

Naked in the Refrigerator Light
Scene Script

Adapted from the memoir "Self-Portrait"
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NAKED IN THE REFRIGERATOR LIGHT

In 1984, after a troubled young woman named Stacy comes to stay with Veronica in San Francisco, she helps with Veronica's move to Los Angeles. In Veronica's new apartment, what begins as a simple request to paint the kitchen reveals the extent of Stacy's addiction and forces Veronica to confront what she has failed to see.

INT. VERONICA'S KITCHEN - DAY

VERONICA (V.O.)

When I was younger, I had read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which had been very influential on my perception of the United States. I remembered that their kitchen was described as being pale yellow. So I had bought some yellow paint and asked Stacy to paint the kitchen walls while I went out. I was looking forward to the results.

An old copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird* lies on the kitchen counter.

CLOSE ON pale yellow paint samples spread beside the matching tile.

Veronica compares one sample to the countertop, then holds it against the wall.

Veronica hands Stacy a can of pale yellow paint. Veronica grabs her purse, slings it over her shoulder and closes the door behind her.

EXT. VERONICA'S APARTMENT - LATER

Veronica climbs the steps to her apartment. Loud, off-key singing comes from inside.

INT. VERONICA'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Veronica opens the side door. The long galley kitchen. Stacy on a ladder at the far end, paint roller in hand. A few uneven yellow strokes on the wall.

VERONICA

What happened?

STACY

I went out and bought some wine.

Stacy gestures toward the trash can.

VERONICA
Where and how?

STACY
I took the change from your jar and
went down to the liquor store.

VERONICA (V.O.)
She was drunk and I was upset that
my kitchen had not been painted,
but I still didn't think much of
it.

Veronica looks at the trash can.

CLOSE ON the empty wine bottle in the trash.

Veronica looks at the empty change jar.

VERONICA
Get down from the ladder and finish
tomorrow.

Stacy comes down from the ladder.

VERONICA (V.O.)
That night I had plans to go out
with a new acquaintance.

Veronica walks toward her bedroom.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

"Girls Just Want to Have Fun" by Cyndi Lauper plays on the
bathroom radio. Audible through the apartment.

Veronica, dressed up to go out, checks herself in the mirror
and puts on earrings.

A KNOCK at the door.

VERONICA
Coming.

Veronica exits the bedroom.

INT. VERONICA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica walks through the kitchen and opens the side door.

A woman in her mid-twenties enters, looking excited.

Something catches Veronica's eye.

Veronica and the woman turn toward the dark kitchen.

The refrigerator door stands open halfway across the room, casting a bright light.

Stacy stands naked in front of it, wearing only dressy red shoes with little heels.

Her lower belly sticks out, creased where the waistband of underwear normally sat. Her overgrown, boyish blonde hair is messy.

CLOSE ON her hand scooping cottage cheese from the container and shoving it into her mouth.

VERONICA

What are you doing?

Stacy turns toward them. She has red lipstick on.

A beat.

Stacy walks quickly toward them, bypasses them and runs outside naked.

Veronica looks at the woman. The woman stares back at her in disbelief.

VERONICA

(to the woman)

She's a friend of a friend.

Veronica and the woman run after Stacy.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Stacy disappears onto the street.

She staggers, stumbles and eventually falls into the gutter.

The street is deserted.

CLOSE ON the red lipstick smeared across her face.

Veronica and the woman reach Stacy and help her up by the arms.

They walk her back toward the apartment.

INT. VERONICA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

VERONICA (V.O.)

We brought her inside and made her
put on some clothes. I didn't go
out that night.

Stacy sits on the open sofa bed with dark grey sweatpants and
a white tank top on.

Veronica gets a light grey sweatshirt from a chair and helps
her put it on.

The visitor stands nearby.

Veronica looks at her with a sorry expression.

She nods, then quietly picks up her purse and leaves.
The door closes.

VERONICA (V.O.)

Finally, I got it. Not only did she
have a drug addiction, but she was
also an alcoholic. I had no idea.

Stacy sits on the open sofa bed looking down, defeated.

Veronica looks toward the unfinished kitchen. The ladder. The
paint roller.

VERONICA (V.O.)

That night I called her parents. I
told them that they needed to come
pick her up. They said they might
be able to send her to rehab in Los
Angeles and would call me back the
next morning.

Veronica picks up the phone and dials.

Veronica is on the phone with Stacy's parents.

Veronica brings the phone to Stacy and walks away.

INT. VERONICA'S APARTMENT - DAY

VERONICA (V.O.)

The morning after, her mother
called to say they had found a
rehab center in Beverly Hills ready
to take her in. I loaded her and
her belongings into my car and
drove her there.

Stacy is packing a few last items into a small duffle bag.

Veronica grabs a medium-sized suitcase and they exit the apartment from the living room/front door.

EXT. VERONICA'S GARAGE - DAY

Veronica puts the suitcase into the trunk of her cream-colored VW Rabbit, which is parked in the garage. The garage door is open.

Stacy enters the car from the passenger side.

INT. VERONICA'S CAR - DAY

Veronica drives.

Stacy sits in the passenger seat with the duffle bag on her lap and her arms hanging over the bag.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS REHAB CENTER LOBBY - DAY

An elegant facility.

Stacy sits on a chair with her suitcase and duffel bag next to her.

Veronica stands nearby pacing, eager to leave.

A blonde female doctor in her mid-forties approaches Veronica.

DOCTOR
What happened?

VERONICA
I am just the ride.

VERONICA (V.O.)
The truth was a bit messier. I had unknowingly enabled her by letting her drink.

A nurse approaches Stacy.

Stacy stands and starts to leave the lobby carrying her duffel bag, while the nurse carries the suitcase.

She turns back and waves goodbye.

VERONICA
Goodbye, Stacy. Take care.

INT. VERONICA'S CAR - DAY

Veronica drives through Los Angeles.

VERONICA (V.O.)
As I drove home, I felt relieved
that I had been able to get rid of
her so quickly.

Los Angeles slides past the windshield.

She reaches for the radio dial.

CLICK.

AUDIO: "Drive" by the Cars begins softly.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Then that song came on, and it
marked the beginning of the next
chapter of my life, one that ended
up being a mixture of bravery and
recklessness.

The music rises.

Through the windshield, the road stretches ahead.

Veronica keeps driving.

The song carries.

FADE TO BLACK.