

LIANNA (The Winwood Company, 1982)

LIANNA is the young wife of a film studies professor at a small college. She used to be his student; they had an affair and now have been married several years, much of it unhappily. DICK still sleeps with his students, and takes no pains to hide it from LIANNA. He can't or won't give it up. They have two children now, Spencer, an adolescent, and Theda, in grade school. They live on campus in a house provided by the school. LIANNA wants to be defined by more than her family; she starts taking a night school course, with little support from DICK. He wants her to show up at faculty functions because he's hoping for a promotion and tenure. He's very afraid he'll be passed over. LIANNA takes her course anyway, and soon has an affair with her professor, who happens to be a woman. This hasn't happened to her before; she once had a teenage crush on her camp counselor, but she's lived as a straight person her whole adult life. She doesn't question it, however; she feels she is in love, and almost immediately tells DICK. They've just come back from another faculty party.

DICK has been out of town at a film festival.

INTERIOR. DICK AND LIANNA'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

DICK: ...I mean, it was sort of my responsibility to stay.

LIANNA: I'm sorry, I thought you might wanna come home and talk to me. I thought you'd be tired from your trip.

D: I am tired, but it's part of my job. You know that. These parties are where all the "teacher evaluation" goes on.

L: You're exaggerating.

D: I'm not ex – Forget it. So what did you do with yourself while I was off viewing Lithuanian masterpieces?

L: Nothing. I had an affair.

D: Oh. Congratulations. Anyone I know?

L: Not really.

D: Good. Jerry Carlson was acting kind of strange tonight; I'd hate to think that he had anything on me. An affair, huh? Feel like you've gotten even?

L: That's not why it happened.

D: Was it worth it? Was it the man of your dreams?

L: It wasn't a man.

D: Huh?

L: I said, it wasn't a man.

DICK starts to laugh.

L: What's so funny?

D: You've come a long way from Alberta. How was it – like a drug store paperback?

L: None of your business. I don't know what you're feeling so humorous about.

D: It's just different than if it had been a man –

L: Why? She touched me the same way you –

D: I don't wanna hear about what you did in bed, damnit. Who is it?

L: Ruth Brennan.

D: Ah-ha. The pieces fall into place. I always thought there was something fishy about her.

L: There's nothing fishy about her.

D: She engaged in an unnatural sex act with my wife, I think that's pretty damn fishy. Professor Brennan, huh?

L: That's right.

D: So you're still fucking your teachers.

L: And you're still fucking your students!

D: At least they're the right sex! What'd she do? Come on to you after class, offer you a friendly shoulder to cry on? Tell me, I'm interested in how they operate.

L: Who's "they"?

D: Campfire girls, what the hell do you think I mean?

L: Why are you being this way? You're making everything worse.

D: What the hell, you said it was no big thing.

L: I never said that, Dick.

D: It is a big thing?

L: I know it's probably never occurred to you, but it is possible that I might fall in love with somebody else.

D: With somebody else.

L: With somebody.

D: Well, don't let me stand in your way.

L: I don't intend to.

D: Are you gonna keep seeing her?

L: If she wants me to.

D: The hell you are! Not while you're living with me.

L: Okay, if that's what you want. We'll get a separation.

D: Where do you think you're gonna live? How do you think you're gonna support yourself?

L: What do you mean?

D: Move in with the professor, if you want, whatever. But I want you out of here tomorrow.

L: The hell I will!

D: Did you ever consider what the kids are gonna think? Or our friends and neighbors here in Faculty Land?

L: You're not telling the kids.

D: No. I'll leave that up to you. You'll have to think of something to explain why you're moving out.

L: Why are you being this way?

D: You're giving me a perfect escape route, honey. I'm taking it, that's all.

L: You fucker. You prick!

D: That it, Lianna, let it all out.

L: You always have to win, don't you? And if you lose, you make the other person lose more.

D: Very good, you're psych classes must be finally paying off. Must be all that private tutoring.

L: You made up your mind in Toronto, didn't you? You came back to ask for a separation, and then I dumped it right in your lap.

D: I did a lot of thinking while I was in Toronto.

L: You're not taking the kids from me, Dick.

D: That depends on you, and whether you're a true convert to the fold, or just hot for the first friendly piece of ass you –

L: God damn you – !

She flies at him and a physical struggle ensues. He overpowers her.

D: I'll hurt you back, Lianna! I will! No matter how much you think you can hurt me. I can hurt you more! Understand!