

1

INT. RENTAL CAR - PARKED - DUSK

PHONE SCREEN: A thumb swipes through INSTAGRAM REELS.

TRADING / FINANCE BRO (ON PHONE)
"I made over 29,000 dollars last
month with this simple trading
strategy, and in this video-"

Swipe.

FITNESS COACH (ON PHONE)
Picture a man with commanding
presence. Picture how he moves, how
he speaks. There's a quiet
confidence that signals to us that
he's in control, which is why we
feel drawn to him.

Swipe.

DATING INFLUENCER (ON PHONE)
"Being attractive isn't just money
and good looks, it's about high-
status behaviours. It all comes
down to the story you tell yourself
and how you present that story to
the world."

Phone off. The man checks the time on his ROLEX.

TILT UP to the REARVIEW MIRROR. BENJAMIN (30, guarded) fixes
his hair. He's dressed in a sharp suit.

He looks out of the window to a TOWNHOUSE across the street.

His hands DRUM on the steering wheel, then stop.

2

EXT. QUIET TORONTO STREET - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON: He holds an AUDI KEY. A RENTAL CAR tag hangs on the
key-chain, which he hides inside the palm of his hand.

Benjamin crosses the street with a paper grocery bag. He
reaches the front door and KNOCKS.

CLICK. The door opens.

HEATHER
Hey.

HEATHER (late-20s, casual elegance) stands in heels and a captivating GREEN DRESS.

Her face will remain hidden or obscured for now. We're firmly in Benjamin's POV, and for him, she's a placeholder. This is a disconnected transaction. One-sided. Performative

BENJAMIN
(big smile; mask on)
Heather. It's a pleasure to meet
you. You look amazing.

HEATHER
Thanks. Come on in.

Before he does, he clicks the car keys. The lights on the AUDI parked across the street blink, then Benjamin approaches and gives her a hug. The door closes and we're into -

3 INT. TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

An open-plan, MODERN TOWNHOUSE. Minimalist decorations.

BENJAMIN
Nice place. I like the subtle
approach. Do you rent or own?

HEATHER
I rent, but I might move soon. Love
the area, but my landlord's a pain.

BENJAMIN
Landlord's can be frustrating. If I
wasn't in such a great spot in the
finance district, I'd be jumping on
the property ladder right now.

He pulls an expensive bottle of RED WINE and a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS out of the bag, setting them on the dining table.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
You said you like wine. And...
these are for you.

HEATHER
Looks lovely. And... how about the
other thing we discussed?

BENJAMIN
Of course.

He retrieves an ENVELOPE from his suit pocket and hands it over. Heather peaks inside. CASH - lots of it.

HEATHER

And you still just want to stay in tonight?

BENJAMIN

Can I be honest? This is my first girlfriend experience. I don't really need to go anywhere. Just looking for some good company after a long week.

HEATHER

But not at your place? In the finance district?

He picks up the bag.

BENJAMIN

There's renovations going on. I should get started on dinner. How do you like your steak?

HEATHER

I'm vegan.

BENJAMIN

(stops)

Are you actually?

HEATHER

(smirks)

No. I'll take mine medium-rare. Need any help?

A gentle touch on his arm as she takes the wine from him.

BENJAMIN

No. I love cooking for people. Just sit back and relax.

4

INT. TOWNHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

WOOSH! He ignites alcohol in a pan with a LIGHTER.

ANGLE ON: Heather is holding Benjamin's PHONE, we see him at the stove through his camera.

HEATHER

Jesus!

BENJAMIN

(grins)

It's perfectly safe, I've done it a million times. Like with everything, it's all about practice and steady refinement. Did you get the photo?

He takes the phone and looks. He frowns. It's not good.

HEATHER

(trying to remain jovial)

I like cooking, but I don't try and set my house on fire.

She grabs paper towel to clean up the mess beside the pan. He takes it from her and does it himself.

BENJAMIN

Relax. It's all under control.

HEATHER

Any other hobbies I should know about?

BENJAMIN

I have a home gym setup, I do some investing, I read philosophy.

HEATHER

Yeah? What kind? Political, existentialism...?

BENJAMIN

I dabble in all kinds. --
What about you, any hobbies?

HEATHER

I take dance lessons. It's pretty fun once you learn the basics. Takes a lot of practice, so maybe you'd like it.

BENJAMIN

I don't really have the bandwidth for anything purely recreational.

HEATHER

Is something burning?

He smells it too, opens the oven - and pulls out a tray of half-burnt potatoes.

BENJAMIN
The simplest part. Of course...

5 INT. TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM / KITCHEN - NIGHT

They eat at the candle-lit TABLE, Benjamin with his back to the CAMERA (lurking in the background). MUSIC plays.

BENJAMIN
But really, my job is about wealth management. We work with a lot of high net worth individuals handling major transactions.

HEATHER
(teasing)
So, shuffling digits from one offshore account to another? Sounds like my idea of hell.

BENJAMIN
Why? Too much responsibility?

HEATHER
Because how does any of it feel real?

BENJAMIN
The numbers are just the baseline. If there's one thing I've learned, it's that wealth is about optics. If you can convince the world you're rich, it doesn't really matter what the numbers say.

HEATHER
If that's the case, I better start convincing you I'm rich.

BENJAMIN
(laughs)
You already look like a million bucks.

The line doesn't land as well as he thought it would.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
I'm at junior level for now, but if I keep grinding I'll be in an executive position soon.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: Heather's eye, piercing him.

HEATHER

"Grinding". You ever feel like they gave us that word to make burnout feel like progress?

BENJAMIN

"Burnout" is a word we invented to excuse a lazy culture. I love the work. And there's always gonna be rich people to take care of.

HEATHER

You're telling me.

She takes their plates. A knife slides off and CLATTERS to the floor. Heather bends over to pick it up.

POV: We're watching her figure beneath the dress -

5a FLASHBACK - SUDDEN INTERCUT: Match cut to a POV CLOSE UP of the naked back of an ESCORT (20s) during sex.

5 Benjamin blinks and the colour drains from his face. Heather leaves the room and he stands up to shake it off.

Heather re-enters, pours more wine into their glasses.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

It's funny. You picked a wine from a region I lived in for a while.

BENJAMIN

What region?

HEATHER

(teasing)

You mean you didn't research your wine before making a purchase?

BENJAMIN

I go by the awards on the bottle and the price.

She walks over and hands him his glass.

HEATHER

Well, it's from the Tuscany Region. -- I'd love to get back there someday. Life doesn't feel like you're on someone's agenda.

BENJAMIN

That coastline is something else.

HEATHER
You've been?

BENJAMIN
I've seen videos. Beautiful.

HEATHER
I have this vision of me and... of
me in some villa by the sea,
writing about the people I've met.
Maybe publishing something one day.

He moves in.

BENJAMIN
You look like the kind of woman an
Italian villa was made for.

HEATHER
Thanks. -- What's your vision?

BENJAMIN
To be undeniable. A man who never
waits to be chosen.

The words hang. Heather leans in slightly, expecting a kiss,
even starting to initiate one. But he hesitates.

HEATHER
(teasing)
I guess you haven't done this
before, huh?

THE LIGHT CHANGES.

Behind Benjamin, a soft-lit, out of focus scene appears in
the room with them, overlaid like a ghostly memory.

5b FLASHBACK - A HOTEL BED. red lamplight. CASH on a side table.

Benjamin and a SECOND ESCORT (20s) on the bed. SUGGESTIVE
CLOSE UPS. Him thrusting mechanically. Her eyes distant.

Benjamin leans in for a kiss, but the Escort stops him.

A moment later, the flashback Benjamin sits on the edge of
the bed. The Escort dresses behind him. Time to go.

How the previous encounters have gone: Automatic. Detached.

Present-day Benjamin stares, remembering with a haunted look.

SCENE FADES OUT