OVER BLACK

ALFIE'S VOICE
You're quite lucky, you know...

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

CAMERA EXPLORES the room... Modest, messy and male. Just the basics. No photos of family or friends. Only telltale signs of a single, untidy man living alone. An ad, torn from a magazine, picturing a classic Morgan sports car is taped to the refrigerator with Want It scrawled in black marker.

A stack of books - *French For Fun, Dress For Success For Less - A Guide To New York's Designer Discount Warehouses.*

A clock on the night-stand tells us it's half past two.

ALFIE'S VOICE
-- I rarely allow anyone into my flat.

TRACK IN ON - **ALFIE**

Sleeping, with a wry smile on his face. A beat, then... One eye POPS OPEN and Alfie GLANCES CONSPIRATORIALLY at CAMERA. This is something he will do throughout our story... speak in intimate asides to the audience, as though he's talking to a friend. Other characters within the scene will be oblivious.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
I know... humble digs, not exactly what you'd call a 'panty peeler'...

He pulls himself out of bed, wearing only striped silk pajama bottoms, drops to the floor.

ALFIE (cont'd)
Know what I mean?

With that, he begins a quick series of crunches.

Alfie is an Englishman in his early thirties with tousled good-looks and a healthy dose of cockiness. He lives in perpetual motion and has the youthful air of a guy who's managed to escape the normal adult responsibilities and emotions.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA, while doing crunches)
-- but it works for me. To be honest, I rarely spend a night in my own bed anyway...

Another five or six crunches.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
There we go. Ten crunches is all I need. Try not to hate me for it.

Alfie continues talking TO CAMERA as he hops up and gathers a handful of vitamins from various bottles and pours some water.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Now with women, generally speaking, if a guy's a good provider and a nice chap, six-pack abs aren't really a deal-breaker. In fact, if he's in the right tax bracket, a bloke can be bald, wear a truss, have seizures - and still get shagged.

Alfie swallows a mouthful of vitamins with water, then grabs a pack of Dunhills.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(confidentially)
On the flip-side, even though the politically-correct bloke sitting next to you will deny it - for us men, when it comes to women, it's all about the F.B.B. - face, boobs, bottom. I mean, sure, we'd like a cool gig tossed in for good measure, like say... multi-millionaire hotel chain heiress. But above all else - 'looks rule'.

He lights his cigarette and gives CAMERA a sly shrug.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Just being honest.

INT. TINY BATHROOM

Alfie turns on the shower, cigarette dangling from his lips, unties his drawstrings, looks up, remembering THE CAMERA.

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ALFIE (cont'd)
Give us a bit of privacy now.
(a beat)
No, really, turn away.

He SHOOS US AWAY, then slips out of his pajama bottoms and into the shower, pulling the shower door closed behind him.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
All right, you can look back. Hang on, I'll be quick.

Through OPAQUE GLASS, we watch Alfie lathering up.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(shouting over the shower)
I know you're expecting the opening credits now but we'll save you the thrill of knowing the Key Grip's name 'til the end of the flick.

He peeks his SOAPY HEAD out, looks about fifteen...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
So, while I lather up, why don't you settle in with the popcorn you overpaid for and we can begin.

Alfie ducks back into the shower and begins singing a garbled, almost unrecognizable version of *I Gotta Be Me*.

A CLOSET DOOR SLIDES OPEN

ALFIE (O.S.)
It's been said that clothes speak the international language...

REVEALING Alfie's small but fastidiously organized and supremely fashionable WARDROBE. Alfie sorts through the choices, while glancing over his shoulder AT CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
And I admit I am a bit of a fashion whore. But, I believe, to be satorically-correct, a man requires only a few well-chosen basics.

A SERIES OF RAPID-FIRE CUTS

Alfie, posing as if for a *GQ* layout, wearing a quick succession of STYLISH WARDROBE COMBOS. He models these outfits in a slightly rumpled, hair tousled sort of way, giving the impression of never trying too hard.

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BACK TO SCENE

He selects a pin-striped suit from the closet.

ALFIE
Unfortunately, today I'm off to work so we've got to tone it down a bit.
(holds up suit)
Gucci - End of Summer Sale. Very understated.
(takes out a very pink shirt)
But I can easily spice it up. When you ooze masculinity, as some of us do, you have no reason to fear pink.

He holds up the shirt and suit together.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Smashing.

A little smile as he picks up a bottle of *Acqua Di Gio* cologne.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Now, most men overdo it in the cologne department. Americans practically spray it on with a crop duster.
(dabs his wrists)
My rule: Nothing above the neck.

Alfie then splashes a bit on his fingers and drops his HAND BELOW FRAME.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Though I do believe in a quick splash on the old Eiffel Tower.
(winks)
Never know where the day might take you.

INT. APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - MINUTES LATER

Alfie, dressed smartly in his suit and a carefully chosen tie, adjusts his cuff-links and starts to exit, snaps his fingers, remembering something.

ALFIE
Almost forgot--

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He crosses to the dresser and tears a page off a *WORD FOR THE DAY CALENDAR*.

ALFIE (cont'd)
New word for the day:
(reading calendar)
Os-ten-ta-tious. "*The attempt to attract attention to one's self.*"

He looks in the mirror.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Who? Me?

INT. HALLWAY

Alfie steps out, locks his apartment door, TURNS to CAMERA:

ALFIE
Oh, blimey, I'm rude, I forgot to introduce myself. I'm--

A WOMAN'S VOICE
-- Alfie!

FREEZE FRAME. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
There you go.

ACTION RESUMES and Alfie turns TO CAMERA with a big grin.

ALFIE
Alfie.

He turns to see LU SCHNITMAN, an overweight woman in her sixties with pendulous breasts and a coquettish grin.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
Were you the little elf who left those mocha bon-bons on my doorstep?

Alfie glances at CAMERA, shrugs.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
They were passing out free samples in the Village.
(to MRS. SCHNITMAN)
Perhaps you have a secret admirer, Mrs. Schnitman.

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MRS. SCHNITMAN
What do I have to do to get you to call me Lu?
(then)
Alfie, you're a doll, but I'm supposed to be on a diet.

ALFIE
You? A diet?

He crosses to her and leans in with a husky whisper.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I don't mean to be forward, Lu, but don't you know a full-figured gal like yourself is every man's secret fantasy?

As Mrs. Schnitman melts, Alfie LOOKS UP to CAMERA:

ALFIE (CONT'D)
All right, she's a tub of lard, but the ship's already sailed, so why not let her feel good about herself? Know what I mean?

He starts out, turns back to Mrs. Schnitman.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Oh, Lu, don't feel you have to, but the key's under the mat if you're up for a bit of your fabulous dust-busting.

The look on her face tells us she can't wait to grab that Dirt Devil...

And with that, MUSIC BEGINS: Sting singing, *Englishman In New York*.

EXT. SOHO STREET - DAY (MUSIC OVER)

Alfie expertly weaves through the gridlock on his mint-condition, vintage VESPA, all the while SPEAKING to CAMERA. Alfie smiles at every SEXY WOMAN he passes. Most smile back.

ALFIE
I migrated to the States a few years back 'cause I had a mate who knew a bloke who crossed the pond, snagged a job and in less than two years wound up owning the joint.

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A STUNNER gives him the once-over.

ALFIE (cont'd)
But, more importantly, I always heard the most beautiful women in the world reside in Manhattan. And when it comes to shagging birds, it's all about location, location, location.
(gestures to PASSING WOMEN)
And just look around - every one unique and special, like snowflakes.
(breathes in the city)
God, I love this city. And, I mean, with such a *plethora* - calendar word - meaning abundance of gorgeousness and diversity...

Alfie pulls into the RED ZONE in front of an OUTDOOR CAFE, where a curvy Hispanic METER MAID is writing up a ticket.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- how could I ever choose to settle down with just one?

The Meter Maid looks up at Alfie, then at the RED ZONE, then gives him a scolding look. Alfie approaches, all charm.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Desperately need a spot of tea, Lindy. Do us a favor.

METER MAID
(flirtatiously)
As long as you return it. Again.

ALFIE
As long as you wear the uniform. Again.

Alfie offers Lindy his patent killer smile, pats her butt and cruises toward a cafe table. Lindy watches him for a moment, slaps a ticket on someone's car. He's made her day.

ALFIE - SEATED AT THE CAFE (MUSIC CONTINUES)

He sips a cup of tea, while observing a parade of scurrying suits and shoppers laden with designer store bags.

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ALFIE (cont'd)
(to CAMERA)
I watch this parade of conspicuous consumption and upward mobility and think to myself, America - take a tea break.
(his cell phone RINGS, checks caller ID)
Annie? Incredible! I was just thinking about you.
(whispers, into phone)
I'm with a client at the moment, luv, ring you later? Kiss -kiss.
(clicks off, back to CAMERA)
I myself subscribe more to the European philosophy, my priorities leaning toward wine, women and--
(cocks his head, smiles)
-- well, actually that's it, wine and women.
(then)
Although women and women is always a fun option.
(finishes tea)
So.
(rising)
To live life to the fullest--

He glances around, casually slides the tray of remaining TEA BAGS into his coat pocket and starts off...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- I require only enough to cover my modest expenses.
(turns back)
I've got no desire to be the richest stiff in the cemetery.

EXT. CEMETERY - EVENING

Quiet. Eerie. Shadows on tombstones. CAMERA GLIDES over the graveyard toward a LIMO parked on a road above. CLOSER. CLOSER. Right up to:

THE LIMO'S WINDOW

A beat. Then, a hair-raising SCREAM. And a WOMAN'S FACE bolts INTO FRAME. She continues SHRIEKING as she moves up and down, in the heat of passion...

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INT. LIMO - SAME TIME

The woman is DORIE, a suburban housewife in her late thirties. She's in the throes of intense love making... her skirt pulled up around her waist, bra unhooked, blouse open.

She's straddling Alfie and as her moans of pleasure grow LOUDER, Alfie gives a LOOK to CAMERA.

ALFIE
(softly, to CAMERA)
I think this just might be my favorite position. I know it was President Kennedy's. He was such a great leader. Of course, JFK used the old 'bad back' excuse, but, if you ask me, the Prez knew it gave you maximum pleasure with minimum exertion.

Dorie reaches a climax during above and now collapses into Alfie's arms...

DORIE
Mmmm... What is it about the back of a limo?

Alfie kisses her neck, while CONTINUING to CAMERA.

ALFIE
She's right, you know. If you haven't tried it limo-style, I give it my highest recommendation. Of course, you usually don't get the full undress--

Dorie buries her head in his neck...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
-- but that can be an added bonus. I mean, once you've seen a bird in the buff, it's like unwrapping the same birthday gift again and again. Know what I mean?

DORIE
(purring)
What would I do without my weekly Alfie fix?

They kiss, he caresses her, SPEAKS to CAMERA.

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ALFIE
Obligatory cuddling... Thousand one... thousand two... thousand--

Alfie glances at his watch, taps it a couple of times to get it going, then bolts up, pretending to suddenly realize the hour.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Cripes, I've gotta get cracking, luv... I've a ten o'clock pick-up.

Dorie sits up, stretches, pulls up her lacy red bra.

DORIE
Oh, better hurry, you don't want to keep her waiting.

Alfie helps Dorie fasten her bra, while he TALKS to CAMERA:

ALFIE
Luckily, this one's only a *wee bit* possessive...

He kisses Dorie's HAND, then EASES IT to CAMERA, showing us a WEDDING RING.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- Married, you see. I love married. No property rights.

Alfie watches with appreciation as Dorie stretches out her long shapely leg, adjusting her garter belt.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
Quite the number, isn't she? Yet, she tells me her old man hasn't shagged her in six months. Thank God there are gents like me 'round to pick up the slack.
(to DORIE)
You deserve to be appreciated...
(BACK to CAMERA)
-- While she's in her prime.
(to DORIE, caressing her leg, pats her tush)
Mmm, legs like a racehorse... The perfect yoga butt...
(BACK to CAMERA)
-- I give it my highest grade - A minus.

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He reaches down, puts on a CHAUFFEUR'S HAT and adjusts it "just so".

INT. LIMO - TRAVELING - NIGHT

Alfie drives while Dorie sits in the backseat, freshening her make-up and punching the RADIO BUTTONS, looking for a song she likes.

ALFIE
Where did we tell the old man we were going tonight?

DORIE
(punching stations)
Movie...

ALFIE
Treasure, please quit messing about, you'll ruin my pre-sets.
(then)
What movie?

Dorie settles on a slow-jam.

DORIE
I don't know. What's the difference?

ALFIE
The difference is, the more details you give, the less interested your hubby will be. If you want to stop someone from being suspicious, tell 'em more than they want to hear. When lying, never be vague.

DORIE
It doesn't matter what I say. It would never occur to Phil that another man would look twice at me.

ALFIE
Dor, darling, if you're fishing for a compliment, you should know by now they only come when least expected.
(offers a tin)
Now, have an Altoid so Phil doesn't smell the Alfie on your breath.

DORIE
I don't care if he does.

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Alfie sighs, LOOKS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
If there's one thing that puts me off marriage, it's married women.

Dorie pops the Altoid in her mouth and chases it with a swig of vodka. She checks to make sure Alfie's not looking, then mischievously slips her LACY RED THONG into the pocket of his jacket, which is neatly folded over the front seat.

She wraps her arms around Alfie, nibbling on his ear, as he drives and TALKS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
What Dorie doesn't know is - we won't be seeing much more of her. Yeah, I've got that all-too familiar feeling that, before long, she'll be wanting a bit more than I'm able to give.

DORIE
Wouldn't it be great if I was going home with you tonight instead of Phil the Pill?

Alfie gives a knowing side-long glance TO CAMERA. As they pull up to a RED LIGHT, Dorie grabs Alfie by his tie, pulling him close.

DORIE (CONT'D)
(pouty)
Baby, I'm not ready to let you go--

ALFIE
(re: his tie)
Careful, darling, Ralph Lauren - Purple Label--

Before he can finish, Dorie YANKS Alfie down by his favorite tie.

DORIE
It's him!

Alfie drops onto the front seat, while Dorie flattens herself in the back.

ALFIE
Him who?!

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Alfie and Dorie are now both LYING FLAT in their respective seats, WHISPERING to one another.

DORIE
My husband just pulled up next to us!

ALFIE
What the bloody hell am I ducking for - he doesn't know me!
(then)
Besides, one-way windows.

DORIE
Oh, right. Sorry.

Alfie nonchalantly sits up, straightening his tie. He casually LOWERS HIS WINDOW and glances over at PHIL, a harried, 36-going-on-60, balding exec sitting in the back of a taxi, talking on his cell. Alfie gives him a little salute.

Phil, a bit confused, returns the gesture. FREEZE FRAME. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
Yep, it's definitely time to stage a disappearing act.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - WATERWAYS FERRY - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Alfie and Dorie standing in the shadows. Alfie takes her face in both hands and kisses her. Dorie doesn't realize this is their final good-bye.

DORIE
Next Tuesday? Same time? Same place?

Alfie feigns disappointment.

ALFIE
Sorry, luv, that's Fashion Week...
I'm booked double shifts.
(peck on the cheek)
I'll ring you the instant things let up.

DORIE
I'll be doing my Kegel exercises.
(kisses him)
In the meantime, I left you a little souvenir to remember me by...

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Alfie looks at her quizzically but before he can respond, she's started up the stairs to the ferry.

ALFIE
Oh, Dor...
(she turns back)
Your *derriere* looks rather ravishing from this vantage point.

DORIE
Why, thank you, kind sir.

ALFIE
(a grin)
See. A compliment. When you least expect it.

She smiles down at Alfie and bounces up the stairs.

ALFIE WATCHES

Dorie approach Phil, who's wearing a trench coat and carrying an over-stuffed briefcase. Phil gives her a quick peck on the cheek and moves off, heading for the Ferry, leaving her five steps behind. Dorie looks down at Alfie, shrugs and smiles. Alfie blows her a kiss, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
What can I tell you - happy as a pup with two tails. And I reckon I've done old Phil a good turn - but of course, he'd be the last to see it.
(sighs, reflective)
Never expect any thanks in this life, you know what I mean?

Alfie checks his watch, starts back toward his Limo.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
So. Tuesday, 10:03 PM. Do I drag meself home to a cold flat and empty fridge?
(checks himself in side-mirror)
Or, nip cross town to a warm body, hot bath and breakfast in bed?
(mock-mulling)
Decisions, decisions.

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EXT./INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

THROUGH THE WINDOW, we see JULIE, 26, a winsome working girl, with an ever-so-slight weight issue. Her apartment is small and warm, homey on a budget... At the moment, she's peering expectantly out the window, waiting for somebody.

ALFIE'S VOICE
Yeah, think I'll pay a visit to my semi-regular, quasi-sort-of...

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Julie turns from the window to stir a big pot of chili on the stove. FREEZE FRAME.

ALFIE'S VOICE
-- My Sweet Julie...

ACTION RESUMES and there's a KNOCK on the door. Julie fluffs her hair, hits a spritz of perfume between her breasts, picks up a stereo clicker and presses "play", filling the room with Teddy Pendergrass.

JULIE
Forget your key again, Alfie?

She opens the door, the eagerness leaving her face when she discovers TERRY, a cute, slightly awkward young guy. In his hands, he cups a perfect PEAR.

JULIE (cont'd)
(amused, but...)
Terry - you need to stop.

She lowers the CD player with the remote.

TERRY
I know, the drop-by thing is totally uncool, but I saw this pear and thought it'd be perfect for you.

She looks at him, baffled. He grins. She's grins. He's cute.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Remember, date three, I made baked ziti and we rented *'Godfather II'*? And young Don Corleone brought his wife a pear wrapped in brown paper, 'cause it's all he could afford--

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JULIE
-- and she said, 'What a nice pear... '

TERRY
-- And you thought that was really romantic. Now every time I see *a pear*, I... you know, think of you. And you may not realize this, but there are *thousands* of pears in this city.

JULIE
(laughs, trying to move off the subject)
Terry, by any chance, has there been a little drinking going on this evening?

TERRY
No. No. Two brews.
(beat)
And a shot of tequila.
(beat)
Maybe another beer. The thing is... And another tequila. Or two.
(then)
The thing is I had the best four and-a-half dates of my life with you...

JULIE
(gently)
Terry... when I broke it off, the half-a-date night, it was because I suddenly realized it was a mistake trying to see anyone else. I'm really sorry if I hurt--

Her robe falls open slightly.

JULIE (CONT'D)
-- you.

Terry gulps, looks away, tortured... as Julie quickly ties it back. He's crazy for her.

TERRY
(half to himself)
That kind of thing really doesn't help...

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JULIE
Look, I know my 'situation' doesn't appear to be perfect on the surface but...

She shrugs.

TERRY
And where's the lucky bastard tonight?

JULIE
He had a double shift.
(off Terry's doubting look)
Terry, don't start...

TERRY
I just don't want to see you treated like some kind of a--

JULIE
(finish the sentence)
-- a...?

TERRY
(shrugs)
-- Booty call.

JULIE
Bye, Terry.

TERRY
Okay, okay... I'm sorry. I'm outta here.
(lingering)
How's Max?

JULIE
Great. He's great.

TERRY
That's great.

Awkward moment.

TERRY (CONT'D)
So...

Julie takes the pear from him.

JULIE
Thanks for the nice pear.

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They smile. She kisses him on the cheek. He turns and their lips accidently meet. She eases away and shakes her head, giving him a little smile. He steps forward but she pushes him playfully out the door.

When she closes the door, her smile fades... And she stands there unsettled...

INT. STAIRWELL - JULIE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Terry trudges down the stairs, as the front door opens and Alfie ENTERS carrying the bottle of Stoli from the Limo and taking the stairs two-at-a-time. As they pass, Terry steals a glance at Alfie, who either ignores him or doesn't know he exists.

JULIE'S FRONT DOOR

A KEY in the lock and Alfie lets himself in. He sees Julie stirring the chili.

ALFIE
I have an alibi, your honor.

JULIE
Let me guess, unexpected late night fare?

Alfie moves into the kitchen, slips his arms around her waist.

JULIE (CONT'D)
What was it this time - blonde, brunette or jet black Goth chick?

Alfie kisses her neck, sneaks a GLANCE at CAMERA.

ALFIE
When trapped, it's sometimes best to admit the truth - they'll never believe it.
(to JULIE)
I had a very demanding last minute ride - spoiled Long Island housewife.

JULIE
You *had* her? Am I supposed to read anything into that choice of words?

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ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Make that: they'll *usually* never believe it.

JULIE
And where, exactly, do you take someone's wife at this hour?

ALFIE
Where *didn't* I take her, she had me going up and down for hours.

He pulls her close.

JULIE
Is that supposed to be funny--
(he runs his finger across her upper lip)
-- 'cause it's so very--
(kisses her gently)
-- not.
(kisses her again)
You're a conceited...
(kisses her)
-- lying...
(kisses her)
-- irresponsible...
(and again)
-- English asshole.
(and again)
Don't kiss me again.

But instead, SHE kisses him. Alfie hoists her up, trots across the room and they fall on to the sofa. He nuzzles her, burying his face in her hair.

JULIE (CONT'D)
I'm not kidding, Alfie, I hate you sometimes.

He kisses her again... their bodies coming together. A long, sexy kiss, she's totally gone now. Julie unbuckles his belt...

ALFIE
You have a unique way of showing it.

She starts pulling his pants down. Alfie eases away.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
Darling, can we... Sorry... Can we--
(she won't let him go)
-- hit 'pause'? I just need a second to unwind...

He rises, pulling up his pants, tries to distract her with:

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I've knicked a half bottle of Stoli from the limo.
(starts toward kitchen)
How do you want yours, luv - rocks?

Julie grabs him, pulling him back down...

JULIE
I just want my usual, Alfie - Straight Up.

She kisses him, goes for the belt buckle again... He eases away. Again. Heads for the kitchen area, walking backwards, feigning exhaustion.

ALFIE
I'm totally knackered, baby. I'll make it up to you in the morning. Cross my heart.

He picks up Terry's "perfect" PEAR.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
But tonight...

Before Julie can speak, Alfie takes a BIG BITE out of Terry's pear. Julie gasps, looks at him, annoyed.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(chewing)
-- all I'm good for is a quick bite, hot bath and a long night's kip.

He opens the fridge, drops a couple of ice cubes into a glass and pours himself a stiff one. He wipes his hand along his side and feels something in his jacket pocket.

JULIE
(from sofa)
You know, this isn't a hotel, Alfie.

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Alfie pulls Dorie's LACY RED THONG from his jacket pocket and looks at it, momentarily confused. As Julie enters, Alfie quickly stuffs the thong back in his pocket, turning to her with a big smile.

ALFIE
Say again?

JULIE
Why are you so 'totally knackered'? I mean, where were you tonight... really?

As Alfie leans over to sample the chili with a wooden spoon, he deftly drops Dorie's LACY RED THONG in the trash bin and buries it with his foot.

ALFIE
I thought we weren't asking those questions in this relationship.

Julie, getting emotional, makes the appropriate "quote" marks as she speaks.

JULIE
It was always you who wanted to have an 'understanding', your words. Well, I think it's time for a 'new understanding', my words.

ALFIE
(re: chili)
You really must open a restaurant, Jules. This is seriously brilliant.

JULIE
(oh, please)
Alfie, it's just chili.
(then)
Look at me.
(he does)
I can't keep doing this. I'm serious. I need to know if we have a future or if... I'm just some kind of glorified 'booty call'?

Alfie pulls her close, LOOKING over her shoulder AT CAMERA.

ALFIE
Is she not adorable? Problem is she doesn't have enough of the superficial things that really matter.
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
She's cute, absolutely - but not drop-dead. I know, sounds shallow but I told you how we men are - we want 'show-stoppers', that's all it is. I mean, even mangy old Quasimodo, the Hunchback, thought he deserved a babe.
(to Julie)
I don't deserve you.

JULIE
That's probably true but, unfortunately for me... I love you, Alfie.

Alfie stands uncomfortably, then turning to get more ice...

ALFIE
Thanks, baby.

JULIE
(on verge of tears)
Jesus, Alfie! After eight months, I say 'I love you' and *thanks* is the best you can do?!
(slams freezer door)

ALFIE
(anxiously, to CAMERA)
Oh dear...
(gently, to JULIE)
All right, sshhh... C'mon now... we don't want to wake--

LITTLE VOICE (O.S.)
-- Max!

Alfie and Julie turn to see MAX, a sweet little two-and-a-half-year-old boy standing in the doorway, wearing mismatched pj's. Alfie offers a quick sigh of relief TO CAMERA.

ALFIE
Hey little man, we wake you?

Max nods, extends his arms. Alfie crosses to him, SPEAKING to CAMERA along the way.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Lads, learn from my mistake, never get involved with a single mum.

Alfie lifts Max, who wraps his arms around Alfie's neck. Alfie makes a face, cracking Max up.

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CAMERA FOLLOWS them into MAX'S ROOM, a tiny alcove off the main room. Alfie lays Max on his little bed, while TALKING to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
See, they come with accessories, some of which can be... quite irresistible.

Alfie pulls Max's sheet over his head, slips on his shades and in an instant, is transformed into a cool version of "The Invisible Man". Max cracks up.

Alfie turns TO CAMERA, with a shrug.

ALFIE (cont'd)
Yeah... this little nipper made off with my heart.
(rumples Max's hair, to MAX)
Hey, Pookie...
(to CAMERA)
And there's absolutely nothing worse than realizing you care about someone...
(pulls up covers, tucking Max in)
I know that sounds a bit frosty, but the truth is, sooner or later, one way or another--

He watches Max's eyes flutter and close.

ALFIE (cont'd)
-- it's gonna find a way to knock you sideways... Yeah, I'm mad for this little character...

Alfie sees Julie standing in the doorway.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(sighs, to CAMERA)
-- It's Jules that's the problem.

He crosses to her, SPEAKING to CAMERA on the way.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Can't very well tell her that and break her heart, now, can I?

They speak in the hallway, in hushed tones.

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JULIE
(softly)
Is this it? Is this all it will ever be?

ALFIE
I know... You're right, he deserves a proper 'Dad'... Not some limo driver who's poor as a shit-house rat.

JULIE
Just say it, Alfie, we're not enough for you.

Alfie chooses his words carefully.

ALFIE
It's difficult, Jules... I care so much for you both, but I'm still, I don't know... a bit of a kid myself, you know.

JULIE
(knowing he's right)
And one kid can't raise another...

MAX
(groggy, eyes closed)
Poem, Alfie.

Alfie, grateful for the distraction, crosses and sits on the edge of Max's bed.

ALFIE
Here's one my dear step-mum used to tell me...
(softly, with a 'working-class' accent)
Now... There was an old hooker from Brighton,
Who did so many Johns it was frightenin'...

Julie can't help herself and smiles bitter-sweetly...

EXT. LOW RENT NEW YORK STREET - FOLLOWING DAY

CLOSE ON an OLD HOOKER, unsuccessfully working a street corner...

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ALFIE'S VOICE
I feel sorry for the poor old luv... Her racing days are long gone.

NEW ANGLE - REVEALING ALFIE

Zipping through traffic on his Vespa, TALKING to CAMERA.

ALFIE
Yep, sights like that make you realize it's important to know your own expiration date.

He rounds a corner and pulls up in front of a drab building: *ELEGANT LIMOUSINE SERVICE*. A smaller, hand-printed sign reads: *For Sale By Owner*.

ALFIE (cont'd)
Our shelf lives are limited, so it's best to strike while you're in your prime.

Alfie parks near the front steps, indicates sign.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
The standards for 'elegance' have taken quite a pounding, wouldn't you say?
(as he dismounts, locks up)
Still, this is where I make my reasonably honest living. Heavy accent on the 'reasonably'. It's a mere stepping stone.

He gestures to a good-looking Black guy in his twenties, MARLON, sitting on the steps, morosely sipping a Starbucks coffee.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
And currently sitting on one of those stepping stones, is my best mate and future business partner--
(greeting MARLON)
Marlon.

Marlon nods. Alfie sits next to him on the steps. They sit there in silence for a long moment. Marlon stares into his steaming cup of coffee.

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MARLON
Black. Like Lonette's skin. Which I will never again touch.

Alfie looks TO CAMERA.

ALFIE
I'm afraid you're not meeting my homeboy in top form. See, Marlon's got a problem...

CUT TO:

INT. THE LUCKY BAR - NIGHT

A noisy, packed, downtown club with a cool, diverse clientele. CAMERA FOLLOWS a MINI-SKIRTED WAITRESS, with a killer bod, swiveling through the crowd. She's carrying a tray of drinks which she delivers to a table of Young Guys, who all look up and all do double-takes.

ALFIE'S VOICE
It's called Lonette.

REVERSE ANGLE - LONETTE

A beauty. Leaning over to set down the drinks, she flashes a blinding smile and we FREEZE FRAME.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And, very recently, it dumped him.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. ELEGANT LIMO - ALFIE AND MARLON - CONTINUOUS

Alfie and Marlon sit on the steps.

ALFIE
Oh, dear. What was it this time?

MARLON
Three a.m. desperation call.

ALFIE
How do you live with yourself?

MARLON
I hung up before she answered. She didn't know it was me.

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ALFIE
But you know it was you.
(shakes his head)
And I used to think you were
cool...

They both rise and start down the parking ramp. Alfie attempts to fluff Marlon's normally cool Afro which is dented on one side.

Marlon slaps his hand away.

MARLON
I'll get her back.
(forces a grin)
I'm still a radiating hoochie
magnet.

Alfie's not sold.

INT. ELEGANT LIMO SERVICE - MINUTES LATER

CAMERA is CLOSE ON a short, skinny CHINESE MAN with a loud, abrasive voice.

CHINESE MAN
Alfie, why no Stoli in car
seventeen?!

ALFIE'S VOICE
The little wanker's name is Wing -
my boss and owner of this tragic
operation.

ANGLE BACK as WING approaches Alfie and Marlon who are wiping down two already gleaming black Town Cars.

Elegant Limo is a modest operation, two Town Cars, two Limos, a small dispatch office and a row of shabby lockers.

WING
Wipe down car good.

Alfie continues wiping as he SPEAKS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
'Owner' that is, 'til Marlon and I
swing a loan and buy it out from
under him. You see, that's my plan,
Marlon and I--

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WING
(points to fender)
-- You miss bird poop.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Yep. Wing's a barking lunatic.

During the above, Wing's WIFE enters, carrying a ledger and a pencil. She's pleasant but down-trodden and at the moment, looks concerned.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
Just check out the way he treats the little woman.

Mrs. Wing asks her husband something in CHINESE, gesturing to Alfie, as though telling her husband to be nicer to his employees.

Wing unleashes a torrent of impatient CHINESE SHOUTING on his beleaguered wife. Alfie watches, then LOOKS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Haven't a clue what he's saying, but I know it's not good. She's given him her best years, cooked his freakin' chop-suey, helped run his business, and at one time, I'm sure he couldn't wait to rip off her kimono... But look at 'em now...

Mrs. Wing hurries off, close to tears, with Wing still berating her.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
And I'm supposed to respect the institution of marriage?
(sighs)
There was more love in the Boxer Rebellion.

Marlon has taken all he can stomach and steps forward.

MARLON
Hey Wing, I think she can hear you without the volume.

Wing glances at Marlon. Alfie TURNS to CAMERA, anticipating the worst.

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ALFIE
Oh man, here comes trouble.

Everything falls silent. Then, Wing wheels on Marlon.

WING
(screaming)
You never mind! It not your business! She not your wife! She mine! You fired!

Wing storms off. Marlon is stunned. Mrs. Wing is speechless. And scared.

Alfie gestures to them both to let him deal with this and follows after Wing, who's headed into his office.

ALFIE
Wing, Wing, wait up, mate.
(entering Wing's office)
Look... He meant no disrespect...
(pretending to remember)
Oh... Get this. I got one for you... A straight Priest with a duck on his head walks into a gay bar...

Marlon turns to Mrs. Wing.

MRS. WING
(softly)
Thank you, Mister Marlon.

Marlon and Mrs. Wing watch as Alfie is SEEN GESTURING animatedly to Wing BEHIND THE GLASS PARTITION of Wing's office.

Wing has no reaction and Alfie is working harder. Finally, Wing stares at Alfie for the longest time, his mouth hanging open, then ERUPTS with HOWLS of LAUGHTER.

Alfie sneaks a wink at Marlon and Mrs. Wing. DISCO MUSIC BEGINS...

CUT TO:

INT. LUCKY'S BAR

CLOSE on LONETTE gliding through the room, effortlessly balancing a tray of drinks.

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ALFIE'S VOICE
(doing his best Marlon IMITATION)
I swear to you, my brother...

ANGLE - ALFIE AND MARLON

Alfie and Marlon move through the trendy crowd, their eyes on Lonette.

ALFIE
-- I'm not throwing you shade, it's her night off.

MARLON
I can explain.
(then)
I lied.

INT. LUCKY'S - NIGHT

Alfie and Marlon sit with nearly empty drinks. Alfie wears glasses and crunches numbers on a cocktail napkin.

ALFIE
(figuring)
-- okay... times 3 months... 7, carry my 2... equals...

ON ALFIE at a table, crunching numbers on graph paper in a red file folder. Next to him is Marlon who stares longingly at Lonette as she waits on someone across the room.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- times 3 months... 7, carry my 2... equals... Okay, wait, wait... this is brilliant... if we get a small business loan and calculate it at...
(figuring)
-- Hold on... One...

He glances up from his calculations to see Marlon's attention is riveted on Lonette. Alfie sighs, looks AT CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I predicted this. See, Marlon and Lonette had reached that critical eighteen-month, *Where-Are-We-Going-What-Are-We-Doing-What's-Happening-Here* crisis point that rears its ugly head in every relationship. Lonette wanted ring, home, baby.
(MORE)

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
Marlon wanted another eighteen months to make sure nothing better was coming his way.

MARLON
(re: Lonette)
I fucked up egregiously.

ALFIE
Very nice wordage. I see you're getting some use out of your birthday calendar.
(to CAMERA)
So, it ended. Marlon prowled. Lonette sulked. By the time he realized he'd made a mistake and wanted her back - it was too late.

MARLON
The iron door has slammed shut.

ALFIE
You've just got to put her out of your mind. Pretend she got run over by a truck and died.
(off Marlon's look)
I'm serious. Funeral was this afternoon. You're all cried out. Single and ready to move on.

Marlon stares at Alfie.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
What?

MARLON
Iceman. You ever deal with shit on any real level?

ALFIE
And why would I want to do a thing like that?

MARLON
Well, that's real solid advice, b. 'Move on' to what?

ALFIE
Other women. Hello? Believe me, as long as you don't get crazy picky, you have no idea what surprises await--

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SEXY VOICE
-- Hey, stranger.

Alfie looks up to find an exotic brunette, CAROL standing next to him. She seems uneasy, a bit hurt or could it be resentful?

ALFIE
Oh, hello...

CAROL
-- Carol.

ALFIE
Yes, Carol. You look wonderful, Carol. How have you been, Carol?

CAROL
Fine...

She stands there expectantly.

ALFIE
So. Nice to see you again, Carol. Be well.

Suppressing some humiliation, Carol hurries off. Marlon checks her out, then looks back at Alfie.

MARLON
What's up with that?

ALFIE
Let me put it this way, the show closed after only one performance.

MARLON
Does a brother even want to know why?

ALFIE
It would be less than discreet to tell you.
(short beat)
Hair on the arms.

MARLON
Excuse me?

ALFIE
Long, dark hair on her arms.

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MARLON
So? Don't you have hair on your arms?

ALFIE
Not as much as her. And I'm not a bleedin' bird, now am I?

MARLON
What happened to 'don't get crazy picky'?

ALFIE
(points downstairs)
Try explaining that to Sir Gigglestick.

WOMAN'S VOICE
So, it's the royal 'Gigglestick' that has the unreasonably high standards?

They look up to see LONETTE has ARRIVED with fresh drinks. She avoids Marlon's gaze.

ALFIE
Yes. All his fault. Even though he has only one eye, he thinks he's seen and done it all. Nothing's ever good enough for him. He really is an arrogant little prick.

Lonette laughs, setting Alfie's drink down. She wordlessly slams Marlon's down, the drink sloshing over the rim of the glass. Before Marlon can give her a beseeching smile - Lonette's gone. Marlon downs his drink...

MARLON
Can't you talk to her for me...?

Alfie pats Marlon on the shoulder, while looking TO CAMERA..

ALFIE
Classic, isn't it?

Alfie watches Marlon watching Lonette longingly.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Now that he can't have her, he thinks he can't live without her.
(shakes his head)
Some people are funny...

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EXT. STREET - LATER THAT EVENING

Alfie's Town Car pulls into a *Handicapped Only* slot. A Senior Couple eyes him suspiciously and Alfie begins an exaggerated LIMP...

ALFIE'S VOICE
But Marlon's predicament did get me thinking about my own situation...

INT. JULIE'S HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie, carrying a half-empty bottle of Cristal, bounds up the stairs.

ALFIE'S VOICE
Maybe it was time to stoke the home fires.

He opens the door with his key and is dumbstruck to find his entry blocked by the security chain. Julie APPEARS through the crack in the door.

ALFIE
Anybody in the mood for a little Alfie straight-up?

JULIE
This isn't a good time, Alfie. I've got a lot on my mind.

ALFIE
Oh God, don't you hate when that happens?
(holds up Cristal)
I brought some 'Cris.'

JULIE
You brought a *half* bottle left in your limo by some drunk rapper who probably drank out of it with his mouth. Am I supposed to be flattered?

Alfie's genuinely thrown, recovers and puts on his best "little boy" charm...

ALFIE
Baby, you look so warm, soft and curvy--

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JULIE
(interrupting)
-- Not tonight, Alfred.

ALFIE
What's wrong, luv? Tell me...

JULIE
(shrugs)
I don't know - guess I'm just...

She dangles Dorie's LACY RED THONG on the end of her finger like its' contaminated.

JULIE (CONT'D)
-- seeing red.

Jules tosses the THONG in Alfie's face and SLAMS the DOOR.

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie steps onto the street, takes a deep breath and a deeper swig from the Cristal and gets into his Town Car.

He doesn't notice TERRY, walking up to Julie's with an arm-load of take-out.

INT. THE LUCKY BAR - CLOSING TIME

A Busboy rattles around the empty kitchen. Lonette clears the last of the glasses from a table. As she moves past the window:

A FACE APPEARS

Lonette SCREAMS bloody murder - her tray of glasses shattering on the floor! She looks up terrified, and realizes it's only ALFIE, grinning contritely through the glass.

THE LUCKY BAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Alfie trails Lonette, as she moves from window to window, closing the steel shutters and half-listening.

In the background, the Busboy sweeps up the broken glass.

ALFIE
I mean the poor guy's dying...
Haven't you tortured him long
enough?

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LONETTE
He should have thought about all that before he dipped his wick in that skanky, fake-boobed ex-ho-friend of his.

ALFIE
(stops in his tracks)
Those are fake..? I'm devastated. Next you'll be telling me there's no Easter Bunny.

Lonette moves behind the bar, takes down a bottle of 1800 and pours shots.

LONETTE
You were consoling my devastation, remember?

ALFIE
Right, right...

Alfie sits on a bar stool.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
At any rate, he came crawling back, didn't he... begging forgiveness and all that jazz?

LONETTE
(downs her shot)
And I'm just supposed to forgive and forget? Sorry. I'm not that easy.

ALFIE
Who said you have to forgive him to take him back?
(downs his shot)
In my opinion - forgiveness is way over-rated. My motto is, always harbor a bit of resentment - keeps you in the power position.

Lonette rolls her eyes, as the Bus Boy sticks his head in from the Kitchen.

BUS BOY
It's okay if I leave now, Miss?

LONETTE
Si, gracias, Felix. Hit the lights on your way out, por favor.

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As he leaves, Felix flicks the switch and the LIGHTS DIM. Alfie pours himself a shot, downs it and rises.

ALFIE
Well, I'm off.

Lonette takes out a cigarette. Alfie lights it for her. She takes a deep drag, blows a lazy smoke ring. He glances out the window.

ALFIE (cont'd)
It's really pissing down out there.

A CRACK of thunder...

TIME PASSAGE:

AT THE POOL TABLE

Outside it's raining. Inside the ashtrays overflow with butts, the bottle of 1800 is half empty, old school r & b plays on the juke box and Lonette and Alfie are feeling no pain. They shoot pool, while playing a game called *I've Never*.

LONETTE
I've never swam in the Pacific Ocean.

ALFIE
Me neither.

LONETTE
Shit. Okay, wait a second...
(thinking)

ALFIE
I got one.

LONETTE
Excuse me, it's still my turn. Wait. Okay, I got one, I've never seen a James Bond movie.

ALFIE
Get out! Not even a Roger Moore?

LONETTE
I'm serious.

ALFIE
You can't be.
(realizes she is)
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
You are. Wow. Brilliant.
(downs a shot)
Five to four. Okay...
(smiles, he's got one)
I've never made my own bed.

LONETTE
Bullshit.
(he shrugs, it's true)
Not even as a child?

ALFIE
I repeat - I have never made my own bed.

LONETTE
(rolls her eyes)
I'm impressed. Five-five.

Her turn to down a shot. She refills both glasses...

LONETTE (CONT'D)
Here's one... I've never been with a white man.

ALFIE
What? And you think I have?!

LONETTE
(laughs)
Just checking. Okay, I've never had sex with two people in one night.

Alfie downs another shot.

ALFIE
Six-five, your favor.

Lonette leans over to pour him a refill.

LONETTE
How many's the most you've had in one night?

Alfie pops a Dunhill in his mouth, looks over at her.

ALFIE
We've stopped playing the game, haven't we?

Lonette smiles and lights his cigarette for him. Alfie glances TO CAMERA.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
Am I wrong - or is there a little innocent flirting going on here?

TIME PASSAGE:

ALFIE AND LONETTE TAKING A BREAK

Lonette sitting on the edge of the pool table, regaling Alfie with some story...

ALFIE'S VOICE
Like most women, once Lonette got a little personal attention, she really came alive. And I thought, she looks amazingly dishy tonight, has a real glow about her...

LONETTE
-- Okay, so here's what I always wondered - why I never made your hit list...

ALFIE
-- Okay, here's why - I took one look at you and thought - gorgeous, smart, funny, can balance a dozen drinks on a tray and still move like poetry - and way out of your league, son.

LONETTE
Alfie, you're so full of shit but you're so damn cute, every woman wants to believe it.

They share a laugh and another round...

ALFIE'S VOICE
Funny how a few drinks and the right lighting can turn an evening into an experience.

TIME PASSAGE:

ALFIE AND LONETTE

A nearly empty bottle of tequila... Something like *Didn't I Blow Your Mind This Time* by The Delfonics on the juke box. Lonette SINGS along, she's got serious chops...

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ALFIE
Now see, if I had that kind of talent...

LONETTE
-- Finish the sentence.

ALFIE
... and looked like you, I'd definitely be strutting my stuff on a stage somewhere...

Feeling emboldened, Lonette SINGS the next couple of bars directly to Alfie.

LONETTE
Didn't I Blow Your Mind This Time,
Didn't I? Oh, baby...

They do a little club dance step... Alfie then picks up his pool cue and passes behind Lonette, sizing up the table.

He takes her hand, raises it to his lips, inhales off her cigarette, then leans in to line up his shot. Lonette shakes her head, disapproving, bends over him to help... They are very close.

Alfie stands up, so does Lonette. They look at each other. Lonette takes a long, cool drag on her cigarette.

ALFIE'S VOICE
Trust me, what happened next was the furthest thing from my mind when I dropped by tonight...

Alfie pulls Lonette to him. They look at each other. She doesn't pull away. Alfie kisses her and they come together, hungrily, drunkenly.

They break. Alfie looks at her, gauging the moment. Lonette doesn't look away...

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- but then, I thought to myself, you know what, if it'll help her get past her anger towards Marlon, I owe it to them both, as a friend, to do whatever I can to help.

Lonette moves to him now and they kiss again.

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ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I find that lately, even lying to myself comes easily...

With that, Alfie and Lonette start touching and undressing each other...

TOP SHOT - THE POOL TABLE

Alfie sweeps the balls away and Lonette and Alfie fall IN SLOW MOTION onto the pool table...

DISSOLVE TO:

ALFIE AND LONETTE - FACE-TO-FACE

Staring silently at each other, catching their breath. It's over and neither knows what to say or do. The MUSIC has stopped. Everything is still. Lonette starts to sit up.

LONETTE
Oh God, room spinning...

Alfie slides off the pool table, helps her down. They self-consciously and quickly begin putting on their clothes, avoiding eye contact. Alfie pulls on a white undershirt.

LONETTE (CONT'D)
I think that's mine.

ALFIE
(quickly pulling it off, handing to her)
Sorry... all the excitement...

She laughs without humor, pours herself a shot. Alfie tucks in his shirt, takes a deep swig from the bottle and EYES CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
Don't give me that look. I know it was wrong, but she's so sexy and life's so short. Still, I know I shouldn't have... Marlon's my best friend. But you know, down deep, I really think I was trying to help her make up for what he...
(then, annoyed at himself more than us)
Oh, never mind. I don't owe you an explanation. Just bang-off!

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EXT. NEWSSTAND - FOLLOWING DAY

Alfie pays for *Vogue Homme, Details, Hello.* He seems jumpy, distracted.

ALFIE'S VOICE
The next morning, I couldn't get last night out of my mind.

A COLLAGE of RAPID FLASH-CUTS - Alfie and Lonette making love. Alfie tries to shake off the thoughts.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I tried desperately to focus on something else... *Anything* else.

The FLEETING LOVEMAKING IMAGES are PUSHED ASIDE by:

RANDOM-UNRELATED CUTS

-- Alfie's HAND moves up Lonette's skirt... PUSHED ASIDE by LENNOX LEWIS dropping MIKE TYSON to the canvas...

-- LONETTE'S HANDS tugging Alfie's shoulders... REPLACED by HANNIBAL LECTER wearing that mask and laughing...

-- ALFIE AND LONETTE'S MOUTHS MEETING... PUSHED AWAY by QUEEN ELIZABETH waving to her loyal subjects...

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Anything to get my mind off my best friend's incredibly hot, best-ass-I've-ever-seen-in-my-life girlfriend.

The IMAGES are all BANGING TOGETHER... fighting for control of Alfie's mind.

FLASH-CUT - LONETTE

In the throes of passion, she opens her mouth to call Alfie's name but ANOTHER VOICE comes disconcertingly from her lips.

MARLON'S VOICE
Alfie!

Alfie is jarred BACK TO REALITY. He quickly moves down the street, glancing over his shoulder to see Marlon jogging toward him.

MARLON
Hey, Alfie!

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ALFIE
(quickens pace, to CAMERA)
Should I pretend not to hear him?

MARLON
Slow down!

ALFIE
Too late. Oh, Christ...
(turns to Marlon)
Marly, what up?!

MARLON
Marly?

CAMERA TRACKS - Marlon trying to keep up with Alfie.

MARLON (CONT'D)
Hey, listen, I gotta talk to you.

ALFIE
Love to but gotta dash, got a pick-up at La Guardia.

MARLON
I wanna hear what happened last night.

They start down the ramp toward ELEGANT LIMOUSINE.

ALFIE
Last night? What do you mean last night?

MARLON
Son, you know, with Lonette.

We SEE Alfie's face drop, Marlon doesn't. They ENTER WING'S OFFICE.

WING
You ever hear word 'knock'!?

Mrs. Wing ENTERS, avoiding eye contact with Wing. She takes some papers from under a stack on the desk and abruptly exits. Wing yells after her IN CHINESE but she sticks her nose in the air, acting as though she doesn't hear him.

WING (CONT'D)
Missus give me silent treatment.

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MARLON
(ignoring Wing, to Alfie)
So, what went down?

ALFIE
(nervous, vamping)
What? Nothing. We had some drinks...

WING
(in his own world)
Little she know, not hearing constant--
(makes 'yapping' motion)
-- blabber-blabber is gift from heaven.

Alfie laughs a little too loudly.

ALFIE
Good one, Wing.

Alfie rifles through the booking slips, pulls one, starts out. Exasperated, Marlon grabs Alfie's arm, turning him around.

MARLON
What happened?

ALFIE
Ah ha, what happened was...
(to CAMERA)
I'm about to get my jaw rocked.

Alfie stands, resigned now to face the music.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to Marlon)
Oh fuck a duck. Look, man, I had a lot to drink and... Well... I don't really remember a lot of what happened but...

MARLON
-- Well, you did *something* to her, 'cause she pulled a complete one-eighty and turned up on my doorstep at two in the morning saying--

Marlon's VOICE FADES, as Alfie's VOICE RISES and he TURNS to CAMERA.

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ALFIE
-- that she loved him and if he needed more time, she understood completely... She wanted him, and didn't care how long she'd have to wait.
(proudly)
So, chalk one up to the blokes. Thanks to me, Marlon had beaten the rap. He was off Scott-free. It was a bloody miracle.
(to MARLON)
That is so fantastic, man. And what did you say?!

MARLON
(ear-to-ear grin)
It's all good.
(then)
I asked her to marry me.

FREEZE FRAME on Alfie. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
Moral of the story - No good deed goes unpunished.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREETS - DAY

Alfie navigates his Vespa through traffic and pulls up to the MAGNOLIA CAKE SHOP. He parks in the red zone, takes a shopping bag from the mini-trunk.

EXT./INT. MAGNOLIA CAKE SHOP - SAME TIME

A birthday party for Max is in full swing. Max, surrounded by a few of his Little Friends and their Moms, is seated on Julie's lap having just opened the last of his presents. Everyone applauds.

Julie looks up and is surprised to see ALFIE peering in the window.

EXT. MAGNOLIA CAKE SHOP - A MOMENT LATER

Alfie moves away from the window, as Julie steps out, carrying Max. She's a little testy, distant...

JULIE
Didn't expect to see you here.

Max is excited to see Alfie, he waves with one hand, while clutching a NEW TEDDY with the other.

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ALFIE
Hey, Jules. Hey, Max. I like your teddy.

MAX
(garbled)
From Teddy...

ALFIE
Say again?

JULIE
(setting Max down)
From Terry. It's his birthday present from Terry and he won't let go of it.

Alfie shifts his shopping bag to the other hand, holds it casually behind his back.

ALFIE
Oh really. Great. Well. Happy Birthday, little man.

MAX
Happy Birthday, Alfie!

Alfie and Julie exchange an uncomfortable look, moved by Max's silly adorableness.

ALFIE
So... Terry, huh? You two an item now?

JULIE
You need a haircut.

ALFIE
Nice avoiding of the question.

JULIE
I learned from the master.

Alfie nods. Touche. Just then, TWO HOTTIES exit the cake shop. Alfie casually turns away, trying to avoid them. Too late.

HOTTIE
Hey, Alfie.

ALFIE
Hi, Sasha.

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SASHA
Thanks for never calling back.

ALFIE
(half-wave)
Right... Sure... Sorry...
(to Julie)
Yeah, well...

JULIE
Yeah, well...

Terry appears in the doorway.

TERRY
C'mon guys, cake time.

JULIE
Be right in.

Terry hesitates, then turns back inside. Everyone feels uncomfortable except Max who is delightfully oblivious.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(polite only)
You want to come in for the cake?

ALFIE
Nah, I should get back to work.
Just wanted to, you know, put in an appearance.
(reaches for his wallet, pulls out some bills)
Look I... uh, I didn't know what to get so um, you know...
(holds out money)

JULIE
You're giving a child cash?

ALFIE
Oh... Not good? All right, then...
(rubs Max's head)
Have a happy, Max.

Alfie turns to go.

MAX
Poem, Alfie.

Alfie turns back, hesitates, looks to Julie, who shrugs.

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MAX (CONT'D)
For my birthday.

ALFIE
Okay, something quick.

Alfie drops to one knee next to Max.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Here's one my step-mum used to tell me...
(reciting, softly)
Today's my birthday, three years old I am... I had for breakfast egg as well as jam... I chose the cake we had for dinner too... This afternoon I'm going to the zoo... Now isn't that too grand for anything! Mine is a birthday fit for any king.

Alfie glances up at Julie, but she looks away...

JULIE
(to Max)
We have to go in, sweetie, your pals are waiting.

Alfie stands uncomfortably, odd-man-out.

ALFIE
Yeah, okay...

Julie lifts Max and heads back inside.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Be well.

Baffled, Max starts crying, looking back at Alfie, over Julie's shoulder.

ALFIE - ALONE ON THE STREET

From inside, the Kids SING "*Happy Birthday, Dear Max*". Alfie opens the shopping bag and looks down at the stuffed TEDDY he bought Max. A ribbon is tied around its neck.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

Alfie's Vespa roars through traffic a bit recklessly. Alfie flirts with every PRETTY WOMAN he passes.

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ALFIE'S VOICE
Resilience - *The ability to readily recover after disappointment or loss.*

He deftly avoids colliding with a passing GARBAGE TRUCK and turns TO CAMERA with a cocky smile.

ALFIE
The capacity to spring back.

BLACKOUT:

OVER BLACK

ALFIE'S VOICE
New word for the day...

ALFIE'S *"WORD FOR THE DAY"* CALENDAR

Alfie's HAND rips off a page, revealing today's word is: HEDONISM.

ALFIE
Hedonism - *The belief that obtaining pleasure is the true meaning of life.* Hmmm... Reminds me of someone I used to know...

Alfie raises an eyebrow TO CAMERA.

MONTAGE - MUSIC OVER

-- CLOSE ON ALFIE, a contented smile on his face.

ALFIE'S VOICE
Understand, I wasn't looking to replace Julie...

ANGLE BACK to see he's stretched out on a massage table, a skimpy towel covering his skimpy butt, receiving a loving massage from a loving Masseuse. A SCREEN surrounds the massage table.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- I just wanted to get back to the simple life - women who meant nothing to me...

ANGLE - OUTSIDE THE SCREEN

There's a GAP of several inches between the floor and the bottom of the screen.

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MASSEUSE (O.S.)
You can roll over now, Mr. Elkins.

ALFIE (O.S.)
(exaggerated formality)
Why, thank you, Miss Wilcox.

We WATCH the MASSEUSE'S FEET DISAPPEAR upwards as she climbs onto the table with Alfie.

-- ALFIE struts past a long line of hipsters waiting to get into a CHIC NIGHTSPOT. He SPEAKS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Now, on the scene...

A no-nonsense, PLAIN JANE, wearing a headset and holding a clipboard, guards the entrance along with Two Bouncers. Spotting Alfie, she lights up and instantly unhooks the velvet rope.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- you never want to be standing on the wrong side of a velvet rope. So I clocked in a bit of O.T. with a petite nightclub manager called Uta...

-- ALFIE and UTA in AN ALCOVE, behind a waist-high partition... furiously making out. As Uta, still wearing her headset, sinks down and OUT of FRAME, Alfie turns TO CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I know - you're thinking, not up to the lad's usual standards, and I must admit I am feeling a bit of a mustache at this particular moment...

A PRETTY BRUNETTE passes...

BRUNETTE
Hi, Alfie... I dumped Robby.

ALFIE
(waves)
Fab... I'll ring you.

-- ALFIE weaves through the BEAUTIFUL CROWD...

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
And to think, somewhere in the world people are going to bed horny. Sad.

He waves to the DJ as he passes LEGGY TYPES who smile coyly.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
Now, as a heat-seeking bachelor, I live by a few simple rules. My Alfie Elkins *Weltanschauung* - calendar word - meaning credo or philosophy - can be summed up by the only bit of advice my old man ever gave me...

Alfie grins first to the Girls, then TO CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
He said, 'Son, every time you see a beautiful woman, just remember, somewhere there's a bloke who's sick of shagging her.'

One BITTER but sexy GIRL watches Alfie strutting.

BITTER GIRL
Explain to me what everyone sees in that Euro-Trash?

Alfie flashes her a blinding smile and Bitter Girl melts.

-- ALFIE is now seated at A BOOTH in the VIP SECTION with two Hilton Sister wannabes - CHYNA and TONYA.

ALFIE
(to the Girls)
I think it's so unfair how it's acceptable for a man to be sexually adventurous, but if a woman wants to experiment with something... like say an innocent little three-way, they're considered a trollop, a slut. It's just so wrong.

The Girls nod with indignant agreement. CAMERA MOVES IN on Alfie drinking and watching the Girls who begin making-out with each other for his benefit.

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ALFIE'S VOICE
But, although I was living every guy's post-modern Rock Hudson fantasy--

He leans back for a moment, closes his eyes on the sight of two girls kissing, which ordinarily he would savor.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- something felt a bit 'off'.

-- In a CHEESY STUDIO APARTMENT, CAMERA DRIFTS PAST an array of discarded women's clothes and undergarments and Alfie's neatly folded top-coat and things. A half-empty bottle of Jack sits on the end table. CAMERA comes to rest on the BACK OF A SOFA.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- And throwing myself back into the old lifestyle didn't go quite as smoothly as I'd hoped.

The SOUNDS of building SEXUAL ANTICS, abruptly stop. A beat and ALFIE'S HEAD APPEARS at the end of the sofa. He looks chagrined, reaches for the Jack. CHYNA pops up on one side of Alfie, eyeing him suspiciously. TONYA pops up on the other, also giving him the 'evil eye'.

ALFIE
(self-conscious)
Sorry, girls. Don't know what happened. So unlike me.

FUNEREAL MUSIC begins...

CUT TO:

A FUNERAL PROCESSION

Slowly passing, the coffin laced with flowers...

ALFIE'S VOICE
Unexpectedly, my very best friend, had fallen... like a soldier on the battlefield...

CAMERA EASES BACK to see we are OVER ALFIE'S SHOULDER, as he looks down on A CEMETARY from a high window inside:

A STARK WHITE DOCTOR'S EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Alfie turns from the window TO CAMERA. He is sitting on an examination table, wearing a paper gown.

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ALFIE
How could I could go on? How would I face the future without 'him'. Yes, from out of nowhere - 'The Unthinkable'.

FLASHBACK TO:

THE BITTER GIRL

Wrapped in a rumpled sheet, SPEAKING BITTERLY to CAMERA.

BITTER GIRL
Now I *really* don't get what everyone sees in him.

WIDEN to REVEAL ALFIE - at THE OTHER END of the bed, dejectedly pulling on his pants, also SPEAKING to CAMERA.

ALFIE
It kept on happening and happening.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - THE PRESENT

Alfie's nervous knee jiggling so wildly he has to quiet it with both hands.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- Or, more accurately, *not* happening and *not* happening.

FLASHBACK TO:

A BUBBLE BATH

TILT UP to UTA, the gate keeper, luxuriating at one end of the bubble bath. REVEAL Alfie at THE OTHER END, staring morosely down into the bubbles. He looks up at a stern, judgemental Uta.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
This never happens, Uta. Honestly.

UTA
(pointed)
That's not the word around town, pee-wee.

Alfie is mortified. Uta's words ECHO us BACK to:

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INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - PRESENT

The DOOR SWINGS OPEN and DR. KULP, a middle-aged, androgenous, no-nonsense woman with a buzz-cut and white lab coat ENTERS. She refers to a clipboard.

DR. KULP
Mr. Elkins? Dr. Kulp.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
The penis doctor's a 'she' - with a little 'he' thrown in.

DR. KULP
So, I understand you're experiencing some ED.
(off his look)
Erectile Dysfunction?

ALFIE
Oh. Yes, I have been experiencing a bit of what you just said.

DR. KULP
Did it come on gradually?

ALFIE
-- No, no. Very sudden. One minute I... It... He... was... How shall I put this - 'the life of the party'... And the next...
(he shrugs, hopelessly)

DR. KULP
(offers her hand)
Not to worry, I'm an Erectionologist. I specialize in that area.

Alfie shakes her hand, a little squeamishly.

ALFIE
I see.
(raises eyebrow to CAMERA)
And why do you suppose she chose, as her field of interest, the penis?
(cocks his head)
Envy?

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DR. KULP
Have you been under any emotional stress, Mr. Elkins?

ALFIE
Yes, but my fear of Al Qaeda shouldn't really affect my wanker, should it?
(then, to CAMERA)
I suppose I could tell her about the recent, less-than-calming chat I had with Jules...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - BALCONY - NIGHT

Julie and Alfie stand outside her closed apartment door. Julie, looking more relaxed, now has a new very cute, SHORT HAIRCUT.

ALFIE'S VOICE
I popped over unannounced, and you know what - she wouldn't let me in. Kept me at the door.

JULIE
I'm not angry anymore... I have to accept that we want different things... But I can't see you... and I can't have you traipsing in and out of Max's life.

ALFIE
(nods, then)
And so, you and Terry...

She shrugs, checks her watch.

JULIE
Alfie, I'm gonna be late...

ALFIE
You've changed your hair.

JULIE
Um-hmm.

ALFIE
It looks really good.

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JULIE
(unmoved)
...Okay. Thanks.

ALFIE
(uncharacteristic remorse)
Why did you never do it like that before? When we were together?

JULIE
Alfie, I've really gotta go.

They look at each other for a moment.

ALFIE
Right. Okay.

She starts to close the door.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Oh...
(digs in his pocket)
I guess... I won't be needing this anymore.

He pulls out his key ring, takes off a KEY, hands it to Julie. She takes the key. Alfie looks in her eyes, sees nothing, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Even the old 'return the key bit' got no reaction.
(then)
Have you ever noticed the sudden chill that comes over a woman when it's truly over?

He starts down the stairs.

JULIE
Alfie?
(he turns)
Are you gonna be okay?

ALFIE
(looking up at her)
No worries, I'll be fine. Thanks for asking.

Alfie forces a smile... FREEZE FRAME. OVER:

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DR. KULP (O.S.)
All righty. Let's take a gander at that penis of yours.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - PRESENT

Dr. Kulp slips on a round HEAD MIRROR, flips it down over one eye and DROPS OUT OF FRAME in front of Alfie, to examine him. Alfie immediately reacts to her cold hands...

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Whatever happened to warming your hands by the fire?
(then sighs, remembering)
I had to admit, Julie never looked lovelier than when she didn't fancy me anymore.

He smiles a bittersweet smile, then squirms around a little.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to Dr. Kulp O.S.)
So, what do you think, Doctor?

DR. KULP (O.S.)
I think it would be helpful if you stopped squirming, Mr. Elkins.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
That's a bit of a challenge when she's messing about with Sir--
(then suddenly)
Whoa! Hel-lo!
(eyes widening)
God Save the Queen!

Dr. Kulp RISES INTO FRAME.

DR. KULP
Well, so much for ED.

Alfie's embarrassed at first, then grins.

ALFIE
Well done. What a relief. I feel like Lazarus raised from the dead.
(to CAMERA)
If the 'Blair Witch' here can give me a stiffy, then I should have no problem keeping it up for my target demographic.

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DR. KULP
-- There doesn't seem to be anything physiological, so we can be fairly certain your problem was stress-related.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Translation: Julie-related. Like I always say, if they don't get you one way, they get you another.
(to DR. KULP)
Right then, I'll be off.

He reaches for his boxers, failing to see Dr. Kulp's look of concern.

DR. KULP
Um... However...

Alfie turns...

ALFIE
-- I did feel something a little kooky...

She steps to him, drops her HAND OUT OF FRAME.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- Kooky? Is that a medical term?

TWO SHOT - ALFIE AND DR. KULP

As she examines him BELOW FRAME, Alfie's beginning to have a mild panic attack.

DR. KULP
Any pain here? Tender?

ALFIE
(shakes his head)
W-W-What exactly are you looking for? Ow!

DR. KULP
-- Mr. Elkins-

ALFIE
-- Please, you've got to tell-

DR. KULP
-- there's something--

ALFIE
-- What? Something. What?

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DR. KULP
-- I thought I felt--

ALFIE'S VOICE
-- thought you felt--

DR. KULP
-- a lump on your--

ALFIE
(pure panic)
-- Not on my...?!?

Alfie falls straight OUT OF FRAME with a thud.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A light snow falls on Workers hanging the first of the season's CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
(as if reciting a Christmas tale)
And so randy young Alfred got an early Christmas gift...

Alfie hobbles onto the sidewalk, his hands covering his groin to avoid contact with passing Pedestrians.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
-- A penis biopsy.

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE WINDOW - DAY

Delighted Children and their Moms crowd the sidewalk, vying for a peek at a SANTA'S WORKSHOP SCENE being installed in the store window.

Alfie approaches, his hands still protecting his crotch. He steps into the middle of the gathered Families to check out the display, all the while TALKING to CAMERA.

ALFIE
I get my test results in three days, well five, if you count the weekend.
(suddenly panics)
Oh, Lord... How am I going to keep from going bonkers?
(calms himself)
I'll be fine. I'm a young man. Shift focus, Alfie.

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A Pretty Young Mom glances over and notices Alfie looking sort of spaced and crazed. Alfie gives her his best sexy smile. The Mom looks down, sees Alfie's hands cupped over his privates - and immediately yanks her Child away.

Alfie turns and realizes *all* THE MOMS are now glaring at him like he's some sort of perv. He TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
In the meantime...
(turns, hobbling)
-- perhaps I'd be safer hobbling home...

He turns and hobbles off...

EXT. ALFIE'S STREET - LATER THAT DAY

Alfie, juggling a bag of groceries and his dry cleaning, limps up the steps of his building, as Lu Schnitman and her friend MRS. LIBERMAN are about to exit. Alfie struggles to open the door for the ladies.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
Alfie, dear, what's wrong - you look like death warmed over.

ALFIE
Slight groinal soccer injury is all, Lu. Mrs. Liberman, you're looking well.

He holds the door with great effort and gives a slight pained bow as they pass. The Girls giggle at his gallantry. Alfie steps sideways through the doorway. It's then he notices:

LONETTE - WAITING IN THE VESTIBULE

LONETTE
Could I speak to you for a sec?

ALFIE
Sure... Of course. Ladies, this is my friend, Lon--

But Lonette has already moved toward the steps. Alfie turns to the Ladies.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Sorry... I didn't expect--

Mrs. Schnitman comes close to Alfie, whispers in his ear.

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MRS. SCHNITMAN
She's lovely. Good for you dating an African-American.

Alfie crosses to Lonette, who's leaning against the front bannister.

ALFIE
Hey, girl. I've missed you.

Mrs. Schnitman and Mrs. Liberman tippy-toe around them.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
Don't mind us, we're not here, you two kids keep talking.

MRS. LIBERMAN
Very nice to meet you.

Lonette smiles at the Ladies. When they're gone, she drops the smile and turns to Alfie.

ALFIE
So, what have you been--

LONETTE
-- I'm pregnant.

FREEZE FRAME on Alfie...

ALFIE'S VOICE
It seems to me, the problems you worry yourself sick about, never seem to materialize.

DARK CLOUDS

roll across a bleak, grey sky.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
It's the one's that catch you unexpectedly on a Tuesday afternoon, that knock you sideways.

EXT. FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC - DAY

A grey, rainy morning. Alfie and Lonette stand in front of the clinic. Alfie, wearing his raincoat, holds an umbrella between them.

ALFIE'S VOICE
I offered to face the music with her...

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They look at each other a moment, then Lonette turns and heads inside...

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- but she wanted to go it alone...

INT/EXT ALFIE'S TOWN CAR

The rain has turned to drizzle as Alfie waits in front of the clinic.

ALFIE'S VOICE
We both knew if that baby was born with any pasty white boy features, it would pretty much mean the end of Lonette and Marlon.

He glances up at the clinic, checks his watch, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
Not to mention, your host for the this evening.

ON THE STREET

Alfie paces.

ALFIE'S VOICE
But, standing there in the rain, I found myself thinking morbid thoughts, like 'Here's another kid you'll never get a chance to know... your own...'

He turns up his collar against the chill.

A HALF-HOUR LATER

Alfie rubs his hands together to stay warm. He tries to light a cigarette but can't in the drizzle.

BACK IN THE TOWN CAR

Alfie is now smoking, takes a deep drag, leans his head back, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
Life can be a bit too much at times... Still, it beats the hell out of the alternative.

ALFIE LEANS AGAINST TOWN CAR'S FENDER

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He glances up as the CLINIC DOOR OPENS and Lonette walks slowly toward him. She looks shaken. Alfie hurries to meet her, trying to appear upbeat.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Well, that didn't take long, did it?

He looks in her eyes, forces a smile. She turns away. Alfie takes her hand and helps her to the car.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Your hands are freezing.
(rubs her hands)
Are you... How do you feel?

LONETTE
Empty.

Lonette gets in the car, Alfie opening and closing the door for her. He stands there for a moment, then TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
That night in the bar, I thought I was getting something for nothing but it doesn't seem to have worked out that way, does it?

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - HIGH SHOT - LATER

Alfie's Town Car pulls up and he gets out, opening the door for Lonette. She gets out and walks the rest of the way home without even a goodbye. Alfie stands there watching her disappear in the crowd...

BLACKOUT:

OVER BLACK

ALFIE'S VOICE
I keep having this vision...

INT. MEDICAL LAB - NIGHT

A bespectacled, LAB TECHNICIAN is bent over a microscope, intensely studying a slide.

ALFIE'S VOICE
That at this very moment, some lab technician is looking at my slide and gasping.

The Lab Tech GASPS, recoiling at what he sees.

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ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And calling over his mates...

Other Lab Technician's quickly crowd around him.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- to observe this tragic specimen.

The other Lab Techs all GASP in horror as well.

CUT TO:

LU SCHNITMAN

In her LIVING ROOM, wearing a frilly robe and nightgown.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
You're not going to die, honey bunch.

Alfie sits across from Lu, rumpled and anxious in his pj's. Lu drops a marshmallow into the cup of hot chocolate Alfie's holding, follows it with a splash of brandy and stirs it for him.

MRS. SCHNITMAN (CONT'D)
If it's anything, which I'm sure it's not, you can rest assured they caught it early. My friend Marge Skolnick, God rest her--
(catches self)
Oh, never mind. Go on, Alfie.

Alfie puts down his hot chocolate, overly anxious, wrings his hands.

ALFIE
Because the thing is, Lu, when I do go, I'd like to go out on a higher note, if you know what I mean... I don't want to feel too many--
(searching for the word)

MRS. SCHNITMAN
-- Regrets, sweetheart?

ALFIE
Yeah. Exactly. Regrets.
(TURNS to CAMERA)
She's so warm and compassionate.
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
Why can't she be a rich, curvy Norwegian babe with pert, up-turned...
(to himself)
All right, stop.
(to LU)
There are things I still want to do with my life, Lu.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
Like what, lovey?

ALFIE
Well, that's part of the problem... I'm not exactly sure... But, if it turns out tomorrow that I even *have* a future, it's a sign changes need to be made...

MRS. SCHNITMAN
I'm sure you'll find your way, Alfie.

ALFIE
I appreciate you letting me ramble on, Lu... There aren't many people I can turn to at two in the a.m.

Lu gives him a comforting smile.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
Oh, please, everyone adores you.

ALFIE
I don't think I'm winning many popularity contests these days, Lu.

MRS. SCHNITMAN
Well, from what I've seen, you certainly have your share of female admirers. Present company included.

Alfie gives Lu a hug. She's plotzing.

CUT TO:

A LINE-UP OF OLD GEEZERS

CAMERA MOVES PAST Geezer after Geezer seated side-by-side until we come to ALFIE, the youngest geezer in THE DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM by thirty years. His nervous knee is bobbing like gang-busters.

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He fidgets for a beat, then is on his feet, crossing to the ICY NURSE, at the receptionist station. She's a cool Hitchcock blonde. Before he can speak:

ICY NURSE
For the millionth time, Mr. Elkins, when we know the results, you'll know the results.

ALFIE
For the millionth time, Nurse, since I've nothing better to do than find out whether I'm gonna live or die - think I'll hang.

He crosses back to his seat, picks up a magazine, leafs through it, then glances out the window.

HIS VIEW - ANOTHER FUNERAL

It's raining and the Mourners are all hidden under an array of BLACK UMBRELLAS as they toss rose petals onto a coffin.

CLOSE ANGLE - ALFIE

He turns from the funeral TO CAMERA.

ALFIE
One wonders who'd show up to toss petals on my coffin. Really, who - Max? Who'd drive him?

The Icy Nurse glances over at him, then looks away. Alfie can't help himself. He's back at her desk like a shot.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Nurse, I saw the way you looked at me just then and if you already know something and they've asked you not to tell me--

ICY NURSE
-- Mr. Elkins...

ALFIE
-- I can handle it...

ICY NURSE
-- Mr. Elk--

ALFIE
-- I'm right, aren't I?

ICY NURSE
(daggers)
<u>There</u> - <u>is</u> - <u>no</u> - <u>news</u>!

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Alfie closes his eyes regaining his composure, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
I'm gonna be fine. I just feel it.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie enters to find one urinal "Out of Order". The other occupied by a nattily dressed old guy, JOE.

JOE
I'll be a minute. Or ten.

ALFIE
Take your time.

JOE
Don't have a choice. I used to pee, now I trickle. I'm Joe. What's your name?

ALFIE
Me? Alfie.

We HEAR a thin trickle of pee in fits and starts from Joe.

JOE
So, how you doin', Alfie?

ALFIE
Hangin' in... you?

JOE
Shitty.

ALFIE
Yeah, me too.
(then)
I like the bolo tie, Joe.

JOE
Thanks. I have a collection.

He's still peeing. Alfie, having a bit of trouble holding it in, smiles politely at Joe.

JOE (CONT'D)
When you're old, you learn to be patient.
(then)
Yeah, used to be I had no time for nothing. Go, go, go.

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ALFIE
I know the feeling...

JOE
The wife was always hocking me to take a little vacation, Hawaii, Reno... I always said, 'Next year, Evie, next year, I got too much on my platter...' Always thought I'd have more time... Then one Sunday night, she takes the pot roast outta the oven, yells, 'Soup's on'... and slumps to the kitchen floor. Just like that.
(snaps his fingers)
Dead as disco.

ALFIE
Geez, I'm sorry, Joe.

JOE
I tried picking up the pieces. Even went to Waikiki alone on the eight-day cruise package she was always yakking about. Couldn't get Evie outta my mind. I kept thinking how she would've loved the islands... the trade winds, the flowers...
(laughs to himself)
-- and those blue drinks.

ALFIE
I think you had what they call a bit of 'contrition.'
(to CAMERA)
Calendar word.

JOE
You married, Alfie?

ALFIE
No, Joe.

JOE
How come? You a tough fit?

ALFIE
It's just not on my radar.

JOE
Two things I learned in life - find someone to love and live every day as though it's your last...
(MORE)

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JOE (cont'd)
(zips up)
She's all yours, Alfie. Enjoy.

Joe crosses to wash his hands.

JOE (CONT'D)
If you're ever bored or feel like schmoozing, give me a holler...
(about to hand Alfie his card, stops)
Ah... you'll never call.

ALFIE
(not really meaning it)
Maybe I will.

JOE
Good, we'll go to a rave together.

Alfie laughs, takes Joe's card.

ALFIE
Thanks, Joe. And, sorry about Evie.

Joe looks off wistfully, starts out, stops, turns back.

JOE
We weren't all that fond of each other, but we were very close, if you know what I mean...

ALFIE
I think I do.

Joe pats Alfie on the shoulder and leaves. HOLD on Alfie watching him go. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
I've been thinking a lot about God and death lately...

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A dreary, drizzly day. Beat. Beat. The DOOR OPENS and Alfie trudges out, head hanging, shoulders sagging. He lifts his head slightly, looks mournfully AT CAMERA:

ALFIE
-- And how, if what they taught us in Bible Class is true, I'm really in for it.
(then, practically jumping for joy)
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
But I won't be partying with Lucifer any time soon - 'Cause my test results came back NEGATIVE! I'm gonna live!

Suddenly he's Gene Kelly, sans umbrella. He hops over the railing - splashing feet first in a HUGE PUDDLE.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Look at that, I've ruined my Prada loafers!

Alfie splashes joyfully around in the puddle, oblivious to the stares of onlookers. He suddenly stops, SPINS around to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Don't think I've forgotten my oath to completely change my life!

A CLAP of THUNDER, LIGHTENING streaks across the sky.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Yep, health is now priority number one, business plan moves onto the fast track and from this day forward - no more meaningless sex!

Alfie spreads his arms wide and as he opens his mouth to drink in the RAIN, we HEAR a SCREAM of ECSTASY.

MATCH CUT TO:

THE ICY BLONDE NURSE - FREEZE FRAME

Half out of in her crisp white uniform and half out of her mind, she's caught in a frozen moment of unbridled ecstasy...

ALFIE'S VOICE
-- All right, all right... one little piece of unfinished business...

The IMAGE POPS to LIFE and the Icy Nurse HOWLS like a Banshee...

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
You have to admit, this one desperately needed a good thawing out.

WIDEN to REVEAL the Icy Nurse and Alfie going at it, after hours, on top of HER RECEPTIONISTS' DESK.

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The Icy Nurse claws Alfie's back, writhing and screaming and generally going nuts. Alfie steals a quizzical LOOK to CAMERA.

ALFIE
But, what's up with all the racket? I mean, if it's for my benefit, she's wasting her breath.
(SCREAMS grow louder)
No ego requires this much positive feedback.

The Icy Nurse reaches an EAR-PIERCING ORGASM...

ICY NURSE
Oh, Mr. Elkins - you rock!!!

INT. TOWN CAR - MOVING - DAY

Alfie, wearing a snappy new suit and his chauffeur's cap, maneuvers the Town Car through traffic. He SPEAKS to CAMERA, while occasionally checking something in his rear-view mirror.

ALFIE
Minor detour... Back on track and cracking on.

He glances in the rear-view.

HIS VIEW - THROUGH MIRROR

Curled up in his backseat is LIZ, a voluptuous, some would say over-ripe, all would say sexy, woman in her late forties, early fifies... She has a full, throaty smoker's voice and is decked out in Versace.

Liz nuzzles WES, a tanned, tight, manicured, business exec in his fifties. They both roll calls, Wes' hand absently resting on Liz's thigh.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
New slate. New beginning...

Liz looks up from her cell phone, catches Alfie in the rear-view. Alfie flashes his patented smile, Liz looks away, continues talking into the phone...

EXT. HENRI BENDEL - DAY

The Limo pulls up and Alfie pops out, smartly OPENING the DOOR for Liz and Wes.

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WES
(snapping phone shut)
What's your name?

ALFIE
Alfie, sir.

WES
Wait here, Alfie.

ALFIE
May I ask how long you'll be?

WES
(turns back)
Why, you got someplace to go?

ALFIE
No, I just thought I'd grab a cup of tea across the--

WES
-- You know what, why don't you stay put.

Wes starts after Liz.

ALFIE
I like your suit, guv.

Wes gives Alfie a dismissive look, then follows Liz into Henri Bendel. Alfie "flips" Wes off, behind his back. Liz glances over her shoulder and catches the gesture, breaks a tiny smile. Alfie pops a lollypop in his mouth...

EXT. HENRI BENDEL - AN HOUR LATER

Alfie leans against the Town car watching Christmas shoppers hurry past. He checks his watch, makes a decision, clicks on the hazard lights and drops the lollypop stick in the trash.

INT. HENRI BENDEL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON THREE IMAGES of LIZ seen in a three-way mirror. She's modeling a clingy low-cut cocktail dress while a Chic Salesgirl watches admiringly from the sidelines.

LIZ
Yay or nay?

Wes looks up from his *The Wall Street Journal* but before he can answer:

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ALFIE (O.S.)
A definite 'yay'.

Wes sees ALFIE'S REFLECTION approaching in the mirror, pulling off his chauffeur's cap.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(as he passes Wes)
Stunning, wouldn't you agree, sir?

WES
(annoyed)
I'm sorry, didn't I ask you to wait by the car?

ALFIE
I reckoned the lady might need a hand with her packages.

Liz feels Alfie's unabashed male appreciation wash over her.

LIZ
(poses for Alfie)
Yay? You think?

ALFIE
I do... With one minor...
(gesturing he wants to adjust something)
-- May I?

LIZ
-- You may.

ALFIE
-- adjustment...

Alfie moves close to Liz, gently tugging the neckline revealing a small TATTOO of a TINY HEART with the name *PABLO* S encircling it on her breast. S

LIZ
Bullfighter. Another lifetime. Don't ask.

Alfie glances at the tantalizing view of her cleavage, then COCKS an EYE to CAMERA.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Fifty if she's a day. But you know, they say 'fifty's the new forty' and is she not the living proof?
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
I mean, have a look - Cleavage like the Holland Tunnel.
(to LIZ)
Better?

LIZ
Much.

ALFIE
You are so right to trust Versace. A pair of hot pink Jimmy Choo stilettos and you're good to go.

Alfie nods to the Salesgirl who hurries off in search of the Jimmy Choo's.

LIZ
Well, aren't you Mister Full Service...

Wes snaps shut his cell-phone and glares.

ALFIE
He's getting a bit pissy, isn't he?

LIZ
He's fine. It's good for him.

ALFIE
Husband's a bit older than you.

LIZ
He's not my husband.

ALFIE
But he's wearing a ring.

LIZ
I didn't say he wasn't someone else's husband.

Alfie laughs, a gal after his own heart.

THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - LATER

The Town Car pulls up and a Bellman steps forward, opening the door for Liz and Wes.

Alfie hustles around, pops the trunk, and begins handing shopping bags to a Second Bellman. He finishes, turns, holding out his card to Liz.

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ALFIE
If you should require my services in the future...

Liz takes the card, joins Wes.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(calling after them)
Happy Christmas... Sir... Ma'am.

LIZ
Back at ya, cutie.

Alfie watches Liz move toward the hotel entrance. She offers Alfie a quick turn of the head and a wink. FREEZE FRAME. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
Now *that*, I thought to myself, is a *real* woman. Smart, sexy... And you saw the little flirt that went down between us.

Alfie gives Liz a parting wave, then TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
It makes me think... If a woman of that caliber takes notice of a bloke like me... perhaps I've been selling myself a bit short...
(starts toward Limo)
And that was it, in a flash I had my New Year's resolution...
(stops, turns TO CAMERA)
Aim higher.

EXT . ELEGANT LIMO - DAY

Alfie's Town Car zooms down the ramp. OVER:

WING'S VOICE
Futile!

INT. ELEGANT LIMO DEPOT

Wing is PACING AND RANTING behind Alfie who stands in the foreground, FACING CAMERA.

WING
Desperate! Doomed! Desolate!

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ALFIE
Gave him a calendar for Christmas - large mistake.
(to WING)
What's got you so bleak, mate?

WING
You soul brother!

Wing tosses a package to Alfie.

ON THE STREET - OUTSIDE ELEGANT LIMO - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie leans against a wall reading a letter and holding a small wrapped gift.

ALFIE'S VOICE
As it turns out, Wing was bummed because Marlon had quit. He and Lonette decided, on the spur of the moment, to elope and move upstate. Somehow, Lonette convinced Marlon it would be too painful to say our 'good-byes' in person.
(sighs, resigned)
Yeah, right...

As Alfie unwraps the gift.

FLASHBACK TO:

A BEACH - AT SUNSET - ALFIE'S MEMORY

Alfie, Marlon and Lonette, bundled up in blankets, around a bonfire - drinking beer, acting crazy and cracking each other up. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
In the letter, Marlon called me his 'best mate' and apologized for bailing on our little 'take-over' scheme. He said his whole thing now was to make Lonette happy - and that I had a standing invite to drop by anytime...

The Three Friends sling their arms around each other and the IMAGE FREEZES. PULL OUT to:

ALFIE - HOLDING THE GIFT

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It's a sea shell-encrusted FRAME with the PHOTOGRAPH of ALFIE, MARLON and LONETTE captured at that moment on the beach - laughing, their arms around each other.

WIDE SHOT - ALFIE ON THE STREET

Alone, holding the framed photo.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I was feeling a bit abandoned...
And to make matters worse, it all
dove-tailed into the second
loneliest night of the year...

Softly, we HEAR Steve Tyrell's soulful version of *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas.*

CHRISTMAS EVE IN MANHATTAN

New York in all its holiday splendour.

ALFIE'S VOICE
-- Christmas Eve.

-- Doorways adorned with garlands... Wreaths of holly and strings of twinkling lights hung on snow-dusted shops.

ALFIE'S VOICE **(CONT'D)**
A night that brings on those
familiar festive feelings of
hopelessness, anguish and despair.

-- Snow flutters down on happily, bundled-up Upper East Siders - hurrying to festivities.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Not a good time to be flying solo.

INT. ALFIE'S TOWN CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
That's why I'm of the belief that
couples should never break up
between Thanksgiving and January
Two.

-- Thousands of lights adorn the Broadway entrance to Macy's.

ALFIE'S VOICE
Always have a relationship to carry
you through the holidays.

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-- Skaters, mostly Couples, glide by the 70-foot Christmas tree in Rockefeller Center.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
The down side of course being gifts.

INT. ALFIE'S TOWN CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Passing The Empire State Building wrapped in twinkling Christmas lights. Alfie LOOKS at CAMERA as he drives.

ALFIE
Personally, I've always suspected that everyone was having a far merrier Christmas than me. Not that I ever actually *had* a Christmas, but that's a whole other Dickens story.

A LOUD male WHISTLE interrupts him and Alfie raises a finger TO CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

He turns to see:

ALFIE'S VIEW - TRAVELING SHOT - CITY STREET

A boisterous group of BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS in their late 20's, waving for Alfie to pull over. Someone drops a bottle to the sidewalk where it shatters.

YOUNG GUY IN SANTA HAT
Taxi!

Fits of bent-over laughter, some random carolling. They're drinking from plastic cups, practically spilling on each other, all majorly buzzed. Alfie lowers his window...

ALFIE
Sorry, mates, against the law for me to transport more than--

Alfie stops mid-sentence, unable to speak, as one of the young women who has been facing in the opposite direction turns toward him.

HER NAME IS NIKKI

And she's a tall, willowy, drop-dead blonde. She gives Alfie a smile that could melt Alaska.

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ALFIE'S VOICE
And there she was...

Snow swirls around her... BACKLIT by twinkling Christmas lights, she is nothing short of a vision. CHORAL MUSIC rises.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- My Christmas Miracle.
Remember... 'Aim higher'?
(to THE GROUP, voice cracking)
Hop in, then.

They all rush the Town Car, Nikki leans her head in the window...

NIKKI
Thanks for saving us, I was freezing my little...
(picking her word)
--tush off.

ALFIE
No worries. A bit crowded back there, why don't you--

NIKKI
(reading his mind)
-- Good idea. Why don't I.

Nikki slides into front seat, while the others pile in back. Alfie glances down, could there be a shorter mini-skirt on planet earth? Could there be longer legs?

EXT. TOWN CAR - HIGH SHOT - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

OVER we HEAR everyone singing *"I Saw Mommy Schtupping Santa Claus"*...

INT. TOWN CAR - SAME TIME

The friends are all crammed into the back finishing the verse and cracking up.

NIKKI
They don't get out much.

Her Friends laugh agreeably...

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ALFIE
(to the Friends)
You better watch out, you'll end up with a lump of coal in your stocking.

NIKKI
You're English. I love English.

The guy wearing the Santa hat, KEV, leans over the front seat.

KEV
(hokey English accent)
How much to take us downtown, English?

ALFIE
Consider it my gift, darling.
(for Nikki's benefit)
That's what the season's all about, isn't it, the joy of giving?

KEV
Yeah. Don't you just hate the holidays?

GUY #1
Loathe.

GIRL #1
Despise.

NIKKI
Oh, I love them.
(to Alfie)
Don't you... what's you name?

ALFIE
Alfie. Absolutely. Adore.

Nikki is punching RADIO BUTTONS, screwing up his pre-sets the way Dorie did earlier. Every station is playing HOLIDAY TUNES. Alfie starts to say something, catches himself. Nikki fires up a joint and gives him an inviting smile.

NIKKI
Wanna abuse a little substance, Alfie?

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ALFIE
No thanks, I'm trying to quit.
(glances at beautiful
Nikki)
One hit.

Nikki settles on *Little Saint Nick* by The Beach Boys, as Alfie takes a long pull on the joint and holds it in... And MUSIC RISES...

EXT. MANHATTAN - NIGHT (MUSIC OVER)

The Town Car rolls through the nearly empty city streets.

INT. ARTIST'S LOFT - NIGHT

A full-tilt bash. Packed with young, arty types. Huge Pollack-like canvases, with bold streaks and splotches of color, cover the walls. Strings of vintage Christmas lights everywhere. Sixties holiday MUSIC blasts, possibly a Mel Torme/Hip Hop mix. The crowd, mostly couples, laugh, dance, make-out, drink too much...

CAMERA FINDS Alfie taking a couple of eggnogs from the Bartender. He turns to see:

NIKKI - SURROUNDED BY ADMIRERS

She winks at Alfie.

ALFIE'S VOICE
There's an expression the Yanks often use, 'Go with the flow'...

BACK TO ALFIE

SPEAKING to CAMERA as he moves through the crowd, holding the drinks.

ALFIE
She invited me into the party and although I had a dose of the holiday blues, when a bird of this mind-blowing caliber comes along, it's best to get going and start flowing...

Alfie arrives with the drinks, handing one to Nikki and accidently spilling a bit down the side of his glass in the process. As Nikki leans in and licks the eggnog off the side of Alfie's glass, he TURNS to CAMERA.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
Maybe it was the late hour. Maybe it was the heavily-spiked eggnog...

ALFIE AND NIKKI - STANDING UNDER A DOORWAY

Talking, laughing, drinking.... Suddenly, Nikki realizes they are standing under a sprig of MISTLETOE... And she gives Alfie a sweet kiss. He glances TO CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Maybe it was simply a mutual desperate desire to have ourselves a Merry Little Christmas...

ALFIE AND NIKKI - DANCING

It's getting romantic, they're wrapped around each other, moving fluidly.

ALFIE'S VOICE
Whatever the reason, 'hooking up' has *never* gone more swimmingly, until...

They are about to kiss, this time without the aid of mistletoe, when:

A DEEP MALE VOICE
May I have this dance?

Alfie turns to see a handsome MIDDLE-EASTERN GUY, standing before them. He's tall and slickly dressed... everything's shiny - shirt, tie, suit, forehead. He has a moustache and wears tinted glasses.

ALFIE
No thanks. But sweet of you to ask.

FAROOZ
(ignores Alfie)
-- I need to speak with you, Nikki.

NIKKI
Farooz, I'm dancing.

FAROOZ
(a step forward)
Undance. We need to talk.

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ALFIE
(raises his hands)
Really, don't let me--

NIKKI
He's my ex-fiance.
(introducing)
Farooz - Alfie.

FAROOZ
(correcting)
I'm her fiance. I did not agree to the ex part.

Alfie gives CAMERA a LOOK... Nikki takes him aside.

NIKKI
It's not what you think, English. I promise you. We're so over.

ALFIE
...think you better explain that to the bloke in the shiny suit.

NIKKI
Oohh... 'bloke'. You're so cute.
(holds up five fingers)
Give me five. Believe me, I can turn a guy off as easily as I can turn him on.

She squeezes Alfie's hands, gives him a smile... She's too gorgeous. Alfie STEPS away and then EASES BACK within earshot, as Nikki and Farooz carry on a heated, clenched teeth argument behind him...

FAROOZ
-- you're full of bullshit! Who else will ever put up with you?

NIKKI
That's really a great way to win me back.

FAROOZ
I want an explanation, Nikki!

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
You want an explanation? How's this - she's had her fill of you, Slick. Move on. You look rich, I'm sure you can buy someone else.

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NIKKI
-- plus I can't deal with the drama and the possessiveness...

FAROOZ
You are outrageous!

NIKKI
Hey, calm down. Maybe you should take something...

FAROOZ
Like what - a gun to shoot you?

ALFIE
(to no one)
I'll be at the bar.

TWENTY MINUTES LATER - AT THE BAR

The Bartender hands Alfie a fresh drink. The party has thinned out. Nikki and Farooz are not around.

THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Alfie's glass is empty and the party has now dwindled way down. He looks around. Nikki and Farooz are still not to be found. Alfie asks the Bartender for one for the road and grabs his overcoat.

INT/EXT STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie heads down the stairs, sipping the fresh eggnog and TALKING to CAMERA.

ALFIE
A lesson to us all, never--

A DOOR BANGS OPEN somewhere above and HIGH HEELS CLACK frantically down the stairs. Alfie looks up, and sees Nikki running down the stairs. She grabs his arm, without breaking stride, pulling him along with her.

NIKKI
Quick... we gotta get out of Dodge!

Above them, the door BANGS OPEN again!

ON THE STREET - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Alfie and Nikki hit the street at full bore... slide across the icy sidewalk. Alfie presses his remote, unlocks the doors and he and Nikki scramble inside.

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Alfie starts the engine and is about to pull away when there's a DEAFENING CRASH. Alfie looks up.

HIS VIEW - FAROOZ

Landing on the WINDSHIELD, his face a mask of rage. Alfie takes off, Farooz hanging on to the wiper blades for dear life.

FAROOZ
(screaming into Alfie)
You'll be fucking sorry!!!

Alfie HITS his BRAKES and Farooz SLIDES OFF the hood and FLIES into a SNOW BANK.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Alfie floors it and the Town Car fish-tails down the street.

INT. TOWN CAR - TRAVELLING - SAME TIME

The Town Car skids around the corner, making a clean getaway. Alfie sighs with relief, looks over to Nikki, who gives him a sweet smile...

NIKKI
You may be fucking... but you won't be sorry.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - HIGH SHOT - A HALF HOUR LATER

Blanketed in snow. CAMERA MOVES TOWARD the Town Car parked under a street lamp.

ALFIE'S VOICE
After a remark like that and knowing she was suddenly 'homeless for the holidays', I did something highly out of character...

INT. TOWN CAR - NIGHT

Alfie and Nikki are furiously making out in the back seat. Between breathy kisses...

ALFIE
I'm renovating in the West Village, so I can only offer up temporary digs... but you're welcome to crash at my sublet if you like...
(to CAMERA)
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
-- Tide me over through the holidays.

NIKKI
Sounds inviting...
(kissing him)
Anything you say with that accent makes me want to do things only 'bad girls' do on a first date.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

CAMERA PULLS AWAY from the Town Car, now covered with snow...

ALFIE'S VOICE
And so it came to pass, that after all those years, Little Alfie finally got what he wanted for Christmas...

MUSIC UP...

A *HAPPY NEW YEAR!* BANNER

CAMERA BOOMS DOWN past balloons, crepe paper and one of those twirling mirrored balls that sends twinkling lights across a room.

INT. SWANKY NIGHTSPOT - NEW YEARS EVE

A champagne cork is popped! A Band plays. Alfie struts in wearing Nikki wrapped around his arm. She looks smashing in a shimmering skin-tight mini dress. Alfie grins AT CAMERA.

ALFIE
The twelve days of Christmas were flying by...

Alfie twirls Nikki out to the music. She laughs big time. FREEZE FRAME. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
-- at a surrealistic pace...

RESUME ACTION. Nikki twirls effortlessly back into Alfie's arms and kisses him. You half expect the other patrons to applaud.

Alfie slips off his elegant NEW TOPCOAT, smiles AT CAMERA.

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ALFIE
You like? Little Christmas gift from Nikki.
(hands to Coat Check Girl)
Originally meant for Farooz. Lucky break we're the same size.
(confidentially)
Cashmere.
(winks)
Got his girl *and* his topcoat...

FLASHBACK TO:

RAPID-FIRE SHOTS - ONE AFTER ANOTHER

HIGHLIGHTS of the past week with Nikki...

ALFIE'S VOICE
Yeah, it's been quite the ride.

-- Nikki and Alfie, flying through SoHo on his VESPA, looking very 60's Mod.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
The package was irresistible - a show-stopper...

-- Nikki, wearing big Chanel shades, feeds Alfie a hot fudge Sunday at an OUTDOOR CAFE. Other Men ogle her.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- With a new school brand of sexiness...
(beat)
And who wouldn't *dig* the way she made heads turn?

-- Nikki, wearing glitter eye-shadow, sips a Martini and stares smoldering INTO CAMERA.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
She was also smart...

-- Nikki and Alfie in bed - both concealed by NEWSPAPERS. He's reading *Hello*, she's behind *The New York Times*.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Fun...

-- Nikki and Alfie lying half-naked on top of the KITCHEN TABLE, surrounded by the remains of Italian take-out...

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ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Oh, and did I mention, she makes a cracking good bed?

-- Alfie's BED - FOR ONCE - PERFECTLY MADE.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I began to wonder - Could this be 'the one'...

-- Alfie and Nikki SLOW DANCING.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- who finally holds my attention?

Another Stunning Blonde passes, flashing Alfie a comely smile. Alfie looks her way for a fleeting moment, his gaze almost instantly returning to Nikki... As they continue to glide across the floor...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SWANKY NIGHTSPOT - THE PRESENT

Ten... Nine... Eight... The Revellers COUNTING DOWN to the New Year. Seven... Six... Five... Alfie and Nikki pick up flutes of champagne. Four... Three... Two...

THE CLOCK ON THE WALL

The second hand hits midnight! Everyone CHEERS, blowing noise-makers, kissing one another and singing *"Auld Lang Syne"*...

ALFIE AND NIKKI

Nikki kisses Alfie with all she's got, writhing up against him, way over-the-top...

When they break Nikki CLINKS Alfie's glass a bit too hard and both GLASSES SHATTER. FREEZE FRAME on SHATTERING GLASS in mid-air. OVER:

ALFIE'S VOICE
In every doomed relationship, there comes, what I like to call, *The Uh-Oh Moment*...

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Alfie still holding the jagged CHAMPAGNE FLUTE, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
When a certain little something happens that tells you you've just witnessed the beginning of the end. And suddenly you stop and think... uh-oh, iceberg ahead.

ANGLE - NIKKI

Bent over LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY at the mishap. Other Guests look on, failing to see the humor. FREEZE on Nikki - out of control. OVER:

ALFIE VOICE
With Nikki, that was the first of many *Uh-Oh Moments*...

RAPID FIRE SHOTS - ONE AFTER ANOTHER

LOWLIGHTS of life with Nikki...

ALFIE'S VOICE
It began with petty arguments...

-- Nikki, her face filled with rage, throws the contents of her Martini glass, including the olive, DIRECTLY at CAMERA.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Followed by random bouts of melancholia...

-- Nikki sits on a PARK BENCH next to a crazy, filthy BAG LADY with a garbage-filled shopping cart. They are both staring blankly into space. The Bag Lady looks way happier than Nikki.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Reckless behavior...

-- Alfie's Vespa WRAPPED AROUND a fire hydrant, water spraying into the air... Nikki stands nearby, gesturing - like it's the hydrant's fault.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And thank you, no - I did *not* have insurance.
(rolling on)
The girl never knew when she'd had one too many...

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-- Nikki PASSED OUT COLD on the BAR at LUCKY'S. Other Patrons try not to stare.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And I begin to *dread* the way she made heads turn...
(then)
But, whenever I began to feel there was little reason to go on...

-- Nikki stretched out on ALFIE'S BED, wearing a clingy negligee, languidly smoking a cigarette. She gives CAMERA a "come hither" look.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I was reminded that we still had one very major thing in common...

-- Lu Schnitman, in rollers and a robe has her ear glued to her APARTMENT WALL.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Yep, Freud was right - the battier the bird, the better the boffing.

Lu's eyes widen as she HEARS Nikki's HYSTERICAL SCREAMS of PLEASURE coming from Alfie's apartment.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
(sighs)
If only she didn't insist on smoking before, after...

-- Alfie's BED - ENGULFED in FLAMES...

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- *and* during...

DISSOLVE INTO:

A PAINT BRUSH

Paints a wide swath of INDIGO BLUE across one of the walls in ALFIE'S APARTMENT. The room is now cluttered with Nikki's things... underwear drying on the back of a chair, make-up, fashion magazines scattered about, overflowing ashtrays, a box of Tampons, a bong, a gaggle of prescription pill bottles...

ANGLE BACK to Nikki, wearing a silk thong and one of Alfie's big sweaters, painting a wall of Alfie's apartment. Alfie ENTERS from the bedroom, pulling a scarf around his neck.

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NIKKI
(over her shoulder)
What time will you be home, honey?

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Hear that? What time will I, honey, be home? Sounds dangerously close to wife-speak.

NIKKI
-- 'Cause I'm making something really special for din-din.

Alfie LOOKS to CAMERA on 'din-din'...

ALFIE
I'll ring you. You don't think that color's a bit intense?

Nikki turns to him...

NIKKI
I think you're a bit intense.

She grabs his scarf and pulls him toward her.

ALFIE
Careful - do you have paint on your hands? Plus, must you wear one of my good sweaters to paint in...?

NIKKI
(pulls sweater over her head)
Sorry, baby.

She's now topless. Alfie glances down at his sweater, as it FALLS to the floor - with INDIGO PAINT SMUDGES where Nikki just pulled it off. He sighs...

ALFIE
All right then, gotta dash...

She slips her arms around him...

NIKKI
Bet I can make it worth your while to stay...

ALFIE
Wish I could Nik, but I've got that meeting...

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As Nikki closes the paint can and moves into the KITCHEN, Alfie TURNS to CAMERA, indicating her toplessness.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
You know you're in trouble when a sight like this can't keep you planted.

Nikki begins taking things out of the fridge to prepare dinner as Alfie starts for the door, TALKING to CAMERA on the way...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
When I was a boy, St. Alban's Secondary, my school, took us all on a cultural outing to observe art at some famous museum in London. And while there--

He stops at the threshold, looking back at Nikki.

HIS VIEW

Nikki, toplessly cutting and dicing phallic vegetables with a large kitchen knife.

ALFIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
-- I happened upon this statue of a Greek Goddess, Afro-diddy, I think it was, marble, with this curvaceous womanly shape and perfect chiseled face. I stood, in awe of it.

ALFIE turns from Nikki BACK to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Finally, the teacher called at me to move along, and, as I walked past, I realized there were these huge freakin' cracks all over the goddess. Ruined her for me.
(a beat)
That's Nikki, a beautiful statue, damaged in a way you can't see 'til you get too close.

ANGLE - NIKKI

She glances up, smiles at Alfie. She looks a little nuts. Alfie LOOKS to CAMERA.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
There's a very unhappy ending lurking somewhere in our near future.

Nikki waves, the huge butcher knife in her hand. Alfie smiles and slips out the door.

EXT. UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD - LATE DAY

Alfie pulls up on his Vespa, parks and locks it. He nods to a Doorman, who bows as he pulls the door wide for Alfie.

ALFIE
Elvis.

INT. POSH APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Alfie nods to the Receptionist.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Gilda.

GILDA
Welcome, Mr. Elkins. Enjoy your evening, sir.

Alfie RAISES an EYEBROW to CAMERA as he crosses to the elevator.

ALFIE
As you can see, the lad's moving--
(presses 'UP' button)
-- *up* in the world.

INT. APARTMENT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Alfie approaches a corner door, inserts a key, then GLANCES over his shoulder to CAMERA.

ALFIE
You'll never guess who I'm dropping in on.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alfie enters, dropping his keys on the entry table.

THE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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Italian Moderne with a decided Sixties influence... A fire crackles in the fireplace, a spread of delicacies awaits on a well-stocked wet bar. A female 'pad'. Seductive and inviting...

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
Wouldnt've believed it meself a few weeks back.

LIZ GLIDES INTO THE ROOM

stopping under a wind-blown OIL PAINTING of herself in younger days. She wears a low-cut cocktail dress and heels.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
The San Laurent does wonders for your *décolletage*.

LIZ
Big word.

ALFIE
Big *décolletage*.

Liz laughs her throaty laugh.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Come here immediately.

He kisses her neck, gives her a small smile...

LIZ
What's up, baby? You're not your usual effervescent self.

ALFIE
Just some personal stuff. Nothing, really.

LIZ
Don't 'nothing' me.

ALFIE
It's a... a thing with a friend... who's kind of overstayed his welcome...

LIZ
(knowing)
It's a lot tougher gettin' 'em out than gettin' 'em in, isn't it?

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ALFIE
So, I'm learning - the hard way..

LIZ
Well, why not just be honest...
(hint of innuendo))
Tell him the hotel's under new management and he needs to vacate the premises. Know what I'm saying?

Alfie looks at her.

ALFIE
Yes, I believe I do.

LIZ
Now, come on, let's have a drink and you can tell me the rest of your troubles.

ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
--instead of me listening to all hers. Now there's a first.
(to Liz)
You're very wise, for someone so young.

Liz loves hearing this. Alfie's feeling a bit more chipper, notices a tasteful floral display.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Secret admirer?

LIZ
(teasing)
One of many.
(kisses him)
You'd never think of bringing a girl flowers, would you, Alfie?

Alfie slides his hands along her body...

ALFIE
It would only encourage them.

LIZ
Mmmm... Down boy.

Liz gives a little growl, running her fingernails across his chest, as she heads for the bar. Alfie watching with appreciation, TURNS to CAMERA.

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ALFIE
Yep, she's someone who could mother you *and* rock your world.

LIZ
What's your poison, sweetheart?

ALFIE
I'll have a spot of whiskey, Midleton Rare, if you've got it?

Alfie crosses to the bar, TALKING to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I like dropping a fancy brand name now and again, let her know, she ain't the only one been around...

LIZ
(taking down an exotic green bottle)
Why don't we make this an Absinthe afternoon.

ALFIE
Brilliant.
(to CAMERA)
No idea what she's talking about.

LIZ
You've had Absinthe?

ALFIE
Not recently. Remind me. What is it again?

LIZ
'The Green Fairy'. It's an old European aperitif. The French Impressionists' liquid drug of choice.

Liz takes down two ornate little glasses and mixing utensils.

LIZ (CONT'D)
I picked up some of those things you like, the little egg thingys.

Alfie nibbles on an egg thingy from a tray of hors d'oeuvres,

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ALFIE
(to CAMERA)
I mention I fancy something once, next thing I know--
(gestures to hors d'oeuvres))
-- it's presented to me on a silver platter.

Liz begins the Absinthe ritual: Pouring the green liquid into the small glasses... During this, Alfie wanders around the Living Room, CAMERA FOLLOWING.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Groovy, huh? The kind of pad I plan to own myself one day... Understated elegance with just a touch of the trendy...

He picks up a fireplace poker, stokes the fire, glances over at Liz, mixing their drinks, then CONTINUES to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
She's a regular fashionista... You never have to tell this one which sling-backs go with which frock.

He wanders back toward the Bar, still talking TO CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Owns her own cosmetics company. Empire, actually. Started out doing facials at some fancy salon, mixed up a handful of mud with a dash of papaya or something, put it on the market and next thing you know...
(gestures around)
-- All this.

He returns to the bar, where Liz is dousing a spoonful of sugar with Absinthe...

LIZ
This stuff is so illegal. Les smuggled me a case back from Prague in Listerine bottles.

She tosses Alfie a RED FOLDER from the bar.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Hey, I looked over your business plan...

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ALFIE
And?

LIZ
I'm impressed.

ALFIE
You seem surprised.

LIZ
Not at all. Under all that bravado...

Liz lights the spoon and watches the Absinthe and sugar FLAME-UP.

LIZ (CONT'D)
-- beats the heart of a guy who's a whole lot smarter than he thinks but not nearly as cocky as he wants everyone to believe.

ALFIE
(enjoying this)
And what would we be basing this on?

LIZ
That it takes one to know one.

With that, she pours the FLAMING concoction into a glass, stirs rapidly.

LIZ (CONT'D)
A dash of sugar to hide the bitterness...

Liz bends forward, her top revealing the Holland Tunnel, as she hands the glass to Alfie. He looks down at the S *PABLO* S tattooed on her breast, then up to Liz - who's staring directly in his eyes.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Something on your mind, sailor?

ALFIE
Just wondering if a clever tattoo artist could turn that *Pablo* into an *Alfie*...

They exchange a smile, clink glasses.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
Cheers.

Alfie chugs it down and immediately lets out a horrific GASP.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Jesus!
(between gasps)
It's like drinking bleedin' paint thinner!

Liz laughs, downs her shot and gasps as well. The stuff is so strong. Alfie plops into a chair. Liz drifts over, sits on his knee. A moment, as the Absinthe kicks in...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(feeling the glow)
Is it meant to make you feel all warm going down?

LIZ
(kissing him)
No, darling, that's my job.

The only SOUND in the room - Liz's NAILS scratching against the fabric of Alfie's thigh. They are very close...

LIZ (CONT'D)
You know what they say...
Absinthe makes the heart grow fonder.

Alfie pats her butt as Liz crosses to the bar and mixes another round. He rises, really feeling the effect of the Absinthe, "Whoa"... then motions for CAMERA to FOLLOW.

ALFIE
(sotto, to CAMERA)
Check this out.

He BECKONS us into LIZ'S BATHROOM. Posh. Subdued lighting, huge jacuzzi tub filled with bubbles and surrounded by flickering candles.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
What about the size of this tub?
It can get a bit snug with the both of us playing around in there...
(then)
She's had two husbands. Both croaked.
(indicates tub)
(MORE)

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
I have a feeling, this could've been the scene of the crime.

Liz appears, leaning in the doorway, holding two fresh shots of Absinthe. She and Alfie share a stoned grin...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(sotto, to CAMERA)
I mean there've been times I've felt lucky to crawl out of this thing alive.

Liz moves to the tub, setting their Absinthe shots on the ledge, then slipping out of her dress and into the bubbles.

LIZ
Come on, baby, let's get wet.

Alfie TALKS to CAMERA, while unbuttoning his shirt.

ALFIE
She keeps this up, we may be updating that tattoo sooner than she thinks...

EXT. ALFIE'S STREET - LATE AT NIGHT

A light rain falls on Alfie standing under a street lamp, smoking and looking up at his apartment window.

INT. ALFIE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie, damp from the rain, lets himself in, SPEAKING SOFTLY to CAMERA.

ALFIE
Remember how Little Alfie finally got what he wanted for Christmas?

Alfie looks around. A TRANSFORMATION has taken place. The apartment is spotlessly clean and organized. The only chore left undone is the half-painted Indigo blue wall.

Soft soul music plays on the stereo. Candles, illuminating a romantic table set for two, have burned low. Nikki dozes on the sofa. Alfie sighs, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- Be careful what you wish for.

He crosses to the sofa and gently shakes Nikki. She doesn't budge. He shakes her again and she wakes with a start... Looks at him for a beat, like she doesn't recognize him, then smiles sleepily.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
You dozed off.

NIKKI
I tried waiting up for you...
(sits up)
Your meeting ran late, huh, honey?

She stretches, stunning as always.

ALFIE
Quite... and I'm knackered. But, I did want us to have a little chat...

NIKKI
(rising)
Okay... Why don't we talk over a midnight snack?
(crossing to kitchen)
I made roast beef and Yorkshire Pudding... That was your favorite as a 'young lad', right?
(gestures)
And check the place out, if you please. Your little girl worked her fanny off.

ALFIE
Everything looks smashing, Nik. Really. Brilliant.
(sighs)
Look...

She pulls a pan of roasted vegetables out of the oven, sets it on the counter, starts dishing them into a bowl.

NIKKI
So, Alfie... I've been thinking... Will you look at these cute little potatoes... I know I've been a handful lately... but I think that has to do a lot with me feeling displaced and not totally trusting--

Her VOICE DIALS down, as she CONTINUES TALKING, Alfie STEPS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
Can you believe she picks tonight to act sane again? This is gonna be tricky...
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
When they're this vulnerable, you've got to watch your step... You don't want 'em swallowing a handful of pills and leaving a note addressed to you. *Very* tricky.

He STEPS ASIDE and Nikki's VOICE is DIALED UP again...

NIKKI
-- but I'm as blown away as you are that something *real* seems to be happening between us and--
(stops, to herself)
Okay, Nik, get a grip, don't bury yourself here.
(to Alfie)
All right. So. Cutting to the chase... I'm gonna do better, I promise, I'm gonna take my medication religiously from now on and everything's gonna be easy and breezy. Sound good?
(opening the oven, revealing the roast)
So. Come. Sit. A feast awaits.

ALFIE
I, um... I already ate, Nik.

Nikki covers her disappointment.

NIKKI
Okay. No worries. We'll have leftovers. I'll whip up a little corned beef hash for brunch.

She moves to him, puts her hands on his shoulders and smiles.

NIKKI
What's up, Alfie?

ALFIE
Nothing, it's just... I don't know, there's a lot going on and I'm feeling a bit--

Nikki steps back realizing something's off. She's suddenly, wary, a little scared...

NIKKI
What? Cold? Distant? Remote?

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ALFIE
Look, Nikki, this is a complete drag... but everything happened so quickly and... I don't know... I'm not the best at this sort of thing...

NIKKI
(knowing exactly what he means)
What sort of thing?

ALFIE
-- I don't know exactly how to say it...

NIKKI
Sure you do, Alfie. You've had plenty of experience dumping girls.

A look passes between them...

Nikki crosses the room, pulls her suitcase from the closet. She sets it on a chair, opens it and looks at Alfie.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
Don't worry. I'm already gone.

EXT. STREET - HIGH SHOT - NIGHT

Pouring rain... Nikki, wearing a raincoat but without an umbrella, holds her suitcases, while trying to hail a cab.

CAMERA EASES BACK to see we are OVER ALFIE'S SHOULDER, as he looks out his window. Nikki waves down a Taxi and struggles with her suitcases, finally climbing in and slamming the door.

As the Taxi disappears in the rain...

ALFIE'S VOICE
(sounding raspy now)
Strange, but even when you know it has to end...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ALFIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - A FEW WEEKS LATER

Pouring rain. OVER, we HEAR Alfie in a raspy voice:

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ALFIE'S RASPY VOICE
-- when it finally does, you always get that inevitable twinge--

INT. ALFIE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Rain streaks the windows. Nikki's gone and the apartment is once again modest, messy and male. Nikki's presence echoed by the half-painted INDIGO BLUE wall.

CAMERA DISCOVERS Alfie, sitting on the edge of the sofa, shining his shoes with a corner of his comforter, a blanket draped over his shoulders. He has a cold and looks the worse for wear. He glances up AT CAMERA.

ALFIE
(raspy)
-- have I done the right thing?

He blows his nose into a handkerchief, pulls himself up, crosses to the KITCHEN AREA where a can of tomato soup is boiling over the top of a sauce pan.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I admit, I do miss the companionship...

He turns off the burner and pours the soup into a coffee mug, takes a sip.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
-- and Nikki *was* a show-stopper.

He moves to his closet where he removes a sport coat from its plastic cover and slips it on.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
But, as my ugly Aunt Gladys used to say, 'Looks ain't everything'. I used to think that was a load of bollix but lately I've come to believe, the old bat may have had something.

He pulls on his raincoat, gives himself a final mirror-check and heads for the door. As he's about to exit, he TURNS BACK to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
One thing I do know... You can't really take away a girl's dreams if you don't have new ones to replace them with...

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Somewhere a CHURCH BELL is ringing...

CUT TO:

A CHURCH SPIRE

The BELLS RINGING. CAMERA TILTS DOWN to the entrance, as:

THE CHURCH DOORS

are flung open and JULIE and TERRY bounce out with MAX and the Teddy Bear Terry gave him for his birthday. They all hold hands in a row like a family foursome.

Julie grasps a wedding bouquet and looks radiant. All three are dressed to the nines, laughing and seemingly bursting with happiness. A small Group of Friends and Family follow, milling on the church steps, with hugs and kisses while a PHOTOGRAPHER grabs shots. During:

ALFIE'S VOICE
Jules had left a phone message. It wasn't an invitation so much as a notification...

Alfie watches from the safety of a nearby alcove, TURNS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
But my curiosity got the best of me.

Julie takes Terry's lapels and pulls him to her, kissing him. Everyone cheers.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I wish it hadn't.

The Well-wishers clap and cheer them on to hold the kiss.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
You know, it's funny but Jules used to say she couldn't live without me...

Alfie shrugs... Such is life. He steps from the cover of the alcove and catches little Max's eye, gives him a wave.

Max just stands there, hugging his Teddy... either no longer remembering Alfie or no longer trusting him...

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Alfie slips back out of sight as the Newlyweds break and Terry picks Max up. Max throws his arms around Terry's neck, the way he used to do with Alfie.

Alfie watches "The New Family" posing for pictures in front of the church...

ALFIE'S VOICE
I had the sudden realization that I'd probably never see Jules and Max again...

Alfie, hidden in the shadows of the alcove, LOOKS to CAMERA.

ALFIE
This was followed by a very unpleasant feeling in the vicinity of my heart...

He glances back for one final look, then walks away...

EXT./INT. LIMO DEPOT - OUTSIDE WING'S OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

Alfie enters. He HEARS an odd sound... is it WHIMPERING? Has Mrs. Wing finally been pushed over the edge? Alfie hesitates outside WING'S OFFICE, then knocks lightly, peeks inside.

ALFIE
Hello? Mrs. Wing, is everything-- Oh...

Alfie stops when he SEES:

WING - BENT OVER HIS DESK

His body racked with heart-wrenching SOBS. Alfie can't quite put it together.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Wing? Are you... crying?

Wing grabs tissues, blows his nose loudly and wipes his swollen, red-rimmed eyes.

WING
I not cry! Get out!

ALFIE
Are you sure you're--

WING
-- I fine! Get out, Alfie!

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Alfie backs out, closing the door, just leaving his head in.

ALFIE
Okay mate, I just came to see if I could borrow one of the cars, I--

WING
(blurts out)
-- She leave me!

Alfie pushes the door back open.

ALFIE
I'm sorry?

WING
Missus gone.

A pause.

ALFIE
Whaddya mean?

WING
Blossom leave me.

ALFIE
Your wife's name is Blossom?

WING
(pleading)
What I do wrong, Alfie? Love her?!

Alfie LOOKS to CAMERA, unbelieving, then:

ALFIE
Look, mate, I'm sure you can get her back. I mean, a woman of her age, how many options--

The stern look on Wing's face stops Alfie. He changes tact.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Woo her, send flowers, write a poem.

WING
(tentatively)
That what you would do?

ALFIE
Absolutely.

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Wing considers this for a moment, then picks up pad and pen.

WING
What rhyme with Blossom?

ALFIE
(thinks about it)
I'd go with... Awesome?

WING
Okay.
(tossing Alfie a set of KEYS)
Get lost.

Wing begins composing. Alfie slips out while he can.

EXT. UPSTATE NEW YORK - HIGH SHOT - DAY

The Black Town Car looks out of place rolling through a quiet green upstate New York suburb.

A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The Town Car drives down a bumpy, unpaved road.

EXT. BUNGALOW - DAY

The Town Car pulls into a gravel drive and parks in front of a modest, well-kept bungalow with a flourishing garden. Alfie climbs out, stretches. A DOG barks. He reaches into the Town Car and pulls out the Red Folder with his business plan.

WOMAN (O.S.)
You never cease to amaze.

Alfie turns as the SCREEN DOOR OPENS and LONETTE steps onto the porch. She doesn't seem pleased to see him.

ALFIE
Really great to see you, too, Lon.
(no reaction)
Guess I should have rang.

LONETTE
That would've been a plan.

ALFIE
O-kay. So. Um...
(takes a beat)
Look, Lonette...
(starts up steps, speaking softly)
(MORE)

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ALFIE (cont'd)
I know it's uncomfortable seeing each other after--

LONETTE
-- You don't have to whisper, Marlon's not here.

ALFIE
-- after what went down with us... But I miss you guys. And I think we should try to put the past be--

From inside the house, a BABY CRIES. Lonette glances over her shoulder.

LONETTE
Dropping by wasn't a good idea.

ALFIE
Do I hear a baby?

LONETTE
Alfie...

ALFIE
Coming from inside your house?

LONETTE
Really... this was not smart.

ALFIE
What's not smart? What are we talking about?

The BABY CRIES again.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Wait a minute, You guys... didn't have a *baby*...?

Lonette says nothing.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
You *did* have a baby.

LONETTE
No, you were right the first time...

Alfie looks at Lonette, trying to piece together what she's saying. He reaches for the door handle. They lock eyes for a moment.

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INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Alfie moves along the unfamiliar hall, following the SOUNDS of the BABY.

INT. NURSERY

CLOSE ON ALFIE. He steps into the nursery and slowly crosses to the crib... confused by what he sees.

ALFIE'S VIEW

A gorgeous BI-RACIAL BABY staring up at him. Alfie moves a little blanket aside for a better view of the Baby's face.

LONETTE steps into the NURSERY behind him. Alfie turns to her, starts to speak but somehow words won't form.

LONETTE
(softly)
Yeah... he's your son... You can close your mouth now...

He looks down at the Baby, then back to Lonette, who has tears in her eyes.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC - DAY

That drizzly day many months ago... Alfie glances up as the CLINIC DOOR OPENS and Lonette walks toward him. Alfie hurries to meet her.

ALFIE'S VOICE
And then I flashed on that day at the clinic...

Alfie looks in her eyes.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- trying to look in Lon's eyes... to see if I could even begin to understand what she was going through...

But Lonette turns away, avoiding his gaze.

ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And how she wouldn't look at me.

FREEZE FRAME on Lonette. OVER:

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ALFIE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And how I think I knew then... I just didn't want to admit it to myself. So, classically - I said nothing.

LONETTE (O.S.)
I knew there was a good chance the baby could be Marlon's...

INT. NURSERY - THE PRESENT

A dazed Alfie, holds on to the crib for support. Lonette is crying softly now, she shrugs...

LONETTE (CONT'D)
-- I hoped...

Alfie is pretty much shattered...

ALFIE
This is just a lot...
(at a loss)
He's healthy and everything...?
(she nods)
That's good.

A beat.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
And Marlon? He stayed?

LONETTE
(shrugs)
So far...

ALFIE
(nods, a beat)
Is there... What can I do...?

LONETTE
(get real)
What are *you* gonna do, Alfie?

She looks at him, honestly waiting for an answer.

EXT. BUNGALOW - MOMENTS LATER

Still reeling, Alfie steps into the sunlight, holding the Red Folder. He moves quickly to the Town Car, opens the door, then HEARS the sound of tires on gravel.

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He turns to see a car pull up and park. A beat and Marlon gets out, holding a bag of groceries. He looks across the drive at Alfie. The two old friends stare at each other for a long moment.

ALFIE
Marlon... I never meant to...

MARLON
(ahead of Alfie)
You never mean to hurt anybody.

Alfie starts to speak...

MARLON (CONT'D)
-- But you do, Alfie.

Lonette steps onto the porch, holding the Baby. Alfie looks from Lonette back to Marlon.

INT. TOWN CAR - SPEEDING - DAY

CLOSE ON Alfie, intense, driving way too fast. He comes to a fork in the road, hits his brakes, whips the wheel one way, then the other, finally screeching to a stop, kicking up huge clouds of dust.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Alfie sits there motionless... He picks up the car phone... and SMASHES it against the windshield - SHATTERING the glass like a spider web. He drops his head on the steering wheel.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - TOP SHOT - DAY

Dust settling around the Town Car idling in the middle of nowhere.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EMPTY BEACH - LONG SHOT - AT SUNSET

ALFIE'S VOICE
I felt the need of a friend to talk to. Problem was - they were suddenly in short supply.

TWO DISTANT FIGURES walk along the shore. OVER:

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ALFIE
-- And next thing, I'm crying... Tears running down my face, like I was a kid myself.

CLOSER ANGLE

Alfie is walking with JOE, the old guy from the Doctor's Office. Joe wears a sweater and another bolo tie. His slacks are rolled to his knees, and he carries his shoes and socks.

JOE
Crying for the little one...?

ALFIE
That's the thing... I don't know exactly. Maybe for him... But mostly, I think, for me.
(pause)
And Marlon... I never had anybody look at me quite that way before. And believe me, I've had my share of looks that could kill.
(then)
And the way he stood by Lon... I could've never--

JOE
-- You don't know what you'll do 'til you really love someone...

A beat, as this sinks in...

JOE (CONT'D)
But now, what? You gonna shoehorn yourself into the situation? Nah, you did the only thing you could do - you behaved like a gentleman.

ALFIE
I've never been accused of that before.

JOE
Don't get all choked up, you also behaved like a scheming, back-stabbing, so low he can look up a snake's asshole, son-of-a-bitch.
(then)
Next time, think before unzipping. I mean, your best friend's girl...

They continue along the shoreline until finally...

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ALFIE
All for a couple of minutes pleasure on a rainy Sunday evening.

JOE
So all right, you screwed up but whaddya gonna do - run to the bridge?
(then)
The question is - what's gonna happen with the rest of your life?

They walk on. Not much else to say.

Alfie stops when he spots something up ahead. He smiles and waves.

ALFIE'S VIEW - LU SCHNITMAN

Dolled-up and STANDING on a SMALL CLIFF above the water. She waves down to:

ALFIE AND JOE

Alfie puts his arm around Joe.

ALFIE
Hey Joe, there's somebody I want you to meet.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - THAT EVENING

A blustery night. Alfie buzzes through traffic on his now banged-up Vespa. He looks cold and distracted and a bit bedraggled. He passes a pair of true HOTTIES on the street, doesn't look twice.

ALFIE'S VOICE
I'd be lying if I didn't admit the events of the past few weeks have knocked me for a bit of a loop....

Alfie notices something out of the corner of his eye, a QUAINT FLOWER SHOP. He impulsively hangs a "u" causing horns to blow and Cabbies to curse.

INT. QUAINT FLOWER SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

A gray-haired, snappily-dressed PROPRIETOR, is arranging an chic bouquet when Alfie enters, rubbing his hands together for warmth.

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ALFIE
Hullo, mate.

PROPRIETOR
And what can we do for you this evening?

Alfie looks around, sees a plastic tub of pre-packaged bouquets.

ALFIE
How much for one of those?

PROPRIETOR
Five-fifty. And you'll need to put them in water immediately.

ALFIE
Right...

Alfie picks a bouquet from the tub and pulls out his wallet. He eyes the elegant bouquet being prepared at the counter. Looks at his inferior offering...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
On second thought...
(drops flowers back in tub)
-- this is sort of a... special thing.

PROPRIETOR
And what's the occasion?

ALFIE
Say again?

PROPRIETOR
For the flowers?

ALFIE
Ah....

Alfie isn't really sure, has to think about it.

PROPRIETOR
I've been in the business too many years, I have a sixth sense:
Proposal?

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ALFIE
No... but... Well, I do want to extend an offer to maybe try to have a go at it for a bit, you know...? See where it takes us... Give it a spin... That sort of thing...

PROPRIETOR
(knowing smile)
I get it. Commitment issues.

Alfie nods, unamused.

PROPRIETOR (CONT'D)
Tell me what she or he is like and we'll find the appropriate blooms.

ALFIE
Well *she's*... adventurous.

The Man picks a flower... begins putting together a bouquet.

PROPRIETOR
Lady of the Nile.

ALFIE
Sexy, of course...

PROPRIETOR
Orchid.

ALFIE
A bit mischievous...

PROPRIETOR
Spider Lily with a touch of Baby Blue Eyes...

ALFIE
And under it all, kind of sweet...

EXT. FLOWER SHOP - EVENING

THROUGH THE WINDOW, we watch Alfie and the Proprietor putting together Alfie's bouquet with great care.

EXT. LIZ'S BUILDING - A LITTLE LATER

Alfie holding his lovely bouquet, pulls up and parks his Vespa.

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INT. CORRIDOR

Alfie walks down the corridor, holding the bouquet. He slows to do a moving mirror-check, then stops in front of Liz's door, a bit like a kid on his first date...

INT. LIZ'S APARTMENT - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Alfie lets himself in, KNOCKING on the door as he enters. Liz's VOICE comes from the bathroom.

LIZ (O.S.)
Hello?

Alfie moves into the hall.

ALFIE
It's me, luv!

LIZ (O.S.)
Just a sec. I'll be right out.

Alfie grins, sets the flowers down, as Liz comes out of the BATHROOM, tying her robe.

LIZ (CONT'D)
(rubbing her temple)
I'm sorry, Alfie, I'm taking a hot soak. I have got one of the worst migraines ever.

ALFIE
Migraine...?

LIZ
I've told you I get these blinding headaches... You don't listen, sweetie.
(then)
How are you? I thought you were working tonight...

He moves to the LIVING ROOM. She follows.

ALFIE
It was a bit slow, so I took the night off.... I thought maybe we'd wake up early and drive to the country... Check out that little B & B you're always on about.

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LIZ
-- Oh, honey... I'd love to, but I've got an investors' breakfast... Can we do it later in the week? Or how 'bout this weekend?

ALFIE
Brilliant. Better.
(trying for casual)
All right, then... By the way, I thought you might appreciate these.

He picks up the FLOWERS, does a cute little bow.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
For you... M'lady.

It's an impressive bouquet. Liz is surprised, touched.

LIZ
Oh, my God, Alfie - what a sweet gesture. Wow. I'm impressed.

ALFIE
And by the way, they're not from a plastic bucket... Every bud is handpicked. I discovered I have quite the flair for flower-arranging.

LIZ
(laughs)
I can see that. I never would've expected... Talk about being blown away...

ALFIE
Good. Mission accomplished.

A beat.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
I like surprising you.

LIZ
(smiles)
You've done that. For sure.

She smells the flowers. This is difficult for Alfie. He takes a step forward, she touches her head, winces slightly, he eases back.

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ALFIE
All right, then... Get some rest.

He moves to the door. Liz follows.

LIZ
I'll be better in the morning.

ALFIE
When you are, there's something - *some things* - I want us to talk about.

LIZ
What things, honey?

ALFIE
Um... you know what... I'd rather save it 'til you're a hundred percent.
(she starts to speak)
And that's the last I'll say about it for now.
(gives her a peck on the lips)
Ring you in the morning.

LIZ
(leading him to the door)
Alfie...

He turns back. She touches his arm.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Thanks for the flowers. Really. They made my night.

Alfie smiles, opens the door.

ALFIE
I'll ring you first thing....

As he's about to step out, Alfie catches sight of something in the foyer.

HIS VIEW - A MOTOR-CYCLE JACKET

casually hanging on a hook.

BACK TO ALFIE

Liz has followed his look. She glances at the jacket, then to Alfie.

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
Whose is that?

Alfie crosses back, picks up the jacket.

LIZ
What... ?

He looks at the jacket, then up at Liz.

LIZ (CONT'D)
One of the guys that came to fix the cable probably forgot--

ALFIE
-- Right.

Alfie shakes his head, reality starting to sink in...

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(gestures to bathroom)
You've got another guy in there, haven't you?

LIZ
Alfie....

Alfie looks heavenward.

ALFIE
God, what's happened to me?
(then)
Did he pick you up as easy as I did?

Alfie moves past her and opens the bathroom door.

LIZ
Alfie, do not do this.

INT. LIZ'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alfie stands in the doorway, a look of blank amazement on his face.

HIS VIEW - A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GUY

is stepping out of the tub, wrapping a towel around his waist. He's twenty-something with tousled long hair. He glances casually up at Alfie.

Alfie stares at the Young Man. Liz has moved in behind him, puts her hands to her face.

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LIZ
Alfie... I'm sorry.

Alfie moves away from the door... leans against the wall, his eyes closed.... He speaks with a mixture of bewilderment and pain...

ALFIE
Why *him* - better than *me*? What's he got that I haven't? Besides the hairdo?

Liz looks away... Alfie looks directly at her now.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Really, I'd like to know.

She doesn't want to answer.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Come on - tell me. I want to know. What's he got?

A beat. She turns to him and says honestly...

LIZ
He's younger than you.

CAMERA HOLDS on Alfie as these words sink in...

DISSOLVE TO:

DARK CHOPPY WATERS

Liz's FLOWERS fall through the darkness.

EXT. WATERWAY'S FERRY - LATER THAT EVENING

Alfie, still dazed, leans over the railing, watching the flowers break apart in the water.

ALFIE'S VOICE
'He's younger than you.' Imagine, a woman her age telling me that.
(pause)
I gotta admit I didn't see it coming. Yeah, she caught me off-guard all right...

He turns up his collar against the chill, LOOKS to CAMERA.

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ALFIE
You couldn't tell though, could you?
(slight grin)
As you've learned by now, I'm quite skilled at hiding my feelings.

CAMERA TRACKS Alfie walking along the river. He passes a YOUNG COUPLE leaning against the rail, laughing and then seriously making-out.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
(to CAMERA)
The thing about feelings is, they have this quiet way of creeping up on you when you least expect it.

CAMERA DRIFTS CLOSER to Alfie, as he wanders along the bridge.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Like with Liz. Who would've thought, out of all the birds I've known... it would be her, the one who, in most ways, gave me the least... would end up hurting me the most...?

He forces a smile... starts to speak TO CAMERA again when he notices someone coming toward him through the fog.

ALFIE'S VIEW

DORIE, the Woman from the beginning of our story, walking toward him. She doesn't seem to notice Alfie, or did she quickly look away?

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Hey...
(squinting through fog)
That you, Dor?

Dorie walks hesitantly toward him.

DORIE
Hello, Alfie.

ALFIE
(happy to see her)
Wow. Dorie - I haven't seen you in ages.

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DORIE
Maybe because you stopped calling.

ALFIE
I know. Things were getting a bit--

DORIE
-- Don't bother explaining. I'm way past needing excuses.

ALFIE
All right.
(a beat)
..but... no, Dor, I want to explain...

DORIE
What? You'd had your fill of me? Someone cuter came along? I don't need to hear it, Alfie, really.

ALFIE
Look, Dorie, you see, what happens with me is... I... well, it gets too... I don't know... not close, but something like that. And then, I feel a bit... not stifled, not trapped but... something like that...

Dorie almost laughs, shakes her head... there's something irresistible about even his confession.

DORIE
Are you done?

ALFIE
Well, did any of that make sense?

DORIE
I think it needs to make sense to you more than me at this point.

A beat.

ALFIE
Fair enough.
(then)
Hey, I like that dress. Silk?

DORIE
Rayon.

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ALFIE
Oh. Well, you look smashing, as usual.
(then)
Where you headed? I've got the town car parked 'round the corner.

DORIE
I'm meeting Phil.

ALFIE
Oh, right... Phil.
(touching her dress)
I really do like this material. You'd swear it was silk the way it clings. Does wonders for your *décolletage*.
(that grin)
Of course, you always were a smart dresser. What about Tuesday then? You up for it?

A FOG HORN blares.

DORIE
I don't think so, Alfie.

ALFIE
Really? Oh, c'mon, for old times sake.

He takes her hand in both of his and massages it with great skill, his fingers running up her arm.

DORIE
I'm not sure... Maybe. But I doubt it.

ALFIE
I'll supply the champagne.

DORIE
We'll see. I need to go. He'll be waiting.

She starts to pass, Alfie gently holds her arm.

ALFIE
So, next Tuesday? Same time? Same place?

DORIE
Maybe, Alfie.

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She forces a smile and hurries off. After a moment, Alfie TURNS to CAMERA with a half a smile.

ALFIE
She won't be there. I know that.

The smile fades as Alfie watches another woman walk out of his life.

OVER DORIE

Disappearing into the mist.

ALFIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I warned them all from the start... I always said something along the lines of - 'I must advise you that I am stamped with an invisible advisory warning: will not commit, will never marry.'

He turns BACK to CAMERA.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
But in spite of all my best efforts, I'm beginning to feel some small cracks in my faux finish...

ALFIE'S FLEETING MEMORIES

-- NIKKI waking Alfie with a breakfast tray. He's rumpled and sleepy, she is stunningly beautiful and looks at him with hope in her eyes. And the tray is the one you make for someone you really care for... The single rose in a bud vase, perfect eggs, steaming cappuccino.

-- LIZ and Alfie, wearing terry robes, facing each other on her sofa, in front of a crackling fire, giving each other pedicures. She's a pro, he's like a little kid with his first paint set...

-- Alfie, laughing along with his friend LONETTE that night at the bar... before everything changed.

-- JULIE and MAX, their faces glowing from the candles on a birthday cake they are presenting to Alfie. They sing "Happy Birthday, Dear Alfie"... It's the moment they loved him most.

BACK TO ALFIE - ALONE ON THE BRIDGE

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ALFIE (CONT'D)
You know, when I look back on my little life and the women I've known - I think of all they've done for me and how little I've done for them. Of how they cared for me and how I repaid them by doing my best to avoid returning the favor.
(a beat)
Yeah, I used to think I was getting the best of the deal.

He wanders along the river's edge, CAMERA TRACKS along.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
But what have I got really? A few bucks in my pocket, some decent threads, a fancy car at my disposal. And I'm single. Yeah... Unattached. Free as a bird.

HIGH SHOT - THE SMALL FIGURE OF ALFIE

He walks along the embankment, he appears tiny against the vast expanse of river.

ALFIE'S VOICE
I don't depend on nobody - and nobody depends on me.
(pause)
My life's my own.

NOW ALFIE WALKS TOWARD CAMERA

He stops, stares out at the darkness for a time, then LOOKS DIRECTLY at CAMERA.

ALFIE
But I don't have my peace of mind. And if you don't have that... you've got nothing really.
(pause)
So, what's the answer? That's what I keep asking myself.
(a beat)
What's it all about? You know what I mean?

Alfie turns and looks off. A little MUTT, trots toward him. Alfie smiles, bends to pet him, the Dog licks Alfie's face.

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WOMAN'S VOICE
Ohmygod, thanks... He's always running away.

Alfie looks up and sees a lovely, BREATHLESS YOUNG WOMAN holding a leash and smiling down at him. Maybe it's her slightly embarrassed manner, or the way her nose crinkles when she smiles, or maybe it's the way the scarf is tied European-style around her neck... Or maybe it's just time...

Alfie rises, holding the dog.

ALFIE
What's...
(checks quickly and discreetly)
-- his name?

YOUNG WOMAN
Mugsy.

ALFIE
(looks at dog)
Hello, Mugsy.
(looks at the Girl)
I'm Alfie.

THE RIVER'S EDGE - HIGH SHOT

Alfie and the Breathless Girl talk for a few moments, then Alfie sets the little Mutt down and they all walk along the river's edge together...

And the song begins...

What's it all about, Alfie?
Is it just for the moment we live?

What's it all about, when you sort it out, Alfie?

Are we meant to take more than we give?

Or are we meant to love...

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Alfie...?

FADE OUT.

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