

JACK: So why'd you even have me?
PAM: Because I wanted you. We both wanted you. Maybe for our own selfish reasons. I wanted someone to love me for me, and I think Mom wanted someone she could protect—since she screwed that up pretty good.
JACK: Is he alive? Did you charge him?
PAM: Yeah, he's alive. And no. It's all over now.
JACK: Is it? Whose words are those? It doesn't seem over for either of us.
PAM: Well you can't dwell in it, Jack. It doesn't do any good.
JACK: Well, what the hell did you do for the last eighteen years but dwell in it with all those stupid guys? Yeah, you can say you shoved it under the carpet and you never talked about it, but you sure as hell dwelled on it.
PAM: Yeah, so what should I have done?
JACK: Set it right. *(He grabs his backpack.)*
PAM: What are you doing? Where are you going?
JACK: I'll be back.
PAM: No, Jack, talk to me. Where are you going? Don't do anything crazy. Come on!
JACK: I gotta go, Mom. I promise I'll be back.
(He exits. Pam is speechless.)

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Susan and Abe, 30s, have been brought together by their spouses, who are coworkers and extremely ambitious lawyers. Both Susan and Abe have complained to their spouses about the lack of time they have to go out. As a result, their spouses have suggested that they use each other for company. The two have gone out a couple of times in the past few weeks and have enjoyed the restaurants and each other's company immensely; still, something seems odd about their spouses' suggestion. As the scene begins, they are enjoying the view in an upscale bar in Minneapolis in a deliciously intense conversation.

SUSAN: Well, the general population there doesn't know! They don't understand the damage, the kinds of cancer and destruction it will do afterwards, Abe.
ABE: Oh God. It's just a lot of political posturing. Neither wants to look namby-pamby. It's like when a kid says my Willy's bigger than yours. You have to respond or you look bad. And when they say "weapons of mass destruction" that doesn't necessarily mean nuclear.
SUSAN: Well what do you think when you hear that? It's the first thing that comes to mind for me. I think radiation. I think nuclear bomb. There are fanatics over there. Once you cross the line, there's no turning back.
ABE: They won't cross the line.
SUSAN: Sometimes you don't even know when the line is crossed because with crazy people you're not even sure where the line is.
ABE: You act like if there's one wrong word between them, that's the end of the world—boom!
SUSAN: It's not *one* wrong word. It's one wrong word after

years of wrong words and wrong killings and totally conflicting values and beliefs. That's a dangerous situation.

ABE: Things aren't that precarious. The leaders want you to *think* things are that precarious so they can get money or support or both from the U.S.! And that's it! It's all about our money!

SUSAN: Wow. You're feisty about this.

ABE: So are you. I feel compelled to argue with you. It's very . . . uh . . .

SUSAN: Sexy? I love this kind of conversation when I'm getting a hint of a buzz cause I feel intense and intellectual.

ABE: You have a buzz?

SUSAN: Hey, don't laugh. This is my second drink. I told you I'm a lightweight. (*Putting her head on his shoulder.*) At least I'm a cheap date. So how's your martini, sir?

ABE: It's cold and dry. The glass is frosty cold—perfectly frosty—just like I like it, miss.

SUSAN: Good. I heard this place was good.

ABE: And it is. Very good. And perfect company all around. How's the daiquiri?

SUSAN: Foo-foo-frozen and sweet—just like I like it.

ABE: So. We're happy. (*Lifts glass.*) To uh . . . to new friends. (*They toast.*)

SUSAN: Good friends. (*She smiles.*)

(*They both drink and then put their glasses down. Awkward pause.*)

ABE/SUSAN: (*Simultaneously.*) Well, this / How's the—

SUSAN: You go ahead.

ABE: I was just going to say this is nice. I mean, us hanging out again. Haven't been out since . . . well since you and I went to that really good Italian place last week.

SUSAN: Fiesta. That was good.

SUSAN/ABE: (*Ritual way of saying it.*) Chocolate Moouuuusse.

ABE: I've been looking forward to getting together with you all week.

SUSAN: Me too. (*They pause.*) I've been meaning to get here

with Matt for months, but, well . . . He's at work more than he's home. So you got to come here with me instead—ha, ha, ha. I've heard over and over about the view and the drinks here. Certainly is true.

ABE: Yep. Lydia keeps telling me once this case is over, she'll be home more, but . . .

SUSAN: When I was young if someone would have asked me—would you prefer your husband's money or to see your husband more often? I would have said the money definitely, but now I want someone to talk to, to take a walk around the lake with.

ABE: I'm with ya. Lydia tells me Matt's likely to get partner soon.

SUSAN: Yeah? Maybe. He thinks *she's* going to make partner soon. They're both so ambitious.

ABE: Ambition isn't everything. It doesn't keep you warm at night—that's for sure. (*Holding out his glass.*) To lack of ambition!

SUSAN: (*Picking up her drink.*) Here, here. And slothfulness! (*They clink.*) Is that a word?

ABE: Who cares? I love toasting. Let's just toast periodically for no reason.

SUSAN: Okay. So their method of getting us off their backs seems to have worked.

ABE: You mean— (*Gesturing between him and her.*) this?

SUSAN: I haven't been bugging him as much about going out in the last month. When Matt suggested I go hang out with you sometimes, I was kind of insulted. I know I didn't tell you that before, but now I kind of feel like I can. You aren't offended by me saying that?

ABE: No. Absolutely not! I felt the same way. She kept going on about how you were in the neighborhood. "I'm sorry. Though I'm your wife, I can't spend time with you, but I have a perfect substitute—and *she's in the neighborhood.*" It *is* insulting. As if you're being passed off. If I didn't have

a devout passion for Thai food and trying out new places. I probably wouldn't have called back that night.

SUSAN: Yeah, it was a fluke for me too. I just didn't want to stomach another dose of reality TV. What is it with that, huh? It's like bargain-basement entertainment. No creative input, no actor, no writer, no story. Just a bunch of type A personalities having petty fights over how to divide up some lima beans.

ABE: *(Ashamed of himself.)* I know. I love it.

SUSAN: What?! You do? You're kidding? Really? You don't seem the type.

ABE: I'm not. And if you tell my students, I'll deny the whole thing. But I'm a junkie.

SUSAN: I'd rather watch my cat barf up a hairball.

ABE: Yeah, well, now that can be entertaining too. To each his own. *(Toasting.)* To each his own.

SUSAN: *(She toasts with him.)* It is counter to my entire world to have TV be reality. What happened to the mindless sitcom? The melodramatic movie of the week? Now we're forced to watch real people do really stupid things over and over. I don't need that on TV. I have that at work.

ABE: I just like the alliances and the competition factor. The pure evil actually. *(Realizing.)* Course I have that at *my* work.

SUSAN: I really hate that show that supposedly has perfectly happy couples go to an island with the intent of splitting them up. I hate that. How disgusting is that?

ABE: I never watched that one. There's something too humiliating about watching people who profess their love in public suddenly fall apart. Watching people being tempted away by scantily clothed women and men. Or maybe I don't like that one because it hits too close to home. Not the scantily clothed part of course, but losing your partner to another.

SUSAN: *(Pause.)* What are you talking about?

ABE: *(Beat. Pointing to her drink.)* Another? *(She nods.)* Sir? *(He points to the drinks. He nods. Returning to her.)* You've never thought anything was strange between them?

SUSAN: You're saying you suspect something's going on with them?

ABE: Don't you?

SUSAN: Well . . . I told his sister two months ago I knew there was something. She laughed. She thought I was crazy or paranoid.

ABE: I just think it's no coincidence that they paired us up. Not that I mind that they threw us together in a way. I love your company.

SUSAN: But that's beside the point. This is so sick of them. It makes me so angry.

ABE: I was like that a couple of weeks ago.

SUSAN: And now?

ABE: Still pretty angry, but now the thing is, I keep asking myself, is she worth fighting for? Is she right for me anyhow? Do we have anything to salvage?

SUSAN: Are you even certain of all this?

ABE: I did some investigating of bills and . . . I have what I would guess is proof, but . . . I'm sorry. I probably shouldn't have said anything.

SUSAN: No. I'm glad you did. I don't like to be made a fool of. It's not as if I'm shocked really or anything. It's like I did know or I probably wouldn't have gone along with getting together. *(Beat.)* I'm glad we're drinking is all I have to say.

ABE: *(Smiles.)* Me too.

SUSAN: *(Holding up her glass.)* To drinking!

ABE: To us!

SUSAN: And Minneapolis! *(They clink glasses and take a huge swig.)*

ABE: *(Clinking again.)* And this incredible view!

SUSAN: *(Looking out at the view.)* I can't believe this. *(Pause.)* I love this city.

ABE: *(Putting his hand over hers.)* Me too.

SUSAN: *(She smiles.)* That figures. Matt hates it. It's not exciting, it's too cold, and Prince is the only celebrity.

ABE: Lydia never liked it either. If we were here and I said, "Wow, what a view," she would say, "Yeah, but it doesn't hold a candle to the view in Los Angeles, and they have mountains, and forest and beaches." To which I would say, "And traffic, and smog and materialistic egomaniacs." She's from Florida. She likes the warm weather.

SUSAN: Oh.

ABE: We were trying to move somewhere warmer about two years ago, but she'd have to get licensed in another state, which is a pain. And I'd have to look for another tenure track, which for philosophy is a lot like trying to find a trick dog with three legs and a French accent.

SUSAN: I want to go back to school to study education. To teach. PR sucks.

ABE: That's great. I mean, the teaching. It's a great profession. It's an incredibly satisfying job I think. Besides the pay, I highly recommend it.

SUSAN: Yeah? *(Beat.)* Yeah! So screw you Matt, wherever you are. He was trying to discourage me. *(Holding up her glass.)* Scrrrewww youuuuu, Matthew!

ABE: I'd rather not. *(Clinking her glass. Drinks.)* Now his wife . . . is another matter. Not that screw is the right word.

SUSAN: Is that an offer?

ABE: No, just an opinion.

SUSAN: But you like flirting with the idea? *(Pause.)* So why did you marry her?

ABE: At that time I wanted someone to whip me into shape. Someone who had confidence and clarity. Now I realize I was searching for my own clarity. She couldn't give me that. I don't mean that she doesn't have good qualities. She's strong, focused, intense, but she doesn't laugh much. And we fight a lot. She thinks I'm lazy.

SUSAN: Did you ever find your clarity?

ABE: In some ways—yes. I think clarity is overrated. And fun, pure fun is underrated.

SUSAN: *(Clinking his glass.)* I agree! *(She takes a big swig.)*

ABE: Whoa. You downed that pretty fast.

SUSAN: Would you like to get a room with me?

ABE: Um, I . . . I don't—I'm flattered. But I don't think that's a good idea, Susan.

SUSAN: Really? Well you've been flirting with me like crazy. Don't you think I'm attractive?

ABE: Yes. But I don't think . . . Look, you were attractive to me from the get-go, but I—

SUSAN: Me too. So what are we waiting for? We have a husband and wife who obviously want us out of the way so they can move forward. You and I are attracted to one another. Who are we hurting?

ABE: I'm not looking for revenge.

SUSAN: Who's talking about revenge? I'm talking about fun, which is highly underrated. We're both lonely for a good reason. So what's so wrong about some harmless sex tonight?

ABE: Sex is never harmless. It's the most powerful thing I can think of. I mean, talk about your weapons of mass destruction.

SUSAN: *(Angry.)* I don't give a good Goddamn whether it hurts him. I don't care if it destroys his world! In fact, I hope he self-destructs!

ABE: And this is not revenge?

SUSAN: *(Beat. Touching his hand and arm provocatively.)* His being hurt or upset is merely an added bonus of me having a great time with you. And I do think we'd have a great time.

ABE: I do too. But I don't want to just be a way to get back at him. I'm in a vulnerable position here too. If we have sex, make love, I'd like you to remember *me* in the whole of it, not some angry feeling you wanted to get rid of. You know what I mean?

SUSAN: *(Annoyed.)* So you don't want to do it?

ABE: For a good reason.

SUSAN: And what do I do? Go home alone again? Wait in the

dark until he sneaks in? Turn over as if I'm still asleep when he slips into bed? Pretend that everything is as it was?

ABE: I don't know. Maybe you should confront him. I'm going to confront Lydia soon.

SUSAN: And what can he say to amend this? What can he say to bring back a marriage after this?

ABE: You sound as if you've known for quite some time.

SUSAN: Maybe I have. But it's hard to admit failure. All I know is it's lonely. Waiting. My life is lonely. Not as I expected. At all. *(Pause.)* Anyway, we have a cottage. *(Chuckles.)* I have a cottage. We could head there tonight? Just both call in sick tomorrow to hang out on the beach. I'm not talking sex. Actually, I don't want it either. I know I'm all over the place tonight. We'll just go, get on the road, and continue this conversation till whenever. Get up, put our toes in the water. I like you a lot too. And I don't know what that means right now. But I know I don't want to be alone again tonight. Waiting. I don't want him to feel the comfort of me being there again. So I'll call and leave a message, telling him where I went. You could call Lydia and tell her something. *(Beat.)* What do you say?

ABE: It's dramatic. Are you sure it isn't all for revenge or show?

SUSAN: Not sure—no. But it appeals to me. *(Beat.)* I've always thought of the cottage as a healing place.

ABE: *(He looks out at the view.)* Umm. Don't know. But I certainly love the beach.

SUSAN: Me too.

• A SWEET PLAN

Katelin and Silvio, 16, have been friends since grade school. They have shared the hard knocks that kids who are a little out of the ordinary face. Both have been bullied by jocks in their high school. Over the last few years, they have joined up with two other boys—outcasts as well—who have formed a “clique.” Marky, the leader of the pack, encouraged them to express their anger toward fellow students and their school by reprogramming some computers a few months ago. Now, he suggests that they do a full-fledged attack on the jocks’ lockers and a trophy case. Silvio starts to get nervous once he learns that Marky has a gun. In this scene, Katelin is picking up Silvio to go on this “locker rage” they had planned the night before. Silvio is resistant to the idea now. He feels things will get out of hand. He wants to discourage Katelin, who he has a crush on, from going as well. As the scene begins, Katelin comes into his house to find him ill-prepared.

KATELIN: What are you doing? You're supposed to be ready to go.

SILVIO: I know.

KATELIN: The guys are already heading over to the school.

SILVIO: Yeah.

KATELIN: What's goin' on, Silvio? Don't get all chicken on me. Put your shoes on, grab your face mask—let's go.

SILVIO: I'm not sure I want to.

KATELIN: What are you talking about? We promised last night. We all made a pact.

SILVIO: I just didn't feel comfortable saying no to Marky.

KATELIN: He didn't force you. None of us did.

SILVIO: No offense, Katelin, but you're kinda blinded by