

BLAMING VICTORIA  
(THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS: REDUX)

Written by

J.E. Clarke

**INT. BAR - NIGHT**

A sign hangs over the bar: DUOPOLY NIGHTCLUB. OLIGARCHY  
SATURDAYS: DRINKS AND TOPS HALF OFF!

Your regular Saturday night atmosphere. Lights are low -  
spirits (and attendance) high.

Feet from the dance floor, three women huddle at a table. The  
only ones not on the prowl:

LISA (39) - almost matronly; wise and weary past her prime.

CANDY (18) - dewy, innocent and naive. Everything Lisa's not.

The two flank a skittish VICTORIA (20s). Sipping her Mohito,  
Vicky chews the straw.

And thrusts one arm into the light. Revealing a massive  
BRUISE. Fingerprints dot the wrist, a bracelet of abuse.

A female gasp of solidarity.

CANDY

Who did that to you?

VICTORIA

(dry)

I give you one guess...

CANDY

Trevor promised he'd stop last  
week!

VICTORIA

He didn't mean to. But it was *bad*  
this time. So bad -

CANDY

He almost broke your arm.

VICTORIA

But he loves me. Does that count?

Lisa yanks Victoria forward; drags her face into the light.  
Highlighting ANOTHER NASTY BRUISE across one cheek!

LISA

Three strikes. Trevor's out.

VICTORIA

I can't make him leave. You think  
he's pissed off *now*?

CANDY  
Big deal. We'll call the cops!

Candy leaps to her feet. Cool and calm, Lisa pulls her down.

LISA  
Don't be such a radical. Cops  
aren't babysitters. Someday,  
Vicky'll be alone. And vulnerable.  
But here we are, in a bar *gift-*  
*wrapped* with alternatives. So let's  
be practical and replace Trevor.  
We've got opportunity - so why not?

Candy's jaw drops: excuse me, what?

Lisa scans the pulsing crowd. Her eyes settle on:

DANIEL HILLINGER (30s). Oh-so-photogenic, Daniel mingles with  
a RED-HAIRED date. Both surrounded by a sea of GIRLS.

LISA  
Exhibit B for "Bachelor". Daniel  
Hillinger: Rich. Well connected.  
Knows how to get things done. The  
hands-down finest catch in town!  
(to Vicky)  
A little bird tells me he's been  
crushing on you from afar. If you  
make a move, Mr. D's sure to bite.  
(giggles)  
Not so hard... most nights.

Across the dance floor: Daniel gropes a PUNK TEEN. His red-  
headed date looks upset. Mr. Perfect smirks:

DANIEL  
You don't like it? Lose weight!

The redhead stomps off. Candy shudders.

CANDY  
He doesn't look like a catch to me.

VICTORIA  
How's about I embrace single for  
awhile?

LISA  
Work within the system, girl!

Daniel leers at more women. Lisa sings a siren song of  
"sensibility" in Vicky's ear.

LISA  
Absolutism is immature. No-one's  
perfect. And you've gotta take  
steps incrementally. The perfect's  
the enemy of the good.

Sick to her stomach, Victoria watches Daniel flex.

VICTORIA  
Will he really protect me?

LISA  
Darling, of course. But if he wants  
to do a few... things that make him  
happy: compromise. Be an adult.

Lisa shoves Vicky out of her chair.

LISA  
Consider it a binary choice of  
boyfriends. Don't be a purist. Go!

Though unsure, Vicky does as she's ordered.

Lisa and Candy watch as the girl approaches Daniel. From a  
distance, her overtures are painful - but they work.

Lisa toasts the "new couple" from a distance.

LISA  
See? Trevor will soon be toast!

CANDY  
But won't Daniel hurt Vicky, too?

Lisa sips her Cosmo, self-satisfied.

LISA  
So? He's the lesser of two evils.  
That's a win-win all around!

Daniel leads Vicky towards a backroom. Everything on her face  
screams "no." Lisa shrugs, and swings towards Candy.

LISA  
Hon, let's find you a man next!

FINAL FADE OUT: