

CINDY Scene 1

NORA
~~I'll find out.~~

~~INT. BULLPEN -- CONTINUOUS~~
~~Nora approaches Gabriel, as if an electrical fence surrounds the bullpen. She knows she's "not supposed" to be there.~~

NORA
~~I think I'm your researcher, and I'm supposed to help with the story Wick assigned.~~

GABRIEL
~~I've got it covered.~~

~~Off Nora as she realizes Gabriel is freezing her out.~~

~~INT. PIT -- 30 MINUTES LATER~~
~~Nora watches Patti at the desk next to hers.~~

PATTI
~~(fuming into phone)~~
~~C'mon. Answer already.~~

~~Patti moves the receiver under her chin.~~

PATTI (CONT'D)
~~(to Nora)~~
~~For those of you following along at home, I've got nothing, and the Jane clock says I have 25 minutes left.~~
~~(off Nora's look)~~
~~What?~~

NORA
~~It's like you two are fighting over the lower bunk bed in jail. Who gets to make the guys who are writing the story look better?~~

~~Off Patti, still on hold, considering Nora's point.~~

~~INT. PHOTO - MOMENTS LATER~~
~~Enter Nora as Cindy arranges lead letters for captions.~~

START

NORA
Now, I get why you stay down here.

Cindy smiles coyly and picks up her tumbler of vodka.

CINDY

Cranky reporters in the bullpen?

NORA

And testy researchers in the pit.

(beat)

Do you *like* working at *Newsweek*?

CINDY

For me, it's ideal.

Nora looks at her, incredulous.

CINDY (CONT'D)

You're not married yet, are you?

Nora holds up her ringless hand.

CINDY (CONT'D)

Lenny, my husband, gave me a year to gather material for my first novel while he finishes law school and gets a job at a firm. Probably in Connecticut. So, I chose *Newsweek*. It's a dream.

NORA

What happens after the year?

CINDY

I get serious and start a family.

NORA

A serious family? Please don't invite me to the dinner parties.

(beat)

Why don't you stay here and get stories. That's the only way to become a writer.

Cindy wells up. Nora stiffens, doesn't know how to respond.

CINDY

I'm sorry. I'm just late, for my, you know. I always use my diaphragm. I don't understand --

NORA

Maybe he put a hole in it. People do that, you know.

CINDY

Lenny doesn't even know where I keep that thing.

Off Nora's level stare, Cindy does calculations in her head.

CINDY (CONT'D)
But maybe he does.

Cindy checks out Nora...

CINDY (CONT'D)
You don't think my being a novelist
sounds like a lark?

NORA
I don't joke about writing or
cooking.

CINDY
I don't joke about drinking and
cooking.

NORA
See, we're a perfect duo.

END

Off Cindy, sparkling.

~~INT. THE PIT - NIGHT
Doug, overcoat on, walks by Patti at her desk.~~

~~DOUG
You ready, Robinson?~~

~~PATTI
Not yet. Santana's PR girl gave me
the number of the hotel room where
The Stones back-up singer is
staying. I want to talk to her.
There are rumors that the official
police account is wrong.~~

~~DOUG
Then get a list of everything the
backup singer says that contradicts
the official account and turn it
over to Jane.~~

~~He kneels down, leans in.~~

~~DOUG (CONT'D)
Those will be her leads to follow
up on. So, meet at my place in an
hour? I'll order from Vincenza's. I
just got the new Van Morrison.~~

~~She caresses his cheek. Gives him a deep, french kiss.~~

CINDY Scene 2

~~Flying time six hours and 8 minutes. So... get on board for a magic carpet ride.~~

~~She gives a small smile at the Steppenwolf reference.~~

~~EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT~~

~~Cindy hustles down the subway stairs, headed home. A light snow falls. She passes men in bowler hats and overcoats who carry briefcases. A marquee halfway down the block promises a 9 p.m. showing of "Easy Rider."~~

~~She puts her hand on her stomach and vomits into the snowbank. She steadies herself on a wrought iron gate.~~

~~CINDY~~

~~No. Please, no.~~

INT. CINDY'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

CINDY POV: Through the half-open bathroom door, we see LENNY, rumpled and sour, buried in text books on the bed.

Cindy opens the vanity drawer, pulls out her diaphragm case and holds it up to the light. And there it is: a pin hole in the rubber trampoline. Cindy gasps and accidentally knocks her brush on to the tile floor.

START

LENNY (O.S.)

What the hell's going on in there?

CINDY

Nothing. I dropped my brush.

LENNY

I'm trying to work, Cindy.

Cindy sits on the edge of the bathtub, gasping for air, out of sight of Lenny.

LENNY (CONT'D)

Why don't you come to bed. You often get clumsy when you're late.

CINDY

I'm not late. I just didn't sleep well the past few nights.

RACK to Lenny, probing. Looking for a clue she's pregnant.

LENNY

And you didn't eat much at dinner.

CINDY

I ate.

RACK to Lenny.

LENNY

Come here, sit on the bed, and tell me if this is what we've been waiting for.

CINDY

It's not.

(beat)

I'm coming to bed soon.

END

Off Cindy, devastated, staring out the window.

~~EXT. ESTAB. HUNTINGTON HOTEL, NOB HILL, SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT
The neon sign glows demurely over wedding cake architecture.~~

~~INT. HUNTINGTON HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT~~

~~In a dim corner of the impeccable lobby, Patti sits across from Danielle, the back up singer from the cold open. They share a bowl of Bugle snacks and each sips a soda.~~

DANIELLE

~~I'm telling you, he was no threat to anyone, and the bikers were kicking him. They were high as kites.~~

PATTI

~~And there was a Hells Angel in an animal hat. It was a stuffed head of an animal on his head. Weird.~~

DANIELLE

~~The Hells Angel guys were throwing entire beer cans at people. Then, the biker with the mustache stabbed that poor guy. The Dead bailed, because they knew those Hells Angels.~~

PATTI

~~Are you saying The Dead fled?
(off Danielle's smile)
I can't thank you enough for talking, Danielle. I just need your full name, hometown and age.~~

CINDY Scene 3

NORA

~~Did you ever put an eye loop on each eye and walk around the newsroom?~~

~~Cindy giggles as they remove their eye loops.~~

NORA (CONT'D)

~~I read the short story you left me last night. It was beautiful.~~

CINDY

~~Thank you. It was the last thing I wrote, right after college.~~

~~Ned enters. Sees Cindy's distant, sad expression.~~

NED

~~Are you okay?~~

CINDY

~~I haven't slept much lately.~~

~~He looks sympathetically at her, covers for Nora.~~

NED

~~Did you do my job for me yet? Which one?~~

CINDY

~~Close up hippie.~~

NORA

~~Flower.~~

NED (CONT'D)

~~I left you with two choices, and you present me with the same two choices.~~

~~(friendly)~~

~~Unacceptable!~~

~~Off Cindy, daydreaming about a life with Ned.~~

INT. LADIES ROOM - DAY

Jane mists hair spray all over her up do.

START

CINDY (O.C.)

Yes! Oh my god, yes yes yes!

She's in the stall.

JANE

Cindy?

CINDY (O.C.)
I got my period!

JANE
(droll)
Is this the first time?

CINDY
Ha! Nope. But I got it! I got it!

WICK (O.S.)
I want everyone to gather here.

JANE
Wick's muster call.

CINDY
I'll be out in a minute.

END

~~INT. NEWSWEEK, BULLPEN -- DAY
Wick holds a rolled sheaf of copy and waves it triumphantly
over his head.~~

~~WICK
This piece --~~

~~All look up, most walk over to where Wick will hold court.
Jane arrives.~~

~~WICK (CONT'D)
-- hit the bullseye and should be a
lesson. A new kid on our team --~~

~~Wick gestures at Gabriel with the sheaf, puts on his glasses.
From his desk, Gabriel beams.~~

~~WICK (CONT'D)
-- took what he called a 'straight
down the middle courts story' and
elevated it to a damn good think-
piece.~~

~~WICK (CONT'D)
"The murders illuminated a free
love movement with the black light
of banality."~~

~~Wick looks up, makes sure ALL are rapt. They are. Cindy
joins.~~