GOOD SESSION (PILOT)

by

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Revised Network Draft

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. WAITING ROOM - THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON A FISH TANK. Slowly pull back until the reflections of JOEL and LINDSAY can be seen in the glass.

JOEL (30's; handsome; curious; people pleaser) holds a tray of 4 Starbucks Coffees on his lap. LINDSAY (30's; beautiful; super driven, hyper-focused) types furiously on her Blackberry. Lindsay wears a business suit; Joel sneakers, chinos and a loosened tie.

JOEL
I could stare at fish all day.

LINDSAY
She's late.

JOEL (CONT'D)
It's so relaxing, watching them swim around and around. Do you think they're equally fascinated by us?

LINDSAY
(little laugh)
I doubt it.
(then)
Maybe she's waiting for us to come in. I'll knock.

JOEL
No! Do not knock! That's rude!

Lindsay stands up, approaches the door. Joel rises to block her path.

LINDSAY
Honey, it's after four. I have a 5:30 conference call. It's not a big deal.

JOEL
We probably got the time wrong. Let's get out of here. We have coffee, let's grab a scone and make an afternoon of it.

Just then, the door opens and a COUPLE walks out. The WOMAN is bawling, mascara streams down her face. The MAN averts all eye contact, head bowed, as he heads for the exit doing the couples counseling '*walk of shame...*'

Joel looks terrified. Then, ELLEN (40's) appears in the doorway, pleasant smile.

ELLEN
Lindsay? Joel? Please come in.

She motions for them to enter. As they do...

LINDSAY
(quietly)
It's going to be fine. No matter what is said in there, remember, I love you.

Lindsay kisses Joel and enters the office.

JOEL
What the hell does that mean?

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The office is modern and sparse. Very Scandinavian. Pictures on the walls, but nothing personal.

Joel and Lindsay sit side by side on the mid-century couch, Ellen in an Eames chair. She has a soft appearance, someone you want to like you, but she plays it close to the vest, divulging nothing.

ELLEN
(re: 4 coffees)
I see someone's thirsty.

JOEL
I didn't know what you like so I brought options. I have a Chai latte? An Americano?

LINDSAY
This is Joel trying to get you on his side.

Ellen nods, getting it.

JOEL
That's ridiculous. I was going anyway.

ELLEN
Thank you, but I'm not going to drink them.

JOEL
If you change your mind, need a little pick me up--

LINDSAY
Joel--
(her phone vibrates)
I'm so sorry, I'll just be one second.

JOEL
Honey, really? I thought you shut off your phone?

LINDSAY
That was the Blackberry. There's a crisis with our Asian office.

As Ellen takes all this in, Lindsay answers the phone, begins speaking in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

JOEL
(aside, to Ellen)
She speaks conversational Mandarin. Rosetta Stone.

LINDSAY
(hanging up)
Actually, that was Cantonese. I apologize. So, where were we?

ELLEN
You tell me. How can I help you two?

LINDSAY
Well, Joel and I have been together on and off since college. We've been married for three years, happily, but we're at a crossroads, which is why we're in therapy.

JOEL
Whoa... we're not <u>in</u> therapy. We're here for one session.

Ellen subtly raises an eyebrow: One session?

JOEL (CONT'D)
Nothing against therapy, we just don't really need it. Unlike that other couple who left. Oof.

Hearing this, Ellen *clicks* her pen and jots something down in her book. Joel notices this, then explains...

JOEL (CONT'D)
I don't know anything about them. Could have been tears of joy... Or a death... I just meant this is elective therapy.

ELLEN
Duly noted. So tell me about this crossroads.

LINDSAY
We've been talking about starting a family, but I just got a new promotion, which means more travel -- I'm just not sure now is the right time.

JOEL
So you take the kid to Shanghai for a few weeks. It's an adventure--

LINDSAY
It's not as simple as that. You need childcare, shots, twenty hour plane trip with an infant--

ELLEN
Why don't we hold these thoughts for a moment. Let's start at the beginning. I want to know more about the history here. When did you two fall in love?

JOEL
Wow, that's going all the way back. You don't want to just focus on why we're here today?

ELLEN
Joel, for me to best help you figure out where you're going, I need to know where you've been.

JOEL
Okay. Seems like a lot to squeeze into an hour, but you're the professional.
(to Lindsay)
Should I go or do you want to tell her?

LINDSAY
I'm not totally sure what you're going to say.

JOEL
That's true. I guess we've never really discussed *the moment*.

They're smiling at each other. It's sweet.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Okay. I'll go. It was junior year of college I was registering for classes...

INT. COLLEGE REGISTRATION - FLASHBACK - 2000 - DAY

Joel, 13 years ago. Hair shaggier, his grunge look. He sits across the desk from a humorless REGISTRATION WOMAN (50's). She's hidden behind a Dell desktop. Seems like they've been at it for a while. They both sip coffee.

REGISTRATION WOMAN
I appreciate the coffee.

JOEL
Please, I was going anyway.

REGISTRATION WOMAN
But, I really need to help other students.

JOEL
I'm sorry this is taking a while. There's just too many interesting options.
(thumbs through catalogue)
How about Poly Sci with Professor Beyser? I love politics. Who knows, maybe someday I'll become president. You can say you were there when it all began.

REGISTRATION WOMAN
(deadpan)
I'll expect a cabinet position.

From the NEXT PARTITION OVER -- a voice rings out.

LINDSAY (O.S.)
Sorry I'm late. My squash match went an extra set. But I bageled her in the third. Yay!

Joel glances under the partition to SEE -- a pair of ridiculously toned legs. A TROPHY is placed on the ground beside a squash bag.

And we INTERCUT WITH: THE NEXT PARTITION

Lindsay, still in her squash outfit, hair pulled back with a scrunchie, passes a REGISTRATION MAN a document.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
I took the liberty of typing up my class schedule. The courses highlighted in red are my first choice and blue are back-up.

JOEL
(whispers to Registration Woman)
Back-ups? She's really got it together.

REGISTRATION MAN
I'm sorry, but it looks like Professor Beyser's class just filled up.

LINDSAY
What! I need that class. I'm a double major and it's credited for both degrees. Please, you have to squeeze me in. It's supposed to be the hardest class on campus -- twenty percent of the students fail out in the first two weeks anyway.

Joel's eyes go wide. He speaks through a small opening in the partition, can't really see what she looks like.

JOEL
Um... excuse me. Sorry. I couldn't help but overhear. I registered for Beyser's class, but my schedule permits some wiggle room. You can have my spot.

LINDSAY
Seriously? Thank you, thank you.

JOEL
My pleasure. Out of curiosity, what were your back-up classes?

LINDSAY
What's your major?

JOEL
It's being hammered down as we speak.
I took Marine Biology, always been fascinated by fish. Then I tried History, but I found it very depressing because, you know, everyone's dead. I dabbled in Eastern Philosophy but--

LINDSAY
(chuckling)
Alright, just stop, stop. Close your eyes. What does your tombstone say?

Joel smiles. He likes this kind of thinking. Complies.

JOEL
Here lies Joel Moss, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, great-great grandfather. I plan on sticking around for a while.

Lindsay comes around the corner and Joel opens his eyes--sees her for the first time. He's immediately taken.

LINDSAY
Is there anything else you want out of life?

JOEL
(serious)
I want to make a difference.

LINDSAY
(smiles)
Great. You want to change the world?

JOEL
Hmm... more like, I want to change someone's world. Then, maybe they'll change the world and give me a shout-out.

LINDSAY
(intrigued)
So, you want to be the gay drama teacher Tom Hanks thanked at the Oscars?

JOEL
In a way, yes. I'd be comfortable watching from the sidelines knowing I helped someone achieve greatness.

LINDSAY
(taking this in)
That's actually kind of cool. Okay. I got it. High school guidance counselor.

JOEL
Mmmm, by high school I feel the mold has been cast--

LINDSAY
Middle school.

JOEL
That could work.

LINDSAY
Then, it's settled. Enjoy summers off.

They share a smile.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Have a nice life, Joel Moss.

And with that, Lindsay flings her squash bag over her shoulder and leaves. Joel watches her go, smitten.

REGISTRATION WOMAN
So not president?

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

JOEL
In ten seconds she figured out everything I wanted in life.

Lindsay smiles at Joel. Touched.

ELLEN
So you're actually a middle school guidance counselor?

JOEL
Yep. P.S. 124 in the Bronx.

LINDSAY
He's great at his job. The kids dedicated the yearbook to him three years running.

JOEL
I feel like they're gonna go for the chess coach this year.

ELLEN
(pushing on)
So Lindsay, is that when you fell in love with Joel?

Joel squeezes her hand. Smiles, confidently.

LINDSAY
No. For me it was at the Taj Mahal.

ELLEN
I can understand that. India is a magical place.

LINDSAY
Not, India. Atlantic City.

Joel's smile fades. His body tenses up.

JOEL
You have got to be kidding me! That was like two years into our relationship? I just told you I fell in love with you the moment we met!

ELLEN
Joel, you've had the floor. I'd like to hear from Lindsay now.

LINDSAY
We were there for Joel's father's third... no fourth wedding.

ELLEN
Hmm. Interesting...

Ellen clicks her pen. Writes in her pad.

LINDSAY
Joel was uncharacteristically drunk.

INT. TAJ MAHAL BALLROOM - FLASHBACK - (2002) - NIGHT

A small, cheap ballroom with ornate decor. Slot machines RING in the distance. About FIFTY GUESTS in attendance. Joel's father STANLEY MOSS (50's) spins his new bride, JANET FONG (40's) across the dance floor as an Asian band plays a Korean version of "CELEBRATION."

Joel and Lindsay sit at a table (Lindsay's hair resembles whatever Jennifer Aniston's was like in 2002.) Joel downs one of several tequila shots he has on the table.

LINDSAY
Honey, why are you drinking so much?

JOEL
We tried the third wedding sober, remember how that went? Come on, have a shot with me.

LINDSAY
I can't. I have that job interview in the city tomorrow morning. Only your dad would choose to get married on a Tuesday in February--

JOEL
You know how much this ballroom rents for on a weekend? This kind of class doesn't come cheap.

Joel motions to a tired-looking WAITER who dumps a bag of frozen SHRIMP into a serving dish.

Stanley Moss takes the microphone and addresses the room.

STANLEY MOSS
Can we have a round of applause for my child bride everyone? Janet Fong! Light of my life, my little kimchi dumpling.
(some awkward looks, Stan continues)
Now, I'd like to introduce you to my best man, best friend and the only decent thing to come out of my first marriage... No. You know what, I'm not gonna go there tonight.

JOEL
(checks his pockets)
Crap, I can't find my speech.

LINDSAY
(helping him look)
Did you check your jacket pocket?

JOEL
Nothing! Maybe I left it in the cab!

LINDSAY
It's going to be fine. Just give the same speech you gave at his last wedding. No one's going to remember.

JOEL
Of course they will! It was eight months ago!

LINDSAY
Fair point.
(then)
Freestyle it, you'll be great.

STANLEY MOSS
Give it up for my beautiful son, Joel Moss.

Lindsay squeezes his hand as an anxious Joel grabs a champagne glass, makes his way to the dance floor. Stanley kisses him on the lips, withdraws, smacks Joel on the butt, coach-style, as he passes him the mic.

STANLEY MOSS (CONT'D)
Kill it.

Joel, wobbly and drunk, stares into the crowd.

JOEL
So, here we are again...

Joel SIGHS loudly into the mic.

JOEL (CONT'D)
All right, look, can we just cut through it here? We all know this marriage isn't going to work. I mean they met two months ago at a Pai Gow table, come on.

The room goes dead silent. Lindsay braces herself, preparing for the worst.

JOEL (CONT'D)
But that's kind of the beauty of it. See, neither one is thinking rationally, or else they wouldn't have had us schlep out to Atlantic City on a Tuesday in the dead of winter, because love isn't rational, isn't something you plan on or control, it's something that hits you and it may only last a second or a lifetime, or in the case of my dad's last marriage, four days, but when it happens you grab it.

Joel looks at Lindsay and smiles. He raises his glass. In turn, she grabs a shot glass, holds it up...

JOEL (CONT'D)
So here's to this moment. This beautiful, fleeting, and deeply misguided moment. Mazel tov!

Joel downs his champagne. Stanley, arms open, staring at Joel: *What the fuck?* Janet Fong, seething.

But not Lindsay. She's been hit.

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - DAY

LINDSAY
It was awesome. He just spoke from the heart. And what he said made me chill out and actually have a great time. Which is pretty much what he's been doing for me ever since.

JOEL
Thank you.
(then, quietly)
You didn't love me for two years?

LINDSAY
Sweetie, that's not what I said. She asked about the specific moment when we--

JOEL
I'm just doing the math here. We started seeing each other a couple times a week. Two years later we're living together...
(MORE)

JOEL (CONT'D)
that's like four hundred dates where you were on the fence?

LINDSAY
I love you now. The hour's almost up. I want to hear Ellen's thoughts.

JOEL
Fine.
(to Ellen)
That's our story. What do you think? Should we have a kid now or not?

ELLEN
That's something you'll need to decide for yourselves. What I can tell you is the more work you put in, the faster the results.

LINDSAY
Whatever it takes. Right, honey?

JOEL
What are we talking about? Pushing through to dinner? Going another forty-five?

ELLEN
Actually, until we get to the bottom of this issue, I'd like to see you twice a week.

JOEL
What?!

LINDSAY
Joel, we just agreed, whatever it takes.
(then, to Ellen)
Can we do one day early? Like 8 o'clock?

ELLEN
No, but I do have a 9 a.m. available on Saturdays if you're okay over a weekend.

LINDSAY
Great. I'm training for the marathon, so I can get a run in before. Honey?

JOEL
You're telling me there's no version of us figuring this out tonight?
(off Lindsay's look)
What? We have coffee?

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

Joel and Lindsay walk towards the front door of a comfortable home in Bronxville, NY. Balloons line the walkway. Lindsay holds a GIFT BAG from a toy store.

JOEL
It's bad enough she wants to see us twice a week, but if I'm going to agree to this, I don't want anyone to know.

LINDSAY
I think you're being a little bit crazy and... sure, I won't say anything.

They get to the front door where a hand-drawn sign in kid's writing reads: "**Happy Birthday, Evan!**" Lindsay's about to enter when Joel stops her.

JOEL
I'm serious. Not a word to Andrea, Seth, your sister... I bet you that annoying Karen Misher will be here. Believe me, if she finds out, it'll spread like wildfire to our entire--
(off Lindsay's look)
What?

LINDSAY
(feels a little guilty)
She's the one who referred me to Ellen.

Off Joel's unhappy look...

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

CLOSE ON KAREN MISHER -- she's that intrusive, annoying friend we all have.

KAREN MISHER
Soooo? How was therapy?

WIDEN TO REVEAL Joel and Lindsay at a FIVE YEAR OLD'S birthday party. Screaming KIDS play in the pool, there's a FACE-PAINTER, a guy making BALLOON ANIMALS.

LINDSAY
It was good. But, let's just keep it between us, okay Karen?

KAREN MISHER
(eyeing Joel)
I get it. Mitch didn't want anyone to know when we started going. I don't know what your issues are, but ours were sexual in nature.

JOEL
("that's my cue")
Alrighty. I'm gonna go find Seth.

As he exits, Lindsay subtly grabs his wrist. Hard.

LINDSAY
I'll come with you, honey.

JOEL
(prying her fingers off)
No, no, you guys catch up. Karen, I'm sure Lindsay would love to hear more details about you and Mitch.

Lindsay shoots daggers at Joel who breaks free of her kung-fu grip and exits. Karen turns to Lindsay...

KAREN MISHER
Let's just say, Mitchell has an insatiable sexual appetite.

Karen motions across the lawn to her husband, MITCH MISHER (a Paul Scheer type). He has the thousand yard stare of someone who may have been lobotomized.

LINDSAY
(shocked)
Really?

KAREN MISHER
Big problem. It's not his fault. Look at him, he's like a primate.

ON Mitch Misher, staring off while eating a banana.

KAREN MISHER (CONT'D)
He's got the deep forehead. Hairy knuckles. Hunched over slightly. Same look as Eliot Spitzer. They're wonderful men but they can't control themselves because they haven't fully evolved.
(MORE)

KAREN MISHER (CONT'D)
But Ellen got him under control. Trust me, the woman is a miracle worker.

DIFFERENT AREA OF THE BACKYARD

Joel approaches SETH FISHER (early 30's), Joel's best friend and former college roommate, as he mans a giant gas grill. Seth has the disheveled, out-of-shape vibe of a man who hasn't been single in years. He wears Crocs and a personalized apron.

Seth's THREE YOUNG KIDS, also wearing personalized aprons, assist their dad with his grilling.

JOEL
(to EVAN, 5)
What's up birthday boy?!

Joel extends his fist for a pound when Seth interjects...

SETH
Joel, don't distract him, he's working. Evan, come on, you gotta keep churning the rotisserie!

Evan coughs as he holds a bandana to his mouth while smoke from the grill billows in his face. The other two kids, LILY (4), stirs the sauce, while MAX (7), face slathered in BBQ sauce, brushes sauce on a rack of ribs.

LILY
My wrist hurts, Daddy.

SETH
That means you're doing it right, sweetie. Change directions now.

Seth's no-nonsense wife, ANDREA, storms over.

ANDREA
Seth, what the hell is the matter with you? It's a birthday party. Give the kids a break.

SETH
Honey, I need the manpower. There are children their age in Chile working in coal mines right now.

ANDREA
That's why we live in a suburb of New York. Let Joel help you.

SETH
No, he just started therapy. I need someone whose head is in the game.

JOEL
Are you kidding me? You know too?

ANDREA
Karen Misher Tweeted out something about you and Lindsay seeing her shrink.
(off Joel's look)
Relax, she only has like six followers. Come on kids, get your swimsuits on.

Andrea exits with the kids as Seth turns to Joel...

SETH
You should have come to me before agreeing to this therapy thing.

JOEL
You think I wanted to go? I agreed to one session, now I'm locked into twice a week.

SETH
Joel, would you say that Andrea and I have a great marriage?

JOEL
(thinks for a beat, then)
No.

SETH
Would you say that we have an above average marriage?

JOEL
No.

SETH
(motions to his marinade)
Would you say that I have a successful sauce?

JOEL
Yes.

SETH
A sauce, Joel, requires patience, care and interest...
(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)
none of which I have in my marriage. Because marriage isn't about those things. It's about distraction.

JOEL
I have no idea what you're talking about.

SETH
Tee-ball practice. Birthday parties. In-law visits. The key to a successful relationship is to fill your life with anything and everything that can prevent you and your spouse from sitting down and communicating with each other.

JOEL
Don't take this the wrong way, but while I admire your sauce, I'm not looking to replicate your marriage.

SETH
I see. So, how was therapy?

JOEL
(sighs)
Not good. I found out that Lindsay wasn't actually in love with me for the first two years we were together.

SETH
And that's my point. Now you can never un-know that. It's exactly the type of info that should never get out. If Andrea knew half the stuff I was thinking I'd be in prison.

We hear a SCREAM and a ruckus in the pool where his kids are swimming. Seth notices a brown stain in the water.

SETH (CONT'D)
Relax, everyone! It's not diarrhea. Just pulled pork.

BACK ON LINDSAY AND KAREN MISHER

Lindsay looks shell-shocked by whatever she's been hearing from Karen Misher.

KAREN MISHER
...he wanted it in restaurants. During movies. Inappropriate ones too. The man tried to have me midway through “LINCOLN”. The beard made him nuts.

Lindsay downs a glass of white wine when her phone rings.

LINDSAY
Sorry, this is my sister. Thanks for sharing, Karen. It was great running into you.
(turns away, into phone)
Hey, where are you?

We hear Lindsay’s sister, ABBY, on the other line.

ABBY (O.S.)
I’m by the side of the house, I’m in a romper and I need a pair of Andrea’s shoes.

LINDSAY
What?

ABBY
Just do it! Maybe a wedge. Preferably tan. Size 7, though I could maybe squeeze into a 6. Bring options.

Lindsay shakes her head and exhales -- it’s clear this type of thing happens a lot with her sister.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Holding several pairs of Andrea’s SHOES, Lindsay steps out of a side door revealing ABBY, her older sister (by 18 months) anxiously waiting. Where Lindsay is grounded, Abby is all over the place -- a lovable mess.

LINDSAY
What happened to you?

ABBY
I had a date last night, really nice guy from OKCupid. We go back to my apartment, we’re getting into it, and then he starts going down on my--

LINDSAY
Whoa. I don't need to hear every detail.

ABBY
I was just going to say he started licking my feet.

LINDSAY
Oh. And also... uch.

ABBY
It was fine. No surprise. He mentioned he was a foot man in his profile.

LINDSAY
Why would you still go out with him?

ABBY
Honey, this is dating in the modern era. Everybody's got their little quirks. But he's sucking my toes for like 45 minutes straight -- literally stripping the pedicure off the nail and... I guess I fell asleep. I woke up this morning, he was gone. And so were all my shoes.

LINDSAY
Abby, you've got to report him to the police.

ABBY
No, I can't face that desk sergeant again. Terrible kisser. I stopped returning his texts.

As Abby goes to try on one of Andrea's shoes, we notice a tattoo on her ankle that reads: "Lonnie."

ABBY (CONT'D)
(trying on shoes)
So? What happened with the therapist? Should I get ready to become an aunt?

LINDSAY
Still figuring it out. We're going to start seeing her twice a week.

ABBY
Joel agreed to that? I thought he was so set on going one time.

LINDSAY
I think he realizes how helpful it can be.

ABBY
Come on, you know he's just doing it because he loves you.

ACROSS THE YARD

Lindsay spots Joel, who's gotten his face painted like a LION -- he looks both fierce and ridiculous. He chases kids around the yard ROARING at them. They love it.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I'm telling you Lindsay, of the many ways in which I resent my younger sister, the fact that you landed a guy like Joel might be the biggest one of all.

Off Lindsay, taking this in...

EXT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - ESTABLISHING - THAT NIGHT

We MOVE IN on a third story window.

INT. JOEL AND LINDSAY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A small but comfortable one-bedroom. Exposed brick, thoughtfully decorated -- more Lindsay's style than Joel's but he's got some of his touches too -- collection of old vinyl, his bicycle mounted to the wall.

As we PAN ACROSS a bookshelf, passing photos of Joel and Lindsay's life together, we land on their WEDDING PHOTO complete with groomsmen (Seth and others) and bridesmaids (Abby, Andrea, etc.) There's a jolt and the wedding photo topples over.

WIDER -- having just walked in, Lindsay pushes Joel against a wall, kissing him. He's still got his lion face make-up on.

JOEL
It's the king of the jungle vibe, right? I'm so happy I didn't let that face-painter talk me into being a Dalmation.

LINDSAY
(mid-kiss)
I get that things have been a little stressful the past few weeks... I just want you to know, I love you.

JOEL
I love you too.

More kissing.

JOEL (CONT'D)
I mean, your love is a bit fresher than mine, given what we learned in therapy--

LINDSAY
(laughing it off)
Would you come on...

JOEL
I was thinking about it on the ride home. You had so many chances to fall in love with me in those two years. That trip to South America. Remember, you sprained your ankle and I carried you to the top of Machu Picchu. Or how about when your grandfather was recovering from hip surgery... I literally gave the man a sponge bath. Nothing?

LINDSAY
That was a sweet... and somewhat awkward moment, but we were in college, I wasn't thinking about love. We weren't even exclusive that entire time.

Lindsay leans in to kiss him again. Joel retreats.

JOEL
What do you mean, we weren't exclusive?

LINDSAY
Honey, I took that semester abroad in Florence. I thought we both agreed we'd see other people.

JOEL
Uh, no, I never agreed to that.

LINDSAY
I remember vividly, in the airport before I left you said something like “Have fun.”

JOEL
Yeah, I took an improv class and went on a ski trip with Seth. What did you take *have fun* to mean?

LINDSAY
This is ridiculous. It was twelve years ago.

JOEL
I know, who cares? Since it’s come up, what, you went on a few dates?

LINDSAY
I... had a fling with my Art History professor.

JOEL
I knew there was something different about our sex life when you came back! You were much more adventurous. I thought it was because you missed me.

LINDSAY
I did...

JOEL
And? What?!

LINDSAY
Nothing.

JOEL
(smiles)
Honey, we’re already having the conversation. Like you said, it was twelve years ago.

He shrugs. *I can handle it*. Lindsay sighs, about to speak...

INT. ELLEN’S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON ELLEN

ELLEN
So it was in Italy when you finally understood what an orgasm was.

We REVERSE onto Lindsay and a pained-looking Joel.

LINDSAY
I thought I knew before, but--

ELLEN
No, I get it. It's a game-changer.

Joel buries his head in his hands.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
Joel, there's no reason to feel ashamed. Unsatisfying sex is an extremely common thing we talk about in here.

LINDSAY
Just to clarify, it's very satisfying now. This was a million years ago.
(turns to Joel, smiles)
I mean, honey, based on how we started, I think we're doing great.

ELLEN
How did you start?

JOEL
(unhappily resigned)
Here we go...

INT. LINDSAY'S DORM ROOM - FLASHBACK - NIGHT (2000)

The lights are dimmed. A candle glows softly. "Drops of Jupiter" by Train plays softly on Lindsay's CD player.

A shirtless Joel, pants around his ankles rolls off of a confused Lindsay and simply states:

JOEL
I am so sorry.

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ELLEN
I'm not sure I'm following. So it was just an awkward first attempt at intercourse?

LINDSAY
I don't know that you could technically call what happened intercourse.

Joel steams silently on the couch.

ELLEN
I still don't...

JOEL
I Lewinsky'd her!

Ellen CHORTLES.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Yup! I did it on her dress, okay?! Laugh it up!

LINDSAY
No one's laughing at you, honey.

JOEL
She just did!

ELLEN
No, I simply chortled at your phraseology.

JOEL
Why are we doing this? Before we came here, I was perfectly content thinking that you may have both loved me and been sexually satisfied for the entirety of our relationship!

LINDSAY
Joel, I do love you and you heard me tell Ellen our sex life is great now!

JOEL
(to Ellen)
Then aside from the obvious entertainment value, what's the point of digging up all this stupid stuff?

Joel stands up, in a rage. Ellen calmly takes him in.

JOEL (CONT'D)
We came to you with one simple question: Should we bring a child into this world now or not?! And you've turned it into this whole big thing! And by the way, I've seen some of your miracle work. Mitch and Karen Misher? I don't know what kind of Freudian voodoo spell you cast on him, but this was a vibrant, energetic, vivacious man! Now he slumps around like something out of THE WALKING DEAD! You're not gonna "Mitch Misher" me, sweetheart!
(turns to Lindsay)
Honey, lets go!

LINDSAY
Joel, there's still fourteen minutes left in our session.

Joel stands there awkwardly, not quite sure what to do.

JOEL
Well, now I'm committed to this path. I've lost all credibility here. I'll meet you downstairs.

And he exits.

INT. ELLEN'S WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As soon as he leaves, Joel stops short because sitting on the waiting room couch are... MITCH AND KAREN MISHER.

JOEL
Oh, hey guys.

KAREN MISHER
Door's not that thick. We heard everything.

JOEL
Sorry, Mitch.

Mitch shrugs. As Joel slinks out of the waiting room...

KAREN MISHER
BTW, if you two break up, we're on Team Lindsay!

<u>END OF ACT TWO</u>

ACT THREE

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

Joel stands on the street holding a bag from Banana Republic. Lindsay charges out of the building, pissed.

LINDSAY
You went to Banana Republic?!

JOEL
I had fourteen minutes. You know I need socks.
(Lindsay stares daggers)
Look, Linz, I'm sorry, okay? I feel bad that I left you... But not that I *left* because I don't think we need her.

LINDSAY
We have issues, Joel. It doesn't make us broken. I feel like you're so afraid of becoming your father and his five failed marriages, you won't discuss anything.

JOEL
(sheepishly)
It's actually going to be six. I kind of neglected to mention we need to be in Cleveland for New Years Eve.

LINDSAY
See! That's what I'm talking about! You're afraid to share anything you think is going to upset me!

JOEL
Okay, fine, you want to talk things out, let's do it right now. There's a Le Pain Quotidien right around the corner. Let's grab a scone and get into it.

LINDSAY
Enough with the stupid scones! We need help figuring things out and we're not going to find it in a Le Pain Quotidien!

Lindsay's phone RINGS. She eyes the Caller I.D.--

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hello?... Slow down, slow down...
Okay, I'll be right there.
(she hangs up)
I have to go. Abby had an accident at a spinning class.

JOEL
How? It's a stationary bike?

LINDSAY
(shrugs)
Do I know? It's Abby. I'm gonna go make sure she's okay.

JOEL
I promise she's fine. Your sister's like a cockroach, she can survive anything. We're finally getting somewhere.

LINDSAY
We were getting somewhere twenty minutes ago in a trained professional's office and you stormed out!

Lindsay hails a cab, gets inside.

JOEL
Look, I gave couple's therapy a shot. I agreed to one session, I went to two.

LINDSAY
Well, I'm going back, so I guess I'll be there alone.

JOEL
Great! You realize that's just therapy?!

The cab drives off, leaving Joel standing alone on the street holding his Banana Republic bag.

EXT. FLYWHEEL - NIGHT

A CROWD of SPINNERS (sweaty and in bike shorts) are gathered in front of the gym. Abby has her neck in a brace, still wearing her entire spinning outfit as she's wheeled out on a stretcher into an awaiting AMBULANCE.

LINDSAY
What happened? Since when do you spin?

ABBY
I was trying to impress this guy. I guess I wasn't clipped into the bike properly. I pushed myself too hard and went flying over the handlebars.

EMT
One, two, three.

TWO EMTS hoist Abby into the back of the ambulance.

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

Lindsay and an EMT ride in the back beside Abby, still strapped to the stretcher, neck locked into a brace.

LINDSAY
What were you thinking? You don't even like exercise.

ABBY
He had on his E-Harmony page that he loves spinning, so I said I did too. I had no idea they put your time up for everyone to see. I had to maintain pace! The guy brings his own seat!

LINDSAY
Abby, you're terrific. You don't have to pretend to be something you're not.

ABBY
Actually, I kind of do. I'm not you.

LINDSAY
What does that mean?

ABBY
Come on, I'm your older sister. Do me the courtesy of not pretending your life isn't perfect.

LINDSAY
Please, my life is far from perfect. Joel just walked out of our couples therapy session.

ABBY
(excited)
Really?!
(off Lindsay's look)
Sorry. I didn't mean to say that out loud. What happened?

LINDSAY
I really want to figure this kid thing out. I'll talk about everything in there. He doesn't want to talk about anything. Honestly, Abby, I just feel like we're so different.

ABBY
That's the beauty of you two. It's why you work so well.
(then)
Look, having just face-planted into another spinner's sweaty ass in the pursuit of love, I can tell you that sometimes life gets messy. I know this goes against every fiber of your being, but it's okay not to have all the answers right now. The important thing is you know the person you want to find the answers with.

As Lindsay considers this, the ambulance stops in front of the HOSPITAL.

EMT
I'm sorry, I couldn't help but overhear. That was really beautiful what you said.

Abby perks up. Stares into his eyes.

ABBY
Thank you.

EMT
I hope this isn't too forward...

ABBY
Yes?

EMT
(turns to Lindsay)
But if things don't work out with Joel, I think you have great energy and I'd love to take you on a ride-along.

Abby bolts upright...

ABBY
Are you fucking kidding me?!

EXT. SETH'S SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Joel rings the doorbell. Waits. No answer. Weird. Seth's Ford Flex is in the driveway. Lights are on. Music plays inside. He rings again. A beat later...

SETH ANSWERS THE DOOR. Wearing a bathrobe. The gentle sounds of Dave Matthews' "Crash Into Me" fill the air. He seems anxious, blocks Joel from entering.

SETH
What are you doing here?

JOEL
I blew my cool and walked out on couples therapy. Need a place to clear my head.

SETH
Didn't I tell you to stop going there? Name me one problem in this world that's ever been solved with honesty.

Joel sighs. Doesn't really want to touch that one. He peers behind Seth -- the lights are dim. There's a scented candle burning.

JOEL
Where is everyone?

SETH
They're out. I'm here all alone.

JOEL
Candles. Bathrobe. Mid-career Dave Matthews.
(quietly)
Dude, are you with someone?!

SETH
What? No, it's my weekly date night. The kids are at gymnastics. Andrea's got her book club. These are literally the only two hours when I can be alone to pleasure myself in the comfort of my own home.

JOEL
I really don't want to go home now. Can't you skip a week?

SETH
That's not an option.
(then)
You know what, we lived together in college, I guess I can knock one out with you in the house.
(ushering him in)
There's a nice bottle of Shiraz open in the kitchen. Some Lunchables in the fridge. I'll see you in thirty.

And Seth exits towards his den.

INT. SETH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Joel pours himself a glass of wine. Takes in all the family photos and kids drawings on the fridge door.

Joel sees a PHOTO from the recent birthday party of himself, in lion face make-up, pretending to "bite" Evan's belly as the birthday boy cracks up. We see in Joel's eyes how much he wants to be a father. Then...

SETH'S WIFE ANDREA WALKS INTO THE KITCHEN.

ANDREA
Hello?

JOEL
Jesus, Andrea, you scared me. What are you doing here?

ANDREA
This is my house, Joel. What about you?

JOEL
I, uh... Lindsay and I got into a fight.
(MORE)

JOEL (CONT'D)
I needed a place to hide out for a few hours.
(covering)
I think Seth is doing some work in the other room.

ANDREA
Work... got it.
(pours a glass of wine)
What's the deal, couple's therapy bringing some stuff up?

JOEL
It's crazy. We went for one session to gain a little clarity on this baby stuff, and it's brought up all these stupid things from the past.
(growing frustration)
But you know Lindsay, now she has to fix every little detail until it's perfect.

ANDREA
Not that you're asking, but, let me tell you what I think the key to marriage is: Know your partner completely, and accept them for who they are.

Weird because Seth is in the next room, jerking off.

JOEL
Okay...

ANDREA
For example, while my husband is using my fifty dollars a bottle La Mer cream to violate himself in our family room, I wait across the street in my car and read GONE GIRL on my Kindle.

JOEL
(can't believe it)
So you don't even have a book club?

ANDREA
I do, but, it ends at 7. Seth doesn't need to know that. I was just craving a little red.

Andrea grabs the wine bottle and her glass.

ANDREA (CONT'D)
If therapy is what Lindsay needs to get comfortable with the idea of having a kid, deal with it.

Andrea turns and exits. A moment later, Seth enters.

SETH
Wet-noodle, dude. I just can't do it with you here. Andrea won't be back for another hour. You wanna spark one up and play Madden?

Before Joel responds...

INT. ELLEN'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON THE FISH TANK -- we PULL BACK to reveal Lindsay sitting ALONE on the couch, staring into it.

It's a nice, meditative moment, Lindsay getting a sense of what it's like to go through life as Joel, until...

LINDSAY
I don't get it.

She picks up her Blackberry, starts typing away. Ellen opens the door to her office.

ELLEN
Lindsay?
(noticing)
Oh, Joel's running late?

LINDSAY
It's just me today.

Ellen notes this, then ushers Lindsay into her office.

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ellen sits in her chair while Lindsay sits on the couch.

LINDSAY
I guess I could've just called, but we had this session on the books so I wanted to tell you in person, we're not going to be continuing therapy.

ELLEN
I'm sorry to hear that.

LINDSAY
Digging up this stuff from the past has been pretty rough on Joel, and I don't want to force him to do something that makes him so uncomfortable.

ELLEN
It's important for you to do what feels right. I wish you two the best of luck.

LINDSAY
Thank you, Ellen.

A little sad, Lindsay stands, heads for the door. She opens it to reveal JOEL holding a tray of coffees.

JOEL
Sorry, I'm late. Terrible barista.

Lindsay looks totally confused as Joel blows past her.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Lindsay, here's your triple iced Americano. Ellen, I got you options. Regular drip. Chai latte. Drink it or not, but I brought it because, that's who I am.

Joel waits a beat to see if Ellen will take the coffee. She doesn't. He plays through...

JOEL (CONT'D)
It's there if you want it. Linz, I was thinking about what you said the other day about me not wanting to talk about stuff and I guess if this is going to work I need to be willing to go there, so in the spirit of total candor, the other night, I walked in on my best friend, Seth, masturbating--

LINDSAY
Honey, where you taking this?

JOEL
I'm gonna bring it all home. You'll see.
(MORE)

JOEL (CONT'D)
And it occurred to me, I withheld a piece of information from our first slightly askew sexual experience that I'd like to share now.

Joel stands, and with some difficulty, he confesses.

JOEL (CONT'D)
After we met, because of Lindsay's crazy schedule -- squash tournaments, a future business leaders conference in D.C. -- there was a six week window before our date. During which time, I abstained from a practice I had been enjoying on a fairly continual basis since the 6th grade...
(deep breath)
I'm talking about masturbation.

ELLEN
I know, Joel.

JOEL
Oh, good. You see, to have done it while thinking of another woman would've felt like a betrayal, and to think of <u>you</u> while doing it seemed... distasteful. So when you were kind enough to finally permit me access, I may have been a tad bit rapid because I was playing with a loaded gun and said weapon accidentally discharged. But it's only because I was already so madly, insanely in love with you that I refrained from this almost daily ritual.
(beat; big exhale)
Wow. I've been holding that in for twelve years.

Joel sits down. Lindsay looks at him lovingly, takes his hand in hers...

ELLEN
Thank you for sharing, Joel.

JOEL
Did I do it right?

ELLEN
There's no right way. But, very good.

JOEL
Bam. Drop the mic.

ELLEN
May I ask, coming off that first date, how was there ever a second?

LINDSAY
I'll take this one...

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - FLASHBACK - NIGHT (2000)

Lindsay's sister, Abby, is getting the "**LONNIE**" TATTOO we saw earlier with her then-boyfriend, LONNIE, cheesy, long-hair, who's getting his own "ABBY" ankle tat next to her.

ABBY
I'm confused, so you did it or you didn't do it?

INTERCUT WITH

INT. LINDSAY'S COLLEGE DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lindsay is on her land-line talking to Abby.

LINDSAY
He did it. All over my dress. It's almost as if he'd been storing it up for the occasion. What is that noise?

ABBY
Lonnie and I are getting matching tattoos.

LINDSAY
Didn't you just meet that guy two weeks ago at a Creed concert?

ABBY
When you know, you know.
(blows Lonnie a kiss, then, into phone)
Uch, I'm sorry, Linz. Sounds like a date I would go on.

LINDSAY
Actually, the five hours leading up to the seven seconds of disastrous sex were great.

ABBY
Five hours? Where the hell did he take you?

LINDSAY
Uh... we walked to get a cup of coffee, then we just kind of... hung out and talked.

ABBY
You just hung out? That does not sound like my sister.

LINDSAY
(realizing)
Yeah, I know...

ABBY
So you think you'll give him another shot?

LINDSAY
I totally would. But he was so embarrassed, I doubt he'll ever call.
(there's a knock on her door)
Hold on, someone's here...

Lindsay opens her door onto a UNIFORMED MAN.

MAN
Campus Dry Cleaning. A Joel Moss called, said you have a soiled garment.

Lindsay smiles, totally amused as we go to...

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - DAY

LINDSAY
Most guys send flowers and chocolates, mine sent out for dry-cleaning.

JOEL
Hey, it worked.

LINDSAY
Yes it did.
(beat, then)
(MORE)

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
You know, Ellen, as I think about it, I may have been wrong about something I said earlier. I'm pretty sure that's the moment I fell in love with Joel.

Ellen nods. She doesn't reveal much but it's pretty clear this pleases her. As it does Joel.

JOEL
I knew it! Two years in? That's ridiculous. And while we're clearing the air here, there is the other issue on the table...
(feeling his oats)
Honey, you're not that good an actress. You definitely had an orgasm before you went to Italy.

Silence from Lindsay.

ELLEN
Okay... our time is up. So, shall I expect to see you next week?

LINDSAY
It's up to you, honey.

JOEL
We'll be here, Ellen.

INT. ELLEN'S WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Joel and Lindsay exit. A GAY COUPLE sits in the waiting room. One guy holds a BASKET OF MUFFINS.

JOEL
(to muffin-holder)
Buddy, I respect the effort but it's not going to work. She's a brick wall.

NON-MUFFIN-HOLDING GAY MAN
I told you, Conrad!

JOEL
Shoot, I left my sunglasses in there.

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

JOEL
Hi, sorry, I forgot my--

Joel stops mid-sentence. Ellen sits at her desk, laughing while drinking the Chai latte Joel brought her.

ELLEN
You caught me.
(re: computer)
A colleague just sent me this video. It's unbelievable.

Joel eyes a YouTube video on Ellen's computer.

ON THE SCREEN -- a high-angle SECURITY CAMERA POV of a FLYWHEEL CLASS IN ACTION. One woman in the middle of the class -- yep, Abby -- builds up a ridiculous amount of speed, she rises off her seat, and then, in a flash...

...SHE GOES FLYING OVER THE HANDLE-BARS, landing out of frame. The fall repeats in SLOW-MOTION, over and over.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
Can you imagine falling off a stationary bike?

JOEL
If it's Lindsay's older sister, then yes. That's her in the video.

ELLEN
Really? Lindsay didn't mention a sister.

JOEL
Oh, there's plenty you don't know about us, Ellen. Until next time.
(then, genuinely)
Good session.

And Joel exits as we... FADE OUT.

END OF PILOT