

ILLICIT

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. SHAW HOTEL SUITE - MORNING

Morning sun filters through the expansive windows of a high-end hotel suite, casting a warm glow over its lavish yet currently unoccupied splendor. The centerpiece, a pristine king-sized bed, its luxurious linens crisp and undisturbed.

In this sanctuary of opulence, each item is in its rightful place; the air itself seems hushed, reverent to the untouched elegance surrounding it. The silence, a testament to the suite's tranquility, is poised to be broken.

Subtle clicks of a key card interrupt the stillness, heralding a presence at the door. It swings open briskly to reveal STEPHANIE, woman in her early-40s exuding a controlled aura of authority. She speaks into the iPhone at her ear.

STEPHANIE

Hi!

Stephanie's attire, a sharply tailored gray skirt suit, speaks of corporate battlegrounds; her accessories, a sleek purse and a leather laptop case, are the armor and arsenal of a business warrior.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I'm here. Where are you?

Stephanie enters, with a blend of urgency and grace. The door closes with a soft thud, sealing herself within the suite's grandeur, ready to transform the space from a mere showcase of luxury into a stage for the day's unfolding drama.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Hopefully you won't let early opening day Cubs traffic keep us apart much longer.

Stephanie listens.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Yes, I'm wearing the red! See you soon.

Stephanie hangs up.

INT. LUXURY BATHROOM - MORNING

In the mirror of the opulent, luminous bathroom, Stephanie gazes at her reflection, smooths her long dark hair, taming errant strands. She traces her lips with a sweep of lipstick, undoes a blouse button, offers a subtle glimpse of cleavage.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Perched on the bed's edge, Stephanie crosses her smooth legs, red heels clicking together. She twirls a diamond ring on her left hand. A KNOCK interrupts the silence.

INT. SHAW HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Stephanie reaches the suite entrance door. She peers through the peephole, smiles, and opens the door.

STEPHANIE

It's about time you got here.

CUT TO:

BLACK TITLE CARD: "PART ONE - INFIDELITY"

INT. SHAW HOTEL SUITE - MORNING

MICHAEL, suave, handsome, in his early-40s, steps in dressed in a blue suit, sans tie, carrying a leather laptop bag. He shuts the door, sets down his bag, and exchanges a smile with Stephanie before pulling her into a passionate kiss.

Their suit jackets fall to the floor as they move through the suite, lips locked.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael and Stephanie enter the bedroom. Michael removes Stephanie's blouse, a red bra covers her breasts.

MICHAEL

You look so hot in red!

Stephanie strips Michael's dress shirt, a white tank top covers his torso, she removes that also.

They reach the foot of the bed, Stephanie undoes Michael's belt, unzips and unbuttons his pants. She sits on the edge of the bed, lies on her back.

Michael kneels and reaches under Stephanie's skirt. He pulls out small, sexy red panties. He looks at them, then her.

STEPHANIE

I bought those just for you!

Michael grins, raises Stephanie's skirt as he lays on top of her while she spreads her legs, his pants at his knees. Michael thrusts, Stephanie gasps.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

God! This is all I could think about.

Stephanie places her hands on Michael's waist, helps THRUST him deeper inside her.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Yes! Yes!

Michael thrusts harder. Stephanie's moans escalate.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

You're going to make me cum!

Michael grabs the bed headboard to push himself deeper inside Stephanie, her legs spread wider to receive him.

Stephanie places both hands on Michael's backside, pulls him in deeper as she lifts herself off the bed.

MICHAEL

I'm cumming!

Michael does one last deep thrust, he and Stephanie YELL in ecstasy before she lets go and falls flat on her back in the bed. Michael collapses between Stephanie's legs.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Michael and Stephanie, exhausted but satisfied, lie next to each other on top of the bed sheets, parts of clothes still on.

STEPHANIE

I needed that.

MICHAEL

You liked it?

STEPHANIE
Yes! Its been a while.

MICHAEL
For us, or in general?

STEPHANIE
Both.

Silence fills the room while Stephanie weighs her next words.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
What are we doing?

MICHAEL
We were having sex. Now, we're
waiting for round two.

STEPHANIE
I'm referring to this thing we're
doing.

MICHAEL
What's wrong with what we're doing?

STEPHANIE
Everything. We need to make a
decision about us.

MICHAEL
I thought we were getting together
to have fun today.

STEPHANIE
You think this is fun?

MICHAEL
Yes! It's what we agreed to do
while everyone was distracted by
the Cubs' first game of the season.

STEPHANIE
We're hiding in a hotel.

MICHAEL
Those were our conditions.

STEPHANIE
I don't like this. You led me to
believe you didn't either.

Silence takes over the room again, both trying to find their
next words.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
We didn't remove our rings. That
was another condition.

Michael REMOVES a gold wedding band from his finger, places
it on the nightstand on his side of the bed.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Too late.

MICHAEL
Not if we're spending the day in
this fancy room.

Stephanie REMOVES her wedding ring, places it on the
nightstand next to her. She looks at the clothes remaining on
her and Michael's bodies.

STEPHANIE
We didn't get all of our clothes
off this time either.

MICHAEL
You liked it that way!

Stephanie smiles. She and Michael lift the sheets from the
bed then remove the rest of their clothes. They get under the
sheets, concealing their naked bodies.

Michael lies on his back, Stephanie lies on her side facing
him.

STEPHANIE
Have you spoken to her yet?

MICHAEL
No.

STEPHANIE
Why not?

MICHAEL
I'm trying to find the right time.

STEPHANIE
Will there ever be a right time?

MICHAEL
Anytime is going to be the wrong
time, I suppose. Have you had the
conversation?

STEPHANIE
Not yet.

MICHAEL

I'm not surprised since you're still wearing your wedding ring.

STEPHANIE

So are you.

MICHAEL

I'm not the one applying the pressure.

Stephanie takes in Michael's response.

STEPHANIE

I'm going speak to him. Soon.

MICHAEL

My point is, you can't have a reaction to me not having a conversation with my wife that you haven't had with your husband.

STEPHANIE

That's fair. I just don't want to hide anymore.

MICHAEL

We can't simply go on a date.

STEPHANIE

We're both C-levels. I'm sure there is a way to disguise a date to not look like a date.

MICHAEL

Not if you want me to take you to a concert or a movie.

STEPHANIE

That's not what I'm saying. I love you! I want to be with you.

MICHAEL

We have this room all day. Do we need to have this conversation now?

STEPHANIE

Eventually, we do.

Stephanie turns over, back facing Michael.

MICHAEL

Are you serious? You're mad?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

Why did you turn your back to me?

STEPHANIE

I was uncomfortable.

Michael shifts, SPOONS with Stephanie.

MICHAEL

Still uncomfortable?

Stephanie flashes a smile.

STEPHANIE

Can't believe you're missing
opening day to play hooky with me?

MICHAEL

I'm a Cardinals fan. The Cubs can
go to hell. I'd rather be in St.
Louis if not in bed with you.

STEPHANIE

You're so sweet!

Stephanie turns her head slightly, Michael KISSES her cheek.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Even though we're playing hooky, I
have some work to do.

MICHAEL

So do I. Nothing we can't handle
remotely thanks to our wonderful
technology.

STEPHANIE

It better work right. You spent
enough money on it.

MICHAEL

Always finances with you.

STEPHANIE

It's hard work keeping the lights
on at that place! I have attorneys
trying to write everything off and
a technology department that spends
the most money in the firm. And we
still have to pay your salary.

MICHAEL

Ouch!

STEPHANIE

The Chief Technology Officer is
lucky he's spooning me right now.

MICHAEL

You like that spoon.

Stephanie gives a playful slap to Michael's cheek.

STEPHANIE

Maybe a little.

The sheets move as Michael adjusts his lower body closer to
Stephanie.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Maybe a lot!

MICHAEL

I thought so.

Stephanie turns to meet Michael's lips, he leans in for a
kiss.

FADE TO:

BLACK TITLE CARD: "PART TWO - POLITICS"

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Stephanie lies on Michael's chest, listening to his
heartbeat.

MICHAEL

Is the remote on your side?

STEPHANIE

Why? Am I not entertaining enough?

MICHAEL

You are. I just want to watch the
news. The world does not stop just
because we're playing hooky.

Stephanie leaves Michael's chest, reaches onto the night
stand on her side, grabs the remote and gives it to Michael.

STEPHANIE

Men and their remotes.

Michael clicks on the large flat screen television to a news channel.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Of course you'd pick that channel.

MICHAEL
Oh yes. I forgot about your political leanings. Would you like me to change it to a station similar to your voting record?

STEPHANIE
This is fine.

Stephanie lies next to Michael.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
I think there's something to be said about a man's infatuation with the remote control.

MICHAEL
What do you mean?

STEPHANIE
Historically, men are always in charge and if they are not, they fight and wage war to be in charge. I think the remote control is a metaphor about the male psyche.

MICHAEL
I can't say I've ever given that any thought. I just press buttons and go to the channel I want.

STEPHANIE
It does exactly what you want. Men have a need to control; people, devices, everything.

MICHAEL
For a woman that's Republican, that's an awfully feminist stance you're taking.

STEPHANIE
I don't make a habit of putting titles on my gender except that I'm female.

MICHAEL
So, you admit you're a feminist?

STEPHANIE

Democrats don't have a monopoly on feminism.

MICHAEL

Based on the comments by a lot of men running for office in your party, I beg to differ.

STEPHANIE

First of all, I'm a fiscal conservative.

MICHAEL

Hence the reason you're the Chief Financial Officer. You can be a fiscal conservative and a Democrat.

STEPHANIE

That's an oxymoron.

MICHAEL

It's not. How can you align yourself with a party that says the things they do about women?

STEPHANIE

You're attacking my political views? You've always known what I am.

Michael thinks while watching the television.

MICHAEL

I'm not attacking your political views. Truth be told, I'm a fiscal conservative also.

STEPHANIE

I wouldn't know it by the way your IT department spends money.

MICHAEL

Only because the lawyers demand things you can't do on the cheap. I'm a fiscal conservative and I believe in smaller government.

STEPHANIE

Why aren't you a Republican?

MICHAEL

They say far too many offensive things about black people and other minority groups. I can't get behind that.

STEPHANIE

And Democrats don't?

MICHAEL

I didn't say that. However, when I turn on the television and a politician is apologizing for saying something offensive, it's usually a Republican.

STEPHANIE

So, any Republican is a racist?

MICHAEL

No, but it seems to go hand-in-hand. Republicans aren't close to what the party of Lincoln used to be. Until that gets cleaned up, I can't support Republicans.

STEPHANIE

Do you think I'm racist?

MICHAEL

I don't think so.

Stephanie sits up in the bed, agitated.

STEPHANIE

(appalled)

You don't think so?

MICHAEL

I think every white person has some form of prejudice in them about non-white people.

STEPHANIE

So does every other human, regardless of race.

MICHAEL

Okay, let's remove race. I think you're misguided.

STEPHANIE

Wow! How so?

MICHAEL

You use birth control, correct?

STEPHANIE

You already know I do. Is that a round-about way of making sure I'm not tricking you into getting pregnant? Because I'm not. Besides, you always pull out.

MICHAEL

That's not where I'm going. You use birth control courtesy of Harris-Brown's health insurance plan.

STEPHANIE

Okay.

MICHAEL

Don't you think it's hypocritical on your part considering Republicans are fighting to not have health insurance cover birth control? Republican men are your voice on this matter.

Stephanie does not answer.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You have nothing to say about that?

STEPHANIE

What do you want me to say?

MICHAEL

Whatever you want. It's just a discussion.

STEPHANIE

I don't have to agree with everything about the Republican party. Do you agree with everything about the Democrats?

MICHAEL

No, but I'm not going to vote against my own self interests either.

STEPHANIE

That's what you're doing when you vote for a party doing things counter to your beliefs.

MICHAEL

No, it's not. Here's an example. I may not agree with Democrats making it a priority for women to fight on the front lines in combat. At the end of the day, whatever decision is made, it doesn't affect my well being one way or the other.

STEPHANIE

Unless it's your wife, or you have a daughter.

MICHAEL

Whatever is at stake personally.

STEPHANIE

You just choose the lesser of the two evils when voting?

MICHAEL

You don't?

STEPHANIE

Maybe I don't find what my party does evil.

MICHAEL

Says the white woman that benefited more from Affirmative Action than actual minorities.

Stephanie jumps out of bed, stands and POINTS at Michael.

STEPHANIE

I worked my ass off to get to where I am! I didn't benefit from anything.

Michael sits up, RUBS his brown skin.

MICHAEL

I'm sure not having any of this opened some doors a little easier.

STEPHANIE

(livid)
Fuck you!

Stephanie paces angrily before turning back to Michael.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

You wanna go there? Fine! Your party's stance on immigration.

MICHAEL

What about it?

STEPHANIE

You all want open borders and for everyone to come into this country, no questions asked.

MICHAEL

I don't believe that.

STEPHANIE

Your party does.

MICHAEL

Not intellectually speaking.

STEPHANIE

Then how come anytime someone on the right brings up stricter policies for immigration, you all throw a fit and call it racist?

MICHAEL

It is, how you all do it.

STEPHANIE

And how do we do it?

MICHAEL

You want to go door to door, or simply round up people of Hispanic decent and start kicking them out of the country, no questions asked.

STEPHANIE

That's not true. If they have identification, there's nothing to worry about.

MICHAEL

Why don't you all get so worked up about the Irish or the Asians that are in this country illegally?

STEPHANIE

They're not coming here through an open border.

MICHAEL

What difference does that make? They're here illegally and they won't leave!

STEPHANIE

They contribute to our economy.

MICHAEL

Not through taxes, they don't.

STEPHANIE

There is a legal path to citizenship.

MICHAEL

No shit! But I guess only the white -- sorry -- right kind of immigrant gets to take that path.

STEPHANIE

What's interesting is your boy deported more Mexicans than any president in history.

MICHAEL

My boy?

STEPHANIE

Yes. Obama!

MICHAEL

Wow. You just called a black, former president, a boy.

Stephanie thinks for a moment.

STEPHANIE

That's not what I meant!

MICHAEL

Whatever. We can leave out immigration. We can talk about issues in this country alone.

STEPHANIE

If the country is so bad, why do you live in it?

MICHAEL

Too many of my people died working hard to build this country. We don't deserve to be overly policed and shot down like dogs from the back. But we don't need to discuss that issue either. We can continue on the one more personal to you.

STEPHANIE

Like what?

MICHAEL

Republican men who have no clue on the reasons women use birth control. That hurts all women in this country. They want to, and in some cases have, gotten rid of something that affects you directly. Yet those same men approve Viagra being covered by health insurance. How is that fair?

STEPHANIE

Who knew you were such a bleeding heart...

Michael lies down, turns away from Stephanie.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Michael?

MICHAEL

What?

STEPHANIE

Are you mad?

MICHAEL

Why would I be mad?

STEPHANIE

You turned away.

MICHAEL

I was no longer comfortable.

Stephanie crawls back in bed, faces Michael's back.

STEPHANIE

You can't be mad because you can't change my mind.

MICHAEL

I'm not trying to change your mind. I'm trying to get you to see things without the lens of your white privilege.

STEPHANIE

Wow, you're throwing out all of the liberal buzz words.

MICHAEL
Aren't you Catholic?

STEPHANIE
Yes. Why?

MICHAEL
It would explain why you don't give a damn about birth control, even though you still take it.

STEPHANIE
You're getting personal.

MICHAEL
Look at the hypocrisy of your life when it comes to politics and religion.

STEPHANIE
Meaning what?

MICHAEL
You're Catholic, but you take the same birth control your party tries its best to ban, even though Catholic doctrine prohibits the use of it. You're having an affair, but you're a member of the party that promotes family values.

STEPHANIE
You're having an affair too.

MICHAEL
Republicans don't want to prevent child birth through birth control use. They're against abortion. But they also don't want to help mothers via welfare if they have the child and the father splits. You have to choose something, not be against every idea.

Stephanie moves closer to Michael. She kisses him on the shoulder as she puts her arm around him.

STEPHANIE
Can we talk about something else? You're getting worked up off the wrong thing. I prefer you get worked up another way.

Michael turns over to face Stephanie.

MICHAEL
What do you want to talk about?

STEPHANIE
You...

Stephanie KISSES Michael on the lips.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
...and me.

MICHAEL
What about us?

STEPHANIE
Why do you always pull out when you cum?

MICHAEL
Whoah! I was not expecting that.

STEPHANIE
You've never cum inside me. Do you not trust me?

MICHAEL
I do.

STEPHANIE
But not enough to cum inside me.

MICHAEL
I didn't say that.

STEPHANIE
You didn't have to.

Stephanie and Michael stare at each other, silent for several moments.

MICHAEL
With our current situation, I don't want there to be the potential...

STEPHANIE
(interrupting)
I'm not going to get pregnant.

MICHAEL
Okay.

STEPHANIE
And I'm more aware of our situation than you think.

MICHAEL

Meaning?

STEPHANIE

I've thought about what we can both lose if someone finds out about us. We would not have to worry about that if we would just be together.

MICHAEL

It's not that simple.

STEPHANIE

Why not?

MICHAEL

People will talk and assume a lot. They'll be right. And there is a subset at work that will have a problem with our relationship.

STEPHANIE

Why?

MICHAEL

I'm black. You're white. I know how the white men in the office feel about you. Imagine if they knew I was living out their fantasy.

Stephanie sits up in the bed, perked up.

STEPHANIE

How do the men around the office feel about me?

MICHAEL

That's not important.

STEPHANIE

I still want to hear. Tell me.

MICHAEL

It's just locker room talk, as your boy would say.

STEPHANIE

Funny! Come on, I want to know.

MICHAEL

They talk about who in the office they want to sleep with. Your name is at the top of the list.

STEPHANIE

That's a bit of an ego boost!

MICHAEL

Like you didn't already know.

STEPHANIE

I had no idea!

MICHAEL

Sure you didn't. I'm sure the women you talk to at work do the same.

STEPHANIE

Not quite as barbaric, but we have hypotheticals.

MICHAEL

Like what?

STEPHANIE

We imagine what someone would be like in bed.

MICHAEL

Huh. Who's barbaric?

STEPHANIE

We also hypothesize how someone would be as a mate.

MICHAEL

You do?

STEPHANIE

Yes. You say the men would not like if they knew what you were doing.

MICHAEL

The white men would not like it. The brothers, on the other hand -- that would be great conversation.

STEPHANIE

Well, the women would be more encouraging and would want to know details about the sex and other romantic things the guy does.

MICHAEL

The men would be on another man's side too, if the other guy is white and someone they like.

STEPHANIE

Your name comes up a lot among the women.

MICHAEL

Really?

STEPHANIE

Yes. In a good way, but sad at the same time.

MICHAEL

How so?

STEPHANIE

Depends on who you talk to. The female attorneys like you. They would take you to bed.

MICHAEL

That's not so bad.

STEPHANIE

Some of the men too.

MICHAEL

Oh...

STEPHANIE

But, some staff, the non-lawyers, say things like, "Michael isn't like other black people. If he wasn't black I would have sex with him".

MICHAEL

So, you should understand where I'm coming from when I say the white men wouldn't be able to handle it if we were together.

STEPHANIE

We don't live in that type of United States anymore.

MICHAEL

Correct. But the only difference is people can't be overt with their racism these days.

STEPHANIE

The firm champions diversity.

MICHAEL

That's marketing to attract clients. One of us would need to leave the company.

STEPHANIE

That's why I said I'm aware of our situation; not just at work but our home lives as well.

MICHAEL

Yeah?

Stephanie lies down again, facing Michael.

STEPHANIE

I'm not trying to trap you. How would it look if I came up pregnant, even though, as I suspect, my husband is sterile, and the baby is half black?

MICHAEL

He doesn't know you're on birth control?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

You're hiding it from him.

STEPHANIE

You could say that. I got on when we started our thing.

Michael nods, takes in Stephanie's words.

MICHAEL

How long were you trying to get pregnant?

STEPHANIE

Five years.

MICHAEL

How long have you been married?

STEPHANIE

Seven.

MICHAEL

That's how long I've been married. Ever gotten a pregnancy scare?

Stephanie shakes her head, negatively.

STEPHANIE

No false positives, no symptoms. No lost pregnancies. Nothing.

MICHAEL

Diane and...

STEPHANIE

(interrupting)

No names.

MICHAEL

Sorry. We waited three years to get pregnant. I thought it would take a year since she had been on birth control so long. Took three months.

STEPHANIE

It's easier for others.

MICHAEL

Yeah, two sons later.

STEPHANIE

As you can see, I'm not trying to trick or trap you. In spite of the obstacles we face, I want to be with you. Unconditionally.

MICHAEL

There is a lot we have to work out.

STEPHANIE

I know. But we're here now. I want to be in this moment and forget everything else. Just have it be about you and me.

Michael and Stephanie draw closer, KISS passionately.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I want you to finish inside me.

Michael climbs on top of Stephanie, KISSING her as she spreads her legs. Michael enters Stephanie, she releases a intense GASP.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

(moaning)

Michael...

Michael slowly and deeply thrusts into Stephanie as they kiss on the lips.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Oh my god, you're so big!

Michael quickens and deepens his strokes, eliciting a moan of pleasure from Stephanie.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Oh, Michael!

Stephanie hugs Michael around his neck and shoulders as she pulls him closer. He strokes harder.

Stephanie clutches Michael's waist. Their pelvises meet each other's, echoing through the room along with Stephanie's moans. Her legs spread wider.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
I'm cumming!

Michael thrusts hard and deep as he and Stephanie look deep into each other's eyes.

MICHAEL
Oh god!

STEPHANIE
Cum inside me!

Michael holds in place, his body trembles as Stephanie holds his waist tight, in place between her legs.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Yes! Yes! Yes!

Michael GRUNTS with pleasure, collapsing fully between Stephanie's legs.

FADE TO:

BLACK TITLE CARD: "PART THREE - STEREOTYPES"

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Stephanie is cuddled in Michael's arms, content and quite satisfied.

STEPHANIE
That was amazing.

MICHAEL
Glad you liked it.

STEPHANIE
I always like it. The feeling of
you cumming inside me was so
intense. That was the best orgasm
of my life.

MICHAEL
Wow!

STEPHANIE
I can still feel it.

MICHAEL
Good!

STEPHANIE
Did you like it?

MICHAEL
Oh yes! You have a pool down there
that proves it.

Stephanie smiles, kisses Michael on the lips.

STEPHANIE
My body hasn't felt this good in a
long time.

MICHAEL
Nothing like a good fuck from me in
order to fix all that ails you.

STEPHANIE
Is that all it was for you?

MICHAEL
What?

STEPHANIE
A cheap fuck?

MICHAEL
That's not what I said.

STEPHANIE
I just don't like the word "fuck"
when it comes to sex.

MICHAEL

Is it okay to use, "fuck" in another context? Like, "what the fuck are you doing" or, "fuck you".

STEPHANIE

Call me crazy, but I thought we were making love.

MICHAEL

Okay, whatever you want to call it.

STEPHANIE

So, I am just a cheap fuck to you?

MICHAEL

Why do you keep saying, "cheap"? You make it seem like I'm leaving money on the night stand.

STEPHANIE

If you were, how much would you tip?

MICHAEL

I don't know, but there is nothing cheap about you. Stop saying that.

Michael nods at Stephanie to ensure she understands.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

There are different levels of intercourse.

STEPHANIE

(sarcastic)

I never knew. What are they?

MICHAEL

Making love, screwing and fucking.

STEPHANIE

What's the difference?

MICHAEL

Depends on the situation.

STEPHANIE

Enlighten me.

MICHAEL

Fucking is passionate, but visceral and hard.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

When it has been so long two people can't keep their hands off each other, you have to get that release. Whereas making loving is also passionate, but slower, very deep. A nice slow broil until a culmination of the two people's passion.

STEPHANIE

I can see that with those two. What about screwing?

MICHAEL

Screwing is probably the worst kind of sex two people can have.

STEPHANIE

Why is that?

MICHAEL

There are no feelings involved. It's like you're having sex for the sake of doing it. You don't enjoy it, but you don't hate it either. You're going through the motions with no end goal in sight.

STEPHANIE

That's very interesting.

MICHAEL

With fucking or making love, there are some feelings involved. Screwing is the definition of cheap. It's like you need no attraction or feelings for the person. No foreplay. You just lay down and wait for it to be over. What's the fun in that?

Stephanie smiles, kisses Michael.

STEPHANIE

Now that you put it that way, you can fuck me anytime.

MICHAEL

Actually, this second time, we were making love.

Michael smiles as he and Stephanie kiss again.

STEPHANIE

You have such a magnificent cock.

Michael LAUGHS.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

MICHAEL

The word, "cock".

STEPHANIE

What's wrong with the word, "cock"?

MICHAEL

It sounds weird. Who was the person to look at a penis and say, "actually, a more appropriate word is "cock"".

STEPHANIE

As opposed to someone looking at a penis and calling it a "dick"?

MICHAEL

You make a good point. And who decided, "Dick" is short for, "Richard" when "Rich" exists?

STEPHANIE

Would you rather I call your penis a dick?

MICHAEL

You call it whatever gets you wet.

STEPHANIE

You have such a magnificent dick.

Michael smiles, kisses Stephanie.

MICHAEL

"Dick" sounds more direct and common. "Cock" actually sounds more dirty and taboo. Like you should get in trouble for saying it.

STEPHANIE

Did you just compare cock versus dick?

MICHAEL

I sure did! Go ahead, say it.

STEPHANIE
Which one?

MICHAEL
Cock.

STEPHANIE
Cock.

MICHAEL
Say it sexy, like you're about to
do something illicit.

STEPHANIE
(sexy)
I want to feel your cock in my
mouth.

MICHAEL
That is so hot! I'm getting hard
again.

STEPHANIE
I think the opposite. "Dick" sounds
dirty.

MICHAEL
Well, men do, "dick down" a woman
and not, "cock down".

Stephanie LAUGHS.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Maybe it's cultural.

STEPHANIE
Meaning?

MICHAEL
I don't know many black people,
especially women, that use the
word, "cock", only white people.

STEPHANIE
I've never thought about it. I've
heard both.

MICHAEL
Perhaps it's regional, like soda
versus pop.

STEPHANIE
Anyway, I think your cock -- dick
is wonderful.

MICHAEL
Hmm. In what way?

Michael and Stephanie kiss.

STEPHANIE
How big it is!

MICHAEL
How else?

Michael and Stephanie kiss again.

STEPHANIE
The way it fills every inch of my
pussy when you stick it inside.

MICHAEL
You naughty girl using language
like that!

STEPHANIE
You open me up so wide!

Michael and Stephanie kiss more. Deeper.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
There's one thing you haven't done
to me.

MICHAEL
What's that?

STEPHANIE
You've never gone down on me.

MICHAEL
Huh...

STEPHANIE
I've gone down on you, but you've
never returned the favor.

MICHAEL
I hadn't realized it. I didn't know
you were keeping count.

STEPHANIE
I'm not. I just want the joy of
experiencing your mouth on me like
you feel when my mouth is on you.

MICHAEL
That does feel quite nice!

STEPHANIE

If that's not your thing, tell me.
I'll understand.

MICHAEL

I don't have a problem doing it. I
guess I get caught up in the moment
of being with you that I just have
to get inside you. I'll be more
conscious.

STEPHANIE

I'm just making sure it wasn't a
cultural thing and that I wouldn't
be waiting on something that will
never happen.

MICHAEL

When did eating pussy become a
cultural thing?

STEPHANIE

I've heard that black men don't go
down on women.

MICHAEL

Who told you this?

STEPHANIE

No one in particular, just
something I picked up over the
years.

MICHAEL

Do you repeat every stereotype you
hear?

STEPHANIE

Is that considered a stereotype?

MICHAEL

Once you preface it with, "a
cultural thing" it becomes a
stereotype.

STEPHANIE

Do you know any black guys that do?

MICHAEL

I haven't taken a survey.

STEPHANIE

But men talk. How many have said they go down on women, or at least mentioned it?

MICHAEL

You're assuming the men I would be talking to about this are black.

STEPHANIE

Are they?

MICHAEL

Yes.

STEPHANIE

Then answer the question.

MICHAEL

It's probably been mentioned, but I can't say we've consciously made it a topic of discussion.

STEPHANIE

You don't remember?

MICHAEL

No! How many black dudes have you spoken to in order to draw your conclusion?

STEPHANIE

I haven't asked any.

MICHAEL

Then you can't assume it's for cultural reasons that I have not gone down on you.

STEPHANIE

Have you gone down on anyone?

MICHAEL

What type of question is that?

STEPHANIE

A yes or no question.

MICHAEL

You really want to know?

STEPHANIE

Yes! That's why I asked.

MICHAEL

I have.

STEPHANIE

Who?

MICHAEL

Who do you think?

STEPHANIE

Is she the only one?

MICHAEL

No...

STEPHANIE

Are you any good?

MICHAEL

Why do you want me to answer that?

STEPHANIE

(giggling)

I just want to know if you're good at it or not! I need to know if I'm going to enjoy the experience or if I need you to do something else.

MICHAEL

That's like me asking can you suck dick good and if you have references. I don't want to know that! And I wouldn't want you telling me you're known for legendary blow jobs.

STEPHANIE

I didn't ask for references. I'm asking if you are good at going down on women.

MICHAEL

I don't know. You'd have to ask.

STEPHANIE

I don't want references. I want you to tell me.

MICHAEL

I may think one thing, but the women may not agree.

STEPHANIE

You must be somewhat good at it and someone told you. Otherwise, you wouldn't have done it on multiple women.

MICHAEL

I guess you'll have to find out.

STEPHANIE

That's interesting.

MICHAEL

Why? Because it doesn't match up with what you were told about black men?

STEPHANIE

I just thought it was interesting.

MICHAEL

Have you spoken to any black women about this topic?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

Just other white women.

STEPHANIE

Yes.

MICHAEL

So, how do you know what black men do in the bedroom?

STEPHANIE

Some of those white women have dated a black man, here or there.

Michael LAUGHS at Stephanie's statement.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

So, are you any good at it? In your opinion?

MICHAEL

I haven't received any complaints.

STEPHANIE

I want to know for myself.

MICHAEL

You don't take my word for it?

STEPHANIE

What good is taking your word for it if I don't experience it myself? Why should the other women you went down on get to have all of the fun?

Michael smiles as he kisses Stephanie on the lips.

MICHAEL

What other stereotypes about black men, or black people, are you carrying around that I can debunk?

STEPHANIE

Let's see. Black women will not go down on their men.

MICHAEL

That's not accurate.

STEPHANIE

No?

MICHAEL

You want me to elaborate?

STEPHANIE

Spare me the details.

MICHAEL

You make it sound like black people are prudes when it comes to sex! There has to be some black women you can talk to about this stuff.

STEPHANIE

I'm sure you have stereotypes when it comes to white people.

MICHAEL

Everyone has stereotypes. But, that's why you should have a diverse friend circle. You can find out if those stereotypes are true or not.

STEPHANIE

What are some of the stereotypes you've heard about white people?

MICHAEL

Growing up in a black family, most of the stereotypes you hear about white women come from your mother. With the white men, you formulate stereotypes on your own.

STEPHANIE

I'm curious what your mother had to say about white women.

MICHAEL

She feels white women are easy to get into bed.

STEPHANIE

Is that right?

MICHAEL

Well, you are in bed with me right now.

Stephanie playfully slugs Michael.

STEPHANIE

It wasn't easy!

MICHAEL

We had other complications. But no, it was not as easy as my mother said.

STEPHANIE

What else did she say?

MICHAEL

White women do crazy stuff in bed.

STEPHANIE

Really?

MICHAEL

I can attest that a white woman doing crazy stuff in bed is not necessarily a bad thing.

STEPHANIE

I'll show you something crazy...

MICHAEL

I'm sure your family had some outlandish things to say about black people.

STEPHANIE

My father was convinced all black men wanted to rape white women.

MICHAEL

I knew it!

STEPHANIE

I think my mom had a crush on the black guy that delivered our mail.

MICHAEL

Always the mailman. Lucky for your mother, you didn't come out half black.

STEPHANIE

Thank goodness my brother didn't either.

MICHAEL

What would your old man say if he came into this room and saw this black stud giving it to his daughter?

STEPHANIE

If he was alive, he'd probably drop dead.

MICHAEL

Ouch. My bad. I didn't know...

STEPHANIE

It's okay. My mom, however, might try to hop in bed with us.

MICHAEL

Does she look like you?

STEPHANIE

I am her daughter.

MICHAEL

We got room in this bed...

STEPHANIE

Shut up!

Stephanie playfully elbows Michael in the ribs.

MICHAEL

Look at you, living out your mother's fantasy.

STEPHANIE

It's amazing how stereotypes keep us from accomplishing the things we want, or loving who we want to love.

MICHAEL

For sure. While it definitely stings when someone from another race shows their ignorance to your face, it hurts much more if it comes from someone supposedly on your side.

STEPHANIE

What do you mean?

MICHAEL

Black families have internal struggles. Lots of judgements and stereotypes against the people in their family.

STEPHANIE

Really?

MICHAEL

I'm sure white families have it too, but I can't relate to theirs since I'm black. But overall, things coming from family members can leave scars.

STEPHANIE

Like what?

MICHAEL

Growing up, they used to call my family the Cosbys.

STEPHANIE

As in Bill Cosby?

MICHAEL

Yes.

STEPHANIE

We watched the Cosby Show every Thursday. How is that an insult?

MICHAEL

My father's side of the family was very poor. Always asking for a handout.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Everything that can go wrong, went wrong. My father decided that's not how he wanted to live. So, he made sure he didn't. He had a great job. He invested well, was a family man that actually took care of his children. Never had a bill collector call his house. That was seen as atypical for a black family. Calling us the Cosbys was an insult in saying that we cannot identify or understand what "real" black people deal with.

STEPHANIE

Wow!

MICHAEL

They said my sister and I talked white because we could speak proper English.

STEPHANIE

I've never heard of anything like that. Not all white people speak English properly.

MICHAEL

Try telling that to black people that did not grow up as fortunate as I did, and what I'm doing for my children. I always hated when they called us the Cosbys because I knew exactly what they were trying to say, even when I was young.

STEPHANIE

That's more than a stereotype.

MICHAEL

It's a social nihilistic brainwashing.

STEPHANIE

I've never experienced anything like that with my family.

MICHAEL

You wouldn't. Being white is a privilege. You get access to things most black people can't dream of.

Stephanie pulls out of Michael's arms, sits up in bed.

STEPHANIE

I don't like how you said that.

Michael sits up in bed.

MICHAEL

There are things you will never be able to identify with simply because they wouldn't come up in your household. I'm not saying that as an insult. There are things you probably deal with that would never come up in my household. Lets be serious. In your house, have you spoken about the things black men deal with from society?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

Well, I do. You have no idea the ridicule or anger I would face if most black people knew what we were doing.

STEPHANIE

Why ridicule?

MICHAEL

The prevailing stereotype about black men is once they're successful, they go and get a white woman on their arm.

STEPHANIE

Are you serious?

MICHAEL

Absolutely. And not just any white woman. Usually it's a blonde, not so attractive bigger white woman.

STEPHANIE

I'm not blonde.

MICHAEL

You're also not big and unattractive.

STEPHANIE

I didn't know there was this type of thought out there. It's so...

MICHAEL

Racist?

STEPHANIE

Yes!

MICHAEL

Now you understand the other side of the equation. I'm sure you know all about how it is if a white woman gets with a black man, and what other white people's thoughts are on it.

STEPHANIE

Of course. I've heard some awful things. I didn't think black people carried these thoughts so strongly, also.

MICHAEL

Do you understand why?

STEPHANIE

Not fully.

MICHAEL

Black men were hung, beat to death, even castrated for things as simple as just looking at a white woman. So, I understand why black women would have a problem with black men dating white women. You know what white women are called by some black people?

STEPHANIE

What?

MICHAEL

A black man's Kryptonite.

Stephanie LAUGHS.

STEPHANIE

Seriously?

MICHAEL

Yes!

STEPHANIE

I don't believe you. Why?

MICHAEL
Apparently, black men can't say no
to white women.

STEPHANIE
Am I your kryptonite?

MICHAEL
I'm here, aren't I?

STEPHANIE
(sarcastic)
You sure know how to make a woman
feel wanted.

Michael and Stephanie lie down, Michael spoons Stephanie.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Any other stereotypes black people
have about white women?

MICHAEL
Y'all really love pumpkin spice.

STEPHANIE
(playfully)
Shut up!

Michael wets his middle finger and slips it under the sheets,
prompting a moan of pleasure from Stephanie moments later.

MICHAEL
(seductive)
You're more than my weakness.
You're my fantasy woman.

Stephanie moans more as she reaches back for Michael.

STEPHANIE
I love watching you enter me!

MICHAEL
You do?

STEPHANIE
Yes! The contrasts of our skin
merging into one, inside of me...

Michael and Stephanie kiss more. They are interrupted by a
ringing iPhone.

MICHAEL
That's me.

STEPHANIE

Can it wait?

Michael grabs his iPhone off his night stand, looks at it.

MICHAEL

No...

FADE TO:

BLACK TITLE CARD: "PART FOUR - DUTY CALLS"

INT. SHAW HOTEL SUITE - AFTERNOON

Stephanie and Michael, dressed in undergarments, are seated diagonally from each other at a desk in a work area, each with a laptop in front of them. Stephanie wears a red bra and panties, while Michael is in boxer briefs and a tank top.

Michael speaks with a direct tone into his iPhone while looking at his laptop screen.

MICHAEL

You said there was the potential a for work stoppage. He, nor you, said it was critical when I asked, so I don't think it's as critical as you're saying. I can't authorize an outage when neither of you can give me an estimate of how long it will last. You need to research that and get some timeframes. Until then, shutting down the firm on two day's notice and not having attorneys billing is not happening.

Michael hangs up, tosses his phone on the desk.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(frustrated)

These guys are unbelievable!

STEPHANIE

What was that about?

MICHAEL

My engineers want to shutdown the entire firm based off something they read on a message board in order to apply a fix to a hypothetical problem.

STEPHANIE

Nothing wrong with getting out in front of a problem.

MICHAEL

I'm all for preventive maintenance. But, they can't confirm this with any of our vendors, and they've done no research.

STEPHANIE

That doesn't make sense.

MICHAEL

I wish I could get IT people to understand the business side of their jobs.

STEPHANIE

What do you mean?

MICHAEL

They focus too much on the technical aspect of how things should work, or what is the latest and greatest shiny new toy.

STEPHANIE

That is a complaint I've heard around the office about your department.

MICHAEL

It's valid! They worry too much about a system being easy for them to support instead of it being easy for the attorneys to use. If designed correctly, the system can be both.

STEPHANIE

That makes sense.

MICHAEL

From the business side, they need to make sure the tools being delivered enhance an attorney's practice, not drive clients away because using them is too difficult.

STEPHANIE

Do the people in the department not have the education?

MICHAEL

Education wise, they're fine. Their personalities are the problem. Most IT people come off as weird.

STEPHANIE

There is the one guy I told you about that just stands outside my office and doesn't say anything until I happen to look up and see he's there. By that time, I've forgotten what I needed help with.

MICHAEL

We should make them do a Myers-Briggs test as part of the interview process.

STEPHANIE

Those damn liberal HR rules that prevent you from doing that...

Stephanie and Michael look at each other, share a smile over Stephanie's statement.

MICHAEL

What are you missing out on by not being in the office?

STEPHANIE

Awaiting figures from Pete on the Los Angeles thing, if we're still doing it.

MICHAEL

As far as I know, we are.

STEPHANIE

I don't have anything that requires major thought. I hate responding to those type of emails when I'm not in the office. I love my iPhone, but emails with, "Sent from my iPhone. Please pardon the typos" do not seem professional to me.

MICHAEL

Create a custom signature on the phone, put the company logo in it and delete that text. Makes it look like you're in the office sending that email.

STEPHANIE
You'll need to show me how to do
that.

Michael puts his hand out, Stephanie hands him her iPhone.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Don't go through my stuff.

MICHAEL
Not with you sitting here. I'll
just do that behind your back.

STEPHANIE
You're funny.

Michael swipes and presses the iPhone for several seconds.
When done, he hands it back to Stephanie. She looks at it,
nods her head in approval.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Impressive. Thank you.

MICHAEL
I don't get paid a lot of money
just for my looks!

STEPHANIE
(flirting)
Maybe it's for those other customer
service things you do.

MICHAEL
(flirting)
You're the only one at Harris Brown
that knows about those.

Stephanie leans over and kisses Michael. They both return to
looking at their computers.

STEPHANIE
I prefer working away from the
office some days.

MICHAEL
Why is that?

STEPHANIE
I'm more productive. I don't have
people barging into my office and
springing surprises on me.

MICHAEL

I can relate to that. It happens to me anytime some partner's wireless mouse runs out of batteries.

STEPHANIE

It's rewarding to focus intently on a single task, and complete it quick and efficiently.

MICHAEL

Not to pat myself but...

STEPHANIE

You're about to pat yourself on the back?

MICHAEL

All of that money you keep talking about my department spent, that was for you and everyone else in the firm to be as productive as you say you are working from home. That's the reason the firm had record profits during the pandemic. And you can still work from anywhere in the world.

STEPHANIE

Like this fancy hotel?

MICHAEL

Exactly! No need to thank me.

STEPHANIE

Thank you.

MICHAEL

That's all I get?

STEPHANIE

What else do you want?

MICHAEL

What do you think?

STEPHANIE

Are you propositioning me?

MICHAEL

Maybe.

STEPHANIE

You're already getting something from me.

MICHAEL

Maybe there is something else I want.

STEPHANIE

Like what?

MICHAEL

Something I -- we haven't done.

STEPHANIE

What?

Michael pauses several moments, debating internally.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

What is it?

Michael smiles at Stephanie. He looks down where she is sitting, at her backside, then back up to her, smiles and nods.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

(appalled)

Oh my god...

MICHAEL

What?

STEPHANIE

No!

MICHAEL

You don't even know what I'm thinking.

STEPHANIE

Yes, I do! What is with men's infatuation with that?

MICHAEL

I wouldn't say I have an infatuation with it. It's just something new.

STEPHANIE

Are you bored with me already?

MICHAEL

No!

STEPHANIE
Why do you want to do that?

MICHAEL
I've never done it.

STEPHANIE
Not with your wife?

MICHAEL
No one.

STEPHANIE
That's the only reason?

MICHAEL
Isn't the point of having a sexual partner to explore with them?

STEPHANIE
That's not the only reason.

MICHAEL
I'm referring to the sexual side.
Not the emotional connection of being in a relationship.

STEPHANIE
Yes, you explore sexually with your partner. But there are things you wouldn't do with just anyone.

MICHAEL
So, I'm just anyone now?

STEPHANIE
No! Look at it like this. What if I did every sex act with ever person I've been intimate with? How would you feel about that?

MICHAEL
You've done it a few times, haven't you?

STEPHANIE
I didn't say that.

MICHAEL
I admit, I probably would look at you funny. Kind of like when we were talking about providing references.

STEPHANIE

Exactly!

MICHAEL

So, have you done it before?

STEPHANIE

Do you really want me to answer that question?

MICHAEL

I'm asking.

STEPHANIE

No, I have not.

MICHAEL

Never?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

Not even with your husband?

STEPHANIE

No! We've discussed it. We've never done it.

MICHAEL

That's interesting.

STEPHANIE

Why?

MICHAEL

I thought for sure you would have tried it with your husband.

STEPHANIE

Why?

MICHAEL

I mean, you are married, after all.

STEPHANIE

You're married and you say you've never done it with your wife.

MICHAEL

Yeah, but she's black.

STEPHANIE

You think only white women have
anal sex?

MICHAEL

That's not what I said.

STEPHANIE

That sounded exactly like what you
said!

MICHAEL

What I'm saying is white women are
a little more open to trying
something new sexually. Including
something taboo.

STEPHANIE

I'm going to punch you!

MICHAEL

Please don't.

STEPHANIE

This interracial thing between us
isn't taboo enough?

MICHAEL

Not like it used to be.

STEPHANIE

So, you felt comfortable asking me
to do that because I'm white?

MICHAEL

I...

Michael stops, unable able to find words.

STEPHANIE

When we talked about stereotypes
earlier, you said I was wrong about
black women.

MICHAEL

You were wrong on one particular
act. For the most part, black women
are not so quick to do something
taboo or defiling.

STEPHANIE

If it's considered defiling, why
would I -- anyone do it?

MICHAEL

It doesn't mean it is defiling.
Look, forget I said anything.

STEPHANIE

No, I want to talk about this. You
really want to do it, don't you?

MICHAEL

It's a fantasy. You don't always
get to fulfill your fantasies.

STEPHANIE

This is intriguing. Most guys want
to be the first to do something
with a woman.

MICHAEL

You said you've never done it.

STEPHANIE

I haven't.

MICHAEL

Then, I could be your first.

STEPHANIE

What I'm saying is guys want to be
the first to try something with a
woman, but are shocked when she
says no or is hesitant. If she's
never done it before, why would she
simply say, "yes"?

MICHAEL

A man doesn't expect a woman to say
yes readily. It's about knowing she
is willing to try something you
want to do. It's the same
expectations women have for men.

STEPHANIE

That's not the same since anything
a woman suggests sexually, every
man is going to say yes, no
questions asked.

MICHAEL

Not just sexually, but anything.
Like hanging around a woman's
friends he has nothing in common
with. Those are the things women
ask men to do and how that equates
to what men want in the bedroom.

STEPHANIE

I see.

Stephanie and Michael concentrate on their computers. Michael then turns and looks at Stephanie. She looks at him.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

What? You feeling comfortable asking me something else taboo because I'm white?

MICHAEL

No. A confession.

STEPHANIE

What are you confessing to?

MICHAEL

If you were to tell me you've done something I've never tried, it would be a bit of a turn on.

STEPHANIE

Really?

MICHAEL

Yes. I wouldn't want to know the "who" you did it with. That's where the funny looks come from, when a woman tells a man the "who". But knowing that you've done something, without the "who", is a turn on because that means the potential is there for you to do it with me. That's what makes it hot.

STEPHANIE

I never thought of it that way. Are these general things for any woman, or me in particular?

MICHAEL

For me, it's personalized to the woman. To you.

STEPHANIE

How so?

MICHAEL

It's what I imagine myself doing with you. There's a different level of intimacy with each person you've been with.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Some things you feel more comfortable doing with one person than you would with another. I feel with you, I can be uninhibited.

STEPHANIE

Why do you feel this way with me and not your wife?

MICHAEL

You and I have this natural chemistry, a magnetic attraction to each other. The more I talk, the more comfortable I feel talking to you about sexual desires. After I got married, it became a barrier. I could not talk about those things with my wife anymore.

STEPHANIE

She didn't want to?

MICHAEL

I don't know if it was her or my thinking changed. As a man, you think about all these things you want to do sexually. You're not thinking about your wife, but another woman. You expect your wife to be a certain way.

STEPHANIE

What way is that?

MICHAEL

Wholesome, I guess. It's your wife, and if she lets you do those things and she does them too well, you think, "wow, you've had a lot of practice".

STEPHANIE

Wouldn't you want your wife to do those things so you don't have to get them somewhere else?

MICHAEL

That would be ideal.

Michael and Stephanie look into each other's eyes.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Things seem rigid, like there are things that can't be talked about, sex being one of them.

STEPHANIE
Have you tried talking about it with her?

MICHAEL
I don't know how to bring it up.

STEPHANIE
Has she tried talking to you about anything?

MICHAEL
No.

STEPHANIE
If there was ever anything I felt was wrong, I would talk to you about it.

MICHAEL
I know.

Michael turns and stares at his laptop.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I just got an email from Pete. I guess Los Angeles is almost a go.

Stephanie looks at her laptop.

STEPHANIE
Huh, I didn't get the email.

MICHAEL
He only sent it to me.

STEPHANIE
I wonder why.

MICHAEL
(reading)
He wants me to go to Los Angeles to evaluate the other firm's technology infrastructure. I need to see how long it will take to integrate them into our system. Or determine if we need buy brand new stuff, and provide how much either option will cost.

STEPHANIE

It must be close to a done deal if they want you out there.

MICHAEL

Which means after I deliver my findings, that's when you can do your part.

STEPHANIE

When do you leave?

MICHAEL

He wants me there next Tuesday.

STEPHANIE

They're pushing to get this acquisition done before the end of the fiscal year.

MICHAEL

It would be nice if you could find a way to come. However, you're not supposed to know I'm headed out there.

STEPHANIE

I can still find a way. I would pay for a plane ticket out of pocket.

MICHAEL

How would you keep your husband from knowing?

Stephanie flashes a smile at Michael.

STEPHANIE

I have some finances he doesn't know about. I can make the trip happen.

MICHAEL

You can't go into the office with me.

STEPHANIE

I know. I can find ways to keep myself entertained. Or I could prepare for when you get back. It could be something waiting for you that you like, or are really looking forward to.

MICHAEL

Is that right?

Stephanie smiles at Michael as his iPhone RINGS. He grabs it and looks at the screen. It reads, "Diane".

STEPHANIE

(sarcastic)

Nice timing.

Michael answers.

MICHAEL

Hello... My day is fine. How's yours?

Stephanie looks at Michael, then crawls out of her chair and onto her knees in front of him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Do you need me to grab anything on the way home?

Stephanie grabs at Michael's underwear as her head disappears from view. Michael continues talking on the iPhone.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I have to go to Los Angeles Tuesday... Potential acquisition of another law firm.

The top of Stephanie's head slightly comes into view, then goes down again. This continues, rhythmically. Michael's expression changes to a look of intense pleasure. He struggles to contain himself.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Oh god... No. I just realized there will be more travel... Um, no, not sure of their offices. I have not, um uh, had a chance to look up their locations. Will do that shortly. Just got the e-mail a few minutes ago... I'm trying to read and talk to you at the same time... No, I'll be home at my regular time... Yes, I'll pick something up... Whatever you want... I'm fine. Just a little hard. Hard to decipher some of this stuff... Love you too.

Michael hangs up the phone, tosses it on the desk.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Stephanie stands, leans into Michael.

STEPHANIE

(seductive)

Did you like having your cock in my mouth while you were talking to your fucking wife?

MICHAEL

I'd have rather not been talking.

STEPHANIE

What would you rather be doing?

MICHAEL

Fucking you.

Stephanie and Michael kiss.

STEPHANIE

Do you realize how big your cock is?

MICHAEL

Why don't you tell me?

STEPHANIE

It's the biggest one I've ever had. I can't fit it all in my mouth. Do you really think something like that can fit in my tight ass?

MICHAEL

You have me so turned on right now!

STEPHANIE

You didn't answer my question.

MICHAEL

I don't know if it will fit. What do you think?

STEPHANIE

It probably won't, but we can find out for sure in Los Angeles.

MICHAEL

Oh my god!

STEPHANIE

I'm going to give you the ride of
your life.

Stephanie reaches down as she straddles Michael on the chair. She sinks down on him as they moan passionately. Stephanie grabs the back of the chair, rides Michael hard and deep. Michael holds Stephanie's waist, grinding her down deeper on him.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I'm going to cum all on you!

Michael does not speak, instead, he holds Stephanie in place. She grinds down on him as he thrusts up into her.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Oh Michael! Michael! Michael...

Stephanie kisses Michael, he keeps pumping.

MICHAEL

(whispering)

I'm going to cum deep inside you.

STEPHANIE

Yes, baby! Fill me up!

Michael grabs Stephanie's waist firm and squeezes as he explodes with pleasure and satisfaction, Stephanie does the same.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

God, I love you, Michael.

Stephanie and Michael stare deep into each other's eyes as if they are peering into each other's souls.

FADE TO:

BLACK TITLE CARD: "PART FIVE - GOOD BYE...?"

INT. LUXURY BATHROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Michael and Stephanie embrace in the steamy, candlelit ambiance of a spacious jacuzzi. Nestled against Michael's chest, Stephanie's back contours to his form. The air, heavy with steam, blurs the lines between their sweat-glistened skin and the warm bath's embrace.

STEPHANIE

Do you think there's a remote chance anyone knows about us?

MICHAEL

Outside of the executive board, I don't talk to anyone else at work.

STEPHANIE

I don't either.

MICHAEL

No one has seen us out anywhere. We don't interact at work in a way anyone would suspect anything.

STEPHANIE

What about your people looking at our email or text messages?

MICHAEL

Anyone on the executive board has a special trigger on their information that alerts HR and me if anyone not authorized accesses our information.

STEPHANIE

We have that capability?

MICHAEL

Yeah. We had to install it after that idiot Scott got busted for insider trading. He was going into partner mailboxes to learn about that new Google deal.

STEPHANIE

Oh yes. I remember that.

Stephanie and Michael lie in the bathtub, quiet.

MICHAEL

There's not a chance anyone knows about us. We're much too careful.

STEPHANIE

You're sure?

MICHAEL

Oh yeah. Not like some of these idiots at the office.

STEPHANIE
(laughing)
That's mean!

MICHAEL
It's the truth. Do you realize how many people in the firm are doing what we are?

STEPHANIE
I know about Mindy and Alan.

MICHAEL
That's nothing. They're at least trying to keep things a secret.

STEPHANIE
Who else is there?

MICHAEL
Pete our COO.

STEPHANIE
No way!

MICHAEL
Yes. Him and Angela Goff. That's been going on for about six months.

STEPHANIE
Who else?

MICHAEL
You'll love this one. You have the Hunter duo.

STEPHANIE
Glenda and Stephen.

MICHAEL
Yes. You have Stephen's office, an office in between then Glenda's office. You following?

STEPHANIE
So far.

MICHAEL
In between them is Curt Cooper's office. Curt is fucking Glenda.

STEPHANIE
Oh wow! How does Stephen not know?

MICHAEL

He's too busy sniffing cocaine off his desk to have any perception. One of my people walked in on him doing it.

STEPHANIE

No wonder his billables seem weird.

MICHAEL

That's because he docks the billable hours from the associates that work for him and adds them to his bills.

STEPHANIE

That's fraud!

MICHAEL

It gets better.

STEPHANIE

There's more?

MICHAEL

Oh yeah. Glenda is also fucking Trent Johnson.

STEPHANIE

What! I thought Trent was into the church.

MICHAEL

That right wing hypocrisy.

STEPHANIE

(sarcastic)

Funny. How did you figure that one out?

MICHAEL

At last year's partner retreat, Trent was in the room next to mine. On my way back to room after one of the parties, I see Glenda holding on to Trent as they are trying to get into his room. They see me and Glenda says she's just helping Trent get into the room because he had a lot to drink. Ten minutes later I hear her screaming from his room.

STEPHANIE

Stephen didn't notice his wife didn't come back to their hotel room?

MICHAEL

Cocaine's a hell of a drug.

STEPHANIE

Glenda is the last person I would expect to be that way.

MICHAEL

Are you being serious? She wears leather skirts to work. Of course she is.

Stephanie reaches back, pats Michael on his cheek.

STEPHANIE

Anyone else I should know about that's having an affair?

MICHAEL

Those are the more salacious ones I told you about. There are staff members messing around. Which is a deal within itself.

STEPHANIE

Any people on my team that you know about?

MICHAEL

No. For the most part, you finance types stay on the straight and narrow.

STEPHANIE

Suddenly, I feel judged. What about your people?

MICHAEL

Complete department of heathens. Them sleeping with each other is the least of my concerns.

STEPHANIE

It gets worse?

MICHAEL

Discretion is not their strong suit on anything.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

They don't do a good job of keeping their liaisons private. They not only talk about it in the office but they post all types of things on social media.

STEPHANIE

No way! You're on social media?

MICHAEL

Facebook and Instagram.

STEPHANIE

You don't seem like the type to share your life on those type of platforms.

MICHAEL

I'm not. It's easy to post pictures of the kids for friends and family to see.

STEPHANIE

I can't do the social media thing. Seems toxic.

MICHAEL

It is. People will post anything out there without vetting the validity. My people like to friend me on platforms.

STEPHANIE

Why on earth would they do that?

MICHAEL

They think I'm going to post something that gives an indication of what I think about them.

STEPHANIE

You don't do that, do you?

MICHAEL

Hell no! But it is entertaining seeing the things people post.

STEPHANIE

Such as?

MICHAEL

Political stuff that is either not true, or no sane person would let people they work with know they think in some of those ways.

STEPHANIE

That's not good.

MICHAEL

I've had to let go of some people because of that.

STEPHANIE

Oh yeah?

MICHAEL

Some of the things are so extreme, you can't let them be around our workplace.

STEPHANIE

Isn't that violating their freedom of speech?

MICHAEL

No!

STEPHANIE

How so?

MICHAEL

You're violating someone's First Amendment right by throwing them in jail for something they say. Firing someone over something they say is not a violation of that right. Just as you have freedom of speech, so does a company.

STEPHANIE

You think companies have freedom of speech?

MICHAEL

To an extent. Usually in response to something. You, the employee, can express an opinion. The company you work for can exercise their First Amendment right by choosing not to associate with you over your opinion.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

If you say something counter to a company's values, it's within their right to terminate you.

STEPHANIE

That's what some of your people did?

MICHAEL

Yes. They have public profiles that show they work for Harris Brown. The firm can't be associated with someone spouting homophobic ideology when it advertises itself as a champion of diversity and inclusivity.

Stephanie and Michael return to silence while relaxing in the bathtub.

STEPHANIE

It's getting late for us.

MICHAEL

We still have some time to relax.

STEPHANIE

Not much.

MICHAEL

If you come to Los Angeles, we can do this all night.

STEPHANIE

I'd like to do this all night everywhere, not just Los Angeles.

MICHAEL

Yeah. Me too.

Michael's lips gently meet Stephanie's neck, drawing her further into his embrace. Together, they close their eyes, surrendering to the tranquility of the bathtub's embrace.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

Stephanie awakens beneath the sheets, her eyes flickering open to an empty bed. She sits up, searching the room for Michael.

STEPHANIE

Michael?

Shortly after, the sound of a FLUSHING TOILET and running water is heard. Michael, clad in his underwear, emerges from the bathroom and rejoins Stephanie in bed.

MICHAEL

Hey.

STEPHANIE

I thought you left.

MICHAEL

Without saying good-bye? Come on.

Michael strokes Stephanie's hair, kisses her.

STEPHANIE

I've never had a whole day orgasm until today.

MICHAEL

Really?

STEPHANIE

Yes! Each time we had sex, the orgasms got more intense. My body feels so good.

MICHAEL

I'm glad I could oblige.

STEPHANIE

I don't want to leave. I want to spend the rest of the evening and night with you.

MICHAEL

You realize what time it is, correct?

STEPHANIE

Yes. But I don't care.

MICHAEL

We both need to get going soon.

STEPHANIE

Do you love me?

MICHAEL

What?

STEPHANIE

I don't think you've ever said you love me.

MICHAEL

I have strong feelings for you. I care about what happens to you and with us.

STEPHANIE

But do you love me? Because I love you and I've told you as much, even today.

MICHAEL

Where is this coming from?

STEPHANIE

I wanted to discuss this earlier. I want to know where I stand with you before we leave this room.

Mark gathers his thoughts while looking at Stephanie.

MICHAEL

Stephanie, I care for you. I guess you could say I love you.

STEPHANIE

You guess?

MICHAEL

I don't know. I mean, I feel I do. But things are complicated.

STEPHANIE

How?

MICHAEL

I think I love my wife also.

Stephanie looks away from Michael.

STEPHANIE

You have such a beautiful family. Your wife has it all and I envy her. Not just because she has you, but she was able to give you children. I will never experience that joy while I'm with my husband. Why did you have an affair, Michael?

MICHAEL

I don't know. I was attracted to you. Always have been. I never envisioned things would end up here for us.

STEPHANIE

Have you had an affair before?

MICHAEL

No. Have you?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

Why did you have an affair?

STEPHANIE

I'm attracted to you, not just physically, but intellectually. You're everything my husband is not. Adventuresome, funny, assertive. Do you remember how this all started?

MICHAEL

It just sort of happened. I don't remember one specific event that led us here today.

STEPHANIE

I remember. You finally noticed me -
- at our firm holiday party. There was no one around while I was getting a drink. You came up and said something simple. "Stephanie, Happy Holidays. You look nice tonight". That's how it started, for me.

Stephanie turns her head to look at Michael.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I looked at you differently after that. I had not received such a genuine compliment in years, definitely not from my husband. I guess I pursued you. It was subtle at first. Asking you to lunch more often to discuss budget for IT. Later, those conversations strayed into our personal lives.

(MORE)

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I remember thinking one day I wanted to be in your wife's position with you. That's when I decided I didn't want to be with my husband anymore. I wanted to be with you.

Silence for a few moments.

MICHAEL

Stephanie, I do love you.

STEPHANIE

And you love your wife, Michael. It's not possible to love two people equally, at the same time.

MICHAEL

But what about you?

STEPHANIE

I've told you how I feel.

MICHAEL

There has to be more to the story of you wanting to leave your husband for me.

STEPHANIE

I love you, I've made no secret of that. I feel you are better for me than him. Just like I feel I am better for you than your wife.

MICHAEL

Men and women have affairs for different reasons.

STEPHANIE

What do you think they are?

MICHAEL

Men cheat to fulfill a sexual need. To get something he doesn't currently have. If a man wants a woman, he doesn't have to love her. He just wants to have sex with her for the sake of doing it. Women cheat because there is something going on at home where they want to leave that situation for the person they are cheating with.

STEPHANIE

You're saying you're in this room with me now and all those other times just to get something sexually you don't get at home?

MICHAEL

That's not what I'm saying about myself.

STEPHANIE

Then what are you talking about?

MICHAEL

I was speaking in general terms.

STEPHANIE

In general terms, you're only here to have sex with me. I've wasted my time pouring my heart out to you.

MICHAEL

Answer my question. Why are you having this affair?

STEPHANIE

You really want to know about my husband? Why I want to leave him?

MICHAEL

Yes.

STEPHANIE

No! One of the conditions of this affair was we would not discuss each other's spouses.

MICHAEL

Apparently, we need to.

Stephanie glares at Michael, searching for words.

STEPHANIE

My husband is a stock broker. He works constantly. He no longer notices me. This is has been an issue the past four years of our marriage. He does not call me during the day, so I don't call him. We don't e-mail. Our marriage has become two ships passing in the night.

(MORE)

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

He blames me because we haven't gotten pregnant, even though he is where the problem lies. He checked out of our marriage in favor of his work. He may be having an affair, but honestly, I don't care. It would make me feel better if he were.

MICHAEL

Why? So you can feel better about our affair?

STEPHANIE

Maybe. I'd have the satisfaction of knowing he had the affair first and it wasn't me that destroyed our marriage. It would be his fault that he decided to no longer treat me as his wife. I want everything to be on him! If he feels horrible things about me, why doesn't he just let me go?

Stephanie cries. Michael comforts her.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I didn't intend to have an affair. But you showed me something I haven't not had in years. Attention. This is my fault because I was desperate for something I couldn't get at home.

MICHAEL

It takes two people to have an affair. I was a willing participant. This is not all on you.

STEPHANIE

Why did you have an affair?

MICHAEL

I've asked myself that plenty of times, I don't have an answer. I'm somewhat happily married. I love my wife. I can't wait to see my boys when I get home, I love them. They look so much like me. My wife has not done anything to warrant me cheating on her. I believe in the karma principle. It would serve me right if she were cheating on me.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

The truth is I'd lose it if she were. In some ways, I feel justified having an affair because there are more women than men on earth for a reason. Maybe I wasn't supposed to be with just one woman.

STEPHANIE

You're not serious, are you?

MICHAEL

I am. I work hard. I make it so my wife has to do nothing but take care of our boys, which is a very important job. What I do behind her back, as long as I don't bring it into our home, shouldn't matter.

STEPHANIE

Have you had an affair before?

MICHAEL

No.

STEPHANIE

Are you sure?

MICHAEL

Don't you think I would know?

STEPHANIE

You answered as if you're entitled to have an affair because you're the primary breadwinner.

MICHAEL

I don't have that sense of entitlement.

STEPHANIE

You sound like you do! You justified it.

MICHAEL

Anyone that's ever had an affair justifies it. You did.

STEPHANIE

Do you hear yourself?

MICHAEL

Including the time we dated, I've been having sex with her exclusively for ten years.

STEPHANIE
She's your wife!

MICHAEL
Are you judging me?

STEPHANIE
No!

MICHAEL
Are you sure? Because it sounds
like you are.

STEPHANIE
I'm simply trying to get inside
your head to figure out why you're
here.

MICHAEL
You don't think a man can get
bored?

STEPHANIE
What?

MICHAEL
The same woman. Same pussy. Same
breasts. Same lips. Same routine.
Get on top, now your turn. Suck
this. Same things said in bed. Ten
years. The same woman. So mundane.

STEPHANIE
Are you absolutely sure you love
your wife?

MICHAEL
That has nothing to do with what
I'm talking about. I'm a man and I
find women desirable. You're
desirable. But like I said, men and
women have affairs for different
reasons. Women have affairs because
they feel their current
relationship can't be salvaged.
They feel the new man is the answer
to all of their problems.

STEPHANIE
Maybe it's true. You don't think
men do the same?

MICHAEL

A lot of times, men have affairs because a woman hit a particular level on their attraction meter.

STEPHANIE

What the hell are you talking about?

MICHAEL

When wives catch their husbands in an affair, they always ask if the other woman is prettier than she is. It's not about being prettier. Most times she's not prettier than the wife.

STEPHANIE

I don't know whether I should be insulted or not.

MICHAEL

I'm not talking about us right now. Men can cheat because the other woman hits his sexual attraction meter and he had to have her. He has no plans of being with her or leaving his wife for her. She's just a person that he wanted to have sex with because he was sexually attracted to her.

STEPHANIE

A few moment ago, you were comforting. But I listen to you now and it's like you're not the same person. You make having an affair sound cold and heartless.

MICHAEL

I'm speaking general facts about the process of an affair.

STEPHANIE

I don't want to talk about generalities. I want to talk about us!

MICHAEL

Okay, in relation to us, you say you want to be with me. You'd leave your husband and I'd leave my wife. You're envious of what she has.

STEPHANIE

Now, I'm not so sure.

MICHAEL

Good! Lets be honest, if we leave our spouses, what's to stop me from cheating on you with someone else? Or you doing the same to me?

Stephanie turns her body away from Michael.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm sure you haven't thought about this. You can get a divorce from your husband, split everything 50/50 and you two can walk away. I have a wife that does not work and two boys. Do you know how much that's going to cost in a divorce? Alimony, child support; spousal support since she's used to a particular lifestyle. You think you could deal with me shelling out all of that money and barely having anything left to give you?

STEPHANIE

I've never asked you for anything financially.

MICHAEL

That doesn't matter. You'd have to support both of us because I would have close to nothing. How would that look to my boys? How would that look to my family or my wife's family?

STEPHANIE

How it looks to your wife's family shouldn't matter.

MICHAEL

Here's one for you. How would that look to society? Another successful black man left his black wife for a white woman. Now, that white woman has to pay for everything because he can't afford anything since he ruined his marriage.

Tearful and upset, Stephanie abruptly shoves Michael, causing him to tumble off the bed and land seated on the floor.

STEPHANIE

I have thought about what it would cost for you to get a divorce, tangible and intangible! I researched it! I know how much you make and combined with my salary, we would have more than enough to get by, even with what you would pay out in a divorce. I'm committed to being with you. You've led me on!

MICHAEL

I did not!

STEPHANIE

You have never considered being with me! That's why you never wanted to discuss this!

MICHAEL

Stephanie, I care about...

STEPHANIE

(interrupting)

You don't! I was only a hit on your attraction meter. I'm not prettier than your wife!

MICHAEL

I didn't say that about you, or us. I was speaking in generalities.

STEPHANIE

Shut up about generalities! I can read between the lines.

MICHAEL

There are no lines to read between with us!

Michael stands up, goes to the area with his clothes are.

STEPHANIE

Do you think about me when we're not together?

MICHAEL

Yes!

STEPHANIE

Is it in conjunction with thinking about how wrong you feel you're doing your wife?

MICHAEL

That's not true. I know what I said sounds heartless, but I care about you! I know what you want out of a partner. I know I can provide those things for you. But I'm married. You're married. Neither of us has done anything to resolve that.

STEPHANIE

Michael, I'm going to ask you again. Have you done this before?

MICHAEL

Done what?

STEPHANIE

Have an affair!

MICHAEL

I've never had an affair! This is the first time. That's why this is so hard! Why do you keep asking that?

STEPHANIE

I want to believe I'm more than another level on your sexual attraction meter.

MICHAEL

You are more!

STEPHANIE

Have you ever had sex with someone you work with?

MICHAEL

No. Have you?

STEPHANIE

No.

MICHAEL

You ever been close?

STEPHANIE

I can't say that I have. Before I was married, I spent time with some co-workers, nothing serious. I didn't have sex with them. You ever been close?

MICHAEL

One time, a lady sent me an instant message on our company network. She wanted me to come over. I told her no. I had plans for my career. I knew it was possible I could be her supervisor one day. Years later, I'm the CTO and she's still on the help desk.

STEPHANIE

What about other times?

MICHAEL

Years ago I did some things.
Nothing in recent memory.

Michael and Stephanie are silent for several moments. Michael puts on his shirt.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Stephanie, you're not just a thing to me. My situation is not as bad as yours. That makes this difficult. I know you doubt it right now, but I do care for you. A lot.

STEPHANIE

Do you ever feel guilty?

MICHAEL

All the time. For my wife, for you. I feel I'm cheating on you too. I'm depriving both of you of what you need and both deserve.

STEPHANIE

I feel guilty too. I know I'm the homewrecker. I don't know your wife, but I hate her because she has you. But I don't feel guilty about that. I feel guilty because of what it would do to your sons if you were to break up the home.

MICHAEL

I love my sons.

Michael puts on his pants and shoes.

STEPHANIE

What did this affair mean for you?

MICHAEL

What?

STEPHANIE

Was it symbolic of anything?

Michael thinks for a few moments.

MICHAEL

It allows me to escape my life at work and home. We have good conversations. Conversations I can't have, or no need to have at home or in the office. This was symbolic of a relationship I've always wanted with a significant other. Was this symbolic for you?

STEPHANIE

Symbolic of the marriage I've always wanted in both the man and the sexual satisfaction. It's the perfect relationship, physically and intellectually, during the time we spend with each other. Today was the longest we've spent in each other's presence. I don't want it do end.

A DING comes from Michael's iPhone. He looks at it.

MICHAEL

I need to go.

STEPHANIE

I know.

MICHAEL

What do you want to do? Is this the end?

STEPHANIE

I don't know if we can end things cold turkey since we're going to see each other in the office. We're in a meeting together tomorrow. This won't be easy for me.

MICHAEL

I know.

STEPHANIE

What do you want to do?

MICHAEL

The selfish part of me wants to continue this. I know it's wrong, but I like what we're doing.

Michael sits on the bed, in front of Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

I don't want to go back to him.

MICHAEL

You don't have to.

STEPHANIE

He doesn't love me.

MICHAEL

I know he doesn't.

STEPHANIE

And I don't love him.

MICHAEL

I know you don't.

Michael wipes the tears from Stephanie's face.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Regardless of what happens with us, you don't have to go back to him. Especially if he makes you feel this way. I'll help you and be there for you anyway I can, regardless of what you decide. You don't have to be lonely in a house while there is someone present.

STEPHANIE

Thank you.

Michael's iPhone DINGS again. Stephanie grimaces.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

You need to go.

Michael and Stephanie share a passionate kiss before Michael rises to don his suit jacket and collect his leather laptop bag.

MICHAEL

Will I see you in Los Angeles?

Stephanie looks at Michael, smiles. He nods, walks toward the door exiting the suite.

STEPHANIE

Michael?

Michael looks back at Stephanie.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

If you leave her, you won't regret
it. I'll make sure it won't be as
hard as you think. I can be
everything she's not, for you.

Michael and Stephanie exchange glances from across the room. With an affirmative nod and a smile to Stephanie, Michael turns, opens the door, and exits the suite.

For a moment, Stephanie's smile lingers, then shifts to sadness. She wraps herself tightly in the sheets, seeking comfort.

Her iPhone rings, displaying "Matt" on the screen.

As a knock sounds at the suite door, Stephanie, distracted from her phone, looks up with a hopeful expression.

FADE OUT.