

GREAT WHITE MEN IN BLACK HISTORY

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EXT. SOHO - DAY

At the corner of "Walk" and "Don't Walk" is ALICE JEFFERSON.

Alice, who stopped worrying about boyfriends and Balenciaga at some point between 30 and 35, toe-taps in sensible shoes.

She closes a pamphlet. ADOPTION 101: After Your Application.

Alice sees an older New York COUPLE holding hands. The pair walk slowly on the sidewalk, outpaced by HUSTLERS, BUSTLERS.

Like Alice, they are the only black faces in a sea of white.

ALICE (V.O.)

My grandmother was a matchmaker from Brooklyn. Her grandmother was also a matchmaker -- by way of Bradford and Boston, which are more than a couple stops from Brooklyn on the "L" train.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Alice teaches BOYS and GIRLS in front of a periodic table.

ALICE

And while my Brooklyn grandmother put about three dozen eggs in the "All You Need Is Love" basket, it was a scientist from Brooklyn who said that Love is just one element on the periodic table of Happiness.

She indicates a blackboard featuring a segmented triangle.

ALICE

That scientist was Abraham Maslow, this triangle is his Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow believed that if we don't have these colored sections accounted for...we can't be happy.

GIRL

What does a scientist know about happiness?

ALICE

Oh, Maslow didn't "know" anything.

EXT. SOHO (INTERCUT) - DAY

Alice sees a doting HUSBAND pushing his WIFE'S wheelchair.

ALICE (CONT'D)

He just believed. He said we place too much emphasis on the idea that love leads to happiness... I agree.

Everything Alice says, denied by what she sees:

ALICE

Maslow's base-level requirements for happiness? A) Food, B) Sleep.

Alice sees a COUPLE enjoying "Food" at a diner.

A GIRL in a park gets "Sleep" on her GUY'S leg.

ALICE

Next? Employment and Property.

Alice watches OWNERS in a laundromat, team-working.

Over "Property" she spies NEWLYWEDS, house-hunting.

GIRL

Wait. Maslow says we focus on love leading to happiness. But half the levels involve finding someone. Or they're just more fun with someone.

ALICE (V.O.)

Well, take New York. There are so many reasons why people move here: For great apartments, better food, plus companionship, sportsmanship, gamesmanship ... Even battleships.

QUICK CUTS: Alice dines in a loft. Boos the Yankees in the Bronx. Gets her cab stolen. Visits the USS Intrepid museum.

ALICE

I don't discount the importance of companionship -- But companionship alone will never lead to happiness.

BOY

I say your matchmaker grandmother was right... Love is all you need.

Alice with a DATE. He eyes a TEENAGER. Alice bites her lip.

GIRL

But how does love actually happen? Sure, it's not everything, but it is something.

EXT. SOHO - DAY

Back on the street, Alice hears a dashing BACHELOR.

ALICE (V.O.)
How does love happen?

Bachelor smiles.

ALICE (V.O.)
Love is proximity and chance.
(beat)
That's how you end up with someone.

He greets the much YOUNGER WOMAN in front of Alice.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

A glazed look in Alice's eyes. She snaps out of it.
Notices ELI BRAUN (17), fumbling with Elmer's glue.

ALICE
Eli, what are you doing?

He freezes.

ELI
Love is proximity and chance.
(beat)
That's how you end up with someone.

ALICE
Are you eating paste?

ELI
Self-actualization, ergo happiness,
is attainable.

ALICE
Why are you eating paste?

ELI
It's glue. I spread it on my palm
and my fingers. Then I let it dry.
(beat)
After it gets hard, I rub it.

ALICE
After it gets hard, he rubs it.

ELI
I didn't mean it like that.

ALICE

And then more glue comes out? To
the principal's office you go.

ELI

I didn't mean it like that!

No one notices as the PRINCIPAL appears at the door.

ALICE

That is a bald-faced lie, Eli. It
was a intentional double entendre,
and it was nasty as absolute shit.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Instead of Eli, it's Alice in front of the Principal.

PRINCIPAL

Ms. Jefferson...do you know what
the key to my longevity has been?

She thinks.

ALICE

Nepotism and a comb-over?

He ROARS, Alice LAUGHS. He abruptly stops, Alice follows.

PRINCIPAL

The key is that I genuinely love
children.

ALICE

Well you did go to Penn State.

PRINCIPAL

Alice, you have the same qualities
I have -- You adore these children.

ALICE

... I do?

PRINCIPAL

It's why I asked you to help Eli
Braun with tonight's talent show.

ALICE

Totally. It's a big night.

PRINCIPAL

With Eli being the only Jewish boy in Catholic school, seems to me he doesn't always get his due respect.

ALICE

Well the talent show will fix that. He's singing "If I Were a Rich Man" from Fiddler on the Roof.

PRINCIPAL

Good... The kids respect you, Alice. I'd like them to accept Eli as well.

(beat)

With layoffs looming, eyes are open.

ALICE

What's that supposed to mean?

PRINCIPAL

It means I won't forget that Penn State joke for a long time. Kudos. As if straight from my ex-wife.

(beat)

Only a divorced woman could offer a barb so sharp, and yet so blunt.

ALICE

Sir, I've never been married.

PRINCIPAL

I thought you went through a divorce.

(beat)

You almost... You look like you have.

ALICE

Thank you, Sir.

PRINCIPAL

I'm joking.

(beat)

Only in the morning.

ALICE

Thank you, Sir.

PRINCIPAL

Under your eyes.

ALICE

Oh, wow.

PRINCIPAL

Class dismissed.

EXT. MADISON AVE - DAY

Boyish and handsome, OLLIE FITCH (40) studies the window display at Ralph Lauren. He furtively snaps a photograph.

Later, he snaps menswear photos from Jay Kos and agnès b.

Ollie, like Alice, is the only person of color for miles.

INT. OLLIE'S APT - NIGHT

Ollie, ensconced in his tiny apartment. The studio's only remarkable tenants are a sewing machine and a D.I.Y. rose garden of sorts. Ollie nips a bud, then gets back to work.

He sits down in front of the sewing machine. Steps on the pedal under the desk. The fine needle CHARGES up and down.

Ollie makes a tie. Uses the Jay Kos photo as his template.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In his hoodie and homemade tie, Ollie walks. Like Alice, he is also a teacher. He meets with a student, DAVID FEIN (17).

Together the pair brave a crowd, enter Alice & Eli's school.

INT. AUDITORIUM - LATER

Ollie & David sit together as the auditorium begins to fill.

DAVID

Why am I here?

OLLIE

To show support for other schools' events... And so I can meet women.

DAVID

Dude, you're a teacher. I can't have people see me with you.

OLLIE

I make you cool, David.

DAVID

(craning his neck)

If anyone sees me with a slag, I'll never live it down.

Ollie sees a potential DATE, but her HUSBAND spoils the view.

DAVID

Why are you wearing a hoodie? I've never seen you in a hoodie before.

OLLIE

It's comfortable.

DAVID

It's weird.

OLLIE

It's casual wear... I have one good suit; I can't afford to wear it out.

DAVID

You're cheap. You're both cheap and materialistic. Horrible combination.

OLLIE

I'm frugal and materialistic -- Big difference. And I hafta be: I don't wanna end up poor like your parents.

A MOM sits. For Ollie, a shot at the love that eludes him.

MOM

Are you Samantha's dad?

OLLIE

No. But I am Ollie Fitch.

MOM

The hedge fund manager?

OLLIE

The educator.

MOM

Oh, what do you teach? Wait; lemme guess: Applied Physics... Columbia.

OLLIE

Well I'm a generalist. I teach violin, SAT verbal, I teach survival training, both urban and teenage...

MOM

Interesting. I was afraid you were gonna say you teach something else.

OLLIE

Like what, yoga?

MOM

High school. Yoga would be sexy.

The typical outcome for Ollie. He turns to a grinning David.

OLLIE

You said that if anyone sees you with a slag you'll never live it down. So then "slag" is the word kids use for teachers, obviously?

DAVID

Are you mad?

OLLIE

No, David. I'm not mad.
(beat)
I'm just disappointed.

David, ridden with guilt. Ollie's ego, bruised like Alice's.

INT. BACKSTAGE - SAME

Alice preps Eli for the talent show. She applies his makeup.

In the insular world of NYC teaching, he is her *best friend*.

ALICE

He said that since you're the only Jewish boy in Catholic School, you don't get respect.

ELI

I dunno -- Binu Patel is the only Indian kid, but people can't stop losing their shit over Binu Patel.

ALICE

Things fizzled out with Lawyer Guy.

ELI

In that book "Stuff White People Like," Binu Patel should get his own fucking chapter.

Dressed like Fiddler's Tevye, Eli begins to innocently goad.

The contrast of Alice being a black woman with her best pal being a Jewish teen complements Ollie (Black)/David (White).

ELI

Love is elusive, Alice. Maybe Lawyer Guy got bored.

ALICE

Wasn't love. I don't believe in love.

ELI

Maybe he was doggin' someone younger.

ALICE

Maybe. Love isn't for women over 30.

ELI

Maybe he never really cared for you. From the beginning. Maybe the whole thing was a massive charade for him, cuz he was a misogynistic sociopath.

ALICE

... Maybe he's gay.

ELI

Maybe he's gay... Actually, you don't dress nicely enough to land a gay guy.

ALICE

Cool.

ELI

You also bite your nails.

ALICE

Awesome.

Eli stares at her.

ALICE

What?

No response.

ALICE

What?

Eli fingers her hair.

ELI

Split ends.

She SLAPS his hand away.

ALICE

Listen up: If this goes off well, you'd better share the spotlight.

Before Eli objects, Alice pokes the underside of his chin with an eyebrow pencil, immobilizing him like a stuck pig.

ELI

I'll share the spotlight! Chill!

She releases.

ELI

And forget Lawyer Guy. You don't need a guy to adopt a baby... 'Course, you do need a lawyer. Maybe call him back.

Alice puts an arm around Eli, smiles with him in the mirror.

Her smile fades. She calls back to their sing-song exchange.

ALICE

Maybe he withdrew because he put on a few pounds.

ELI

Maybe he withdrew because ya put on a few pounds.

Giving up, Alice closes her eyes.

Alice & Eli mirror Ollie & David.

His lack of money has long priced him out the dating market.

In turn, Alice's diminishing youth is having similar effect.

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The opening chords of a familiar bass line.

A line that's not from Fiddler on the Roof.

We see Eli in full Hasidic dress: Ankle-length frock coat, a wide-rimmed black hat, plus a set of flowing side-curls.

Behind Eli, besuited men in bow ties dance to Vanilla Ice's "Ice Ice Baby." They are all members of The Nation of ISLAM.

ELI

Yo, J-A-P -- Let's kick it!

Ollie and David, confused.

ELI

A'right stop / Put down the Torah
 and listen / to the New York Jew
 with some cruel intentions /
 Something / wakes me up from sleep
 -sleepy / I think it's the moil
 coming to cut my pee-pee / Will
 the pain stop / Yo / I don't know /
 Turn on the lights, It's Schlo-mo /
 Like po-lice I cover up a scandal /
 And when I light the menorah it's
 with eight white candles / School /
 My English skills spell doom /
 I don't like Gatsby / I only read
 Judy-Blume / Deadly / When I write
 my re-ports / I got more game than
 Alan Dershowitz in court / Love it
 or leave it / Y'better gain weight
 / I don't kiss skinny girls, this
 Jew don't play / If there was a
 conflict / Golda Meir would solve
 it / My nose still grows while my
 dreidel revolves it.

ISLAM

You're a Jew, Jew, baby...

Alice, aghast at the substitution of Vanilla Ice for Fiddler.

ELI

Now your bar mitzvah is jumping /
 The Cristal's kicking in / Hava
 Nagila is pumping / In the bedroom
 the walls are shaking / That
 Goldberg girl is for the taking /
 Summer camp / Is where she learned
 to blow / My mom goes crazy when
 she's at the sto' / At Loehmann's /
 With a final markdown / I'm on a
 roll / It's time to go solo /
 Rollin' / in my Mazda Miata /
 Haters like to call it the Jewish
 Porsche-ata / The shiksas on
 standby / waving just to say hi /
 Did you stop / No I just drove by /
 Kept on / pursuing to the next stop
 / I busted left and I'm heading to
 the next block / The block was dead
 -- yo -- So I continued to A-1-A --

ISLAM

Diamond District!

ELI

Girls were hot wearing less than
bikinis / My moms would kvetch if
she saw how teeny / Jealous / Cuz
I'm out cutting deals / Zac Posen
made me a yarmukle in teal / Said
if there was a conflict Netanyahu
would solve it / My hose still
grows while my dreidel revolves it.

ISLAM

You're a Jew, Jew, baby...

ELI

Yo J-A-P's -- Let's get outta here.
(beat)
Word to Alice Jefferson.

Stunned silence. As promised, a spotlight shines on Alice.
She takes an exaggerated step to the left. It follows her.

INT. ATM - DAY

Next morning. Alice checks her savings account. Overdrawn.
Alice exits, Ollie enters. His savings? Also non-existent.

INT. Ollie'S SCHOOL - DAY

Ollie and David dine in the teacher's lounge.

A grim-faced TEACHER approaches. Ollie GULPS.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

SUITS, like a jury avoiding eye contact with the defendant.

OLLIE

The teachers' lounge is sacred ground.
I get that. I do. Admittance is not a
right, it's a privilege. But this kid
David is one of the best eggs we have.

(beat)

Things are a little tough for him at
home, so I figured granting a little
access might...show him that we care.

(beat)

We don't care? Okay, no; that's cool.
Tough love. I shouldn't have done it.

SUIT 1

That's not why you're here, Ollie.

INT. ALICE'S SCHOOL - SAME

Just like Ollie, Alice is up against a firing squad.

We INTERCUT as the two are simultaneously dismissed.

SUIT 2

The tax base in the city has been decimated. Unfortunately, in this economic climate, faculty layoffs are inevitable.

ALICE

... Is this about Eli's dance?

SUIT 3

Alice, I'm Til Martz. I'm a management consultant. This is hard for all of us.

ALICE

Says some German guy with frosted tips who won't have to swirl his tongue for gas money... I still pay student loans.

OLLIE

I have zero savings -- I'm poor and materialistic: Horrible combination!

Suits roll their eyes. Incensed, Alice and Ollie unload.

ALICE

It wasn't a student who took a dump in the salad bar. It was Dr. Lee. I'd tell you why, but trust me: For those of us who already know? It will never help us understand.

OLLIE

Mr. Johnson stole the money from the Coke machine. He spent it on his own coke machine, but hey -- who doesn't love coke? I know you do, Lisa.

LISA discreetly rubs her nose.

ALICE

Anyway. I've got direct deposit and an Asian lawyer. I'll see you all in court but for now? Peace out.

A slip of paper. ODDS ALICE CRIES: 3/1. Gets crossed out.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Alice commiserates with a sad TEACHER and a bawling Eli.

ELI
It's all my fault!

TEACHER
It's nobody's fault.

ELI
I'm sorry; it's all my fault!

TEACHER
Eli, it's nobody's fault.

ALICE
Well, it's a little bit his fault.
(beat)
Story of my life -- Too young for
tenure yet too old for employment.

TEACHER
In what sense?

Eli blows his nose.

ELI
She means it's similar to how she's
too young to be single, yet too old
to have a baby.

Alice's eyes widen: That's not what she was thinking.

Alice, now distracted by the radiant LILY WHITE (30).

ALICE
Hey... If they're getting rid of me
and replacing me with a newer model,
do you know who they're bringing in?

TEACHER
Oh, man. I think that's her: Lily
White. They like her because it's
a diversity thing.

Alice eyes Lily: Whiter than a Rockwell on Christmas.

ALICE
Diversity?

TEACHER
She's from Africa.

Alice, incredulous.

ELI

There are a lot of white people in Africa, Alice.

ALICE

Diversity? Her name is Lily White. Her name is literally, Lily White.
(beat)
She's about as African as a rhino.

ELI

... That doesn't even make sense.

ALICE

Shut up, Eli.

ELI

There are tons of rhinos in Africa. There is even a species called the African rhino... And it's not even obscure -- No wonder you got fired.

Eli begins to blow his nose, but as she did earlier, Alice SLAPS his hand. His tissue falls to the floor.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

She flips through *New York Press*. Sees the rather charming space ads advertising pricey knickknacks.

Alice spots a tasteful pig pendant. She covets it.

INT. BUILDING - DAY

Alice's MOMMA, at a window.

She takes in a 5-on-5 basketball game in the courtyard below.

The building across the way features its own windowsill FANS.

Alice watches from the next window and Momma heckles BALLERS.

MOMMA

Jobs are like men, Alice. They come and they go. They give you a little bit of money, but not nearly enough.

ALICE

I don't want a man for his money,
Momma.

MOMMA

Oh, I see... No wonder you got fired.
(to a Baller)
I've seen babies dribble better than
you!

Baller's GRANDMA cries out from the building across the court.

GRANDMA

Don't you talk like that to my son!

MOMMA

Not to worry, Cynthia -- The world
needs bricklayers too!
(to Alice)
You should never depend on someone
else for a job. Make your own work.

Momma indicates a wall filled with gambling odds and spreads.

MOMMA

Look here: Any basketball games that
go on at this housing complex, folks
are betting on them. Who takes those
bets? Momma take those bets.

ALICE

I wish I had your gifts, but I'm a
teacher. It's all I know how to do.

MOMMA

Not true. You could have gone into
matchmaking. Your grandmother said
it got us through WWII. I did some,
so can you -- You are too slow, PJ!

BALLER

Step off! You're old and slow!

MOMMA

I'm slow? I may be old, but I ain't
the one who's slow! Cinderella gets
to the ball faster than you!
(to Alice)
Don't work for someone else. I did
matchmaking, I ran that day-care a
bit, I got this... Build a website.

ALICE

Computers hate me.

MOMMA

Tutor SAT's.

ALICE

Market's saturated.

MOMMA

Ever set someone up?

ALICE

A woman who doesn't believe in love becoming a matchmaker? That's kinda sad... But yeah; I've set people up.

MOMMA

Then you can be a matchmaker. It's in your blood. Between student loans and rent and adoption plans, y'need money.

BALLER

This one's for you, Momma!

He dribble-drives and trips. Looks up to Momma, sheepishly.

MOMMA

Nice play, Shakespeare.

EXT./INT. LIMO - DAY

A black stretch cuts through NYC. Inside is Ollie's mother, MRS. FITCH (70). She's joined by her right hand man, REVIS ST. CLAIRE (40). Just like Alice, she reads *New York Press*.

MRS. FITCH

Famine, poverty...ethnic strife...

(beat)

How are housing starts, St. Claire?

Down. How are green shoots? Wilted.

The consumer price index? Stagnant.

She eyes the charming space ads for expensive knick-knacks.

MRS. FITCH

I want good news. Tell me gay men can be married in Utah. Tell me girls can go to school in Kabul... No, I'm just being facetious --- Tell me Sean Penn contracted cholera in Haiti.

She sees the cute pig pendant that piqued Alice's interest.

ST. CLAIRE

There is some good news, Mrs. Fitch.

MRS. FITCH

Go on.

ST. CLAIRE

Your son has been dismissed from his teaching appointment.

MRS. FITCH

Oliver? D'tails, man.

ST. CLAIRE

The Board of Ed issued city-wide layoffs today. Ollie, armed with only an undergraduate Bachelor's from university, was an easy cut. Others hold PhDs from university.

(beat)

Mrs. Fitch...you've waited forty years to tell your son the truth. I respectfully submit that today, his moment has arrived. Thoughts?

Mrs. Fitch searches out the limo for answers.

MRS. FITCH

Don't say "university," St. Claire. It makes you sound like an asshole.

INT. BAR - DAY

Post-Momma, Alice drinks at a quiet bar. Only sad-sack BARFLYS are around. Alice's tipsy eyes see the jukebox.

BARFLY

Do not.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - DAY

Ollie enters the opulent tower, a bee-hive of madness. At the front desk, a GUARD sees him. Picks up a phone.

GUARD

He's here.

INT. BAR - DAY

Alice feeds change to the jukebox. Countess LuAnn -- Money Can't Buy You Class. Alice returns to stool, drink, Barfly.

ALICE

I'm a great teacher.

BARFLY

(leering)

You could teach me something.

ALICE

I could. When I sober up, I could teach you not to wear white socks with black jeans. That you should never tuck your t-shirt into said jeans, or pants of any kind.

Barfly raises his glass.

BARFLY

Never again will my socks be white, and my shirts will never be tucked.

ALICE

I'm tipsy. And rude.

BARFLY

No, I've been looking to learn some self-improvement. There's gonna be a whole new me. Tommy, who you setting New Me up with?

ALICE

... I can set you up with someone.

INT. WAR ROOM - DAY

Ollie's mom -- Mrs. Fitch from the limo -- leads him through the war room of a financial services company.

MRS. FITCH

China is exploding.

BUYERS and LENDERS are everywhere, oblivious to them.

MRS. FITCH

Greece is imploding. Let me see if I can grab a conference room.

A Buyer calls to her.

BUYER

Can we do a coffee run, Linda?

MRS. FITCH

Right away, Sir.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Mrs. Fitch consoles Ollie at a mahogany table.

OLLIE

Mother, I may never find work again.
I have no skills.

MRS. FITCH

You're an English teacher.

OLLIE

Exactly; I'm ruined... What am I
gonna do about money?

Mrs. Fitch swivels in her chair, evaluates a Picasso.

She rises, heads for the painting. Touches the frame.

Recognizing her fingerprints, the painting slides to
the left, revealing a safe. Her retinas scan and the
large safe offers its treasure: A handsome briefcase.

Mrs. Fitch sets it on the table. Hits the gold locks
and opens it up. Ollie has never seen this much cash.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Alice, on the sidewalk with the Barfly. Looking to match him.

WOMAN approaches. Alice locks on her, but Barfly isn't a fan.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Ollie stares at the briefcase. Stacks and stacks of hundreds.

MRS. FITCH

I don't know where to begin.

Mrs. Fitch gets up and walks away. She pours herself a drink
from the wet bar. Ollie, clearly unnerved by her trepidation.

MRS. FITCH

Your name is Ollie Fitch. My name
is Linda Fitch. But your father's
name was not James Fitch by birth.

OLLIE

What was it?

MRS. FITCH

Jean-Paul Lacroix. Your father was a Frenchman, born near Charleville Mézières in 1937. His father was a blacksmith, born in 1896.

INT. SMITH SHOP (INTERCUT) - DAY

Ollie's GRANDFATHER (who may as well be Ollie with a poor excuse for a beard) hammers pressed metal as a fire burns.

MRS. FITCH

Your grandfather, Henri Lacroix, was an artist. A master of blacksmithery.

OLLIE

... I don't think that's even a word.

MRS. FITCH

Henri Lacroix was deeply in love with Juliette, a girl from the noble class.

The gorgeous JULIETTE (who may as well be Alice with head lice and better clothes) helps Ollie's grandfather create.

MRS. FITCH

But their love was a forbidden love.

POLICE burst through the door, steer Juliette away.

MRS. FITCH

Your grandfather, a small laborer, was too poor to be given her hand in marriage. Juliette was sent to Tulle, and died of a broken heart.

Later, Henri angrily pounds metals. The fire RAGES.

MRS. FITCH

Your grandfather, he threw himself into his work. He would never love again, only taking wrought iron as his mistress. Lacroix built France.

MONTAGE: Henri installs metalwork throughout Paris.

MRS. FITCH

Gates, grills, railings. Light fixtures, furniture, sculpture. Agricultural implements, tools, weapons. Even cooking utensils.

The city of Lille, BUZZING with WORKERS and CROWDS.

MRS. FITCH

The French did not have sanitation. Consequently, Henri Lacroix wanted to improve conditions: For working class people, for his people. Each storm drain, every sewer cage that is now in France today, every last one bears the name Lacroix.

The glass of scotch cannot hide her trembling hand.

MRS. FITCH

Ollie, your grandfather built an empire. When you were a baby and your father passed away, Lacroix felt that if simply handed money, you would be lazy in his absence. And as Lacroix money from copper gave way to earnings from mining, Lacroix Metal became a player on the world's stage... We're worth over 500 hundred million dollars.

Ollie stands. Heads to the floor-to-ceiling windows.

MRS. FITCH

Say something.

Ollie studies the street below. Turns to his mother.

OLLIE

We're French?

MRS. FITCH

You are the last Lacroix, son. Your grandfather raised your father in a similar fashion: Only upon marrying me was he told of his great fortune.

Ollie approaches the briefcase. Smooth, tight bills.

MRS. FITCH

On our wedding day, your grandfather rewarded us with the truth. And when I had you, he rewarded us with money.

The tips of Ollie's fingers admire the green cotton.

MRS. FITCH

When your father passed on, Henri Lacroix established the very same parameters for you... Now, I have waited 40 years for you to settle.

(MORE)

MRS. FITCH (CONT'D)

I've waited to tell you, dear boy,
that when you can produce an heir,
our fortune will turn over to you.

(beat)

Our millions will be yours, Ollie.

Ollie, shocked.

OLLIE

Are we French? I thought we were
like, normal American black folk.

MRS. FITCH

You're half-black.

OLLIE

And half-French?

MRS. FITCH

I'm black. You're half-French.

OLLIE

... Sacré bleu.

EXT. STREET - SAME

When we left Alice, she was on the sidewalk with the Barfly.
As one did previously, a WOMAN nears. Alice locks in on her.
Barfly nods in approval. Alice makes a bee-line towards her.

ALICE

Hi. Um, are you single?

WOMAN 2

... I like men.

Alice indicates Barfly. He smiles. Barfly's missing a tooth.
Woman 2 smiles. She's also missing a tooth. A perfect match.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

Ollie holds a brick of cash.

OLLIE

How come we're not discussing this
with like, a small army of lawyers?

MRS. FITCH

Because once marriage and children leads to a claiming of your legacy, your entire life will be lawyers.

(beat)

Money doesn't buy happiness, Ollie. It buys problems.

OLLIE

Mother, are you crazy? On the way in here a man in a suit asked you to go on a coffee run. This is a financial services company. Lacroix or Lemieux or Gretzky -- whoever we are, do you expect me to believe we own all this?

MRS. FITCH

The man who requested coffee is our employee... Any subservience to him has managed to inform your humility.

OLLIE

What about St. Claire. You work for Revis St. Claire -- He's in on this?

MRS. FITCH

St. Claire is my assistant... His office is mine, my cubicle is his.

Ollie produces his wallet. Demonstratively holds a bill.

OLLIE

Okay, so I'm a millionaire. I'm a rich man, so I guess the last 100 bucks I have to my name, it isn't needed. Guess I got money to burn.

Ollie takes out a lighter. He sets the \$100 bill ablaze.

MRS. FITCH

Money to burn is right. However, as mentioned, you do not get the money until you marry and produce an heir.

Ollie blows the bill. Flames are stoked. He blows again.

MRS. FITCH

I waited for you to marry on your own, Ollie. But now you're 40 and without a job. Your prospects are dim. Worse, your clock is ticking.

OLLIE

My who?

MRS. FITCH

Society wrings its hands over female fertility. But male fertility is not forever. Ollie, if you don't produce an heir the money will go to charity.

OLLIE

Charity?

MRS. FITCH

Hospitals. Farms. Charter schools.

OLLIE

Charter schools? Over my dead body!
What have schools ever done for me?

Mrs. Fitch's raised eyebrows neatly answer the question.

OLLIE

Also, I would love to get married.

(beat)

Just not until gay men and women are allowed to marry in New York as well.

MRS. FITCH

They already can.

OLLIE

What? No! Ban it!

(beat)

Joking. Listen...I've wanted to meet someone for awhile now. I'm not like other guys in that regard. But women don't want to marry me. I don't have money, and this is a city made of it.

MRS. FITCH

I'll sit down with some matchmakers.

OLLIE

A matchmaker? Okay, this is a joke.

He rises to leave.

MRS. FITCH

Take the briefcase, Ollie.

INT. HALL - DAY

Ollie nears the lively war room he passed through earlier. As Ollie enters and makes his way through, the Buyers and Lenders who were everywhere and oblivious to his presence, they are now silent and still. Ollie picks up their stare.

Ollie stops walking. He faces all. Buyers/Lenders APPLAUD.
The Buyer who asked for the coffee run offers a thumbs up.
St. Claire beams with affection. HOOTS & HOLLERS ring out.
Stunned, Ollie drops the briefcase. And he finally smiles.

INT. BAR - DAY

Alice and Barfly re-cap with Barfly 2.

BARFLY

If she can set me up, you're golden.

He SLAMS a \$50 bill in front of Alice.

ALICE

No promises. But whaddaya like in
a woman? Whaddaya like in general?

BARFLY 2

I like my beer ... I also like my
Chicago Cubs. Good luck with that.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

As Ollie exits, Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" RISES.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Along with Barfly 2, Alice studies the streets.

ALICE

Beer and the Chicago Cubs...

In an office plaza, WOMAN 3 eats with a FRIEND.

ALICE

Beer and the Chicago Cubs...

Woman 3 wears a blue hat. Adds Stoli to her OJ.

ALICE

Vodka and the Chicago Bears.

Woman 3 sees Alice spy. Spots Barfly 2. Smiles.

Ode to Joy RISES. Alice & Ollie MONTAGE begins.

Having set up Barfly 1 & 2, Alice spins it into setting up their friends. Alice shakes hands with AUTO MECHANIC. Greets Mechanic's BUTCHER. The handshake turns into one with a PLUMBER, then a CABBIE, a NURSE, then a GOLF PRO.

Alice pounds meat, Rocky-style. Unclogs a drain, drives a cab. Takes a blood pressure reading, hits a golf ball.

She then acts a 3rd wheel chaperone on a date with each.

Over TENORS and SOPRANOS, Ollie buys clothes: Suits and shoes, ties and trousers, coats and cardigans. All cash.

David meets the suitcase. He hops onto Ollie's bed with it, unbuttons his shirt, rubs money on his chubby chest.

Ollie in front of a Kobe beef set-up. Indicates his cut. Later, David tosses it into a dog run -- Torn to pieces.

Ollie crouches down in front of an ornate tray of sushi. David baits a hook with it and casts it into the Hudson.

Alice sells possessions to pawn shops and thrift stores.

Happy Ollie performs a double dutch skip through a jump rope, just like Sherman Hemsley in the credits for AMEN.

Next, Alice sets up a BLIND WOMAN with a CROSSING GUARD.

Ollie throws fruit against the facade of his old school. Apples, pears and strawberries make a mess. The TEACHER who's escorting his KIDS back inside is horrified. Kids, of course, love it. Ollie hurls a tomato at the Teacher.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Fitch sits with a series of MATCHMAKERS.

Later, a bored, unimpressed Ollie is turned off to them.

Armed with her credit card, Alice cradles her cell. She again looks at the space ads in *New York Press* that she and Mrs. Fitch were both reading. A panel: Your Ad Here.

A week later, Mrs. Fitch reads the newspaper. Finds the pig pendant that she and Alice pined for. It is circled by a Sharpie, as Mrs. Fitch plans to order it... Except this week, the space ad right above was placed by Alice.

Mrs. Fitch sees Alice's smiling face. Picks up her cell.

INT. MOMMA'S APT - DAY

Alice, at Momma's. Eli plays solitaire. The phone RINGS.

ALICE

Hello?

ST. CLAIRE

Hi there. My name is Revis St. Claire.
I'm the assistant to Linda Fitch, and
I am inquiring about a Mrs. Jefferson?

ALICE

Ms. Jefferson. Speaking.

ST. CLAIRE

Apologies. Mrs. Fitch saw your ad
for matchmaking in *New York Press*.
She'd hoping to sit down with you.

ALICE

I'd love to.

ST. CLAIRE

Excellent. And do bring your team.
Who's working with you over there?

Out the window, Alice spots Momma shooting dice with Ballers.

Alice turns, is greeted by the sight of Eli picking his nose.

ALICE

Some colleagues.

Eli eats a booger. Alice gags.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

St. Claire escorts Alice & Co. to a meeting with Mrs. Fitch.

ELI

Alice and I met at my school. For a
Big Sister/Little Brother type deal.
Now I'm the Director of Development.

ALICE

I had been planning to adopt, and
since Eli came through the system,
he began to advise on the process.

ST. CLAIRE

... Are you a Republican voter, Alice?

ALICE

I'm not. I mean, I'm a woman. And a black woman at that. I'm a Democrat.

ST. CLAIRE

... Are you a Republican voter, Alice?

ALICE

No. In fact, our family has voted Democrat each election since 1880.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Alice, Eli, Momma, across from St. Claire & Mrs. Fitch.

MRS. FITCH

Are you a Republican voter, Alice?

ALICE

Is there any other kind?

MRS. FITCH

Now, how do you make your matches? Beyond intuition or word of mouth.

ALICE

... The Compatibility Matrix?

MRS. FITCH

Which is?

A faucet DRIPS. A clock TICKS. Eli comes to the rescue.

ELI

The Compatibility Matrix is a for profit, non-partisan mathematical initiative, the result of a joint outreach program, a collaboration between MIT, Alice Jefferson, and myself. The Matrix aims to supply a substantive algorithm that adds to real-time observations, and so proffers a firm assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a man and woman, in el contexto de amor.

Alice slowly turns her head, looks at Eli in disbelief.

ELI

It's based in math and physics and absolutes. No space for compromise, and zero accommodations for change.

ST. CLAIRE

But compromise and change are part of any relationship.

ELI

Indeed, Mr. Revis.

ST. CLAIRE

Mr. St. Claire.

ELI

Whatever. How learned you are in the Ways & Means of Love. Compromise and change are essential. I believe that as hard as it will be, the change we need is coming. Because I've seen it. Because I've lived it...I've seen it in Illinois, when we provided health care to more children and moved more families from welfare to work. If --

Obama's 2004 DNC speech. Mrs. Fitch smells BS. Eyes Alice.

MRS. FITCH

How long have you been a matchmaker?

ALICE

About a week. I lost my job, have no money, I maxed out my credit card on the *New York Press* ad... I'm kidding.

MRS. FITCH

I hope so. I won't work with amateurs.
(beat)
Let me be clear -- My son needs to be married... Now, if a given matchmaker can introduce him to someone and that relationship results in an heir...the fee paid shall be one million dollars.

Alice and Momma, shocked.

ELI

We won't do it for less than two.

Alice covertly stabs Eli w/ a pen. He FACEPLANTS on the table.

MRS. FITCH

I'll give you a week to show my son the quality of horse in your stable. After a week, we move on.

ALICE

... Who's your son?

INT. CORPORATE GYM - DAY

Ollie, along with David. They box 2-on-1 against BUTTERBEAN. They don't fare particularly well. Enter Alice and the rest.

OLLIE

Oh hello, Mother. We hired Butterbean to spar with us. And guess what? He's just like you, Revis: His real name's Eric and he loves pounding black guys.

A beat. With Butterbean distracted, David tries to land one. Butterbean ducks to his left. David SLAMS Ollie in the face. Ollie goes down in a heap, as does David, who hurts his arm.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Alice bids Momma, Eli adieu. They disappear into the subway.

MOMMA

Eli and I will put together an itinerary of events. Talk soon.

Alice faces Ollie. She exhales.

ALICE

Alright... Let's make love.

Ollie is cute and *polished*, while Alice is cute and *chipped*.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK ZOO - DAY

On line for maple ice cream boats, Ollie explains his story.

ALICE

500 million? Shoot... So, do you feel like a bonafide rich person?

OLLIE

Well, again, until there's an heir, I only get what's in the briefcase.

A FATHER orders for his FAMILY.

FATHER

Eight scoops. You still have that free scoop deal if they're all in the one chocolate boat, right?

SERVER nods, Father moves over.

ALICE
Hi. Two scoops.

OLLIE
Same, please.

SERVER
In one boat? Together or separate?

ALICE
Oh, we're not together... Nope.
(smiles)
No way are we in the same boat.

LATER

The animal farm paddock. Alice and Ollie feed pigs.

OLLIE
Maybe I feel rich on the outside.
New clothes... New possibilities.
(beat)
Hopefully if I have a baby, I'll
start feeling rich on the inside.

ALICE
Yeah. That's what she said.

A forlorn Alice sees a PROSPECT and changes course.

ALICE
Two o'clock.

OLLIE
Your hunting instincts are blunt.
I saw her 10 minutes ago at 1:50.

ALICE
And?

OLLIE
And, you should've paid for both
our ice creams, as it's a normal
person thing to do, or, combined
them into one boat so we'd get a
free scoop. I would've paid, but
you were ahead of me on the line.
(beat)
You mean the girl... She's not my
type. She's wearing Juicy Couture.

ALICE

I have stuff from Juicy.

Pigs oink.

OLLIE

You have stuff from Juicy Couture cuz you think it's juicy. She has stuff from Juicy Couture cuz she thinks it's couture.

ALICE

Thanks?

OLLIE

Not a compliment; you still dress kinda awful... No offense, I just resent having to deal with you in order to get my money. Let's walk.

EXT. BELVEDERE CASTLE - DAY

The duo take in views of Turtle Pond and The Delacorte.

ALICE

Why am I here if you resent me and don't want to get married?

OLLIE

I do want to get married. But if the strategy solely entails you pointing out women like an undersexed college kid, it's not gonna work out for you.

Ollie carves his initials into a soft piece of granite.

OLLIE

Sorry. It's a huge life change for me, as if I won the lottery. I was a teacher. And I just don't need a babysitter to meet women.

ALICE

You're a teacher?

OLLIE

Was a teacher... We had city-wide lay-offs, and I became expendable.

Alice is surprised that they shared the same profession.

ALICE
You never said you're a teacher.

OLLIE
Worse, I'm a substitute teacher.

She takes the Swiss Army Knife he uses on the granite.

ALICE
You'll get this back at the end of
the day. So, what's the worst-case?

OLLIE
If I don't have a baby, the money
goes to charter schools.

ALICE
That's wonderful.

OLLIE
I don't want someone who knows that
I have an inheritance coming my way.
I want somebody who loves me for me.

ALICE
Well at this age...

OLLIE
Your age.

ALICE
At our age...love doesn't exist.
Surrender and compromise, maybe.

Ollie disagrees.

OLLIE
There are a ton of amazing women in
this town. I'll find someone easily.
(beat)
Keep in mind, it's the money I want.
Not for you to set me up with three
thousand cute girls or whoever else.

Alice, unable to suppress her teacherly instincts.

ALICE
It's "whomever," not "whoever."

OLLIE
Wrong. I'm an English teacher.

ALICE

You're a sub, Dumbledore. Check it.
(fast)

It's whomever, since "whom" is the objective case of the pronoun "who" used when "who" is the object in a sentence instead of a subject. For example, we'd employ "who" in "Who loves you, girlfriend," since "who" is the subject of "loves." But you'd use "whom" in "Whom do you love, boo" since "whom" is the object of "love."

Ollie begins to object, until he sees a HUSBAND giving the universal signal to cease and desist: He waves a flattened palm under his neck. Ollie quiets. Eyes shut, Husband nods.

ALICE

Thesis stands. Love does not exist.

EXT. "CONSERVATORY WATER" - DAY

Alice, Ollie pilot the radio-controlled toy boats for rent.

OLLIE

You're kind of a cynical matchmaker.

ALICE

Says the man paying to find a woman.
(beat)

I just don't think true love exists past about 30 for women, 35 for men. As far as matchmaking goes, I think most people can grow to love anyone.

OLLIE

You can?

ALICE

Not me, but most people.

OLLIE

Hm. I do like that you're honest and not trying to sell me a bill of goods. That said, I think you can find love at any age so long as you have attitude...and armor.

ALICE

Armor.

OLLIE

Body armor. Shoes and slacks and
belts, shirts and coats and ties.

ALICE

Hats?

OLLIE

No hats. See, what's great about
New York is that we're a walking
city. As such, you're not judged
by your car, but by your clothes.
Not everyone can afford a Jaguar,
but you can afford to dress well.

(beat)

You've given up on love, Arianna.
And it reflects in your clothing.

She crashes her radio-controlled sailboat into Ollie's.

ALICE

I didn't ask... And I may have given
up on "love," but you've given up on
yourself -- And my name's Alice, P.S.

His boat flees. Hers follows, smashes his. He capsizes.

EXT. SOFTBALL FIELD - DAY

Alice, Ollie watch a softball game on the North Meadow.

OLLIE

How have I given up on myself?

ALICE

Women don't care about clothes, they
just want someone who's nice to them.
Apparently you don't have confidence
in your own self, so you rely on all
the...subterfuge in terms of clothes.

(beat)

You're materialistic.

OLLIE

I am not materialistic.

ALICE

No one has ever accused you of being
materialistic?

OLLIE

No.

ALICE

Fine.

OLLIE

Not today... It's cuz teaching's the worst thing that ever happened to me.

(beat)

Speaking of which, do make a note that -- aside from gold-diggers -- the only people I don't wanna date are teachers.

ALICE

What? Why?

OLLIE

It's an M-R-S degree. Most female teachers are lacking for ambition. It's a temp gig until the wedding.

Alice's ready to erupt, but she can't blow her cover.

Ollie, meanwhile, notices a pretty WOMAN approaching.

OLLIE

4 o'clock -- Still not a fan of your hunter and gatherer methodology, but 4 o'clock.

Alice makes binoculars with cupped hands on her eyes.

ALICE

I dunno, Karl Lagerfeld. I can't see what she's got on from here. Can you determine everything about her based on her outfit, Tom Ford?

Ollie assesses Alice, uses the Woman as her stand-in.

OLLIE

Her name is Malice. She's single, self-employed...and 37 years old.

ALICE

She's 36 years old.

OLLIE

She's 36 years old. And very tired. She spends so much time addressing the needs of her clients, that she doesn't have time for herself. And she doesn't think she'll ever love anyone the way she loved li'l Mark Rothko, her warm college boyfriend.

ALICE

Mark Rothko the artist?

OLLIE

I was coming to the end and I
couldn't think of a fake name.

ALICE

It wasn't a college boyfriend...but
a high school sweetheart. Malice is
angry with him. She's angry because
he spoiled her. Then he passed away.

(beat)

See, he was hardly the smartest boy
or the prettiest boy, he wasn't the
toughest boy or the tallest boy. He
wasn't even the nicest boy. But you
know what he was better at than any
boy before or any boy since? He was
the boy who tried for her. He tried
hard for her. He would pick flowers
on his walk to school every morning.
He tried to pick her different ones
every day, but sometimes he'd hafta
get the same ones two days in a row.
Then he'd actually apologize for it.
Most often, he'd get her carnations
two days in a row. White carnations.

(smiles)

She hated carnations, he knew she
hated carnations... But gosh darn
it if he did not try hard for her.

A soft moment. Ollie eyes the Alice look-alike, then his own.

OLLIE

The man next to her. What's his deal?

ALICE

... He's a professor. He's spent his
entire adult life waking at dawn for
a.m. lectures. It hasn't allowed for
a social life in the city that never
sleeps. The few women around? Fellow
professors. They chose less handsome,
but wealthier men. And it's made him
bitter. If he were a woman, his face
would have led to marriage, children,
and Sunday cookouts... But now, he's
had some success in life. Perhaps in
the form of a new job with new money.
Maybe an old relative with old money.
Either way, sunshine and gold cannot
chip away at the years of bitterness.

(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

Still, he's quite personable, bright,
and slick enough to convince someone,
somehow, that he's worth being saved.

OLLIE

Thanks.

ALICE

Not a compliment... Smile, you look
kind of awful... No offense, I just
resent having to put up with you in
order to get my money -- Let's walk.

INT. MOMMA'S APT - DAY

Equally cross, Eli and Momma wait impatiently, arms folded.

ELI

(loud)
Where is she?!

MOMMA

(louder)
I don't know!

EXT. STRAWBERRY FIELDS - DAY

Alice and Ollie, now at a pretzel stand. Ollie takes his,
then pays the VENDOR with five, one hundred dollar bills.

Vendor, thrown, as Ollie motions for him to keep the tip.

OLLIE

So, it was your mother that I met,
along with the young man from the
Big Sister/Little Brother program?

ALICE

Eli. My adoption adviser.

OLLIE

I have my own Eli. He's my favorite
student and in the insular world of
teaching...he's also my best friend.
(beat)
His name is David and he's poor.

They drift from the pretzel stand. Vendor clears his throat.

Alice looks to Ollie. Post-\$500 tip, he admires the skyline, then calls back to the maple ice cream Alice didn't pay for.

OLLIE

Oh, we're not together... Nope.
(smiles)
No way are we in the same boat.

EXT. BOAT HOUSE - DAY

On cue, Alice and Ollie are literally in the same boat.

ALICE

Down at Lincoln Center, Juilliard hosts these fundraiser breakfasts early in the a.m. Juilliard Dance. I'll get us into a top-shelf club tonight, help you meet some women, but I want to get up early and go to Juilliard for the ballet girls.

OLLIE

Let's do it.

As one may or may not expect, it's Alice who's rowing.

ALICE

Out here, I can't help but think of Swan Lake. My favorite ballet.

OLLIE

You're really going out on a limb. D'you also root for those scrappy underdogs on the New York Yankees?

She uses all her might to raise an oar out of the water and guide it so it passes over his head, wetting him with water.

ALICE

Swan Lake is a wonderful, timeless art piece. So what if it's popular?

OLLIE

True. No, you're right. The Dallas Cowboys could always use more fans.

She again struggles to wet him with the oar. The boat rocks.

ALICE

... I have this party to go to. What should I bring, gift-wise?

OLLIE

A bottle of wine.

ALICE

Ha! Cliché! You're a cliché person, who is riddled with clichés. There is nothing wrong with saying, "Hey, my favorite ballet? It's Swan Lake." It's sort of like saying...

OLLIE

Like women on dating shows who say, "I like to have fun." Sort of like saying, "I see things with my eyes."

Rather than raising an oar over him, Alice guides one into Ollie's ribs. Only Alice loses balance, falls in the water.

OLLIE

She's right. We are definitely not in the same boat.

INT. MOMMA'S APT - NIGHT

Eli and Momma, still upset. Alice strolls through the door.

ELI

Where have you been?

MOMMA

Did you sleep with him?

ELI

You've been gone for hours!

MOMMA

Did you sleep with him?

ALICE

I was in Central Park.

ELI

We were worried sick.

MOMMA

Alice, tell me you slept with him!

ALICE

Ew!

Momma advances on Alice with a feather duster.

Begins dusting around her hips and groin area.

ALICE
What are you doing?

MOMMA
I'm sweeping the cobwebs out.

ALICE
Get away from me! Are you crazy?
Eli's here; he's only seventeen!

MOMMA
It's nothing he hasn't seen before.

ELI
Actually...

MOMMA
I want you to keep him for yourself.

ALICE
This guy's only concern right now is his ability to meet a woman and have a baby, while my only concern is the inability to have a baby. Even if he wasn't a jerk, and he is, he's after the one thing that I cannot give him.
(beat)
Eli, I can hear you thinking -- Stop.

ELI
Hold on... You went to Central Park?

ALICE
The office is by the park, remember?

Momma eyes her suspiciously.

MOMMA
Exactly what happened in the park?
(beat)
You didn't tell him that terrible story about Omar Cook picking the carnations, didja? Alice, tell me you didn't go on about his asthma attack and the goddamn carnations!

ALICE
I don't remember! Um, first we got maple ice cream boats, then we saw some pigs at the petting zoo, then we finished up at Belvedere Castle.

(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

Next we were at Conservatory Water racing toy sailboats, after that I believe we watched a softball game.

(laughs)

And you don't wanna know about our tiff in Strawberry Fields over who would pay for the pretzels, or the rowboat incident at the boat house.

Momma/Eli, stunned. Then, his face turns sour, hers sunny.

ELI

(angry)

You fucked him!

MOMMA

(happy)

You fucked him!

EXT. STREET - DAY

The next morning. Alice walks, enters LUV Adoption Center.

INT. ADOPTION CENTER - DAY

Alice with an AIDE. Through a window, they watch TODDLERS at play. The playroom is modeled after a football stadium.

ALICE

So cute. It's like Puppy Bowl.

AIDE

Excuse me?

ALICE

Puppy Bowl. On Super Bowl Sunday, they have counter-programming on Animal Planet, where they show a bunch of puppies, all playing in this wee little football stadium.

Aide, speechless.

ALICE

It's called Puppy Bowl.

AIDE

I know what it is.

ALICE

Right.

AIDE
Children are not puppies.

ALICE
Yeah. It's too bad.

AIDE
Alice... Your adoption application
has been reviewed by the directors.
(beat)
They think you need more seasoning.

ALICE
Why?

Aide checks for prying eyes.

AIDE
You don't have any money.

ALICE
But I have love.

AIDE
You don't have a partner.

ALICE
Neither do these kids.

AIDE
The good news is, you do have a job.
Teachers are looked upon quite well.

A BOY on his hands and knees. He barks at the other CHILDREN.

AIDE
It would really, really help your
case if you had some money, Alice.
Or a man... Only takes 2 out of 3.

INT. DEALERSHIP - DAY

Seated with David, Ollie buys a car.

DEALER
Mr. Fitch? Say hi to your new baby.

Ollie turns, sees a Ferrari roll in.

He opens the briefcase, grabs money.

Another buyer, KEN DAHL (40), looks on.

KEN

Ken Dahl. Dahl Textiles & Fabric.
(beat)
That girl's gonna make you happy.

EXT. DEALERSHIP - DAY

Ollie and David drive out of the lot. The Ferrari sits close to the ground, so as soon as they hit the dip, the underside hits pavement. SPARKS FLY from a 900 horsepower Roman candle.

EXT. ALICE'S APT - DAY

Alice gets dressed.

Her outfit rivals the style quotient of a dusty, burlap sack.

EXT. ELECTRIC ROOM - NIGHT

Alice approaches an intimidating BOUNCER. Her former student.

BOUNCER

What's good, AJ?

ALICE

It's Ms. Jefferson, Donald. We may be out of the classroom, but you address me as Ms. Jefferson. Now didja get my message? I left specific instructions: You don't know me, I am not a teacher.

BOUNCER

Oh, most definitely. Just like that time you gave me the B- I asked for.

ALICE

... I didn't give you the B, I gave you a C+ and you complained for the next 6 months okay that is not cool.

Ollie appears.

ALICE

Ollie, Donald -- Donald, Ollie.

OLLIE

How do you two know each other?

Bouncer winks. Delivers sexual, plus "teaching" innuendo.

BOUNCER
Same way as you, dog. Same way.

OLLIE
(sees his ring)
Oh, cool. Any advice?

BOUNCER
She likes to lecture a lot.

OLLIE
Preach.

BOUNCER
You have to take a lot of notes.

OLLIE
Sing it.

Alice clears her throat. Bouncer leans in close to Ollie.

BOUNCER
She is always down...for extra help.

OLLIE
Now that's real talk.

BOUNCER
Also, Ms. Jefferson --

ALICE
-- AJ. Haha. Call me AJ.

BOUNCER
She'll quiz you a lot. And test you.

OLLIE
Well even figuratively, I'll get at least a B. Only retarded kids score a C+ or worse given grade inflation.

Given his earlier B-/C+ whining, Bouncer loses his smile.

OLLIE
And I don't even mean retarded in an offensive way, I mean you need to genuinely be a retarded person.

Ollie guffaws, then playfully punches Bouncer's shoulder.

Bear in mind, I have as many MR/DD in my family as yours.

INT. ELECTRIC ROOM - NIGHT

Alice and Ollie sit at a table and take in the scene.

OLLIE

This is one of the hardest doors in town -- I'm impressed you got us in. Eight hundred a table, but worth it.

ALICE

It's very progressive. The place is a transgender club. All of the hot guys working bottle service? They're women.

Ollie downs a shot.

OLLIE

Those guys are not women.

ALICE

They are. They're just tall and built.

OLLIE

Maybe next time we can find an even freakier spot. The morgue? Bellevue?

ALICE

You need to be less shallow and more open. Let's find you a dance partner.

OLLIE

I only dance when I'm drunk... Before we do that, let's go powder our noses.

ALICE

I don't do cocaine.

OLLIE

Neither do I. But I have been known to take a shit in a public bathroom.

LATER: Alice and Ollie wait on line next to a SMART GIRL.

OLLIE

Unisex bathrooms. Didja know this is a transgender club? Very progressive.

SMART GIRL

Are you a man?

OLLIE

Maybe once, in college.

ALICE

Yes, he's a man. You two should have a drink.

OLLIE

You're welcome to join us. Table Two.

SMART GIRL

Only bottle service jackasses can sit down here. Losers who try to buy cool.

OLLIE

Strike one.

LATER: Alice & Ollie order their drinks from a HOT BARTENDER.

OLLIE

Macallan. Neat.

BARTENDER

My kinda guy. You, Ma'am?

ALICE

Just water, please.

BARTENDER

... I'm trying to make money.

ALICE

I'm sorry; I don't drink.

Hot Bartender gives Alice a once over: The burlap sack dress.

BARTENDER

Maybe if ya had a night out since the Clinton administration, you'd have a clue.

Ollie laughs heartily. Then, he leans close to Hot Bartender.

OLLIE

Maybe if you had studied a little more in high school, you wouldn't be side-stepping broken glass and last night's vomit for a living.

She throws a drink at him.

OLLIE

Strike two.

Ollie dries himself off as the pair head back to their table.

ALICE
Bad move, brother. She was into you.

OLLIE
She was mean to you. We're drinking buddies, Alana -- Bro's before ho's.

ALICE
Bartenders are really hard workers. What you said was shallow and mean.
(beat)
I can handle stuff; I'm a big girl.

OLLIE
Stop. You're just not a gym person.

LATER: The pair at their table, along with four DUMB GIRLS.

OLLIE
So I go "Whaddaya get when you combine the Quadratic Equation, SOHCAHTOA, and the Pythagorean Theorem?"

A teacher, Alice smiles. Dumb Girls sit in awkward silence.

OLLIE
Sorry -- I thought that was funny.

GIRL 1
But you never said the punch line.

OLLIE
Oh. The set-up was the punch line.

Girl 2 laughs.

OLLIE
That wasn't a joke.

All the Girls laugh.

GIRL 3
You're so funny, Tommy.

GIRL 4
And rich.

ALICE
It's Ollie. His name is Ollie.

A beat. All the Dumb Girls again laugh at normal statements.

Ollie pours shots. One is for a DRAG KING at the next table.

OLLIE
Are you a man?

DRAG KING
It's rude to ask.

OLLIE
Sorry... I am sorry; I didn't know.
(beat)
Are you a man?

ALICE
That's not funny.

OLLIE
It is when you're drunk.

Ollie looks at Drag King's hips. Sees a shapely form.

OLLIE
You have a woman's hips.

Drag King, wanting to be seen as a man, smacks Ollie.

ALICE
Strike three. Caught looking.

LATER: On the dance floor, Ollie is quite competent.

ALICE
Where did you learn to dance?

OLLIE
Recess! My students taught me!

He faces off against DRAG KING 2 going move for move.

OLLIE
We're the only two guys here who
know what's up!

DRAG KING 2
I'm actually a girl! But thanks!

Suddenly, the music cuts out, followed by the lights.

When the lights come on, Ollie's wearing a blindfold.

OLLIE
What's going on?

Dance floor empties, save the PEOPLE with blindfolds.

A large circle forms on the floor. A standard ritual.
People in blindfolds, guided to seats. Drums RISE UP.

OLLIE
Alyssa?

Alice stands in the circle.

OLLIE
Mother?

HOT FEMALE DANCERS fan out.

OLLIE
Thurman Munson?

Female Dancers give PG-13 lap dances to People in chairs.
"La Cumparsita" PLAYS. Dancers lead People to their feet.

Led by Hot Female Dancers, People make a go at the Tango.

They try their best to keep up. But Ollie, talented like
we've already seen, dances the Tango better than anybody.

He and his Dancer move in time, as if partners for years.
The circle focuses on their chemistry. Alice is thrilled.

MAN
Want a shot?

ALICE
I don't drink.

All watch Ollie and Dancer. The song ends, the pair kiss.

DANCER
Your lips are tender. So soft.

OLLIE
Your lips are pillowy. So big.

Hot Female Dancer, mad. In a deep, rich baritone HE says:

DANCER
You got somethin' to say about my
lips, playboy?

Confused, Ollie rips off his blindfold, tosses it aside.

Dancer, the first drag queen Ollie's met, hurls his wig.
Ollie sees his sexy, black woman is an angry, black man.

Ollie takes a knockout punch to the neck. Alice, who doesn't
drink, takes the shot from Man next to her. Swallows it down.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Sunrise. Alice escorts a beaten up Ollie out of the hospital.

INT. DINER - DAY

Ollie negotiates an ice pack as Alice has a look at the menu.

OLLIE

Why did we go there tonight?

ALICE

You need to broaden your horizons.

OLLIE

I need to not kiss other men.

ALICE

You need to be less materialistic,
less shallow, more open to others.

OLLIE

The girl by the bathroom? She only
rejected me because I actually had
money. And the dumb girls later on
only liked me because of it.

ALICE

You got judge-y with the bartender.

OLLIE

She was obnoxious.

ALICE

So are you. You were rude to the
Drag King. Do you really believe
you never met anyone cuz you had
no money? Your personality sucks.

A WAITER appears.

ALICE

Hi. A large cup of coffee, with one
packet of sugar, and two packets of
Stevia, and can also I get a packet
of Splenda on the side? Sorry. Also,
if you have one percent, gimme that,
but if you only have two percent or
skim milk, just give me the tiniest
bit of half-and-half instead. Ollie?

OLLIE

I'm going to bed -- It's late.

ALICE
Well at Juilliard, it's early.

Their eyes meet. Ollie smiles.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

The pair now sit with COACHES, PARENTS and BOYFRIENDS.

BALLERINAS extend, flex, work on the Cecchetti Method.

LATER: Alice and Ollie eat and mingle with Ballerinas.

OLLIE
We heard about a Friends & Family
mixer you host in the a.m., so...

BALLERINA
Well thanks for your patronage.
(beat)
And you? What do you do, Alice?

ALICE
I'm a matchmaker.

BALLERINA
Really? I thought that was something
Gypsies did. Older women... Not that
you're particularly young.

Alice, downcast eyes. Ollie notices, again sticks up for her.

OLLIE
Well, she's quite young in ballerina
years, no? You guys age quickly with
sciatic issues, late onset of menses,
nerve damage, all on seventeen grand
a year and no college degree to show.

Ballerina exits stage left.

ALICE
Again, thanks.

OLLIE
Again, we're partners in this mess.

ALICE
And your personality does not suck.
(beat)
It does, but you have a good heart.

OLLIE

Thanks.

ALICE

No sweat. Just don't ever refer to a woman's period as "late onset of menses..." I need to take a shower, you incredibly huge effin' creeper.

A shared laugh -- The two, beginning to tolerate one another.

ALICE

4 o'clock.

OLLIE

Too young... I like younger women, and enjoy dating women my own age, but younger women do have less...

ALICE

Don't even think about saying it.

OLLIE

What is the word I'm looking for?

ALICE

If you say "baggage" I will punch you in the gut.

OLLIE

It's on the tip of my tongue.

ALICE

I see the "B" forming on your lips. Say "baggage," and I will slug you.

OLLIE

Older women have more...

ALICE

I see a white light. I see a white hot light, and I'm not responsible for my actions if you say "baggage."

OLLIE

Older women have more...bitterness.

Alice fake punches. Ollie reacts, SMASHING his head against the dance studio's mirror. The great wall of glass SHATTERS.

INT. OLLIE'S APT - DAY

Alice helps an injured Ollie into his tiny studio.

Ollie sits, nurses his wounds. Alice pokes around.

ALICE
Nice sewing machine, Grandma.

OLLIE
Back off. It's a 1955 Singer.

ALICE
What's it for? Animal pelts? Human skins?

OLLIE
Clothes. You say I'm materialistic, but how d'you think I put together a designer wardrobe on a teacher's salary?

Alice sees his collection of Polaroids on the wall.

ALICE
Wait. These pictures are of clothes, and then you like, make the clothes?

OLLIE
A man has to compete with hedge fund guys, and it's the only way. Plus, I do want to get married, I do want to have kids. My daughter won't love me if all the other girls wear YSL, and I can't afford DSL. This way, she'll have a sweet dad. The same with that.

Ollie indicates his miniature, D.I.Y. rose garden.

ALICE
Yeah, what is that?

OLLIE
That is called a rose. Of the order "Rosales," of the family, "Rosaceae," of the grand sub-family, "Rosoideae."

ALICE
I get it. But why do you have a rose garden? You barely have enough space here for a bed. Not that ya need one.

Ollie gets up and tends to his roses with a mist bottle.

OLLIE

My first girlfriend said I was cheap. I didn't want to spring for roses on Valentine's Day, cuz they were about seventy-five a dozen. It's a rip-off.

ALICE

It is.

OLLIE

It was. If I could go back, I'd buy her every flower in town. Anyway, I realized one day that I would never let that happen again if I ever met someone, so I read everything there is to read about how you grow roses.

Alice takes pruning shears, stands next to Ollie, helps.

ALICE

They're lovely. May I have one?

OLLIE

No... When we were in the park and I was speculating about that woman and using you in her place, and then you did it to me, I got upset. It wasn't cuz you said he was bitter and would stay bitter. It was actually because before that, you told the carnations story about your old boyfriend. Made me think of the roses, and how I was cheap with my girlfriend... He tried for you... But I never tried for her.

They continue tending to the bush. A seed has been planted.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Alice walks home. In her arms, she carries dozens of roses.

WOMAN

Hold on to that one. He's a keeper.

INT. OLLIE'S APT - DAY

Ollie's alarm clock goes off. He wakes, hustles out of bed. Runs out of the room. Stops, realizes he has nowhere to go. Opens his laptop. Goes to sites: NYT, WSJ, BBC. Closes lid.

Turns on his TV. Flips channels: HBO, SHO, OWN. He's bored.
 Later settles on NBC News w/ MAURICE DUBOIS & TI-JUA CHANG.

MAURICE

Excitement at Columbia earlier, as
 the botany department introduced a
 new species of rose from the Amazon.

Ollie leans in, rapt... Thoughts about teaching, set aside.

INT. ALICE'S APT - DAY

Alice watches the same news report. She goes to the window.
 Sees KIDS on a playground. She misses teaching so, so much.

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Ollie is incompetent behind the wheel. Manual transmission
 unfamiliarity compels him to start and stop, herk and jerk.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S ISLAND - DAY

The Veuve Clicquot Polo Classic -- NY society, commingling.
 Ollie checks the underside of the Ferrari. Alice heads off.

ALICE

I'll get us registered.

Enter Ken -- the amiable Ferrari buyer from the dealership.

KEN

Ollie? Ken Dahl. What happened?

OLLIE

I don't know how to drive.

KEN

Well maybe you should have learned
 before buying the little lady here.

OLLIE

Oh-no; I know how to drive. I just
 meant that I'm very terrible at it.

The grille falls off. Annoyed, Ollie kicks the Ferrari.

KEN

Please don't do that... Ollie, I'd like to talk to you about going in with me on a business opportunity.

(beat)

I'm buying a parcel of land uptown.

LATER: Alice, Ollie press the flesh with female RIDERS.

ALICE

I was just now talking to Ollie about how I've seen you on ESPN. I dream about doing what you do.

RIDER 1

Oh, you're way too skinny... Ew.

(beat)

Have you seen me on ESPN, Ollie?

OLLIE

I have. I do feel lucky to have witnessed your continual growth.

Rider 1 realizes, pulls her jacket down over her hips.

LATER: Alice gets the opposite treatment from Rider 2.

ALICE

I so wish I could do what you do.

RIDER 2

You need muscle. You're thin, but weak. Ask your friend; he'll tell you. She has to tighten up, right?

OLLIE

I dunno. Reminds me of what Frank Molinaro once said in fifth grade. "I don't like when women exercise because it's takes the fat out of their ti--

LATER: Alice and Ollie watch polo RIDERS play the field.

ALICE

What is wrong with you?

Ollie lowers his gaze.

OLLIE

Sometimes when things get hot and heavy during a makeout session, I have to slow it down or else --

ALICE

-- Stop... Why are these ballerinas and horse riders or club girls, why are they so ridiculously mean to me?

ALICE

That's not fair. It's reductive and limiting. bell hooks would spin in her grave if she heard you say that.

OLLIE

bell hooks is still alive.

ALICE

How do you know who bell hooks is?

OLLIE

Don't assume that the men you meet are all as pathetic as the men you date... Anyway, if women aren't so competitive and crazy, then why're they being so mean to you?

ALICE

Because society pits women against one another. Because there's a man in the picture, career reasons, or just to see another woman collapse.
(beat)
Also because they're fucking crazy.

A familiar face in Ken approaches as Alice continues on.

ALICE

No idea why that second rider was so mean... She looked like Barbie.

KEN

Hi, I'm Ken... Ken Dahl.

Alice, enchanted. Ollie notices. He feels an odd disturbance.

INT. OLLIE'S APT - DAY

Ollie comes home. An envelope by the door reads: The Apthorp.
A note reads: Penthouse. Signed by: Mother. Inside is: A key.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ollie spots CHILDREN on a playground. Stirs something within.

He slowly approaches the chain-link fence. Curls his fingers.
 A CHILD get his Nestlé Crunch chocolate bar taken by CHILD 2.
 Child cries. Ollie produces a Werther's Original. Dangles it.

OLLIE
 You like candy?

Child takes it, smiles angelically.

CHILD
 Thanks, Mister.

Child puts his small hand through the fence. Ollie shakes it.
 Slowly, Ollie looks to his left. A SECURITY GUARD, not happy.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Ollie, at Alice's school, with the Principal she met earlier.

PRINCIPAL
 Son... Do you know what the key to
 my longevity has been?

Ollie thinks.

OLLIE
 Affirmative action and a comb-over?

Principal LAUGHS, Ollie LAUGHS with him. Then, Principal
 abruptly stops, as he did with Alice. Ollie follows suit.

PRINCIPAL
 Why are you touching my children?

OLLIE
 His candy was stolen.

In the room next door is Lily White, who drew Alice's ire
 post-firing. She listens in. Principal turns to a TEACHER.

PRINCIPAL
 Byagari, what type of candy did
 Mr. Fitch offer to little Timmy?

TEACHER
 A Werther's Original.

PRINCIPAL

A Werther's Original... Can ya get
any more pedophilic than Werther's?

Ollie thinks.

OLLIE

A Mary Jane is pretty incriminating.

PRINCIPAL

What's a Mary Jane?

TEACHER

It's that old-time candy with the
yellow wrapper and the red stripe.

OLLIE

It's molasses. Plus peanut butter.

PRINCIPAL

... You sick piece of shit.

OLLIE

Sir, listen. I'm a teacher.

PRINCIPAL

Oh. You're a teacher?

OLLIE

Well, no. I got fired.

Principal and Teacher, taken aback.

OLLIE

No-no-no! It's not like that!
Look, I'm confused right now!

TEACHER

I'll say so!

OLLIE

My mom told me that I hafta get
married or I don't get my money!

TEACHER

If I had a son who was a pederast,
I'd make his ass get married, too!

OLLIE

Wait, you don't understand! If I
can get married, then have a kid,
I'll inherit 500 million dollars!

Lily, interest piqued. Principal stands, attacks Ollie.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Ollie, frozen peas to his head. Lily White follows him.

A wall of ice cream. Ollie does his best impression of Jeremy Renner vs. Cereal at the end of The Hurt Locker.

Gold-digging Lily, twenty feet away. Ollie notices her.

OLLIE

Why does ice cream cost so much?

(beat)

Don't say that. It's bad enough that you had no money until two days ago. But if you're whining while now part of the 1 percent, it's a hole you won't climb out of. Forty, wealthy, and opening with ice cream grievances? Nope. Not a good look.

Lily appears right beside Ollie. On cue, she opens with:

LILY

Why does ice cream cost so much?

OLLIE

You think? I have no issue with paying twice as much. The dairy farmers, the truck drivers, the stock boys... I read an article about how that shipping process works. See, what happens is...

Ollie aborts. Extends his hand instead.

OLLIE

Hello, there. I'm Ollie Fitch. In case you haven't noticed, I'm the most boring man in America. Didja know a woman can die from boredom in 6 seconds or less? I don't buy it, but we're about to find out.

LILY

Oh, stop... You know, they say you can tell everything you'll need to know about a person based on their ice cream choices.

Lily picks hers.

LILY
 Banana. Sugar-free, fat-free
 banana. Packs a surprising punch.

Ollie picks his.

OLLIE
 Vanilla . . . Vanilla.

LATER -- Lily shelves the ice cream between jars of sauce.

LILY
 Sugar-free? Fat-free? More like
 Fun-free -- Rope the jackass in!

Lily leaves. A jar drops, then SHATTERS in the background.
 She winces. Meanwhile, in contrast with her poor shelving,
 Ollie replaces his ice cream with kind, uncommon courtesy.

OLLIE
 Way to showcase your personality,
 Ollie. Vanilla? 200 flavors, and
 you go with Vanilla.
 (beat)
 At least she knows what the sex
 will be like.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ollie exits the supermarket. Meets Lily, waiting for him.
 They stop for further small talk, Lily sinking her claws.
 LATER -- The pair explore New York. Day turns into night.

INT. APTHORP - NIGHT

Ollie, about to enter his new place. He produces the key.
 Inserts it in the lock. Turns the key, then knob. Enters.
 Ollie stands in an old money penthouse. Manhattan is his.

EXT. MUSEUM - DAY

The next day -- Alice & Ollie wait outside for Eli & Ken.

OLLIE

There's something I have to tell you.

(beat)

'Member when I said how I don't want to be set up with a teacher? I think that was foolish of me. Jealousy, as I assumed they had it easy with guys.

Alice blinks.

OLLIE

I like someone. And she's a teacher.

(beat)

We just met, but maybe she likes me.

LATER: Alice, Ollie and Eli study fine art with Ken Dahl.

Hiding, Lily White waits for them to arrive. She appears.

A coy Ollie demonstratively places his hands on his hips.

OLLIE

Don't I know you?

LILY

... Ice cream.

OLLIE

Banana!

LILY

Vanilla!

OLLIE

Sugar-free!

LILY

Vanilla!

Alice, disturbed, as the memory of Lily comes into focus.

OLLIE

Hey guys? This is Lily White.

LILY

OMG! What are you doing here?

She smiles broadly.

LILY

Are you stalking me?

LATER: Alice, Ollie, Eli and Ken explore. Lily has now left.

KEN

Why don't you go on The Today Show?
A New York City teacher who stands
to inherit 500 million? You'll get
married in six hours.

OLLIE

Discretion is key. Mother would go
nuts if we made this into a circus.

ALICE

The obstacles aren't about exposure.
Though I'd like him to get out more.

OLLIE

I told her already: I'm not looking
to meet a thousand people. She said
it herself -- You can learn to love
most anyone, and I'm in it for that
money. I'm sure there are a hundred
thousand women in town who I'd love
to settle down with. Lily's a catch.

INT. DEALERSHIP - DAY

Ollie's grille gets attached to the Ferrari by a MECHANIC.
A television: ABC News with N.J. BURKETT & SADE BADERINWA.

SADE

A new species of rose discovered --

Ollie leans on a side mirror as he watches Mechanic, Sade.

MECHANIC

Front grille. Twenty grand.

OLLIE

I can get a car for that much!

The side mirror he was leaning against breaks off. Ollie
slams into the car, bounces off, hits the showroom floor.

MECHANIC

Side mirror. Six hundred.

Ollie opens his briefcase. Behind him, the window that he
slammed into upon slipping, it CRUMBLES in the background.

He sighs, closes the briefcase, offers up the case itself.

"... Money doesn't buy happiness, Ollie. It buys problems."

INT. PENTHOUSE - DAY

Alice & Ollie position an Eames couch and chair.

Ollie's character arc begins its learning curve.

OLLIE

Should I be leading with money?

ALICE

Talk to me.

OLLIE

Just like... Should I be flaunting my money the way I am, with bottle service and what not? Maybe my new clothes alone can get the job done.

(beat)

I don't want to screw up with Lily.

ALICE

Your nice clothes are hurting you. Cuz if you look in the mirror and see fancy clothes, you expect the same reflected back at you in the form of well-dressed women. Thing is, you prolly used to meet women based on your presentation skills, but once they discovered that you had no money...they lost interest.

OLLIE

Plus my personality stinks.

ALICE

Terrible. Even if Lily meets your standards of beauty and dress and smarts or whatever, you'll prolly still push her away before she'll reject you for being a teacher or whatever criterion she might have.

The two turn their attention to Ollie's rose garden.

OLLIE

Maybe if I dress down I can look in the mirror and not be as shallow in what I expect to reflect back at me.

(on her eager nod)

Yeah, that's a terrible idea.

Ollie uses a mist bottle. Alice, the pruning shears.

ALICE

You reject women before they can reject you. That is your problem.

OLLIE

Oh, is that my problem?

ALICE

It's one of 'em... Look, seriously: Your father passed when you were a little boy. As a matchmaker, a lot of my male clients went through it.

OLLIE

They did?

ALICE

Yes. And your issues with women --

OLLIE

-- I don't have issues with women.

ALICE

You have problems with women; I was being polite... Listen, your issues with women are a result of your not having a father to teach you things.

OLLIE

Okay, what about this: You're not going to land a guy like Ken Dahl looking like that, so --

Alice holds the shears to Ollie's nose.

ALICE

Like what?

OLLIE

Like this.

He holds a desiccated rose to her nose.

OLLIE

Let's cut a deal: I'll let you dress me down...if you let me dress you up.

Alice eyes him: What's your angle here?

OLLIE

If I can't do my own pruning and grooming, I have to do someone's.

(beat)

It's a sickness, Boss. I need to.

ALICE

I don't know... My clothes aren't nice, but my style is inscrutable.

OLLIE

I don't think inscrutable means what you think it means.

She takes the dried rose from him, crushes it over his head. The petals, more or less dust, collect on his precious hair. Ollie takes the pruning shears from Alice and cuts her hair. Both GASP -- And their eyes open wide in shock and surprise.

INT. ADOPTION CENTER - DAY

Alice, back at the Adoption Center. She meets with the AIDE.

AIDE

Now, your adoption application was denied, but an appeal can be filed.

ALICE

That's great. Two out of three, no?

AIDE

The directors look for two factors: Stable employment, money, or a man. You have a great job, but no money.

ALICE

Well... Thank God I now have a man.

SMASH TO:

INT. HERMÈS - DAY

Ollie hangs a bag on his shoulder as he looks in the mirror.

OLLIE

I'm buying you this.

ALICE

I do not need a Birkin bag. It's not gonna make me feel good about myself.

OLLIE

It's not supposed to. It's supposed to make other women feel bad about themselves.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

Ollie is in the chair while Alice directs a BARBER.

ALICE
Take two inches off.

OLLIE
I won't have any hair left!

ALICE
And strip him of this...product.

Ollie sneers.

ALICE
Women want to run their fingers
through a man's hair; not check
their reflection in it.

She tries to touch his hair. He jerks his head.

OLLIE
Don't touch my hair.

They share a light LAUGH. Alice again moves in.

OLLIE
Seriously; don't touch me.

INT. RED DOOR SPA - DAY

Now, Alice is in a chair. Ollie directs the STYLIST.

OLLIE
Take two inches off.

ALICE
I won't have any hair left!

Stylist eyes the hunk Ollie sheared off. Guilty-looking Ollie WHISTLES. Stylist smells Alice's hair like an Iroquois Indian.

STYLIST
A straight man was here.

INT. THRIFT STORE - DAY

The two hunt and gather in the stacks and racks of donations.

ALICE
Women want a wolf in sheep's clothing.

OLLIE

That's me.

ALICE

You're a sheep in wolf's clothing.

Alice picks out soft vintage t-shirts.

ALICE

Okay, so no more designer clothes. Women want rugged men, men with a spine who define style themselves.

OLLIE

I'm a rugged guy. I don't know cars and I don't know how to build stuff, but I play sports. I'm a rugged guy.

Alice points to the floor and SCREAMS.

ALICE

Mouse!

Ollie instinctively sprints off, directly into the water cooler that's maybe four feet away, tops. He bounces off, falls down. The water becomes a river, shorting circuits.

INT. BERGDORF'S - DAY

Ollie guides Alice past the counters and into the VIP room.

LATER: Alice is doted on by a makeup ARTIST, a young woman.

ARTIST

My whole thing is, I can get paid to paint a face, but it's not the face you can put on every day. So I'd rather get double business by teaching a regimen with little or no makeup at half the cost to you.

ALICE

I love how this looks. I really do. Where did you learn how to do this?

ARTIST

From Mr. Fitch... I was gonna take out like, eighty thousand in loans for college, but he told me senior year that if I went to cosmetology school instead, he'd set me up with a job at Bergdorf's... You want me to shade this scar a little, Ma'am?

ALICE

Please do.

OLLIE

Don't. She has a lovely face. We want to show it off, not hide it.

Alice blushes. Ollie's beginning to change, and so is Alice.

MONTAGE:

Alice continues to dress Ollie down. Ollie dresses Alice up.

Ollie chops wood. Alice checks palms for calluses. Approves.

Alice and Eli have green masques on. Ollie does Eli's nails.

Alice teaches Ollie and David under the Ferrari -- Auto 101.

Alice squeezes into jeans. Ollie pulls the zipper w/ pliers.

Ollie, dinner with Lily. At home, Alice checks her messages.

Alice at lunch with Ken. At home, Ollie checks his messages.

Alice and Ollie separately spot schools. They miss teaching.

At Ollie's Apthorp penthouse, Alice and Ollie cause trouble.

The two swim w/ Eli and David in the building's indoor pool.

They play billiards with Eli and Momma. Ollie sinks 'em all.

Later, they toss water balloons off the roof at BUSINESSMEN.

Finally, back in the penthouse, Alice and Ollie paint walls.

OLLIE

That's eggshell... I wanted cream.

ALICE

That is white. It is a white wall.

(beat)

I need you to come to my adoption appeal... To pose as my boyfriend.

Ollie's silence confirms his participation in Alice's ruse.

Or maybe "boyfriend" renders him both Excited & Speechless.

OLLIE

Should I buy some art? Pictures?
What have you got on your walls?

ALICE

Honestly? Nothing. I always figured that if I met someone, I'd let them fill up the walls with their stupid sports memorabilia or whatever else.

OLLIE

That's actually...thoughtful of you.

INT. ALICE'S APT - DAY

They continue the discussion while facing Alice's empty wall.

ALICE

It is. You always hear about women making all the design decisions in a relationship. And since men grow resentful about losing all control after marriage, I figure I'd score points for leaving the walls empty.

(beat)

Of course, I haven't had a live-in boyfriend, much less a husband, so I'm stuck with a blank canvas here.

INT. MOMMA'S APT - DAY

The next day. Eli & Momma pepper Alice with Ollie questions.

ALICE

I don't like him, I just don't want those two getting together. I won't get my fee; I didn't introduce them.

ELI

Girl, you like him. That's what's up.

ALICE

Eli...

ELI

Eli nothing! You can't be letting that white bitch steal a fine ass stallion like him. The sisterhood is bigger than you and me, Alice!

ALICE

Look: Ollie is nice...and cute. But I don't get why two people can't be chummy without childish speculation.

Silence. Then --

MOMMA

Alice and Ollie sittin' in a tree.

MOMMA

K-I-S-S-I-N-G.

ELI

K-I-S-S-I-N-G.

ALICE

Eli, you were against this.

ELI

That was before I saw that he's a cool guy. None of your boyfriends have ever been cool the way he is.

ALICE

I haven't had any boyfriends.

Eli places his fingers to his mouth like a coy Betty Boop.

ALICE

That's not funny.

MOMMA

It's a little funny.

ELI

Ken is a doofus. He's handsome, but so is Ollie. Yet Ollie has a better personality, so I don't know if...

ALICE

If I can get him? I can get him. Didja read *The Marriage Bargain*?

ELI

He's in line for 500 million and he's also extremely good-looking.

ALICE

What am I, chopped liver?

ELI

I dunno about chopped liver. Maybe something further down on the menu.

ALICE

Don't even think about saying it.

ELI

It starts with an "R."

ALICE

Say roast beef, watch what happens.

OLLIE

It starts with an "R," followed by
a vowel.

Alice cocks her fist. A call back to her and Ollie when she thought he'd say "Baggage" but he said "Bitterness" instead.

ALICE

Say roast beef, watch what happens.

MOMMA

... Rump roast.

Alice's cocked fist deflates. She purses her lips in defeat.

EXT. BAKERY - DAY

Ollie and Lily get cupcakes from a BAKER.

BAKER

Twenty dollars.

OLLIE

For two cupcakes?

BAKER

They're gluten-free.

OLLIE

How 'bout free-free? Is it less if
you stuff the gluten back in there?

Ollie offers a five-dollar bill, then picks at the tip jar.

OLLIE

Okay, well here's five bucks... And
here's fifteen more. Twenty dollars.

Gold-digger Lily sees a chance to prove herself as sincere.

LILY

It's just money, Ollie. Allow me.

Ollie smiles, quite impressed. Lily's intentions seem pure.

INT. ADOPTION CENTER - DAY

Alice and Ollie sit before the adoption Aide and DIRECTORS.

AIDE

Alice, off-topic, I just want to say how much I really adore your outfit. And that hair -- My Lord!

ALICE

Thank you; that's so sweet.

Director, to a dressed-down Ollie.

DIRECTOR 1

I wish we could extend you the same honors, sir... Clothes make the man.

Alice smirks at the role reversal.

DIRECTOR 2

Alice, I know that adoption and the single life are a tough proposition. And I commend you for pursuing this appeal... Obviously, I do hope your relationship with Ollie blossoms in the form of marriage ... Either way, I am confident in your life choices.

Alice nods, expounds on his point.

ALICE

There was this episode of Seinfeld where Elaine goes to a baby shower and has to defend her life choices.

OLLIE

It was Sex and the City.

ALICE

Right -- Miranda goes to a shower.

OLLIE

Carrie. Carrie goes to the shower.

ALICE

That's what I said. She goes to a shower, gets her Louboutins stolen.

OLLIE

Manolos.

ALICE

Pay attention. Carrie points out how it's unfair that the host is praised for her life choice to have the baby.
(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

She's like, "Single women never have their life choices celebrated." It's not like Precious Moments makes a --

OLLIE

-- Hallmark.

ALICE

Stop interrupting; please. Carrie's like, "Precious Moments never makes a figurine that says, 'Good job not marrying the wrong dude.'" Point is, thank you for not making me justify my life choices.

Ollie can't let go.

OLLIE

How do you confuse Precious Moments with Hallmark? Can Precious Moments even fit that much text on the base of their figurines? No, and they're not even inclined in that direction. Their figurines don't offer musings on the human condition -- They just stand there looking judgmental with their dead, ceramic eyes.

The Director writes notes on a legal pad:

Alice Jefferson: Typical, Everyday Woman.

Mr. Ollie Fitch: Typical, Everyday Woman.

Preliminary Conclusions -- Perfect Match.

EXT. ADOPTION CENTER - DAY

Alice and Ollie exit the center, discuss.

OLLIE

That went well.

ALICE

It did not.

OLLIE

I looked awful.

ALICE

I looked good. Maybe it did go well.

OLLIE
You look the same. Just new clothes.

ALICE
I look better.

OLLIE
You don't. You finally look like you.

ALICE
... That's sweet of you.

OLLIE
It is what it is. I'll see you later.

ALICE
8:00 -- You have Ken's address?

OLLIE
Hope his place isn't bigger than mine.

ALICE
It's not the size, Ollie. It's what
you do with it.

INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

Ollie treats David & Eli. They try on designer sneakers.

OLLIE
My grandfather wanted me to make a
difference in the world. He prolly
thought if I were all normal, then
was given the money after marriage,
I'd have perspective. And then I'd
dole out cash for the greater good.

ELI
You had no idea you came from money?

OLLIE
None.

ELI
Maybe the fact that your mom makes
you call her "Mother" should have
tipped you off... Who's your dad?
Thurston Howell III?

OLLIE
I dunno. He died when I was young.

ELI

So did my dad. Both of my parents.

OLLIE

I'm so sorry; I forgot about that.

David shoots him a look.

OLLIE

What? He made fun of my dead father.
I forgot both his parents were dead.

(beat)

I was trying to make him feel bad.

DAVID

Looks like it worked.

OLLIE

It definitely worked.

ELI

No worries. Though I am worried about
this hat. I don't want to show up any
neighbors; you can pay rent with this.

Eli looks at the price tag -- It's a two hundred dollar hat.

Ollie slips into stylish, Japanese sneakers. They sit right
next to his old, dated -- but warm and familiar -- sneakers.

Studies both pairs weighing Alice's "dressing down" lessons
against his normal, materialistic self. He opts for the new.

OLLIE

Look, Eli: Forget what other people
may think. And don't feel bad about
money: David's parents are poor, too.

DAVID

Dude, why do you always say that?
My parents aren't poor.

OLLIE

No, David, your parents aren't poor.
You just get school lunches at half
price cuz you're a nice guy.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The three walk to the soccer field at Chelsea Piers.

DAVID

So this soccer player's showing up?

OLLIE
For twenty-five grand, he'd better.

ELI
I play stickball in Bed-Stuy if you
ever wanna come.

OLLIE
Let's go.

ELI
You sure? It's a tough neighborhood.

OLLIE
I'm a tough guy. Stickball's my jam.

EXT. CHELSEA PIERS - DAY

Ollie and Eli. Stand on a pristine, heavenly soccer field.
Ollie in his new sneakers. Cringes in pain. Rubs his feet.
Ollie takes shots on N.Y. Red Bulls goalkeeper RYAN MEARA.
David stands at the post near Ryan. Ryan lets Ollie score.

OLLIE
Ryan, I get you're a serious athlete
and we're paying you to play with us,
but you wouldn't let me score, right?

Ryan looks to David. David shakes his head.

RYAN
'Course not. I'm trying my best.

RYAN
(to David)
Should I keep letting him score?

David nods his head: "Yes." Ollie kicks it weakly.

Ryan stages a meek dive. After the ball goes past.

OLLIE
Get in there, David.

David takes Ryan's place. Eli strikes it like a pro.
David takes it directly off the forehead, goes down.
Ollie again eyes his new shoes. They're hurting him.

INT. ADOPTION CENTER - DAY

Ollie has returned to the center. He speaks to Aide.

OLLIE

I don't want you thinking we fight.

AIDE

No problem. Listen, couples bicker. Alice is a fine candidate. She's a teacher, a volunteer, a good woman.

OLLIE

... She's not a teacher.

INT. KEN'S APT - NIGHT

Alice and Ken, Ollie and Lily. Ken shows them the layout.

OLLIE

This is way bigger than mine.

KEN

Over here we have 12-inch ceilings. Rather... We have 12-foot ceilings.

The four watch WPIX news with ERNIE ANASTOS & KAITLY TONG.

ALICE

Oh, have you guys heard about this? They discovered a new rose species.

OLLIE

In the Amazon.

LILY

It wasn't in the Amazon. They found it in a rainforest in South America.

KEN

She's right on, Ollie. But nice try.

Alice & Ollie, separately confused. Ken & Lily are dopes.

On TV, an excited PROFESSOR speaks at a press conference.

PROFESSOR

We're calling it Petulant Rose, as it's challenging to grow. We had a hard time, but couldn't be happier.

KEN

Are any roses easy to grow?

OLLIE

About Face roses are easy. Same
with Day Dream and Child's Play.

LILY

You know about roses, Ollie?
Can you buy me one of these?

Alice privately bristles.

OLLIE

Well, the seeds for any new flower
species are available on the black
market. I hear these will be fifty
thousand a seed once they hit town.

ALICE

It's almost worth it. So gorgeous.

KEN

I'll find you those roses, Alicia.

OLLIE

... It's Alice. Her name is Alice.

LILY

Will you find me the roses, Ollie?

OLLIE

It's not that easy. Finding seeds
on the black market is tough. But
it seems growing these is tougher.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Alone, Ollie and Ken drink. The two lord over New York.

KEN

I'd like to bid on a parcel of land.
(beat)
I'm going to build a parking garage.

OLLIE

You mentioned that at the polo match.
Look, Ken, we've only just met and I
don't know much about investing. And
I've already spent most of the money
Mother offered me. After the Ferrari,
new clothes, furniture, money I gave
to my friend David...I'd have to get
Mother's blessing. Her money as well.
(beat)

Does the world need a parking garage?

KEN

See the land with me.

OLLIE

I was hoping to buy some art tonight.
You don't have like an investor list?

KEN

It's rough out there, brother. Other
guys have been burned by contraction.
Or, they have a wife to answer to in
terms of where they put their powder.

(beat)

It's not prestigious like art, but a
parking garage is a sound investment.

OLLIE

I'd need Mother's support... I dunno.

KEN

The one percent should never have to
apologize to the ninety-nine percent.

Ollie, uncomfortable.

KEN

Okay, maybe the world doesn't need
a parking garage, but I like money.

(beat)

Screw the common man. Whaddaya say?

OLLIE

I mean... I am the common man.

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Alice & Ken, Ollie & Lily. Socialize at a Chelsea gallery.
Men in Armani, Women in Rodarte. With jeans and a t-shirt,
Ollie's the worst-dressed person but the best-looking man.

Alice sees a high school CLASSMATE approach her and Ollie.

ALICE

Oh, no. That's Rhonda Shepard from
high school. She was so mean to me.

OLLIE

Where?

ALICE

Turn around! She won't recognize me;
I look much prettier -- Turn around!

Ollie was already turned around after her first insistence.
The second insistence has Ollie again facing the Classmate.

OLLIE

You look the same. In a good way.

ALICE

Are you crazy -- Turn around! And no;
I look great. She won't recognize me.

CLASSMATE

Alice. Joanna. Annette. Jefferson.
How are you?

LATER: Ken & Lily, along with PATRONS, fawn over crap art.

Alice & Ollie, away from one another, have the same taste.
They turn their nose up at crap, smile at genuine product.

Ollie sees an OLD ARTIST by his painting, unhappy that no
one is interested in his work. The painting is of the U.N.
General Assembly, member countries represented by animals.

Alice watches as Ollie approaches the Old Artist. She can
pick up on his sadness as well. She watches as Ollie puts
his arm around the Artist. Ollie lifts the painting's tag.

Old Artist smiles with happiness. Alice smiles in private.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Eli walks in the flashy hat and new shoes Ollie bought him.
He vocalized his concern over attracting the wrong kind of
attention. That attention manifests in the form of BULLIES.

The Bullies corner Eli, then beat him badly. Steal his hat.
Eli lies on the street. After a moment, an ambulance WAILS.

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Ollie bangs into a SERVER. Red wine gets on him like blood.

SERVER

I am so sorry. There's a kitchen
and a sink in the adjacent space.

LATER: Ollie uses water from the sink to get the stain out.
He fills a cup, takes a seat on a staging block. He scrubs.

A Banner: End Congo's Slavery...The Whole Word is Watching.

On the block, Ollie blends in with rueful, disaffected men. Two WOMEN enter. Walk past Ollie, part of the installation.

OLLIE

Hi.

WOMAN 1

Oh, my God -- You're a real person.

OLLIE

I know someone who might not agree.

WOMAN 2

He blended in -- You look homeless!

WOMAN 1

I know, right? That was hysterical!

EXT. GALLERY - NIGHT

Ollie tears into Alice for the case of mistaken identity.

OLLIE

It was humiliating; they laughed at me! I've been getting laughed at by women for twenty years. This is why I wear suits and nice clothes -- Do you get that now? If I were wearing a suit, they would not have laughed!

ALICE

Calm down. You're wearing jeans and a t-shirt, which is considered sexy.

OLLIE

In a magazine ad, or on a ranch! In real life, it renders you invisible!

ALICE

Grow up; you're a good-looking guy!

OLLIE

So? All it does is price me out of the market! It means I'm naturally attracted to pretty girls, and the pretty girls attract neurosurgeons and athletes and artists who paint cats 'n dogs and giant squids that work at the U.N. The dressing down stuff is clearly not going to work!

ALICE

It's only been two days.

Her phone RINGS.

OLLIE

I told you I didn't want this to be a thing where I date 5,000 girls! I like Lily, because she likes me for who I am! She hasn't seen the place, hasn't seen the Ferrari! She has no idea that I'm going to get 500 mill!

ALICE

Then go marry her, you spoiled brat!

Her phone RINGS again. Caller ID: Beth-Israel Hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Alice races through the E.R. Discovers Eli on a gurney.

NURSE

He wouldn't give them his hat.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Alice tears into Ollie.

ALICE

You can't buy a kid's affection!

OLLIE

I was being thoughtful.

ALICE

You don't do things to be thoughtful, you do stuff so people will like you! You don't make clothes so you can do it for a daughter one day, you do it to get women! The roses are a way of drawing sympathy, not becuz you feel bad about your first girlfriend!

OLLIE

What about you? You're a teacher!

Alice, caught off guard.

ALICE

Who cares? I'm doing my job, right? Lying about teaching's the same as Eli getting all beat up cuz of you?

OLLIE

You said my issues with women were a result of my father not being around! You said, "As a matchmaker, a lot of my male clients go through it, Ollie."

ALICE

I'm sorry!

OLLIE

Sorry isn't good enough when you cite my dead father as a way of separating my mother from her money!

(beat)

And lying is the reason your appeal's gonna be denied... They told me. They aren't supposed to...but they told me.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The next day. NEW YORKERS commute. Let the River Run.

INT. FLOWER DISTRICT - DAY

Ollie enters a wholesaler. Greets his teenage DEALER. Dealer is Ollie's former student. The BOSS eyes them.

OLLIE

Petulant Rose. Have any seeds?

DEALER

You know anyone with 50 grand?

OLLIE

I know someone with a hundred.

Dealer grins.

DEALER

I heard about you... You've come a long way since teaching, Mr. Fitch.

OLLIE

You've come a long way since high school, Mr. Lomax.

DEALER

Do you miss it?

Ollie evades.

OLLIE

Do you?

DEALER

Yeah, I miss it. I couldn't wait to get outta school... Make that money. Course, money doesn't buy happiness.

Ollie produces a thick envelope. It's filled with thousands.

OLLIE

Money *doesn't* buy happiness.

(beat)

But it sure as hell tries to.

Gives him the cash. Boss walks on over. Offers Ollie a card.

BOSS

You didn't get it from me.

Ollie eyes the business card. Boss takes it back. Repeats:

DEALER

You didn't get it from me.

INT. FLOWER WHOLESALER - DAY

Ollie follows up on the lead. Offers the card to an OWNER.

OWNER

Who gave you this?

OLLIE

Lefty Miller. 28th & 7th. Balding, no teeth. Has a cat named Esteban.

Ollie gives up the goods easily. Owner slips another card.

EXT. FLOWER SHOPS - DAY

A MONTAGE of Ollie collecting business cards. False leads.

His teenage Dealer talks to a SECOND DEALER, lands a card.

A THIRD DEALER speaks to a FOURTH DEALER and FIFTH DEALER.

Tons of business cards change hands. No seeds, just leads.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Alice sits across from Mrs. Fitch and offers her findings.

MRS. FITCH
Are you religious, Alice?

ALICE
I'm a lot of things.
(beat)
You're...Protestant?

MRS. FITCH
I am. But don't let that distress you.
I was raised to respect all religions.
(beat)
Even Catholics.

Alice shifts uncomfortably.

MRS. FITCH
This parking garage nonsense. I hope
it's not something you put him up to.

ALICE
No, ma'am.

MRS. FITCH
I understand that you've grown close.

ALICE
Well he's spent time with Eli for me.
Eli's foster family is not...engaged.

MRS. FITCH
With the week up shortly, it appears
this Lily White is his best prospect.

ALICE
Have you met her?

MRS. FITCH
I have. She's not the brightest
girl in the world, but she's...

ALICE
Suitable?

MRS. FITCH
Honest... She is honest, Alice.
(beat)
Or should I say, Ms. Jefferson?

Alice blinks.

ALICE
I'm sorry.

MRS. FITCH

Keep your distance, Alice... If he marries her, you'll get your money. That is my gift to you.

Alice gets up and places a cute box on Mrs. Fitch's desk.

ALICE

And this is my gift to you.

She leaves. Mrs. Fitch opens the box, only to be shocked. Inside is the pig pendant from *New York Press* that Alice coveted on the train to Brooklyn. It is the same pendant Mrs. Fitch circled while reading *N.Y.P.* in her limousine.

She only found Alice's ad when later looking for the pig. Mrs. Fitch, captivated. She places a hand over her heart.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Alice & Ken at the counter. He inadvertently insults her.

KEN

I still cannot get over how you look so much better than before.

ALICE

I dunno. I think I brought out what was working. I finally look like me.

KEN

Oh-no... You look like someone else.

WAITRESS appears. Alice orders exactly as she did with Ollie.

ALICE

Hi. A large cup of coffee, with one packet of sugar, and two packets of Stevia, and can I also get a packet of Splenda on the side? Sorry. Also, if you have one percent, gimme that, but if you only have two percent or skim milk, just give me the tiniest bit of half-'n-half instead. Thanks.

KEN

You're a bit high maintenance, huh?

ALICE

I'm not high maintenance; I'm weird. I wouldn't expect you to understand. Guys don't pay attention to details.

KEN

I notice that you look better. What other details should I have noticed?

In walks Ollie. Alice and Ken sit at the lunch counter, so they see Ollie enter. Alice eyes a booth she can duck into.

ALICE

I'm not here if he asks.

She scoots into the booth, within earshot of Ken and Ollie.

KEN

Hey. Alice will be here in a sec if you want to stick around and say hi.

Alice rolls her eyes.

OLLIE

Forget her.

Alice, hurt.

OLLIE

Ken... Mother won't lend me money.

KEN

How much do you have left?

OLLIE

Half a million.

KEN

... I say 250 from each of us wins the auction for the right to build on the land. I'll be in and out of meetings -- Place the bid tomorrow?

Ollie nods. A WAITER appears.

WAITER

Shift change. Can I take your order again? I can't read the handwriting on this ticket.

KEN

Oh, man. Alice wanted a coffee, but she's all high maintenance about it. I could guess, but she's a stickler for details and gets pissy about it.

Alice crinkles her nose. Ollie calmly turns to the Waiter.

OLLIE

Um, a large cup of coffee, with one packet of sugar, and two packets of Stevia, and can I also get a packet of Splenda on the side? My bad. And if you have one percent, gimme that, but if you only have two percent or skim milk, just give me the tiniest bit of half-'n-half instead. Thanks.

Alice can't believe Ollie remembers her order from night one. She slips out of the booth undetected and misses what's next.

KEN

Any luck with roses? Dahl Textiles & Fabrics gets four tickets to the Met Ball -- It's fashion's biggest night. I hope Alice lets me...plant my seed.

Ollie bristles.

KEN

The paper says that the rosebushes themselves are going for 250 grand.

OLLIE

Do you even like Alice that much? Like, enough to buy her the rose?

KEN

Ah, come on. I need to settle down, and she's hot. I wanna impress her, sure, but getting the rose is more about impressing myself. It's also like buying art so other people in our tax bracket can't get it first.

OLLIE

The games people play.

KEN

Tell me about it... No woman's worth fifty grand a seed, a hundred a rose, and 250 for a bush that may not even flower. No woman's worth any of that.

OLLIE

True. No woman is worth that.
(beat)
But some women are priceless.

INT. MOMMA'S APT - DAY

Eli, watching TV at Momma's. Lies on the couch while in pain.

ALICE
Who did this?

ELI
I'm not a rat.

ALICE
I'm going to ask you one more time.
Who did this to you?

ELI
Snitches get stitches.

She chokes him.

ELI
Darnell Kennedy!

ALICE
He's a rich kid!

ELI
Okay, well tell him that!

Alice releases.

ALICE
You didn't need that fancy hat.
(beat)
"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

Eli's confused.

ALICE
"Beware of Greeks Bearing Gifts."
Ever hear that expression?

ELI
"...I don't want expensive gifts, I
have everything I need. I just want
someone to be there for me, to make
me feel safe and secure." Ever hear
that one?

ALICE
Walt Whitman?

ELI
Princess Diana.

He gets up, tosses the blanket.

ALICE
Where are you going?

ELI
Stickball with Ollie and David.

ALICE
No way.

ELI
I feel fine.

ALICE
I don't care how you feel... I just
don't want you hanging out with him.

ELI
He's my friend.

ALICE
I'm your friend.

ELI
Mainly when it's convenient for you.

Alice, hurt.

ALICE
What are you trying to say?

ELI
... I think I just said it.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Eli walks, headed to play stickball. Alice secretly follows.

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Eli with Ollie/David. Alice watches, then enters the subway.

EXT. STICKBALL COURT - DAY

Ollie looks at his new shoes. Grimaces. They still hurt him.

LATER: The game progresses. Ollie, David & Eli have a blast.

Afterwards, Ollie is on a bench. Takes off his new sneakers.

Puts them side-by-side with his old, but warm and familiars.
 A moment passes. Ollie takes his pricey sneakers and throws them in the trash. He puts on his older, broken-in sneakers.
 From beyond the outfield wall, Alice watches... Then leaves.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Our three boys walk. Eli and David enter into a candy store.
 Ollie nears the parked Ferrari. A TOUGH GUY in a lawn chair is planted next to the driver's side door. He holds a novel.

OLLIE
 What are you reading?

TOUGH GUY
 My Bondage and My Freedom.
 (beat)
 If no struggle, than no progress.

OLLIE
 ... It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

TOUGH GUY
 I am a Republican... A black, dyed in the wool Republican. And never intend to belong to any other party than the party of freedom and progress.

He sits and Ollie stands... A long, uncomfortable moment.

OLLIE
 Do you mind?

TOUGH GUY
 Do you?

OLLIE
 Well, you're sort of in my way.

Ollie, patience thin. Tough Guy looks left. GANG MEMBERS watch from a stoop, eyeing the Ferrari like pack hunters.

TOUGH GUY
 The only thing standing between those nice boys and your car is Frederick Douglass here.

OLLIE
 ... I'm sorry.

TOUGH GUY

Don't be. It's a pleasure to watch
your ride... I'm gonna finish this
book, I'm gonna finish grad school,
and I'm gonna buy this car one day.

(beat)

Maybe I can trade in my old hoopty.

He indicates a beat up Cougar across the street.

OLLIE

What're you studying? Nothing dumb
like philosophy or writing, I hope.

TOUGH GUY

No, I'm going places. Master's in
Education. I'm gonna be a teacher.
Make some difference in the world.

Ollie, touched. When buying shoes, he invoked the same words
with respect to his grandfather's plan for leaving him money.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Eli & David exit the candy store. Eli's smile disappears as
he recognizes the Bullies who beat him up. Bullies converge.

Alice appears between the two groups. Approaches the LEADER.

ALICE

Look at me. You're a big man?

(beat)

Darnell, right? Do you know what your
parents pay in tuition for 10th grade?

(beat)

They pay more money than my college.
Look at me.

He looks.

ALICE

I went to a very expensive college.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Ollie is bored with New York... New York is bored with him.

Opens his laptop. Goes to sites: NYT, WSJ, BBC. Closes lid.
Turns on his TV. Flips channels: HBO, SHO, OWN. He's bored.

Rags or riches, his websites and channels are no different.

He watches a documentary about indigent, starving children.
Lily tests 1 of 100 perfumes. Ollie eyes her with contempt.

LATER

David has come over. Wipes Ollie's butt in a game of chess.

DAVID

You're out of sorts.

OLLIE

I lost it after you took my Bishop.

DAVID

You're always awful at chess; I'm talking about life. You're unhappy.

OLLIE

I really need to see a therapist.
Lottery winners always go insane.

(beat)

If I had grown up with money, if I knew that I was the family of rich folk, maybe it would have inspired me to do more. To be better. If my grandfather built France's general infrastructure, maybe I could have built something.

DAVID

Built what?

OLLIE

A family. Or maybe I could have just been a better teacher.

DAVID

... What did your mom tell you your grandfather did for a living?

OLLIE

He was a writer. He wrote the modern-day equivalent of a coffee table book. No wonder it's out of print; it never existed.

DAVID

What was it called? Supposedly.

OLLIE

Great White Men in Black History.

DAVID

Great White Men in Black History?
What the hell; what was it about?

OLLIE

It was about black history, and all the wonderful ways white men have contributed to it over the years.

DAVID

That's kind of offensive.

OLLIE

That was half the point.

DAVID

What was the other half?

OLLIE

White men, and of all the wonderful ways they've contributed to black history.

LATER

David has left. Ollie sits, bored. He stands, walks around. Ollie drifts to a bookshelf. SAT books. He reads, intently.

INT. MOMMA'S APT - NIGHT

Eli through the doorway. Alice, clearly waiting up for him.

ALICE

... You insinuated that we're only friends as it suits my convenience.

ELI

I didn't insinuate anything.

ALICE

No, you didn't insinuate anything. You came out and directly said it.

ELI

Look, Alice: It doesn't feel good when you tell people how I'm your adoption counselor because I went through the system. Obviously I'm still in the system, which begs a question or two, e.g., why hasn't anyone adopted him? I get that no one wants a teenager.

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

I know that people want a baby they can shape 'n mold. But what's wrong with me?

ALICE

Eli...

ELI

I don't need your protection from anyone, much less those guys. And if Ollie's buying me a 200 dollar hat, that's none of your business.

ALICE

It is when you get hurt.

ELI

"...I don't want expensive gifts, I have everything I need. I just want someone to be there for me, to make me feel safe and secure."

ALICE

Princess Diana.

ELI

Eli Braun.

(beat)

If you're not going to be my mom, you have no right to act like it.

Alice breathes, patiently tries a different approach.

ALICE

I'm a teacher, and teaching has been my life. I'm going through some tough times right now, and you will not see me complaining. I've lost my whole identity, as I've been in school since I was four years old. For me, life is about teaching, so --

ELI

-- No wonder you're alone! Life isn't about teaching, Alice! If you tell guys you don't believe in love, I can promise you that they will find someone who does. I mean get a fucking clue! Life is not about goddamned teaching!

ALICE

Then what's it about, you shit?!

ELI
... It's about learning.

INT. BOTANY DEPT - NIGHT

Ollie with the Professor we saw on the TV press conference.
The Professor, about to sell Ollie a black market rosebush.

PROFESSOR
Rosebush -- 250,000 dollars.
(beat)
If you can make this flower,
you're a better man than me.

OLLIE
... That's not what makes me a
better man than you.

INT. ALICE'S APT - NIGHT

Alice stands in judgment before her empty wall.
She talked to Ollie about how she was keeping it bare as a
means of making a future boyfriend or husband feel welcome.
Her empty wall, complemented by her empty heart. She cries.

INT. DARKROOM - NIGHT

Industrial-sized heat lamps and high-end grow lights.
They smile fondly upon Ollie's new \$250,000 rosebush.
Ollie positions the lights while David prunes leaves.

OLLIE
The accelerator lamps are all clear.
(beat)
Hopefully, we see a rose by morning.

David prunes.

DAVID
She just needs a little bit of love.

OVERNIGHT -- Time-lapse captures an emerging rosebud.

EXT. GARAGE SITE - MORNING

Alice and Ken stand at the mouth of a bottomless pit.

ALICE
Does the world need more parking?

KEN
Ollie thinks so.

ALICE
Oh, then it must be a good idea.

KEN
Have you seen him lately?

Alice shakes her head. Then sees a school.

ALICE
Have you?

INT. DARKROOM - DAY

Ollie meets the Petulant rosebud. He basks in its glory.

INT. AUCTION HOUSE - DAY

Ollie sits in the crowd, his head buried in an SAT book.
He grabbed it from his bookshelf last night while bored.
The AUCTIONEER. Bidding starts at \$300,000. Paddles fly.

AUCTIONEER
400,000 going once, going twice...

OLLIE
500,000 dollars.

BIDDERS eye one another. Ollie, overly proud of himself.

AUCTIONEER
500,000 says this season's spender
in last season's clothes. I do say
500,000 going once, going twice...

BIDDER
600,000 dollars.

MURMURS as Bidders crane their necks to see: Mrs. Fitch.
Touched by Alice's gift, Mrs. Fitch purchased for Ollie.

INT. KINKO'S DAY

Ollie considers a large, vinyl banner. It hangs proudly.
It says -- Customize Our Banners in Celebration. \$59.99.

EMPLOYEE

Sir? Can I help you with something?

OLLIE

I need a big banner and a small sign.

EMPLOYEE

Okay, I'm gonna have to ask that you
be on the proper side of the counter.

Ollie examines an over-sized frame on the employee side.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ollie carries a banner and frame, walks with Mrs. Fitch.

MRS. FITCH

If you're going to build a parking
garage I support you. We live in a
city with the worst urban planning
since children eating Legos.

OLLIE

Henri Lacroix wanted me to make a
difference in the world. Lacroixs,
Fitches, whoever we were, whoever
we are, parking is not our legacy.

MRS. FITCH

It's "whomever," not "whoever."

Ollie begins to challenge, but he remembers Alice's lesson.

MRS. FITCH

So what's your plan, Oliver?

OLLIE

I'm going to build a school.

SMASH TO:

EXT. GARAGE SITE - DAY

Alice and Ken return to the site, Ken now aware that Ollie
has crossed him. Ken explains to Alice as they exit a taxi.

ALICE

What do you mean, a school?

KEN
A charter school.

They see the banner:

"Welcome to the Home of the Henri Lacroix Charter School."

KEN
He named it after his grandfather.

ALICE
"The Henri Lacroix Charter School."

KEN
I can't believe this!

ALICE
Neither can I... Ollie's French?

LATER

Ken sits on the curb, defeated. Sees David taking pictures.

Ken stands, approaches David.

KEN
Where is he?

DAVID
Ollie? At his mother's... Can ya
get a shot of me with the banner?

Ken begrudgingly agrees. David stands in front of the banner
as Ken fiddles with the camera. He sees the last shots taken:

The Petulant rosebush. Ken, realizing Ollie is in possession.

INT. APTHORP - DAY

Ken enters the lobby, approaches a grouchy DOORMAN's station.

KEN
Hi. The papers tell me Mrs. Davis
passed, and her studio's for sale.

DOORMAN
They show it Monday.

KEN
How about you lend me a key and
I'll be your best friend?

DOORMAN

I don't wanna be your best friend.
(beat)
You've got the face of an asshole.

Ken LAUGHS loudly.

KEN

Just do me a solid, Pop.

DOORMAN

Give me one good reason.

Ken presents cash.

KEN

I'll give you a thousand.

INT. DARKROOM - DAY

Ken snips off the single Petulant rose, then slithers away.

INT. ALICE'S APT - NIGHT

Alice gets dressed with the help of Momma.

ALICE

It's the Costume Institute Gala at the Metropolitan Museum. They call it fashion's biggest night.

MOMMA

This dress is amazing. I just hope it's better than Lily's.

ALICE

It's not a competition. Besides, I'm sure Ollie will be dressing better than most everyone there.

MOMMA

Have you talked since the blow-up?

ALICE

We spoke on the phone an hour ago.

MOMMA

All is well, then? You're friends?

ALICE

Yeah... We're friends.

Alice wants more.

INT. THRIFT STORE - DAY

Ollie in the same store where he learned to dress down.
Donates the wardrobe he bought after coming into money.

VENDOR

Do you want a tax credit receipt?

OLLIE

Nope... How about giving me that?

Ollie eyes a vintage tuxedo in a large, glass showcase.

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Ollie, driving poorly as usual, on his way to Brooklyn.

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY

Ollie walks through. Past a sign -- "Free SAT Tutoring."
He straightens the sign. Earlier, we saw Ollie pulling
an SAT book from his shelf, studying it at the auction.

His character arc in motion, Ollie walks into the room,
and it's full of KIDS. Ollie, at the head of the class.

OLLIE

Good afternoon... Welcome to the
first day of the rest of my life.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ollie arrives at the Ferrari. Again guarded by Tough Guy.

TOUGH GUY

How'd it go?

OLLIE

Little rusty.

TOUGH GUY

"It is easy to make money. It is much
more challenging to make a difference."

OLLIE

Frederick Douglass?

TOUGH GUY

Tom Brokaw.

OLLIE

"I am indebted to my mother for living,
indebted to my teacher for living well."

TOUGH GUY

Ollie the Educator?

OLLIE

Alexander the Great.

Ollie produces his car keys. Tosses them in Tough Guy's lap. Earlier, Tough Guy mentioned wanting to one day buy his own.

Ollie eyes Tough Guy's beat up Cougar. Tough Guy fishes out his own keys and tosses them at Ollie. They exchange smiles.

Ollie moves a fist, alluding to a stick shift, poor driving.

OLLIE

It's automatic transmission, right?

EXT. FDR DRIVE - DAY

Ollie rides the Cougar, his smile as wide as the East River.

INT. OLLIE'S APT - DAY

Ollie in front of his sewing machine, back where he belongs. Making slight alterations to the thrift store's vintage tux.

INT. DARKROOM - DAY

Ollie enters, then is thrown for a loss by the missing rose.

EXT. MET MUSEUM - NIGHT

Again, it's fashion's biggest night. BENEFACTORS and ACTORS and DESIGNERS and MODELS and PR, plus flowers and chocolate.

PHOTOGRAPHERS flash bulbs. Hands on hips plus kisses on air.

Alice & Ken arrive. Shortly thereafter, Ollie & Lily appear.

INT. MET MUSEUM - DAY

Ken presents Alice with the new rose, encased in a bell jar.

KEN

I told you I would do anything to find you the Petulant rose, Alice.

ALICE

Oh, my God. Where did you find it?

KEN

Well, that's just it. You have to be discreet, because black market items, they inspire hurt feelings.

ALICE

Understood. Mum's the word.

LATER: Alice excitedly spills the beans to a confused Ollie.

ALICE

No one has ever done anything like this for me. Not since I was young.

OLLIE

You are young.

ALICE

You know what I mean. Ollie, he got me a new species of flower. Can you believe it?

OLLIE

No. I can't.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Ollie and Ken overlook the fine tables, remarkable GUESTS.

OLLIE

Mother swooped in unexpectedly.

KEN

She hijacked my auction, Ollie.

OLLIE

She did. But I won't pretend that the final decision was hers alone.

KEN

Well, all is fair in love and war. At least I have Alice for comfort.

From a distance they observe Alice, beaming and beautiful.

KEN

Just look at her. Behind every
great fortune is a great woman.

OLLIE

Absolutely... And behind every
great fortune is a great crime.

LATER: Ollie and Lily eat. A SERVER presents exotic candy.

LILY

Wow. Do you have Belgian chocolate?

SERVER

We have six types of Belgian.

LILY

Do you have a Werther's for my man?

Ollie, whose face is already despondent, furrows his brow.

OLLIE

How do you know about the Werther's?

Lily's jaw falls. She eavesdropped, knew of Ollie's money.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Alice stands alone at a railing. Ollie appears. Approaches.

OLLIE

Alice... When you say that I reject
women before they can reject me, it
includes you.

ALICE

What does?

OLLIE

You were the first woman I rejected.
Before the woman wearing Juicy, and
before the women at the bar, before
Juilliard, before polo and prior to
Lily White, I rejected you. Because
I thought you were pretty, I needed
to hurt you so you wouldn't hurt me.

ALICE

You thought I was pretty?

OLLIE

You are pretty. I thought you were beautiful. I pushed away the other women... Because I only wanted you.

(beat)

I picked on your clothes because it was the only aspect I could pick on. Everything else about you... You're sassy and sweet. And my best friend.

ALICE

... Let's go back to the part where you said I was beautiful.

OLLIE

You are. I couldn't find anything wrong with you, really, just your wrapping paper. But you taught me that teaching didn't hold me back in life, it was the one aspect of my life that I loved. And just as with actual love, I didn't really appreciate it. Until it went away.

ALICE

Exactly. You'll never forget the name of your first grade teacher.

OLLIE

... I've never taught first grade.

ALICE

That's...not my point.

Ken appears at the entrance. Scans the CROWD for Alice.

ALICE

Look Ollie, you've also taught me great lessons. I thought teaching was my life, that love had passed me by. And yes, Ken isn't the man of my dreams, but he likes me. No one else would to the lengths Ken did with that Petulant rose... If I'm honest with myself, sure I've got feelings for you, too, but it doesn't seem practical -- I can't have kids and you really need one.

OLLIE

About the Petulant rose, Alice...

ALICE

Can it wait? It's time to dance.

She heads off to join Ken.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

COUPLES, cheek to cheek. SINGERS gently croon.

Ollie stands alone. Sees Alice dance with Ken.

On cue, when Ollie looks down, Alice eyes him.

EXT. MET MUSEUM - NIGHT

Ollie leaves, his evening and his life at a crossroads.

INT. DARKROOM - NIGHT

Ollie in the darkroom. No flowers. Just business cards.

EXT. ALICE'S APT - NIGHT

Ollie stands outside, looks up at her vacant apartment.

INT. ALICE'S APT - NIGHT

Later, Alice comes CHUCKLING through the door with Ken.

Ken fixes a drink.

KEN

What are you having?

ALICE

I don't drink.

Ken rolls his eyes, pulls Alice close. She pulls back.

ALICE

Listen, Ken... I'm not really the
"bring a guy up to my place" type.

KEN

Then why lead me on?

ALICE

Excuse me? I'm not leading you on.
You begged me to use the bathroom.

KEN

What a tease. You know how many men would do what I did to get a stupid rose? I had to volunteer as a favor.

ALICE

Look, I appreciate it. It's very...

Alice notices a huge frame on her formerly blank wall.

ALICE

... thoughtful.

Alice slowly approaches. Sees it hanging majestically.

A moment ago, Ollie arrived outside... He's been here.

The frame has 3.5" x 2" equidistant spaces, about 200 of them. Each space holds a flower shop business card.

Alice touches the glass. As she does, we FLASHBACK to:

A MONTAGE of Ollie collecting business cards. False leads.

His flower Dealer speaks to a SECOND DEALER, lands a card.

A THIRD DEALER speaks to a FOURTH DEALER and FIFTH DEALER.

Tons of business cards change hands. No seeds, just leads.

Finally, when he was at Kinko's, Ollie planned the gift:

Ollie examines an over-sized frame on the employee side.

Back on Earth, a thrilled Alice turns, heads for the door.

KEN

What does he have that I don't have?

ALICE

... My back.

INT. OLLIE'S APT - NIGHT

Alice and David at the door.

ALICE

Where is he?

DAVID

No idea. I told you -- I'm worried.

(beat)

His Swiss Army knife. It's missing.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

Alice runs through the park.

EXT. BELVEDERE CASTLE - NIGHT

Alice races up the castle steps. Reaches the top.
Finds Ollie standing there, a deer in headlights.

OLLIE

What are you doing here?

She approaches him, gently raises his wrist.

He does, in fact, hold the Swiss Army knife.

When they first met and spoke at the castle:

"Ollie carves his initials into a soft piece of granite."

Alice took his knife and said, "You'll get this back at the end of the day." Now, she examines the granite wall.

Ollie's initials, O.F., are joined by her initials: A.J.

The four, circled by a heart. Alice softly kisses Ollie.

Love blooms. Midnight CHURCH BELLS pierce the moonlight.

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

CHURCH BELLS. Continue to sing their song.

Months later, Alice and Ollie climb steps.

Alice carries a bouquet of Petulant roses.

INT. CHAMBERS - DAY

Alice & Ollie, surrounded by ATTORNEYS and a JUDGE.

JUDGE

I recognize that on this day, Alice
Joanna Annette Jefferson and Oliver
Barrett Fitch are united, firmly in
both duty and purpose.

Alice & Ollie share smiles.

JUDGE

Mr. Fitch and Ms. Jefferson --

ALICE

-- Mrs. Jefferson.

JUDGE

Mrs. Jefferson... I further recognize that Mr. Fitch and Mrs. Jefferson are formally established as the guardians of Eli Braun. Mr. Braun now stands as the pair's adopted son and legal heir.

We see Eli and Mrs. Fitch, arm-in-arm and beaming.

Ollie needed an heir, and Alice has given him one.

INT. CHARTER SCHOOL - DAY

Tough Guy, finished with his Masters in Education, now a teacher at Henri Lacroix. Sees Eli/David in the hall.

He nods at them, then steals a peak at some classrooms.

Ollie teaches in one room...as Alice learns in another.

FADE OUT.

THE END