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50 Ways to Leave Your Lover

By Jordan Hawley

Chapter six.

He used to love the city.

Her chrome ad glass...

her buildings painted

with a hooker's blue eye shadow.

Her hills, her beaches...

her sleazy past

all cast a spell on him.

But now it was over.

His romance with the city had
gone the way of all the others.

The truth is, she was
suffocating him--literally.

Plus, he'd had it with
her insecurity about her looks.

And her constant need
to have work done to herself.

Not that he was any prize.

He wrote biographies of
the notorious and semi-famous.

A job where
the most important words...
were usually left off the page.

There was his first book,
"Dead Parents Society"...

about the homicidal
high school twins.

We ate, like, two rolls
of cookie dough...

and then we shot Mom.

You're not gonna put that
in the book, are you?

The part about the cookie dough?

There was the porn star.

Can we just forget about 1972
altogether?

The grandmother
who strangled six men.

I'd rather you not mention
the part...

where I took his jar of pennies.

And his current subject,
the astronaut.

Where the hell do you come up

with this steaming crap?
Uh, your journal.
I told you, mister,
I had a drinking problem then.
But the drinking problem doesn't
start till chapter nineteen.
Come on!
I just got back from the moon.
I was getting blown every night.
His job was a freak show...
and his love life
wasn't much better.
Still, he believed there was
that one person out there...
who could
make everything OK again.
After exhaustive research...
he was fairly sure
she didn't live in Los Angeles.
Oh, I'm not gonna order
anything.
I brought my oats.
By the way, did I tell you...
I'm getting back together
with my old boyfriend?
I'll have
the lobster and the crab.
I think you're ready
to meet my doctors.
The truth is, he was never
going to find anyone here.
He should have changed cities
years ago...
but, no, here he was...
Living in the same house
with the same best friends...
with the same books.
He was never gonna break up
with the city.
And then one night,
she kicked him out of bed.
Uh...
Unh! Aah!
Ah. Oh.

Mom...

Susan, relax. I'm fine.

You know, you haven't asked
how I am once.

Yes.

I'm standing in the doorway.

-Sweetie, it was just a tremor.

-Mom! Mom!

Yeah, it was a big tremor, OK.

I don't know. Three at most.

I mean, four is for,
like, major shock.

That was at least a six.

Dude, I'm talkin' dosage here,
not Richter scale.

All right? Bye.

Dosage. Yeah, of course.

No, Mom, you're not gonna die
from a gas leak.

Why not?

Because your stove is electric.

I got to go. Yeah. Bye.

You OK?

I'm above ground.

This is Donnie.

Donnie, could you go stand
in that doorway over there?

Why?

Well, I've known Owen longer.

I'd rather die with him.

So, who's Donnie?

My waiter at lunch.

Lunch? But it's 2:00 a.m.

You actually spent twelve hours
with the same guy?

Yeah, well, it was a late lunch.

Hello?

Eileen.

No, I'm fine. How--OK.

Right now?

Yeah, I still have the keys.

OK. OK.

Was that the call?

She wants me to come over.

Oh, it was the call, all right.
The thought of going down
in a quake alone...
without your soft, doughy butt
to hang onto terrified her.
So then she realizes she never
should have dumped you.
Hey, it wasn't a dump.
It was mutual.
I can't believe
you're going to go over there...
after she dumped you.
Would you really take
Eileen back?
Well...I mean,
she did cheat on me.
Mm-hmm.
-And leave me.
-Yeah.
And, you know, she made
last year totally miserable.
Uh-huh.
But on the other hand, it takes
a pretty special woman...
to make you feel that shitty,
so, yeah, I might.
I'm sorry.
We can't let you do that.
Dude, she's right.
We're going with you.
Let's go.
I've been thinking
a lot about us lately...
and we can't just
keep on standing still.
I totally agree.
Yeah. I--I mean,
it's been a whole year...
since we've been going out...
and I still haven't found
anybody that I liked.
Me, neither. I--I think
it's time we moved forward.
Oh, God. I am so glad

to hear you say that.
I mean,
I was sitting here tonight...
and watching the walls
crack around me...
and waiting for the pool
to fall through the roof...
and obliterate me...
and suddenly,
it was all very clear to me.
I saw my future--the house...
the white picket fence,
the kids...
but I didn't see you.
Uh, w-well, maybe I was at work.
Or the hardware store.
Was it a Saturday?
I was probably out
buying fertilizer.
No, no. I didn't see you...
because you're not
a part of my future.
I'm sorry, but I just--
I can't meet anybody...
with you
just waiting around for me.
Look, I mean,
this is obviously...
just a stress reaction
to a scary event...
Like when your mother
got remarried...
and you went out
and bought a kiln.
Ohh! Owen, stop spinning this.
I'm not spinning this!
I'm simply saying that
the lies and the cheating...
and the name-calling,
it's made us stronger.
OK, stop it!
This is not one of
your stupid biographies...
where everybody gets

what they want.
I am never
going to become a D.A...
and you are never
going to become a novelist.
And we are never, ever going
to move back to New England...
and get married. It's over.
It is all over.
There!
God, I feel so much better,
don't you?
How could she break up with you?
You weren't even going out.
I don't know what happened.
I mean, she's right, though.
I am always spinning things
to make them look better.
I got to face reality.
-Thai stick?
-Thanks.
I mean, this city has not worked
out for me. I got to get out.
Come on.
You're not going anywhere.
I am. I am leaving.
Hey, honestly, man, I think
you're aiming a little bit high.
Aiming high?
I'm talking about
buying a ticket...
and sitting on a plane
for four hours...
while somebody flies me
to a new destination.
That is
a beautiful theory, man...
but this city's got you
by your cojones.
I mean, look at her.
Ohh, she's beautiful.
You can't turn your back
on that.
Stand back and watch, my friend.

OK. OK.

I'm gonna show you something.
Now, you take this next left.
Historically, this town
has never been easy to escape.
Even the dinosaurs
had a hard time.

Dude, we live in a basin...
and by definition,
a basin contains shit.

That's why there's smog.
Air can't even escape
out of here.

OK, look, so it's finally over
with Eileen.

I mean, look on the bright side.
The relationship was shallow,
sexless, and rooted in lies.
Yeah, well, it's not just Eileen
I've been lying about.

It's every relationship I've
had, every book I've written.
People hire me
to write their life stories...
because I make them look better
than they really are.

I lie!

And you're just now
figuring this out?

No,
I just can't avoid it anymore.

You can't run away
from yourself, Owen.
Your whole life is here.
Yeah, well, my life and l...
have been growing apart
over the years.

I mean, I've been going one way,
and it's been going another.

We're getting
a trial separation.

So, you're breaking up
with your life?

You can't break up

with your life.
You'll just come crawling
right back to it.
You're right.
I've got to kill it.
First, he had to say good-bye
to his support group.
Well, I had a little slip.
Last night,
after the earthquake...
my ex said she was never
coming back to me...
and I realized
that I was lying to myself...
and the people at work...
and everyone else in my life.
And so today,
I've come to tell the truth.
-All right!
-Good for you.
That's nice.
Last night,
I got so deliriously...
rhapsodically stoned...
it was fucking fantastic.
And I realized
that for all the progress...
that we make here at AA...
I mean, we might as well
be getting stoned.
I mean, Keith--Keith
may not be drinking...
but he sent his father
another dead sparrow.
And, Joan,
well, Joan is sober...
but she handed out Halloween
candy naked again this year.
Anyway, take it easy.
I'm leaving town
to start my new life over.
But before I do,
I'm gonna blow a big, fat doob.
-Such a disgrace.

-Mm-hmm.

Owen! Stop! Stop! Owen!

Listen to me, will you?

Listen to me.

If you don't turn back now...

you will drive yourself

over the edge!

Jack, relax. The world is round.

Next, he had to set things

straight at work.

I've made some revisions...

because I feel like

we need to offer...

a more complete account

of events.

The most important thing

is we write a book...

we can both be proud of.

Well, Shakespeare,

there's two things...

I want this book to make us--

proud and money. Shoot.

"The competition

for the Apollo mission...

sizzled hotter than

a Houston parking lot in July."

That's good. I like that.

"I knew the final selection

would come down to politics...

"so I volunteered to pilot

Senator Baldrige's plane.

"That weekend I was ordered...

"to fly some hookers

to Camp David.

"The Soviets were in town...

"and Nixon wanted to make

a good impression.

"The rest is history.

To this day...

"I think if Brezhnev

had not been sated...

"by a little Korean stripper

named Susu...

"I might never have become...

the national hero
that I am today."
Just who in the fuck
do you think you are?
Oh, yeah? I was gonna ask you
the same question...
because you're definitely
not the guy in the book!
And then came
the hardest part...
the final farewell
to his friends.
What does that mean,
breaking up with your life?
Is that one of the twelve steps?
No, I finally got honest
with myself...
and everyone else in my life.
Cool. Well, good luck, man.
Yeah.
Hey, before I go,
there's something...
I always wanted to tell you.
You remember that guy
on your wedding tape...
who was humping
one of the caterers...
in the video greeting arbor...
and all you could see
was his hairy white ass?
Oh, my God!
You found out who that was?
Yeah! That was me.
-Ahem.
-Ha ha!
Remember when Allison
was into girls...
and you asked me to find out
if she wanted to sleep with you?
Yeah. As I recall, she said
I was a moped with a vagina.
Actually, she didn't say that.
I did.
Heh. That was you?

Yep. Allison actually thinks
you're hot.
So I could have been
fucking Allison all this time?
Oh, my God!
Well, if my show's the welfare
cheese of the American mind...
then what the hell's
the crap you write, huh?
You talentless fuckhead!
At least my cheese
doesn't stink.
Well, thanks, Blaine.
I'm glad we could catch up.
Good luck to you, buddy.
What the hell was that about?
I don't know.
I've started speaking
from my heart, you know?
And in about an hour, I'll have
absolutely no friends left...
so there'll be less reason
to come back.
Hey, man, I'm still your friend.
Yeah,
I was just getting to that.
Rob, listen, you're one of
my closest, dearest friends...
so I say this with true love.
Your girlfriend
is a huge screaming cunt.
She's cut you off
from your friends...
and made you take
these anti-depressives...
that have turned you
into a sad, boring ghost...
who leaves parties early
and drinks out of a juice box...
and most likely
sits down to piss.
Trust me.
All your friends agree...
this woman has the brain

of a Pilates machine...
and a heart
the size of a Zoloft.
Dump her!
Hey. What's going on?
Hi! I was just telling Rob here
what a cunt you are...
and how dull you've made him--
Unh!
Fuck you, Owen.
Let's go.
So long, old friend.
I'm gonna miss you.
Well, this is a nice way to say
good-bye to all your friends.
Well, you can't say
I wasn't honest.
Aah. At least I leave
with a clear conscience.
What are you gonna do
when you want to come back?
Well, that's the beauty of it.
Now I can't.
Great. Great.
So, you trashed your life.
For what?
Ahh.
Well, among other things...
an ex-Soviet
Nobel prize-winning physicist.
I told him I'd give him
his first three chapters...
for free
if he hired me to write his bio.
Dear Mr. McCabe, I am most
interested in your proposal.
The sooner
you come to Brighton...
the sooner we can begin.
In fact, I suggest
you leave immediately...
before there is
another earthquake.
L.A. is a doomed city.

Yours, Vassily Stepniak.
That's...
Wow. Ha!
So, I guess this is, uh...
this is really it.
Don't you have any final
earth-shattering words for me?
Ha ha!
There are no words for you.
Mmm. Mm.
Mm. Mm. Mm!
Owen?
Owen.
Eileen's boyfriend, right?
Oh, my God. Hi.
I didn't recognize you.
Yeah, well,
last time you saw me...
I probably had my eyes open...
and my tongue
wasn't down someone's throat.
I knew there was something
different. It's Val, right?
Yeah. And this is Max--
my boyfriend Max.
-This is Owen.
-Hi.
Owen and I met at this
oil spill cleanup years ago.
Ah, so you must be
in Friends of the Earth, too.
No, I was just there
to pick up girls.
Heh. So, how are you?
Are you still with Eileen, or...
Well, Eileen and I, you know...
I mean, we decided
we'd be happier, um...
It's complicated.
I got dumped.
Oh, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.
Hey, darling, listen,
my plane's going. I got to go.
-But you have ten minutes.

-Yeah.

-I'll call you.

-OK.

Mmm.

-Bye.

-Bye.

So, how long
have you guys been together?

Oh, um, four years.

He, um, he just got this
really great job in Miami...
so he's gonna try living there
for a while.

Which is fine, really.

I mean, we--

It's complicated, but...

I got dumped, too.

Really? That's great.

It's great?

Well, great, like--yeah, great.

I mean, you know--I mean, I--

Max and I don't go back
very far, but "I'll call you"?

I mean, a woman like you--
you could get anyone you want,
and...

You know,
it's none of my business.

Do you want to get a drink?

Yeah, I could use another.

OK, OK. Now, just go out there
and be honest...

because if you're honest...

and you say exactly
what's on your mind...

then she'll never
speak to you again...

and you can get
the hell out of here.

OK. Team.

You were the best nine seconds
of my entire fantasy life...
which is a lot more competitive
than my normal life.

Heh. God, that's funny.
No, that's very, very sick.
No, I mean, that's funny,
because, um...
I fantasized about you, too.
-Heh.
-Ha!
-You did?
-Mm-hmm.
Gosh, what were those like?
Um, they were just, like,
your basic sordid...
wake-up-in-the-middle
of-the-night-sweating...
kind of fantasies.
Hmm. Heh heh.
Oh, shit.
Are you OK?
You know, not even close.
Yeah, you know, you seem
a little--I don't know--
manic-depressive or something.
Well, lucky for me,
the airlines don't charge...
for excess personal baggage.
This is the final announcement
for flight 505...
nonstop service to New York.
Damn. Um...that's my flight.
Oh.
OK, well,
call me when you get back.
Sure.
Just walk away and praise God
that you don't have her number.
Wait, Owen!
I almost forgot
to give you my number. Heh.
-Thanks.
-Have a great trip.
Thank you.
Hey, is this flight 505?
Yeah. We just closed the gate.
No, no.

I've got to get out of here.
I have burned all my bridges
in this town.
And even if I wanted to,
I could never go back.
And now, because
your plane was late...
well, I met a woman that
I could fall in love with...
and I'm telling you...
if I don't get
on this plane right now...
I might just call her.
And then what?
I mean,
I could be here for years.
What if the relationship
works out?
Get real. It won't.
How do you know that?
I mean, what if,
by leaving now...
I'm dooming myself
to a lifetime...
of shallow, failed
relationships...
because I'll always be
thinking about her?
Are you getting on the plane?
No, thanks.
Well, better luck next time.
Jesus!
You scared the shit out of me.
Sorry. I don't know
what I was thinking...
getting into my own bed
like that.
OK, you can go now.
I'm really sorry. It's just
I thought you were gone...
and you have
a king-size bed, so...
Stephanie, can you please
hand me my underwear?

Get your own.
I don't have anything on.
Well, neither do I.
Look, clear out, asshole.
She's mine.
OK, Owen,
what the hell happened?
Well...
I met someone.
You came back for a woman?
I know, I know.
Things were going so well.
Well, who is she?
She's a friend of Eileen's.
You came back
for a friend of Eileen's?
Eileen
has horrible, ugly friends.
OK, she was an acquaintance.
We met a few years ago,
only then, she had a boyfriend.
Then tonight, at the airport,
I run into her...
and, of course,
we're both single.
Oh, so she ruined your exit.
Well, I mean,
I can't walk away now...
knowing
she's there and available.
Otherwise, I'll just be back
in three weeks.
Uhh. Do you wear a 32 Hanes?
Oh. Yeah.
So, wait, what are you gonna do?
You're just gonna go on a date?
Well, I have to make sure
that she's wrong for me.
You know, psychologists
say it takes...
at least three months
before the real you shows up.
No, no. I'm putting this
on the fast track.

The real me is gonna show up
the first date...
and I'm giving her the bad news
right up front.
I don't want to be her friend.
I don't want children,
'cause there's already...
too many parents in the world
as it is.
And I have no opinions
about shoes.
Do you really expect her
to go for that?
Well, there's always
that chance.
I mean, who knows where or when
love will strike?
I mean, I've just got
to give it an honest shot.
So, I guess you'll be
wanting your room back.
No, I'm booked on the red-eye
tomorrow night.
Yes, Bucky,
I am still in Los Angeles.
I'm just calling to tell you...
you are a great writer,
Shakespeare.
You could be
another Michael Crichton.
Well, we do both write
about dinosaurs.
Come on,
why do you hurt me like that?
I have nothing
but the utmost respect for you.
What do you say to \$5,000?
Bucky, listen,
this is not about money.
It's about self-respect.
I hear you. How about 7,000?
I said no! I quit! Period!
OK, fine.
You're being honest with me.

I appreciate that...
because now
I can be honest with you...
you stinkin' little hack!
I am a--a historical figure,
God damn it!
And I'll show
all you little writer faggots!
Anyone can write a book,
ass-wipe!
Come on. There's no way...
you're gonna bag her
on the first date.
Besides, you've never
gotten laid on a first date...
in your entire life.
See, I am sick of waiting till
the third date to be denied sex.
I'm just gonna say to her,
"Look, we're both adults.
"We both know why we're here,
so let's have sex, tonight."
And if that goes well...
we'll build toward
a nice get-to-know-you lunch.
Maybe you should call
the airport shuttle now.
I hope you don't mind
my calling so soon.
Usually I'd act like I was busy
and wait five days...
but I'm kind of experimenting
with honesty.
Damn, I thought it was
just 'cause I was hot.
-Not...entirely.
-Ha ha!
I mean, for me, brains
and intellectual curiosity...
count for at least
three percent.
So, which car is yours?
Uh...the one
with the light on top.

The taxi?
Yeah, I kind of sold my car.
Oh. OK.
So, you grew up in Glendale.
Yes, I did.
Do your parents
still live there?
Oh, yes.
They're very sweet.
They're just not very exciting.
And what are their names?
Roberta and George. Ha!
I'd love to meet them sometime.
Well, maybe sometime you can.
What are they doing tonight?
I don't know. Why?
Do you think they'd mind
if we stopped by?
I mean, you said they didn't
have much going on. I--
Ha! Why would you want
to meet my parents?
Well, look, you know,
we can have the same old...
how's-the-salmon
first date type of night...
or we could see if
there is any future for us...
and meet your family.
OK, this is insane.
Is it really? Why wait till
date twelve or sixteen...
to find out
if your parents hate me?
If there's a problem,
wouldn't you rather know now?
Heh. Well, they never liked Max.
You see? And where's Max now?
I mean, think of all the time
we could save.
Tick, tick, tick.
Driver, we're going to Glendale.
Wait, l--
Well, we were

in the neighborhood...
so we thought we'd stop by.
This is very weird, dear.
Would you like
some more grape juice, Owen?
Thank you.
This is really great egg salad.
Oh. It's the gherkins.
Now, you know Val from where?
Well, from the airport, George.
I was standing there
last night...
feeling a little depressed...
doggin'
a gin and peach iced tea...
when our eyes met,
and it was like--
you know how dogs can smell
and hear things...
that other people can't?
We were like two dogs...
and there was this scent
between us...
that no one else
could pick up on.
Owen's a writer.
What kind of writing?
Well, I started writing
short stories.
Then I moved to Los Angeles...
where I continued
to build self-esteem...
by lowering expectations
and co-writing autobiographies.
Oh. Any we would know?
Um, well, there's
"Dead Parents Society."
Do you remember the twins...
who hired the Crips
to kill their parents?
And then some stranglers,
but mostly minor ones.
You know, son,
you have a very bad attitude.

Oh, come on, Dad.
Don't get fresh, young lady.
Now, when I was a young man...
my dream was to build
the first U.S. space station.
I got a job at Lockheed...
where I worked sixty-hour weeks
for thirteen years...
to try and reach that dream.
And then one day, it hit me.
I was painting a new wing flap
on an L-1011...
when suddenly I realized...
my dream
was never gonna come true...
because dreams don't mean shit.
That's why
they're called "dreams."
They don't ever happen.
They're just figments
of the imagination...
that make people feel bad
about what they do.
So, don't put yourself down
for not fulfilling some dream.
Yeah, but don't you think...
you should be
a little more demanding...
of the men
your daughter brings home?
Well, we trust Val.
If Val likes someone,
we like him, too...
even if they're not
very successful.
Mom.
Roberta and I
keep telling Val...
that someone with
a lot of money and ambition...
is not gonna put in the time
to make as nice a home...
as a fella
with average talents...

someone who's mature enough
to realize...
he's not gonna change the world
one jack shit.
Cheers.
Heh.
Oh, thank you, Owen.
Yeah.
Yeah.
I don't know what to do
with Allison.
We were supposed
to go to a movie...
and now she says
she doesn't want to go.
The whole evening's
turning into a fucking disaster.
You gotta help me out, OK?
All right, all right.
Take her to the new gallery
on Melrose...
and then stop off
for a miso soup at Banzai.
Thank you. So, how's it going...
with your hot little
piece of ass?
Oh, not so good.
Her parents seem to like me...
and she does, too. It just--
You're never leaving.
I knew you'd fag out.
No, there's still some hope.
I'm gonna show her
a side of me...
that no self-respecting woman
from Glendale...
will be able to tolerate.
Is this not great?
Yeah. And \$2.17. Who knew?
I love buses. I mean, you know,
in a city full of commuters...
where everybody's
cut off from each other...
I mean,

this is the only place...
we can experience life
with other people.
I mean, look at this.
Nothing brings people together
like a bus.
I never liked buses.
Well, they're not for everybody.
You know, it's true, though.
I mean, when you drive around
in a car all day...
you never get a chance
to look at anything.
But at least in a bus,
you can...
really notice
how beautiful the city can be.
Excuse me?
I mean, especially
on a night like tonight.
You know, it's so clear.
The wind's just blowing away
all that haze and crap...
and you can really see.
It's like the unveiling
of a painting or sculpture.
For some reason,
a stripper comes to mind.
Oh, come on.
The skyline is to die for.
And someday,
it'll probably topple over...
and kill a lot of people,
most likely.
Heh!
Gonna get that? It's OK.
Owen! It's Jack.
The Fairfax meeting
starts in twenty minutes.
We're all still praying for you.
You're still an alcoholic,
and your life is--
OK, take a look at this.
This is what I'm talking about.

You see that building
over there?
What, the Falafel Queen?
No, not the Falafel Queen.
Above it. Look up.
Is that new? I don't think
I've ever seen that before.
Isn't it beautiful?
It is kind of beautiful.
I had a really nice time.
Yeah. Me, too.
Sorry. Heh.
Look, l, um, I just wanted
to say that we're both adults...
and we both know
why we're here--
Zeke! Come on, Zeke! Shh!
Shh, shh, shh! I'm sorry.
No, it's OK.
And we've been through this
with a lot of other people, so--
Zeke! Come on!
Uh, he's--he's an only dog.
-Yeah.
-Sorry.
And, I mean, I think
we both know why we're here--
Just hang on one sec.
Zeke, shush.
Ha ha ha ha! This is a great--
Aww. Oh, I'm sorry.
No, it's fine.
You know, it's a great dog.
Sorry! He's sorry. So sorry.
-Heh. It's OK.
-Ha!
Heh.
Now, as I was saying, um...
Thanks. Call me.
I'd invite you in, but I'm still
feeling a bit vulnerable.
No, it's--
Plus, you smell like
lamb kibble.

-Heh.
-Ha ha!
It's OK. Um...
Good night. Thanks again.
-Thank you. Good night.
- Come on, baby.
Good night. Good night.
OK.
OK? It's not--
Ah, how could you say "It's OK"?
It's not OK. It sucks!
So, did you do her
like you said you would?
No, it was a total failure.
Then why are you
selling your bed?
Because I'm trying
to stay positive.
We've done the parents thing.
Now it's time
to meet the friends.
Owen,
you don't have any friends.
Besides which, she's not dating
your friends. She's dating you.
Come on,
you don't date the person.
You date the package.
Friends,
their family, their job.
I mean, the whole thing
has got to work out.
One of my biggest problems
with Eileen...
is that she hated
all my friends.
She thought you and Rob
were clannish and rude.
What are you doing tonight?
No. I am not gonna be
a bitch to this girl...
just to make you happy.
Hey, did I say be a bitch?
Just be you.

Fuck a lot of girls on this?
I'm not selling you my mattress.
Why not? 'Cause I'm gay?
No, because you're
sleeping with the woman...
I've always wanted
to have sex with.
Hey, you know what?
I, uh, took her to that gallery
you told me about. She loved it.
So now I'm thinking
I want to buy her something.
I don't know what to get her.
I was thinking maybe a piece
of hot lingerie or something.
They got those nursing bras
in silk.
-You just pop the top and go.
-Please, just stop.
No, seriously. Look,
you gotta help me out here.
Allison and I, uh...
we're having
some sexual issues, OK?
What does she like in bed?
I don't know. Breakfast.
Oh, what? Like guys don't talk
about this shit all the time?
She can't keep her hands
off my titties...
but I can't make her come.
There's more to it
than just sex, though.
I mean, women are emotional.
-They--
-Right?
At least, most of them are.
Yes, go buy her something.
That sounds fantastic.
What? Buy her what?
I don't know. A hat. A cap.
Something not white.
A hat. Thank you.
Thank you. OK, uh...

so, what?
A hundred bucks for the bed?
Do you not already have a bed?
I've been living at my parents'.
Now I'm moving out. Here.
Fine.
So, where are you moving to?
Aw, fuck!
Heh heh.
I can't believe
you gave Stephanie my room.
Actually, Rob did.
Well, you guys
could've at least told me.
What difference does it make?
You knew someone
was gonna move in.
-Can I ask you something?
-Mm-hmm.
Is this thing with Stephanie
for real?
You know me.
I enjoy being worshipped.
But she's moving in.
Across the hall.
We're just getting...
the sex part out of the way
so we can be housemates.
Yeah, but you never got the sex
out of the way with me.
You wouldn't even let me see
your boobies on a French beach.
Have you even
stopped to think...
about what's gonna happen to me
when you're gone?
You are leaving
an enormous hole in my life...
and at the moment,
I'm filling it with Stephanie.
-Ha ha ha.
-Anyway...
it turns out we have more
in common than I thought.

She likes galleries,
cheap Japanese restaurants...
just like you and me.
Well, I'm glad it's working out.
-Hey, Owen.
-Hey, Owen, how you doin'?
-Who the hell is that?
-Some friends from AA.
Hi! How are you guys doin'?
Great!
Aren't we moving
a little fast here?
No, it only seems that way
because we're on Fairfax...
and everybody else
is using a walker.
Heh. No, but, I mean...
isn't it a little early
for me to meet your friends?
I mean, I usually don't
introduce a guy to my friends...
till I'm pretty sure
how things are gonna go.
Oh, I'm pretty sure
how things are gonna go.
So, then Adam and Sue say, "Are
you going to Rick's wedding?"
And I say, "What wedding?"
And they look at me
like I'm a turkey...
who doesn't know
it's Thanksgiving.
When are you gonna get over
this whole Rick thing?
I mean, you can't blame
Adam, too...
because Rick didn't tell you
he was getting married.
-Who are Adam and Sue again?
-Do you know Neil Lobenthal?
Um...no.
Neil was a friend
of mine and Rob's.
He lived with Adam and Sue

in college...
and introduced Allison to Rick,
her old boyfriend.
I just can't believe
I'm not invited.
All my Stanford friends
are gonna be there. It sucks.
-Are we back on Rick again?
-Apparently so.
Wait a second. You went to
Stanford? When did you graduate?
'97. I mean, here's the thing.
Even though I wouldn't go,
I'd like to be invited.
I was '96.
I mean, you broke up with Rick
seven years ago.
Exactly. Move on.
I have moved on,
but I just come back for visits.
This isn't Rick Labutier
by any chance, is it?
No, it's just some freak
that Allison went out with.
-You know Rick?
-Yeah. Heh.
Yeah, we dated junior year.
Oh, my God.
Oh, my God. Ha ha ha!
You're not the girl
that he, um, proposed to...
at his parents' Christmas party,
and you said no?
Yeah, because he was screwing...
some stupid little groupie
from his band.
-That would be me.
-Oh.
Yeah. I'm not a big fan
of yours, either.
You know, I, um, I always
wanted to meet you...
so I could look you
in the eye and...

thank you for saving me
from such a huge jerk.
Oh, my God. Wasn't he?
Wasn't he?
I mean, him and his stupid van!
-Oh, I hated that van!
-And his mother?
OK, can you imagine spending
every Christmas with that mother?
OK, do you remember
that thing on his--
Oh' you mean the--
The--the what?
What on his thing?
Wait a second, wait a second.
Did you know
that friend of his--Dan?
Do you remember Dan? He was
always trying to jump my bones.
Oh, God! Me, too!
As a matter of fact,
he did jump my bones.
Oh, my God. You slept with Dan?
Oh, my God! Ha ha!
Wait, Dan who?
Dan Monahan, or--
I always wanted
to sleep with Dan...
but I was just kind of
too chicken to do it.
Who the hell's Dan?
OK, you can stop wondering.
I'm gonna tell you.
Oh, my God. Will you really?
Excuse me. OK, start
from the beginning now.
Unbelievable.
Allison actually likes her.
She does have a hell of a rack.
When you go,
could I get her number?
Would that be possible?
I really liked your friends.
Yeah, they liked you a lot, too.

Of course, they were mentally
raping you the entire meal.

Heh.

Whoa. Heh. I really wasn't
expecting anything like this.

-Were you?

-Definitely not.

Ha!

I keep waiting for the catch.

The catch?

Yeah, you know, like,
you're really a robot...
or you have three balls
or something.

Well, negative to both...

but please

don't take my word for it.

Ha ha! Seriously. I, um...

I really feel like
this could go somewhere.

Inside would be nice.

Heh.

Look, I mean, the thing is...

I just--I just came off
a really bad breakup, you know?

And I wasn't really looking
for another relationship.

Perfect.

Until the last couple of days.

I guess I just think we should
take things slow, you know?

Otherwise, it's just gonna be
one of those rebound flings...
that just go down in flames,
do you know what I mean?

Yes, I totally agree.

Right. Mm...mm...

what I'm saying is--

Hey, hey, hey!

I say I want to take things
slow, and you grab my ass?

I was disagreeing with you.

Well, thank you.

I appreciate your enthusiasm...

but I'm not ready.
I want to wait.
Why? Why is waiting a good idea
when it comes to men and women?
Because when it comes to
everything else, waiting stinks.
I mean, my whole life,
I've been waiting...
for things that never came--
Santa Claus,
the Police reunion tour...
the right time to quit my job...
phone calls from friends
when my dad died.
Waiting is death, and I'm
just not gonna do it anymore.
Well, then maybe
you should move on...
'cause I don't think
this is gonna work.
Ahh! Shit!
Ah! Come on!
Hey. Dude, come here.
Sorry, I'm not in the mood
for a cuddle.
Look, she loved the hat.
Came like a freight train.
What now?
She wants to go away somewhere.
Do you know any nice walks?
Rock Springs Ranch.
Out past Yucca Valley.
It's in the desert,
but it's got a nice breeze...
Iike you're in Cascais.
Hi.
You want a waffle?
Uhh.
Shouldn't you be, uh,
having sex right now?
Actually, I think
I'd be on to the cigarette...
or the embarrassing silence
by this point.

Hmm. What happened?
You know...
she's not ready, take time,
wants to make it special.
Too bad.
She seemed like she was OK.
Yeah. For a minute there,
I thought I met someone...
who could make it
all good again.
Wow. One of those.
When was the last time
you met someone like that?
Been a while. You?
Ah. I don't think
they really exist.
Good night.
Good night.
Yeah, well, maybe it's just as
well you're getting out of town.
I mean,
wait till you see the e-mail...
that Grant and Nancy sent me.
What e-mail?
Check out that ass.
Well, does it look fat
or anything?
Well, I mean, you could've
shaved for the occasion.
Well, fuck, how many people
did they send this to?
A few friends. It--
OK, everybody we know.
Aw, cheer up. Want some "X"
For the plane ride?
I don't need it anymore,
now that I'm in a relationship.
Waa-ha-hoo! You are doing it.
-Yes!
-You are really leaving.
Yeah, four days, nine
ex-friends, and one job later...
I'm getting out.
Yes, you are. Yes!

Damn it!
Hey, come out and meet me
at the Venice meeting.
You can probably get here in
time for the serenity prayer.
God, Goddess, Grace...
Prayer Father, Holy Mother,
Source Energy.
-All right, where were we?
-You were doing it.
Right. Right!
Thy will, not mine, be done.
No, my will, not thine.
I'm getting out.
You're doing it, man!
You're doing it!
Fuck you, city!
You can suck on it!
-Yeah!
-Suck on it!
Yeah!
I'm not coming back.
You can go fuck yourself,
you big dickwad.
-Owen?
-Val?
-Hi.
-Hi.
I'm sorry. Are you
in the middle of something?
Um, well, actually, at the end.
Well, I was just calling...
because I was thinking about
what you said last night...
and, um...
how we're not supposed
to go through life waiting.
You know what?
Don't give that another thought.
Obviously, I was drunk,
and I was horny...
and I was groveling
at the chance...
to do filthy,

shameful things to you.
Fortunately,
you--you saw through...
my sad little diatribe,
and you sent me packing.
No, actually, I was calling
to say you were right.
No.
No?
-No way, no way. That's great.
-What?
Just one question--
why would you think that?
Well, I've just been doing
a lot of thinking about it...
about Max and how
that never went anywhere.
And I just--I really like you.
Oh.
Are you free tonight?
Sure.
OK, I'll pick you up at 7::00.
OK, bye.
Don't tell me. U-turn?
Well, if living here doesn't get
you depressed, nothing will.
I'm sorry, but that goddamned
fucking phone call...
just made me feel so happy.
I hate this!
You done?
Face it--you're gonna be here
for a while.
No. No, no, no.
Look, you put this relationship
on the fast track.
You met the parents, introduced
her to your friends...
insisted that she have sex
with you almost immediately...
and for some reason
she still likes you.
What else do you need to know?
That I can trust her.

Oh, right.
Well, then I suggest you get
your ass back to the house...
eat some shit with your friends,
and get your job back...
because that, my darling,
is going to take time.
I--I just need one more day. I--
What are you going to do,
hook her up to a lie detector?
Rory Riseman's having a party.
I'm going to take her.
Rory Riseman
is a drunken venal creep.
I thought you slept with him.
Well, he gets me hot.
See? Exactly. I mean...
he's hit on every girl
I've ever dated here.
So what? He tries
to sleep with everybody.
I don't hate him for trying.
I hate him for succeeding.
Dude,
what the hell are you doing?
I can see you.
Val's coming over...
and she doesn't know
I don't live here anymore.
Look' man' phone call.
Get the rest of your shit
out of here.
-Hello?
-Shakespeare?
Bucky,
what the fuck do you want?
I drink
seven cups of coffee a day.
I sit at my desk
and put commas in.
I take commas out.
Writing is very, very hard.
You want the truth, Shakespeare?
I'll tell you the truth.

I need money.
It seems that I took a shine...
to a lovely young lady
sometime back--
a professional, if you will.
She was costing me
eight grand a month.
I went through everything,
and then she left me.
You're kidding me. A hooker
only loved you for your money?
Shakespeare,
you're--you're delightful.
My wife doesn't have a clue.
I--I remortgaged my house.
Now I owe people--big people.
They want the book.
Hey!
They will fuck you up.
Well, they better hurry, because
I don't even live here anymore.
Extra, extra, read all about it
-Wow, this is nice.
-Yeah.
Dave? Dave, it's me, Lucy.
Dave, it's so good to see you.
Hey, Fuck face,
what are you doing here?
You know, I always wanted
to call you that...
Fuck face.
Fuck face, Fuck face!
OK, tell me you didn't
sleep with her.
Even I couldn't get that drunk.
Oh, shit.
Oh, my God.
Dude! Nice butt.
Rory.
Come on, man. You're famous now.
-Oh!
-At least your ass is, huh?
Wait a minute.
That--that's you up there?

I really don't see
a resemblance. Do you?
Oh ho ho!
We were at this terrible
wedding years ago.
He gets drunk. Does the caterer
in the video arbor...
only the tape's running.
The next morning,
bride and groom are watching...
their little treasured
wedding memories on video...
when suddenly his hairy ass
comes on-screen...
just a-humpin' away.
Ha ha. Oh, my God.
That is you. Wow.
Well, I've toned a lot
since then. I--in my opinion.
I'm Rory, by the way.
-Oh.
-Oh.
-Hi, I'm Val.
-Sorry.
God, you look familiar
or something.
Oh, yeah.
Maybe this will jog your memory.
Coming up, we got Gin Blossoms,
Box, Blind Melon, Silverchair.
Plus, the new video from Belly
and an exclusive extra--
Kennedy interviews
the guys in Candlebox.
Oh, my God. You're Rory,
who used to be on MTV.
-Yeah, yeah.
-Wow.
Oh, man, I love doing that
to people, man.
Ask him about
the shampoo commercial.
His hair is apparently amazing.
Well, actually,

I just finished a novel.
Oh.
About the rise and fall of a VJ.
Well, Kelly Ripa
has a book club.
Actually,
I just sold it to Random House.
What?
Dude,
that's what the party's for.
Are you smoking crack right now?
Come on, man.
Congratulations.
That's fantastic.
Thank you. Thank you very much.
You know, actually, I got
some advance copies downstairs.
Fuck it. I'll sign one for you
if you want.
Sure. Thanks. Great.
-Right on.
-Come on.
Fuck it. I--sorry. Really,
I'm OK. Let's just go home.
Would you stop being like
an idiot? He's your friend, OK?
Let's just go home. It's fine.
-Ohh. Just two minutes, OK?
-I'm fine. Thank you.
Here you go.
Oh, my God.
That was another earthquake.
Did you feel that?
Did you feel that earthquake?
We just had an earthquake.
I haven't felt anything
since Tuesday.
It's not a tremor.
That is an earthquake.
It's just like the one that
they had here last week.
Look, I'm just trying
to make some points.
I'm not myself tonight.

-Oh, God!
-Did you feel that?
-Yes, I felt that.
-OK.
OK, now, that was for real.
I was not making that one up.
OK, that was--that was
not my imagination.
-I know.
-OK, OK.
All right. OK.
We're having an earthquake.
I think the--look.
-Oh, God.
-Did you feel that?
-I felt it. I felt it.
-He felt it. He felt it, too!
We're going to die!
This is an earthquake!
-This is an earthquake?
-What?
We're going to die!
Let's get out of here!
Ha ha ha!
Come back here! Sissy dude,
I paid you two grand, man.
Get your ass back in there. Cut
that shit.
Come on. Hey. No, no, no.
No. Come on.
-Ow! Stop pushing!
-Ow, my foot!
Forget it! Leave it!
There you are. I've been
looking all over for you.
I knew this night
was going to end badly.
What--what do you mean?
How was your book signing?
Was it totally awesome?
Are you mad at me?
I was just trying to make
an effort with your friend.
I know. Rory's amazing.

He's really incredible.
It only took him twenty minutes
to get your number.
My--what are you talking about?
I didn't give him my number.
Val, I saw you.
Are you kidding me?
Just so you know, it wasn't
my number--it was my shrink's.
The guy's a mess.
And you know what else?
I didn't even want
to come here, you know?
I thought
we might go out to dinner...
the two of us--you know, talk?
But, no, you drag me
to this lame party...
where I don't know anyone.
I don't see you,
and I spend my night...
smiling and nodding
to some ex-VJ with manorexia.
And you're down here
convincing yourself...
that I'm cheating on you?
I mean, are we even dating?
Wait, where are you going?
I'm going home. Take the bus.
You like the bus.
No matter what you do
I've given up on you
No matter what you say
I'm leaving you today
Hey.
Can we talk?
You got a fax.
Dear Mr. McCabe, I am sorry
I cannot honor your request...
to work from Los Angeles.
You must make a choice.
Like the atom,
a man split in two parts...
unleashes uncontrollable chaos

and deconstruction.
The man does make a good point.
There's only one problem.
Val passed the Rory test.
She chose you over Rory?
I know. I was shocked.
I thought
that was what you wanted.
No. I wanted her to be
some shallow selfless nut...
I could walk away from
without any guilt...
and of course
she turned out to be...
some beautiful, charming,
loyal woman. Why?
You know, I'll still respect you
if you decide to stay.
Yeah,
but me and all your friends...
we'll just think
you're a big pussy.
I mean, there's just
a few more things...
I need to know, and I just--
What?
You've done the Rory test...
the parents test,
the best friends test.
What other tests are there?
Sex.
I mean, not to mention...
the "can I spend a weekend
alone with this person" test.
Of course,
that's all contingent...
on her passing
the forgiveness test...
because right now she hates me.
Well, talk about plans
for the weekend.
I mean, I'm supposed
to go with her...
to some animal rights thing

tonight...
only she's not calling me back.
So, what are you going to do?
Go anyway. I mean,
if we click back on...
I'll invite her
to spend a weekend with me...
at Rock Springs Ranch.
It's this place
out in the desert...
but it's got a breeze
like you're in Cascais.
And by Sunday,
hopefully, I'll know.
Rock Springs Ranch--isn't that
where you wanted to go?
Uh, no, I don't think so.
Yeah, no, I remember.
You described it the exact
same way, like Cascais.
Well, maybe I heard it
from Stephanie. I--
You've been to Cascais, yeah?
-Stephanie?
-What?
Have you been to Cascais?
-Uh-huh. Yeah.
-Oh. When?
Uh, the--the bike trip
I took to France.
Well, that's funny.
Cascais is in Portugal.
Fine. It was Owen's idea.
Listen, I was just
trying to give her...
some pointers
on what you're into. It--
Oh, really? Like you would know.
Hey, thanks to me...
your one week anniversary
present was that hat...
and not an autographed
Raiders helmet.
Oh, fuck you.

Great. This is great.
So, um, it was all you--
the trip, the gallery, the hat.
This whole relationship
is a lie.
No. I like you.
Owen was helping me.
I'm sorry. It...
I mean, you were
one of the only reasons...
I was staying in L.A...
and I knew that if
you were with someone else...
I wouldn't be able
to stick around and watch that.
Well, I guess you were wrong.
You never even left
the area code.
-Wait, I can explain.
-l--l...
Allison!
Well, a gift of just \$2,000...
will provide an operating room
for spaying and neutering...
so anything you could give
would be wonderful.
Well, we did want to do
something...
-to commemorate Ronnie.
-Oh.
He bit a three-year-old
in the face--really did a job.
-He didn't mean it.
udge made us put him down.
Well, maybe--maybe you'd like...
to buy a commemorative plaque
for Ronnie in our new building.
I think Ronnie--
Excuse me for one moment.
What are you doing here?
Look, I wanted to say that
I was sorry about last night.
OK, Owen,
I can't do this right now.

I have two hours
to raise twenty grand, OK?
Can you just go, please?
Look, I want to be here for you.
Hey, what the hell
are you doing here?
Oh, Mr. Brandt, hi!
Welcome. Nice to see you.
-You know this guy?
-Um...
I was about to make a donation.
What about you?
Oh, I'd be happy
to contribute...
as soon as this little prick
finishes my friggin' book.
-Excuse me?
-What about five hundred bucks?
Five hundred bucks?
Screw that, mister.
I've got bigger worries than
Chihuahuas fucking in east L.A.
Besides, I'm not contributing
that's got your name
on its guest list.
Get me my goddamn pages.
What was that about?
Actually, no. You know what?
I don't want to know.
I saw the cutest little puppy...
at that adoption center
on Laurel Canyon--
Bucky. Oh, Mrs. Brandt,
it's really nice to see you.
Listen, you forgot to sign
your pledge card.
It's \$2,000.
It's, uh, very generous.
-Excuse us.
-Ha ha.
You little runt.
Go shove this pledge
up your girlfriend's ass.
It's still a lot cheaper

than what your wife would cost.

I'm sure her version
of Christmas, 1974...
is a little different
from yours.

I think the journal entry
went something like...

"When everyone was singing
Joy to the World...

"I was banging Suzie Shapiro
on my workbench.

"She was an oversexed
little hottie of a J.A.P...
and why she was dating my son
I'll never know."

Hey, mister, you signed
a confidentiality agreement.

I will sue your ass.

I got news for you, Bucky--
you can't touch me.

You can't lean on my friends,
because I don't have any.

You can't stake out my house,
because I don't live anywhere.

You can't fuck my career,
because I already did.

You can't call my cell phone,
because I don't have one...

and you can't bring me down,
because I've already jumped.

And the only question left is...

do I bring you

down with me or not?

No. Please. Look, I can go
a couple of hundred bucks...

but that's it.

I am cleaned out.

Well, you better get
your friends out there...

to start writing checks.

You got till dessert.

I was thinking
about all the dogs...

that have been gassed in L.A.

over the years...
and it occurred to me that
we're all kind of stray dogs...
on this lonely planet.
So, I'm asking you to join me
in showing our love...
not only for
these poor homeless mutts...
but for each other.
Please, give generously.
I know I will.
Is the bar still open?
-Do you have a valet ticket?
-We'd better get going, honey.
My throat's dry. I want to go.
A candy-colored clown
they call the sandman
Tiptoes to my room
every night
Just to sprinkle stardust
and to whisper
"Go to sleep,
everything is all right"
I close my eyes
Then I drift away
& into the magic night &
& I softly say &
& A silent prayer &
& Like dreamers do &
& Then I fall asleep to dream &
& My dreams of you... &
-Hi.
-Hey.
Look, I don't know
what you said to Bucky Brandt...
but whatever it was, it worked.
I mean, I didn't even think...
anybody was listening
to the guy...
and now I'm \$4,000 over my goal,
so...thank you.
You saved me.
I'm just happy it worked out.
Do you want to dance?

Yeah. Love to. Heh.

& Only in dreams &

& In beautiful dreams &

-Heh.

-Heh.

Do you do this professionally?

I do. I'm a professional
circus freak makeup artist.

-Ha ha.

-Ha ha ha!

Mmm. I just need
a little more right here.

Ha ha ha!

Oh, God, I think that the, um...

the water is not cold enough

to make Jell-o. Ha ha ha ha!

-It was an inspired idea.

-Thank you.

-Here, you want that?

-Ah! Ow! Ow!

-Wait, wait, wait.

-Shit!

-Use that.

-Ow.

Ha ha ha! Wait, I don't know--

-Ha ha ha.

-Ha ha ha!

You...come here.

Mm. Mmm.

OK.

-Want that now?

-Mm-hmm.

All right.

-Heh.

-Ha ha ha ha!

Hi.

Isn't sex great?

Yeah. I was

a little worried, though...

because usually,

if you're with somebody...

who's funny and caring and nice,

the sex is gonna be...

-Really shitty.

-Pretty terrible.
Ha ha ha ha!
Listen, there's something
I always wanted to tell you.
Yeah?
-No. Come here.
-What?
Come here. Let's just
go back to where we were.
Wait, wait, wait.
-Mm-mmm.
-Mmm.
-Uh-huh.
-Mm-mmm.
Wait a minute. Ha ha ha! Wait.
I want to hear
what you were gonna tell me.
What was it?
OK, what if I say it first?
Come here.
I love you.
Oh. OK. Heh.
I love you, too.
Hello?
Hey, it's me.
Um, we really need to talk,
so can you come over?
OK.
I'll be back around 6:00.
-Having fun with Val?
-Yeah.
Bye.
Mmm.
-Thank you.
-Good night.
-I'm gonna call...you...later.
-OK. Ha ha ha!
OK, bye.
Hey, Val.
Eileen! Oh, my God. How are you?
I'm great.
Um, I hope I'm not too late.
The drive from Laurel Canyon
was just terrible.

Heh. Late...for what?
Um...
Heh.
Allison. Allison?
What the hell is this?
Don't get mad. We're here
because we want to help you.
I'm sorry.
I thought I made myself clear...
when I said, "Go fuck yourself."
Hey, hey, hey, hey.
It's not just Jack.
We're all here
at this intervention...
because we're worried.
Intervention? What, like--
like I'm some drug addict?
No, no, no. That's not it.
We did an intervention
for my mom...
when she tried to kill herself.
Joan,
your mother did kill herself.
Eventually...yes.
And thank you for
bringing that up, Mr. Shithead!
Oh, God!
Joan, Joan--see?
This is exactly
what we're talking about.
-You're out of control.
-You're crying out for help!
-You're over the edge.
-You used to be so pleasant.
You're such an asshole.
Jesus. What the hell
are you doing here?
Oh, you're dating
one of my friends...
and you don't even have
the balls to tell me about it?
-Owen?
-Val.
-What's going on here?

-Listen--

Owen's friends and I
called for an intervention.

What?

He's pissed on all his friends.

He needs help.

We just wanted to talk to him
before he leaves.

Leaves? You're leaving?

Face it, Owen. You're not
gonna have a support group...
when you're at Brighton.

Brighton?

What--what is he talking about?

You didn't even tell her?

-Tell me what?

-Listen, I--

Uh...I got offered a job.

Oh, you are a wee little man.

A what?

What are you even doing here?

She's a friend.

And she loves you.

Listen,

will you get out of my house?

Dude, it's not your house.

You don't live here.

Great. You don't even live here.

No, I do.

Would you listen to me?

Just forget it, Owen...

if that really is your name.

Is there any--wait!

Wait. Can you wait a second?

Can I at least explain
my side of it?

You knew I was coming off
a bad relationship.

I don't--how could you
just lie to me?

Listen, I needed to find out
if it was real or not.

I mean, they say that it takes
three months of dating...

before a person reveals
their worst qualities.
Well, I didn't have
three months...
so I showed you all
my worst qualities in a week.
So, all this time, you've been
trying to test this?
No, not test it, tank it.
But even I can't screw this up.
Wow.
I don't want to lose you.
You--you--
Come to Jersey with me.
If you have so much faith in us,
why don't you stay?
Because I can't go back
in there, all right?
My life here is over.
It was all a big lie...
so I burned it to the ground...
and the only thing
that I have left...
is this tiny shard
of self-respect...
and if I don't get out of here,
then I'm gonna lose that, too.
I think you already have.
I... &
Hey, Holmes.
-Come here.
-Ohh!
Ohh...
Oh. Ohh.
Uhh.
Ohh.
Hi. You got to help me out.
These guys really want
their goddamn money.
I tried writing
the ending myself.
Could you just take a look
at pages 188 to 301?
Chapter twenty-two

is a fuckin' snore.

Ohh.

& We &

Ohh.

& Walked for hours &

& It seems she didn't like &

& That day &

& So we paint the picture gray &

& I don't want truth'

I just want her &

& The chance has come &

& The chance has come &

Professor, at last. It's really
an honor to see you again.

Welcome, my friend.

I see you finally made it, huh?

But not without

a good L.A. beating, huh?

Now, are you actually
from Los Angeles?

Um, no. The east coast, but

I moved there seven years ago.

I thought it might be

a good place to write.

So did

Faulkner, Huxley, and Didion.

They left bitter,
creatively impotent.

Well, at least

it was creatively.

Do you miss it?

Um, it was fun while it lasted.

Yeah, you sleep with L.A.

You don't marry her.

Well, he didn't, did he?

Hi.

For Stephanie, press star two.

For Allison,

leave a message after the beep.

Idiot.

I really enjoyed

the first three chapters.

They are funny,

but also disturbing and violent.

Now, an intro. Uh...
Where's my Nana?
I don't know. For some reason,
she wasn't mentioned...
in the U.N. summit address.
Oh, forget summit.
Here, we'll put a story about
my Nana beating my ass black.
But I thought
we were going to focus...
on the roles of physics
and social responsibility.
Nobody cares about the physics.
They want
pain, suffering, and victory.
But this is your chance
to rewrite history...
and finally tell the truth.
If I wanted to write history,
why would I hire you?
Excuse me?
I hire you because you sell.
Now, chapter one.
Professor, l...
You know,
l--I don't think I can do this.
Why not?
Well, because I came here...
to write the truth
about your life...
no matter
how difficult that may be.
I am a historical figure,
God damn it.
You write what I say to write.
Now...
forget about this whole...
Here we tell the story...
about alcoholic violin teacher
and Doris, her little spaniel.
Hello?
Hi.
Where are you?
Hi.

Hi.
Look, I, um...
I know your new life
probably doesn't like it...
when your ex-life
shows up uninvited, but...
I was in the city, and
I wanted to stop by and say hi.
So, hi.
No, no, I'm really glad you did.
What are you doing here anyways?
Interviewing
for some teaching jobs overseas.
You're kidding.
You're leaving L.A.?
Well, my interview at
the International Institute...
didn't go so well.
How's Stephanie?
We broke up.
Really?
What--what happened?
Well, I, um...
I--I realized that
the things I liked about her...
weren't hers, they were yours.
You know, what you did to me
was really shitty.
Well, if it's any consolation...
your little intervention
left me pretty shattered.
So, I guess we're even.
OK.
Have you heard anything
from Val?
Not a word. You?
She's moving to London.
What?
She got a job with an animal
rights group, three year gig.
There's a--
There's a going away party
for her, actually.
I'm throwing it.

We kind of became friends, so...
Oh, that's great.
You know, that's...
I mean, I can't believe
she doesn't even tell me...
that she's leaving the country
for three years.
I mean, nothing--not even
a--a text message, you know?
"Changing continents.
I hope you're doing well."
Look, if you've been
thinking about it that much...
maybe--maybe
you should go back and tell her.
Forget about it.
God, you know,
you always do this, Owen.
You wait and you wait, and then
you wonder why you miss out.
Come on, I did that once--
with Eileen.
And us.
Yeah.
Yeah, I always thought
we'd end up together.
I wonder what happened.
Well, I think we were saving it
for a rainy day--
only it's L.A.
It never rains.
That morning began
like any other.
I walked into the office,
took a sip of coffee...
and started reading
the writer's latest chapters.
It was then that it hit me.
He was gone.
And at that moment,
I realized...
what the writer
had already figured out.
I had a brilliant mind,

but I was a morally bankrupt...
greedy little man
whose entire personal life...
was nothing more than one boring
seventy-two-year-long fart.
Well, this truly is a fine
piece of verse, my friend.
You've made this explorer proud.
Can you please
call off your thugs now?
Ha ha. Done, amigo.
I just hope you're not
still feeling dirty...
and cheapened by this.
Bucky, let's face it.
This is the literary
equivalent of syphilis.
Ha ha. Well, of course
you feel that way now.
You're a young man.
As you grow older,
you're going to find...
that all those feelings of guilt
and fear of moral retribution...
all that shit we learned
as kids, it all disappears.
Gradually, we heal.
How can you say that...
when your lack of morality
almost cost you your home...
your family,
everything good in your life.
OK, so I did a few bad things,
but the book came out perfect.
I paid my debt.
I even made twenty grand.
It really is a wonderful life.
Thank you.
Owen?
-Hi.
-Hi.
-What are you doing here?
-I just got off a plane.
So, here you are.

-I am.

-Oh.

And I was thinking
about what you said.

Look who's back. Hey, stranger.

Jack.

Hi. Allison, Jack.

Jack, Allison.

Hey, there.

I'm going to talk to you later.

OK.

Jack,

I'm sorry for being such a jerk.

Um, I know that you
and everyone in the group...

were just trying to do

what's good for me...

and I apologize for being
such a prick about everything.

Don't worry about it.

Not a problem.

No, seriously. I owe you a--

It's OK. I mean...

I honestly haven't given it
a second thought.

I'm not in AA anymore.

You're kidding me.

Why? What happened?

It's all a load of shit.

The same depressing people
every week--I had to get out.

Me and a few guys

from the group...

we went in on a vineyard.

Anyway, nice to see you.

It was nice seeing you.

Look, I am really sorry...

that things didn't work out
with you and Allison, but we--

I am really sorry

about that wedding video.

I mean, it was

tasteless and offensive...

and you guys really got me back

by sending out that MPEG.
I mean, practically everyone
here has seen my ass.
So, what do you say?
OK.
I'm so sorry
that I used the "C" word.
It wasn't about you. It was me.
Hey, man, welcome back.
Thanks.
I see you finally spoke
to Susan.
Yeah. I guess it's official.
I'm off the Christmas card list.
Yeah, man, don't worry about it.
You were never on it.
Well, that's fine, if that's
the way you want it to be.
Oh, it is.
I don't ever want to see...
any of my friends
talking to her again.
What?
You were right, man.
We broke up. Tch. Fuck it.
I started asking my friends
what they thought about her...
and no one liked her.
Then I realized I've become
a different person...
ever since
I started dating her...
only no one wanted to tell me--
except you.
Thanks, man.
Well, the pleasure was not mine.
-Hey.
-Can you believe it?
Ahh. My boy is back.
Yeah. Ha ha.
Let's get something to drink.
Fuckin' juice box.
-Come on.
-Yeah.

As I was saying outside, l, um--
Dude, there she is.
Now, this is your shot.
Don't be a pussy.
It's a great plan,
so I'm really, really--
-Will you excuse me for a second?
-Yeah, yeah.
-Owen, hi.
-Hi.
-Oh, God.
-Oh, God.
I thought you were back east.
What are you doing here?
There was a problem
with the book.
I mean, the guy turned out
to be a complete and utter hack...
and l, uh, I made a big mistake.
I'm sorry.
Anyway, l--I hear
you're moving to London.
-Yeah.
-Wow.
I've never been
out of the country.
I mean, Alaska doesn't count.
Besides, I've just been feeling
like I need a change, you know?
Oh.
You know, t-there's something
I wanted to tell you...
before it's too late.
Look, Owen, maybe we can
talk about this some other time.
No,
l--I really need to say it now.
OK. Ahem.
I'm sorry.
I'm sorry for everything.
Thank you.
I just--I just wanted
to put that out there...
before you took off.

Thanks.

So, what are you
going to do now?

-I'm starting a book.

-Yeah?

-A novel.

-Wow.

I'll bet you write
something great.

We'll see.

Anyway,

it--it's good to see you.

-You, too.

-Thanks for coming.

Take care of yourself, OK?

You take care of you, too.

So, did you get her back?

No.

What? What happened?

I apologized, and she said OK.

Oh, my God. Owen,

you are such a fucking pussy.

Hey, I don't have

to explain myself to you.

I just--I can't believe you came
all the way back here...

to get her back, and you folded.

-No, I didn't.

-Meow, meow, meow.

I came back for you.

What?

I want to be with you.

I...

When did this happen?

I--sometime between

the first day we met...

and last Tuesday

at the Newark airport.

-Aw, shit. God damn it, Owen.

-What?

I got the job, and I'm leaving
for China next week.

Jesus Christ!

I mean, you're the one

who said L.A. was giving you...
frontal lobe cirrhosis.
I probably wouldn't have
even thought of it...
if it wasn't for you.
Well, I'm glad I could help.
Well, it's only six months.
Yeah, but, you know,
you're going to go out there...
you're going to meet
other people.
You may never come back here.
I'll come back.
I will. I'll come back.
Where are you going to be?
I'll be here.