAUL
You don't want to?!

JULES
No, I do! It's just...
(urgent whisper)
I have a guy outside!

Overcome with lust, Jules wraps her legs around his waist and Paul walks her into...

75

HIS BEDROOM

75

Quick cuts of their awkward ravenous gropings. Somewhere between slapstick and animal. He pulls her hair back hard. She loves it. She pulls his hair back harder. He yelps. She pulls down his underwear. Her eyes widen. It's been decades since she's seen a hard cock in the flesh.

JULES
Oh. Well. Hel-lo!

Cut to them fucking. It's gawky and passionate. Somewhere in the middle of it, Jules starts laughing.

PAUL
What?

JULES
Nothing.

Paul flips her on her hands and knees and they go at it some more.

She keeps laughing. Paul goes harder to make her stop. The paces grows quicker. They're getting closer. And then...

LUIS (O.S.)
Hello? Excuse me, Senora Allgood?!

They stop mid-thrust.

JULES
You gotta be fucking kidding me!

She dislodges from Paul and starts dressing furiously.

76

INT./EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY

76

Jules runs out to meet Luis, waiting patiently at the door.

JULES
What's up?

LUIS
Where do you want the stones?

JULES
(catching her breath)
The stones? Over by the fence.

Luis stares at his employer. She looks totally disheveled.
Jules starts feeling her hair, smoothing it into shape.

JULES (CONT'D)
(defensive)
What? I was using the bathroom.
(then)
Do you need to use the bathroom?

Luis stares at her feet. She looks down. She's barefoot.

77

EXT. PUBLIC PARK - DAY

77

Paul and Laser shoot hoop. There's a tense-ness to their patten. Laser takes the ball and steps to the top of the key and shoots. Drains it.

LASER
That's H.

PAUL
I know.

Laser steps up to left side of the basket, calls his shot.

LASER
Lay-up.

PAUL
Hey, don't take it easy on me cause
you're winning--

Laser does a trick behind the back lay-up. Nails it. Then tosses the ball to Paul.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Nobody likes a show-off.

LASER
Hey, can I ask you a question?

PAUL
Oh god. Okay. Hit me.

LASER
When you die do you want to be
buried or cremated?

PAUL
That's your question?

LASER
I want to be cremated.

PAUL
I think I'd rather be buried.

LASER
Why? That's just taking up more
space in the earth.

PAUL
I don't know, something about the
idea of being burned into this
chalky powder and sprinkled--

LASER
What do you care? You won't even
be conscious.

PAUL
That's true. I guess I just want
to be in a place where people can
visit me.

LASER
(growing animated)
But why?! You'll be dead! You
won't even know they're there!

78 INT. WYSIWYG - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

78

Joni and Sasha are at a table eating dinner. Tanya has temporarily joined them. Sasha checks out Tanya's oversized African bead necklace. Joni watches Paul charm customers.

SASHA
God, I love your necklace! Where'd
you get it?

TANYA
I don't know, some flea market--

SASHA
In Africa?

TANYA
No, more like Pasadena.

SASHA
Well, it's really awesome.

Paul saunters up to the table and stands behind Sasha. He mindlessly places his hand on Sasha's shoulder.

PAUL
Sorry guys, I need to steal Tanya back now.

Sasha clocks Paul's hand. She carefully and without looking back places her hand on top of his.

SASHA
That's okay, Paul.

TANYA
(getting up)
Well ladies, it was fun talking with you.

SASHA/JONI
You too.

Paul pulls his hand away from Sasha's and walks off with Tanya. Sasha turns to Joni.

SASHA
Okay, I'm sorry but your donor daddy is giving me the sex vibe.

JONI
No he's not. He wouldn't do that.

SASHA
Why not? He's not **my** dad.

JONI
God Sasha, that's totally gross! Not everybody wants to have sex with you, okay? Especially when you act like a slut.

SASHA
Fuck you.

JONI

Well it makes you seem insecure and desperate.

SASHA

I'm not insecure and desperate!
I'm just a normal sexual person!
And maybe you'd get that if you weren't so uptight!

JONI

Fuck you. I'm not uptight!

79

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

79

Nic and Jules dine with their friends, JOEL and STELLA.
Nic's drinking like a fish.

STELLA

Oh my god, these heirloom tomatoes are insane.

JULES

Joni brought some home from Paul's garden the other day. They were huge!

Nic tightens at the mention of Paul.

JOEL

So, the kids have been spending time with him?

NIC

Oh, yeah, they're spending all kinds of quality time together.

STELLA

(senses the sarcasm)
Well, it's great they like him so much. You know, you hear these stories about kids meeting their donors and the guys end up being nothing like they were on paper.

NIC

No, everyone's getting along famously. Apparently Paul can do no wrong...

Nic grabs a passing waiter by the arm.

NIC (CONT'D)
Can we get another bottle of the
Seavey Cabernet?

Jules gives Nic a look. Joel and Stella feel the tension
between them.

STELLA
Hey, have you guys tried those Açai
fruit packs?

JULES
No, but they're pushing them like
crack at Whole Foods.

STELLA
I know. Joel's addicted.

JOEL
What I do is I throw one in the
blender with some bananas, frozen
strawberries and hemp milk and I'll
tell you, it's sensational.

Nic slaps her forehead.

NIC
Oh, just fucking kill me...

Everyone stiffens. Jules is embarrassed.

JULES
Honey...

NIC
I'm sorry guys, but I just can't,
with the fucking hemp milk and the
organic farming and heirloom
tomatoes.
(mocking-voice)
"Oh no, don't throw that in the
trash, no man, you gotta throw that
into the composting bin so the
fucking worms can shit all over it
and turn it into glorious multch
and we can all feel better about
ourselves." God! What a bunch of
bullshit!

Nic takes a big swallow from her glass. Jules windshield
wipes Nic's forearm.

JULES

(sotto)

How about some green tea, honey...

Nic slams her glass on the table. Explodes.

NIC

You know what, Jules?! I like my wine! Okay? So fucking sue me! And fyi, red wine has a chemical called Resveratrol in it, which has been proven to significantly extend human lifespan!

JULES

Yeah, if you drink a thousand bottles a day!

NIC

Fuck you.

Nic storms off. Jules turns to Joel and Stella, ashen.

JULES

I'm sorry.

80 INT. RESTAURANT BAR - MINUTES LATER

80

Jules walks over to the bar. Nic is sitting in the corner.

JULES

What the hell is going on with you?

NIC

This whole Paul thing is driving me crazy! I feel like he's taking over my family.

Jules tries to bring it down. She yells in hushed tones.

JULES

No. He's not!

NIC

(nerves fraying)

Okay! Okay. I'm sorry. I'm just exhausted...

JULES

Maybe you need to take some time off and recharge.

NIC
 (self-pitying)
 Sure, and who's gonna pay for that?

Jules looks pissed off, and hurt.

NIC (CONT'D)
 Look, I'm sorry, I just feel like
 I'm carrying the whole load here.

JULES
 Because that's the way you like it!
 That's the way you keep control!

This is Jules' break-point.

NIC
 What are you talking about?

JULES
 Oh come on! You hated it when I
 worked! You wanted me at home,
 taking care of the kids. You
 wanted a wife!

NIC
 That is just not true!

JULES
 You didn't trust any of those
 nannies! And you sure as hell
 didn't back my career!

NIC
 What are you talking about? I just
 helped you start another business!

JULES
 Yeah, so you can feel better about
 yourself!

NIC
 No, so you can feel better about
yourself!

JULES
 Are you even attracted to me
 anymore?

The BARTENDER holds out the bottle of Cabernet.

BARTENDER
 Do you still want this?

NIC
No. Just the check please.

81 JULES AND PAUL

81

Fucking again in his bedroom. Jules writhes beneath him, her eyes closed. Paul seems to be in some kind of zone. He stares at her, enthralled.

CUT TO:

82 POST - COITUS

82

Jules and Paul lie naked in the bed. Jules slithers around the covers, stoned on post-coital endorphins.

JULES
God, I feel so drugular right now.
(sitting up quickly)
I really want a cigarette! Do you have any? I haven't had a cigarette since Laser was born. Do you smoke?

PAUL
Sometimes. But I don't have any here. Want me to run to the store?

JULES
(bouncing off the walls)
Yeah. Wait, no. Don't. Sorry.

Jules pops up on her knees, getting in his face.

JULES (CONT'D)
Do you think I'm just like some sad-sack middle-aged lesbian?

PAUL
God, that's it. I was trying to figure out how to describe you to my friends. Thank you.

Jules punches his arm, mock hurt. They start rough-housing. Then kissing. Then the phone rings.

JULES
You want to get that?

PAUL
No. I want to get this...

Paul grabs a handful of Jules' ass. Jules throws her leg over Paul and climbs up for another round. Suddenly, Joni's voice echoes through the machine.

JONI (ON MACHINE)
Hi Paul. It's Joni. I just wanted to apologize for my friend, Sasha. I was really embarrassed when she put her hand on your--

Paul grabs the receiver.

PAUL
Hey, Joni. I'm here...

Jules visibly recoils.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Listen, don't worry about your friend.

Jules pales. She mouths: "What are you doing?!" Paul gesticulates: "I'm sorry!"

PAUL (CONT'D)
No. Honestly. I didn't even notice...

Jules throws on her clothes and starts to leave.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Hey, Joni? Can you hold on a second?

Paul grabs Jules' wrist and mouths "wait!" Jules rips her arm free and walks out.

walks outside and is stunned to find Luis already back from Home Depot, sneezing and wiping his nose.

JULES
Did you go to Home Depot?

LUIS
Yeah. I just got back.

JULES
That was fast!

LUIS
Yeah, no lines.

His look of confusion trips off her paranoia. She's convinced he knows everything.

JULES
What's that look?

LUIS
What look?

JULES
The look you're giving me right now!

LUIS
That's no look. That just my face.

JULES
Look, I'm not gonna play this game with you! You need to keep your judgements to yourself!

LUIS
Senora, I didn't give no looks!

JULES
I don't ask you why you keep blowing your nose constantly! I mean, if you have a drug problem that's your business...

LUIS
I don't have no drug problem!
I have the allergies!

JULES
Then why are you a gardener?!

Luis stares at Jules, innocent.

LUIS
Cause I love the flowers.

JULES
Look, this isn't gonna work. I'll pay you through the end of the day and then we're done.

Jules walks past a totally confused Luis.

84 INT. NIC AND JULES BEDROOM - NIGHT 84

Jules lies on her side. Nic shuffles to get to close to her. Jules moves away, still pissed at her. Nic realizes she needs to make amends.

85 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING 85

The family sits in silence, having breakfast. Nic looks around the table, feeling like a pariah.

NIC

Look, I know you've all been enjoying your time with Paul. And I know I haven't been as open to him as everyone else and this has caused some...friction...between us. But I'd like to try and change that...

Everyone keeps eating, uncommitted. "And...?"

NIC (CONT'D)

So I was thinking. Maybe it would be nice if we all had dinner at his house sometime. That way, I could get to know him a little better, and I could see all the good work mom's been doing with his backyard.

Nic looks at Jules and smiles. Everyone nods. They recognize this is a big step for Nic.

86 OMITTED 86

88 EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY 88

Paul walks out to check on Jules. She's sweating her ass off, shlepping stacks of heavy mulch across the yard.

PAUL

How's it going?

JULES

Okay...

PAUL
Here, let me help.

Paul takes some of her load and together they transport the sod to the other side of the yard. Neither know what to say.

Paul stares at her, waiting for her lead.

JULES
We can't be doing this...

PAUL
I know...

JULES
I'm married...

PAUL
...and the kids...

JULES
Yeah, and I love Nic.

PAUL
I know...

They stare at each other and we cut to...

INT. PAUL'S BEDROOM - LATER

Paul and Jules lie in bed. Jules looks nauseated. Paul offers her a pack of smokes.

PAUL
I got you some cigarettes.

JULES
(ignoring him)
Jesus, what's wrong with me? I shouldn't have fired Luis like that. That was totally wrong...

PAUL
Come on. Don't be so hard on yourself. Things get messy sometimes...

JULES
That wasn't messy. That was fucked up. I'm totally fucked up...

PAUL
I think I'm really falling for you.

JULES
Paul, don't...

90 INT. PAUL'S BATHROOM - LATER 90

Jules takes a shower, washing off the evidence. She looks nauseated by her lack of willpower.

87 INT. WYSIWYG - LATER 87

Tanya walks over to Paul who's on his computer. She flops on the couch next to him. He doesn't look up.

TANYA
Pretty good night. That table had like 5 bottles of wine.

PAUL
Wow. Yeah. Good night.

TANYA
Joni's pretty. She's got some of your genes.

PAUL
I think she looks more like her mom actually. But thank you.

TANYA
It's cute seeing you in dad mode.

PAUL
Yeah?

TANYA
Yeah.
(lowering voice)
It makes me want to fuck you.

PAUL
(uncomfortable)
Oh yeah?...

TANYA
Yeah...

Tanya moves imperceptibly closer.

TANYA (CONT'D)
I've been missing our sleep-overs.

Paul finally stops what he's doing.

PAUL
Yeah, it's been a while.

TANYA
You want to meet up later?

Paul hesitates. He doesn't know how to say no.

PAUL
Tanya, you're so sexy and beautiful, but I don't think we should do that anymore.

Tanya's face drops.

TANYA
What happened?

PAUL
You know, our thing is really fun and easy, but...I don't want to be 50 and still "hanging out." You know? If I really want a family then I have to stop getting in these situations that don't go anywhere.

Paul just looks at her. Tanya gets it.

TANYA
(welling up)
Oh.

Paul knows enough to say nothing. Tanya gets up and walks off.

TANYA (CONT'D)
Fuck you.

Paul sits there, feeling like an asshole.

The family packs into the Volvo to head to Paul's.

92 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR 92

Paul gets dinner ready with Joni and Laser as his sous-chefs. Both kids seem really jazzed to be cooking with him.

IN THE BACKYARD -EVENING

Jules tours Nic around the backyard, looking a little freaked out as she shows her the work she's been doing.

JULES
I'm gonna do some planting over
there so it won't look so bare...

NIC
It looks great, honey. Very
indigenous. I'm so proud of you.

Nic kisses Jules spontaneously. Jules looks nauseous again. They head back up the stairs, toward Paul's house.

NIC (CONT'D)
Hey, so how's that guy Luis working
out?

JULES
Oh, I had to fire him.

NIC
(surprised)
Really?!

JULES
Yeah, he had a drug problem.

NIC
Whoa. What kind of drugs?

JULES
Blow, I think...

93 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER 93

Nic flips through Paul's album collection, including Joni Mitchell's *Blue*.

94 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 94

Everyone digs into the meal, enjoying themselves. Especially Nic, who's committed to redeeming herself.

PAUL
Hey Nic, I think you're gonna love
this '98 Screaming Eagle.

NIC
You know what, I think I'm gonna
stick with water tonight. But
thank you so much.

The Allgoods look at Nic: this is a first.

NIC (CONT'D)
God, Paul, this steak is delicious.
What's the seasoning?

PAUL
I just mist it with a little
truffle oil.

Nic looks at Jules and smiles in full overcompensation mode.

NIC
What a good idea. We should try
that. Right, honey?

JULES
(taken aback by Nic's
cheerfulness)
Mmm-hmmm.

NIC
And it's done to perfection.

PAUL
So it's not too rare?

NIC
No, it's perfect. Juicy. Tender.
Exactly what rare's supposed to be.

PAUL
Good. A lot of people in the
restaurant order a steak rare and
they freak out at the slightest
sight of red.

NIC
Ugh, isn't that annoying? That
happens to me all the time when I'm
grilling.

PAUL
Don't people know that rare means red?

NIC
Right?! It means bloody!

PAUL
Exactly! They should see what rare looks like in Argentina. The cow's practically still mooing.

Laser chuckles at Paul's joke, then reigns it in. Joni tries to insert herself in the conversation.

JONI
I really want to go to Argentina. Buenos Aires is supposed to be--

NIC
(interrupting)
...So Paul, I was checking out your album collection over there. Quite the eclectic mix...

PAUL
Thanks...

NIC
You don't meet too many straight guys who love Joni Mitchell.

Joni glares at Nic: stop being such a Paul hog.

PAUL
Oh yeah, you a Joni Mitchell fan?

NIC
(smug)
Not really. We just named our daughter after her.

PAUL
Cool. Right on...

NIC
What's your favorite Joni album?

PAUL
I think I have to go with "Blue."

Nic raises her hand in a testify.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Yeah? You too?

They high-five across the table.

NIC
Oh God, I probably spent half of high school in my room crying to that album. That record kills me.

PAUL
I know, it never lets up, you got "River," "California..."

NIC
"A Case of You..."

PAUL
"All I Want..."

NIC
Mmm!!

Nic pulls her hands to her chest, shuts her eyes...and starts to sing.

NIC (CONT'D)
*I am on a lonely road and I am
traveling traveling, traveling,
traveling/Looking for something,
what can it be/Oh I hate you some,
I hate you some/I love you some Oh
I love you/when I forget about
me...*

Jules, Paul and the kids watch, open-mouthed as Nic soldiers on, skipping ahead to another verse.

NIC (CONT'D)
*I want to talk to you/I want to
shampoo you/I want to renew you
again and again/Applause, applause/
Life is our cause/When I think of
your kisses/My mind see-saws...*

Nic takes a breath. Just as Paul's about to say something, Nic resumes her unfortunate solo.

NIC (CONT'D)
*Do you see/do you see/do you see
how you hu-urt me baby/so I hurt
you too/then we both get/soo-ooo-
ooo blue...*

Nic stops, eyes still closed. She's connected to a part of herself she rarely lets herself visit. The moment is punctured by her smart-ass 15-year-old son.

LASER

Don't quit your day job, mom.

PAUL

Hey. It's hard enough to open your heart in this world. Don't make it harder.

LASER

You're right.
(to Nic; contrite)
I'm sorry, mom.

Nic looks at Paul. Stunned. Then looks at Jules and points to Paul.

NIC

I like this guy.

Paul looks at Joni.

PAUL

You didn't tell me you were named after Joni M.

JONI

It's just so dorky. I don't really like to bring it up.

PAUL

I think it's cool.

NIC

(getting up)
Hey Paul. Where's your bathroom?

PAUL

Just around there.

On her way to the loo, Nic turns back to Paul.

NIC

You know what? I think I will try some of that Screaming Eagle.

95 INT. PAUL'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

95

Nic washes her hands at the sink. Something catches her eye. She lifts Paul's hairbrush from the shelf in front of her and examines it. She reaches into the bristles and pulls out...

A few strands of long red hair.

Nic pales.

CUT TO

Nic on her knees in Paul's shower, pulling a clump of tell-tale red hair from the drain.

CUT TO

Nic skulks out of the bathroom. She looks out and b-lines for the bedroom.

CUT TO

Nic pulling pillows off Paul's bed. Her look tells us she's found hair here as well.

THEN WE CUT TO

Nic sitting back down at the table. She looks drained. Nobody notices. The sound drops out.

NIC'S POV:

Paul and Jules talking comfortably.

Joni and Laser chiming in, smiling, one big happy family.

REVERSE ONTO NIC:

Totally disconnected. Shell-shocked. She wants to scream but it feels like she's trapped in cement. Things slow way down...

96 OMITTED

96

97 INT. NIC AND JULES' BATHROOM - THAT NIGHT

97

Nic and Jules perform their nightly ablutions. Jules is sonic-caring her teeth.

JULES
 (through the sonic buzz)
 Well, you and Paul seemed to get on
 like gang-busters...

NIC
 You're sleeping with him, aren't
 you.

JULES
 (freaked)
 What?

Nic turns to her, eyes red with anger.

NIC
 Just be honest with me. Don't make
 me feel crazier than I feel right
 now!

JULES
 Where is this coming from?!

NIC
 I found your hair in his drain!

JULES
 (scrambling)
 What? I was working. I got dirty
 so I took a shower.

NIC
 Oh yeah? You take a nap, too?

Jules pauses a second too long. The jig is up.

INT. NIC AND JULES' BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

The truth has come out. Nic is so angry she's calm.

NIC
 Are you in love with him?!

JULES
 No!

NIC
 What, are you straight now?!

JULES
 No. It has nothing to do with
 that!

(MORE)

JULES (CONT'D)

(beat)

I've just felt so cut off from you lately...

NIC

Oh, right, so it's my fault!

JULES

No! Who said anything about fault? Just listen to me!

NIC

I'm listening! What?!

JULES

I just needed...

NIC

What? To be fucked?

JULES

No, appreciated!

NIC

It's always what I'm not doing for you, isn't it? Well here's what I don't **to** you. I don't work out my issues by fucking other people!

Nic starts heading for the door. Jules follows.

JULES

He's not just "other people!"

NIC

No, you had to go fuck our *sperm donor*! You couldn't have picked a more painful way to hurt me...

JULES

Where are you going?!

NIC

I need water! My mouth is dry!

Nic opens the door. There's Joni and Laser, looking devastated. They've been listening to the whole thing.

Jules wakes up looking crusty from a rough night on the couch. She looks like she hasn't slept at all.

100 INT. LASER'S ROOM - DAWN

100

Jules enters and walks over to her sleeping son. She gently nudges him awake.

JULES
Hey Laser. Honey?

Laser turns over, semi-conscious.

LASER
What?

She sits down on his bed.

JULES
Listen, I know you and Joni heard what's going on. I just want you to know that what happened with Paul and me is over. There's nothing going on now.

LASER
Okay.

JULES
I know you might need some time to process your feelings around this, but I just want you to know that I'm here for you if you want to talk about anything.
(beat)
Is there anything you want to talk about?

LASER
(leave my room)
Not really.

JULES
(fighting the impulse to push it)
Okay then. Go back to sleep.

Jules pats her son and leaves.

101 INT. JONI'S BEDROOM - DAWN

101

Jules enters and touches Joni's shoulder.

JULES
Joni?

JONI
I don't want to talk to you.

JULES
Can we just--

JONI
I said I don't want to talk to
you!!

JULES
Okay. I'm sorry.

Jules slowly retreats to the door.

102 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING 102

Jules drinks coffee at the table. Nic walks in, dressed for work. Jules looks at her, wanting to "process." But Nic isn't in the mood. She grabs a banana from a bowl and walks out. Jules feels like a leper.

103 OMITTED. 103

104 INT. SASHA'S ROOM - AFTERNOON 104

We can tell Joni's been crying and downloading the whole thing to Sasha.

SASHA
How's Nic doing?

JONI
She's a wreck. I've never seen her
like this before.

Joni's cell rings. She gets off the bed, looks at the phone. It's a picture of Paul.

SASHA
Is it him...?

Joni nods gravely, answers.

JONI
(cold)
Hello.

105 EXT. PAUL'S FARM - AFTERNOON

105

Paul's walking through rows of swiss chard, cell phone to his ear.

Conversation Intercut.

PAUL

Hey Joni, how you doing?

JONI

You're such a phony.

Beat.

PAUL

Excuse me?

JONI

You act like you're so groovy and together but you're not. You're a shitty person!

PAUL

What happened?

JONI

With my mom?!

PAUL

Listen, can I just come and talk with you--

JONI

What's wrong with you?!

PAUL

Joni...

JONI

Don't call me anymore.

Joni hangs up and start crying. Sasha hugs her.

106 EXT. PAUL'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

106

Sweaty, nauseous with remorse, Paul turns around to find fetching young Brooke, waiting for him with a wicker basket of huge cucumbers.

BROOKE

Hey Paul, look at these cukes...

Paul holds up his hand at her. This girl symbolizes every bad choice he's ever made.

He gives her the universal, "Leave Me Alone" gesture. Brooke looks embarrassed.

107 EXT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - BACKYARD - AFTERNOON 107

Jules sits on a lawn chair smoking a cigarette. Her cell rings. She answers.

108 EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON 108

Paul walks down the street, wiggling out.

PAUL
Hey, it's me. I just talked to
Joni.

Conversation intercut.

JULES
Oh my god, I'm so sorry. I should
have called you.

Jules sucks a big, anxious drag off a cigarette.

PAUL
What happened?

JULES
Nic saw my hair in your bathroom.

PAUL
The other night.

JULES
Yeah.

PAUL
Fuck...

JULES
Yeah.

Beat.

PAUL
Listen, it's all out in the open
now. Let's make this happen.

JULES

Paul...

PAUL

No, I'm serious. Fuck it. Let's get the kids together and do this thing.

JULES

Paul, come on...

PAUL

No! I'm sick of this life. I want a family. I'm ready--

JULES

(eye rolling)

Jesus, Paul! I'm gay!

Jules tosses the phone away from her.

109

EXT. HOUSE PARTY - BACKYARD - NIGHT

109

Joni and Sasha stand at the makeshift "bar". Joni's downs several Tequila shots quickly.

SASHA

Slow down, tiger.

Across the room, Joni spots Jai chatting with a WAIFY GIRL in a sundress.

Joni drops one more Tequila shot and walks up to Jai and Waify girl, interrupting them.

JONI

I like the scruff. It's sexy.

Waify girl juts out her hip territorially.

WAIFY GIRL

Uh, 'scuuuse me...

JONI

You're excused.
(then back to Jai)
Hey, can I talk to you?

Joni leads Jai to a private corner.

She leans in and kisses Jai. And Jai actually returns the kiss. And it's completely sweet and intimate.

But then the kiss starts to morph as Joni's energy turns manic, intense, less romantic than emotionally needy. We see Jai start to pull away. But Joni keeps holding him, wanting more. Finally, Jai breaks off the kiss.

JAI
Joni...Joni...

JONI
What?

Joni looks pained, embarrassed. Jai keeps holding her hands.

JAI
Are you okay?

JONI
Yeah, I'm fine...

Joni pulls free and escapes, leaving a confused Jai in her wake.

110 INT. NIC AND JULES BEDROOM - NIGHT

110

Jules walks in to find Nic, awake, in bed.

JULES
Just getting another pillow. The couch is kind of saggy.

NIC
Is your back okay?

Jules perks up: is this an invitation to share the bed again?

JULES
It's a little ache-y.

NIC
You should take some Advil.

Guess not.

Suddenly they hear bumping and loud footsteps downstairs.

111 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

111

Jules walks downstairs to find Joni stumbling toward her bedroom.

JULES

Hey. How was the party?

Joni tries to avert her mom's questioning gaze.

JONI

Fine.

JULES

How big was it?

JONI

I don't know. Medium...ish...

Jules takes in the glassy look in her daughter's eyes.

JULES

Are you drunk?

JONI

No.

Nic enters from the stairs, having caught the last piece.

NIC

I hope you had a designated driver.

JONI

Why? I'm not drunk.

NIC

Well, you seem drunk to me.

JONI

Yeah, well, you should know.

NIC

(furious; incredulous)
What did you just say to me?!

JONI

I'm going to bed.

Joni starts to leave. Nic grabs her.

NIC

No, you're not! I'm not done
talking to you!

Laser opens his door and watches the scene progress.

JONI

What do you want from me?! I did everything you wanted! I got all A's! I got in everywhere I applied! Now you can show everybody what a perfect family you have!

JULES

Don't talk to your mom like that!

Joni spins to face Jules.

JONI

You're really gonna tell *me* how to act? Now?!

JULES

Hey, I'm still your mother.

JONI

Whatever...

Jules reaches out and Joni backs away, sickened.

JONI (CONT'D)

Don't touch me!

Joni heads for her room.

JONI (CONT'D)

I'm so sick of both of you!

112	EXT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - DAWN - MOS	112
	The sun rises on this formerly happy home.	
113	INT. ALLGOOD LIVING ROOM - MORNING	113
	Jules wakes up on the couch. Sits up. Rubs her aching back.	
114	INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - JONI'S BEDROOM - DAY	114
	Joni packs for college. The room is littered with half-filled packing boxes. She picks up a pile of clothes from the corner and sees the farmer's hat Paul gave her. She puts it aside, not sure what to do with it.	

115 EXT. PAUL'S BACKYARD - DAY 115

Paul looks around his newly landscaped yard. It looks more abandoned than revived.

116 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - NIGHT 116

The family has their last supper - before Joni leaves.

NIC

Did you pack that lamp I gave you?

JONI

Yeah.

NIC

Well, we can always get stuff up there, too, if you need it, I mean if the room's dark or you need extra bedding...

JONI

I'm not going to Siberia, mom.

Jules looks at the family unit, misty.

JULES

I can't believe this is our last dinner together.

LASER

Oh God, are you gonna cry?

Jules looks at her son, fed up.

JULES

I wish you *were* gay. You'd be so much more sensitive.

The doorbell rings.

JONI

It's probably Sasha. I'll get it.

Joni runs to the door. Opens it. It's not Sasha. It's Paul.

JONI (CONT'D)

(shocked)

What are you doing here?

PAUL
I needed to talk to you before you left.

JONI
There's nothing to talk about.

PAUL
I just want to apologize again for what happened. I can't tell you how much I regret it.

117 EXT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - SAME

117

Joni walks out for privacy, closes the door behind her.

JONI
So like, everything that happened between us. What was that? Was that just bullshit?!

PAUL
No, it wasn't bullshit at all. I know I don't seem credible right now but I really care about you...

Paul struggles to keep his emotions in check.

PAUL (CONT'D)
...and I just hope someday we'll be able to see each other again. Do you think that could maybe happen?

JONI
I don't know...

Joni looks down welling up.

JONI (CONT'D)
I just wish you could've been...

PAUL
What?

Joni chokes back tears.

JONI
Better...

Paul and Joni look up at each other when the door suddenly flings open. Nic is there, fuming.

NIC
You've got some balls, mister!

PAUL
Nic, hold on...

Nic walks toward he and Joni. Joni ducks back inside.

NIC
No, you hold on! Let me tell you something, you really hurt my kids!

PAUL
Well, they're kinda my...

NIC
(cutting him off)
No! They're not. This is *not* your family. This is *my* family! You're just a fucking interloper...

Jules joins Nic, concerned things are getting out of hand.

PAUL
I didn't mean to hurt anyone...

Paul and Jules share a look as Nic deals the *coup de grace*.

NIC
If you want a family so much, go out and make one of your own!

Nic heads back inside and slams the door behind her.

Paul stand alone, spinning. After a moment he spontaneously looks back into the house. Laser is staring at him through the window. Their eyes lock and Paul give Laser a contrite smile. That's the final straw for Laser. He grabs his plate and walks out of view.

Reeling, Paul heads for his motorcycle. He gets on the bike, helmet in hand. Turns on the ignition. He picks up the helmet and pauses, shaking in the hell of his own making. Losing it, he hurls the helmet at the motorcycle.

118 INT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - TV ROOM - THAT NIGHT

118

Laser, Joni and Nic watch "Locked Up Abroad" Jules walks in front of them, picks up the remote and turns off the TV.

JULES
I need to say something.

Everyone sits up. Jules acts stoic but she's wrecked.

JULES (CONT'D)

Look, it's no big secret your mom and are in hell right now. Bottom line...marriage is hard...really fucking hard. Just two people, slogging through the shit, year after year, getting older, changing. It's a fucking marathon, okay?!

Everyone is silenced by the outpouring. Jules soldiers on.

JULES (CONT'D)

So sometimes you're together so long, you just stop seeing the other person. You just see weird projections of your own junk. And instead of talking to each other, you go off the rails, and act grubby and make stupid choices. Which is what I did. And I feel sick about it because I love you guys and I love your mom and that's the truth. Sometimes you hurt the ones you love the most. I don't know why. Maybe if I read more Russian novels I would...

Nic looks down, overwhelmed by it all.

JULES (CONT'D)

Anyway, I just wanted to say how sorry I am about what I did and that I hope you'll forgive me eventually.

(awkward)

Thank you.

And, without further ado, Jules hands the remote back to Laser and departs the field. Everyone's silenced by Jules' rambling apologia, especially Nic.

119 OMITTED. 119

120 INT. JONI'S ROOM - MORNING 120

Joni wakes up. She looks around her room. There's nothing on the walls. The floor is covered with boxes taped and labeled. It's time to go.

- 121 EXT. ALLGOOD HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY 121
 Nic and Jules stuff the last of Joni's things in the back of their station wagon. Laser and Joni bring the last of the boxes out of the house.
- 122 INT. VOLVO STATION WAGON - DAY 122
 The Allgoods are on the road, heading to college.
- 123 OMITTED. 123
- 124 EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY - ESTABLISHING 124
 The station wagon passes through the campus.
- 125 INT. STATION WAGON - DAY 125
 As they drive past buildings and dorms, Joni sees STUDENTS swarming the campus. She takes it all in, nervous, excited. Nic and Jules steal looks back at Joni, feeling her nervousness, wishing they could take it away.
- 126 EXT. STREET - DAY 126
 The Allgoods pull up to the curb, get out. Laser piles Joni's boxes on his skateboard.
- 127 EXT. FRONT OF DORM - DAY 127
 Laser dollies Joni's boxes though the corridor and while Joni and the moms follow behind.
- INT. DORM ROOM - MOMENTS LATER
 Nic and Jules follow Joni to the door. They all jam up at the threshold.
- JONI
 Guys, it's okay. I got it.
- Nic and Jules get the hint. They move back and Joni enters the room alone. Nic and Jules quietly turn and leave.

128 INT. JONI'S DORM ROOM - BEDROOM - LATER 128

Joni stands among her bags and boxes looking around. She goes into her suitcase and pulls out her linens. She starts making her bed but suddenly stops mid way. She stares out toward the hallway.

Finally she moves to the doorway and looks out. She realizes her family isn't there.

129 EXT. DORM BUILDING - DAY 129

Joni exits, looking around to find her family. The station wagon is gone. She looks panicked. Her pace quickens as she makes her way down a hill toward the road.

Finally Joni sees the Volvo heading towards her.

The car pulls over to the curb and everyone gets out. Joni looks vulnerable. She tries to cover it.

JONI
Where'd you go?!

NIC
We had to move the car.

JONI
I thought you left.

JULES
We wouldn't leave without saying
goodbye.

NIC
Give us *some* credit.

And suddenly, everyone realizes...this is it. It's time to say goodbye. First Laser comes up and hugs Joni.

LASER
It's gonna be weird not having you
at home.

JONI
Sorry to leave you alone with them.

LASER
It's okay. I can handle it.

Laser backs up. Then the moms both come up and hug Joni, tears streaming down their faces.

JONI
 Guys, come on...
 (beat)
 Look, I'll talk to you soon.

Joni tries to detach from the hug. But her moms won't let go. They keep holding her and crying.

Slowly, their tears begin to break Joni down.

Trapped in their loving embrace, Joni's feelings rise up, unbidden, overpowering her. She starts crying.

The moms hold her tighter, which makes her cry even harder.

Soon she's sobbing in her mothers' arms, as all the pressure, resentment and anger she's felt starts seeping out of her.

Nic and Jules feel their daughter letting go. They hold her tight to comfort her.

They keep holding her until a calm sets in.

The hug breaks apart. Nic pushes the hair from Joni's face. Joni gives her moms one last smile.

Laser, Jules and Nic get back in the car. Joni stands watching as they drive off and her new life begins.

130

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

130

The family drives home. Jules is at the wheel. Nic's in the passenger seat, eyes red and puffy. Laser's in the back.

No one speaks, everyone's lost in their own worlds. Finally Laser breaks the spell.

LASER
 I don't think you guys should break up.

A long beat.

NIC
 No? Why's that?

LASER
 I think you're too old.

Both Nic and Jules crack smiles. Their son's rudeness is unsurpassed. But then his words have an unexpected gravity.

NIC
Thanks, Laser.

Jules, disarmed and slightly smiling, reaches over and puts her hand on Nic's leg. She gives it a gentle squeeze and doesn't let go. Nic looks over to Jules, finally disarmed.

Nic reaches for Jules' hand and holds it tight. Nic and Jules look at each other, and then away.

Laser watches his moms holding hands from the back seat. Their small gesture is what he needed. He smiles to himself, grateful for a sign.

FADE OUT

THE END