

BOILER ROOM

INT. BAR - NIGHT (LATER)

They've already had a couple of drinks by now and are pretty loosened up.

SETH
So who do you live with?

ABBIE
Oh, you mean is the black girl here taking care of her grandma because her momma's a crack-head?

SETH
Yeah, exactly. I thought it was smack, though. You know you have got to get a hold of that edge. It's kind of sharp sometimes.

ABBIE
(embarrassed laugh)
I know, it's true. I just got so much shit at JT. Sometimes I have to get into that mode just to fend them off.

SETH
So why are you there? It doesn't seem like the ideal working environment for a black woman.

ABBIE
No, it isn't. But tell me, how many secretaries you know make eighty thousand a year?

SETH
(smiling)
One.

ABBIE
Exactly.

SETH
You could always go back to school.

ABBIE

(laughs)

You pompous ass. What makes you think I want to? College isn't for everyone. It's not like every black girl dreams of being a marine-biologist her whole life.

(dramatic)

If only she could get out of the ghetto.

SETH

Hey, you don't have to tell me. I dropped out.

ABBIE

Really? Now that's a surprise.

SETH

(mocking)

You know it isn't for everyone. It's not like every Jewish boy wants to be a CPA if only he could make Wharton's.

Debbie laughs hard and they settle into intimate eye contact. Debbie leans toward Seth who pulls away, embarrassed.

SETH (CONT'D)

Whoa. I don't even know what synagogue you belong to.

Debbie bursts into laughter.

ABBIE

You don't fit in there. You know that? They're all white trash. To them, this is going legit.

SETH

What do you mean by that?

ABBIE

Always talking about being a big swinging dick on Wall Street. It's funny, 'cause Long Island is as close as they're ever going to get. But you could be doing the real thing at a real trading house. Instead you're here. You don't need to be making it this way. At a chop-shop.

SETH

What are you saying? JT isn't a chop-shop. We just push the envelope a little. I mean it's not like we do anything illegal. We just push a little. Same as on Wall Street.

Debbie laughs.

SETH (CONT'D)

What?

ABBIE

You don't have to convince me.

Debbie raises her glass to Seth.

ABBIE (CONT'D)

To bending the rules.

SETH

Alright. That I can handle.

ABBIE

So tell me about your family.

SETH

My family? It's a mess.

ABBIE

Whose isn't?

SETH

Yeah I guess. Well my mom's great. Real supportive and loving. Almost to a flaw. I can do no wrong.

ABBIE

Sounds terrible.

SETH

My dad's the mess, but that's not very interesting conversation. What about you?

ABBIE

Mom raised me. No money. Now I'm taking care of her.

SETH

What's wrong?

ABBIE

Chronic pneumonia. Smoked for fifteen years. She's been sick for a while now. It makes her so happy that I make this salary so I can support us. It's a little scary.

SETH

And your Dad?

ABBIE

Rather not talk about my father either.

SETH

Boy, I'm so glad we had this conversation. I really feel like I've gained this insight into your life.

ABBIE

And me into yours.

They both laugh.

ABBIE (CONT'D)

Tell me something real.

SETH

What do you want to hear?

ABBIE

Tell me a story about your dad.

SETH

Well I have so many great ones.

ABBIE

Tell me.

SETH

Okay. I'm ten years old. I just got this new bike. A red Mongoose. You know, BMX. So I'm skidding out in this puddle -- Starsky & Hutch style. My foot slips, and the pedal spins around hard enough to break my leg. Real bad too. But I don't fall off the bike. I keep coasting down this hill. So finally I get scared and I jump off. Fell right behind a parked car. Laid there for half an hour. Finally, I hear my father screaming my name from up the block. I was so happy that he

SETH (CON'T)
was coming to get me. He comes around
the car and sees me lying there.
There's blood everywhere and the bone
is sticking out straight through my
skin.

ABBIE
Oh my god.

SETH
I looked up at him, and for the first
time in my life I saw how much he loved
me. He was frozen. It hurt him to see
me in that much pain. So he leans
down... and slaps me across the face.

ABBIE
What? Why?

SETH
I don't know. Maybe he was mad at me
for making him that helpless, or it was
the only thing he could think of. I
don't really care anymore. What I
remember now is the look on his face
when he first saw me. That's all I
remember. That's what I miss.

ABBIE
I'm so sorry.

Debbie leans over and kisses him deeply.