

**YOU SEND ME**

a feature-length screenplay

by

Rhett Martinez

Copyright © Rhett Martinez  
Registered WGA/E

2618 Baylor Street  
Houston, TX 77009  
718-915-1374  
rhettmartinez@mac.com

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

SAM and RUBY are laughing. Ruby is wearing her wedding dress and Sam is wearing a tuxedo. Both are in their early thirties. Giddy with exhaustion from all the events of their wedding day, they are lying side by side, flat on their backs, atop a fully made bed, looking up at the ceiling. Or rather, laughing up at the ceiling. Muffled SOUNDS OF A PARTY bleed in through the closed door. Finally, they catch their breath.

SAM

So what do we do now?

RUBY

Let's just stay here.

SAM

Can we do that?

RUBY

I don't wanna go out there.

SAM

I don't wanna go out there either.

RUBY

Good.

Pause.

SAM

How long before they notice we're gone?

RUBY

We've got time. They're all drunk.

SAM

Good point.

Pause.

RUBY

Maybe we could escape out the window.

SAM

Too far. The fall would kill us.

RUBY  
Yeah, you're probably right.

Pause.

RUBY (CONT.)  
So what are we gonna do?

SAM  
I guess we better go out there.

RUBY  
Yeah, but then what?

SAM  
What do married people do?

RUBY  
Get jobs.

SAM  
Buy a house.

RUBY  
With a picket fence.

SAM  
Get a dog.

RUBY  
Have a baby.

SAM  
Grow old.

RUBY  
Die.

Pause.

SAM  
Sounds good to me.

RUBY  
Sounds perfect.

Sam's hand reaches for Ruby's. As they touch...

FREEZE FRAME. SOUND OF A SNAP SHOT being taken.

MUSIC UP: SAM COOKE'S "YOU SEND ME." The still image fades from COLOR to BLACK AND WHITE.

The photograph falls away, in SLOW MOTION, into empty black space. As the white framed edges come into view, the corners burst into flames. Curls of fire destroy the photo from the outside in, reducing the paper to ash, until finally...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

EXT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - EVENING

MUSIC FADES slowly throughout the following. Ruby, carrying a bottle of wine in one hand and her keys in the other, walks down a picture perfect street in Brooklyn lined with beautiful brownstones. She approaches her front stoop and is on her way up when she sees someone sitting on the top step.

It's DEBBIE, their landlord--a short, fire-plug, Puerto-Rican, mid-forties, bad hair, bad skin, bad attitude, bad everything. She's dialing a cell phone.

RUBY

*(startled)*

Oh! Hi Debbie. I didn't see you.

DEBBIE

Hi. Listen, be careful on the steps cuz there's a broken one.

RUBY

Oh. Okay.

DEBBIE

I'm callin' a guy now to see if he could come fix it.

RUBY

*(amiable)*

Oh, good. Maybe he could fix some of the other stuff on the list we gave you when--

Debbie holds up her hand to cut Ruby off and speak into the phone.

DEBBIE

Hola, Rico! Como esta?

RUBY

*(trailing off, to herself)*

--we first moved in.

Ruby, realizing she has lost Debbie, heads upstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby enters with the wine. Sam has everything set up for dinner Japanese style on the floor. The apartment is the perfect starter home for a young couple: exposed brick, fireplace, hardwoods. Boxes are scattered around along with other belongings yet to be unpacked. In the corner, by the bay-windows which look down onto the Park Slope street below, is an upright piano.

Seated on the floor between Sam and Ruby is MEANS-WELL: a mutt puppy, less than a year old. On the coffee/dining table are several opened take-out containers. The centerpiece is comprised of a pair of tall, elegant candles which serve as a romantic counterbalance to the fact that the only glassware that could be found are two mismatched coffee mugs.

RUBY

*(closing the door behind  
her, taking in the room)*

We have too much stuff.

SAM

*(lighting the candles)*

Hey, baby. You got the wine?

RUBY

*(handing him the bottle)*

I don't like the landlady.

SAM

So don't talk to her.

RUBY

She lives downstairs!

SAM

So what?

RUBY

I'm gonna have to talk to her.

SAM

It's Brooklyn. You don't have to talk to her.

RUBY

This apartment is too expensive.

SAM

We'll manage.

RUBY

I don't have a job.

SAM  
You just had a great interview!

RUBY  
Yeah, at a stupid television  
company.

SAM  
You love television.

RUBY  
I don't even know what an Associate  
Producer does!

SAM  
You'll be great.

RUBY  
This place is too small.

SAM  
*(feeding Means-well)*  
It's perfect.

RUBY  
We have too much stuff.

SAM  
What do you want to get rid of?

RUBY  
You know what we have to get rid  
of.

Ruby turns slowly and looks at the piano.

SAM  
No.

RUBY  
It's too big.

SAM  
I need it for work.

RUBY  
You do not. You have a whole room  
full of stuff at your job.

SAM  
That belongs to the studio.

RUBY

When was the last time you wrote a score on that piano? (*Sam thinks.*) Or a commercial jingle?

Sam thinks again, but he's got nothing.

SAM

I love my piano!

Sam jumps up and sits at the piano as if to protect it from her.

RUBY

Baby, I love your piano too but--

SAM

You hate it!

RUBY

I love it, but--

SAM

(*to the piano*)  
She hates you.

RUBY

Oh for God's sake.

SAM

(*to the piano, tenderly*)  
Don't worry, I won't let her take you away.

RUBY

Sam. You're talking to the piano.

Sam begins to play George M. Cohan's "Oh You Wonderful Girl." It's an old familiar favorite of theirs.

SAM

(*singing*)  
Oh you wonderful girl/What a wonderful girl you are/You make the world appear to me/Near to me/Dear to me...

Ruby sits next to Sam on the bench and rests her head on his shoulder. Sam, as he often does, begins to alter the lyrics.

SAM

Oh you wonderful girl/What a  
wonderful girl you are/You make the  
stars shine in the sky/Shine so  
bright/In the high

Ruby lifts her head from his shoulder and laughs.

SAM

*(still improvising)*

Oh you wonderful you/What a  
wonderful you you are/You do the  
thing that is the thing/With the  
deal/Over there...

Since Ruby is laughing even harder now, Sam's job is finished. He trails off with a final flourish of the keys.

Pause. Ruby takes a deep breath. Exhales.

RUBY

Happy Anniversary, baby.

SAM

Happy Anniversary.

He kisses her. She smiles lovingly at him.

Sam looks around.

SAM

We have too much stuff.

Ruby collapses onto him again. Instantly...

FREEZE FRAME. SOUND OF A SNAP SHOT being taken. As before, the still image fades from COLOR to BLACK AND WHITE. The photograph falls away, in SLOW MOTION, into empty black space. As the white framed edges come into view, the corners burst into flames. Curls of fire destroy the photo from the outside in, reducing the paper to ash, until finally...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Ruby enters. She is immediately met by Means-well who has grown twice as large as before.

RUBY

Hello, Means-well. How's my boy?

She moves into the room and drops her keys on the dining table. This is the same apartment as before, but now all the boxes have been put away. Some more furniture has filled out the space. Paintings and framed posters adorn the walls. The piano is anchored in the same corner by the bay-windows.

RUBY

Sam? (*She listens. No reply.*) Sam?  
 (*Again, no reply.*) Means-well,  
 where's Daddy?

Means-well runs to an open window, puts his paws on the windowsill, and barks up at the fire escape. Ruby follows him, sticks her head out the window and looks up.

RUBY

Sam?

EXT. ROOFTOP. SAM AND RUBY'S BROWNSTONE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Sam pops his head over the side and looks down at her.

SAM

I'm up here!

RUBY

What are you doing?

SAM

(*dramatically*)  
 Come to me.

Ruby giggles and climbs out onto the fire escape then up the ladder to the landing. Sam steps off the landing onto the roof, then takes her hand and helps her down too.

SAM

I have a surprise for you.

Sam has set up a romantic table for two on the roof.

RUBY

(*seeing the table*)  
 Oh my God, baby, look at this!

He leads her to the table.

SAM

The view's not too bad either.

Ruby turns to take in the breathtaking Manhattan skyline.

RUBY  
Beautiful.

SAM  
Perfect.

Ruby turns to Sam. He pulls her in for a long kiss. The two start to sway back and forth, slowly, until they're dancing cheek to cheek. Sam spins Ruby out. Ruby twirls herself back in for a dip. They laugh. Sam pulls her up.

SAM  
Happy anniversary, Ruby.

RUBY  
Happy anniversary, love.

They kiss.

RUBY (CONT.)  
Actually, I have a surprise for you too.

SAM  
Really? What?

RUBY  
Oh, it's no big deal. It's just, you know that idea I pitched to Marty?

SAM  
The t.v. show?

RUBY  
Yeah. They decided to greenlight it.

SAM  
What?

RUBY  
*(feigning disinterest)*  
Well, they really like it and they decided to go ahead and order thirteen episodes.

SAM  
*(stunned)*  
Are you kidding?

RUBY  
*(giving up the game)*  
Nope.

SAM  
Oh my God, Ruby! You did it!

RUBY  
I did it!

Sam picks her up, swings her around, and shouts for the whole city to hear.

SAM  
She did it! She did it! (*Putting her back down.*) This calls for champagne!

RUBY  
Yes!

SAM  
Have a seat. I'll go down and get it.

RUBY  
You want me to help?

SAM  
No, you just sit. Go ahead without me.

RUBY  
No, I'll wait for you.

She sits. Sam goes to the edge of the roof and steps off onto the fire escape landing. He starts down, stops, turns back.

SAM  
You want drowned strawberries in your champagne?

RUBY  
Yes!

SAM  
Two drowned strawberries! Coming right--

Before he can say another word, it happens:

The landing collapses.

The SOUND OF METAL AGAINST BRICK is excruciatingly loud.

Sam falls out of sight.

Ruby lets out a scream, runs to the edge of the roof, and looks down.

Sam is still there. Something in the structure has snapped and the landing has fallen a few feet away from the side of the building, but it's still holding by a thin twist of metal.

Sam, in a state of half-shock, takes in his surroundings, looks down at the street five stories below, looks at the thin metal strip, pulled taught, then looks up at Ruby.

Ruby reaches for him.

RUBY

Sam!

Sam takes a deep breath and pulls himself together. Slowly, carefully, he stands. He might be able to reach her if he can just move a little closer to--

The metal snaps.

SLOW MOTION. ON SAM.

Sam falls. His eyes are locked on Ruby. He descends toward the sidewalk past the fourth floor, the third, the second, the first. The instant before he slams into the concrete...

ON RUBY. Still in SLOW MOTION.

She screams, covers her face, turns away. She cannot look. She doesn't need to. There's no way Sam could have survived.

Finally, she pulls her hands from her face and opens her eyes.

BACK TO SCENE.

The same romantic table for two.

The same breathtaking, amber twilight.

Ruby wails.

She collapses to her knees, silhouetted against the New York City skyline.

FREEZE FRAME. SOUND OF A SNAP SHOT being taken.

As before, the still image fades from COLOR to BLACK AND WHITE.

The photograph falls away, in SLOW MOTION, into empty black space. As the white framed edges come into view, the corners burst into flames. Curls of fire destroy the photo from the outside in, reducing the paper to ash, until finally...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A fireplace. The photo of the skyline turns out to be a postcard burning on the logs of the open hearth.

ON RUBY.

She's sitting in front of the fireplace with a photo album on her lap. She has been burning the album page by page.

She stares calmly into the fire, mesmerized.

Her cheeks are smudged with mascara from dried tears. She is wearing one of Sam's old Boston University sweatshirts and a pair of her own pajama pants. She's a mess.

So is the house. Strewn about are dirty glasses, empty beer and wine bottles, dirty clothes, unopened mail, dirty plates, half-empty containers of take-out food.

Methodically, as though under the spell of a hypnotist, she tears another page out of the album and tosses it into the fire.

Then...a voice.

DR. HAYNES (O.S.)  
Why did you burn the pictures?

Pause.

No answer.

DR. HAYNES (O.S.)  
Ruby?

No answer.

DR. HAYNES (O.S.)  
Ruby?

INT. DR. HAYNES' OFFICE - DAY

ON RUBY

Staring out the window, as she snaps out of her reverie.

RUBY

What?

ON SCENE.

DR. Haynes' office: sterile, clean, muted colors. DR. HAYNES matches his office, both in demeanor and style, with one notable addition--the doctor wears a toupee on his head that is almost passable. Despite this, he seems to be well qualified in his practice.

DR. HAYNES

Why did you burn the pictures?

RUBY

I thought it would help.

DR. HAYNES

Did it?

RUBY

No.

DR. HAYNES

Let's talk about the drinking.

RUBY

Okay.

DR. HAYNES

How would you describe your drinking.

RUBY

I drink a lot.

DR. HAYNES

How much is a lot?

RUBY

Every day.

DR. HAYNES

Today?

RUBY

Yes.

DR. HAYNES

You had a drink before you came here?

RUBY

Three.

DR. HAYNES

Three?

RUBY

Three drinks. I had three glasses of wine this morning.

DR. HAYNES

Why?

RUBY

What?

DR. HAYNES

Why? You had been doing better. Making progress. Why did you feel the need to do that? What hap--

RUBY

Today is our anniversary. (*Pause.*) Today would have been number three. Would have been--*should* have been the third anniversary of the beginning of our lives. Instead, it's the first anniversary of his death. Our death.

Pause.

DR. HAYNES

But you're not dead, Ruby. (*Pause.*) I know that today is going to be particularly hard to get through, but you will get through it. And I hope you won't allow yourself to fall back into old habits just because of this one very difficult day. (*Pause.*) The last time we spoke you said you had a date. How did that go?

Beat. Ruby starts to laugh. After a few moments, her laughter grows until she is fully doubled over into a hysterical sort of fit, the kind that only comes when it has been earned through a great deal of pain.

Finally, she calms down enough to speak.

RUBY

Not well.

INT. SHOE STORE - AFTERNOON

ON JUDY.

JUDY is sharp, street-smart, and about the same age as her best friend, Ruby. However, unlike Ruby, Judy suffers no fools.

JUDY  
Don't laugh!

ON SCENE.

Ruby and Judy shopping for shoes.

RUBY  
Judy, seriously, thank you, but no.

JUDY  
Why?

RUBY  
I don't want to.

JUDY  
I think it's time.

RUBY  
It's not time.

JUDY  
Just meet him.

RUBY  
No.

JUDY  
He's perfect. He's handsome,  
charming, funny, humble...

RUBY  
Then why don't you date him?

JUDY  
I would love to, but instead I'm  
sacrificing him to you for the  
greater good.

RUBY  
If he's so great then he doesn't  
deserve to be wasting his time with  
me because there's no way that  
anything can come of it.

JUDY  
Ruby.

RUBY  
Judy.

JUDY  
Look at me. (*Ruby looks at her.*)  
I'm worried about you.

Beat.

RUBY  
I'm fine.

JUDY  
No. You're not.

Pause.

RUBY  
I don't know how to go on a date  
anymore, I don't know what to wear--

JUDY  
I'll help you.

RUBY  
I don't know what to say--

JUDY  
I'll coach you.

RUBY  
I don't know what to--

JUDY  
(*putting her hand over  
Ruby's mouth*)  
Shh. It's going to be okay. We're  
just talking about dinner and  
conversation. That's it. No biggie.

RUBY  
No. I don't think I can--

JUDY  
(*taking Ruby by the  
shoulders, firmly*)  
Listen to me: You're fucking up.  
You're a mess. You're unhealthy.  
You're supposed to be getting  
better all the time and you're  
getting worse. You're fucking up.

(MORE)

JUDY (cont'd)  
Your job, your bills, your house,  
your family, your friends. Your  
fucking up. You understand me?  
You've got to stop. Come back to  
us, Ruby. We want you back. I love  
you. And I miss you. And if you  
don't want to do it for you, then  
do it for me. Because I need you. I  
need you to come back to me, Ruby.

Pause.

RUBY  
Okay.

JUDY  
Okay?

RUBY  
Yeah.

JUDY  
*(tears in her eyes)*  
Yeah?

RUBY  
Yeah.

JUDY  
Wow. That really worked?

RUBY  
*(chuckling)*  
I guess so.

JUDY  
Good. I've been rehearsing that for  
a couple of days now. I was afraid  
it wasn't gonna work.

They hug.

RUBY  
So. I guess you better call this  
guy.

JUDY  
I already did. He's picking you up  
at eight.

Beat. Judy smiles triumphantly.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Ruby and TED--early thirties, handsome, charming, with kind eyes--are midway through a tense dinner.

An uncomfortable silence.

TED  
*(attempting to break the  
ice)*  
So, you work in television?

RUBY  
*(unnecessarily defensive)*  
Yup.

TED  
Anything I would have seen?

RUBY  
I don't know, what kind of shows do  
you watch?

TED  
Well, actually, I don't really  
watch much television.

RUBY  
Of course you don't.

TED  
What do you mean?

RUBY  
Nobody watches t.v. Whenever I ask  
someone, "Hey, what do you like on  
t.v.?" They always say, "*Oh, well,  
I don't really watch t.v. T.V. is  
so stupid. Who can watch all that  
stupid shit?*"

TED  
I see.

RUBY  
But really, they do watch it. They  
just pretend they don't.

TED  
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to--

RUBY  
Do you own a t.v.?

TED  
Of course.

RUBY  
Did you turn it on today?

TED  
Yes.

RUBY  
Then guess what: you watch t.v.

TED  
I didn't say I don't watch it at  
all. I said I don't watch it much.

RUBY  
What does "much" mean?

TED  
I never really thought about it. I  
suppose I mean, not as much as  
other people.

RUBY  
Right. Other people.

TED  
Yeah.

RUBY  
Let me guess: you watch the news,  
right?

TED  
Sure.

RUBY  
PBS. Documentaries. That kind of  
thing?

TED  
Sometimes.

RUBY  
Movies. On the movie channels. Only  
you don't call them "movies," you  
call them "films."

TED  
I do watch *movies*, yes.

RUBY

But mostly you read. You read a lot, right?

TED

I suppose.

RUBY

You sit in your house. With the t.v. off. And you read. Books. Right?

TED

*(with a tinge of sarcasm)*

Amazing. You can see right through me, can't you?

RUBY

Well, Ted, it's easy, because everyone I know says exactly the same thing. But you know what's really amazing? I'll tell you. We make all these shitty t.v. shows that everyone is too good to watch, and somehow we manage to stay in business.

TED

Amazing.

RUBY

It is. It's absolutely amazing.

TED

What kind of shows do you make?

RUBY

Mostly reality shows.

TED

Oh. I see.

RUBY

Yeah, that's right. And I'll tell you something: I like those shows. I like making them. I like watching them. I would rather sit around all day, in my boxer shorts, watching those stupid reality shows, than waste my time watching the Criterion Collection of the *films* of John Cassavettes or reading *Ulysses*.

TED

Really?

RUBY

Yes, really. (*Awkward pause.*) I'm sorry that this is going to be our only date, but I am who I am. And I won't apologize for it.

TED

I see.

RUBY

So: I say we eat dessert, shake hands, and go our separate ways.

TED

No, I don't think so.

RUBY

What?

TED

I have no interest in doing that.

RUBY

Okay. I'm sorry this didn't work out. I guess I should go.

Ruby takes some money from her purse, places it on the table, and stands.

RUBY

Good night.

TED

Ruby, sit down.

Ruby hesitates. She looks around the restaurant at the people nearby who have taken notice of her. She sits again.

TED (CONT.)

Put your money back in your purse.

RUBY

I insist on going Dutch.

TED

You insist? You insist. You're a piece of work, you know that?

RUBY

I agree. I'm very difficult. If I were you I wouldn't bother.

TED

If you were me? You have no idea who I am.

RUBY

You're right. I don't. I should just go.

TED

Yeah, you can go. But before you do, I'm going to tell you something. You've been sitting there, all night, chugging wine and making snide comments about everything from my choice of clothes to the waiter's use of the word "neo-Tuscan."

RUBY

"Neo-Tuscan" is a stupid word.

Ted takes a breath. He proceeds calmly, coolly.

TED

I know your story. I know what happened to your husband. Judy told me. And I can't imagine what that's been like for you. I can't even imagine it. And I don't know why you decided to come here tonight. And I don't know why you're in such a hurry to leave. But before you go, I am going to tell you something about me. And you're going to sit there and listen. You got it?

RUBY

Fine.

Ted leans in and looks Ruby dead in the eyes.

TED

I hated *Ulysses*.

RUBY

(*confused*)

What?

TED

I hated *Ulyssess*. I fucking hated it. They made me read it in college, so I read it.

(MORE)

TED (cont'd)

Actually, I can't even honestly say that I "read" it. I looked at every word on every page of it. But that's not the same thing as "reading" it. And I hated every fucking minute of it.

RUBY

*(still confused)*

Um...okay.

TED

And one more thing: I need to ask you something. Those boxer shorts you wear--are they yours?

RUBY

What?

TED

Are they yours originally or did they used to be your husband's?

RUBY

They're mine. Originally.

TED

Good. Because I think wearing other people's underwear is disgusting. But I also think chicks who wear boxer shorts are quite sexy.

RUBY

Oh.

TED

Yes. "Oh." And I also sometimes use the word "chick" to describe beautiful women such as yourself. And I'm sorry if that offends you but that's something you should know about me. And if you can't handle that, then maybe you really should leave.

Ruby smiles.

RUBY

No, I think I can handle that.

Ted smiles.

TED  
Good. Because I really want  
dessert.

RUBY  
Me too.

TED  
Good.

RUBY  
Neo-Tuscan desserts are my  
favorite.

TED  
Nothing beats neo-Tuscan.

Pause.

RUBY  
What about John Cassavettes.

Ted sighs.

TED  
Well...on that, I guess we're just  
gonna have to agree to disagree.

A shared smile.

A comfortable silence.

Ruby lets herself be drawn into his gaze. They linger there  
just a bit longer than seems appropriate for a first date.  
Then Ruby pulls herself out of it.

RUBY  
You sure you want dessert?

TED  
*(instantly)*  
Fuck dessert.

RUBY  
*(standing)*  
Right.

TED  
*(right there with her)*  
Let's get outta here.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE IN PARK SLOPE, BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Ted is walking Ruby home after dinner.

RUBY

So, Ted. You never told me how you know Judy.

TED

She was my pen pal when I was in prison. (*Ruby stops dead in her tracks.*) Is that bad? (*Ruby stares, trying to recover.*) Ruby, I'm kidding. (*Beat. She finally starts breathing again and they both laugh.*) My company hired her company to restructure our accounts payable and receivable to see how we could maximize our tax incentives. Sexy, huh?

RUBY

Very. So did they do...that, whatever the hell it was you just said?

TED

No. It was awful. I had to fire them for total incompetence. (*Ruby laughs.*) All except for Judy who was caught stealing.

RUBY

(*playing along*)  
Really?

TED

Naturally, I had to have her arrested.

RUBY

Naturally.

They turn onto Ruby's street.

TED

Much to her credit though, I must say, she went down kicking and screaming.

RUBY

That sounds like Judy.

TED

It took four officers to get the cuffs on her. They had to use a choke hold, which caused her to black out, but after that, she was really no trouble.

RUBY

That's embarrassing.

TED

Tragic really. Of course she regained consciousness moments later, as they were dragging her off. Then she started crying and pleading with me not to send her away. And it was at this point actually that she offered you up as a sort of bribe.

RUBY

Really?

TED

Yeah, she said, "I know this great girl, devastatingly beautiful, thoroughly available, I can hook you up."

RUBY

Is that so?

TED

Oh. She also said you were easy.

RUBY

Cheap date.

TED

Exactly.

They've stopped in front of Ruby's stoop.

RUBY

And so you took her up on her offer.

TED

Well, I told her we'd have to wait until I actually met you to see if you were worth it.

RUBY

And so what's the verdict?

Beat. They smile flirtatiously at one another. Ted takes a step closer to her.

TED

I think I may have to drop the charges.

RUBY

Oh.

He leans in and kisses her, slowly, somewhat carefully. She leans into him, puts her hand around his neck and kisses him harder. The embrace builds, becomes more intense. But then Ruby suddenly, bizarrely, begins to weep.

Her mouth is still on his when her breath turns into sobs. Ted pulls away instantly. Tears are streaming down her face now.

RUBY

I'm sorry!

TED

*(genuinely concerned)*  
It's okay.

RUBY

No, it's not okay!

She reaches for him, pulls him into her, and forces herself to kiss him. Ted, not sure how to handle this, just goes with it. She kisses him vengefully, trying to prove to herself that she can. But she is still sobbing. After a couple of seconds of this, Ted carefully pulls himself away.

TED

Ruby, it's okay. You don't have to do this. It's okay. Shhhh....

Ruby wails. Something deep inside is heaving its way out of her and she is powerless to stop it.

Ted holds her tight.

TED

It's okay, Ruby. Just let it go. Just let it all go.

She does. She wails until her breathing finally begins to grow calmer. Until she finally has let it all out.

TED

*(still holding her)*  
Just keep breathing, Ruby.

RUBY  
I'm so sorry.

TED  
Don't be ridiculous. This is how  
all my first dates end.

She bursts out laughing and pulls away.

RUBY  
Oh my God I'm so embarrassed.

TED  
Hey. Don't do that. Look at me.  
(*She does.*) You have absolutely  
nothing to be ashamed of. What you  
have been through in this last  
year, my God. You're probably the  
strongest person I know. You're a  
hell of a lot stronger than me,  
that's for sure.

RUBY  
Thank you.

TED  
You feel better now?

RUBY  
Yes. Thank you for letting me ruin  
your shirt.

TED  
(*dismissing it*)  
Cheap, Kenneth Cole knock-off.

RUBY  
And your jacket.

TED  
Yes, well *that* you're going to have  
to pay for. (*She laughs again.*) You  
okay?

RUBY  
As good as can be expected.

TED  
Do you need someone to stay with  
you? I don't mean me and I don't  
mean...*that*. I just mean, do you  
need me to call Judy or--

RUBY  
No. Thank you, though, I'll be fine.

TED  
Okay.

RUBY  
I hate to let it end this way.

TED  
It's not ending. I'm gonna call you tomorrow. (*Ruby looks down at her shoes.*) Hey. (*She looks up.*) Is it me?

RUBY  
No. No it's not you.

TED  
Okay then. Now go upstairs and get some sleep. Okay? I'm going to call you tomorrow.

RUBY  
Don't.

TED  
Don't what?

RUBY  
Ted, you are...more perfect than I could ever have hoped for. But please, don't call me. (*Ted is stunned. She kisses him on the cheek one last time.*) Thank you for everything.

She turns and races up the stoop, leaving Ted on the sidewalk.

TED  
Ruby, wait! What the--did we just fall into another dimension or something? What are you--

RUBY  
(*tenderly*)  
Ted. Please. Don't call me. Just forget you ever met me.

TED  
Ruby, there is no way that I am going to be able to forget you.

RUBY  
Then please, for your own sake,  
please don't call me.

TED  
What are you talking about?

Beat.

RUBY  
You deserve better.

Ted stares in disbelief.

Before he can recover, she is gone. He's left there, under the streetlight, staring up at her door.

INT. THE FRONT ENTRANCE OF RUBY'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Ruby is leaning with her back against the other side of the door. She covers her face with her hands and sobs quietly.

Over this, a voice...

DR. HAYNES (O.S.)  
And that's it?

RUBY (O.S.)  
Yeah.

INT. DR. HAYNES' OFFICE - DAY

Ruby is staring out the window again.

RUBY  
That's the end.

DR. HAYNES  
Well, I've heard of worse first dates. (*Ruby chuckles.*) When you kissed him, how did you feel.

Beat.

RUBY  
Wrong.

DR. HAYNES  
Wrong? Wrong how?

RUBY

Wrong. Like a betrayal. I felt that I had betrayed Sam. Unfaithful. Cheating. Wrong.

DR. HAYNES

Did you have any feelings of pleasure?

RUBY

No.

DR. HAYNES

It's alright if you did.

RUBY

I didn't.

DR. HAYNES

It has been a long time since you kissed a man. It's only natural if it aroused some sensual feelings in you.

Beat.

RUBY

I thought that it would. I expected it to. But it didn't. It felt wrong.

DR. HAYNES

I'm not sure I understand what you mean when you say "wrong."

RUBY

*(not hiding her disdain)*

Wrong, as in the opposite of right.

Dr. Haynes takes a deep breath.

DR. HAYNES

Ruby, it's healthy for you to try and move on. *(Ruby looks away in disgust.)* It may not go well at first. Maybe it's not even supposed to go well at first. But what you did was healthy. You took a step in the right direction. You have to move on. You have to go on living your life. *(Pause.)* After all...what other choice do you have?

Ruby looks up. She is thinking about the other choice.

Dr. Haynes' voice continues over...

INT. RUBY'S BATHROOM - LATER

ON RUBY.

She is standing in the bathroom, bathed in the bleached light of a bare bulb, wearing one of Sam's button-down dress shirts which, like her face, has been smudged and weathered by tears. She stares blankly.

DR. HAYNES (O.S.)

It's healthy for you to still have strong feelings for your husband. But it's not healthy for you to hold on to him as though he were still alive. He will always live with you in your heart.

ON SCENE.

Ruby steps into the bathtub holding a knife.

DR. HAYNES (O.S.)

But you have to let go. You have to let Sam go and get on with your life. Don't you think Sam would have wanted that? Don't you think Sam would have wanted you to be happy? It's time to let go, Ruby. It's time to make the choice.

Ruby stands in silence.

Pause.

SOUND OF A SINGLE DRIP OF WATER echoes faintly off the ceramic tiles.

Ruby looks down at the knife. Slowly, she brings the blade to her wrist. She blinks. She thinks about it, then decides to change hands and slice the other wrist. Her movements are methodical, detached. She presses down. In the instant that the blade hits her wrist, before she can break the skin...

A sound.

PIANO. Just A SINGLE NOTE, somewhere in the distance. It hangs there for a long moment before Ruby realizes she has heard it.

With the knife still to her wrist, she turns toward the sound.

MORE PIANO NOTES begin to chime. Not a song really, but the flourishing lilt of someone just getting warmed up to play.

Ruby looks around, confused.

She pulls the knife away from her wrist and steps out of the tub. She staggers toward the door. As she opens it, the MUSIC SWELLS. It's coming from the living room.

Ruby makes her way down the hall slowly.

THE MUSIC FLOURISHES EVOLVE INTO A FAMILIAR MELODY. Sam Cooke's "You Send Me."

Ruby freezes in her tracks. She listens to a few more bars before finding the courage to peek her head around the corner to see...

Sam.

Sam is sitting at the piano.

Still playing, he looks up at her kindly.

RUBY  
(frozen)  
Sam?

SAM  
Hey kiddo.

Ruby gasps. Slowly, Sam stands and moves to her.

RUBY  
Is this really happening?

Sam smiles and keeps moving toward her.

RUBY  
Oh my God I'm finally, really  
losing my mind.

SAM  
(seriously)  
No. (The two are now face to face.)  
You lost that a long time ago.

Through tears, Ruby laughs, but she's still semi-frozen and in shock.

RUBY

But...how? You're dead. I saw you die.

SAM

Yeah. Sorry about that. Fucking landlady. (*Ruby laughs again.*) If that bitch didn't have a brother in the housing department you'd own this whole building by now.

Beat. Ruby stares in shock.

RUBY

Are you real?

Sam reaches out, takes her hand, and slowly brings it up to his heart. Then, delicately, he takes her other hand--the one that's still holding the knife--brings it up, and takes the knife from her.

SAM

Ruby, what were you thinking?

Ruby looks at the knife for a moment as if it too is from another world. She forgot she was holding it. Sam takes the knife from her, delicately.

SAM

(*regarding the knife*)

A cheese knife?

This finally breaks her into hysterical laughter. And with the laughter comes another swell of tears blended in for good measure. Sam carefully places the knife aside onto a table.

RUBY

Oh my God, Sam, are you real? Are you really really real?

Sam brings her into his embrace and kisses her passionately. Finally, the lovers lips part. Ruby lolls there in his arms as if she may faint. Sam holds her tightly.

SAM

What do you think?

Ruby smiles. She leans toward him.

LOUD SOUND OF THE DOOR BUZZER explodes through the apartment, shattering the moment.

RUBY

What the...?

SAM  
It's Judy.

RUBY  
What? How do you know that?

SAM  
*(shrugging)*  
One of the benefits of being dead.  
I know things.

SOUND OF THE DOOR BUZZER AGAIN pierces the room. Ruby goes to the intercom and presses a button.

RUBY  
*(into intercom)*  
Hello?

JUDY (O.S.)  
*(muffled through the intercom)*  
It's me.

Ruby looks back at Sam who is casually leaning against the piano.

RUBY  
*(into intercom)*  
Yeah, what is it?

JUDY (O.S.)  
What the hell do you mean "what is it?" It's me!

RUBY  
*(to Sam)*  
What do I do?

SAM  
Buzz her in.

She hesitates for just a second, then turns back and buzzes her in.

RUBY  
*(focusing on holding down the buzzer, trying to think)*  
You've got to hide.

When she turns back, Sam is gone.

RUBY  
Sam?

Horrified, she moves back into the living room, searching frantically for Sam.

RUBY  
*(desperately)*  
 Sam!

SAM (O.S.)  
*(a distant voice; echoed;  
 ghostly)*  
 Hello!

Ruby rushes down the hall to the bedroom and throws open the door. Sam is lying on the bed with Means-well. Actually, Sam has Means-well in a full bear-hug and is rolling him back and forth over the bed while Means-well attempts wildly to lick Sam's face.

SAM  
*(to Means-well)*  
 Hello, boy! Who's a good boy? Did you miss me? I missed you so much!

When Sam sees Ruby he stops.

RUBY  
 I thought you were gone!

SAM  
 Gone? Oh, baby. I wouldn't do that to you twice. I just had to come say hello to my boy. *(to Means-well)* Who's a big boy? Who got so big and hairy while Daddy was gone?

RUBY  
 Judy is on her way up. We have to hide you!

SAM  
*(back to Ruby)*  
 Why?

Ruby blinks.

RUBY  
 Because you're DEAD!

SAM  
 Oh. Right.

Ruby smacks herself in the forehead and rubs her hands across her face hard.

She takes a deep breath and then looks up at Sam and Means-well. Man and beast stare back at her, both with blank, panting expressions.

RUBY

Fine. I'll take care of it. You two stay in here. I'll get rid of her.

Ruby steps back into the hall, closes the door and leans back against it.

RUBY

*(muttering to herself)*

Back from the grave five minutes and already I want to kill him.

SOUND OF KNOCKING.

INT. FRONT DOOR OF RUBY'S APARTMENT - SECONDS LATER

Ruby opens the door to see Judy standing there with a wary frown on her face.

RUBY

*(overcompensating with cheerfulness)*

Hi!

Judy's frown deepens, her eyes squint.

JUDY

What's going on?

RUBY

Nothing.

Still frowning, Judy holds out a paper bag.

JUDY

I brought General Tso's Chicken.

RUBY

*(taking the bag)*

Great!

Judy stealthily steps into the apartment.

RUBY

*(rushing past her into the kitchen)*

Mmmm! Smells good! I'm starving!

(MORE)

RUBY (cont'd)

I don't know if I have any clean plates so we may just have to eat out of the cartons which is pretty much how I've been living these past few...months. (*Ruby rummages through the pantry.*) But, I do believe I have a bottle of wine somewhere that I haven't sucked dry yet. Aha! (*She plops an enormous bottle of wine down on the counter.*) Magnum!

Beat.

JUDY

(*maternally*)

Are you on dope?

RUBY

What? No!

Judy squints at her, not completely convinced. Ruby begins to open the wine. Judy opens the bag and begins to deal with the take-out containers.

JUDY

Good, because I've got you another date.

RUBY

What, tonight?

JUDY

Of course not.

Sam enters.

SAM

(*to Judy*)

Well that's a relief.

Ruby let's out a shriek and POPS the cork.

RUBY

Aaah!

Judy is oblivious to Sam.

JUDY

(*startled*)

What?

Ruby looks at Judy, then at Sam. Judy looks in Sam's direction.

SAM  
*(to Judy, casually)*  
 Boo.

JUDY  
*(still oblivious)*  
 What? What is it?

Realizing that Judy can't see or hear Sam, Ruby covers.

RUBY  
 I thought I saw something. Out the window.

JUDY  
 What?

RUBY  
 A tree.

JUDY  
 And *that's* the sound you make when you see a tree?

RUBY  
 I wasn't expecting it.

JUDY  
*(indicating the wine)*  
 Pour yourself a short one. *(Ruby dismisses her advice and pours herself a tall one.)* So anyway, listen, after your last date with Ted, I thought you might like to start fresh with some new blood.

SAM  
 Sounds heavenly.

RUBY  
 Look, I don't know.

Ruby pours Judy a glass and places it in front of her.

JUDY  
 Just hear me out.

SAM  
 Yes, love, it can't hurt to hear her out.

Judy finishes with the boxes and hands one to Ruby.

JUDY  
I'm having a party at my place  
tomorrow night. He'll be there. His  
name is Top.

SAM  
*(incredulous)*  
Top?!

RUBY  
Top?

JUDY  
That's not his real name.

RUBY  
It's not?

JUDY  
No.

RUBY  
What's his real name?

SAM  
Wait. This is priceless.

JUDY  
His real name is Christopher, but  
he dropped the "Chris" off the  
front and the "her" of the back and  
that just leaves...Top.

Ruby blinks at Judy. Sam laughs.

SAM  
I told you!

JUDY  
I know, I know. But that's the only  
slightly off thing about him.

SAM  
Oh, I don't know about that, wait  
till you hear what he does for a  
living.

RUBY  
What does he do?

Judy clears her throat.

JUDY  
He's a clown.

Beat.

RUBY  
A clown?

SAM  
Not a regular clown.

JUDY  
*(coming right in over Sam)*  
Not a regular clown.

SAM  
French.

JUDY  
He's a French clown.

RUBY  
He's French?

Sam shakes his head "no."

JUDY  
No. He was trained in the French  
method of clowning. He's not like  
Bozo or Krusty the Clown, he's more  
of a Cirque de Soleil kind of  
clown.

RUBY  
Oh.

SAM  
*(to Judy)*  
Tell her about the eye.

Pause. Of course, Judy can't hear Sam, so Ruby quizzes her.

RUBY  
Is that it?

JUDY  
Yeah.

SAM  
That's not it.

RUBY  
Are you sure?

JUDY

Well, I mean, he has this thing,  
it's not really a big deal,  
but...he has a wandering eye. It's  
not a problem really, it's just  
that when you're talking to him you  
shouldn't look directly at either  
eye, you just sort of focus on the  
bridge of his nose. To be safe.

Ruby and Sam burst out laughing.

JUDY (CONT.)

Go ahead and laugh, but after you  
screwed-the-pooch on that last one  
do you think I'm going to hook you  
up with a keeper? That's like  
wasting one. I figured you could  
use this guy to practice on until  
we get you a real one.

Now Judy starts laughing too.

RUBY

Top, the French trained clown with  
the wandering eye. Sounds great.

JUDY

Hey, you might hit it off, he's a  
drunk too.

Judy turns from her food and holds up her glass to Ruby who  
clinks it with hers. Behind her back, Sam picks up Judy's box  
of General Tso's, pours half of it into her napkin, puts the  
box back, then takes the napkin full of chicken and heads to  
the bedroom. Judy turns back to her food.

JUDY

*(confused)*

What the..? *(She holds up the box.)*  
They gypped us!

INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Sam tosses Means-well a piece of chicken. Means-well catches  
it and swallows almost without chewing.

Sam scruffs Means-well and continues feeding him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Ruby and Judy have finished with the food and Judy is getting ready to leave.

JUDY  
Alright, chica. I'm going home. And I'm going to call you tomorrow and we're going to get to work finding you a man.

RUBY  
Yeah, that'd be great. Hey you know what?

JUDY  
What?

RUBY  
Maybe we should go to a carnival! Find some carnies! What do you think?

JUDY  
Funny.

RUBY  
Or you know what? Mimes...huh? Good! Huh?

JUDY  
Uh huh, yeah that's good. I'll look into that. (*Ruby kisses Judy on the cheek.*) Fuck off.

RUBY  
Love you.

JUDY  
Go to bed. Loser.

Ruby smacks Judy on the ass just before shutting the door. Standing behind the door, impossibly, is Sam.

Beat.

He smiles at her lovingly.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam and Ruby are lying on top of their bed, side by side, looking straight up at the ceiling, the same as they were after their wedding.

SAM  
So what do we do now?

RUBY  
I don't know.

Beat. She takes his hand.

RUBY  
Sam?

SAM  
Yes?

RUBY  
What's it like...out there?

SAM  
It's not what you'd think. It's a lot like life. There are no great answers or anything. At least I didn't find any. Of course I wasn't there for very long. Everyone there is the same as here: everyone is still just trying to figure it all out.

RUBY  
Is it scary out there?

SAM  
No. Not as scary as here, anyway.

RUBY  
Then why'd you come back?

SAM  
I came back for you. To save you. To save us. I came back because my body died, but my love for you didn't. I know I'm supposed to be with you. I don't know why. I don't understand it now anymore than I understood it when I was alive. I just know it's true.

RUBY  
Will you have to go back?

SAM  
Sure. Eventually.

RUBY  
When?

SAM  
Whenever I want.

RUBY  
I don't want you to go out there.

SAM  
I don't want to go out there.

RUBY  
Will you stay here with me?

SAM  
Of course. I'll stay here with you  
as long as it takes. As long as you  
still want me.

RUBY  
I still want you.

SAM  
Good. Because I can help you.

RUBY  
You can help me?

SAM  
Yes.

RUBY  
Good. I think I could use some  
help.

Pause. Ruby and Sam gaze up at the ceiling.

RUBY  
What are we going to do?

SAM  
What are we going to do about what?

RUBY  
About...everyone else?

Sam thinks.

SAM  
Fuck 'em. (*Ruby laughs.*) Really!  
Ruby, look at me. (*She looks at  
him.*) What do you want? What do you  
really want?

RUBY  
I want you.

SAM

And I want you. And here we are.

RUBY

But that's crazy.

SAM

Why?

RUBY

Because...it's not right. I can't be in love with you. You're dead. I have to move on.

SAM

Why?

RUBY

Why?

SAM

Yes, why?

RUBY

Because...

She can't think of a reason.

SAM

Why is it that the only way you can be healthy is to fuck someone else?

RUBY

*(shocked)*

Sam!

SAM

What?

RUBY

Are you...jealous?

SAM

Of course I'm jealous! I'm your husband!

RUBY

You don't want me to move on?

SAM

Hell no! *(Ruby laughs.)* Why would I want that?

RUBY

It doesn't seem right.

SAM

So what are you supposed to do?  
Just get over me? Just like that?  
Get married again? What if that guy  
croaks? What, are we *both* supposed  
to wait for you on the other side?  
And when you get there, how do you  
choose between us? Do we have to  
arm wrestle for you or something?  
(*Ruby laughs harder.*) If I'm your  
soulmate and you go and find  
another soulmate, who gets your  
soul when you die?

RUBY

(*honestly perplexed*)  
I don't know.

Sam takes her hand.

SAM

Ruby, this life is just a fleeting  
moment. I've seen what's on the  
other side. I came back to you  
because I still love you. Because  
you still love me. And I had to  
come back to you and tell  
you...I'll wait for you. But I can  
only do that, if you'll wait for me  
too.

Pause.

RUBY

Oh, Sam. I don't want to wait. (*Sam  
looks as if the wind has been  
knocked out of him.*) No, I don't  
mean that! I mean, I want to be  
with you now.

SAM

I'm here. I'll stay here.

Ruby touches his face.

RUBY

Will you make love to me?

SAM

(*shakes his head*)  
Sorry, sweetie. It's taboo.

RUBY

We can't?

SAM

No, we could. But we shouldn't.

RUBY

Why?

SAM

It's dangerous. I mean, if it were just casual sex, hell we could do it like bunnies all night. There's this Goth club, in Prague. They have these seances. Talk about some freaky ass shit. Oh it's possible to have sex with the dead, sure. But to *make love* to the dead? No. That's too much. That could really damage you.

Ruby takes this in for a moment.

RUBY

So...we have to wait until I'm dead?

SAM

Thems the rules.

RUBY

So why did you come back tonight and stop me?

Sam looks at her gravely.

SAM

If I had let you...finish, then I would have lost you forever. You would have gone on to a place where I could never have found you. I had to stop you.

Ruby turns away from him in shame.

RUBY

So what do we do now?

Sam touches her face and turns her toward him.

SAM

Now we do what we always do: we stay together.

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)  
*(He runs his fingers through her hair. Ruby's eyes close.)* And now...you sleep.

Ruby suddenly allows her exhaustion to surface.

RUBY  
 Mmm...sleep is good. We should sleep.

SAM  
 Not we. Just you.

RUBY  
 Just me?

Sam runs his fingers through her hair which causes her to close her eyes. After a moment she struggles to open them again to look at him. Sam leans in to her.

SAM  
 You know that saying, "I'll sleep when I'm dead?" Totally wrong.

Ruby smiles. Sam kisses her forehead. As she begins to drift off..

FADE TO BLACK.

In the darkness, the SOUND OF DISHES CLINKING.

FADE IN AGAIN.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Ruby wakes. Alone. She blinks and looks around the room. Finally, she gets up, wearing the same clothes as the night before, hair disheveled, and makes her way toward the kitchen, toward the sound of dishes.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The kitchen is completely cleaned and organized in sharp contrast to the night before. Sam is making breakfast. A couple of grocery sacks are on the counter, a cutting board, some small ramekins of herbs and assorted gourmet goodies are placed about: Sam is an excellent cook.

SAM  
 Good morning, Sugar-Lump.

RUBY

Hey.

SAM

I'm making my famous frittata ala funghi. I've got six different kinds of mushrooms, some soft white cheese with a name even I can't pronounce, I've squeezed orange juice and made a half-pot of Gorilla coffee. If madame would care to have a seat at the bar, I shall be your servant.

Ruby sits.

RUBY

What happened to the kitchen?

SAM

I cleaned it. You should try it sometime. I did the whole house overnight.

RUBY

Where'd all this stuff come from?

SAM

Um...this place called "stores."

RUBY

Yes, but you're a--I mean, did they...how did you...?

SAM

I snuck in and out of the food Co-op early this morning.

RUBY

You stole this?

SAM

Uh-uh. Can't do that. Turns out that whole *karma* thing? Totally true. Major issues in the afterlife. No, I took money from your purse and left it on the counter when no one was looking.

Sam slides the frittata onto a plate in front of Ruby who already has a cup of coffee and a glass of O.J.

SAM

Luckily, New Yorkers all live in their own little worlds. No one even noticed two bags of groceries floating down Union Street. Just kidding. I made sure no one saw me.

RUBY

Looks great! Just like I remember.

SAM

*Bon appetite.*

RUBY

You're not having any?

SAM

*(ironically)*

I'm watching my cholesterol.

RUBY

*(realizing)*

Right. Sorry.

Sam begins to clean.

SAM

So I've got our whole day planned. First, breakfast. Then, out to Prospect Park. We take Means-well for a walk around Long Meadow. Then canoeing on the Lake. I'd bring my ukulele but that might look weird.

RUBY

Oh, can't we just stay in and watch movies.

Sam makes his way to the windows and throws open the curtains.

SAM

Absolutely not! You've been holed up in here so long your skin is this icky greenish-blueish-yellowish-disgustingly color. Plus Means-well's hair is falling out. So eat up! I did your laundry too. You've got clean everything. But first, you need to shower. You smell like ass.

RUBY

Sam!

SAM

Better you should hear it from me.

EXT. PROSPECT PARK - DAY

Gorgeous Spring day. The grass glows vibrantly with life. Lovers walk hand in hand. Mothers hold babies in papooses. Dogs run after balls with children chasing after them.

Sam and Ruby stroll along a path canopied with trees, the sunlight flickering through now and again, with Means-well close behind sniffing anything and everything.

RUBY

Does it hurt?

SAM

No. It's more like a release. It actually felt quite good for me.

RUBY

Weren't you scared?

SAM

Terrified. I realized as soon as the fire escape gave way that I was going to die. The certainty of it was absolutely horrifying. But then, after that, about halfway down...it's crazy, but...I got really really pissed.

RUBY

Pissed?

SAM

Hell yeah! I thought, "Goddammit! This is all I need. I totally didn't want to die today and I'm totally going to!"

Ruby laughs hysterically. But of course, since this is New York, nobody pays any attention to her.

SAM

I was thinking, "Man, I had plans today! This is completely unacceptable! I was gonna have a career. I was gonna have a baby. I was gonna have dessert! I made all this dessert that I'm not gonna get to eat!

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)  
 No way Ruby is going to eat it if  
 I'm dead! It's just gonna go to  
 waste!"

As they pass by a man seated on a bench, finally someone notices her. It's Dr. Haynes. Of course, he can't see the ghost of Sam, so he simply watches Ruby pass by as she says out loud, apparently talking and laughing to herself...

RUBY  
 Did your life flash before your  
 eyes?

SAM  
 No.

RUBY  
 Did you see a white light that you  
 had to--

SAM  
 No. Nothing. (*Ruby laughs.*) I was  
 expecting that little midget lady  
 from "Poltergeist" to throw me a  
 tennis ball or something. (*Ruby  
 laughs harder.*) Nothing.

ON DR. HAYNES as Sam, Ruby and Means-well trail off.

EXT. THE LAKE IN PROSPECT PARK - AFTERNOON

The water shimmers in the sunlight, a picturesque scene straight from a postcard. Ruby rows the canoe while Sam pets Means-well.

RUBY  
 You know, I asked you before, but  
 you didn't give me a good answer,  
 so I'm gonna ask you again: what's  
 the afterlife like?

SAM  
 It's not *afterlife*. It's just *more*  
 life. *Different* life.

RUBY  
 What's it like?

SAM  
 I know I was kinda vague before.  
 And I've been trying to think of a  
 good answer for you. But I can't.

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)

I can't really tell you what it's like. All I can tell you is: you don't have to be afraid of it. It's not what you think it is, but it's nothing to fear.

RUBY

Wow, Sam. That's a very unsatisfying answer.

SAM

Sorry.

RUBY

No, I mean it. That's a really sucky answer.

SAM

I know. I know. I wish I had something more for ya.

RUBY

Oh well. I guess I'll find out sooner or later.

SAM

Yup.

RUBY

How come Means-well can see you but other people can't?

SAM

I don't know. That was a pleasant surprise. I guess it's because dogs are superior to humans in every way. (*Ruby giggles.*) It's true.

RUBY

Oh, I know.

Sam scruffs Means-well under the chin.

SAM

By the way, what are we going to do about tonight?

RUBY

Oh shit, I forgot! Judy's stupid party.

SAM

I think we should go.

RUBY

No no no, it's going to be a bunch of smarmy singles standing around drinking and trying to glom onto someone.

SAM

You need to get out more.

RUBY

She only wants me to go so she can hook me up with a date.

SAM

All the more reason.

RUBY

You're kidding.

SAM

No.

RUBY

Are you trying to set up some sort of sex thing where you get to watch or something? Because I'd need a lot of drinks for that.

SAM

Yes. That's exactly what I'm doing. No, I just thought maybe we could get into some mischief.

Ruby's curiosity is peaked.

RUBY

Mischief? What kind of mischief?

Sam smiles devilishly and scruffs Means-well.

INT. JUDY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Judy opens the door to reveal Ruby, alone, holding a bottle of wine.

JUDY

At last, the guest of honor.

RUBY

As soon as I get a good buzz going I'm outta here.

JUDY  
*(ushering her in)*  
 Like Hell you are.

Judy takes the wine, turns and announces Ruby's arrival to the party.

JUDY  
*(with grandiosity)*  
 Ruby, this is everyone. Everyone--  
 and by everyone I mean all the  
 single men in the room--

ON THE PARTY.

About a DOZEN PARTY GUESTS are standing around, holding drinks and *hors d'ouvres* plates, staring at the new arrival. The SINGLE MEN outnumber the SINGLE WOMEN in the room about three to one. Judy has stacked the deck.

JUDY (O.S.)  
 --this is the lovely, the charming,  
 the thoroughly available--

BACK TO Ruby and Judy.

JUDY  
 Ruby. I'm going to go liquor her up  
 for ya, boys, and then I'll trot  
 her on out so we can start the  
 bidding.

Everyone chuckles tensely.

Ruby, mortified, gives a plastic, diplomatic smile.

RUBY  
*(to Judy, under her  
 breath)*  
 Bitch.

JUDY  
*(likewise)*  
 Love you.

INT. JUDY'S PARTY - MOMENTS LATER

ON TOP AND HIS WANDERING EYE.

Judy has introduced Ruby to TOP, the professional clown of the French school. Top is not dressed at all like a clown, but nonetheless, his personality is completely manufactured.

RUBY (O.S.)  
So, Top, Judy tells me you're a clown.

TOP  
Yes, but we prefer the term *vaudevillian*.

Top pronounces the word with a thick French accent making it difficult to understand.

ON SCENE.

RUBY  
(*pronouncing it normally*)  
Oh, a *vaudevillian*.

TOP  
(*gently correcting her*)  
*Vaudevillian*. We're really an entirely different animal from the typical American clown.

RUBY  
Really?

TOP  
*Absolute mont!* Could an American clown do this?

Top takes two olives from Judy's plate and places them in his mouth. He then leans his head back dramatically. A couple of people nearby take notice.

Then he begins to spit each olive out of his mouth, one at a time, juggling them, all the while making loud sucking/popping noises with his lips. After a few seconds, he stops, catches the last olive in his mouth, stands up straight, and swallows them both.

He holds his arms out for applause.

None comes. Just silence. Finally, mercifully, Judy and Ruby applaud lightly.

RUBY  
Wow!

JUDY  
Yup.

TOP  
I usually use ping-pong balls.

JUDY  
Of course.

RUBY  
Right.

Beat.

JUDY  
*(pulling Ruby to freedom)*  
Ruby, I just realized I never  
introduced you to Bill.

RUBY  
*(playing along)*  
Ah, yes, Bill...

Judy has pulled Ruby across the room to where a HANDSOME  
YOUNG MAN is chatting with a rather PLAIN-LOOKING YOUNG MAN.

JUDY  
*(aside to Handsome Young  
Man)*  
Hi. What's your name?

ADAM  
Adam.

JUDY  
*(aside)*  
Adam! Hi. Please pretend your name  
is Bill for a second and that  
you've been dying to meet my friend  
here, Ruby.

Adam glances over their shoulders at Top and immediately gets  
the idea.

ADAM  
*(jumping right in)*  
Ruby! Hello! I'm Bill. Bill  
Williamson. So glad to finally meet  
you.

RUBY  
Bill! Hello at last.

JUDY  
*(aside to Adam, impressed)*  
Well played.

ADAM

Well, after all Judy has told me about you and your many varied interests, how could I be anything but smitten?

JUDY

Oh, I like this one. You're good you.

Judy turns to the Plain Looking Young Man.

JUDY

You, however, need more food. Come with me.

Judy begins to tug him away, but the Young Man resists.

PLAIN LOOKING YOUNG MAN

Actually, I've got a full plate here.

Judy snatches the plate from him.

JUDY

Nonsense. I can pile tons more on there. Come on. Scoot scoot!

She nudges him away toward the kitchen, leaving Adam and Ruby alone. Top gets the hint and moves on. Adam notices.

ADAM

All clear.

RUBY

Thanks.

ADAM

You have to admit, a man with those talents, makes you wonder where else that mouth has been.

RUBY

*(laughing)*

The question is, does it ever work?

ADAM

One look at you and I can't blame the guy for trying.

Beat.

Enter Sam.

SAM  
Wow, he *is* good.

RUBY  
Well, Adam, thank you for saving  
me. And now you're officially off  
the hook.

She makes to leave.

ADAM  
Doesn't the rock usually help?

RUBY  
The rock?

SAM  
On your finger dear.

RUBY  
(remembering her  
engagement ring)  
Oh, the rock.

Adam takes her hand and raises it for a better look.

ADAM  
That's hard to miss.

RUBY  
I suppose it is.

Beat.

ADAM  
Got the band to go with it too.

RUBY  
Yep.

ADAM  
You see what I did there? I used  
the excuse of looking at your rings  
to hold your hand. Clever huh?

SAM  
Very.

ADAM  
Of course, talking about it spoils  
the trick, but it's a cheap trick  
and you weren't really falling for  
it anyway, were you?

SAM  
Were you dear?

RUBY  
*(to Sam)*  
No, I wasn't.

ADAM  
Good. Judy told me you were smart.  
She actually gave you quite a hard  
sell. Tell me, can you actually  
walk on water or was that...?

RUBY  
*(laughing, in spite of  
herself)*  
Judy, in her ambition, will often  
exaggerate.

ADAM  
Don't tell me you haven't actually  
won the Nobel Prize either?

RUBY  
Oh no, that's true.

ADAM  
Good. Congratulations.

RUBY  
Well, it was a few years ago and  
ever since then my work has really  
gone downhill.

ADAM  
Happens to the best.

Sam regards Ruby. Ruby notices that she is flirting.

RUBY  
*(turning off the charm)*  
Well, I should get back to Judy.

ADAM  
No you shouldn't.

SAM  
No you shouldn't, dear, our young  
Romeo knows so much about you and  
yet you know so little about him.

ADAM  
Besides I need you.

SAM

Here we go.

RUBY

Excuse me?

ADAM

You can't see it from here but Top is making obscene gestures toward me using his tongue and a slab of pimento loaf. Don't look. (*Ruby starts to look.*) Don't look!

RUBY

Sorry.

ADAM

Well now you have to stay. You owe me.

RUBY

*Touche.*

ADAM

So I have to tell you I'm sort of hurt that Judy told you nothing about me.

RUBY

Well, she may have, but I don't really listen to her.

ADAM

Ah ha.

RUBY

Why don't you tell me yourself?

ADAM

Okay, let's see. I was born into royalty. My father was the last Prince of Lartania, I'm sure you've heard of it? No? Small island, tiny really. Actually, nonexistent.

RUBY

Because you made it up.

ADAM

Because it sank.

RUBY

Ah.

ADAM  
It happens.

RUBY  
Luckily you survived.

ADAM  
Yes, a narrow escape, but here I am  
in the good old U.S. of A. where  
I've landed firmly on my feet.

RUBY  
And what do you do?

ADAM  
I'm a clown actually.

RUBY  
Really?

ADAM  
It's where Top and I first met.

RUBY  
Right.

ADAM  
Didn't I mention that he and I used  
to be lovers?

RUBY  
(*laughing*)  
No.

ADAM  
Yes, but that's a long story.  
Actually, with Top, it's a *short*  
story. And *that* was the real  
problem, if you know what I mean.

Ruby laughs and Sam, obviously irked, makes a show of  
laughing too.

ADAM  
Let's see, what else don't you know  
about me?

SAM  
Well, there's Asianstreetmeat.com.

RUBY  
(*to Sam: taken aback*)  
Asianstreetmeat.com?

Adam freezes. He has been completely blindsided.

ADAM

What?

SAM

I think we touched a nerve dear.

ADAM

What did you say?

Ruby remembers that Adam can't see or hear Sam.

RUBY

*(shocked, judgemental)*

Um...asian...

SAM

*(cueing her)*

...streetmeat.com.

RUBY

...streetmeat.com.

Adam wavers for a moment, literally teetering back on his heels as if he may fall.

SAM

It's a little website Adam here created documenting his many vacations to the far east and the adventures he has with his young companions. Some of whom are very young.

ADAM

That's what I thought you said.

Adam is drenched in shame, but still manages to maintain what's left of his dignity.

ADAM

How could you know that? It's impossible, how could...?

SAM

He wears a mask in all the videos. Pesky legal issues and all.

ADAM

*(with sudden resignation)*

...but it doesn't really matter, does it?

Ruby is dumbstruck.

SAM  
No, it doesn't.

Adam, defeated, walks away.

From across the room, Judy notices and approaches Ruby.

JUDY  
What the hell was that?

RUBY  
Judith, my darling, I've got a deal  
for you...you keep your clowns and  
your perverts...(Ruby looks to Sam.  
Sam smiles.)...and I'll keep my  
Sam.

Ruby tosses back her drink in one gulp and exits. Judy  
follows her to the doorway.

JUDY  
Ruby wait. Ruby...

But Ruby and Sam are already heading down the stairs. As they  
make their way down the winding steps...

A voice.

DR. HAYNES (V.O.)  
Ruby...Ruby...

INT. DR. HAYNES' OFFICE - DAY

Ruby snaps out of her reverie. She has returned to the couch  
in Dr. Haynes' office.

DR. HAYNES  
Ruby...

RUBY  
Yes. What? Yes. What were we  
talking about?

DR. HAYNES  
When I saw you in the park. We were  
talking about when I saw you in the  
park.

RUBY  
Yes. You saw me the other day.  
Right. Funny.

DR. HAYNES

Funny?

RUBY

Yes. Not funny ha-ha but funny strange.

Pause.

DR. HAYNES

Ruby, when I saw you in the park the other day, you were talking to yourself.

RUBY

I was what?

DR. HAYNES

You were talking to yourself.

RUBY

I was?

DR. HAYNES

Yes. You were quite...actually I'm not sure the phrase "talking to yourself" is accurate. You were...conversing.

RUBY

Conversing?

DR. HAYNES

Yes. I don't know how else to put it. You were not talking to yourself so much as you were talking with...someone who wasn't there.

RUBY

Was I?

DR. HAYNES

Yes.

RUBY

Hmph.

Pause.

DR. HAYNES

Perhaps I am mistaken.

Pause.

RUBY  
No. No you're not.

DR. HAYNES  
So then you remember  
this...conversation?

RUBY  
Yes.

Pause.

DR. HAYNES  
Well then obviously I have to  
ask...who were you talking to?

Pause.

RUBY  
You'll think I'm crazy. Of course,  
you're my shrink, so you're  
supposed to think I'm crazy. A  
little crazy, anyway. But if I tell  
you then you'll think I'm, you  
know, lock-her-up-in-a-padded-cell  
type crazy.

DR. HAYNES  
If you're not going to be honest  
with me there's really no point to  
all this, is there?

Ruby takes a deep breath.

RUBY  
I was talking to Sam.

DR. HAYNES  
I thought so. That's not so crazy.  
Lots of people still feel a  
connection when someone dies and,  
at times, talking to the person as  
if they are there is comforting,  
even healthy.

RUBY  
Yeah. Well, see, that's the thing.  
I wasn't doing that.

DR. HAYNES  
No?

RUBY

No. I was actually talking to Sam.  
He was right there. With me. In the  
park.

Pause.

DR. HAYNES

Sam?

RUBY

Yes.

DR. HAYNES

You could see him?

RUBY

See him. Touch him. Talk to him.

DR. HAYNES

Do you see Sam now?

RUBY

*(appalled)*

No, of course not. This is my  
therapy. He's not allowed in here.

DR. HAYNES

I see.

RUBY

He's in the waiting room.

Beat.

DR. HAYNES

Sam is in the waiting room?

RUBY

Believe me, I know how this sounds.  
But it's the truth.

DR. HAYNES

When did Sam first appear to you?

RUBY

He's not an apparition. He's real.

DR. HAYNES

Okay. Okay...hmmm...Perhaps we  
should ask Sam to join us.

RUBY  
I'd love to, but I'm the only one  
who can see him.

DR. HAYNES  
Okay.

RUBY  
Well, besides Means-well.

DR. HAYNES  
Means-well? Your dog?

RUBY  
Yeah. I'm the only human who can  
see him.

DR. HAYNES  
How do you know that?

RUBY  
Because when Judy came over she  
couldn't see him, and when I took  
him to the party the other night no  
one there could see him...

Pause.

DR. HAYNES  
Ruby, you've been honest with me so  
I've got to be honest with  
you...I've never had a patient tell  
me anything quite like this  
before...

RUBY  
*(somewhat proud)*  
Thanks, doc.

DR. HAYNES  
That wasn't a compliment. Ruby,  
this kind of...situation...is  
extremely delicate. Now, just to be  
clear, you're telling me that you  
routinely see and have  
conversations with your late  
husband, is that correct?

RUBY  
Believe me, it sounds crazy to me  
too, alright? But it's the truth.

DR. HAYNES

I believe you. It's because I believe you that I think we should talk about some of our options here.

RUBY

What do you mean.

DR. HAYNES

Well, for something like this, I think maybe we should consider... some inpatient options.

Sam suddenly appears behind Ruby.

SAM

*(to Ruby)*

I told you he'd lock you up.

RUBY

Sam! What are you doing in here?

Sam sits on the couch next to Ruby.

DR. HAYNES

Is Sam...*with us*.

RUBY

*(to Sam)*

How long have you been here?

SAM

Just since you started talking about me.

RUBY

You were just going to spy on me?

SAM

Relax. I wasn't trying to find out your masturbation secrets but I can't help hearing my name when you say it, so I just peeked in. Good thing too. I'm just in time to save you.

RUBY

Save me?

DR. HAYNES

*(intrigued)*

Save you? Ruby, how can Sam "save you?"

SAM

You know he can have you committed.  
For real. Against your will. And  
there's not much I can do about  
that.

RUBY

*(to Sam)*

I'm not going to be committed.

DR. HAYNES

*(thinking she's talking to  
him)*

Well, now, being committed full  
time for hospitalization is quite  
extreme. We have other inpatient  
options. Of course, what you're  
telling me is also rather extreme.

RUBY

*(to Dr. Haynes)*

What did you say?

SAM

See?

RUBY

Shut up, Sam! Just shut up for a  
minute.

DR. HAYNES

What is Sam saying to you?

RUBY

*(to Dr. Haynes)*

Forget Sam! What did you say? Did  
you say you want to have me  
committed?

DR. HAYNES

No, I didn't say that. Let's cross  
that bridge when we come to it,  
shall we? Let's talk about Sam. Is  
he still...*with us*.

RUBY

He's right here. But let's not talk  
about him for a moment, let's get  
back to that bridge...the one that  
leads to the nut-house. Let's talk  
about how we're not going to be  
crossing that bridge anytime soon,  
alright?

DR. HAYNES

Ruby--

SAM

Ask him where he got that awful  
toupee.

RUBY

*(to Sam)*

Shut up!

DR. HAYNES

*(backing off)*

Alright. Okay.

RUBY

*(to Dr. Haynes)*

No, not you. Sam--

Sam jumps up and reaches for Dr. Haynes' toupee.

SAM

I have to touch the toupee! I can't  
help myself!

Ruby lunges to stop Sam.

RUBY

No! Leave him alone!

Ruby swats Sam's hand away from Dr. Haynes' head at the last second. Dr. Haynes recoils and reaches to shield his head. In doing so, he hits the toupee slightly. It hangs awkwardly to one side.

DR. HAYNES

What are you doing?

Sam laughs loudly at Dr. Haynes who is just now noticing that his hair has fallen sideways.

RUBY

Stop laughing, Sam, that's not  
funny.

SAM

Oh come on, look at him!

Ruby looks.

RUBY

Stop it, it's not--

But she can't finish her sentence because, of course, it *is* funny and, of course, she begins to laugh.

Dr. Haynes is humiliated. With as much dignity as he can muster, he removes his toupee completely.

DR. HAYNES  
*(calm, controlled)*  
 Why did you do that?

Ruby tries to stop laughing, but of course this only makes it worse.

RUBY  
 It wasn't me, it was--*(Sam's laughter makes her laugh too hard to speak.)*

Dr. Haynes looks up at Ruby with genuine pain in his eyes.

DR. HAYNES  
*(quietly)*  
 You have a mean streak in you.

Ruby is startled out of her laughter, slightly.

RUBY  
 What?

DR. HAYNES  
*(still quiet)*  
 You have an incredible capacity to be cruel.

This stops Ruby cold. Sam too.

SAM  
 Wow. That's harsh.

RUBY  
 Me? I'm cruel? You're the one who's talking about having me committed!

DR. HAYNES  
 I don't know if you need to be committed. Maybe. Maybe not. Maybe you're just a drunk.

RUBY  
*(stunned)*  
 What?

DR. HAYNES

*(regaining his composure)*

Maybe your conversations with your dead husband are nothing more than the hallucinations of a common drunk. Maybe you're no more interesting than that.

Ruby takes a step back.

RUBY

Well, if that's the way you feel, Doc, maybe I should just go.

DR. HAYNES

Yes, I believe you should.

RUBY

And maybe I should never come back.

Pause. Dr. Haynes eyes her evenly.

DR. HAYNES

I agree. I would prefer that you not come back.

Ruby is startled, hurt, angry.

RUBY

Well. Alright then. *(sarcastically)* I want to thank you, doctor, for all the help you've given me this past year. *(She advances on him.)* I came to you for help and look at me! Look what an amazing success story I am! One hundred percent cured! You should be very proud! You should sleep well tonight knowing that you're an excellent doctor!

Dr. Haynes' poker face remains perfectly intact. Calmly, he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a package of breath mints.

DR. HAYNES

Have a breath mint, Ruby. You reek of alcohol.

Ruby is cut to the quick. Sam sees this and goes to her.

SAM

Come on, sweetie. Let's go.

Ruby tries to think of a response, but none comes. She turns quickly and leaves. Sam follows her.

EXT. SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby strides furiously down the sidewalk. Sam tries to keep up.

SAM

Do you believe that guy? What a quack! Fuck him!

Ruby stops. So Sam stops.

RUBY

Fuck him? Fuck him? No, Sam fuck you! Why did you do that?

SAM

Oh come on, he had it coming!

RUBY

No, he didn't!

SAM

Yes, he did! Are you kidding me? You saw his true colors in there! What kind of doctor talks to his patients like that?

Ruby storms off down the sidewalk again. Sam follows.

As they continue to argue, from time to time, PASSERSBY can be seen in the background turning and making note of the crazy woman who seems to be shouting at no one.

SAM

He wanted to lock you up in a loony bin!

RUBY

Well maybe that's what I need!

SAM

Baby, come on, you're not crazy.

Ruby stops again. So Sam stops again.

RUBY

Why did you come back?

SAM

What?

RUBY  
Why did you come back?

SAM  
I told you. I came back for you.

RUBY  
Why?

SAM  
Because...you needed me.

RUBY  
I needed you?

SAM  
I had to stop you from killing  
yourself.

RUBY  
Fine. Mission accomplished. I'm  
alive! Hurray! Why are you *still*  
here?

SAM  
Why am I still here?

RUBY  
Yes, Sam, why did you stay?

SAM  
I stayed because I love you.  
Because you love me. Because you  
wanted me to stay. I stayed to help  
you.

Ruby steps close to Sam and looks right in his eyes.

RUBY  
And have you? Have you helped me?

Beat.

Ruby turns and walks down the street again. Sam follows.

SAM  
Ruby--

RUBY  
Don't follow me.

SAM  
Wait--

RUBY  
Get away from me.

SAM  
Ruby!

Ruby stops and turns on him.

RUBY  
BACK OFF! JUST BACK THE FUCK OFF  
AND LET ME BREATHE!

She turns and flees. Sam is frozen. Passersby are frozen.

After a moment, the Passersby move on, but not Sam.

He stays and watches Ruby walk away.

INT. APT. BUILDING DOORWAY - LATER

Row of door buzzers. Ruby pushes one.

RUBY (O.S.)  
So now you know everything.

INT. APT. BUILDING HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby walks down a hallway toward a set of stairs.

RUBY (O.S.)  
That's the secret I've been hiding  
from you. I'm sorry I didn't tell  
you sooner.

INT. APT. BUILDING STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby ascends the stairs.

RUBY (O.S.)  
It's just such an incredible story,  
I didn't know if you'd believe me.  
Do you believe me?

INT. JUDY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

ON JUDY. She stares at Ruby, playing her cards close to the vest. Finally...

JUDY  
Yes. I believe you.

RUBY

Really?

JUDY

Yes. Really.

RUBY

Are you mad at me?

JUDY

Yes, I'm fucking mad at you.

RUBY

I'm sorry--

JUDY

Shut the fuck up. (*Judy leans forward, her angry eyes on Ruby. Ashamed, Ruby averts her gaze.*) Look at me. (*Ruby forces herself to meet Judy's glare.*) Don't you know who I am? After all these years, don't you know that I'm the one you come to with shit like this. I'm always the one you come to. Don't you know that by now? Of course I believe you. Of course I'm with you. I'm always going to be there for you. Through anything. Through everything. You need me: I'm there. You need someone killed? I kill them for you. You're on the run from the cops? I'm coming with you to Costa Rica. You've got a ghost problem? I've got a ghost problem. I've known you longer than Sam's known you. I've loved you longer than Sam's loved you. I knew you first. I loved you first. Don't you ever fucking forget it.

Judy pulls Ruby in hard, hugs her hard, holds her safe. Ruby weeps.

RUBY

Oh, Judy, I'm so scared! I'm so scared and I'm so lost and I'm so exhausted!

JUDY

I know, sweetie, I know.

RUBY

Am I going crazy? Is this really happening? Is this all in my head?

JUDY

No.

RUBY

Are you sure?

JUDY

He told you things you couldn't possibly have known. If he was a figment of your imagination, how could he have told you all those things?

RUBY

That's true, right?

JUDY

Yes. It's true. This is real. Sam is real. This is really happening.

RUBY

How can you be so fucking calm about this? Isn't this blowing your fucking mind?

JUDY

Not really. I've always believed in ghosts. I've just never seen one. I know my father's watching over me. I feel his presence sometimes. People can call me crazy if they want to. Fuck 'em. I know what I know.

RUBY

Yeah. Fuck 'em.

JUDY

Fuck 'em right in the neck. (*Ruby laughs.*) Fuck 'em up their dickhole.

Ruby laughs harder. But it quickly turns to tears again.

RUBY

What am I gonna do?

JUDY

I don't know, sweetie. But maybe that's not the first question you have to ask.

RUBY

No?

JUDY

Maybe the first question you have to ask yourself is this: What do you want? What do you *really* want?

Pause.

RUBY

I don't know what I really want.

Judy takes Ruby's hand, looks directly into her eyes.

JUDY

I think you *do* know.

Ruby stares back.

MUSIC UP. PIANO.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK SLOPE, BROOKLYN - DUSK

Ruby walks down 7th Avenue in Brooklyn.

Shop owners pull down sliding metal window-guards.

Cabs and cars turn on their headlights.

A single candle.

A romantic table for two at a corner bistro. A waiter moves on, lighting the candles on all the other tables.

Union Street. Ruby looks west.

The sun inches down behind the Manhattan skyline.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM, RUBY'S APARTMENT. - EVENING

MUSIC CONTINUES.

Sam is seated at the piano. He continues playing softly.

Means-well sits on the piano bench beside him, as if waiting for his turn.

Ruby enters. Sam stops playing.

Means-well runs to her. Ruby pets him lovingly until he feels sufficiently greeted and wanders off.

Ruby haphazardly drops her keys on the table. Exhausted, she shuffles over and takes Means-well's place on the piano bench next to Sam.

SAM

I'm glad you let me keep my piano.

RUBY

I love your piano.

SAM

Do you remember the first song I ever played for you?

RUBY

*Drunk on the Moon.*

SAM

*Drunk on the Moon.* I wanted to impress you so I serenaded you. I serenaded you with a Tom Waits song. On this piano right here. And what did you say to me?

RUBY

I said "I don't like Tom Waits."

SAM

You said you *hated* Tom Waits.

RUBY

I *do* hate Tom Waits.

SAM

I know. You said so.

RUBY

I hate his voice.

SAM

That's what you said. You said, "He can't sing."

RUBY  
He *can't* sing.

SAM  
But he's got soul.

RUBY  
That's what you said. You said "He  
can't sing but he's got soul."

SAM  
That's right.

RUBY  
And what did I say?

SAM  
You said, "He may have soul but he  
still can't sing."

RUBY  
That's right.

SAM  
And what did I say?

Pause.

RUBY  
*(with difficulty)*  
You said, "Goddammit. Of all the  
women I could have fallen in love  
with, I had to fall in love with  
you."

SAM  
That's right. That was the first  
time either one of us ever used the  
L-word.

Pause.

RUBY  
I need you to make love to me.

SAM  
What?

RUBY  
I need you to make love to me.

SAM  
We can't do that.

RUBY

I know.

SAM

It's too dangerous.

RUBY

I know.

SAM

It could be really bad for you, Ruby. I mean, I'm not a hundred percent sure exactly what would happen, but I know it could be bad. It could destroy you.

RUBY

I know. I know it's a risk. I know what it could do to me. But we have to do it.

SAM

Why?

RUBY

I talked to Judy tonight. She helped me.

SAM

You told Judy about me?

RUBY

Yes.

SAM

Ruby--

RUBY

I've known her longer than I've known you.

SAM

*(treading lightly)*  
That's true.

RUBY

She loved me first.

SAM

*(relenting)*  
Yes. Yes she did. I know we can trust her.

RUBY

Yes we can. She told me that I know what I want. And I realized she's right. I do know what I want. I want you. I just don't know if I can have you.

SAM

You already have me. I'm right here.

RUBY

That's not enough. I want it to be the way it was. I want you back. All of you. That's why I need you to make love to me. I need to know if we can really be together. Or if we're...dead.

Pause.

SAM

Is this a test?

RUBY

Yes. This is a test. This is a test and we have to pass it.

Sam gets up from the bench, retreats.

SAM

I don't think I can do that.

Ruby pursues him.

RUBY

Yes. You can. You have to. You have to do this for me, Sam. I need it. I need to know.

She touches him.

RUBY (CONT.)

Make love to me. I need you to make love to me, Sam.

She pulls him close.

SAM

No.

RUBY

I need you, Sam. Don't you want to make love to me?

SAM

Oh God, yes, of course I do, but--

She kisses him.

RUBY

Then do it. Come on, baby. I need you to do it.

SAM

*(reluctantly pulling away)*  
No, Ruby, no.

RUBY

*(holding on)*  
Yes. I give you permission to do it. Even if it hurts. Even it breaks me. I need it. *We* need it. We need to know.

She begins pulling at his clothes and lustfully seeking his neck with her mouth.

SAM

Oh my God, Ruby, don't make me do this.

Now she knows she has him. She grabs the back of his neck and commands him.

RUBY

Be a man. Be a man and do it. I want it. I need it. I don't care if it kills me. I need you.

He relents.

Ruby pulls Sam to her.

The light in the room dies.

Moonlight through the window turns Sam and Ruby into silhouettes.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Silhouettes. Sam and Ruby. Naked. Bodies moving. Writhing.

Sam is deep inside her. Ruby cries out in pain. Sam tries to pull away. Ruby clings to him. Forces him to continue.

Sam holds her lovingly. Ruby wilts. Her body goes soft and weak. Sam caresses her gently. They move together tenderly. Silhouettes twist again and...

Suddenly Ruby gasps for air. Sam stops. Ruby breathes deeply, desperately. Sam is still. Ruby forces herself onto him. Sam holds back but Ruby is determined, driven.

She overpowers him.

She devours him hungrily, muscle on muscle, clawing at his skin, fighting for breath.

She begins to weep. But still she consumes him. Her body is raw. Her will is relentless.

She ascends. Everything in her body and soul peaks. This is not a climax. This is the horrifying ecstasy of a final crescendo.

She holds there, frozen in that terrible pleasure, tears smearing her face, mouth open. Whole. Broken.

Sam is terrified. He reaches for her.

She breathes and crumbles into him.

He holds her.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam sits on the edge of the bed. Ruby lies facing away from him. Sam turns and places a hand on her.

Ruby begins to weep.

Sam tries to console her, but she sobs harder and deeper.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam is seated, leaning against the headboard, holding Ruby in his arms. He rocks her back and forth.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby is seated, leaning against the headboard, hugging her knees to her chest. Sam is sitting on the floor, watching her.

Ruby stares straight ahead.

Finally, Sam musters up the courage to speak.

SAM

Ruby?

No answer.

SAM (CONT.)

Are you okay?

No answer.

SAM (CONT.)

Talk to me.

RUBY

I'm okay.

Sam exhales. These are the first words she's spoken.

SAM

Ruby, my love, I am so sorry.

RUBY

Don't be. I'm not. (*Pause.*) Now we know.

Pause.

SAM

Now we know what?

No answer.

SAM (CONT.)

What do we know now, Ruby?

Finally, Ruby turns to him. There is only love in her eyes.

RUBY

That what we had is dead. (*Pause.*  
*Sam looks away.*) Don't we?

No answer.

RUBY

Sam. (*He turns to her.*) Now we know  
what we have to do.

SAM

I don't want to go out there.  
(*Pause. Ruby sees fear in his*  
*eyes.*) I've been out there. And  
without you... there's nothing  
there.

For a moment, Ruby almost falters. But she steels her  
resolve.

RUBY

(*tenderly*)

I don't want you to go, but you  
have to. We can't do this anymore.  
We can't pretend it's all okay  
anymore. Not after tonight. After  
tonight, we can't lie to ourselves  
anymore. Now we know what we have  
to do. Don't we?

Pause. Sam accepts the truth.

SAM

Yes. Now we know.

RUBY

I've got to move on, Sam. I've got  
to try. I don't want to. I don't  
even think I can do it. But I must  
try. It's the only way.

SAM

I know. You're right. I hate it but  
I know you're right. (*Pause. Sam*  
*takes Ruby's hand.*) I'll watch over  
you.

RUBY

No. No I can't bear the thought of  
that. I need you to go. And I need  
you to let me go. Completely.

Pause.

SAM  
What will you do?

RUBY  
What do you mean?

SAM  
Will you find someone else?

Pause.

RUBY  
I don't know. Maybe. I don't know.

Pause.

SAM  
I'll wait for you anyway.

RUBY  
No. Don't do that. You can't wait for me. And I can't wait for you. It won't work if we do that. We have to do this for real. We have to let go. We both have to.

Pause.

SAM  
If I let go, I might lose you forever.

RUBY  
Yes. You might. But you still need to do it. (*Sam searches for words, but he knows she's right.*) Come on. Kiss me goodbye and go now. While we're both strong enough.

SAM  
Am I strong enough?

Ruby touches his face one last time.

RUBY  
You're invincible.

SAM  
Are you strong enough?

RUBY  
Yes. I am.

SAM  
Yes. You are.

RUBY  
Kiss me one last time.

Sam kisses Ruby. Neither wants to pull away, but eventually, they both give up.

Sam steps back and looks at her one last time.

SAM  
Goodbye, my love.

RUBY  
Goodbye, my love.

Sam turns and goes. Ruby closes and locks the door behind him.

She turns her back to the door.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Sam stands outside the door for a moment. Then, he turns to the stairwell. He looks at the stairs: one side leads down to the street, one side leads up to the roof. He takes a deep breath, then ascends the steps.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Ruby stands in front of the door for a moment. She looks over her home. Her eyes stop on the piano.

EXT. ROOFTOP OF RUBY'S BROWNSTOWNE BUILDING - SAME TIME

Sam steps out onto the roof. Slowly, he moves to the edge and looks across the East River to the panoramic skyline of Manhattan glimmering in the distance.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Ruby moves to the piano. She runs her hand lovingly along the dark wood. After a moment, she sits on the bench.

Alone.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN AGAIN.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - MORNING

Sunrise over Brooklyn.

Subway. Atlantic Terminal. The N train pulls in. The usual crowd makes its way on and off.

Manhattan. Morning. The city goes to work.

Downtown. A building--glamorous, modern architecture. The home of Watermark Studios.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

A meeting is in progress. About a HALF-DOZEN DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVES are present, including Ruby. Ruby's boss, MR. SCHWARTZ, the Head of Development, is at the head of the table listening to a pitch from the Executives. Ruby is supposed to be paying attention, but instead she stares absently into the middle distance.

EXECUTIVE #1

So it's like a reality show--

EXECUTIVE #2

--and a dog show--

EXECUTIVE #1

--combined!

EXECUTIVE #3

It's like "The Real World", only instead of teenagers, we use dogs!

MR. SCHWARTZ

I hate it. What else you got?

EXECUTIVE #1

*(regrouping quickly)*

Okay okay. How 'bout this? "Fat Camp Island!"

ON RUBY.

The others are merely disembodied voices floating in. Ruby continues to stare out, lost in her own thoughts.

EXECUTIVE #2 (O.S.)

We take a bunch of fat people--

EXECUTIVE #3 (O.S.)

--we dump 'em on an island--

EXECUTIVE #1 (O.S.)  
 --with a limited food supply--

EXECUTIVE #2 (O.S.)  
 --and they have to fight if they  
 want to eat!

EXECUTIVE #3 (O.S.)  
 But like, in teams.

EXECUTIVE #1 (O.S.)  
 Right! And around the island, we  
 hide secret stashes of like, a  
 bunch of ribs, and like, buckets of  
 cookie dough and stuff and--

MR. SCHWARTZ (O.S.)  
 That's good. I like that. We can  
 work in a lot of product placement  
 with that.

EXECUTIVE #1 (O.S.)  
 Oh yeah!

EXECUTIVE #2 (O.S.)  
 I hadn't even thought of that!

EXECUTIVE #3 (O.S.)  
 I thought of that.

MR. SCHWARTZ (O.S.)  
 Ruby, what do you think?

No response from Ruby.

MR. SCHWARTZ (O.S.)  
 Ruby?

Ruby snaps out of it.

BACK TO SCENE.

Back to the whole table now. Everyone is staring at Ruby.

RUBY  
 Yeah?

MR. SCHWARTZ  
 What do you think?

Ruby blinks at him.

RUBY  
 What do I think?

MR. SCHWARTZ  
You're the Associate Producer,  
right?

Ruby nods absently.

MR. SCHWARTZ  
You don't want to be an *Associate*  
Producer your whole life, do you?

Ruby considers this question sincerely. She shakes her head  
"no."

MR. SCHWARTZ  
What do you want?

Ruby blinks at him.

MR. SCHWARTZ  
You want to be a *real* Producer,  
don't you? So step up to the plate,  
and tell me what you think.

Ruby takes a moment to let his challenge sink in. She looks  
around the conference table at all the other Executives.  
Finally, she knows what she wants to say.

She stands.

RUBY  
I think it's a stupid idea.

MR. SCHWARTZ  
What?

RUBY  
I think it's a stupid idea. I think  
it's one of the stupidest ideas  
I've heard in a long, long time.  
And I think it'll make you a lot of  
money. Because there are a lot of  
stupid people out there. This world  
is full of stupid people who will  
watch whatever stupid shit you put  
in front of their stupid faces. And  
I think anyone who wants to be a  
*real* Producer should jump at the  
chance to produce this stupid piece  
of shit. But I don't want that.

Ruby starts to leave.

MR. SCHWARTZ  
Where are you going?

Ruby gets to the door, thinks for a second, then turns to them.

RUBY  
I don't know. But I know I don't  
want this anymore.

She leaves.

Mr. Schwartz is stunned. The Executives look on, confused, waiting for some sign from the boss to tell them how to react.

MR. SCHWARTZ  
Alright, who wants it?

All the executives jump at once.

EXECUTIVE #1  
Me!

EXECUTIVE #2  
I do!

EXECUTIVE #3  
I want it!

EXT. SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby walks in a daze down the street.

MUSIC UP. Something cheery. Liberating.

INT. RUBY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

MUSIC CONTINUES. Ruby enters her front door. She looks around as if waiting for something to happen.

Nothing does.

She goes to the bay windows. She throws open the curtains.

EXT. FOOD CO-OP - LATER

MUSIC CONTINUES. Ruby fills a basket with healthy, organic vegetables.

INT. RUBY'S APARTMENT - LATER

MUSIC CONTINUES. Ruby cooks a meal for herself, singing happily all the while.

INT. RUBY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

MUSIC CONTINUES. Ruby sets a table for herself. She lights a single candle.

She sits down to eat. She looks at the feast. She digs in.

INT. RUBY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

MUSIC CONTINUES. Ruby sits in the bay window looking out on the picture postcard street below. Means-well curls up next to her. She scruffs him playfully.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - LATER

MUSIC CONTINUES. Ruby lays in bed.

She looks over at the empty space beside her.

She lets her gaze linger for a moment, then turns out the light.

MUSIC OUT.

INT. RUBY'S BATHROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ruby clicks on the bathroom light.

She is standing in the bathroom, bathed in the bleached light of a bare bulb. Her face is smudged and weathered by tears. She stares blankly.

She has been here before.

All the freedom she felt has now drained out of her.

Her eyes have lost all hope

She is holding a knife. This time, it's a real knife.

She stands in silence.

SOUND OF A SINGLE DRIP OF WATER echoes faintly off the ceramic tiles.

Ruby looks down at the knife. She listens. No piano music this time. Sam is not here.

She looks up. She sees herself in the mirror. She leans in close. Looks herself dead in the eyes. She listens. Nothing.

Ruby decides.

She turns with deliberate certainty and strides out of the bathroom, through the apartment and into the living room.

She stops in front of the piano. She eyes it with boiling hatred.

Suddenly, she cries out, lunges at the piano, and thrusts the knife deep into the wood. It sticks.

She looks at her wounded victim. She is unsatisfied. She goes to the closet and gets a baseball bat. She returns to the piano, looks it over, surveys it for a good starting point.

Then she moves in for the kill.

Howling like a murderer, Ruby slams the bat into the piano with all her might. The piano splinters. Ruby screams and strikes again. This time she takes out several keys. Again she shrieks, again she strikes.

Over and over again. Wailing, crying, frothing at the mouth, pounding away in wild abandon, sending wood and ivory flying in all directions. Finally, she brings the bat down one last time in violent triumph.

Sam's beloved piano is decimated.

Ruby stands triumphantly over the rubble.

A neighbor, woken by the clamor, shouts from somewhere.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)  
Shut the fuck up!

Ruby turns calmly, goes to the window, lifts it, and shouts out at the Brooklyn night.

RUBY  
FUCK YOU, MOTHERFUCKER!

She steps back from the window. Her blood is up. Her mind is clear. Then...

SOUND OF SOMEONE POUNDING ON HER APARTMENT DOOR.

THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE SCREENPLAY,  
BUT IT IS THE END OF YOUR FREE SAMPLE.

To read the rest of the screenplay and/or to obtain production rights,  
email [rhettmartinez@icloud.com](mailto:rhettmartinez@icloud.com).