

Int. therapy office - day

CLAIRE and STEVEN sit next to each other in separate chairs. MS. BELL sits across from them. Posters about healthy love and companionship are plastered on the walls.

CLAIRE

I just feel like he's not paying enough attention to me. He's always at work and-

Steven interjects. He's heard this countless times.

STEVEN

Yes, but-

MS. BELL

Let's allow Claire to finish.

INT. THERAPY OFFICE - five minutes later

MS. BELL

Thank you for sharing that Mrs. Murphy.

Ms. Bell turns to Steven.

MS. BELL (CONT'D)

Now, Mr. Murphy, please share what's been on *your mind*.

STEVEN

I've honestly just been a little stressed at work. I understand that there are things to do around the house, but sometimes I just want to come home and relax.

Ms. Bell nods, intrigued.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

I want to give Clair all the attention she needs, but I really just need at least a half hour by myself to decompress.

Ms. Bell pinches her lips and thinks hard. She nods in decision, then takes out a stack of cardstock papers from underneath her desk.

MS. BELL

Have you ever heard of the rorschach test?

STEVEN

You mean, like, ink blots? Aren't those outdated?

MS. BELL

Mrs. Murphy, what do you see?

Ms. Bell holds up an ink bot.

CLAIRE

Uh...I see two ravens- looking away from each other.

MS. BELL

Hmm, okay, and Mr. Murphy?

STEVEN

Uhm...I think it's a butterfly.

Ms. Bell looks back at the ink blot, puzzled.

MS. BELL

Well...okay.

STEVEN

Was I right?

Ms. Bell reassures Steven and herself.

MS. BELL

It's not about who's right Mr. Murphy, it's about interpretation.

Ms. Bell holds up a clear silhouette of an elephant and turns to Claire.

MS. BELL (CONT'D)

Now, what about this one?

STEVEN

It's an elepha-

MS. BELL (CONT'D)

Ah- wait your turn Mr.Murphy

He scoffs.

CLAIRE
It looks like...

Claire tilts her head. Steven exhales.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Kinda like...a woman's face screaming

Ms. Bell is almost smiling.

MS. BELL
hmm...interesting. And you Mr-

STEVEN
It's an elephant.

Ms. Bell is genuinely concerned.

MS. BELL
Oh...okay. And finally, what do you see
here?

She holds up another paper with a singular black dot in the center.

MS. BELL (CONT'D)
Mrs. Claire?

A look of horror grows on Claire's face.

CLAIRE
oh, wow. It's- It's all the
responsibilities I have to uphold a
wife!

Claire breaks out into a sob. Steven is horrified for a different reason than Claire.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
It's anguish! It's loneliness! It's our
neighbor paul that lives down the
street-

STEVEN
It's who-

MS. BELL
Please Mr. Murphy!

Claire saddens.

CLAIRE
Oh this is all so overwhelming.

MS. BELL
Don't worry, Claire. Take a breath,
honey.

Ms. Bell turns to Steven.

MS. BELL (CONT'D)
And...Steven, what do you see?

STEVEN
You're kidding me right?

Claire bursts into tears. Ms. Bell lovingly hands her a box of tissues and looks at Steven scoldingly. Steven looks to the side confused and dumbfounded.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
It's a dot.

They all sit in silence except for the occasional sniffle expelled by Claire.

MS. BELL
Well I've seen all that I've needed to see. Mrs, or- miss Murphy, you need to leave this man immediately.

STEVEN
What!

MS. BELL
We already have a protection program set up for women in your situation. You will be safe there.

Ms. Bell pushes a button on the floor and security bursts through the door. They pick up Steven by his arms and drag him out of the room. He screams in confusion on the way out.

MS. BELL (CONT'D)

Don't worry, Claire, everything is okay
now.

Claire nods her head, wipes her nose, and sniffles.

MS. BELL (CONT'D)
That will be 2,000 dollars.