

Criminal Conversations

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

DOCTOR TED SMITH, late fifties, a psychiatrist dressed in casual clothes, is standing amid a small pile of taped-up moving boxes. He looks unsure where to begin.

Now he decides. He opens one box and starts pulling out...

...cooking utensils, including cake pans and pie tins.

One cake pan slips from his hand and hits the floor with a CLATTER.

Behind him, as he reaches down to pick it up...

...a HOME HEALTH CARE NURSE, forties, steps into the kitchen and gets his attention.

HOME HEALTH CARE NURSE
Doctor Smith? Your wife wants you.

It seems urgent. Ted, still holding the cake pan, follows the Home Health Care Nurse as she moves down a

HALLWAY

And stops outside a bedroom.

The Nurse discreetly waits outside as Ted enters a

SMALL BEDROOM

Where his wife, GEORGINA, early fifties and clearly very ill, is in bed. She is surrounded by medical furnishings, including a small table with several pill bottles, a hospital-style bed tray with a water cup and straw, an oxygen tank with an oxygen mask hung on it. There also are some potted plants and flower arrangements intended to add cheer to the grim room.

GEORGINA
Ted, what are you unpacking?

Ted holds up the cake pan.

TED
Just a few pans.

GEORGINA
Those can wait. Leave them for
ANGIE.

Ted gets a stricken look.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
She's the only one of my kids who
likes to cook.

Ted looks away. He gets tears in his eyes and tries to wipe
them away without being seen.

Georgina sees.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
Ted.

Georgina gestures to him to move closer to the bed. He does.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
Put down the cake pan and kiss me.

She puts her arms out to him and holds onto him as he puts
the cake pan aside, leans closer and kisses her.

As he pulls back and smiles at her, she reaches up and wipes
the remnants of a tear off his cheek.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
Listen, my dear Mister
Psychiatrist. We can't change
what's happening to me. But I can
change what's happening to you.

TED
(defensively)
Nothing's happening to me.

GEORGINA
Exactly. Your life's on hold.
You're just hovering around.

TED
I love you, Georgina. I'm here for
you.

GEORGINA
I know you love me. I've never
doubted that. But some of this I'll
have to do by myself.

TED

I want to be here.

GEORGINA

I want you here, too. But it hurts me to see how it affects you. Everything has just stopped for you. I feel bad about that.

TED

(defensively)

I'm doing things. I'm not standing around. I'm doing what I can.

Georgina has to lie back and rest for a beat.

Ted gently strokes her forehead and touches her hair.

She closes her eyes but smiles.

GEORGINA

That feels good.

He continues to stroke and touch her hair gently.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

I know this has been very hard for you. But I'm glad we moved here.

She winces for a moment, a pain quickly passing through from somewhere. She opens her eyes again.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

I like being closer to my kids and relatives.

After a beat, she puts a hand up and stops his stroking.

TED

I can keep doing that.

Georgina smiles. She has regained a little bit of strength.

GEORGINA

I know. Later. Right now, I want you to do me a big favor.

Ted suddenly gets up from the bed, straightens up and gives her a little Roman centurion, hand-to-chest salute.

TED

Your wish is my command, Queen Georgina.

Georgina CHUCKLES.

GEORGINA

Well, if you were God, you could grant my biggest wish. But a much smaller wish will have to do.

Ted gets serious.

TED

What can I do?

Georgina reaches out. Ted takes and holds her hand.

GEORGINA

Two wishes, actually. Number one...

She pauses to gather a little strength.

TED

Number one.

GEORGINA

I want you to get back to setting up your practice. Lots of crazy people need your help.

TED

You need my help.

GEORGINA

You need your own help. Get back to work, Ted.

TED

We still have money. We're okay.

GEORGINA

You've never lived in this town. You'll need to start again from scratch. It'll take a long time to get going.

Ted can't argue her point.

TED

Okay. I'll start soon. What's the second wish?

GEORGINA

I want you to have some fun.

TED

What?

GEORGINA

Fun, Ted. Amusement. An activity.
Something that gets you out of the
house for a while.

TED

My place is here, with you.

GEORGINA

I am now in full acceptance mode,
and you, Doctor Smith, are still
denying.

TED

No, I'm not. Why do you think that?

Georgina gestures toward the cake pan.

GEORGINA

State's evidence, exhibit one. You
were caught with a cake pan in your
hand.

TED

I'm just trying to help unpack. I
promised you -- in sickness and in
health.

GEORGINA

Well, now it's in sickness and in
death.

Georgina LAUGHS and smiles at her joke.

Ted looks hurt.

TED

Please.

GEORGINA

Sorry. Just a little gallows humor.
You, of all people, should be very
glad I can laugh right now.

TED

I married you for your laugh. And
many other things.

Georgina smiles.

GEORGINA

I know. And it has been great fun
sharing those many other things
with you.

Ted tries to smile back, but visibly reacts to her use of the past tense.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
Now, speaking of fun again, here's
what I want you to do.

She gestures to the chair beside her bed.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
First of all, sit. Quit hovering
around.

Ted sits.

TED
Okay.

GEORGINA
Raise your right hand.

Ted raises his right hand to swear an oath. It is a game they have played many times before.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)
Do you swear--

TED
Like a sailor--

GEORGINA
To tell the truth, the whole truth?

Ted gives her a teeth-baring grin.

TED
Nothing but the tooth, your honor.

Georgina looks pleased.

GEORGINA
I'm serious, Ted. I want you to re-
open your practice. And I want you
to have some fun.

TED
I've set up my computer in the den.
I'll start working on my business
plan. That'll be fun.

GEORGINA
No, Ted. Fun. Fun-fun. A hobby. An
activity. Maybe a class.

TED

There's nothing I want to take
right now.

GEORGINA

Liar. I remind you, Doctor Smith.
You are still under oath here.

Georgina pauses momentarily to catch her breath and to react to some pain. Ted looks worried. But Georgina resumes with a smile.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

I've heard you in previous
testimonies. You've wished you
could be some kind of artist or
actor.

TED

None of that would have ever paid
off my medical school loans.

GEORGINA

Or the alimonies from your previous
marriages.

Ted winces but plays along.

TED

That's correct, your honor.

Georgina smiles.

GEORGINA

None of that will be an issue now.

TED

I am happy being here with you.

GEORGINA

I know that. And I love you for it.
Now, sign up for painting, Ted. Or
basket weaving. Or acting.
Something. Make some friends. Tell
me you are having some fun.

TED

Why don't you want me here?

GEORGINA

I do. But not all of the time. I
have a nurse, and I need to know
you have a plan.

TED

A plan.

GEORGINA

For getting on with your life. This is very, very important to me, Ted. Before I...go...I really want to know you'll be okay.

As Ted looks at her, visibly unsure what to say, tears well in his eyes.

Georgina reaches out and pulls him close again.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

I want you to be okay.

Ted CRIES as she comforts him almost like a small child.

EXT. CITY AREA - ANOTHER DAY (ESTABLISHING)

City life goes by as...

EXT. CITY AREA - SIDEWALK - DAY

...Ted, now dressed in a well-tailored business suit, stands on a sidewalk, looking at a some papers and trying to get his bearings. He turns toward a building.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

A sign near or over its front door shows the school's name as Ted walks toward it..

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - REGISTRATION OFFICE - DAY

Ted is signing up for a class with help from a REGISTRATION ASSISTANT, a woman in her late twenties to early thirties.

The Registration Assistant consults her computer screen.

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT

(to Ted)

All of the painting, drawing and sculpting classes are filled, Doctor Smith.

Ted blows out his breath and looks frustrated.

The Registration Assistant types something on her keyboard and again checks her computer screen.

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
There's one opening in Acting 101,
Tuesdays and Thursdays at one P.M.
LIVINGSTON is the instructor.

TED
Is he good?

The Registration Assistant makes some entries on her keyboard and looks at her screen.

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT
She's very good.

TED
She.

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT
Doctor ALEXANDRA Livingston. I took
two of her classes.

Ted grins as he hands the Registration Assistant a credit card.

TED
Alexandra. One of my ex-wives was
named Alexandra. God knows what
happened to her.

The Registration Assistant gives him a non-committal smile.

Ted pulls out his wallet and pulls out a credit card.

TED (CONT'D)
Sign me up. I'll go see if I can
talk to Doctor -- what?

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT
Doctor Livingston.

If it turns out that I don't like
her, can I cancel and get my money
back?

The Registration Assistant readies her credit card machine.

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
Yes, but there's a fifty-dollar
administrative fee.

Ted LAUGHS and signals his okay.

TED

That used to be the price of a
whole class when I was young.

REGISTRATION ASSISTANT

Her office is on the third floor.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ted walks through a hallway, looking at bulletin boards and
doors. He finds what he is seeking.

HIS POV

An overhead sign, "Drama," with an arrow.

Ted turns and follows the arrow down another hallway.

CUT TO BLACK

TITLE CARD

Conversation 1

Meet. Greet. Retreat

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DRAMA HALLWAY - DAY

Ted walks along a hallway looking at door nameplates.

He stops at a door that is half-open.

HIS POV

Nameplate: "DR. ALEXANDRA LIVINGSTON"

INT. ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Alexandra Livingston, acting teacher, early fifties, is in
her office, talking on her telephone.

ALEXANDRA

(into phone)

No, FRANK, I will not do that.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Alexandra's raised voice carries out into the hallway where
Ted is standing.

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)
You stay there. I'll stay here.
It's as simple as that. Goodbye.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Alexandra hangs up her phone, visibly angry.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ted KNOCKS on her open door.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Alexandra looks up and...

HER POV

...sees Ted standing in the doorway.

ALEXANDRA
May I help you?

TED
Doctor Livingston?

Alexandra is startled. Suddenly, she recognizes him.

ALEXANDRA
Ted? Ted Smith?

Ted is startled, too. Now he recognizes her.

TED
Alexandra?

She stares at him. He stares back.

TED (CONT'D)
Wow, this is weird. You got a
Ph.D.?

Alexandra nods, unsure what is happening.

Ted stays in the doorway, looking in.

TED (CONT'D)
I guess I'm the Ghost of Marriage
Past. Can I come in?

Alexandra looks uncomfortable.

ALEXANDRA

Yes. Of course. Have a seat for a minute.

Ted enters and sits in her visitor's chair.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm surprised you're here.

TED

So am I.

ALEXANDRA

It's been--what? Twenty eight years?

TED

Twenty nine. But who's keeping count? How are you, Alexandra?

ALEXANDRA

I'm fine. How are you?

TED

I'm okay. And your next question is, what am I doing here?

ALEXANDRA

Okay. What are you doing here?

Ted isn't ready to give her the whole truth.

TED

I've moved my practice here. And my wife. I'm a psychiatrist now.

ALEXANDRA

The last I knew, you were in Washington, D.C.

Ted gives her a questioning look.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Well, that was the postmark on the alimony checks. I spent them on graduate school.

Ted nods and gives her a wan smile.

TED

We were in Georgetown, right on the Potomac. We moved here three weeks ago.

Alexandra looks at him and past him for a beat, still mentally processing her surprise.

ALEXANDRA

Wow. This is odd. Tell me about your wife.

TED

Her name is Georgina. Her two kids live in Socorro, and she wanted to get back closer to her family. So we moved.

ALEXANDRA

That's nice. Is she working, too?

TED

She was. She's a lawyer. Unfortunately, she has A.L.S. now.

ALEXANDRA

A.L.S.?

TED

Lou Gehrig's disease. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

ALEXANDRA

Oh. That's not good. I'm really sorry, Ted.

TED

She has some good doctors here. They'll keep her going a few months.

ALEXANDRA

That's sad. I wish I knew what to say.

TED

There isn't much anyone can say. Life kills us all, in the end.

There is an awkward beat as they look at each other.

ALEXANDRA

Well --

Ted still isn't ready to tell her the truth.

TED

I came here...
(indicating her office)
(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

...well, I came here to get some advice.

Alexandra gives him a noncommittal look.

ALEXANDRA

Advice.

TED

I'm planning to take a few classes.

ALEXANDRA

The University of New Mexico is a very good school.

TED

No, I'm coming here to the arts school. I want to study acting.

Alexandra looks almost angry, definitely resisting.

ALEXANDRA

UNM has a very good drama program. And it's right there in Albuquerque.

TED

I know what you're saying.

ALEXANDRA

Do you?

TED

And I completely understand. You might not want an ex-husband showing up in one of your classes.

ALEXANDRA

That's NOT what I'm saying. But this is very unexpected, Ted. I'm not sure this school -- and the long drive -- are good ideas for you.

TED

I don't know if I have real talent or not. But it doesn't matter, Alexandra. I have time to give it a shot.

ALEXANDRA

What about your wife -- Georgina?

TED

The doctors say she won't live past mid-fall.

ALEXANDRA

So shouldn't you wait...until next semester?

TED

She wants me out of the house during the day. She has a nurse taking care of her.

ALEXANDRA

But why here? It's a long commute. Albuquerque has several campuses and workshops where you take acting classes.

TED

I've already signed up.

Alexandra looks startled.

ALEXANDRA

Acting 101?

TED

Tuesdays and Thursdays. I had no idea it was you when I signed up. I had no idea you had moved to Santa Fe.

Alexandra looks skeptical.

TED (CONT'D)

Honest. I tried to take an art class, but they were all filled. And there was just one opening left for acting. I've been told you're very good. I like learning from the best.

ALEXANDRA

Thank you. But there are many better than me. DOCTOR CLOUD has an eleven o'clock class that you would really like. Maybe someone will drop out, and you can take it.

TED

I'm serious about this, Alexandra. I still have a few good years left.

ALEXANDRA

I'm sure you do.

TED

Georgina's condition has made me reconsider how I want to spend the rest of my life.

ALEXANDRA

I understand that. But is acting the only reason you're going to be in my class?

TED

I didn't know it was you. But now I'm curious. Yes. Sometimes I've wondered how things have worked out for you.

ALEXANDRA

You could have e-mailed me. I would have sent an update and saved you the tuition.

TED

This is the last thing I expected. Your name was Alexandra Smith when I wrote the alimony checks. I had no idea what happened to you after that.

Alexandra looks at him for a beat, processing information and visibly not sure how to respond.

TED (CONT'D)

I'm serious. I'm jealous of great actors. I want to be in at least one movie and one play before I die, no matter how good I really am. I really do want to act. Or at least try.

ALEXANDRA

How will you take care of your wife?

TED

We made plenty of money when we sold our house and my practice. And Georgina has a nurse from eight to six. I have time for a class.

Alexandra makes a face. She looks away for a moment and stares at a wall, thinking. Now she faces Ted again.

ALEXANDRA

I need a promise, Ted. One that will stay valid all semester. Two promises, actually.

TED

What are they?

ALEXANDRA

Number one, you will be just one of the thirty students in my class. You will get no special privileges or favors. None whatsoever.

TED

Agreed. I'm here to learn.

ALEXANDRA

Number two, don't die on my stage. The paperwork is outrageous.

As Ted LAUGHS...

...Alexandra's office phone RINGS. She answers it.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello?

As she listens, she tenses visibly. She interrupts her caller.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

(into phone)

I'm in a meeting. This is not a good time.

She hangs up the phone, frowning, visibly distracted.

Ted's mind is still on the second promise.

TED

Did that really happen? Somebody dying?

Alexandra remains distracted for a moment.

ALEXANDRA

Yes. Two years ago. A man about your age. He insisted on doing some stage combat. We did a sword-fight scene, and he was supposed to fake being stabbed and fall down.

TED

He got stabbed?

ALEXANDRA

He did a good fake and dropped to the stage the way he was supposed to. But when I told him he could get up now, he didn't move. We all thought he was doing a great job, until one of the students -- a part-time nurse -- checked his pulse.

TED

Damn!

ALEXANDRA

She did CPR. I called nine-one-one. But he couldn't be revived.

TED

What happened after that?

ALEXANDRA

Paperwork, like I said. His family tried to sue me and the school. But he had signed a release, and his autopsy found an undiagnosed birth defect.

TED

In his heart.

ALEXANDRA

Yes. We'll never do stage fighting again in my class. And anyone who signs up for JACK TURNER's stage combat course has to sign a bunch of waivers. A big bunch.

TED

My doctor wants me to get more exercise.

ALEXANDRA

And you haven't started yet.

TED

Touche.

ALEXANDRA

You're still thinking about it.

TED

You still know me. Did you get married again? I guess you did. Your maiden name was Benson.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, I did.

TED

Are you still married?

ALEXANDRA

Yes.

TED

Is that all you're going to tell me?

ALEXANDRA

Yes.

Ted looks at her, waiting to see if she will say anything else. She doesn't.

He glances up at a shelf near her desk and sees a picture. It's Alexandra and Frank. He's mid-fifties.

Ted stands up and looks at it.

TED

Is this him?

Alexandra frowns.

ALEXANDRA

No comment.

Ted realizes she's serious about not talking about him.

TED

(looks at watch)

Well, I better run. See you in class next week. Thanks for the visit.

As he leaves, Alexandra calls out to him.

ALEXANDRA

Ted!

Ted turns around.

TED

Yes?

ALEXANDRA

Your right shoe is untied.

Ted, looks down, bends down, ties the loose lace and straightens up again.

TED

Some things haven't changed.

ALEXANDRA

You still can't keep your shoes tied.

TED

And you haven't quit noticing.

Ted stands up.

TED (CONT'D)

(with fake formality and a slight bow)

Well, I bid you good day, Doctor Livingston.

Alexandra responds with equally fake formality.

ALEXANDRA

And a good day to you, Doctor - it is "doctor," isn't it?

Ted nods, looking pleased.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Doctor Smith.

As he leaves...

...Alexandra shakes her head, smiles slightly and then frowns and keeps working in her office.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

As Ted walks away from Alexandra's office, heading toward the front door...

...A "Student" (THE WATCHER) in his mid-to-late twenties surreptitiously takes a picture of Ted's face with a digital camera.

As Ted goes out the front door, The Watcher checks his picture.

In the image, Ted looks modestly happy and completely unaware.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 2

Wants & Needs

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Students walk past the Drama Building sign.

INT. ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

Alexandra is lecturing.

ALEXANDRA

Today, we will examine Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs -- how the needs he identifies relate to character motivation.

Ted is much older than the other STUDENTS in the class.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

I hope each of you looked at the reading assignment. Who has a question to get things started?

Several Students raise their hands. Alexandra looks pleased.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Good. Let's start with you...
(points and consults
seating chart)
...MISTER VARGAS?

The student, ARMANDO VARGAS, early twenties, stands confidently and smiles. He addresses the Students, as well as Alexandra.

ARMANDO VARGAS

Thank you. My name is Armando Vargas. Most stories seem to be about love or death. Don't those fit right in the middle of the pyramid?

ALEXANDRA

Thank you, Mister Vargas.

(to class)

Notice how he stood, introduced himself to us all, and presented his question clearly and concisely. That is what I expect from each of you.

She signals for him to be seated. He smiles and sits.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Now, let's take his question. Are most stories really about love or death?

CYNDIE MASTERS, a student in her late teens to early twenties, raises her hand.

CYNDIE MASTERS

I'm not sure which stories --

Alexandra interrupts her.

ALEXANDRA

Stand, please. Introduce yourself.

Cyndie Masters stands and looks at Alexandra.

CYNDIE MASTERS

My name is Cyndie Masters. I'm not sure--

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting)

Address the whole class.

CYNDIE MASTERS

(complying)

I'm not sure which are more popular. Stories about love...or about death.

As Cyndie Masters sits down, some of the Students glance at each other. But no one raises a hand.

ALEXANDRA

(to Ted)

Mister -- I'm sorry -- DOCTOR Smith. What are your thoughts?

Ted responds without standing.

TED

Well, I can only speak as a medical professional and as a man who has been married four times and divorced three times.

Some of the Students LAUGH.

ALEXANDRA

Stand up, please. Introduce yourself.

TED

(complying)

I am Doctor Ted Smith. I am a psychiatrist in Albuquerque. By virtue of age and experience, I may know a bit more about love and death than anyone in this room.

ALEXANDRA

Or -- maybe not.

TED

Okay, maybe not. I've never seen one of my patients die. And quantity of love - four marriages - may not equate to quality of love. Or maybe...

(loses train of thought)

...maybe I don't know what the hell I'm talking about.

As the other Students LAUGH, Alexandra signals for quiet.

ALEXANDRA

Let's end it here today. For next time, finish your descriptions of how two characters can demonstrate three elements of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs while not using words.

STUDENT #1

Any three elements?

ALEXANDRA

Any three.

One student, MIKE KEELER, tall, lanky, late teens to early twenties, smirks at Student #1.

KEELER

Dude, they steal some food and choke on it. That's two right there. Physiological and safety.

STUDENT #1

And then what?

KEELER

Then they struggle with self-esteem...while they die?

STUDENT #1

That's stupid.

KEELER

You're welcome.

All Students, except Ted, leave. He goes over to Alexandra.

TED

Well, that was embarrassing.

ALEXANDRA

How so? A big part of acting is being honest with who you are.

TED

I think you're still a bit mad at me for divorcing you.

ALEXANDRA

I gave you every chance to take another class.

TED

But aren't you?

ALEXANDRA

What? Mad at you?

Alexandra looks to see if anyone else is watching. She sees no one.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Thirty years ago, I might have fantasized about killing you. Who knows? Frankly, I was very glad to see you go. Now you're just another student. And I'll flunk you like any one of them if you don't do the work.

TED

I'll do it.

ALEXANDRA

Show me; don't tell me. You didn't read the Maslow handouts.

TED

I work with this stuff every day.

ALEXANDRA

But you didn't do the homework.

TED

Georgina needed my attention.

ALEXANDRA

It would have taken you five minutes - no more than ten - to read what I assigned.

Ted starts to say something else but stops. He has no defense for what she has just said.

TED

You're right. I'm sorry. I apologize.

He smiles.

ALEXANDRA

Apology accepted.

She returns his smile.

As they smile at each other for one brief moment...

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

...The Watcher is standing in the hallway pretending to be a student waiting for the next class.

He takes another surreptitious picture.

As Alexandra leaves, carrying her briefcase, and Ted exits the acting workshop a few steps behind...

The Watcher checks his picture. It shows Ted and Alexandra smiling at each other, seemingly on the best of terms.

He puts his camera into his book bag and leaves, looking relaxed and walking like a student with time on his hands.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 3

Cleopatra & the Late Doctor Smith

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Ted's car moves along in heavy traffic.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ted's car moves slowly down a street.

INT. TED'S CAR - DAY

Ted looks for a parking space. None.

He looks at his watch.

TED
(to himself)
Damn!

He keeps looking for a parking space. None.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Ted drives slowly, still looking for a parking place. None.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Ted has parked his car. He climbs out and jaywalks, striding fast.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Ted hurries along a sidewalk.

He catches up with Alexandra, who is walking toward a parking lot.

TED

Good morning.

Alexandra stops.

ALEXANDRA

Well, if it isn't the late Doctor Smith.

TED

I'm sorry I missed class. I had to take my wife to the emergency room.

ALEXANDRA

What happened?

TED

She had trouble breathing.

ALEXANDRA

I'm sorry. Is she doing better now?

TED

She's stabilized and sleeping. They said I should have called an ambulance. But I couldn't just wait and watch her suffer. I carried her to the car and drove like a maniac. They're keeping her overnight.

ALEXANDRA

That's good. You can get some rest.

TED

Can I buy you a coffee? You can tell me what I missed in class.

ALEXANDRA

It's not a good idea, Ted. I'll e-mail you my notes.

TED

I'm not asking for a date, Alexandra. I just want to know what I missed.

ALEXANDRA

It's not personal. Teachers and students are not supposed to fraternize. College rules. I'm up for tenure.

TED

I'm sorry. I just need to vent.
Georgina barely knows who I am
sometimes. It's a terrible way to
die.

Alexandra softens.

ALEXANDRA

Hold this a minute.
(hands him her briefcase)
I've got to make a call. When we
get to my car, I'll find my class
notes and let you borrow them.

TED

Thanks. I'm sorry.

Alexandra pulls out her cell phone and dials. She steps aside
a short distance, indicating she wants privacy.

Ted stands, holding the bag, discreetly glancing at her and
just looking around at the rest of the world.

Alexandra is now in a heated discussion on her phone. Her
words can't quite be heard. But her gestures and body
language indicate it's not a happy conversation.

She ends the call and puts away her phone.

She is all business again as she rejoins Ted on the sidewalk
and takes her briefcase from him.

ALEXANDRA

Thanks.

TED

Trouble?

Alexandra pointedly ignores the question.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Alexandra steps over to her car and opens the passenger door.
She puts her briefcase on the front seat, pops it open and
pulls out some papers.

ALEXANDRA

These are the class notes. I'll
need them back. You also missed
getting to pick a side for next
week's staged reading exercise. So
you have to take what's left.

She reaches into her briefcase and pulls out some stapled sheets.

Ted stands close to her and looks at the pages as she shows him the lines.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - TREES NEAR PARKING LOT - DAY

The Watcher takes a photo using a telephoto lens.

The image shows Ted and Alexandra standing with their heads very close together.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Ted and Alexandra are unaware of The Watcher.

Ted looks up from the pages.

TED

Cleopatra?

ALEXANDRA

It'll help you stretch your acting range.

She closes the passenger-side door. As she goes around to open the driver's side...

...Ted starts reading aloud from the side and doing dramatic gestures.

TED

"O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony! Do bravely, horse!"

(pause)

Speaking of Mark Anthony, how are things going for you and your husband?

Alexandra and Ted are now talking across the top of her car. She ignores his question.

ALEXANDRA

Have Cleopatra ready by Tuesday. Just for spite, I may call on you first.

She gets into her car, starts it, gives him a little wave and drives away while Ted holds the paper. He nods and watches her go.

He glances again at the Cleopatra assignment.

TED
(to himself)
"O, happy horse..." Shit.

He walks off looking downcast.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 4

Delay of Game

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Students enter and exit the Drama Building.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL STAGE - DAY

Alexandra's acting class is in progress. Most Students are watching from the seats in front of the stage.

Alexandra is standing off to one side, near the front edge of the stage.

Ted is standing center stage, reading a few lines of another Cleopatra speech from Shakespeare's *Antony & Cleopatra*.

TED
"Give me my robe, put on my crown;
I have immortal longings in me. Now
no more the juice of Egypt's grape
shall moist this lip..."

As he finishes with a flourish, the other Students give him a polite round of APPLAUSE.

ALEXANDRA
Thank you, Cleopatra. I'm sure Mark
Antony will weep bitter tears when
he gets the news.

As Ted comes down from the stage, Alexandra signals that class is over.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Okay, everyone. Be sure to write up your critiques of today's readings and have them ready for next Tuesday.

Students leave.

Alexandra gathers up her class materials.

Ted walks over.

TED

(to Alexandra)

I was pretty bad, wasn't I?

ALEXANDRA

Actually, you weren't half bad.

TED

Half bad? Well, was I on the side of bad closest to bad or the side of bad closest to good?

ALEXANDRA

You're not bad. But you aren't ready for a starring role.

Ted strikes a spear carrier pose and makes exaggerated moves.

TED

Then I'll carry a mean spear. And I can sing at the back of the chorus as the curtain comes down.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, you could. But I have something bigger in mind.

TED

Really? What is it?

ALEXANDRA

I've been thinking about casting you in a supporting role for the semester play.

TED

Because you feel sorry for me?

ALEXANDRA

No, because you're right for the part. You can stay on the set-building crew, if you prefer.

(MORE)

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

But I think the experience would help you gain confidence as an actor. You'll have to put in some rehearsal time at night.

Ted shakes his head no.

TED

I'm pleased and flattered, Alexan --

He stops and glances around to see if anyone is listening.

TED (CONT'D)

Doctor Livingston. But I can't leave Georgina alone at night. The home health care worker goes home at six, and I have to be there. Maybe--

Ted stops himself and doesn't say it.

Alexandra finishes the sentence for him.

ALEXANDRA

Next year.

Ted nods grimly.

TED

See you Thursday.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL STAGE - FOYER

Ted leaves the theater looking downcast and strides out the front door.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL STAGE - DAY

Alexandra gathers up her papers and watches him go.

A thought crosses her mind. She smiles slightly to herself and shakes her head as she puts the papers into her briefcase.

She carries her briefcase over to the theater's main power switch. She takes one look back toward the stage and turns the lights off.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL STAGE - FOYER - DAY

As Alexandra comes out of the theater, The Watcher is sitting in one of the foyer's chairs, reading a newspaper.

He has his camera beside him, but he doesn't use it as...

...Alexandra goes out the front door.

CUT TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 5

Time Enough and Not Enough Time

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DAY

Ted, carrying a book bag, strides across campus. He passes a sign -- "Student Union" -- and goes inside the Student Union Building.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DAY

As he moves into the Student Union building, he looks at his watch and looks around at the people inside.. He goes inside the dining area.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DAY

He spots Alexandra at a table. She sees him and waves him over.

As he sits down, she is having coffee and grading papers. She hands him a coffee in a to-go cup.

ALEXANDRA

Thought you might like this.

Ted is pleased. He holds up the cup in exaggerated admiration.

TED

Nectar of the gods. Breakfast of champions. The finest wine of the vine. Thank you, dearest.

She looks at him sharply.

ALEXANDRA

What?

Ted looks embarrassed.

TED

Sorry. That came from long ago.
From a universe far, far away. Old
habits, you know.

ALEXANDRA

Was that what it was, a habit?

TED

I thought we aren't supposed to
discuss these things while we're
teacher and student.

ALEXANDRA

We aren't.

TED

Then we shan't. My apologies,
Doctor Livingston.

ALEXANDRA

Apology accepted, Doctor Smith.

Ted takes a sip of the coffee.

TED

So how am I doing?

Alexandra gives him a look.

TED (CONT'D)

Do I have any future as an actor?

ALEXANDRA

You won't be performing at the
Globe or off-Broadway. But you
could do fine in some small roles
on stage or indie films.

TED

You mean like the...
(making quote marks in the
air)
...GRUMPY BARTENDER or OLD GUY
NUMBER FOUR?

Alexandra leans closer to him and puts a hand on his
shoulder, an unconscious action as she gestures with her
other hand.

As Ted glances at her hand on his shoulder and smiles and listens...

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - ANOTHER TABLE - DAY

From a nearby table, The Watcher snaps a quick, discrete picture of the hand-on-shoulder moment.

INSERT CLOSE-UP: The picture looks like a moment of casual intimacy between two lovers.

Alexandra's voice is heard as The Watcher checks his photo.

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)

Yes. And maybe some bigger parts.
The main problem is how much time
and emotional energy you can commit
to a role.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DINING AREA -
ALEXANDRA'S TABLE - DAY

Ted ponders her statement for a moment.

TED

I guess...later...not too much
longer from now...I'll have more
time.

Alexandra realizes where her evaluation has landed.

ALEXANDRA

I'm sorry.

TED

No, it's reality. In the near
future, not out of choice, after
Georgina is gone, I'll have more
time...to try whatever else I wish
to do with the rest of my life.

Alexandra finishes her coffee.

ALEXANDRA

I have to grade some papers. See
you in class tomorrow.

TED

Ciao.

He salutes her with his coffee cup as she gets up.

He has a pensive look as he watches her walk away.

He reaches into his book bag and pulls out a small sack lunch. He removes a sandwich and starts unwrapping it.

TED (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Chow.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 6
Just for the Hell of It

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Students walk along the sidewalks and across the grass in front of the Drama Building.

INT. ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

Cyndie Masters, standing in front of the class, concludes a reciting exercise from Dante's *The Divine Comedy* with a confident flourish.

CYNDIE MASTERS
"...Lifting their eyes toward us:
'If ye know, declare what path will
lead us to the mount!'"

As Students APPLAUD...

...Cyndie smiles. Takes a small bow.

And Keeler suddenly stands up, making mock-heroic gestures as he speaks.

KEELER
We can take that mount, that hill,
men! Follow me! CHA-A-A-R-GE!

There is just a smattering of CHUCKLES and APPLAUSE as Keeler holds his pose.

He visually realizes he has not been as funny as funny as he thought he would be.

KEELER (CONT'D)

Or not.

ALEXANDRA

That's right, Mister Keeler. Or
NOT.

As Keeler sits down, he smirks his mortification...

...and Alexandra consults a list.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Okay, next up in our *Divine Comedy*
recitation roundup...Doctor Smith.

Polite APPLAUSE as Ted gets up and stands in front of the
class.

He does not look confident as he begins to recite.

TED

"From the first circle I thus
descended --"

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting; correcting)
"-- I descended thus --"

TED

--I descended thus, down to the
second, which, embracing a lesser
space --"

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting; correcting)
"-- which, a lesser space embracing
--"

TED

-- which, a lesser space embracing
so much more of grief containing --
"

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting; correcting)
" -- grief contains -- "

TED

" -- grief contains, provoking...
(remembering)
...bitter moans. There Minos
stands, grinning with ghastly
feature -- "

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)
(exasperated)
Who writes this crap?

ALEXANDRA
In this case, Dante Alighieri. *The Divine Comedy* is considered one of the great works of world literature.

TED
There's nothing funny or divine about it!

He wads up his piece of paper, throws it toward a nearby trash can.

He goes back to his desk and sits down with a visible and audible HUFF.

Some of the Students sitting near him LAUGH and APPLAUD.

ALEXANDRA
Thank you, Doctor Smith. That was not exactly the assignment. And we are not yet ready to embark on improvisation.

Ted looks glum, yet defiant.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)
(to class)
However, I think we have just seen an excellent example of how an actor must stay in control of his or her own emotions at all times, yet also ready to draw strength and power from them.

TED
I apologize, Doctor Livingston. I was NOT in control of my emotions.

ALEXANDRA
We know. But you have given us a valuable teaching moment.
(to class)
So let's go with it. When you are in a role and up on stage or in front of a camera, you must stay in character AND stay true to the script.

Alexandra pauses to gather her thoughts.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

You may have just broken up with your boyfriend or girlfriend. Somebody you love may have died. You may not give a damn about the character you are playing. But you must compartmentalize your personal emotions and stay within your character's emotions.

Students' faces show reactions and attention as Alexandra continues her comments.

ALEXANDRA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You may be profoundly sad yet having to do comedy. You may be wildly happy about something, yet you still have to die convincingly on stage after drinking poison.

Alexandra again pauses to gather her thoughts.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Sorry. I'm having trouble keeping my mind on my own role today.

Looks up at acting workshop clock.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

So let's do this. Over the weekend, I want each of you to come up with three ways to help you stay focused on your character, no matter how many bad things or good things are shaking up your life. Have a good weekend.

(as Students leave)

Be ready next time to tell us what you've come up with. Don't wait until five minutes before class to give this some thought.

As Students leave the room, Alexandra goes over to Ted.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Can you come to my office, please?

Ted, still looking glum, nods.

CUT TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 7

Past and Prologue

INT. ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Alexandra enters, talking on her cell phone, and sits down at her desk.

ALEXANDRA
(into phone)
Do what you want, Frank.

Ted starts to enter, but stops when he sees her on the phone.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Frankly, Frank, I don't give a damn. Goodbye.

She ends the call visibly angry and puts away her phone.

Ted enters.

TED
Trouble?

Alexandra ignores the question; gestures to her visitor's chair.

Ted sits.

ALEXANDRA
What happened with the Dante assignment?

TED
What do you mean?

ALEXANDRA
You almost made it through.

TED
With a few corrections.

ALEXANDRA
Then you went way over the top.

TED
Sorry.

ALEXANDRA
No apology needed. You heard the applause.

TED

I wasn't acting.

ALEXANDRA

No, you weren't, and yes, you were. We are always on stage, Ted. Even when we're alone.

TED

I've heard that theory. The world's a stage, and my life's a play. In my case, I'm sure the critics are ready to commit suicide.

ALEXANDRA

Clever, Ted. But things aren't that bad, surely.

TED

Not here.

ALEXANDRA

Georgina?

TED

And setting up my practice. I can't help all the people who'll need my help...

ALEXANDRA

...and can't afford to pay. You're doing the best you can. I know that. Don't let up now.

TED

The way I did in our marriage.

ALEXANDRA

We don't need to rehash the past.

TED

No, we don't. We were young, and we wanted to go into separate worlds.

ALEXANDRA

Is that how you remember it?

TED

After four marriages, I'm not sure what I remember. But I do know I was too young, Alexandra. For you AND for us. Things might have been different if I had been older.

ALEXANDRA

How much older?

TED

Considering my track record, maybe
about this much older.

Alexandra looks askance at him for a beat.

She gets up and goes to her filing cabinet. She opens it,
looks inside, and closes the drawer.

Suddenly, she steps over to Ted, bends down and gives him a
kiss on the side of his face.

Ted looks surprised.

TED (CONT'D)

Wow.

Alexandra, looking mortified, steps back.

Ted moves to try to kiss her.

She gestures for him to stay seated.

ALEXANDRA

I don't know where that came from.

TED

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs?

ALEXANDRA

If I don't think about it, maybe it
didn't happen.

Ted gets up and tries to reach out to her.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

No.

She indicates he should sit down.

Ted sits.

She sits again behind her desk.

TED

We both need friends right now.
You're getting divorced, aren't
you?

ALEXANDRA

It's too something.... That didn't
make sense. It's too soon...for
something...

TED

We can be friends.

ALEXANDRA

Technically -- and I really have to
follow the rules if I hope to get
tenure -- no, we can't.

TED

So what happens now? How long?

ALEXANDRA

I don't know, Ted. I never thought
I would have to think about any of
this again.

They look at each other with neutral expressions.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

NO Conversation

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Ted strides along a sidewalk toward the Drama Building.

INT. ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

Ted is in class early. He is visibly proud of himself as he
sits and waits.

HIS POV

He watches other Students enter.

When it is time for class to start, a SUBSTITUTE TEACHER
(DOCTOR CLOUD) comes into the acting workshop. Doctor Cloud,
early seventies, looks as if he should have retired years
ago.

He stands behind the lectern and looks over the class.

DOCTOR CLOUD

Doctor Livingston is taking a short leave of absence. She will be back in a week or so. I am Doctor Cloud.

Ted raises his hand to ask a question.

Doctor Cloud ignores him and consults a sheet of paper

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)

In her absence, she has left two essay assignments. First, she wants you to watch *The Old Man and the Sea* and write a five-hundred-word essay discussing how Spencer Tracy handles the processes of acting alone on a small stage, specifically a boat in the water.

Keeler suddenly stands near his desk. He starts pantomiming the act of struggling to reel in a big fish.

Some of the Students around him LAUGH.

Ted looks irritated.

Doctor Cloud is NOT amused.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)

(to Keeler)

Sir, have a seat.

Keeler sits but raises his arms in victory as some of the Students around him pantomime APPLAUSE.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)

Your second assignment is to watch *Easy Rider* and write a five-hundred-word essay detailing on how Jack Nicholson approaches his character, the alcoholic young lawyer.

Keeler stays seated but leans back in his seat. He holds his arms up, mimicking the act and vibration of steering a "chopper" motorcycle.

A few Students seated around him CHUCKLE and SNICKER.

Ted again looks irritated.

Doctor Cloud once again is not amused.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
(pointing to Keeler)
Sir --

Keeler tries to look and act innocent.

KEELER
(pointing to another
Student)
Him? Or me?

DOCTOR CLOUD
(pointing to Keeler)
-- You in the green shirt.

Keeler looks at his shirt, as if just now discovering that it is green.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
Come to my office after class.

Ted again raises his hand.

Doctor Cloud ignores him and looks at his watch.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
Today, I'll teach you some
breathing exercises that can help
you relax before you go on stage or
work in front of a camera.

Doctor Cloud steps around to stand in front of the lectern.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
In this first exercise, take a very
deep breath.

Ted scowls and does not participate.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
Take it in...
(takes a deep breath)
...and hold it.

Other Students around Ted take deep breaths and hold them.

Some make exaggerated faces at each other as they hold their breaths.

Some, unable to hold back, blow out their breaths and LAUGH in response.

Ted puts his chin in his hand and looks unhappy as Doctor Cloud drones on in the background.

DOCTOR CLOUD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Now let it out slowly, like a tire
losing air. SSSSSS-sssss-sssss!

Some of the Students cooperate with Doctor Cloud.

Some of the Students make exaggerated HISSING sounds.

Some, including Keeler, try to pretend they are tires going flat. They LAUGH among themselves.

Ted gathers up his book bag.

He starts faking a COUGHING FIT.

He gets up, makes a vague wave of apology to Doctor Cloud...

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

...and exits the acting workshop, "COUGHING" as he goes.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ted stops the fake cough and walks up to Alexandra's office.

He tries the doorknob. Locked.

He looks at a small note taped to her door: "Out of the office until 10/14"

He stands in the hallway and looks both ways. Now he walks away.

From up in a shadowy stairwell, The Watcher watches him go.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 8

Don't Ask, Don't Kiss, Don't Tell

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Ted walks from the Drama Building toward the Student Union building.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DAY

Students are grouped at book-strewn tables, having coffee and soft drinks and conversations.

Ted sits alone at a table, having coffee and no conversation. He flip through a few pages of textbook and closes it. He gathers up his stuff and leaves.

EXT. STUDENT PARKING LOT - DAY

Ted walks to his car, puts his book bag inside and climbs in.

INT. TED'S CAR - DAY

Before he can start his car, his cell phone rings.

Ted looks at the display and answers it.

TED

Alexandra? Where are you?

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexandra, cell phone pressed to her face, is moving around inside a small apartment decorated with French-language posters. The lighted Eiffel Tower is visible in the distance outside one window.

INTERCUT ALL

ALEXANDRA

I'm in Paris for a few days. How's the class going?

TED

It's boring. Cloud's a boring teacher. Why are you in Paris?

ALEXANDRA

I needed to get away.

TED

That's a long way to get away.

ALEXANDRA

It's a long way from...things.

TED

Things? Am I one of those "things"?

ALEXANDRA

Paris is my favorite place in the world. I could never afford to live here. But I come here when I can.

TED

You're getting divorced, aren't you?

ALEXANDRA

Maybe. Maybe not.

Ted looks at his watch.

TED

What time is it there?

ALEXANDRA

Are you just leaving campus? It's nine-twenty here. But in Paris, the night is always young.

TED

Where are you...in Paris?

ALEXANDRA

A friend's apartment. It's on a little street called *Rue Cler*. She had to go to Germany for a conference.

TED

She.

ALEXANDRA

MONIQUE. She's going through a divorce. We've been friends almost our whole lives.

TED

I hope we're not running up your phone bill. I never make overseas calls. I'm not even sure I know how.

ALEXANDRA

Don't worry about it.

TED

Okay.

There is an awkward pause. Alexandra CHUCKLES.

ALEXANDRA

We're just talking around things,
aren't we?

TED

Yes. We need to --

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting)
Let me talk first.

TED

Okay.

ALEXANDRA

Death and love are tricky matters
for both of us right now.

TED

Yes, and I've been wondering a lot
about --

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting)
Let me finish, Ted. I need to say
what I think. How I feel.

TED

I'm listening.

Ted listens intently.

TED (CONT'D)

I'm listening. This is me,
listening.

Suddenly he looks puzzled.

TED (CONT'D)

(into phone)
Hello?

He pulls the phone away from his face and looks at it.

INSERT CLOSE UP: The "Low Batt." indicator is flashing.

INT. TED'S CAR - DAY

Ted hurriedly digs around inside his car and glove
compartment looking for his phone power cord. He doesn't find
it.

TED
(to himself)
Damn. Shit. Hell.

He tosses his dead phone onto the passenger seat and starts his car.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

No Conversation (Again)

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ANOTHER DAY

Ted walks toward the Drama Building.

Students pass in various directions as he slows to check his cell phone. No messages.

He puts away his phone and walks into the Drama Building.

INT. ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

Doctor Cloud once again is teaching Alexandra's class.

DOCTOR CLOUD
(to class)
Okay, who would like to discuss
Meyerhold's constructivism and how
it influenced Stanislowski's
system?

All of the Students around Ted look bored or asleep.

Ted starts to say something but thinks better of it.

He doodles in his notebook.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
Anyone? Someone?
(getting angry)
No one seems to give a damn today.
So...it's essay time.

Students suddenly GROAN and AD-LIB quiet PROTESTS.

Doctor Cloud gives them a smug grin.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
THAT got your attention. Doctor
Livingston will be back in class
next week.

Some of the Students around Ted pump their fists and mouth
"Yes!" A few of them quietly APPLAUD.

Ted sits quietly and does not react, except for a look of
relief.

DOCTOR CLOUD (CONT'D)
Between now and then, however, I am
your instructor, and your
assignment is to write a five-
hundred-word essay on why none of
you have any future at all in the
world of acting.

KEELER
Seriously?

DOCTOR CLOUD
I'm very serious, Mister Keeler.
And I suggest you do the work. It
WILL count toward your grade in
this class. I will make sure of it.

Without another word, Doctor Cloud grabs his class materials
and hobbles out of the room.

Some of the Students remain seated for a few moments. They
look at each other, not sure if class is over or not.

Ted checks his cell phone again. No message.

He looks out a acting workshop window, visibly lost in
thought as...

...Others around him start leaving.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 9

Reconnecting?

EXT. CITY - ANOTHER DAY

Scenes of the city flow by.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Ted's car is parked outside a coffee shop.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Ted sitting in the coffee shop's outdoor area, working at his laptop computer.

His cell phone RINGS.

He picks it up, looks at the number and quickly answers the call.

TED

Alexandra? Hi, let me explain.

INT. PARIS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexandra is still in Paris.

INTERCUT ALL

ALEXANDRA

You hung up on me. What's to explain?

TED

My phone battery died.

ALEXANDRA

I was telling you how I felt, and you hung up.

TED

I wouldn't do that. I was in my car. I couldn't find my power cord so I could plug in.

ALEXANDRA

I talked and talked, and then I realized you weren't there.

TED

I heard you say you would tell me how you felt. So I listened. Then I heard nothing. The battery died.

ALEXANDRA

Right.

TED

I never heard a beep. It just cut off. I need a new phone.

ALEXANDRA

You need a new excuse.

TED

Why are we fighting?

ALEXANDRA

We're not fighting. I'm listening to your excuses.

TED

You've said we can't even be friends right now...

ALEXANDRA

That's right.

TED

...Much less anything else.

ALEXANDRA

Be sure you hear this, Ted. There won't be any "anything else." Okay? Goodbye.

INT. PARIS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexandra ends the call and tosses her cell phone aside.

She opens a box of chocolates, pulls out one piece, bites into it and reaches for a glass of wine.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

Ted starts to call Alexandra back. He reconsiders and puts his phone down.

He puts his hands on his computer keyboard and stares at his screen.

He punches the OFF button, pulls his screen down and starts packing up to leave.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

Pas De Conversation

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Ted carries his book bag toward the Drama Building.

Doctor Cloud, looking very old, hobbles toward the Drama Building from another direction. He will reach the doors at the same time.

Ted stops, looks around for moment, and walks away from the Drama Building as Doctor Cloud goes inside.

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DAY

Ted walks toward the Student Union Building with a purposeful stride.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DINING AREA - DAY

At one table, a half dozen Students are AD-LIBBING conversations and LAUGHING.

Ted sits down at the adjacent table with a cup of coffee. He looks out of place and gets no notice from the Students.

Ted pulls out his cell phone, opens it and squints at it.

He closes it, puts it away and continues sitting. Every few moments, he glances over at AD-LIBBED conversations and laughter.

He sips his coffee. His table does not have a sugar dispenser.

Ted leans over toward one Student at the next table.

TED

Pass the sugar, please.

Without looking at Ted and without actually acknowledging him, the Student grabs his table's sugar dispenser and hands it over to Ted without taking his eyes off the other Students at his table.

TED (CONT'D)

Thank you.

The Student does not respond.

Ted puts sugar in his coffee.

He tries to hand the sugar dispenser back to the Student. But all he gets in return is a small, irritated, "keep it" hand wave.

Ted sets the sugar dispenser in the middle of his table.

He turns the dispenser around slowly and appears to study it from all sides as the AD-LIBBED conversation and LAUGHTER continues nearby.

Now, looking bored and alone, Ted takes one more look around the dining area, finishes his coffee and leaves.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 10

Cold and Practical

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - OUTDOOR SEATING AREA - ANOTHER DAY

Ted is sitting in front of his laptop computer, but he is reading a newspaper.

His cell phone RINGS.

He picks it up, looks at it and answers the call.

TED
(into phone)
Hello. Did you get my messages?

INT. PARIS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexandra is lying in bed, talking on her phone.

INTERCUT

ALEXANDRA
Yes. I didn't feel like calling you back. I haven't called anybody back for the few days.

TED
Are you still in Paris?

ALEXANDRA
I went to the Louvre again, and then I spent the afternoon at a really nice outdoor cafe.

TED
So what's up?

ALEXANDRA
Do you have a picture of your wife?

TED
My wife? Yes. Why?

ALEXANDRA
Can you e-mail it to me sometime?

TED
I can send it right now. Why?

ALEXANDRA
Just curious.

TED
Okay.

He works at his computer.

ALEXANDRA
In a way, you left me for her.

TED
No, there were three others --
four, five others -- between you
and her.

ALEXANDRA
That many? Relationships and
marriage have been a bit of a hobby
for you, haven't they?

TED
If so, it has been a very expensive
hobby. Actually, I think there have
been six others. I just sent it to
your phone.

Alexandra holds her phone out so she can look at the picture.

She closes the picture and puts the phone back to her ear.

ALEXANDRA
She's very pretty.

TED
Yes, she is. Thank you. I love her.
(chokes up)
I'll miss her.

ALEXANDRA

I shouldn't have asked. I'm sorry,
Ted. I know you will miss her.

TED

No, it's okay. I have to face it.

ALEXANDRA

Do I need to call you back?

TED

No. It's life. I have to deal with
it. We all have to deal with it.

(pause)

When can we see each other...again?

ALEXANDRA

We need to talk about some things,
Ted. In coldly practical terms. My
situation. And your wife's - uh-

TED

Her passing. Her demise. Her death.
There's no easy word for it.

ALEXANDRA

Her passing. If...

TED

When.

ALEXANDRA

When it happens, time will have to
pass, maybe a lot of time,
before...before we...before I
can...how can I put this?

TED

Just say it.

ALEXANDRA

Before I can give you some kind of
answer to what you seem to be
seeking. I guess that's the best
way to put it.

TED

At my age, I hate wasting time.

ALEXANDRA

The answer may be no. I don't know
yet. Time is not our friend. I
understand that.

(MORE)

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

But certain decorums and niceties
still have to be observed.

TED

Says who?

ALEXANDRA

Well, our grown children, our
friends, our co-workers. Society at
large. God, too, if you believe in
God.

TED

They can't tell us what to do.
Well, maybe God can. But the others
can't.

ALEXANDRA

You have your own business, so that
gives you some freedoms.

TED

Not many.

ALEXANDRA

But I'm a college employee. And now
I'm facing a tenure committee. It's
tough to get tenure at my age. And
there's the mess with Frank. He
wants a divorce, but he also wants
my share of everything.

TED

So later this fall...?

ALEXANDRA

No promises. I have to keep the
tenure committee out of all of
this. Good night from Paris.

TED

Good afternoon from Texas. No
promises.

INT. PARIS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alexandra hangs up her phone and gets into bed.

She settles onto her pillow and looks at a framed French
poster, pondering something.

Finally, she turns off her bedside light.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - OUTDOOR SEATING AREA - DAY

Ted closes his computer.

He props his feet up on an adjacent chair and watches the passing traffic, also pondering something.

A SIREN wails in the background, growing louder.

Now an ambulance speeds past the coffee shop.

Ted watches it.

The ambulance seems to upset his momentary tranquility.

He gathers up his computer and phone and leaves the coffee shop, striding toward his car.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 11

Back and Forth and So Forth

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Another day in the city.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Alexandra is back from Paris. She walks from her car, carrying her briefcase.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ted has parked his car. He walks from it carrying his book bag.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Scenes of City life flow by.

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Ted walks into the Drama Building.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Alexandra is at her desk pulling papers out of her briefcase.

Ted enters. He looks happy.

TED
Welcome back.

He starts to close her office door.

ALEXANDRA
Leave it open.

Her tone is cold, official.

Ted doesn't notice. He sounds jovial.

TED
Did you bring me some wine and
cheese?

Alexandra freezes him with a look.

ALEXANDRA
I have to get some information to
the tenure committee. They want it
in fifteen minutes. I'll see you in
class.

She turns to her computer and starts working.

TED
Okay.

As he leaves, he looks back at her. Her attention stays on
her computer screen.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DINING AREA - DAY

Ted is seated at a table, drinking coffee and looking at a
textbook.

Alexandra arrives, carrying coffee in a to-go cup.

ALEXANDRA
Sorry. I was a bit rushed.

TED
It's okay.

He gestures for her to join him.

Alexandra remains standing. She shakes her head "no."

ALEXANDRA

Frank has been saying some things.
I think he's having me followed.

TED

What kind of things?

Alexandra glances around.

She sits down in a chair at an adjacent table and speaks toward Ted.

ALEXANDRA

Let's not go there. You really
don't need to be part of this.

TED

Why would he have you followed?

ALEXANDRA

How many times have you been
divorced?

TED

Just three. No one had me followed.
Not as far as I know. Everything
was amicable.

ALEXANDRA

Really.

TED

Okay, everything was a mess. You
didn't have me followed, did you?

Alexandra gives an exasperated snort.

ALEXANDRA

I was twenty-two and broke. I just
wanted you to vanish. You and your
dream of being a motorcycle racer.

Ted looks a bit sheepish.

TED

Mission accomplished. On both
fronts.

ALEXANDRA

When you came into divorce court on crutches, looking oh so bruised and pitiful, I knew for sure we were making the right decision. I wanted a home and a family and not the constant fear that you would break your neck or get killed.

TED

What if I had promised to stop?

ALEXANDRA

You would have lied. You were an adrenalin junkie. And then there was that biker chick, what's her name.

TED

Barbie Bonner. We didn't do anything...

Alexandra looks askance and disbelieving at him.

TED (CONT'D)

...much.

He stays on the defensive.

TED (CONT'D)

My life is much safer and saner now. All it took --

ALEXANDRA

(interrupting)

-- Was one good crash and a metal plate in your skull. I know.

TED

You didn't hear about the next one.

ALEXANDRA

You crashed again?

Alexandra gets up and moves over to the chair closer to Ted.

TED

A year later, at a hundred and eight miles an hour. I woke up in traction, with steel pins in both arms and legs.

ALEXANDRA

That's awful, Ted.

TED

Yes, it was. And it's still a hassle. I set off airport metal detectors, and I have to carry notes from my doctors and show my scars.

ALEXANDRA

So, no more adrenalin junkie.

TED

That part of me died in the crash. It damned near killed the rest of me, too. But--

Ted pauses to take a sip of coffee and gather his thoughts.

Alexandra interrupts, moving her hands in a manner that describes a dramatic vista.

ALEXANDRA

Cue the dramatic silver lining, shimmering in the background.

TED

It's a cliché, I know. But there was one. I spent weeks in the hospital and in physical therapy.

ALEXANDRA

I would have gone crazy.

TED

Some of the pain meds did make me crazy. Anyway, I got a lot more exposure to the practice of medicine. And while I was immobile, I had plenty of time to think about why people take stupid risks with their lives and behave the way they do.

Alexandra takes a drink of her coffee and just looks at him for a beat.

TED (CONT'D)

What?

ALEXANDRA

This is really not an appropriate question. But what the hell. How did you afford medical school while you were paying me alimony? You never missed a check.

Ted CHUCKLES and makes wiggly motions with his fingers as he slowly raises his hands.

TED

Cue the second silver lining. My crazy Aunt Edna -- remember her?

ALEXANDRA

The silver-haired little spinster with the sixteen cats.

TED

Right. She hated everyone, and me, especially, for no reason I could ever figure out. Anyway, she died.

ALEXANDRA

And left you some money.

TED

She left me her cats.

ALEXANDRA

Oh, crap.

TED

I was her only survivor. I got the cats. But her will also specified that I was to use her bank account to help the cats get new homes. And once that was done, I could keep the rest to cover my expenses.

ALEXANDRA

And she was rich, of course.

TED

It cost me every cent in her checking account -- about four hundred bucks -- to cover the vet bills and cat food. But I got them all relocated.

ALEXANDRA

That was it?

Ted smiles.

TED

Not quite. After I reported to her executor that the cats were happy in their new homes, he told me that there was one more clause in her will.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

Aunt Edna had left me a trust fund,
to be paid out at six thousand
dollars a month until exhausted.

ALEXANDRA

So Aunt Edna --

TED

That's right. Sent you to graduate
school and me to medical school.

Alexandra LAUGHS.

ALEXANDRA

Good old Aunt Edna. Here's to her.

Alexandra raises her to-go coffee cup in a toast.

Ted touches his coffee cup to hers.

TED

And to her sixteen cats.

ALEXANDRA

Meow!

They LAUGH and sit back, smiling to themselves as they enjoy
the moment and sip their coffee.

Ted breaks the spell by looking at his watch.

TED

Well, I have to go. Reality calls.

Alexandra's facial expression softens.

ALEXANDRA

I know it's hard for you, with
Georgina.

Alexandra gets up to leave. She puts a hand on Ted's
shoulder.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

(official tone)

I'll do what I can to help you get
the most out of our class, Doctor
Smith.

As Ted smiles and reaches up to touch her hand...

Alexandra starts to pull her hand away, but leaves it under
his for a beat and smiles at him. Now she moves it.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DINING AREA - DAY

The moment is just long enough for The Watcher.

Sitting at a nearby table, he watches Ted and Alexandra leave in different directions. Now he views a digital photograph he has just shot discreetly.

INSERT CLOSE-UP: The photograph is perfectly timed. It looks like an intimate encounter between Alexandra and Ted.

The Watcher looks very pleased with the shot.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 11

Cliches

INT. ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

Two STUDENTS finish performing a scene. Other Students APPLAUD.

Ted tries to slip into class, obviously very late.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)
(coldly)
See me after class, please, Doctor
Smith.

Scene continues with MUSIC over acting workshop scenes of Alexandra showing the two Students how to improve the blocking in their scene.

Ted looks melancholy. Looks out the window, watches things visible outside.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - LATER - DAY

Ted enters. Alexandra is at her desk

ALEXANDRA
You missed a pop quiz. And...
(handing him a piece of
paper)
...here's next week's performance
exercise.

She looks down at papers on her desk, visibly ready for him to leave.

Ted, however, sits down.

TED

Can we talk? I really need a friend right now.

ALEXANDRA

Now is not a good time.

TED

I can come back later. I can bring you a coffee.

ALEXANDRA

This is not a good time.

TED

This?

(indicating present moment)

Or this?

(indicating a bigger scope)

Alexandra is angry.

ALEXANDRA

Listen, Ted. Try to understand. I've got divorce lawyers and the tenure committee all breathing down my neck. I just want everybody and everything to leave me the hell alone for a while.

Ted gets up to leave.

TED

Okay. I'm sorry.

He is almost out her office door when she calls out to him.

ALEXANDRA

Ted.

TED

Yes?

ALEXANDRA

I'm sorry. I can talk for a couple of minutes. But I have to go to a meeting.

She gets up and grabs her coat.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

Walk with me.

TED

Is it safe?

ALEXANDRA

No. But frankly, SCAH-LETT,
sometimes I'm can't give a damn.

As they are leaving her office...

TED

I thought you want everyone to
leave you alone.

ALEXANDRA

Don't press your luck. I might
change my mind.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - MINUTES LATER - DAY

Ted and Alexandra walk across campus.

ALEXANDRA

What do the doctors say?

TED

Her main doctor calls it a turn for
the worse. It won't be much longer
now.

ALEXANDRA

I'm sorry. Life's a bitch
sometimes.

TED

Lots of times.

ALEXANDRA

I still can't be your friend right
now. Not the kind you need.

TED

I know. I just need someone who
knows me. Somebody who'll listen
and say something back now and
then.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING - DAY

Alexandra stops in front of the Administration Building.

ALEXANDRA

Well, here's where I get off the bus. Have your performance exercise ready next time. I might, just to be mean, call on you first. And you can make up the pop quiz by giving me a one-page paper on...something. Pick something vaguely related to acting.

TED

Thank you, Doctor Livingston.

ALEXANDRA

Of course, Doctor Smith. Good day.

She walks toward the Administration Building.

For a beat, Ted watches her go. Now he walks away.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - NEARBY AREA - DAY

The Watcher puts his camera into his book bag and strolls off in another direction, looking just like a student.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 12

Death After Life

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL BREAK AREA - DAY

A flow of scenes: life on campus and outside the Student Union Building.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ACTING WORKSHOP - DAY

Ted is standing in front of the class, performing a few lines from William Butler Yeats' poem "Love and Death."

TED

"Go ask the youngest angel.
She will say with bated breath,
(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)
By the door of Mary's garden
Are the spirits Love and Death."

The Students give Ted polite APPLAUSE as he returns to his seat.

Alexandra addresses her class.

ALEXANDRA
Very good. I'm seeing lots of good progress in your work. Let's give all of today's performers another hand.

She and the Students APPLAUD.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)
That's it for today. Have your critiques ready for next class. And if any of you who performed wish to get my views on how you did, I'll be available in the Student Union dining room for a few minutes, at two-thirty.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - BREAK AREA - DAY

Alexandra, Ted and Keeler are seated at a table, having coffee.

KEELER
My real goal after I graduate is to go to L.A. and make movies like the Coen Brothers. Or the Duplass Brothers.

ALEXANDRA
Do you have a brother who wants to make movies?

KEELER
No brother. Two sisters. I guess I'll have to call myself the Keeler Brother. Or Brother Keeler, the Movie Monk.

Alexandra and Ted LAUGH.

Keeler grins, quickly finishes his coffee and looks at his watch.

KEELER (CONT'D)

Time for Stage Combat, my other favorite class. See you next week.

As Ted and Alexandra nod and raise their cups in farewell salute, Keeler leaves.

For a beat, Ted and Alexandra drink their coffee, lost in their own thoughts.

TED

Does he have a chance?

ALEXANDRA

He might. He might not. In Hollywood, nobody can hear you scream. And, as William Goldman famously said, nobody knows anything.

Ted ponders a thought and watches Alexandra add a little more cream to her coffee.

TED

Why did you settle on teaching?

Alexandra gives him a sharp look.

ALEXANDRA

What do you mean?

TED

I mean, why this? Why did you decide to teach drama, instead of going to New York or Hollywood?

ALEXANDRA

"Those who can act, do; those who can't act, teach"? Is that what you're asking me?

TED

No. I'm just curious.

ALEXANDRA

I put in my time. I did some drama in New York and Chicago. And I spent more than a year in Hollywood fighting for bit parts.

TED

What movies were you in?

ALEXANDRA

Nothing that made any money. And nothing that made any headlines. Sometimes I was Dead Girl Number Two in a horror movie. Or I was in bed with some drug dealer when he -- and I -- got whacked with machine guns.

TED

Yuck.

ALEXANDRA

I spent a lot of time wearing fake blood and painted-on bullet holes. And making death noises.

TED

And you hated that.

ALEXANDRA

No, the work was fun, and the cast and crews were crazier and more entertaining than the movies we made.

TED

So, back to my question. Why here?

ALEXANDRA

I didn't like competing with others for parts. And I kept helping out the ones who had less experience. I loved doing that. I still do. That's why I became a drama teacher. I got my master's degree at Stanford, and then I got a teaching assistantship here and stayed after I got my Ph.D.

As The Watcher, pretending to read a book, watches them from a table across the room...

...Alexandra picks up her purse and pulls out a small packet of photographs.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

I want to show you something from Paris. I think I photographed an angel.

She pulls out three photographs.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

I took pictures of some people standing at the base of the Eiffel Tower.

(showing him the photos)

Look, this man is blurry in all three of them. But the people standing right next to him are all in focus.

Ted looks at the photos.

TED

Maybe he just moved when you shot the pictures.

ALEXANDRA

No. All of the people were standing still, looking off at something. That's what caught my attention. Their pose.

TED

Why do you think he's an angel?

ALEXANDRA

I don't know. He just looked perfectly still, yet he's blurry in every shot.

TED

Do you believe in angels?

ALEXANDRA

Sometimes I do. Sometimes I'm not sure.

TED

Oh ye of little faith. What about ghosts?

ALEXANDRA

Maybe. But you have to answer, too.

TED

What?

ALEXANDRA

About angels and ghosts.

TED

What about them?

ALEXANDRA

I don't remember if you believe in them or not.

TED

I'm sure the issue came up while we were married.

ALEXANDRA

But I don't remember what you said about them. Frankly, there's a lot of things I don't remember about our marriage.

TED

By choice?

ALEXANDRA

Maybe. I don't know. Do you or do you not believe in angels and ghosts?

TED

I hope there's life after death. Beyond that, I'm not sure. I don't remember what you believe, either.

ALEXANDRA

I think there's something. You can call it God or angels or ghosts or souls. I think something about us keeps going after we die.

TED

Maybe we die in this universe, but keep living in another universes.

ALEXANDRA

Quantum theory?

TED

(nodding)

Parallel universes. In another universe, we are still married.

ALEXANDRA

That's a scary thought.

TED

And in other universes, we still haven't met, or we've already met, or we're still getting divorced, or we've just gotten divorced, or we now have eighteen children.

ALEXANDRA

God forbid!

(laughs)

But I'll be honest, Ted. Sometimes I wish we'd had at least one child together. She --

TED

(interrupting)

Or he.

ALEXANDRA

--or he probably would be a very interesting person.

TED

Your brains and your beauty. And my...whatever.

ALEXANDRA

You have a lot of whatever, Ted. You're smart, and a many women, including me, would call you good-looking.

TED

Thanks.

ALEXANDRA

None of that has anything to do with why we got divorced. And you still haven't answered my question. Do you believe in angels or ghosts?

TED

(gathering his thoughts)

Well...

Alexandra looks at her watch.

ALEXANDRA

Hold that thought, Ted --

(quickly looks around)

-- Doctor Smith.

(MORE)

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm due at a department meeting in
five minutes.

(quickly finishes coffee)

Stop by my office at three o'clock.
If you can.

TED

(as she leaves)

I'll be there.

He watches her leave, checks his watch and continues drinking
his coffee.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 13

Natural & Supernatural

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - BENCH - LATER - DAY

Ted sits on a bench, open textbook on his lap. He is not
reading it.

As Students walk past...

He leans his head back slightly and closes his eyes, catching
some sunlight on his face.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ALEXANDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Alexandra is working at her desk as Ted enters and sits.

TED

How was the meeting?

ALEXANDRA

Classic academia. Do more with
less. A few new forms. But enough
about me.

(with fake sternness)

Do you or do you not believe in
angels and ghosts, Doctor Smith?

TED

Am I on trial here?

ALEXANDRA

(continuing the fake sternness)

Answer the question or be held in contempt of court.

(now pleasant)

I'm curious. And I have fifteen --

(checking watch)

fourteen -- minutes until my next appointment.

Ted settles in his chair.

TED

Okay. I think I've seen a ghost. I'm not sure I believe in visible angels. Guardian angels we can't see, maybe. But not angels flying around with wings.

Alexandra gets up with a small stack of file folders and steps over to her filing cabinet. She opens a drawer and begins filing.

ALEXANDRA

Tell me about the ghost. I don't remember you saying anything about it.

TED

It was about five years after we got divorced.

ALEXANDRA

When your Dad died.

Ted nods.

TED

Right after his funeral, I decided to take some back roads home. I don't know why. I just wanted to skip the Interstate and take the long way home.

ALEXANDRA

When did you see the ghost?

TED

It was weird. Right at the edge of town, I saw an old man standing by the side of the road, hitchhiking.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

He had what looked like an old Army duffle bag beside him.

ALEXANDRA

Your Dad had one of those bags.

TED

Yes, he did. World War II. Anyway, he -- the old guy -- stuck out his thumb. And I don't know why -- I never pick up hitchhikers -- I slowed down. When I got close, I saw that he looked exactly -- exactly -- like my father.

ALEXANDRA

Wow. Did you stop?

TED

No. It spooked me. I speeded up and kept going. In the rear-view mirror, I could see him watching me.

ALEXANDRA

Do you really think it was his ghost?

TED

I used to wonder a lot about that. If it was -- was I supposed to take him with me or leave him behind?

Alexandra finishes filing and returns to her desk.

ALEXANDRA

What do you think now?

TED

I don't know. He -- my father -- was a good, kind soul.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, he was. I liked him better than I liked my own father.

TED

I've wondered if maybe Dad was just trying to tell me to pass on by and get on with my life. He wouldn't want to haunt anyone.

Ted and Alexandra sit quietly for a beat, contemplating their separate thoughts.

ALEXANDRA

Well, life's a bitch, and then we die. I've always hated that saying. It doesn't say a thing about love.

TED

Do you still believe in love?

ALEXANDRA

Yes.

Ted waits, visibly expecting her to say more.

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

And that's all I'm going to say about it.

(official tone)

It's almost time for my next appointment, Doctor Smith.

Ted stands up to leave and strikes the pose of a 19th century actor making a grand exit from the stage.

TED

Then I bid you adieu, my dear Doctor Livingston.

He strides from her office, chin held high in an exaggerated theatrical manner, not looking back...

...as she smirks and watches him go.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - SIDEWALK - DAY

As Ted walks toward the edge of campus...

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - LOW WALL - DAY

...The Watcher sits on a wall with his book bag beside him. He is on his cell phone as he watches Ted go by a few yards away.

Frank's voice is heard.

FRANK (V.O.)

What you've sent us so far is good. It's very good.

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Frank is talking on his cell phone. His LAWYER sits and listens.

FRANK
But we need to make the case really solid.

Frank looks at his Lawyer, who responds with a barely perceptible nod.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - LOW WALL - DAY

The Watcher smiles to himself as he listens.

FRANK (V.O.)
You know what we need.

THE WATCHER
(into phone)
Yes. And you know what I need.

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Frank glances at his LAWYER and speaks quietly into his phone.

FRANK
I paid your two thousand.

INTERCUT

THE WATCHER
We're in the bonus round now.

FRANK
Get us something else that's worth it. We'll talk.

He hangs up.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - LOW WALL - DAY

The Watcher leans back in the grass, next to his book bag, and lets his cell phone rest on his chest.

THE WATCHER
(to himself)
Yes, we will, Frank.

He smiles, looking very pleased with himself as he puts his hands behind his head and relaxes.

THE WATCHER (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Yes, we will.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 14
Criminal Conversation

EXT. TACO TRAILER - ANOTHER DAY (ESTABLISHING)

CUSTOMERS are lined up at a taco trailer, buying breakfast.

Alexandra is sitting alone at a table, eating. Her back is to the line of Customers.

Ted gets his tacos and starts to walk back to his car. He spots Alexandra. Walks over to her.

TED
Doctor Livingston, I presume.

Alexandra looks startled.

ALEXANDRA
(chewing)
Hi.

TED
Mind if I sit for a minute?

ALEXANDRA
I'm eating and running.

TED
Please.

ALEXANDRA
For a minute. I'm just about to leave.

As Ted sits and unwraps his taco, a MAN, fifties, watches from a nearby table.

TED

One of students told me this is a good place.

ALEXANDRA

It's good for a quick breakfast.
(checks watch)
I better get going.

As she prepares to leave, the man who has been watching them gets up and approaches. He is holding and almost hiding a folded piece of paper. He is a PROCESS SERVER.

PROCESS SERVER

Doctor Smith? Doctor THEODORE MARTIN Smith?

TED

Yes?

PROCESS SERVER

Good morning, sir. This is for you.

He offers the piece of paper. Ted takes it.

TED

What's this?

PROCESS SERVER

Consider yourself served.

Ted looks at the paper.

TED

North Carolina? I don't know anybody there.

Alexandra looks stricken.

TED (CONT'D)

You've got the wrong Ted Smith.

Ted tries to hand back the paper, but the Process Server just smiles.

Alexandra almost looks sick now as...

...the Process Server pulls another folded piece of paper from inside his coat.

PROCESS SERVER

Doctor Alexandra Livingston.

ALEXANDRA

Yes.

PROCESS SERVER

I have one for you, too.

He hands her the subpoena, and she takes it.

PROCESS SERVER (CONT'D)

You're served.

Ted is quickly reading his subpoena.

TED

(to Process Server)

Criminal conversation? What the hell is this?

PROCESS SERVER

Sir, I have no idea. I just pick up papers and get them to the people who are supposed to get them.

(to both of them)

Have a nice day.

The Process Server leaves.

Ted looks at Alexandra.

TED

What does yours say?

ALEXANDRA

I'm sorry. Frank is suing us.

TED

For what? It's not a crime to talk.

ALEXANDRA

In North Carolina, criminal conversation is another term for adultery.

TED

Criminal conversation? That's nuts! We're in New Mexico. And we haven't done anything.

Alexandra gives him a look.

ALEXANDRA

But he's there. We have -- Frank and I -- we had our home there. That's where he's filed.

(MORE)

ALEXANDRA (CONT'D)

We've just rented apartments here.
I told you he might have me
followed.

TED

He can't stop you from seeing
people. Dammit, you're a teacher.
What does he expect?

ALEXANDRA

If he can make a judge believe I am
cheating on him, he can keep
everything and give me nothing.

TED

I'll set him straight. Give me his
phone number. I'll sue his butt
from here to California.

ALEXANDRA

Let my attorney handle it. I'll
give you his number. Don't do
anything else, Ted. I'm serious.
Promise me. Please.

TED

(reluctant)

Okay. Crap. I'm sorry.

Alexandra picks up her food and drink and throws it into a
nearby trash can.

ALEXANDRA

I have to go. But listen, Ted. I'm
very serious. From now on, we can't
be seen together. Not here, not on
campus. Don't even come to my
office. Just the acting workshop.

TED

For how long?

ALEXANDRA

I have no idea. It could be a long
time.

TED

Can I call you?

ALEXANDRA

No.

TED

What about e-mail

She shakes her head "no."

ALEXANDRA
Don't even think about me!

As she leaves, Ted watches her go.

TED
(to himself)
Right.

He folds his subpoena and stuffs it into his shirt pocket.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Conversation 15

In Passing

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Alexandra strides across campus.

Ted, sitting on a bench, watches her from a distance. He does not get up to go meet her.

The Watcher observes them both from a discreet location. He raises his digital camera, but he realizes he has no shot. He puts the camera away.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ANOTHER DAY

Ted walks toward the Drama Building.

Alexandra exits the Drama Building.

They look away from each other as they pass on the sidewalk.

The Watcher, sitting a discreet distance away, looks frustrated as he lowers his camera and telephoto lens.

INT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - HALLWAY - ANOTHER DAY

Alexandra's acting workshop door is open. Alexandra is visible inside as Students file out into the hallway.

The Watcher is seated on the floor across the hallway, as if he is waiting for the next class to begin. He appears to be checking his cell phone.

INSERT CLOSE-UP: His camera view zooms in on Alexandra as Ted walks past her. The picture is snapped. It shows no closeness between Ted and Alexandra. The picture is deleted.

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

The Watcher comes out of the Drama Building and walks a short distance away. He is seen from behind as he makes a phone call and gives frustrated gestures.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS

1. City life.
2. Ted in Georgina's room, putting flowers in a vase as she nods and gestures weakly from bed, wearing an oxygen mask.
2. Ted's car in freeway traffic.
3. Alexandra teaching in front of her class.
4. Ted and Alexandra walking across campus, widely separated.
5. The Watcher watching and holding his camera but not getting pictures. Looking frustrated.
6. Keeler and Ted performing something in front of the class.
7. Ted and Alexandra passing in hallways with just small glances toward each other as...
8. ...The Watcher watches and gets no picture.
9. Changing weather; passage of time.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Ted walks out of Georgina's room. He stands just outside the door, looking exhausted and stricken.

Georgina, in the background, appears to be asleep.

The Home Health Care Nurse gently closes the room's curtains. Now she carefully removes Georgina's oxygen mask and turns off the oxygen valve. Now she pulls up Georgina's sheet, as if adjusting it for sleep, but this time gently pulls it up over Georgina's face.

The Home Health Care Nurse turns out the light in Georgina's room and quietly closes the door as she comes out. She pauses to check on Ted.

HOME HEALTH CARE NURSE
I'm very sorry, Doctor Smith. I can stay here for a while, if you wish.

Ted gives her a sad smile.

TED
No, you have been a great comfort to her and to me. I just wish...

He chokes up and wipes his hand across his eyes.

TED (CONT'D)
I just hope she heard me say goodbye.

The Home Health Care Nurse gives him a gentle smile.

HOME HEALTH CARE NURSE
She did. She loved you dearly. And she told me many times how sure she was that you loved her.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ted enters his kitchen and sits down at a small table. The Home Health Care Nurse follows him in, discreetly watching him.

Ted pulls out his cell phone. He opens it to dial but can't bring himself to punch any buttons yet. He puts the phone down and wipes tears from his eyes.

The Home Health Care Nurse gets a drinking glass from a cabinet, fills it with water and brings it over to him.

HOME HEALTH CARE NURSE
She had a good life, Doctor Smith. And she had a good passing.

Ted drops his face into his hand and just clutches the glass of water.

The Home Health Care Nurse pulls out her cell phone.

HOME HEALTH CARE NURSE (CONT'D)
I'll make the necessary call. You can call your family when you're ready.

Ted nods without looking up. She starts dialing a number.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ANOTHER DAY

Ted, looking grim, walks across campus dressed in his business suit. This time, he is not carrying a book bag.

EXT. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

Some of Ted's classmates, including Keeler come out the front door and walk off.

Ted walks up just as Alexandra emerges from the building.

She sees...

...the look on his face.

Tears well in his eyes and flow down his cheeks.

Alexandra pulls him into a hug. He puts his face against her shoulder and visibly shakes as he cries.

She holds him tight and kisses his hair, trying to comfort him.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - AREA NEAR CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY

The Watcher alertly lifts his digital camera and telephoto lens from behind his book bag. From his angle...

CAMERA POV

...It appears to be a romantic encounter. Just as the Watcher focuses his shot and prepares to push the shutter...

...a small group of ART Students surge into his path, unaware of him and completely blocking his view with their drawing pads and bodies.

The Art Students watch and sketch as their INSTRUCTOR points out something involving a nearby tree.

The Watcher moves quickly, trying to change his angle. But by the time he reaches a clear spot and aims his camera again..

...Ted and Alexandra are gone.

The Watcher looks frustrated. He pulls out his cell phone.

From behind, he is seen talking into his phone, gesturing and shaking his head "no."

The Watcher's voice now rises just enough to be clearly heard.

THE WATCHER

(into phone)

No, listen. I've done all I'm going to do, and I've given you all you're going to get. That's right, Frank. If you want any more of my time, it'll cost you another thousand.

He reacts visibly to something he hears in response.

He SNAPS his phone shut, grabs his camera and book bag and walks away, clearly angry.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

Ends and Beginnings

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

An old and big cemetery with hundreds of headstones.

Ted is seen in the distance, walking into the cemetery.

EXT. CEMETERY - NEAR TREE - DAY

Seen from the back side of a headstone, Ted puts a single rose on the marker.

He stands back, looks at the headstone for a beat and then looks up toward the horizon.

He wipes tears from his eyes.

He sits down near the headstone and works to arrange some flowers on the grave, pulling out some wilted flowers and spreading out the fresher ones.

Later, as the sun starts to set, he walks away from the grave and goes through the cemetery toward his car.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING - ANOTHER DAY

Students carrying book bags walk past the "Administration"
sign.

INT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

A closed door is marked with a sign: "Tenure Committee
Meeting - Please Do Not Disturb".

The door opens.

Alexandra slips out and closes the door.

Alone in the hallway, she looks serious and subdued. She
blows out her breath. Now, as she walks away from the door,
she looks back, smiles broadly and does a little victory
dance.

ALEXANDRA
(to herself)
Yes!

EXT./INT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - DAY AND NIGHT

A series of campus-life shots as time flashes by: Outside on
the sidewalks; in hallways; and inside Alexandra's acting
workshop.

In the Student Union building, Students, including Ted, cram
for an examination.

On the college stage, Ted, several other Students and
Alexandra work on blocking a scene. It is not yet clear what
the play they are rehearsing.

Standing at center stage, Ted faces Alexandra and makes
dramatic gestures as he says some lines that we cannot hear.

As he finishes, Alexandra nods her head and clearly mouths
the word "Yes!" She claps and leads the other Students in a
round of applause for Ted.

Ted, looking happy, takes a sweeping bow.

As he straightens up and looks at Alexandra, she gives him a
smile and a wink that the others cannot see.

EXT. ACTING WORKSHOP THEATER - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - FOYER - NIGHT

A sign is taped to a theater door:

**"Much Ado About Nothing"
Videotaped Rehearsal
Now in Progress
Please Do NOT Enter**

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

The rehearsal is well underway. The players are not in costume but the women are wearing masks. And all have sides from the play in their hands as they speak and move.

Three video cameras are on tripods, capturing their words and movements from different angles. The CAMERA OPERATORS carefully and quietly pan their cameras to keep up with the movements.

The views change from facial close-ups to groups of characters and two-shots and three-shots

The play's DIRECTOR watches intently as...

...Ted (BENEDICK) and Alexandra (BEATRICE) now stand near each other at center stage. Beatrice is wearing a mask.

Several female Students wearing masks are in the background, talking wordlessly among themselves.

Four other Students are arrayed closer to Ted and Alexandra, playing the parts of FRIAR, LEONATO, CLAUDIO and HERO.

FRIAR
(to Benedick, Leonato,
Claudio and Hero)
Meantime let wonder seem familiar,
and to the chapel let us presently.

BENEDICK
Soft and fair, Friar.

As Friar nods...

...Benedick turns toward the masked characters.

BENEDICK (CONT'D)
Which is Beatrice?

BEATRICE
(taking off her mask)
I answer to that name. What is your
will?

BENEDICK
Do not you love me?

BEATRICE
Why no, no more than reason.

BENEDICK
Why, then your uncle and the Prince
and Claudio have been deceived;
they swore you did.

BEATRICE
Do you not love me?

BENEDICK
Troth no, no more than reason.

BEATRICE
Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and
Ursula are much deceived; for they
did swear you did.

BENEDICK
They swore that you were almost
sick for me.

BEATRICE
They swore that you were well-nigh
dead for me.

BENEDICK
'Tis no such matter. Then you do
not love me?

BEATRICE
No, truly, but in friendly
recompense.

The view shifts briefly to Leonato, Claudio and Hero. As they
begin to speak their lines...

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - FOYER - NIGHT

...The theater's empty foyer suddenly gains a visitor. The
Watcher slips in through the building's front door.

The dialogue spoken by Leonato, Claudio and Hero is audible in the background as The Watcher quietly walks over to the door with the "Please Do NOT Enter" sign and eases it open.

He slips inside the darkened theater -- only the stage lights are on -- and ducks behind some seat backs as...

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Leonato, Claudio and Hero continue speaking and moving, and Benedick, Beatrice and all others on the stage watch and react to them.

LEONATO
(gesturing toward
Benedick)
Come, cousin, I am sure you love
the gentleman.

Claudio gestures toward Beatrice and pulls out a piece of paper. As he speaks...

CLAUDIO
And I'll be sworn upon't that he
loves her, for here's a paper
written in his hand, a halting
sonnet of his own pure brain,
fashioned to Beatrice.

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - HIDING AREA - NIGHT

...The Watcher readies and steadies a camera with a telephoto lens and focuses first on Hero and then on Ted and Alexandra (Benedick and Beatrice) as...

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

...Hero pulls out a piece of paper and speaks.

HERO
And here's another writ in...
(gesturing toward
Beatrice)
...my cousin's hand, stolen from
her pocket, containing her
affection toward Benedick.

Benedick reacts and reaches out to take Beatrice's hands as...

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - HIDING AREA - NIGHT

...The Watcher quietly clicks shots that only show Ted and Alexandra together, seemingly with no one else around.

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Benedick continues to hold Beatrice's hands, moving her closer as he speaks.

BENEDICK

A miracle! Here's our own hands
against our hearts. Come, I will
have thee; but, by this light, I
take thee for pity.

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - HIDING AREA - NIGHT

The Watcher keeps clicking photos of Ted and Alexandra as...

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

They continue holding hands and move closer toward embrace.

BEATRICE

I would not deny you; but, by this
good day, I yield upon great
persuasion; and partly to save your
life, for I was told you were in a
consumption.

Benedick pulls her to him.

BENEDICK

Peace! I will stop your mouth!

He kisses her, and she swoons in his arms.

There is a sudden commotion at the back of the darkened theater as a door LOUDLY OPENS and CLOSES.

All on stage look toward the noise. The Director SHOUTS:

DIRECTOR

This is a closed rehearsal!

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - HIDING AREA - NIGHT

The Watcher is gone.

INT. CAMPUS THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Ted and Alexandra are still holding their embrace, but are now their real, less certain, selves again as...

...The Director tries to get the play rehearsal back into motion. He looks toward another actor, DON PEDRO.

DIRECTOR

Okay, Don Pedro, pick it up at "How dost thou, Benedick the married man?" Places, everyone. Begin!

Don Pedro starts saying his line.

DON PEDRO

How dost thou, Benedick the married man?

CUT TO:

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

The Watcher's photographs showing Ted and Alexandra together are SLAPPED DOWN one after another on a conference table...by Frank's Lawyer.

Ted, Alexandra and their now-mutual Lawyer are standing close to the conference table. They exchange glances and looks of surprise as the photographs are arrayed.

Frank is standing across the table from them, near his Lawyer, looking smug.

Frank's Lawyer keeps several photographs close to his chest, image side turned toward him as he finishes putting down the first batch of pictures.

FRANK'S LAWYER

As you see, we have considerable proof of an ongoing relationship between you, Doctor Livingston, and you, Doctor Smith.

Alexandra's and Ted's Lawyer looks at the pictures skeptically and dismisses them.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER

These prove nothing. They show two adults engaged in nothing more than innocent friendship and innocent conversation.

Frank's Lawyer scoffs.

FRANK'S LAWYER
Au contraire, my friend. A North Carolina judge will find these photos very compelling.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER
Only if you have bribed him.

Frank's Lawyer reacts with visible anger.

FRANK'S LAWYER
Watch your tongue, counselor.
That's a very serious charge.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER
So is what you are alleging, with no proof.

FRANK'S LAWYER
Oh, we have proof. We have several more -- more telling -- photographs. Also, we know your clients have a previous sexual history.

Alexandra and Ted exchange nervous looks.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER
They were divorced nearly thirty years ago.

FRANK'S LAWYER
It is a well-established fact that divorce is never a barrier to continued sexual relationship.

TED
Nothing has happened!

Alexandra tries to stop Ted, but he continues to blurt out.

TED (CONT'D)
It's been three decades since we've had sex. With each other.

Frank's Attorney smirks. Frank smiles, clearly enjoying watching Ted flounder and squirm.

Alexandra's and Ted's Attorney pulls Ted aside and speaks to him quietly but insistently.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER
Let me do the talking, please,
Doctor Smith.

Alexandra glares at Ted as he takes his position again beside their Lawyer.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER (CONT'D)
(to Frank's Lawyer)
You don't have enough to prove
adultery --

FRANK'S LAWYER
(interrupting)
Criminal conversation.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER
Whatever the hell North Carolina
calls adultery -- you don't have
enough to prove it in any
reasonable court.

Frank's Lawyer looks smug.

FRANK'S LAWYER
Reasonable doubt. That's all we
have to raise. And we have more
than enough evidence for that. Care
to see a few more samples?

Without waiting for an answer, Frank's Lawyer puts a few more photographs on the table and turns them up, but keeps one photo facedown.

Alexandra's and Ted's Lawyer picks up one of the upturned photos.

HIS POV

The photo shows Ted and Alexandra in an emotional embrace -- the moment when Ted told Alexandra that Georgina had died.

Frank flashes an arrogant smile.

Ted moves to protest, but Alexandra touches his shoulder and shakes her head no. She gives their Lawyer a slight nod.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER
So, what are you proposing,
counselor?

Frank's Lawyer looks smugly victorious.

FRANK'S LAWYER

There is no need go through the time and expense of taking this to court. We can settle this here and now and drop the criminal conversation portions from the divorce proceedings.

ALEXANDRA'S AND TED'S LAWYER

Cut to the chase, counselor.

Frank's Lawyer pulls out a document and hands copies to Ted, Alexandra and their Lawyer.

FRANK'S LAWYER

It's very simple and very fair.

Ted and Alexandra flip through it as their Lawyer quickly scans its pages.

FRANK'S LAWYER (CONT'D)

If your clients will concede in writing that they have engaged in criminal conversation...

TED

(interrupting)

We have not!

FRANK'S LAWYER

(ignoring Ted)

...my client, Frank Livingston, generously will allow Doctor Alexandra Livingston to keep fifteen percent of the assets she would have received in an uncontested divorce.

Alexandra GASPS.

ALEXANDRA

Fifteen percent? I bought the house! I bought the land! I paid for the landscaping! Frank bought nothing but some sod and a privacy fence!

Frank smiles.

FRANK

(to Alexandra)

The law, dear, says I am the injured party.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Your adultery will cost you everything -- one hundred percent of your share and maybe more -- if you try to contest me in court.

FRANK'S LAWYER

(to Alexandra's and Ted's Lawyer)

I recommend you take the deal.

He indicates the photograph that remains face down.

FRANK'S LAWYER (CONT'D)

We have admissible proof of your clients' infidelity.

Ted can't contain himself.

TED

No, you don't. You can't possibly have something if nothing has happened.

Frank's Lawyer looks to Frank. Frank grins and nods. Frank's Lawyer flips over the final photograph.

It's a telephoto close-up of Ted kissing Alexandra -- Benedick kissing Beatrice -- in rehearsal of Much Ado About Nothing.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE LAW OFFICE - DAY

Ted and Alexandra emerge, LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY.

Their Lawyer follows, looking very bemused.

Alexandra and Ted speak with melodramatic gestures as they LAUGH and walk.

ALEXANDRA

Oh, Benedick, Benedick, wherefore art thou, Benedick!

TED

Peace! I will stop your mouth! With a lawsuit!

Alexandra and Ted keep LAUGHING as they leave.

Behind them, in the background, Frank storms out into the hallway and watches them go.

The Watcher suddenly appears out of the shadows and stands beside Frank. The Watcher holds out his hand to be paid.

Frank SLUGS The Watcher, knocking him to the floor, and stalks back inside his Lawyer's office.

EXT. CITY AREA - CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL - ANOTHER DAY

Ted and Alexandra walk across campus carrying to-go cups of coffee.

They stop and sit on a bench and look contemplative, lost in their separate thoughts as they watch City life go by.

Finally, Alexandra looks at Ted.

ALEXANDRA

I can't give you any answers yet.

TED

I know that. Not until after your divorce is final.

ALEXANDRA

Maybe not even then.

TED

I know that, too.

He takes a sip of his coffee.

TED (CONT'D)

I miss Georgina. And the end of mourning is a long way ahead. I thought I would be one who died first.

Alexandra smiles and briefly squeezes his hand.

ALEXANDRA

Well, here we are. At least nobody's spying on us now.

TED

Just each of our grown kids.

ALEXANDRA

And our grandkids.

TED

And our friends and assorted relatives.

ALEXANDRA

And my co-workers, supervisors and students.

TED

And my patients.

ALEXANDRA

And pollsters.

TED

And spy satellites.

ALEXANDRA

And God.

TED

If He's up there.

ALEXANDRA

If She's up there.

Ted looks up toward the sky.

TED

Is that all that's stopping us?

They look at each other and LAUGH.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS WITH UPTEMPO MUSIC

1. Alexandra is animated and looks happy and relaxed as she teaches her class.

2. Ted and Keeler stage a mock, overly dramatic fist fight in front of the class as Students and Alexandra LAUGH and APPLAUD.

3. Alexandra, Ted, and other Students are at a table in the Student Union building. They enjoy a lighthearted moment as Keeler stands up and does a comic dance around part of the table.

4. As Keeler continues his dance in the background, Ted catches Alexandra's eye. She gives him a questioning look. He winks at her. She smiles at him and returns the wink.

5. They stay where they are.

FADE OUT.

THE END