NICOLE
Hey.

CHARLIE
Where’s Henry?

NICOLE
He’s with Cassie and her kids at Laser Tag.

CHARLIE
Oh, I’m going to have to leave a day early to go to New York on the 22nd so I was wondering if I could take Henry that Friday--

NICOLE
The 22nd? So, that’s the 21st? We have plans actually. We’re going to this thing at LACMA with the cousins--

CHARLIE
But could you change it so I can take him--

NICOLE
It’s only that night. He’s looking forward to it.

CHARLIE
Really?

NICOLE
It’s my night, Charlie, we negotiated it.

CHARLIE
(coldly) OK. Fine.

NICOLE
I mean...what?

CHARLIE
No, I’m just asking you to be flexible--

NICOLE
I AM flexible. You come in and out and I adjust based on your schedule.
This one night we happen to have to have tickets to a thing. I mean...

CHARLIE
It’s not only this one night, but fine...

NICOLE
So... I thought we should talk. I feel like maybe things have gone too far. So, maybe we can figure something out between us--

CHARLIE
You’ll remember I said this to you at the beginning.

NICOLE
I know you did, but these are different circumstances--

CHARLIE
I was anticipating these circumstances--

NICOLE
(pause) Ok... Do you understand why I want to stay in LA?

CHARLIE
No. I don’t understand it.

NICOLE
You don’t remember promising that we could do time out here?

CHARLIE
We discussed things. We were married, we said things. We talked about moving to Europe, about getting a sideboard or what do you call it, a credenza, to fill that empty space behind the couch. We never did any of it.

NICOLE
And you turned down that residency at the Geffen that would have brought us here and--
CHARLIE
It wasn’t something I wanted. We had a great theater company and a great life where we were.

NICOLE
You call that a great life. Me discovering you’re fucking Mary Ann--

CHARLIE
I don’t mean we had a great marriage. I mean, life in Brooklyn... Professionally. I don’t know. Honestly I never considered anything different.

NICOLE
Well, that’s the problem isn’t it? I was your wife, you should have considered my happiness too.

CHARLIE
Come on! You WERE happy. You’ve just decided you weren’t now--

NICOLE
The only reason we didn’t live here was because you can’t imagine desires other than your own unless they’re forced on you. And now you’re going to put Henry through this horrible thing so you can yet again get what you want.

CHARLIE
It’s not what I want...I mean, it’s what I want, but it’s what was...WAS...what’s best for him.

NICOLE
I was wondering when you’d get around to Henry and what HE actually wants.

CHARLIE
Oh, fuck off--
NICOLE
No, YOU fuck off. If you listened to your son, or anyone, he’d tell you he’d rather live here.

CHARLIE
Stop putting your feelings about me onto Henry.

NICOLE
He tells me he likes it here better.

CHARLIE
He tells you because he knows it’s what you want to HEAR!

NICOLE
He tells me you’re on the phone all the time. You don’t even play with him.

CHARLIE
Because I’m going through a divorce in LA and trying to direct a play in New York.

NICOLE
You’re fighting for something you don’t even WANT.

CHARLIE
Which closed because I wasn’t THERE! That was a HUGE opportunity for me. For the theater. And I let everyone down.

NICOLE
You’re being so much like your father.

CHARLIE
DO NOT compare me to my father.

NICOLE
I didn’t compare you. I said you were acting like him.

CHARLIE
You’re exactly like your mother! Everything you complain about her, you’re doing. You’re suffocating Henry.

NICOLE
First of all, I love my mother, she was a great mother!

CHARLIE
I’m just repeating what you’ve told me--
NICOLE
Secondly, how dare you compare my mothering to my mother? I might be like my father, but I’m NOT like my mother.

CHARLIE
You ARE! And you’re like my father. You’re also like MY mother. You’re all the bad things about all of these people. But mostly your mother. When we would lie in bed together, sometimes I would look at you and see HER and just feel so GROSS.

NICOLE
I felt repulsed when you touched me.

CHARLIE
You’re a slob. I made all the beds, closed all the cabinets, picked up after you like an infant--

NICOLE
The thought of having sex with you makes me want to peel my skin off.

CHARLIE
You’ll never be happy. In LA or anywhere. You’ll think you found some better, opposite guy than me and in a few years you’ll rebel against him because you need to have your VOICE. But you don’t WANT a voice. You just want to fucking complain about not having a VOICE.

NICOLE
People used to say to me that you were too selfish to be a great artist. I used to defend you. But they’re absolutely right.

CHARLIE
All your best acting is behind you. You’re back to being a HACK.

NICOLE
You gaslighted me. You’re a fucking villain.

CHARLIE
You want to present yourself as a victim because it’s a good legal strategy, FINE. But you and I both
know you CHOSE this life. You wanted it until you didn’t. You always made me aware of what I was doing wrong, how I was falling short. Life with you was JOYLESS.

NICOLE
So you had to fuck someone else? How could you?

CHARLIE
You shouldn’t be upset that I fucked her, you should be upset that I had a laugh with her.

NICOLE
Do you love her?

CHARLIE
No! But she didn’t hate me. You hated me.

NICOLE
You hated ME. You fucked someone we worked with.

CHARLIE
You stopped having sex with me in the last year. I never cheated on you.

NICOLE
That was cheating on me.

CHARLIE
But there’s so much I could have done. I was a director in my 20’s who came from nothing and was suddenly on the cover of fucking Time Out New York. I was hot shit—and I wanted to fuck EVERYBODY and I didn’t. And I loved you and didn’t want to lose you...and I’m in my twenties and I didn’t want to lose that too. And you wanted SO much so fast...I didn’t even want to get married...and fuck it, there’s so much I DIDN’T do.

NICOLE
Well, thanks for that.
CHARLIE
You’re welcome. You’re...welcome.

NICOLE
I can’t believe I have to know you FOREVER!

CHARLIE
You’re fucking insane! And you’re fucking winning.

NICOLE
Are you kidding? I wanted to be married. I’d ALREADY LOST. (sadly)
You didn’t love me as much as I loved you.

CHARLIE
What does that have to do with LA?

What?

CHARLIE
You’re so merged with your own selfishness that you don’t even identify it as selfishness anymore. YOU’RE SUCH A DICK.

NICOLE
I’m sorry.

CHARLIE
Every day I wake up and hope you’re dead-- Dead like-- If I could guarantee Henry would be OK, I’d hope you get an illness and then get hit by a car and DIE.

NICOLE
Me too.