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SIX FEET UNDER "An Open Book"
 CONTINUED:

NATE

GINNIE

I go to Cal State right here in San Bernardino.

CLAIRE

Well, whatever rocks your boat.

RUTH

Claire.

GINNIE

Hey, I love it. By living at home I'm saving a ton of money for grad school. I'm not stuck in some crappy dorm where people are smoking pot and playing loud music all the time. I don't have to call campus police to walk me home from the library so I don't get raped. And I get to stay close to my mom.

HANNAH

That translates as I get to do her laundry.

GINNIE

Not true. I love my mom and I'm not ashamed of it.

HANNAH

Thanks, honey. I love you too.

Ruth looks at Claire pointedly, as if to say "See?" Claire just looks disgusted.

INT. BRENDA'S APARTMENT - THE SAME TIME (DAY 4)

Brenda opens the door, to reveal Nate. We HEAR The Cowboy Junkies' "COMMON DISASTER" on the STEREO.

BRENDA

So how'd it go?

NATE

Oh, it was quite informative. I know what Nathaniel means now.

BRENDA

Mm-hmm.

NATE

And I know you have an I.Q. of one eighty.

(CONTINUED)

START

BRENDA

BRENDA
(a dismissive wave of her hand)
Numbers.

NATE
And I know you had a book written about
you.

Brenda grabs a book from the coffee table, hands it to him.

BRENDA
I signed it for you.

ON THE BOOK IN NATE'S HANDS: On its cover is a shadowy silhouette of a little girl walking away from us. Above this illustration are the words **CHARLOTTE LIGHT AND DARK** by **George Feinberg PhD.**

NATE
Why couldn't you just tell me about this?

BRENDA
Because people always change toward me
after they read it. I was just trying to
make the fun part last as long as it
could.

NATE
So you're kind of scarily brilliant. So
what? I can handle that.

BRENDA
Good.

NATE
What I don't appreciate is the way you
keep making me jump through hoops to get
to know you.

BRENDA
Well, I'm sorry I'm not some well-behaved
little nothing who never challenges you.
But if that's what you're looking for,
you might as well leave right now.

NATE
Whoa. Calm down.

BRENDA
Nate, my entire life people have been
trying to analyze me, and quantify me,
and define me. So they could control me.
Which I hated, naturally.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

So I started making shit up and doing things just to throw them off track, which of course was just a more complicated way of letting them control me. It's a fucking trap. It's a fucking law of physics that the very act of observation changes that which is being observed. And now you're going to read that book and think you know me. Well, you don't. And you won't until I decide that you've earned it.

A beat.

NATE

What do you want from me? Okay? Just tell me. Because I don't have an I.Q. of one eighty, I need some help figuring it out.

BRENDA

I want to know if I'm just a stop along your way.

(off his look)

Oh, I recognize that face. Didn't expect to have this conversation tonight, did you?

A beat.

NATE

Okay, look. We obviously have an intense sexual connection. Which is great. And yes, I would like for there to be something more than that.

BRENDA

Really?

NATE

But I don't think that can ever happen until you trust me, instead of constantly testing me.

BRENDA

Should I trust you?

A beat. This moment has some weight.

NATE

Yes.

Brenda studies him for a long time, then crosses to him and kisses him passionately.