

# "SEX, LIES, AND VIDEOTAPE"

by

Steven Soderbergh

EXT. HIGHWAY – DAY

GRAHAM DALTON, twenty-nine, drives his '69 Cutlass while smoking a cigarette. One could describe his appearance as punk/arty, but neither would do him justice. He is a man of obvious intelligence, and his face is amiable. There is only one key on his keyring, and it is in the ignition.

ANN

(voice over)

Garbage. I started thinking about what happens to all the garbage. I mean, where do we put all of it, we have to run out of places to put it eventually, don't we? This happened to me before when that barge with all the garbage was stranded and nobody would take it? Remember that?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY

ANN BISHOP MILLANEY, twenty-six, sits opposite her therapist.

She is an extremely attractive woman, dressed in a mature preppy style. There is a wedding ring on her left hand.

DOCTOR

Yes, I remember. What do you do when these moods overtake you?

ANN

Nothing. I mean, nothing. I try not to do anything that will produce garbage, so obviously we're talking about eating and basic stuff like that. Did you know that the average person produces three pounds of

garbage a day?

DOCTOR

No, I didn't.

ANN

Don't you think that's a lot of garbage? I'd really like to know where it's all going to go.

DOCTOR

Do you have any idea what triggered this concern?

ANN

Well, this weekend John was taking out the garbage, and he kept spilling things out of the container, and I started imagining a container that grew garbage, like it just kept filling up and overflowing all by itself, and how could you stop that if it started happening?

DOCTOR

Ann, do you see a pattern here?

ANN

What do you mean?

DOCTOR

Well, last week we talked about your obsession with the families of airline fatalities, and now we're talking about your concern over the garbage problem.

ANN

Yeah, so?

DOCTOR

If you think about it, I think you'll see that the object of your obsession is invariably something negative that you couldn't possibly have any

control over.

ANN

Well, do you think many people run around thinking about how happy they feel and how great things are? I mean, maybe they do, but I doubt those people are in therapy. Besides, being happy isn't all that great. My figure is always at its best when I'm depressed. The last time I was really happy I put on twenty-five pounds. I thought John was going to have a stroke.

JOHN

(voice over)

It's true, I'm telling you.

INT. LAW OFFICE – DAY

JOHN MILLANEY, twenty-nine, sits at his desk talking on the telephone. He is dressed very well, sporting real suspenders with his striped pinpoint oxford shirt and cotton suit. He fingers the wedding ring on his left hand.

JOHN

As soon as you've got a ring on your finger, you start getting serious attention from the opposite gender. Seriously, I wish I had Super Bowl seats for every time I had some filly just come up and start talking to me without the slightest provocation. That never happened before I got married. Shit, if I'd known that, I'd have gone out and bought me a ring when I was eighteen and saved myself a lot of time and money.

John looks at his watch.

JOHN

Shit, I gotta be someplace.  
(quickly)

Look, racquetball Thursday? You're the coolest.

John presses the intercom button while putting on his jacket.

JOHN

Uh, Janet, re-schedule Kirkland. Tell him to come in Friday at 1:30.

DOCTOR

(voice over, to Ann)

Are you still keeping these thoughts from John?

ANN

(voice over)

Yes.

INT. LAW OFFICE BATHROOM – DAY

John brushes his teeth and combs his hair very carefully.

DOCTOR

(voice over, to Ann)

Are you afraid of his reaction? Of his finding you silly for thinking of such things?

ANN

(voice over)

No. I don't know. I haven't told him about the garbage thing because I'm pissed off at him right now. He's letting some old college buddy stay at our house for a couple of days, and he didn't even ask me about it. I mean, I would've said yes, I just wish he would've asked.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE-DAY

DOCTOR

What upsets you about that?

ANN

I guess I'm upset because I can't really justify being upset, I mean, it's his house, really, he pays the mortgage.

DOCTOR

But he asked you to quit your job, and you do have housework.

ANN

Yeah, I know.

DOCTOR

This unexpected visit notwithstanding, how are things with John?

ANN

(shrugs)

Fine, I guess. Except right now I'm going through this where I don't want him to touch me.

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

CYNTHIA BISHOP, Ann's SISTER, opens her door to reveal the freshly coifed John Millaney. They kiss passionately and begin to disrobe. Cynthia bears a slight resemblance to Ann, but is not as overtly attractive. She does, however, have a definite carnal appeal and air of confidence that Ann lacks.

DOCTOR

(voice over)

When did you begin having this feeling?

ANN

(voice over)

About a week ago. I don't know what brought it on, I just started feeling like I didn't want him to touch me.

DOCTOR

(voice over, to Ann)

Prior to this feeling, were you comfortable having physical contact

with him?

ANN

(voice over)

Oh, yeah.

(pause)

But see, I've never really been into sex that much, I mean, I like it and everything, it just doesn't freak me out, I wouldn't miss it, you know? But anyway, lately we haven't been doing anything at all. Like I said, it's not that I miss it, but I'm curious the way things kind of slacked off all of a sudden.

John and Cynthia are now having sex.

DOCTOR

(voice over)

Perhaps he senses your hesitance at being touched.

ANN

(voice over)

But see, he stopped before I got that feeling, that's why it seems weird to me. I mean, I'm sure he wishes I would initiate things once in awhile, and I would except it never occurs to me, I'm always thinking about something else and then the few times that I have felt like starting something I was by myself.

DOCTOR

(voice over)

Did you do anything?

A pause.

ANN

(voice over)

What do you mean?

DOCTOR  
(voice over)  
Did you masturbate?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY

ANN  
(taken aback)  
God, no.

DOCTOR  
I take it you've never masturbated?

ANN  
(slightly uncomfortable)  
Well, I kind of tried once. It just seemed stupid, I kept seeing myself lying there and it seemed stupid, and kind of, uh, I don't know, and then I was wondering if my dead grandfather could see me doing this, and it just seemed like a dumb thing to be doing when we don't know what to do with all that garbage, you know?

DOCTOR  
So it was recently that you tried this.

ANN  
(exhales, head down)  
Well, kind of recently, I guess. But not too recently.

There is a pause.

ANN  
I'm really not up to having a guest in the house.

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

John and Cynthia are lying in bed, bathed in sweat.

JOHN

I've got to get back to the office.

CYNTHIA

I only get one today? Gee, how exciting.

John rolls over and begins to put his clothes on.

JOHN

I can't let my lunch hour go on too long. I've already skipped one meeting.

CYNTHIA

Don't give me this passive/aggressive bullshit. If you want to leave, leave. My life doesn't stop when you walk out the door, you know what I'm saying?

John shakes his head.

JOHN

Why don't you just tell me how you really feel?

John stands and begins putting on his clothes.

JOHN

I have a friend coming in from out of town, I'll probably be spending some time with him the next couple of days.

CYNTHIA

Meaning we'll have to cool it for awhile, right?

JOHN

Right.

A silent shrug from Cynthia. John is almost completely dressed.

JOHN

I wish you'd quit that bartending job.

CYNTHIA

Why?

JOHN

I hate the thought of guys hitting on you all the time.

CYNTHIA

I can handle it. Besides, the money is good and some of the guys are cute. And you are in no position to be jealous.

JOHN

Who said I was jealous?

CYNTHIA

I did.

John says nothing.

CYNTHIA

You know, I'd like to try your house sometime. The idea of doing it in my sister's bed gives me a perverse thrill.

John thinks about that.

CYNTHIA

I wish I could tell everybody that Ann's a lousy lay. Beautiful, popular, Ann Bishop Millaney.

JOHN

Could be risky.

CYNTHIA

Well, maybe I could just start a rumor, then.

JOHN

No, I mean doing it at my house.

CYNTHIA

Afraid of getting caught?

JOHN

Maybe.

CYNTHIA

You should be. Can I meet this friend of yours?

JOHN

Cynthia, I don't think you want to, I mean, you should see the way he dresses. I really think he's in a bad way.

CYNTHIA

I'm intrigued.

JOHN

You're intrigued?

CYNTHIA

Sure. Maybe he's the man I'm looking for. Then I won't have to fuck worried husbands all the time.

John looks at her for a moment before heading for the door.

JOHN

Bye.

EXT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Graham has parked in the Millaney's driveway. He opens the trunk, revealing a Sony 8mm Video rig and a single black duffle bag. He grabs the duffle bag and shuts the trunk.

Graham knocks at the door. He is stubbing out a cigarette with his beaten tennis shoe when Ann answers the door. She is unable to hide her surprise at his appearance.

GRAHAM  
Ann?

ANN  
Yes?

GRAHAM  
(extends his hand)  
Graham Dalton.

Ann shakes his hand.

GRAHAM  
Can I use your bathroom?

Ann withdraws her hand.

ANN  
Yes. Yes, come in, please.

Graham moves inside.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Ann closes the door and motions Graham to the rear of the house.

ANN  
Straight back, first door on the left.

Graham heads for the bathroom. Ann heads for the phone. She dials John's office.

VOICE ON PHONE  
Forman, Brent, and Millaney.

ANN  
John Millaney, please. This is his wife.

Graham exits the bathroom. Ann quickly hangs up the phone.

ANN

That was quick.

GRAHAM

False alarm.

ANN

Oh. Well, please sit down.

Graham sits, his manner pleasantly animated. He gets his Gitanes from inside his scuffed black leather jacket and looks around for an ashtray. Ann swallows uncomfortably.

ANN

We... don't usually let people smoke in the house. We have a patio if you –

GRAHAM

Oh, no problem. It can wait.

A moment of silence. Graham looks at Ann directly. It is not a challenging stare, he's just trying to ascertain what kind of person she is. Ann, to her credit, somehow meets his gaze.

Something subtle passes between them.

ANN

(looks at duffle bag)

Do you have other things?

GRAHAM

Yes.

(pause)

Oh, you mean to bring in! No. Yes, I have some other things, no, I don't need to bring them in. This is all I need to stay here.

ANN

Oh.

Graham smiles. He has an unusual face, a face that fluctuates between remarkably handsome and just plain strange.

GRAHAM

Have you ever been on television?

ANN  
Television?

GRAHAM  
Yes.

ANN  
No. Why?

GRAHAM  
(shrugs)  
Curious.

The central air-conditioning switches on. Ann smiles.

ANN  
Graham is an unusual name.

GRAHAM  
Yeah, I guess it is. My mother is a complete Anglophile, anything British makes her drool like a baby. She probably heard the name in some movie. She's a prisoner of public television now.

ANN  
Oh, uh-huh.

GRAHAM  
Are you uncomfortable with my appearance?

ANN  
(downplaying)  
No, I think you look... fine.

GRAHAM  
(smiles)  
Oh. Well, maybe I'm uncomfortable with my appearance. I feel a little out of place in these surroundings.

ANN

Well...

GRAHAM

I used to take great pleasure in that, being purposefully different, rubbing people's noses in it. Didn't you do that when you were younger?

ANN

(thinks)

No, not really.

GRAHAM

Oh. Well, I did. I was in a band once, and the music was always secondary to just flat out offending as many people as possible.

ANN

You play an instrument?

GRAHAM

No, I was in charge of kind of standing at the microphone and reciting these really depressing lyrics in a monotone. The whole thing was really... irrelevant. How do you like being married?

ANN

(caught slightly off guard)

Oh, I like it. I like it very much.

GRAHAM

What about it do you like? I'm not being critical, I'd really like to know.

ANN

Well... well, the cliché about the security of it, that's really true. We own a house, and I really like that, you know? And I like that John was just made junior partner, so he

has a steady job and he's not some...

Ann looks at Graham and stops. He smiles again.

ANN

...free-lance. You know.

GRAHAM

Yes. So you feel security, stability.  
Like things are going to last awhile.

ANN

Oh, definitely. I mean, just this  
past year has gone by like phew! I  
hardly even knew it passed.

GRAHAM

Did you know that if you shut someone  
up in a room, and the only clock he  
has reference to runs two hours slow  
for every twenty-four, that his body  
will eventually adjust to that  
schedule? Simply because the mind  
honestly perceives that twenty-six  
hours are twenty-four, the body  
follows. And then there are sections  
of time. Your life can be broken  
down into the sections of time that  
formed your personality (if you have  
one). For instance, when I was twelve,  
I had an eleven minute conversation  
with my father that to this day  
defines our relationship. Now, I'm  
not saying that everything happened  
in that specific section of time,  
but the events of my childhood  
involving my father led up to, and  
then were crystallized in, that eleven  
minutes.

Ann is fascinated, if a bit overwhelmed.

ANN

Oh, uh-huh.

GRAHAM

(smiles)

Anyway, I think the mind is very flexible as far as time is concerned.

ANN

You mean like "time flies"?

GRAHAM

Exactly. I would say the fact that you feel the first year of your marriage has gone by quickly means lots of things. Or could mean lots of things.

ANN

How long has it been since you've seen John?

GRAHAM

Nine years.

ANN

Nine years?

GRAHAM

Yes. I was surprised that he accepted when I asked if I could stay here until I found a place.

ANN

Why? Didn't you know him well?

GRAHAM

I knew him very well. We were extremely close until I dropped out.

A pause.

ANN

Why'd you drop out?

GRAHAM

Oh, lots of reasons, most of them boring. But, up until I dropped out,

John and I were... very much alike.

ANN

That's hard to believe. The two of you seem so different.

GRAHAM

I would imagine that we are, now. I think I'm ready to use the bathroom, finally.

Graham gets up and heads for the toilet. Ann watches him go, a bemused smile on her face. After she hears the door close, she can't resist the impulse to take a closer look at Graham's bag.

IN THE BATHROOM, Graham pokes around, looking through the medicine cabinet and sniffing towels.

JOHN

(voice over)

Call the cops.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

John, Ann and Graham are eating dinner.

JOHN

(to Graham)

That's the first thing that ran through my mind when I saw you. I thought this is not the same man that rode the unicycle naked through the homecoming parade.

ANN

(to Graham)

You did that?

GRAHAM

Everybody has a past.

JOHN

(smiles at Graham)

What do you think the Greeks would

make of that outfit you're wearing?

GRAHAM  
A bonfire, probably.

John takes a sip of Chivas.

GRAHAM  
(to Ann)  
This food is excellent.

ANN  
Thank you.

JOHN  
Yeah, it's not bad. Usually Ann has  
some serious salt action going. I  
keep telling her, you can always add  
more if you want, but you can't take  
it out.

GRAHAM  
(to Ann)  
You have family here also?

ANN  
(nods, chewing)  
Mother, father, sister.

GRAHAM  
Sister older or younger?

ANN  
Younger.

John takes a large swig of Chivas.

GRAHAM  
Are you close?

Graham sees Ann and John exchange looks.

GRAHAM  
I'm sorry. Am I prying again?

JOHN  
You were prying before?

GRAHAM  
Yes, this afternoon. I was grilling  
Ann about your marriage this  
afternoon.

JOHN  
(smiles)  
Really. How'd it go?

GRAHAM  
She held up very well.

Ann laughs.

GRAHAM  
(to Ann)  
So I was asking about your sister.

Ann's smile fades. John resumes eating.

ANN  
Oh, we get along okay. She's just  
very... she's an extrovert. I think  
she's loud. She probably wouldn't  
agree. Definitely wouldn't agree.

JOHN  
(to Graham)  
Are you going to see Elizabeth while  
you're here?

An almost imperceptible reaction by Graham.

GRAHAM  
I don't know.

ANN  
(interested)  
Who's Elizabeth?

JOHN  
Girl Graham dated. Still lives here,

far as I know.

Graham eats in silence.

ANN

Graham and I were talking about apartments and I told him to check the Garden District, there are some nice little places there, garage apartments and stuff.

JOHN

(to Graham)

Stay away from the Garden District. Serious crime. I don't know what kind of place you're looking for, but there are a lot of studio-type apartments available elsewhere.

GRAHAM

I wish I didn't have to live someplace.

JOHN

(laughs)

What do you mean?

Graham thinks a moment, then puts his keyring with its single key onto the table.

GRAHAM

Well, see, right now I have this one key, and I really like that. Everything I own is in my car. If I get an apartment, that's two keys. If I get a job, maybe I have to open and close once in awhile, that's more keys. Or I buy some stuff and I'm worried about getting ripped off, so I get some locks, and that's more keys. I just really like having the one key. It's clean, you know?

Graham looks at the keyring before returning it to his pocket.

JOHN

Get rid of the car when you get your apartment, then you'll still have one key.

GRAHAM

I like having the car, the car is important.

JOHN

Especially if you want to leave someplace in a hurry.

GRAHAM

Or go someplace in a hurry.

Ann takes her plate into the kitchen.

JOHN

(smiles at Graham)

Do you pay taxes?

Graham also stands, empty plate in hand.

GRAHAM

Do I pay taxes? Of course I pay taxes, only a liar doesn't pay taxes, I'm not a liar. A liar is the second lowest form of human being.

ANN

(from the kitchen)

What's the first?

GRAHAM

Lawyers.

John smiles, thinking. Graham follows Ann into the kitchen.

John shouts after them.

JOHN

Hey, Ann, why don't you go with Graham to hunt for apartments? Show him how the city has changed.

Ann looks at Graham.

ANN  
Would you mind?

GRAHAM  
No.

ANN  
(shouts back to John)  
Okay, I will!!

John, sitting at the table and now toying with his keyring, nods.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Everyone but Ann is asleep. She gets up from her bed and sneaks quietly into the guest bedroom where Graham is staying. She walks cautiously up to his bed to watch him as he sleeps.

Moonlight caresses his face as he breathes peacefully. Exhaling, he turns over slowly, his back to Ann.

She picks up his jacket from beside the bed and feels the surface. She brings the jacket to her nose, inhaling his presence. She then sets the jacket down.

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

The phone rings. Cynthia answers.

CYNTHIA  
Hello.

JOHN  
Cynthia. John. Meet me at my house  
in exactly one hour.

CYNTHIA  
You are scum. I'll be there.

INT. VACANT APARTMENT-DAY

Graham and Ann walk around the room, their footfalls heavy on the hardwood floors. MR. MILLER, the landlord, stands nearby.

He looks fairly interested in Ann.

MR. MILLER  
Plenty of room for two people.

GRAHAM  
It'll just be me.

MR. MILLER  
Student?

GRAHAM  
No.  
(pause)  
You said three-fifty?

MR. MILLER  
Plus first and last month deposit.

GRAHAM  
Will you lease month-to-month?

MR. MILLER  
Not for three-fifty.

GRAHAM  
How about for five hundred?

Mr. Miller looks at Ann, then back at Graham.

MR. MILLER  
That I can do.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Cynthia lets herself in. She looks around.

CYNTHIA  
John?

JOHN

(offscreen)  
In here!!

Cynthia walks to the bedroom, where John lies naked on the bed.

She smiles, kicking off her shoes.

CYNTHIA  
Ain't you a picture.

Cynthia begins taking her clothes off. She places her diamond stud earring in her jacket pocket, and then drops the jacket on the floor. She moves onto the bed with John.

ANN  
(voice over)  
Maybe you'll understand this, because you know John, but he confuses me sometimes.

GRAHAM  
(voice over)  
How do you mean?

INT. CAF, - DAY

Graham and Ann are having lunch. Ann looks to have had a lot of wine. Graham drinks club soda with a twist.

ANN  
It's hard to explain. It's like...  
John treats everybody the same, you know? I mean, he acts just as excited about seeing somebody he hardly knows as he does when he sees me. And so I feel like, what's different about me, if I'm treated exactly the same as some acquaintance? If I don't like somebody, I don't act like I do. I guess that's why a lot of people think I'm a bitch.

She takes a sip of wine.

GRAHAM

Yeah, I know. I mean, I'm not saying I know people think you're a bitch, I'm saying I know what you mean. And I don't even know that people think you're a bitch. Do they?

ANN

I feel like they do.

GRAHAM

Hmm. Well, maybe you are. Really, I wouldn't pay much attention.

Ann smiles.

GRAHAM

I know that I just don't feel a connection with very many people, so I don't waste time with people I don't feel one with.

ANN

Right, right. I don't feel connected to many people, either. Other than John.

Graham nods.

ANN

Can I tell you something personal? I feel like I can. It's something I couldn't tell John. Or wouldn't, anyway.

GRAHAM

It's up to you. But I warn you, if you tell me something personal, I might do the same.

ANN

Okay. I think... I think sex is overrated. I think people place way too much importance on it. And I think that stuff about women wanting

it just as bad is crap. I m not saying women don't want it, I just don't think they want it for the reason men think they do.

(smiles)

I'm getting confused.

Graham smiles.

ANN

Do you understand what I'm trying to say?

GRAHAM

I think so. I remember reading somewhere that men learn to love what they're attracted to, whereas women become more and more attracted to the person they love.

ANN

Yes! Yes! I think that's very true. Very.

Graham watches Ann take a sip of wine.

GRAHAM

So what about kids?

ANN

Kids? What about them?

GRAHAM

Do you want them?

ANN

Yeah, actually, I do. But John doesn't. At least not right now.

GRAHAM

Why is that?

ANN

I don't know, he just said he wants to wait. I quit asking.

Graham nods.

ANN

So what's your personal thing? Are you really going to tell me something personal?

GRAHAM

Do you want me to?

ANN

As long as it's not... gross, you know? Like some scar or something. It has to be like mine, like something about you.

GRAHAM

Agreed.

Graham takes a sip of club soda.

GRAHAM

I'm impotent.

Ann looks at him closely.

ANN

You're what?

GRAHAM

Impotent.

ANN

You are?

GRAHAM

Well, let me put it this way: I cannot achieve an erection while in the presence of another person. So, for all practical purposes, I am impotent.

Ann takes a large sip of wine. Graham lights a cigarette.

ANN

Does it bother you?

GRAHAM

(exhales)

Not usually. I mean, honestly, I haven't known many guys that could think straight with an erection, so I feel I'm way ahead of the game as far as being clear-headed goes.

ANN

Well... are you self-conscious about it?

GRAHAM

I am self-conscious, but not in the same way that you are. You have got to be the most attractive self-conscious person I've ever seen.

ANN

Why do you say I'm self-conscious?

GRAHAM

Well, I've been watching you. I've watched you eat, I've watched you speak, I've watched the way you move, and I see somebody who is extremely conscious of being looked at. I think you really believe that people are looking at you all the time. And you know what?

ANN

What?

GRAHAM

They are looking at you. Ann, you are truly breathtaking. I don't know if you understand how your appearance can affect people. Men want to possess you, women wish they looked like you. And those that don't or can't resent you. And the fact that you're a nice person just makes it worse.

ANN  
(thinks)  
My therapist said that –

GRAHAM  
You're in therapy?

ANN  
Aren't you?

GRAHAM  
Hah! No, I'm not. Actually, I used to be, but the therapist I had was really ineffectual in helping me deal with my problems. Of course, I lied to him constantly, so I guess I can't hold him totally responsible...

ANN  
So you don't believe in therapy?

GRAHAM  
I believe in it for some people. I mean, for me it was silly, I was confused going in. So I just formed my own personal theory that you should never take advice from someone of the opposite sex that doesn't know you intimately.

ANN  
Well, my therapist knows me intimately.

GRAHAM  
(surprised)  
You had sex with you therapist?

ANN  
Of course not.

GRAHAM  
Oh, see, I meant someone you've had sex with. That's part of the theory.

ANN

Excuse me for asking, but how would you know?

GRAHAM

(smiles)

Well, I wasn't always impotent.

Ann takes another sip of wine and thinks for a moment.

ANN

Now, you said never take advice from someone that you don't know intimately, right?

GRAHAM

Basically, yes.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Cynthia is leaving the house. She gives John a big kiss.

ANN

(voice over)

So since I've never had sex with you, by your own advice I shouldn't accept your advice.

GRAHAM

(voice over)

That's correct.

(pause)

Bit of a dilemma, isn't it?

Cynthia is not wearing her diamond stud earring.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY

ANN

Well, I don't know. The week started off okay, but then I was outside watering the plants, and I started feeling dizzy from the heat and that got me thinking about the Greenhouse

Effect, so I went inside and turned on the air-conditioner full blast, and that made me feel a little better until I started thinking about radon leakage coming up through the floor, and –

DOCTOR  
Radon leakage?

ANN  
Yes, it's this radioactive gas in the ground, and houses kind of act like magnets to pull it up, and – you've never heard of this?

DOCTOR  
No, I haven't.

ANN  
Well, the cumulative effect is not good, let me tell you.  
(pause)  
I knew I shouldn't have watered those plants.

DOCTOR  
Did you confront John about the visitor?

ANN  
What visitor?

DOCTOR  
The friend of John's that was staying at your house.

ANN  
Oh, Graham. No, I didn't talk to him about that. Actually, that turned out to be pretty interesting. I expected Graham to be this... well, like John, you know? I mean, he said they had gone to school together, so I was expecting lots of stories about

getting drunk and secret handshakes and stuff. But he turned out to be this... this kind of character, I mean, he's kind of arty but okay, you know?

DOCTOR

Is he still at your house?

ANN

No, he left last week.

DOCTOR

Did you find him attractive?

ANN

What do you mean, like physically?

DOCTOR

Let me rephrase. Were you attracted to him?

ANN

(thinks)

I guess, but not because of the way he looked or anything. He's just so different, somebody new to have a conversation with. I'm just tired of talking to other couples about whether or not they're going to buy the station wagon, you know? It's just boring. I don't know, he was just different. And he's really on about truth a lot, being honest, and I like that, I felt comfortable around him.

(pause)

After he left I had a dream that he signed a lease to rent our guest room.

CYNTHIA

(voice over)

So where's he from?

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

Ann stands watching Cynthia get dressed for work.

ANN

I don't know. He went to school here, then he was in New York for awhile, then Philadelphia, and then just kind of travelling around.

CYNTHIA

Must be nice. So, what's he like, is he like John?

ANN

No, not at all. Actually, I don't think John likes him much anymore. He said he thought Graham had gotten strange.

A pause.

CYNTHIA

Is he? Strange, I mean?

ANN

Not really. Maybe if I just saw him on the street I'd have said that, but after talking to him... he's just kind of... I don't know, unusual.

CYNTHIA

Uh-huh. So what's he look like?

ANN

Why?

CYNTHIA

I just want to know what he looks like, is all.

ANN

Why, so you can go after him?

CYNTHIA

Jesus, Ann, get a life. I just asked what he looked like.

Ann says nothing.

CYNTHIA

Besides, even if I decided to fuck his brains out, what business is that of yours?

ANN

Do you have to say that?

CYNTHIA

What?

ANN

You know what. You say it just to irritate me.

CYNTHIA

I say it because it's descriptive.

ANN

Well, he doesn't strike me as the kind of person that would go in for that sort of thing, anyway.

CYNTHIA

Ann, you always underestimate me.

ANN

Well, I wonder why.

CYNTHIA

I think you're afraid to put the two of us in the same room together. I think you're afraid he'll be undeniably drawn to me.

ANN

Oh, for God's sake. Really, Cynthia, really, I don't think he's your type.

CYNTHIA

"My type"? What is this bullshit?  
How would you know what "my type"  
is?

ANN

I have a pretty good idea.

CYNTHIA

Ann, you don't have a clue. Look, I  
don't even know why we're discussing  
this, I'll just call him myself.

ANN

He doesn't have a phone.

CYNTHIA

Well, I'll call him when he does.

ANN

But he won't.

CYNTHIA

What are you talking about?

ANN

He's not getting a phone, he doesn't  
like talking on the phone.

CYNTHIA

Oh, please. Okay, so give me the Zen  
master's address, I'll think of a  
reason to stop by.

ANN

Let me talk to him first.

CYNTHIA

Why? Just give me the address, you  
won't even have to be involved.

ANN

I don't feel right just giving you  
the address so that you can go over  
there and...

CYNTHIA

And what?

ANN

And... do whatever it is you do.

Cynthia laughs loudly. Ann, not happy, watches her dig through the jewelry box.

ANN

Lose something?

CYNTHIA

That goddam diamond stud earring that cost me a fucking fortune.

ANN

Are you getting Mom something for her birthday?

CYNTHIA

I don't know, I'll get her a card or something.

ANN

A card? For her fiftieth birthday?

CYNTHIA

What's wrong with that?

ANN

Don't you think she deserves a little more than a card? I mean, the woman gave birth to you. It's her fiftieth birthday –

CYNTHIA

Will you stop? Jesus.

ANN

I just thought it might –

CYNTHIA

Okay, Ann, okay. How about this: you buy her something nice, and I'll pay

for half. All right?

ANN

Fine.

CYNTHIA

Good. Now, if you'll pardon me, I have to go to work.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY

ANN

I was thinking maybe I shouldn't be in therapy anymore.

DOCTOR

What brought this on?

ANN

I've been thinking about it for awhile, and then I was talking to somebody who kind of put things in perspective for me.

DOCTOR

(smiles)

I thought that's what I did. Who was it that you talked to?

ANN

That guy Graham I told you about. He said taking advice from someone you don't know intimately was... well, he said a lot of stuff.

The Doctor exhales, thinking for a moment.

DOCTOR

Ann, in life one has to be aware of hidden agendas.

(pause)

Did it occur to you that Graham may have his own reasons for not wanting you to be in therapy?

ANN

What do you mean? I don't understand.

DOCTOR

It's possible that Graham has hidden motives for disliking therapy and/or therapists. Perhaps he has problems of his own that he is unwilling to deal with, and he would like to see other people, you for instance, wallow in their situation just as he does. Do you think that's possible?

ANN

I guess.

DOCTOR

You understand that you are free to leave therapy at any time?

ANN

Yes.

DOCTOR

That you are under no obligation to me?

ANN

Yes.

DOCTOR

Do you want to leave therapy?

ANN

Not really.

DOCTOR

Do you feel there is more progress to be made?

ANN

Yes.

DOCTOR

I'm glad you feel that way, because

I feel that way, too.

ANN

But you don't have hidden motives  
for feeling that way, right?

The Doctor laughs. Ann does not laugh with him.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

On a television monitor we see images originating from an 8mm Video deck. Graham sits naked in a sheet-covered chair facing the screen. He watches the tape, which is footage of himself interviewing a girl about her sexual preferences. The photography on the tape is hand-held, relentless. As the questions get more detailed, Graham becomes more aroused.

There is a knock on Graham's door. He calmly shuts off the videotape player and stands, wrapping the sheet around himself.

GRAHAM

It's open.

Graham walks into the bedroom to put on some clothes. Ann opens the door and walks into the apartment.

ANN

Hi!

GRAHAM

(off)

Ann. Hello.

ANN

Are you in the middle of something?

GRAHAM

(off)

Nothing I can't finish later.

ANN

(looks)

I just wanted to see how the place  
looked furnished.

GRAHAM

(Off)

Not much to see, I'm afraid. I'm sort of cultivating a minimalist vibe.

ANN

Somehow I imagined books. I thought you would have like a whole lot of books and be reading all the time.

Graham enters.

GRAHAM

I do read a lot. But I check everything out of the library.

Graham picks up an Anais Nin diary and opens it to show Ann the library sleeve inside.

GRAHAM

Cheaper that way. And cuts down on the clutter.

Ann walks to the table where the video gear is set up. Graham watches her closely. She looks into a large box of 8mm videotapes. On the side of each tape is a label. The labels look like this:

DONNA / 11 DEC 86 / 1:07:36

And so on. There are thirty or forty tapes, total.

ANN

What are these?

GRAHAM

Videotapes.

ANN

(smiles)

I can see that. What are they?

Graham exhales.

GRAHAM

It's a personal project I'm working on.

ANN

What kind of personal project?

GRAHAM

Oh, just a personal project like anyone else's personal project. Mine's just a little more personal.

ANN

Who's Donna?

GRAHAM

Donna?

ANN

Donna. On this tape it says "Donna".

GRAHAM

(thinking)

Donna was a girl I knew in Florida.

ANN

You went out with her?

GRAHAM

Not really.

Ann looks in the box again.

ANN

How come all these are girl's names?

Graham thinks for a moment.

GRAHAM

Because I enjoy interviewing women more than men.

ANN

All of these are interviews?

GRAHAM

Yes.

ANN

Can we look at one?

GRAHAM

No.

ANN

Why not?

GRAHAM

Because I promised each subject that no one would look at the tape except me.

Ann looks at Graham for a long moment, then back at the tapes.

ANN

What... what are these interviews about?

GRAHAM

The... interviews are about sex, Ann.

ANN

About sex?

GRAHAM

Yes.

ANN

What about sex?

GRAHAM

Everything about sex.

ANN

Like what?

GRAHAM

Like what they've done, what they

do, what they don't do, what they want to do but are afraid to ask for, what they won't do even if asked. Anything I can think of.

ANN

You just ask them questions?

GRAHAM

Yes.

ANN

And they just answer them?

GRAHAM

Mostly. Sometimes they do things.

ANN

To you?

GRAHAM

No, not to me, for me, for the camera.

ANN

(stunned)

I don't... why... why do you do this?

GRAHAM

I'm sorry this came up.

ANN

This is just... so...

GRAHAM

Maybe you want to go.

ANN

Yes, I do.

Ann nods and absently heads for the door. She gives Graham a puzzled look before leaving.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Ann is talking to Cynthia on the telephone.

ANN

(still shaken)

I don't... he doesn't want you to come over.

CYNTHIA

What do you mean he doesn't want me to come over? Did you tell him about me?

ANN

No, I didn't.

CYNTHIA

Why not?

ANN

Because I never got around to it.

CYNTHIA

Well, why?

ANN

Because. Cynthia, look, John was right. Graham is strange. Very strange. You don't want to get involved with him.

CYNTHIA

What the hell happened over there? Did he make a pass at you?

ANN

No!

CYNTHIA

Then what's the story, what's this "strange" bullshit all of a sudden? Is he drowning puppies, or what?

ANN

No, it's nothing like that.

CYNTHIA

Well, what? Is he dangerous?

ANN

No, he's not dangerous. Not physically.

CYNTHIA

Well, what, then?

ANN

I don't want to talk about it.

CYNTHIA

Then why'd you call me?

ANN

I don't know.

Ann hangs up.

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

Cynthia gets out of the shower. The phone rings. She wraps herself in a towel and lifts the receiver.

CYNTHIA

Hello.

JOHN

Cynthia. John.

CYNTHIA

Not today. I've got other plans.

JOHN

Oh.

(pause)

Well, when, then?

CYNTHIA

How about inviting me over to dinner?

JOHN

You know what I mean.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, I know what you mean.

Cynthia hangs up the phone.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Graham sits smoking a cigarette. There is a knock at his door.

GRAHAM

It's open.

Cynthia enters. Graham looks up at her.

GRAHAM

Who are you?

CYNTHIA

I'm Cynthia Bishop.

GRAHAM

Do I know you?

CYNTHIA

I'm Ann Millaney's sister.

GRAHAM

The extrovert.

CYNTHIA

(smiles)

She must have been in a good mood when she said that. She usually calls me loud.

GRAHAM

She called you that, too. May I ask why you're here?

CYNTHIA

You want me to leave?

GRAHAM

I just want to know why you're here.

CYNTHIA

Well, like I said, Ann is my sister. Sisters talk. You can imagine the rest.

GRAHAM

No, I really can't. I find it healthy never to characterize people I don't know or conversations I haven't heard. I don't know what you and your sister discussed about me or anything else. Last time I saw Ann she left here very... confused, I would say. And upset.

CYNTHIA

She still is.

GRAHAM

And are you here to berate me for making her that way?

CYNTHIA

Nope.

GRAHAM

She didn't tell you why she was upset?

CYNTHIA

Nope.

GRAHAM

She didn't give you my address?

CYNTHIA

Nope.

GRAHAM

How did you find me?

CYNTHIA

I, uh, know a guy at the power company.

GRAHAM

I don't understand. Why did you want to come here? I mean, I can't imagine Ann painted a very flattering portrait of me.

CYNTHIA

Well, I don't really listen to her when it comes to men. I mean, look at John, for crissake. Oh, you went to school with him didn't you? You're probably friends or something.

GRAHAM

Nope. I think the man is a liar.

CYNTHIA

(smiles)

I think you're right. So come on, I came all the way over here to find out what got Ann so spooked, tell me what happened.

GRAHAM

(smiles)

Spooked.

He motions to the box of videotapes.

GRAHAM

That box of tapes is what got Ann so "spooked".

Cynthia goes over to the box and looks inside for a long moment, studying the labels.

CYNTHIA

Oh, okay. I think I get it.

GRAHAM

What do you get?

CYNTHIA

Well, they must be something sexual, because Ann gets freaked out by that

shit. Are these tapes of you having sex with these girls or something?

GRAHAM

Not exactly.

CYNTHIA

Well, either you are or you aren't. Which is it?

GRAHAM

Why don't you let me tape you?

CYNTHIA

Doing what?

GRAHAM

Talking.

CYNTHIA

About what?

GRAHAM

Sex. Your sexual history, your sexual preferences.

CYNTHIA

What makes you think I'd discuss that with you?

GRAHAM

Nothing.

CYNTHIA

You just want to ask me questions?

GRAHAM

I just want to ask you questions.

CYNTHIA

And that's all?

GRAHAM

That's all.

CYNTHIA

(a crooked smile)

Is this how you get off or something?  
Taping women talking about their  
sexual experiences?

GRAHAM

Yes.

CYNTHIA

Would anybody else see the tape?

GRAHAM

Absolutely not. They are for my  
private use only.

CYNTHIA

How do we start?

GRAHAM

I turn on the camera. You start  
talking.

CYNTHIA

And you ask questions, right?

GRAHAM

Yes.

CYNTHIA

How long will it take?

GRAHAM

That depends on you. One woman only  
used three minutes. Another filled  
up three two hour tapes.

CYNTHIA

Can I see some of the other tapes to  
get an idea of what –

GRAHAM

No.

CYNTHIA

(thinks)  
Do I sit or stand?

GRAHAM  
Whichever you prefer.

CYNTHIA  
I'd rather sit. Are you ready?

GRAHAM  
Just a moment.

Graham grabs his 8mm Video camera, puts in a new tape, and turns it on.

GRAHAM  
I am now recording. Tell me your name.

CYNTHIA  
Cynthia Patrice Bishop.

GRAHAM  
Describe for me your first sexual experience.

CYNTHIA  
My first sexual experience or the first time I had intercourse?

GRAHAM  
Your first sexual experience.

CYNTHIA  
(thinks)  
I was... eight years old. Michael Green, who was also eight, asked if he could watch me take a pee. I said he could if I could watch him take one, too. He said okay, and then we went into the woods behind our house. I got this feeling he was chickening out because he kept saying, "Ladies first!" So I pulled down my underpants and urinated, and he ran away before

I even finished.

GRAHAM

Was it ever a topic of conversation between the two of you afterward?

CYNTHIA

No. He kind of avoided me for the rest of the summer, and then his family moved away. To Cleveland, actually.

GRAHAM

How unfortunate. So when did you finally get to see a penis?

CYNTHIA

When I was fourteen.

GRAHAM

Live, or in a photograph or film of some sort?

CYNTHIA

Very much live.

GRAHAM

What did you think? Did it look like you expected?

CYNTHIA

Not really. I didn't picture it with veins or ridges or anything, I thought it would be smooth, like a test tube.

GRAHAM

Were you disappointed?

CYNTHIA

No. If anything, after I looked at it awhile, it got more interesting. It had character, you know?

GRAHAM

What about when you touched it? What

did you expect it to feel like, and then what did it really feel like?

CYNTHIA

It was warmer than I thought it would be, and the skin was softer than it looked. It's weird. Thinking about it now, the organ itself seemed like a separate thing, a separate entity to me. I mean, after he pulled it out and I could look at it and touch it, I completely forgot that there was a guy attached to it. I remember literally being startled when the guy spoke to me.

GRAHAM

What did he say?

CYNTHIA

He said that my hand felt good.

GRAHAM

Then what happened?

CYNTHIA

Then I started moving my hand, and then he stopped talking.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Cynthia, adjusting her clothes, opens the door to leave. She looks very aroused. She and Graham do not speak or touch.

INT. LAW OFFICES – DAY

John Millaney picks up a telephone and presses a blinking button.

JOHN

John Millaney.

CYNTHIA

I want to see you.

JOHN  
When?

CYNTHIA  
Right now.

JOHN  
Jesus, I don't know if I can get away. I've got a client waiting. I'd have to do some heavy duty juggling.

CYNTHIA  
Then get those balls in the air and get your butt over here.

She hangs up. John thinks a moment, then hits his intercom button.

JOHN  
Janet, re-schedule Kirkland, see if he can come in Friday. Smooth things out, tell him an emergency came up. I'll slip out the back.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Graham watches Cynthia's tape, becoming excited.

CYNTHIA  
(voice on tape)  
Would you like me to take my pants off?

GRAHAM  
(voice on tape)  
If you wish.  
(pause)  
You're not wearing any underwear.

CYNTHIA  
(voice on tape)  
Do you like the way I look?

GRAHAM  
(voice on tape)

Yes.

CYNTHIA  
(voice On tape)  
Do you think I'm pretty?

GRAHAM  
(voice on tape)  
Yes.

CYNTHIA  
(voice on tape)  
Prettier than Ann?

GRAHAM  
(voice on tape)  
Different.

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

Cynthia and John are having sex.

CYNTHIA  
(to Graham, voice on  
tape)  
John doesn't have sex with Ann  
anymore.

GRAHAM  
(voice On tape)  
Is that what he tells you?

CYNTHIA  
(voice on tape)  
He doesn't have to tell me.

Cynthia has an intense orgasm. She rolls off of John,  
sweating.

JOHN  
Jesus Christ. You are on fire today.

Cynthia smiles.

CYNTHIA

Yes. You can go now.

DOCTOR

(voice over)

If you won't talk to me, I can't help you.

A moment of silence. John is starting to put his clothes on.

Cynthia lies in bed, her eyes closed, her face serene.

ANN

(voice over)

I hate my sister.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY

DOCTOR

Why?

ANN

(rambling)

Because all she thinks about are these guys she's after and I just hate her she's such a little slut I thought that in high school and I think that now. Why do people have to be so obsessed with sex all what's the big damn deal? I mean, it's okay and everything, but I don't understand when people let it control them, control their lives, why do they do that?

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Ann lies awake in bed beside John, who is sound asleep.

DOCTOR

(voice over)

There are many things that can exert control over one's life, good and bad. Religion, greed, philanthropy, drugs.

ANN  
(voice over)  
I know, but this... I just feel like  
everybody I know right now is obsessed  
with sex.

Ann looks over at John. She slowly reaches under the covers and grasps his penis. Without waking, he rolls over and turns his back to her. She returns to looking at the ceiling.

ANN  
(voice over)  
Except John, I guess.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Ann is talking to Cynthia on the phone. Ann looks very morose.

CYNTHIA  
He just asked me questions.

ANN  
What kinds of questions?

CYNTHIA  
Questions about sex.

ANN  
Well, like what did he ask, exactly?

A pause.

CYNTHIA  
Well, like, I don't want to tell  
you, exactly.

ANN  
Oh, so you'll let a total stranger  
record your sexual life on tape, but  
you won't tell your own sister?

CYNTHIA  
Apparently.

ANN

Did he ask you to take your clothes off?

CYTNHIA

Did he ask me to take my clothes off? No, he didn't.

ANN

Did you take your clothes off?

CYNTHIA

Yes, I did.

ANN

(floored)

Cynthia!

CYNTHIA

What!?

ANN

Why did you do that?

CYNTHIA

Because I wanted to.

ANN

But why did you want to?

CYNTHIA

I wanted him to see me.

ANN

Cynthia, who knows where that tape may end up? He could be... bouncing it off some satellite or something. Some horny old men in South America or something could be watching it.

CYNTHIA

He wouldn't do that.

ANN

You don't know that for sure.

CYNTHIA

Well, it's too late now, isn't it?

ANN

Did he touch you?

CYNTHIA

No, but I did.

ANN

You touched him?

CYTNHIA

No, I touched me.

ANN

Wait a minute. Do you mean... don't tell me you... in front of him.

CYNTHIA

In front of him, Ann, yes.

ANN

(serious)

You are in trouble.

CYNTHIA

(laughs)

Listen to you!! You sound like Mom. What are you talking about?

ANN

(outraged)

I can't believe you did that!!

CYNTHIA

Why?

ANN

I mean, I couldn't do that in front of John, even.

CYNTHIA

You couldn't do it, period.

ANN

You know what I mean, you don't even know him!

CYNTHIA

I feel like I do.

ANN

That doesn't mean you do. You can't possibly trust him, he's... perverted.

CYNTHIA

He's harmless. He just sits around and looks at these tapes. What's the big deal?

ANN

So he's got this catalogue of women touching themselves? That doesn't make you feel weird?

CYNTHIA

No. I don't think they all did what I did.

ANN

You are in serious trouble.

CYNTHIA

Ann, I don't understand why this freaks you out so much. You didn't do it, I did, and if it doesn't bother me, why should it bother you?

ANN

I don't want to discuss it.

CYNTHIA

Then why do you keep asking about it?

INT. LOUNGE – DAY

A sparse daytime crowd. Cynthia serves a beer to some DUDE.

He puts the money down on the bar and looks at her.

DUDE  
(as Marlon Brando)  
Are you an assassin?

CYTNHIA  
Excuse me?

DUDE  
(still Brando)  
You're an errand boy... sent by  
grocery clerks... to collect a bill.

Ann enters the lounge, carrying a package.

DUDE  
(to Cynthia)  
Brando, it's Brando, come on.

CYNTHIA  
It's great. Pardon me.

Cynthia moves down the bar to meet Ann.

ANN  
I wish you'd get an answering machine.

CYTNHIA  
There's a phone here.

ANN  
It was busy.

Ann opens the package, revealing a lovely sun dress.

ANN  
Here it is.

CYNTHIA  
What is it?

ANN  
It's a sun dress.

CYNTHIA

It looks like a tablecloth.

ANN

It does not.

CYTNHIA

Well, why would she want a sun dress?  
She's got spots on her shoulders and  
varicose veins.

ANN

So will you, someday.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, and when I do, I won't be  
wearing sun dresses.

The lounge phone rings.

ANN

I was just trying to –

CYNTHIA

Hold on.

Cynthia walks to the other end of the bar to answer the phone.

The Dude watches her pass. Then he turns to Ann and gives  
her the once-over. He spots the present.

DUDE

Nice dress.

Ann says nothing.

DUDE

Wanna hear my Walter Matthau? You'll  
love this.

(as Matthau)

"Feeelix, what are you, craaazee?"

(back to normal)

Pretty good, huh?

Cynthia picks up the phone.

CYNTHIA

Hello.

JOHN

Cynthia. John.

CYNTHIA

Well, this is timely. Your wife is here, would you like to speak to her?

JOHN

She's there? What's she doing there?

CYTNHIA

She came by to show me a present that she and I are buying for your mother-in-law.

JOHN

Oh. When can I see you?

CYNTHIA

I don't know. I'm not sure I can duplicate the level of intensity I had the other day.

JOHN

Nothing wrong with trying.

CYNTHIA

I don't think my sister would agree.

A pause.

JOHN

Do you want me to stop calling?

CYNTHIA

Look, I'll call you, okay?

Cynthia hangs up and walks back to Ann.

CYNTHIA

So what's my share of the dress?

ANN

Thirty-two dollars.

Cynthia pulls thirty-five bucks out of her jeans. She watches Ann put the money away.

CYNTHIA

Look, don't worry about the dress,  
I'm sure she'll love it.

DUDE

(to Ann and Cynthia)

Hey!! How about Tom Brokaw? Nobody  
does Brokaw.

(as Tom Brokaw)

"In Iran today..."

SCENE DELETED

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Graham sits reading a book. There is a knock at his door.

GRAHAM

It's open.

Cynthia enters the room, looking very intent on something.

GRAHAM

Hello.

CYNTHIA

Hi.

Graham sets his book down. He looks at her for a moment,  
then drags on his cigarette.

CYNTHIA

Look, I'm just going to come right  
out and tell you why I'm here, okay?

GRAHAM

Okay.

CYNTHIA

I'd like to make another tape.

Graham thinks for a moment.

GRAHAM

No.

CYNTHIA

No? Not even one more?

GRAHAM

I never do more than one. I'm sorry.

CYNTHIA

I can't talk you into it?

GRAHAM

No. You'll have to get somebody else.

CYNTHIA

Now who the hell is going to do that for me?

GRAHAM

I'm sure a substantial number of men in this town would volunteer.

CYNTHIA

But I want you to do it, I want somebody who will ask the right questions and everything, somebody I can play to and feel safe because you can't do anything.

GRAHAM

Ouch. Okay, I deserved that. Cynthia, don't you understand? After the first time it's just not spontaneous. There's no edge anymore. Look at the tapes, there is only one date on each label. I have never taped anyone twice.

CYNTHIA  
So make an exception.

GRAHAM  
No.

CYNTHIA  
How about if you record over the one  
we already made? You could have the  
same date and not use another tape.  
Who would know?

GRAHAM  
I would.

CYNTHIA  
Well, what the hell am I supposed to  
do?

GRAHAM  
Cynthia, I don't know.

CYNTHIA  
I can't believe you're doing this  
after I let you tape me.

GRAHAM  
I'm sorry. I can't do it.

CYNTHIA  
Goddamit, give me my tape, then.

GRAHAM  
No.

Cynthia heads for the tape box. Graham leaps up to stop her.

CYNTHIA  
(digging through the  
box)  
It's my fucking tape, you asshole –

Graham grabs her wrists momentarily.

GRAHAM

(heated)  
No!! I told you what the parameters  
were and you agreed. It's my tape. I  
look at it, I touch it, nobody else.

Cynthia and Graham look at each other for a long moment.

GRAHAM  
Please go, I'd like you to go now.

Cynthia looks at him.

CYNTHIA  
Sure, okay.

She leaves.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

John and Ann lie in bed. The lights are out. Ann is wide awake, while John is on the verge of sleep. He rolls over and puts his arm around her. She gets up and sits in a chair opposite the bed.

ANN  
John?

JOHN  
Mmmmm...

ANN  
I called you Tuesday at 3:30 and  
they said you weren't in. Do you  
remember where you were?

CUT TO:

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

John and Cynthia are in Cynthia's bed, kissing. On the floor,  
John's watch reads 3:11 pm.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

JOHN

Tuesday. I had a late lunch.

ANN

Did you see a message to call me  
when you got back in?

CUT TO:

EXT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

John leaves Cynthia's house and drives straight home, greeting  
Ann as he steps through the front door.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

JOHN

Yes. I just got busy.

ANN

That's interesting, because I didn't  
leave a message.

John is waking up a little.

JOHN

Then maybe I saw an old message.  
There are a lot of them on my desk,  
you know.

ANN

Who'd you have lunch with?

JOHN

I ate by myself.

A pause.

JOHN

Something wrong?

ANN

Are you having an affair?

JOHN

Jesus Christ, where'd that come from?  
I have a late lunch by myself and  
now I'm fucking somebody?

ANN

Well, are you?

JOHN

No, I'm not. Frankly, I'm offended  
at the accusation.

ANN

If I'm right, I want to know. I don't  
want you to lie. I'd be very upset,  
but not as upset as if I'd found out  
you'd been lying.

JOHN

There's nothing to know, Ann.

ANN

I can't tell you how upset I would  
be if you were lying.

JOHN

Ann, you are completely paranoid.  
Not ten minutes ago I wanted to make  
love for the first time in weeks,  
and you act like I'm dipped in shit.  
You know, I think there are a lot of  
women that would be glad to have a  
young, straight male making a pretty  
good living beside them in bed with  
a hard on.

ANN

My sister, for one. Is that who it  
is?

JOHN

For God's sake, Ann, I am not fucking  
your sister. I don't find her that

attractive, for one.

ANN

Is that supposed to comfort me?

JOHN

I was just saying, you know? I didn't get paranoid when you didn't want to make love. I could have easily assumed that you didn't want to because you were having an affair.

ANN

But I'm not.

JOHN

I'm not either!!

ANN

Why don't I believe you?

JOHN

Look, this conversation is utterly ridiculous. Maybe when you have some evidence, we should talk, but don't give me conjecture and intuition.

ANN

Always the lawyer.

JOHN

Goddam right. I mean, can you imagine: "Your honor, I'm positive this man is guilty. I can't place him at the scene or establish a motive, but I have this really strong feeling."

ANN

You've made your point.

JOHN

I'm sorry. It's just... I'm under a lot of pressure with this Kirkland thing, it's my first big case as junior partner, and I work all day,

I come home, I look forward to seeing you, and... it hurts that you accuse me like that.

A pause. Ann exhales.

ANN

I'm sorry, too. I... I get these ideas in my head, you know, and I have nothing to do all day but sit around and concoct these intricate scenarios. And then I want to believe it so I don't think I've wasted the whole day. Last week I was convinced you were having an affair with Cynthia, I don't know why.

JOHN

I don't, either. I mean, Cynthia, of all people. She's so...

ANN

Loud.

JOHN

Yeah. Jeez, give me some credit.

ANN

I didn't say it was rational, I just said I was convinced.

JOHN

Isn't therapy helping at all?

ANN

I don't know. Sometimes I feel stupid babbling about my little problems while children are starving in the world.

JOHN

Quitting your therapy won't feed the children of Ethiopia.

ANN

I know.

A pause.

ANN

You never used to say "fucking".

SCENE DELETED

INT. CYNTHIA BISHOP'S APARTMENT – DAY

John sits on the edge of Cynthia's bed, slowly undressing.

JOHN

It's just so blatantly stupid, I  
have a hard time believing you did  
it.

CYNTHIA

What's so stupid about it?

JOHN

That you... you don't even know the  
guy.

CYNTHIA

Well, you know him, he's a friend of  
yours, do you think he can be trusted?

JOHN

Shit, after what you've told me, I  
don't know. I should've known, when  
he showed up dressed like some arty  
brat.

CYNTHIA

I like the way he dresses.

JOHN

What if this tape gets into the wrong  
hands?

CYNTHIA

"The wrong hands"? We're not talking  
about military secrets, John. They're

just tapes that he makes so he can sit around and get off.

JOHN

Jesus Christ. And he doesn't have sex with any of them? They just talk?

CYNTHIA

Right.

JOHN

Jesus. I could almost understand it if he was screwing these people, almost. Why doesn't he just buy some magazines or porno movies or something?

CYNTHIA

Doesn't work. He has to know the people, he has to be able to interact with them.

JOHN

Interact, fine, but did you have to masturbate in front of him, for God's sake? I mean...

A pause.

CYNTHIA

I felt like it, so what? Goddam, you and Ann make such a big deal out of it.

JOHN

You told Ann about this?

CYNTHIA

Of course. She is my sister. I tell her almost everything.

JOHN

I wish you hadn't done that.

CYNTHIA

Why not?

JOHN

It's just something I'd prefer she didn't know about.

CYNTHIA

She's a grown-up, she can handle it.

JOHN

I just... Ann is very...

CYNTHIA

Hung up.

JOHN

It just wasn't a smart thing to do. Did you sign any sort of paper, or did he have any contract with you saying he wouldn't broadcast these tapes?

CYNTHIA

No.

JOHN

You realize you have no recourse legally? This stuff could show up anywhere.

CYNTHIA

It won't. I trust him.

JOHN

(disbelieving)

You trust him.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, I do. A helluva lot more than I trust you.

JOHN

What do you mean?

CYNTHIA

Exactly what I said. I'd trust him before I'd trust you. How much clearer can I be?

JOHN

It hurts that you would say that to me.

CYNTHIA

(laughs)

Oh, please. Come on, John. You're fucking your wife's sister and you hardly been married a year. You're a liar. But at least I know you're a liar. It's the people that don't know, like Ann, that have to watch out.

JOHN

By definition you're lying to Ann, too.

CYNTHIA

That's right. But I never took a vow in front of God and everybody to be "faithful" to my sister.

JOHN

Look, are we going to do it or not?

CYNTHIA

Actually, no, I've changed my mind. I shouldn't have called.

JOHN

(ingratiating)

Well, I'm here now. I'd like to do something...

CYNTHIA

How about straightening up the living room?

John doesn't smile.

CYNTHIA

Come on, John. You should be happy, we've gone this far without Ann finding out, I'm making it real easy on you. Just walk out of here and I'll see you at your house for a family dinner sometime.

JOHN

Did he put you up to this?

CYNTHIA

Who?

JOHN

Graham.

CYNTHIA

No, he didn't put me up to this. Jesus, I don't need people to tell me what I should do. I've just been thinking about things, that's all.

JOHN

I can't believe I let him stay in my house. Right under my nose. That deviant fucker was right under my nose and I didn't see him.

CYNTHIA

If he had been under your prick you'd have spotted him for sure.

JOHN

(looks at her)

God, you... you're mean.

CYNTHIA

I know. Will you please leave now?

JOHN

Maybe I don't want to leave. Maybe I want to talk.

CYNTHIA

John, we have nothing to talk about.

JOHN

I knew it, I knew it. Things are getting complicated.

CYNTHIA

No, John, things are getting real simple.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Ann, dressed in some of John's work clothes (old cotton shirt, khaki pants) is cleaning the house. Not cleaning like a normal person, but like an obsessive/compulsive person. Scrubbing spots that are already clean, vacuuming the same area of rug over and over, etc. Suddenly, an object lodges itself in the snout of the vacuum cleaner, making a loud noise. Shutting the machine off, Ann turns it over and sees that Cynthia's diamond stud earring has gotten hooked in the take-up roller.

Ann stares at Cynthia's earring for a long moment.

CUT TO:

Cynthia picking up her jacket from beside the bed after having sex with John. The earring slips out of the pocket and bounces under the edge of the bed.

CUT BACK TO:

Ann as she sets the earring onto the floor and begins to pound it with the bottom of a water glass, trying to smash it to pieces. She soon realizes the futility of trying to break a diamond.

Ann looks down at herself. Suddenly realizing that she is dressed in John's clothing, she frantically rips the shirt and pants from her body as though the material were burning her skin. Popped buttons skid across the floor.

Clothed only in her bra and underwear, Ann sits in the middle of the bedroom floor, arms around herself.

EXT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – DAY

Ann, now in jeans and t-shirt, stumbles to her car. Once inside, she jams the key into the ignition and rests her head against the steering wheel.

EXT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Ann lifts her head from the steering wheel and looks up. She looks almost surprised to find that she has driven to Graham's.

Slowly, she gets out of the car.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Graham sits reading.

There is a weak knock at the door. Graham listens, not sure he heard anything. There is a second weak knock.

GRAHAM

It's open!

Nothing happens. Graham gets up and opens the door himself.

Ann stands against the wall of the hallway, her head down, her breathing deliberate. Concerned, Graham slowly begins to lead her inside. Impulsively, she hugs him tightly.

Unaccustomed to physical contact, Graham's hands hang awkwardly at his side. Ann slowly pulls back from the embrace and sits down. Graham goes to the kitchen area and gets her a glass of water. He gives it to her and sits in the chair opposite. Ann holds the glass in her hand, staring at it.

GRAHAM

It's bottled, not tap.

A weak smile from Ann. She drinks, swallowing with difficulty.

ANN

I'm not sure why I came here. I had kind of decided not to talk to you after... you know.

GRAHAM

I know.

A pause.

ANN

That son of a bitch.

Ann looks at Graham.

ANN

(sarcastic)

John and Cynthia have been...  
"fucking".

GRAHAM

I know.

ANN

(stunned)

You know?

GRAHAM

Yes.

ANN

How did you know?

GRAHAM

She said it on her tape.

ANN

(angry)

Why didn't you tell me?

GRAHAM

Ann, when would I have told you? We  
were not speaking, if you recall.

Ann says nothing.

GRAHAM

But even if we had been speaking, I  
wouldn't have told you.

ANN

Why not?

GRAHAM

It's not my place to tell you these things, Ann. You have to find out by yourself or from John directly. You have to trust me on this.

Ann shakes her head.

ANN

My life is... shit. It's all shit. It's like somebody saying, "Okay, chairs are not chairs, they're actually swimming pools" I mean, nothing is what I thought it was. What happened to me? Have I been asleep? I vaguely remember the wedding, but a lot of it is just a blur... like I was watching from a distance. I can't believe him. Why didn't I trust my intuition?

Graham says nothing.

ANN

And I'm vacuuming his goddam rug. His rug, that he paid to have put in his house. Nothing in that place belongs to me. I wanted to put some of my grandmother's furniture in it, but he wouldn't let me. So I'm vacuuming his rug. That bastard.

Ann looks at Graham.

ANN

I want to make a tape.

A pause.

GRAHAM

Do you think that's such a good idea?

ANN

Don't you want to make one?

GRAHAM

Yes. But I sense the element of revenge here.

ANN

What difference does it make why I do it?

GRAHAM

I want you to be aware of what you're doing and why, because I know that this is not the sort of thing you would do in a normal frame of mind.

ANN

What would you know about a normal frame of mind?

GRAHAM

(impressed)

That's a good question.

ANN

What do you have to do to get ready?

GRAHAM

Load a new tape, turn the camera on.

ANN

Then do it.

Graham opens a new box of videotapes.

ANN

How do you pay for all this? I mean, rent, and tapes and this equipment.

GRAHAM

I have money.

ANN

What will you do when the money runs

out?

GRAHAM  
It won't. Are you ready?

ANN  
Yes.

Graham turns the camera on.

GRAHAM  
Tell me your name.

ANN  
Ann Bishop Millaney.

CUT TO BLACK:

THEN CUT TO:

EXT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DUSK

Street lights are illuminated. Night is imminent.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DUSK

Graham stops the video recorder. The record meter is stopped at 46:02.

Ann sits beside Graham on the couch. She looks into his eyes, stroking his hair.

After a moment, she gets up to leave.

INT. JOHN AND ANN MILLANEY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

John is talking on the phone as Ann walks through the door.

He mumbles an apology into the receiver and hangs up as Ann moves to the couch, her expression calm.

JOHN  
(worried)  
Jesus Christ! What the hell happened?  
I came home and your car was gone,

the door was open, I thought for sure you'd been abducted by some mad fucker, I was literally just calling the cops when you walked in. What happened?

ANN

I want out of this marriage.

JOHN

(genuinely shocked)

What?

ANN

(looks at him)

I want out of this marriage.

JOHN

Why?

ANN

We'll call it uncontested or whatever.

I just want out.

John moves to sit beside her on the couch. Ann does not look at him.

JOHN

(conciliatory)

Ann, honey, please, tell me what's wrong. Don't just say you want out and leave me wondering. You can't just go without telling me why.

Ann turns to look at him for a moment, then turns away.

ANN

Fuck you. I can do what I want.

John's mouth literally hangs open in shock. He is dumbstruck.

ANN

I'll stay at my mother's.

John gets up from the couch and begins pacing.

JOHN

Where did you go when you left here?

ANN

I drove around. Then I went to talk with Graham.

John smacks his hand on his leg.

JOHN

Goddammit, goddammit!! That son of a bitch!!

(thinking)

Well, at least I know you didn't fuck him.

ANN

No, but I wanted to. I really wanted to, partially just to piss you off.

John is seething.

JOHN

You're leaving me for him, aren't you? Well, that makes a sad sort of sense. He can't, and you won't.

ANN

I'm not going to discuss this with you anymore. You're making no sense.

John walks over to Ann.

JOHN

Did you make one of those goddam tapes?

Ann says nothing.

JOHN

Answer me, goddammit!! Did you make one of those tapes?

ANN

Yes!

John explodes, hitting the wall all around Ann. She cowers beneath the storm.

John bolts from the house.

ANN  
DON'T YOU TOUCH HIM!!!

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Graham stands in the middle of the room with a cigarette in his mouth, trying to teach himself to moonwalk.

EXT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

John screeches to a halt, parking haphazardly. He gets out of the car and runs to Graham's apartment.

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

John bursts through the door without bothering to knock. Graham looks up, startled. Before he can even react, John has him by the lapels.

GRAHAM  
Hi, John.

JOHN  
Where are the tapes, Graham?

GRAHAM  
What tapes?

JOHN  
You know which tapes! Where are they?

GRAHAM  
John, as a lawyer, you should know that those tapes are private property.

JOHN  
So is my wife, asshole!!

GRAHAM

She's not property, John, she's a person. Were you just going to keep right on lying to her?

JOHN

What the hell do you think? I love Ann. You think I'm going to tell her about Cynthia and hurt her feelings like that?

GRAHAM

God, you need help.

JOHN

I need help? Whose sitting by himself in a room choking his chauncey to a bunch of videotapes, Graham? Not me, buddy. You're the fucking nut. Now show me those tapes.

GRAHAM

No.

JOHN

I'm not kidding, Graham, you'd better do what I say. Give me those tapes.

GRAHAM

No.

John punches Graham in the jaw, knocking him to the floor.

Graham feels his mouth for blood as John picks him up by the shirt.

JOHN

Graham, I swear to Christ I'll kill your scrawny ass. Now give me those tapes.

GRAHAM

No.

John roughly pushes Graham into one of the director's chairs,

which topples over and throws Graham to the floor once again.

John looks around. He sees the boxes of tapes and begins to go through the contents. Graham gets up and runs over to stop him.

GRAHAM

Get away from those!! They belong to me!!

Graham and John struggle. John hits Graham in the stomach and pushes him to the floor.

JOHN

Give me your keys.

GRAHAM

My keys?

John bends over and starts going through Graham's pockets.

JOHN

Your keys, asshole!! Your two fucking keys!! Give them to me!!

GRAHAM

I'm not going to give you my keys.

John beats Graham until Graham can offer no resistance. He then drags Graham into the hallway and leaves him there.

John then locks himself inside Graham's apartment.

John walks over to the boxes of videotapes and begins to search through them spastically. He finds both Cynthia and Ann's tapes.

After a brief deliberation, he decides to watch Ann's. He turns on the player and the monitor. After pulling a chair up to the screen, John presses the button marked "play".

In the hallway, Graham drags himself to the door of his apartment. Putting his ear to the inlet, he strains to hear what is going on inside.

John watches the monitor come to life.

The image is Ann, sitting in a chair.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Tell me your name.

ANN  
(on tape)  
Ann Bishop Millaney.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
You are married, correct?

JOHN  
Goddam right.

ANN  
(on tape)  
Yes.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Who usually initiates sex?

John's jaw tightens.

JOHN  
Bastard...

ANN  
(on tape)  
He does.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Do you talk to him?

ANN  
(on tape)  
When we're making love?

GRAHAM

(on tape)  
Yes.

ANN  
(on tape)  
Sometimes. Afterward.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Does he go down on you?

JOHN  
(shouting at Graham)  
You son of a bitch!!

ANN  
(on tape)  
Not very often.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
I would.

John is literally so mad he can't speak. He watches the screen in mute anger, his hands wrapped tightly around the arms of the chair. Graham still listens from the hallway.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Have you ever wanted to make love to someone other than your husband?

JOHN  
Goddamit...

Ann hesitates.

JOHN  
(to Ann's image)  
Answer him, goddammit!!

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
You're hesitating. I think that means you have.

JOHN  
(to Graham on tape)  
Shut up!!!

ANN  
(on tape)  
You don't know what I'm thinking.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
It's a simple question. Have you  
ever thought of having – making  
love with someone other than your  
husband?

John leans forward.

ANN  
(on tape)  
Is he going to see this?

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Absolutely not.

A sarcastic chuckle from John. In the hallway, Graham furrows his brow.

ANN  
(on tape)  
I have thought about it, yes.

JOHN  
(to Ann's image)  
You bitch. I knew it.

GRAHAM  
(on tape)  
Did you have sex before you were  
married?

ANN  
(on tape)  
Yes.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

Did the person you made love with satisfy you more than your husband?

JOHN

(to Graham)

God damn you!!

ANN

(on tape)

Yes.

John stands and throws his chair against the door. Graham, still listening at the door, is startled.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

And you have thought about... making love to that person again since you've been married?

John watches the monitor, his eyes beginning to water.

ANN

(on tape)

I don't see what difference it makes, I mean, I can think what I want.

(pause)

I don't know if I want to do this anymore, I'm afraid... I don't mind answering the questions so much, but if somebody were to see this...

GRAHAM

(on tape)

At some level, I don't understand your nervousness. Have you decided to leave John?

Ann thinks. John watches.

ANN

(on tape)

Yes, I have. I will.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

Then as far as this taping goes, you have nothing to worry about.

ANN

(on tape)

I guess not.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

Do you want me to stop?

John, absorbed in the image, absently shakes his head.

ANN

(on tape)

No.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

Are there people other than your previous lover that you have fantasized about?

A pause.

ANN

(on tape)

Yes. Whenever... all right, look. Whenever I see a man that I think is attractive, I wonder what it would be like with him, I mean, I'm just curious, I don't act on it, but I hate that I think that!! I wish I could just forget about that stuff!!

GRAHAM

(on tape)

Why?

ANN

(on tape)

Because that's how Cynthia thinks!!  
All she does is think about that  
stuff, and I hate that, I don't want  
to be like her, I don't want to be  
like her!!

GRAHAM

(on tape)

You're not like your sister. You  
couldn't be like her if you wanted  
to.

ANN

(on tape)

I know. Deep down, I know that. It  
just bothers me, when I have feelings  
or impulses that she has.

John picks up the chair he threw and sets it upright. He  
sits down and watches the screen impassively. Graham still  
listens from outside.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

So you do fantasize?

ANN

(on tape)

Yes.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

About who?

ANN

(on tape)

I fantasized about you.

GRAHAM

(on tape)

About me?

ANN

(on tape)

Yes.

A pause.

ANN

(on tape)

Have you fantasized about me?

GRAHAM

(on tape)

I thought I made that clear before,  
when I said I would go down on you.

ANN

(on tape)

I remember. You could do that,  
couldn't you? Go down on me?

GRAHAM

(on tape)

Yes.

ANN

(on tape)

If I asked you to, would you? Not on  
tape, I mean?

GRAHAM

(on tape)

No.

ANN

(on tape)

On tape?

GRAHAM

(on tape)

No.

ANN

(on tape)

Why not?

GRAHAM

(on tape)

If I can't do it all, I don't want

to do anything. And I can't do it all.

ANN  
(on tape)  
Can't or won't?

A pause. John is still watching the tape, his face betraying no emotion. Graham still listens from outside.

CUT TO:

The previous afternoon. We are no longer looking at Ann on the monitor, but watching her and Graham AS THEY MADE THE TAPE. For instance, we can now see Graham from Ann's point of view, or the two of them at the same time, etc.

GRAHAM  
Can't.

ANN  
You said you weren't always impotent.

GRAHAM  
That's correct.

ANN  
So you have had sex.

GRAHAM  
Yes.

ANN  
Who was the last person you had sex with?

GRAHAM  
Her name was Elizabeth.

ANN  
So what happened? Was it so bad that it turned you off?

GRAHAM  
No, it was wonderful. That wasn't

the problem.

ANN

What was the problem?

GRAHAM

The problem was me. I was... I was a pathological liar. Or am, I should say. Lying is like alcoholism, one is always "recovering".

ANN

So you lied to her?

GRAHAM

Yes. I did. Willfully and repeatedly.

ANN

How come?

GRAHAM

I loved her for how good she made me feel, and I hated her for how good she made me feel. And at that time, I tended to express my feelings non-verbally. I couldn't handle anyone having that much control over my emotions.

ANN

And now you can?

GRAHAM

Now I make sure that no one has the opportunity to test me.

ANN

Don't you get lonely?

GRAHAM

How could I, with all these nice people stopping by? The fact is that I've lived by myself for so long, I can't imagine living with another person. It's amazing what you can

get used to if enough time goes by.  
And anyway, I'm asking the questions.  
Are you happy?

ANN

I don't know anymore. I thought I  
was, but obviously I was wrong.

GRAHAM

Did you confront John with the fact  
that you knew about him?

ANN

Not yet. I'm not sure I will. I just  
want out.

GRAHAM

If you do get out of your marriage,  
will you continue to be inhibited?

ANN

I don't know. It all gets back to  
that Cynthia thing. I don't like  
her... eagerness. There's nothing  
left to imagine, there's no...

GRAHAM

Subtlety?

ANN

Subtlety, yes. No subtlety. Plus,  
I've never really felt able to open  
up with anyone. I mean, that other  
person I told you about, I enjoyed  
making love with him a lot, but I  
still wasn't able to really let go.  
I always feel like I'm being watched  
and I shouldn't embarrass myself.

GRAHAM

And you feel the same way with John?

ANN

Kind of. I mean, John's like this  
kind of... craftsman. Like he's a

carpenter, and he makes really good tables. But that's all he can make, and I don't need anymore tables.

GRAHAM  
Interesting analogy.

ANN  
I'm babbling.

GRAHAM  
No, you're not.

ANN  
(thinking)  
God, I m so mad at him!!

GRAHAM  
You should be. He lied to you. So did Cynthia.

ANN  
Yeah, I know, but somehow I expect that from her, I mean, she'll do it with almost anybody, I don't know, I shouldn't stick up for her I guess, but him. He lied so... deeply!! Ooo, I want to watch him die!!

Ann sits quietly for a moment. Graham watches her silently.

The camera continues to roll.

ANN  
(looks up at Graham)  
You're really never going to make love again?

GRAHAM  
I'm not planning on it.

A pause.

ANN  
If you were in love with me, would

you?

GRAHAM

I'm not in love with you.

ANN

But if you were?

GRAHAM

I... I can't answer that precisely.

ANN

But I feel like maybe I could be really comfortable with you.

GRAHAM

That's very flattering.

ANN

So why won't you make love with me?  
Why wouldn't you, I mean?

GRAHAM

Ann. Are you asking me hypothetically,  
or are you asking me for real, right  
now?

ANN

I'm asking for real. I want you to  
turn that camera off and make love  
with me. Will you?

A pause.

GRAHAM

I can't.

ANN

Why not?

GRAHAM

I've told you.

ANN

But I don't understand –

GRAHAM

Ann, it could happen to me all over again, don't you see? I could start to –

ANN

But how do you know for sure, you have to try to find a way to fig –

GRAHAM

I couldn't face her if I had slept with somebody else.

A pause.

ANN

Who? Elizabeth?

GRAHAM

(uncomfortable)

Yes.

ANN

You mean you're still in contact with her?

GRAHAM

No.

ANN

But you're planning to be?

GRAHAM

I don't know. Possibly.

ANN

Wait a minute, wait a minute. What's going on here? Did you come back here just to see her again?

GRAHAM

Not entirely.

ANN

But that was part of it?

GRAHAM

Yes.

ANN

Like maybe a big part?

GRAHAM

Possibly.

ANN

Graham, I mean, what do you think her reaction is going to be if you contact her?

GRAHAM

I don't know.

ANN

Look at you, look at what's happened to you, look how you've changed! Don't you think she will have changed?

GRAHAM

I don't know. I really would rather not talk about it.

ANN

(has to laugh)

Whoa!! I'm so glad we got that on tape!! You won't answer a question about Elizabeth, but I have to answer all these intimate questions about my sex life!! Graham, what do you think she's going to make of all these videotapes? Are you going to tell her about them? I can't imagine her being too understanding about that. But since you don't lie anymore, you'll have to say something.

GRAHAM

As I said, I haven't decided what to do, exactly. Perhaps I won't do

anything.

ANN

Oh, you just moved here to think about it, right?

Graham says nothing. Ann looks at him.

ANN

Oh, God, Graham, this is so... pathetic. You're not even what you pretend to be, you're a lie, you're a bigger lie than you ever were.

Graham sets the camera down, though it continues to record.

He is visibly upset.

GRAHAM

All right, you want to talk about lies, let's talk about lies, Ann. Let's talk about lying to yourself. You haven't been able to sleep with your husband because you're no longer in love with him, and maybe you never were. You haven't been honest with yourself in longer than you can remember.

ANN

(heated)

Yeah, you're right. But I never claimed to know everything like you, and have all these little theories. I'm still learning, I know that. But I don't feel like I've wasted time. If I had to go through my marriage to get to where I am right now, fine.

Ann moves in closer, burrowing, her eyes on fire.

ANN

But you. You have wasted nine years. I mean, that has to be some sort of weird record or something, nine years.

How does that feel?

Graham says nothing. Ann picks up the camera and points it at him.

GRAHAM

Don't do that.

ANN

Why not?

GRAHAM

Because.

ANN

"Because"? That's not good enough. I asked you a question, Graham. I asked you "how does it feel"? How does it feel, Mr. I Want To Go Down On You But I Can't? Do you know how many people you've sucked into your weird little world? Including me? Come on, how does it feel?

GRAHAM

I can't tell you like this.

ANN

I'm just going to keep asking until you answer. I'm sure there's plenty of tape.

GRAHAM

I don't find this "turning the tables" thing very interesting –

ANN

I don't care.

Graham reaches up for the camera. Ann knocks his hand away.

ANN

Not until I get some answers. Tell what you feel. Not what you think, I've heard plenty of that. What you

feel.

Graham is on the verge of completely falling apart.

ANN

Come on!!

GRAHAM

All right!! All right!! You want to know? You want to know how I feel? I feel ashamed. Is that what you wanted to hear?

A pause. Graham regains his composure somewhat.

ANN

Why are you ashamed?

GRAHAM

Jesus Christ, Ann. Why is anybody anything? I think you have this idea that people are either all good or all bad, and you don't allow for any gray areas, and that's what most of us consist of.

ANN

You're not answering me.

GRAHAM

(heated)

Well, what kind of answer are you looking for, Ann? What is it exactly that you want to know?

ANN

I want to know why you are the way you are!

GRAHAM

And I'm telling you it's not any one thing that I can point to and say "That's why!" It doesn't work that way with people who have problems, Ann, it's not that neat, it's not

that tidy! It's not a series of little boxes that you can line up and count. Things just don't happen that way.

ANN

But why can't you just put it all behind you? Can't you just forget it? All that stuff you did?

GRAHAM

No, Ann, I can't. I can't forget it. It's not something I can fix. It's difficult. There's something in my mind... the way my brain works...  
(frustrated)

God, Ann, when you're with another person, and you're... inside them, you're so vulnerable, you're revealing so much... there's no protection. And... somebody could say, or do something to you while you're in this... state of... nakedness. And they could hurt you without even knowing it. In a way that you couldn't even see.

(looks at Ann)

And you would withdraw. To make sure it didn't happen again.

Ann looks at him for a long moment and then sets the camera down.

She moves in front of Graham and kneels.

ANN

I want to touch you.

Graham shakes his head.

ANN

I want to touch you.

GRAHAM

No.

Ann reaches out, and Graham instinctively begins to move away.

ANN  
Graham.

Something in her voice makes him stop. Their eyes lock. Graham slowly moves back toward her.

Ann's hand eases out to him, her eyes still burning into his.

Graham closes his eyes, accepting Ann's touch.

She caresses him.

Slowly.

Delicately.

She touches his arms, his face, his hair.

Closing her eyes, she takes his hand and puts it against her face.

She begins to lie him back on the couch. When he offers light resistance, she gently persists.

ANN  
Keep your eyes closed.

Graham lies back, silently obeying.

Ann touches his face.

Gradually, her hand slips to his neck and she begins to unbutton his shirt. She watches his face, hoping that he will remain calm. He does.

She rubs her hand on his chest.

Once again she brings Graham's hand to her face. She moves his hand to her neck and throat, painting her skin with his fingers.

Soon each hand is exploring the other. Fingers search for and find hidden areas.

Ann stands.

Their hands remain together, and Graham's eyes remain closed.

Ann moves onto the couch with Graham.

She gently lowers herself into a sitting position on his waist.

She slowly moves both of her hands onto Graham's chest. They move forward and back, like a lazy tide.

She looks at Graham. His face is tranquil.

Ann quietly begins to move her face toward his.

Soon she is hovering inches above him, her long hair touching his features.

She lowers her lips to his forehead and kisses him. She waits for a negative reaction. Getting none, she moves lower and kisses his eyes. Still receiving no discouragement, she moves to his nose.

A subtle movement from Graham. Ann waits for a moment.

She then moves to his lips, her luxuriant tresses enveloping his face.

She kisses him lightly.

She kisses him again.

Graham tilts his head back and she softly kisses his neck.

Graham's hands make their way up Ann's back until they have reached her neck. He slowly pulls his face to hers.

He kisses her.

Graham is flooded with warmth and excitement.

He caresses her, intoxicating himself with physical contact.

The kisses become more meaningful, and the touching becomes more passionate.

For a moment, Graham seems about to evaporate in a state of ecstasy, his eyes filled with relief and happiness.

But his gaze happens to fall on the video camera, which continues to record.

Graham seizes up and abruptly backs away from Ann's embrace.

Reality slowly envelopes him.

ANN

Graham...

GRAHAM

I'm okay. It's okay.

Ann reaches for his hand. He allows her to take it.

GRAHAM

(almost dazed)

It's okay.

Graham looks at Ann for a long moment. She sees the acceptance and gratitude in his eyes. She smiles lightly.

Graham moves forward and shuts off the camera.

CUT BACK TO:

John watching the tape. There is video snow on the monitor now.

The tape timer reads 46:02. John gets up slowly, ejects the tape from the player, and heads for the door.

Graham, hearing the footsteps approach, backs away from the inlet. His eye is swollen, and he holds one of his hands in a curious position.

John opens the door. He looks at Graham for a moment before

reaching into his pocket for Graham's keys. He dangles them in his hand as he stands over Graham.

JOHN

I never told you this, because I thought it would crush you, but now I could give a shit.

(pause)

I fucked Elizabeth. Before you broke up. Before you were having trouble, even. So you can stop making her into a saint. She was good in bed and she could keep a secret. And that's about all I can say about her.

John drops Graham's keys to the floor and leaves. Graham stands, fighting back tears, and walks into his apartment.

He pulls Ann's tape from the videotape player.

He reaches inside the cassette cartridge and pulls the videotape itself out, ruining it forever. He does the same to every other tape in both the boxes. Calmly. Deliberately. Methodically.

He walks over to the camera/recorder, trailing a mound of videotape behind him. He breaks the lens off the camera body, and smashes the inner workings against the edge of the table.

He then drops the damaged unit into the pile of destroyed tape, where it disappears.

CUT TO BLACK:

THEN CUT TO:

INT. LAW OFFICES – DAY

John Millaney talks to his colleague.

JOHN

Man, not having to answer to anybody... I feel like this huge weight has been lifted from my

shoulders. I mean, come on, if I decide that I'd rather live alone, what's so bad about that? It's not like I've decided to live a life of crime, right? It's just how I feel, you can't help the way you feel, you just have to be honest about it.

John dials a number on his telephone.

VOICE ON PHONE

IBM.

JOHN

(to phone)

Brian Kirkland, please.

VOICE ON PHONE

May I ask who's calling?

JOHN

John Millaney.

VOICE ON PHONE

One moment.

JOHN

(to his colleague)

Anyway, I've always said, the work is the thing. I can be happy without a marriage, but take away my work, that's different. And if Ann can't handle that, that's her problem, like we're all alone in this world, you know what I'm saying? I mean, fuck.

(looks at phone)

Jesus, what's takin' this guy?

The intercom clicks to life.

SECRETARY

(on speaker)

Mr. Millaney?

JOHN

Yeah.

SECRETARY

(on speaker)

Mr. Forman would like to see you in his office.

JOHN

Okay, in a minute, I'm on with a client.

SECRETARY

(on speaker)

He said immediately.

JOHN

All right, Jesus.

The intercom clicks off.

VOICE ON PHONE

Mr. Millaney?

JOHN

Yes?

VOICE ON PHONE

Mr. Kirkland has asked me to inform you that he has obtained legal representation elsewhere, and that if you have a message for him to leave it with me.

John swallows.

JOHN

Thank you. I... there is no message.

Thank you.

John hangs up. He thinks for a moment, rubbing his forehead.

The intercom clicks to life.

SECRETARY

(on speaker)

Mr. Millaney, Mr. Forman is waiting.

DUDE

(voice over)

Come on, I'm not asking too much, am I? Just one little question.

INT. LOUNGE – DAY

Cynthia is tending bar. The Dude from earlier is still there, puffing on a big cigar.

DUDE

Just tell me what time you get off.  
Work, I mean. What's the harm in that? Whaddaya say?

Ann enters the lounge. Cynthia watches with apprehensive surprise as Ann approaches with a potted plant.

CYNTHIA

(to Dude)

Excuse me.

Cynthia moves to meet Ann at the end of the bar. Ann sets the plant down on the counter. Her manner is diffident, but not hostile.

ANN

I know it's your birthday, and I know you like plants. So I got you this.

Cynthia is very moved, though she struggles valiantly to conceal her emotions.

CYNTHIA

Thank you.

ANN

Well. I can't stay.

Ann begins to leave.

CYNTHIA  
Can I call you?

Ann turns back to face her. They look at each other for a moment.

ANN  
Do you have my work number?

CYNTHIA  
No.

Ann writes the number down on a napkin.

ANN  
I get real busy between two and four.

CYNTHIA  
Okay.

Ann looks at Cynthia again before leaving.

ANN  
Bye.

CYNTHIA  
Bye.

Ann leaves. Cynthia continues to look at the door long after Ann has left.

DUDE  
Nice plant.

Cynthia turns to him.

CYNTHIA  
Do me a favor. Don't come in here anymore.

SCENE DELETED

INT. GRAHAM'S APARTMENT – DAY

Graham sits reading. There is now some furniture in the apartment. Bookshelves, plants, etc. There are periodicals on the table where the video gear used to be. There are no cigarettes.

There is a knock at Graham's door, which now has a deadbolt lock.

GRAHAM  
Who is it?

A knock again. Graham sets his book down and goes to the door.

He unlocks the deadbolt and opens it.

Ann stands in the hallway.

Graham is obviously flushed with feeling at seeing her. She wordlessly moves into the room, her movements like a slow breeze, her expression calm.

Graham watches her go by.

She stops in the middle of the room, her back to him.

Graham moves toward her slowly. Sensing him behind her, her breathing becomes deep.

Graham slowly enfolds her in his arms, his face against her hair.

She closes her eyes as their fingers entwine.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END