

GOING OUT

by

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Alternate Titles:

DO I DARE?

A SUDDEN LEAP

EACH TO EACH

A FARTHER ROOM

FORCE THE MOMENT

INDECISIONS

TALKING OF MICHALANGELO

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MORNING

A beat-up Ford PINTO hugs the rise and fall of the road as it glides through lush horse country of Chester County, Pennsylvania. TITLES superimpose while Baroque harpsichord MUSIC plays in counterpart.

In the Pinto we see two young men in their late twenties. The driver, MARK HAYWARD, has a cigarette hanging from his lip. The other, JOE BURNS, is looking out the window, stoned on the view.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE, PARKING LOT - MORNING

Mark and Joe pull up to a convenience store and park in front of the main doors. Excerpts from classic poets (Eliot, Whitman, Kipling, Yeats and Keats) can now be seen painted all over Mark's Pinto.

ANGLE - THROUGH THE PASSENGER WINDOW - MORNING

Although Mark and Joe are dressed in "work" clothes, Joe's attire is much flashier. Joe's personality is also much flashier, even though he's a complete realist. Mark, the eternal *idealist*, is quiet, internally strong and the nicest guy you could ever meet. He listens, as Joe reads job opportunities from a newspaper, but has massive amounts of attention on the good-looking chicks (LAURA and SUE) bopping in and out of the convenience store. As yet another chick (DONNA) struts by, Mark pipes up to Joe.

INT. PINTO - MARK AND JOE - MORNING

MARK
(referring to Donna)
Joe! Did you see that one?

JOE
(looking up)
Hmm ... not bad.
(then reading aloud)
Day laborers wanted. Long hours,
but good pay. Don't call unless
you're tough.

Joe chuckles, circles the ad with a pencil and looks over at Mark. Slightly annoyed, he continues.

JOE
Hey ... are you listening, Mark?

MARK
(attention on chicks)
Sure.

Mark stretches his neck to watch a particularly nice one.

ANGLE - SNOOTY GIRL

A better than average looking snooty girl, ANNA, struts by the Pinto towards the store entrance. As she passes within earshot:

MARK
(to Anna)
Hi ... do you know what time it is?

Anna swings around and looks at Mark, then his car.

ANNA
(sneering)
Why don't you buy a watch.

ANGLE - MARK AND JOE

Mark is dashed. Anna stalks off toward the entrance, hardly missing a beat.

MARK
(after a moment)
I think we should move to another neighborhood.

JOE
Why?

MARK
Too many stuck up girls around here.
(beat)
Try to be friendly to 'em and they practically sneer at you.

JOE
They're the same all over.
(he looks Mark over)
It's your car and clothes, man. You look like a farmworker.

MARK

(annoyed)

Well, any girl that can't see past a guy's car and clothes is nothing but a ...

(looking for precise word)

... a powder puff.

JOE

(still reading)

Yeah, yeah ...

ANGLE - BEHIND MARK'S HEAD IN BACKGROUND

While Mark is recovering, an expensive yellow Mercedes convertible pulls up with the top down. The driver, CARLA, is an exceptionally good-looking girl with short brunette hair in her twenties. Mark does a triple-take.

ANGLE - MERCEDES

Carla gets out and heads into the convenience store. She wears an alluring warm-weather dress.

ANGLE - MARK & JOE

JOE

(awed)

Now there's a gorgeous piece of machinery.

Mark looks up, sees Carla and gives a low whistle.

MARK

(almost awed)

Yeah, and if you spoke two words to her, she'd probably think you were about to commit rape.

Joe chuckles and goes back to circling job opportunities as he states his philosophy of women:

JOE

I'll tell you Mark, I've been studying of this phenomenon of women for quite some time and I've come to the conclusion that, since the good looking ones are always having to fight off men who are trying to pick 'em up ... you know what?

(beat)

The prettier they are ... the
bitchier they *have* to be!

Mark is looking down a little despondent, when, in the background, we see Carla emerge from the convenience store, approach her car and get in.

MARK
(agreeing with Joe)
Really.

Mark, hearing a car-start in the background, looks over and sees Carla.

CARLA - CLOSE UP

Carla notices Mark and gives him a warm, friendly smile, as she backs out of frame.

ANGLE - MARK

Mark is jaw-frozen. After a beat he turns to Joe, who is totally oblivious to what just happened:

MARK
(excited, to Joe)
Hey ... you had calls to make on
those ads? Right?

JOE
Yeah ...
(pointing to several)
One, two, three ...

With a little difficulty, Mark starts the car, then flips Joe a dollar bill on the line below.

MARK
Good, go make them ...

He then looks out of his window at the Mercedes, which is now pulling out of the parking lot.

MARK
(continuing frantically)
...I'll be back in a few minutes.

JOE
(confused)
Where you going?!

MARK
(with an ear-to-ear grin)
I'm going to get a date with that
girl ... she just gave me a really
nice smile.

Joe tries to keep from laughing, which aggravates Mark.

MARK
(continuing louder)
Come on!
(shoving Joe)
Get out!!

JOE
(starting to get out of
the car)
Ah, come on Mark. Get real. She'll
think you're an asshole.

MARK
(bearing down)
Nobody says I'm an asshole.

Joe swivels his hand and wrist limply to feign being
impressed.

JOE
Whoaaaa ...

MARK
(now yelling and pushing
more)
Now come on get out! Get out!

Mark pushes Joe the rest of the way out of the car door and
backs away leaving Joe in frame with a newspaper and pencil
in hand. Joe scratches his head and walks out of frame.

ANGLE - PINTO CHASING

Mark pulls out of the parking lot and tears after a girl in a
yellow Mercedes.

ANGLE - MERCEDES CRUISING

The Mercedes heads toward CAMERA which pans with it as Carla
makes a left hand turn.

ANGLE - CARLA IN MERCEDES

We see a close up of Carla looking good, driving in the sunlight with hair blowing effortlessly. She is truly worth chasing.

ANGLE - PINTO CHASING

In a similar shot, Mark's Pinto heads toward CAMERA which pans with it as he misses the left hand turn Carla made and goes straight. Realizing his mistake, Mark slams on the breaks and comes to a screeching, sloppy stop.

ANGLE - CARLA IN MERCEDES

Hearing a screech in the background, Carla nonchalantly looks in the rear view mirror - but keeps going, oblivious to Mark's obsessive chase.

INT. PINTO - MORNING

From a low angle, we SEE Mark looking around for the Mercedes. Giving up, he rests his head on the steering wheel, as the engine of his beat-up Pinto stalls.

MARK

Damn!

EXT. MERCEDES PULLS INTO A PARK - MORNING

Carla's Mercedes pulls into a little park, sweeping by the CAMERA in an impressive shot. She parks, gets out and starts walking onto the grass holding a designer bag.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - MORNING

Joe is standing there talking on his cell phone as Mark pulls back up to where they were originally parked. Joe ends his call and walks up to Mark in the Pinto, a little miffed.

JOE

(looking at his watch)

I wish you'd pick some other time to go on your wild goose chases. This is costing us money. I just got us a job.

Mark sits there staring out the windshield, despondent.

MARK

I lost her.

JOE

(a little hostile)

What would you do if you found her,
ask her for a date in your Pinto?

Mark gives him a sour look.

EXT. PARK - LATE MORNING

Carla has laid down a blanket and is in process of getting a script out of her bag for a quiet, peaceful study. Nearby, in the background, we see a MOTHER and her little BOY sitting on a bench.

The little boy, noticing Carla, wanders over in child-like curiosity to see what she is doing. As he nears, Carla implies a gentle "hello" with a nod of her head.

BOY

(dropping to his knees)

What are you doing?

CARLA

I'm practicing what I'm going to
say in a play that I'm doing.

The boy looks blankly at her.

BOY

Do you do plays where you pretend
you're ... somebody else?

CARLA

That's right.

BOY

Last year, I made pretend I was a
gardiator.

CARLA

(chuckling)

You mean, "gladiator"?

BOY

Yes.

CARLA

Well ...
 (indicating her script)
 ... in this play, I pretend I'm a
 lady of the night.

BOY

(with a quizzical look)
 Then why do you come here during
 the days?

CARLA

(laughing, then)
 Oh, I like it here. It's quiet,
 peaceful ... and beautiful.

BOY

That's why my Mom comes here.

CARLA

(smiling)
 Right, she's got the idea.
 (beat)
 Okay ... listen ... I need to get
 back to my reading now. Would that
 be okay with you?

BOY

(growing shy)
 Sure ... except
 (a beat)
 when I grow up ... can I kiss you?

Carla looks surprised at what has just come out of a 12-year
 older's mouth.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATE MORNING

CAMERA pulls back from a pick-axe hitting dirt to track past
 a busy construction site where a residential house is being
 built. There are THREE CARPENTERS and a BUILDER (standing
 with arms akimbo) working here and there. In the background,
 we can SEE the Builder cursing at one of his CARPENTERS as he
 holds a beer. CAMERA settles on Mark and Joe who are wielding
 shovel and pick-axe, respectively, digging a ditch along the
 driveway. Mark looks like he's taking out some frustration on
 the dirt. Nearby an ELECTRICIAN in hard hat is screwing an
 electrical box onto a stud.

JOE

I hate these jobs.

MARK
 (elsewhere)
 I gotta get a new distributor.

JOE
 I gotta get a new career!

MARK
 (idealistically)
 Hey, it's not so bad ... get to
 work outside in a lovely
 environment. Plenty of fresh air,
 exercise ... the warmth of good
 fellowship all around you. Be glad
 you're alive Joe.

We continue to hear the Builder yelling in the background, as
 a new voice enters the blend:

FIRST CARPENTER (O.S.)
 Hey dummy, get that two-by-four off
 my foot, will ya.

SECOND CARPENTER (O.S.)
 It's called a three-by-four, and
 move it yourself pansy!

Joe gives a sarcastic look toward the carpenters as he starts
 digging ever closer to the electrician.

JOE
 (to Mark)
 Nothing but a bunch of dirty,
 smelly, loud-mouth, redneck, hard-
 hats.

Noticing that he is now too near the electrician to take a
 full swing:

JOE
 (to electrician)
 Hey, mind moving back some ...
 unless you want a pick-axe up
 your

The electrician quickly turns and removes "his" hard hat.
 Long brown hair tumbles out, as Joe realizes that the
 electrician is actually an attractive chick.

JOE
 (taken back)
 ... your ... uh ...

(laughs nervously)
... hi...

ELECTRICIAN
(slightly annoyed)
Hi.

The Electrician gives Joe a wry smile and moves aside, going back to work. After a moment, Joe slinks back over to Mark, who is amused. He puts his pick-axe down.

JOE
(swiping his nose, aside
to Mark)
Okay, watch this.

Joe crosses back over to the electrician and leans against a 2 x 6 exterior stud, as she continues to work, not paying much attention.

JOE
(a little nervous)
So, do you work construction often?

She laughs and shakes her head in amused disbelief.

ELECTRICIAN
No ... not really. You see, these
places are always full of such
(looking Joe over)
dirty, smelly, grubby, loud-mouthed
people.

JOE
(not getting it)
Yeah, I know what you mean.
(beat)
What's your name anyway?

ELECTRICIAN
Linda.

JOE
Well hi Linda ... I'm Joe.

LINDA
(impatiently)
Oh.

Joe is running low on good questions, so there's an awkward silence.

JOE
Have you been in this line of work
long?

LINDA
Yes, but I'm going to be quitting
soon.

JOE
(assured)
Yeah, a girl like you shouldn't be
working in a place like this.

She looks amused, not fully able to figure out if this guy
(Joe) is slick or just mental.

JOE
(continuing)
You could be doing dental hygiene,
or working in a hospital or
something.

LINDA
(wryly)
Well ... I will be in a hospital
in about ... six months.

JOE
(not understanding)
Oh, good. Which one?

LINDA
Paoli Memorial.

JOE
Oh, yes ... that's a fine one.

LINDA
(wryly)
Yes ... we think so too.

Another awkward silence. Joe is struggling with what his
next question will be so he isn't really in present time.

JOE
Say ... how'd you like to go to
lunch later.

LINDA
Thanks ... but we brought our
lunch.

JOE

We?

LINDA

My husband and I.

She quickly indicates one of the carpenters, at some distance who is now staring with a scowl on his face. Joe looks over at him. He then looks at Mark, who is standing there quite amused, and then back to Linda. His mouth drops a little. Nervous, and finally at a total loss for words, he stands there blank as the Builder steps into the scene.

BUILDER

(yelling at Joe and Mark)

Hey ... I'm not paying you guys to stand around here and BS all day. Speed it up.

Joe crosses back over to Mark at the ditch and begins to pick away much more quickly. Mark dumps a shovel-load as he looks at the Builder who is walking away, towards CAMERA.

JOE

(under his breath)

Nerd ... all he does is stand around and drink beer.

MARK

(loud)

And piss.

BUILDER

(hearing this, he turns)

What was that?

MARK

(brazenly)

And piss.

BUILDER

What about it?

MARK

It's yellow.

BUILDER

Boy ... you're a strange one.

(beat)

Just get outta jail or something?

MARK
 (quietly)
 No ...
 (beat)
 I'm a poet.

BUILDER
 (snorting)
 Same difference! A kook!

Mark gives him a cold look, but continues working. His shovel slams into the earth, as the Builder leaves.

DISSOLVE

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SITTING BY HOUSE - NOON

Joe and Mark are sitting on a pile of lumber eating lunch. Mark is also writing on a notepad. Joe looks at the notepad.

JOE
 What are you doing?

MARK
 I'm writing a poem.

JOE
 Oh yeah? What's it about?

MARK
 That girl this morning ... and her smile.

JOE
 (chuckling)
 Too much.
 (beat)
 Read it to me.

Mark surveys Joe's face for signs of mockery, but finding none, starts in.

MARK
 It's not finished yet, but I'll read you what I have so far.
 (beat)
 "Your wondrous glance; Pranced across that pasture of chance, and brought my somberness to bay; By the way you looked at me; And made promise of what romance could be.

How do you meet a person; A girl so
sweet; In a random moment; In the
middle of the street? Smooth
polished person; One pebble a
shrine; Shows there's a difference;
Chance by design. Your lovely face
in the crowd; A scream in the
silence; An excitement so loud ..."

Just as Mark finishes and looks up at Joe for his reaction, the Builder steps into frame holding a cup of coffee. As the Builder speaks (having over heard the poem), three other carpenters and Linda look over to see what's happening.

BUILDER
(loudly mocking)
Oh, lover boy ... that was so
pretty. Would you write me a poem
too?

Mark makes no response, but searches the ground for something. Finding it - a pebble - he picks it up and deftly lobs it. The pebble arcs through the air and plops right into the Builder's coffee, splashing him in the face and hand. All break into laughter, except the Builder, who now simmers in rage.

BUILDER
(angrily)
Punk. You owe me a cup of coffee
... and I want it now.

Mark, who has gone back to working on his poem, places as little attention on the Builder as possible, barely even looking up.

MARK
(matter-of-factly)
Boy you can never tell when one one
of those seagulls'll fly by ... and
pass a kidney stone, right into
your coffee.

Linda, Joe and carpenters laugh as the Builder tosses the coffee cup down and drunkenly lunges off the half-finished door frame to kick Mark with his big muddy boot. Mark, being sober and quick, jumps up and intercepts the kick mid-swing. Mark grabs the Builder's boot and jacks his leg way up in the air, causing him to desperately hop on the other leg to maintain his balance. The Builder looks quite ridiculous.

BUILDER
Let go of my leg punk or I'll kick
the hell outta you!

MARK
 (laughs)
 With what, your other leg!?

BUILDER
 Punk, you're getting me pissed off!

MARK
 You better calm down now buddy,
 before someone gets hurt.

From a LONG SHOT, we SEE the Builder looking even more ridiculous trying to take arm-length swings at Mark - who is distinctly a leg-length away, and in full control.

BUILDER
 Someone gets hurt?! I'll plaster
 you all over the rafters, you kook.

MARK
 (getting close to a ditch)
 Look, I told you to calm down. Are
 you going to listen to my advice?

BUILDER
 Sure. After I break you in half.
 You freak!

Mark shoves the Builder into the water-filled ditch.

MARK
 Cool off buddy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MARK & JOE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - EVENING

Having just showered, Joe is reaching for some deodorant and trying to look at the positive side of the day's events. Mark is evidently in a nearby room, as Joe shouts.

JOE
 (so Mark can hear)
 Ah who cares if we got fired, it
 was only a one-day job ...
 (with exuberance)
 ... and anyway, it's Friday! Yip,
 yip, yip! T.G.I.F.! Ready to
 blast outta here and boogie?

As Joe delivers the last line, he accentuates his enthusiasm with little blasts of deodorant, using the spray as rocket thrusts, he "blasts" into the living room.

INT. MARK & JOES' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Mark is sitting on the couch writing. He looks up, despondent, as Joe comes blasting in.

MARK

Nah, you go. I wanna write.

JOE

Come on ... I hear a lot of foxes hit this place on Friday nights.

(beat)

Besides, that one you saw in the Mercedes might be there!

Mark suddenly stops writing and looks up, as Joe blasts out of FRAME.

MARK

(quietly)

Humm, now that's a thought with some teeth!

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN HARVARD NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

This is an intimate, nicely-appointed club with the right volume of fast-paced music and about 50 ATTRACTIVE PEOPLE dancing and having fun.

ANGLE - TABLE

Mark and Joe are just settling down at a table as they look over the scenery.

JOE

How 'bout it ... would I steer you wrong?

Mark shrugs indifferently. After all, he does not see the girl in the Mercedes - yet. Joe, sensing this, goes for a distraction by leaning over to a good-looking brunette, BETTY, sitting nearby.

JOE
 (to the brunette)
 Hello, beautiful. What's your name?

BETTY
 (blandly)
 Betty.

With this, Betty turns her head away, and Joe "ceases to exist." The music ends. Joe looks dejected.

MARK
 (tugging on Joe's collar;
 sarcastically)
 It's your clothes, man ... you look like a farmworker.

A slow song starts. Joe looks down at his checkered shirt as both are oblivious to the fact that a guy in the background (who looks like a FARMWORKER), has walked up to Betty and is taking her out to the dance floor.

MARK
 (continuing)
 Now watch me.

Mark gets up and leaves frame towards two girls at a nearby table.

ANGLE - NEARBY TABLE

A willowy brunette, DIANE, sits enthusiastically talking (about her ex-) with a redhead, named LISA, as she stuffs popcorn in her mouth. Mark approaches their table after a moment, bends over Diane's shoulder, and, in a very gentlemanly fashion, interrupts Diane.

DIANE
 ... and so, I told the pig I was moving out and didn't want to discuss it ... know what he said?

MARK
 (politely)
 Excuse me for interrupting, but would you care to dance?

DIANE
 (looking up at him coldly)
 No!
 (very unfriendly tone)
 I'm talking to my friend!

She looks back at her friend to ignore Mark and rolls her eyes back as she stuffs another wade of popcorn in her mouth.

MARK

(taken back)

Oh I see, I guess that means I don't get a blow-job either?

Joe, overhearing this, bulges at the eyes. Diane gasps in shock and looks over at her friend - who just stares straight at Mark with a stern look on her face.

DIANE

(abhorred)

I beg your pardon ... what did I hear you say?!

Mark moves closer so he's right in her face.

MARK

(firmly and distinctly)

I said: I guess that means I don't get a blow-job either.

DIANE

(after moment of shock)

We don't have to be subjected to crudeness like that. I'm going to get the manager.

She gets up with a little huff and leaves. Mark throws off the seriousness with a laugh and takes a seat at the table opposite Lisa. Lisa does *not* look happy.

MARK

(being real friendly)

Hey, I'm just trying to be honest. What's wrong with that? It's the truth isn't it?

Lisa sits there staring at Mark. Nothing to say.

MARK

(continuing; with charm)

... the mathematical chances are, I'm not ever going get a date with a chick if she won't even dance with me.

LISA

(breaking the silence)

You're a real wise guy!

(takes a sip from her
drink)

ANGLE - DIANE

Diane has just arrived at the bar.

DIANE
Give me your manager.

BARTENDER
(joking)
Want that on the rocks or with a
twist?

DIANE
(getting angry)
No ... there's some crude guy over
there being rude to my friend.

BARTENDER
(attempting a joke)
Oh, must be one of our regulars ...

Diana snorts. The bartender sees she's in no mood.

BARTENDER
... only kidding madam.
(pointing) The manager is
through those doors.

ANGLE - BACK AT DIANE & LISA'S TABLE

Lisa is just finishing a long sip from a straw leading into a large, colorful drink. She looks up at Mark sternly for another beat ... and then breaks into a slight smile.

LISA
You're actually right,
(beat)
she was rather curt with you, so
I'll consider a dance.

Mark extends his hand out in a grand gesture, a real gentleman. After a small pause, she accepts it and the two make their way to the dance floor. Joe, seeing this, again rolls his eyes back in total disbelief.

ANGLE - MANAGER & DIANE

Diane is explaining "everything" to the MANAGER as the two make their back into the main part of the club. They stop at the edge of the crowd.

DIANE

... and he came over to our table
... I tell you, he was so rude, my
friend was abhorred.

MANAGER

(looking at his watch)
Okay, where is he?

DIANE

(pointing to their table)
He's right over ...
(and seeing that the
table's empty, scans the
room, pointing)
... that's him ...
(amazed)
... he's dancing with my friend!

The Manager looks over and sees Mark and Lisa on the dance floor, dancing in close embrace. From his expression, the Manager has it all figured out - jealousy.

MANAGER

(routinely)
It doesn't look like he's bothering
her.

Diane sulks at this.

MANAGER

(consoling, patting her
shoulder)
Look, there's a lot of guys that
would like to dance with you. Why
don't you go pick out another one.

Diane brushes his hand off her shoulder and stalks towards club exit sign, fuming.

ANGLE - DANCE FLOOR

Mark and Lisa look like they are getting along just fine.

LISA

(playfully)
So, what's your name smart-ass?

MARK

(just as playfully)
Hey, I don't have to be subjected
to crudeness like that.

LISA
 (intrigued)
 No, come on! What's your name?

MARK
 Spike.

LISA
 Spike?!

MARK
 (laughing)
 No ... it's Mark. Mark Hayward.

LISA
 (warmly)
 I'm Lisa.

They continue laughing as Lisa smiles warmly at Mark, now obviously charmed. Mark confronts her gaze directly with a smile of his own ... but something else is on his mind.

MARK
 Tell me Lisa. What does it mean
 when a girl smiles that way at a
 guy?

LISA
 (a little taken back)
 Well ... it could mean different
 things. She likes him ... she's
 attracted to him ... or maybe she's
 just in a good mood and feels like
 smiling at everyone.

MARK
 (sadly thoughtful)
 Could be in just a good mood, huh?

LISA
 (then, provocatively)
 Yeah, but that's not what it
 usually means.

MARK
 (brightening)
 Really?

She nods. They look at one another. They continue dancing. As the music ends, Lisa looks nervously at Mark wondering if he'll ask her for another dance.

MARK
 (stepping back a bit)
 Thanks for the dance, Lisa.
 (beat)
 I hope your friend recovers.

LISA
 (referring to Diane)
 She will. She's just going through
 a bad time, so I'm letting her stay
 with me for a while.

MARK
 I see.
 (beat)

LISA
 Well, maybe I'll ask you for the
 next dance.

MARK
 (laughs)
 Sure.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MARK & JOES' KITCHEN - MORNING

Joe walks from the stove stirring a cup of coffee to sit at the breakfast table where he starts punching vitamins out of an assortment of bottles. A glass of water and the classifides are also present. A crystal pendant swings from Joe's neck. Mark enters, a little hungover, no shirt and holding up a remnant roll of toilet paper.

MARK
 (irritated)
 ... It's your turn to buy toilet
 paper.

JOE
 You can waste a perfectly good car,
 but when it comes to toilet paper
 it's my turn ...
 (changing the subject,
 sarcastically)
 Looks like you hit it off pretty
 good with ...
 (trying to remember)
 Lisa's ... friend last night!

MARK

(chuckling)

No ... but Lisa was okay. In fact,
she taught me something

(sits at table)

If a girl smiles at you, it means
that she might like you. But it
can also mean that's she just in a
friendly mood.

JOE

(with a no-kidding-cosmo
look)

Okay ... so?

MARK

They're out there. I bet if you
can find a girl who loves your
poetry, she'll love you too!

JOE

And I'm telling you, that kind of
idealism went out in the 60's.

MARK

I doubt that.

JOE

Well I doubt that.

The two are now at their usual stalemate, so they just go
about preparing and eating their breakfasts. For a good 10
seconds they say nothing to each other. Then Mark breaks the
silence.

MARK

That girl in the Mercedes ... it's
Saturday, she's probably sleeping
late so her car'll be parked right
outside her house.

JOE

So what?

MARK

(almost in a trance)

I think I'm going to try and find
her ...

(laughs at the thought)

give her my poem.

JOE
(floored)
Ah, come on Mark! Girls don't want poetry! They want beaucoup bucks, fancy restaurants, flashy diamonds, and FAST cars.

Just then the door bell rings and STEVE, a friend, drops by. Steve is a good looking guy who is obviously a bodybuilder.

STEVE
Mark, Joe what's happening?

JOE
Hey, Steve. What's up?

STEVE
Not much. Mind if I join you?

MARK
Not at all.

STEVE
I've been looking for Roger.

MARK
He's probably down at the park jogging off his hangover.
(beat)

JOE
So what's new with you?

STEVE
I finally got approved on my mortgage, so I move in next weekend.

MARK
That's great. Seems everyone wants to live here at Old Forge.

JOE
Yeah, but it's too bad banks give you such a hassle to do it just because you're not a millionaire.
(looks at Mark)

STEVE
I know, they're not much more trusting than women ...

MARK

... speaking of ... I ran into this real cute one in the WAWA parking lot yesterday, but I lost her in traffic.

STEVE

(quizzically)
O-kay.

JOE

He took off after her.

STEVE

Well you know how it is, the ones you want, you can never get.

JOE

And the ones you could care less about, piss on you unless you're filthy rich.

MARK

Well I don't know if I would burn that into stone, Joe. There are some really nice ladies out there just waiting to be discovered. You just have to use the right tools.

STEVE

You mean tool?

MARK

Tools, Steve. Plural.

JOE

And what might those ... tools ... be Mark?

MARK

An honest genuine smile. Good intentions. Knowing what you want. Not being a pig, or just out to satisfy your own ego. Being caring, understanding, perhaps even having a sense of humor. In a sentence: you need to deliver some good virtue yet be firm and gentle.

JOE

And those are *your* tools?

MARK

Basically. Of course a nice poem always helps, as I may have mentioned. One that expresses your feelings, lets her know who you are as a being.

JOE

Totally unrealistic Mark!

MARK

(getting a little pissed)
I told you, stop calling me unrealistic, Joe.

STEVE

(breaking in)
And all fine after the fact. But none of that shit will get you up to bat. To do that you need good looks ...

JOE

(interjecting)
And maybe a BMW ...

STEVE

... big muscles. Abs. Biceps. A tan man. You gotta have the superior physique gentlemen.

MARK

I don't know Steve. I think most women are happy with a man if he makes an effort to be clean, well groomed, healthy and has an *acceptable* physique.

JOE

Nonsense. Both of you. Bucks ... pure and simple, win out every time.

MARK

Well, I guess we all have our philosophies.... I'm going out and search for that girl that gave me a really nice smile. She'll respond to a good poem. You wait and see.

JOE

But she could be anywhere Mark.

MARK
 (undaunted)
 She's gotta live around here
 somewhere, otherwise she wouldn't
 be shopping in the neighborhood.

JOE
 (worrying about Mark's
 sanity)
 You haven't got anything better to
 do?

CUT TO:

EXT. CARLA'S CONDO - MORNING

The Mercedes sits parked: right outside Carla's place, just
 as Mark postulated.

INT. CARLA'S KITCHEN

Carla is getting ready to leave when Diane, the one Mark
 insulted at the nightclub, wanders into the kitchen, hung
 over.

DIANE
 Where's Lisa?

CARLA
 (real pleasant)
 She's at Trader Joes. And she told
 me about last night!
 (beat)
 How are you feeling now?

DIANE
 (miserably sarcastic)
 Oh fine. Once I am firmly able to
 internalize the fact that some
 guys,
 (revising herself)
 all guys ... are just fucking pigs,
 I'm fine.

CARLA
 I know, he was a real weirdo. Don't
 worry, there will be brighter days.

DIANE

It's not the days I'm worried about. How dare Lisa not stick up for me.

CARLA

Well, why don't you join me at the park this morning, I found this perfect little place to relax.

DIANE

No you go. I'm just not in the mood. Maybe next weekend.

CARLA

Okay. Talk to you later. Bye.

With this, Carla walks out the door and gets into her Mercedes.

EXT. MARK'S CAR - MORNING

Mark's battered Pinto rounds a corner just missing CAMERA, as we see him scanning each driveway he passes.

ANGLE - INSIDE MARK'S CAR

Mark is earnestly searching, looking at both sides of the road. Suddenly, he thinks of something.

MARK

(to himself)

Gosh, what am I going to say to her?!

(after thinking a moment)

Hi ... I saw you at a store yesterday and you had such a nice smile, I just had to look you up.

EXT. PARK - MORNING

Carla has now settled in her usual place to study her lines and nibble on a sandwich when ROGER, a tall man with bright yellow hair, jogs by in clashing red and orange running shorts. Carla doesn't notice him, but Roger notices Carla. He continues running for about a dozen paces, then stops and walks back, grooming his hair by hand as he approaches. Carla looks up at him, just after he begins speaking.

ROGER
 (deftly)
 You had such a nice smile, I just
 had to stop and talk with you for a
 while. What's your name?

CARLA
 (friendly, but on her
 guard)
 Carla.

ROGER
 (announcing tone)
 Well hello Carla. I'm Roger.

CARLA
 (meekly, but trying to be
 friendly)
 Oh.

ROGER
 I hope you don't mind a complete
 stranger coming up and talking to
 you this bright Saturday afternoon?

She gives him a token smile with a hint of annoyance

INT. MARK'S PINTO - MONOLOGUE

Mark is on the road, still searching for Carla and practicing
his lines.

MARK
 How 'bout: I hope you don't mind a
 complete stranger just walking up
 to you, but I couldn't help
 noticing how lovely you are....

EXT. PARK

Roger is now standing at the edge of Carla's blanket trying
 to develop a conversation, but she does not appear
 comfortable.

ROGER
 ... and I just graduated summa cum
 laude from Harvard and naturally
 took the best offer:
 (lying)

deputy counsel, Eastern Regional
Division of Duane, Morris and
Heckler.

CARLA
(raising an eyebrow)
Oh ...

ROGER
But don't let me bore you with my
credentials. Say, I'll bet you're
into natural foods and all that.
How 'bout coming down to the
Villanova auditorium next Saturday
with me: there's a holistic health
and natural food convention going
on.

CARLA
Well ... no thanks.

ROGER
(adjusting his tact)
Oh ... well how 'bout a toot of
coke?

Carla is too amazed at this to have a response.

ROGER
(quickly)
I got a spoon in the car.

CARLA
(tongue-in-cheek)
Real holistic!

ROGER
(quickly turning)
Great! I'll go get it.

CARLA
(starting to get annoyed)
No, I have to get back to my play.

ROGER
Oh, I'll take your phone and give
you a call later.

CARLA
No.

ROGER
No?

CARLA

No!

ROGER

Well okay.

Roger gets up and leaves with the attitude that she just lost out on the biggest thing that could have entered her life.

INT. PINTO - MORNING

Mark has a road map open and he's systematically checking off the streets he's so far searched. He's getting frustrated.

MARK

Oh wait. I'm driving all over town looking for one particular chick that just happened to smile at me. Am I insane?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONDO COMPLEX - LATE MORNING

BILL, the Builder (who happens to be Diane's ex-) and Anna, (the snooty girl who wouldn't give Mark the time of day), are just finishing up with some sweaty, sloppy sex in a queen-size water bed. Anna flops over on her back.

ANNA

Boy I needed that. I was starting to become a little snooty ... even to complete strangers.

BUILDER

Yeah.

ANNA

(a little irritated)
What do you mean, "yeah?"

BUILDER

I mean, yeah, I needed that too. All my Ex does these days is bitch and eat cheese.

BILL the Builder, pops a beer and walks into the bathroom where we can distinctly hear him taking a piss.

ANNA
So this place is yours?

BUILDER
Damn right. In fact, I built these
units two years ago.

ANNA
(looking around)
Does your Ex mind me being here?

BUILDER
Of course not. She has her
friends, I have mine.

ANNA
Where's she now?

BUILDER
Staying with a friend.
(after a moment)
What time is it anyway?

ANNA
(snootily)
Why do you always ask me that
question right after I fuck you?

BUILDER
Because I'm starved.

CUT TO:

INT. PORCHE - BUILDER & ANNA

ANNA
Nice Porche. What's her top speed?

BUILDER
Fast as you'd ever want to go, Anna
baby.

ANNA
I like fast cars.
(beat)
Where we going?

BUILDER
I have this little restaurant in
mind. Nothing too fancy.

INT. MARK & JOE'S APARTMENT - NOON

Back at the apartment, Mark is slouched on the couch, feet up on the coffee table, remote-controlling his way through channels. Nearby, Joe is polishing his shoes.

JOE

They always look at your shoes to see if you have money.

(seeing Mark's despondence)

Forget her Mark. It's a big world. The chances of running into her again are nada.

Mark looks over at Joe, hating to admit that he might be right. The doorbell rings. Joe opens it and in pops Roger the Jogger, still in his clashing red/orange get-up.

JOE

(up-beat)

Roger!

ROGER

(announcing tone)

Well hello Joe!

JOE

Come on in ... but don't make any negative comments to Mark ... He's recuperating from a bad case of femaleitis. Real bad.

ROGER

(thinking it a real disease)

Well, should I come back next weekend when he's all better?

They walk into the living room. Seeing Roger, Mark brightens up, as Joe goes back to polishing his shoes.

MARK

(warmly)

Hey, Roger. What's up?

ROGER

Been over to the park. Ran into this really cute chick.

MARK

Yeah? I was over that way this morning ...

JOE

(trying not to be negative)

... trying to find some chick that, he didn't know, hardly knew, that gave him a real nice smile the other day in a parking lot.

Roger gives Joe a weird look and then, after a beat:

ROGER

Well this one turned out to be a bitch-on-wheels, so don't feel bad Mark.

JOE

As I told Mark ... the prettier they are ... the bitchier they have to be. Plain. Simple. Technical. Do you believe me now Mark?

Mark looks over at Joe and winces. Then, after a moment.

MARK

(old idealistic self)

I hate to think there's strife between the sexes. Maybe she was just having her period.

ROGER

That's what I think too.

MARK

Well, now that we solved that, let's grab a bite to eat.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. LISA & CARLA'S CONDO - NOON

Slamming the door, Carla has just exited her Mercedes and heads inside, irritated. She calls out.

CARLA

Lisa. Diane.

Pushing the door open, she stalks into Lisa's bedroom (the girl Mark met the night before at the nightclub). Lisa is in process of getting dressed, eating a salad, as she slips on a shirt.

CARLA
(exasperated)
Gawd, you wouldn't believe this creep in the park.

LISA
Why? What happened?

CARLA
I don't even want to *think* about it.

LISA
The usual?

She nods affirmative.

CARLA
Why can't guys leave us alone?
(beat)
Are you going out tonight?

LISA
The Berwyn Tavern. I'm hoping to run into this really cute guy I met last night at the Paddock.

CARLA
Not that pig that insulted Diane!

LISA
Carla, she's the one who was impolite first! All he did was ask her to dance. Is that a crime?

CARLA
(in her mood)
Yes. Yes it is! Asking anything is a crime.

LISA
Ah come on Carla. Calm down. Why don't you join me ... I'll drive.

CARLA
Okay, I think you'll need to. I'm feeling distinctly vicious today.
(after a moment)

So why are you going to the Berwyn Tavern if you met him at the Paddock?

LISA

Because he probably won't be at the same place two nights in a row. He's got class.

INT. BERWYN TAVERN - AFTERNOON

Mark, Joe, Roger and Steve are enjoying what looks like their 10th beer, as they listen to another intellectual point.

MARK

... I don't know exactly how one would spell it, Roger, but there must be at least three "Rs" in it.

ROGER

Okay, listen more carefully this time ...

With this Roger lets out another real obnoxious belch as SEVERAL CHICKS in the next booth pretend to not hear. All four guys look over, and then back to table-center. After a long silence:

JOE

(breaking the silence)
I agree.

All laugh in mutual agreement about who knows what, then, after another silence:

ROGER

For the life of me I just do not understand what was wrong with that actress chick in the park. I was a complete gentlemen. Offered her the sun, moon and stars ... and zip.

JOE

(mocking Mark)
Geez, some women are just real powder puffs.

Mark looks at Joe like he's going to push his head into a beer mug.

ROGER

Well screw them. I say we declare war! Play the numbers. Anything goes. Trial and error, that's the way we'll win.

MARK

(sincerely)

Did you tell her about the wonderful university you just graduated from?

ROGER

Yep. Looked like she never even heard of Harvard.

MARK

She must be from California.

JOE

(joking)

Did you try telling her your dad was John Lennon's brother?

ROGER

Hey, what kind of a person do you think I am? I do not lie, and I do not cheat ... unless it is absolutely necessary to the process.

MARK

(sarcastically)

And of course it always is.

JOE

(poetically)

The concept is full of high sense, but a bit obtuse as T.S. Elliot might say.

Mark gives Joe a look that invites him to back off a little more, so Roger starts mis-quoting T.S. Elliot.

ROGER

Let a chick know you have other girlfriends, or you have slept with a hundred other chicks that month, and,

(smiling at Mark)

I do not think those mermaids will sing to you while the wind blows the sea black and white.

Mark gives Roger a look that says, 'why do I know these guys?'

JOE

So the one thing girls want -- the truth -- they make impossible to get because of the one thing guys want -- to get laid.

MARK

I don't know gentlemen. I think you're being a little cynical. I mean, look at all the meat-heads out there that consider their girlfriends possessions. Most women start out perfectly fine. Then WE ...

(looks at Roger)
twist them out of shape.

JOE

But WE create the excitement in Life.

ROGER

Really!

Joe clashes mugs with Roger. Mark is a little more reluctant than the other two, but he holds his glass up too so he doesn't come off as a complete alien.

MARK

Just the same, I think I'm going to try and find that girl that gave me a nice smile.

JOE

Get real Mark. You'll never run into her again. The world's too big Dude.

(beat)
Anyone got the time?

No one has the time, so Joe leans over the high-back to the couple in the next booth.

JOE

Excuse me, do you know what time it is?

ANNA

(in a very friendly tone)
Sure. It's just after two.

The couple happens to be Anna and the BILL the Builder. Bill's back is to the group so he doesn't see them and Joe doesn't remember Anna, the snooty girl Mark encountered outside the convenience store.

INT. THE BERWYN TAVERN - AFTERNOON

At a little round table sit Diane, Betty, Linda and Anna - networking; their jackets and pocketbooks slung over chairs.

BETTY

I think we should all move to another neighborhood.

DIANE

Really. The guys around here are simply not rich enough to justify all the shit we take off them.

LINDA

And Betty, I don't believe you making it with that pig Roger in a parking lot already.

BETTY

Hey, he was no farmworker.

LINDA

And if they are, tell 'em you're pregnant and that stops 'em dead. That's what I told that little creep, Joe, when he was hitting up on me at Bill's construction site.

ANNA

It's a shame we have to lie, but sometimes it's the only way to get what you want.

DIANE

... them pinned and wriggling on a wall.

All laugh.

LINDA

I hate these guys that think they own you just because you look at, or even fuck 'em, once.

(accusatively)

Know what I mean, Diane?

DIANE

No. It's been so long I *don't* know what you mean, Linda! But I'm sure Anna know's exactly what you mean.
(everyone laughs)

BETTY

Where did you get that jacket Anna?

ANNA

Over at Macy's in King of Prussia.

LISA

Really, I was just over there. Is that Clinique sale still on?

ANNA

Ended last Friday.

BETTY

Shit.

LISA

You know who's sorta cute.

DIANE

Who?

LISA

Steve. Except I've heard he beats his friends.

BETTY

I'm sure that's just a rumor. He never beat me.

ANNA

I wouldn't mind taking him out for a test drive either.

LINDA

Anna, don't be *too* disgusting ...

ANNA

Who?

EXT. PHONE BOOTH NEAR THE PARK - AFTERNOON

STEVE

Okay, then I'll meet you there in about a half hour or so.

(beat)
 Yes, I'm going to walk .

As he leaves the phone booth, he notices a girl sitting on a blanket a short distance off. Approaching her, Carla comes into focus. He slows.

STEVE
 ... whatcha reading?

Carla looks up at him, irritated, but trying to be friendly.

CARLA
 A script for a TV commercial.

STEVE
 (raising an eyebrow
 dramatically)
 Really? A fellow thespian.

CARLA
 (warming a degree or two)
 Oh, you act too?

STEVE
 (whatever works)
 Well, I've done a movie or two.

CARLA
 Congratulations.

INT. MARK'S PINTO - MONOLOGUE

Mark is back on the road, searching for Carla and practicing his lines.

MARK
 How 'bout: Would you like to read
 my poems sometime?

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

Steve has now made himself more comfortable by stooping next to Carla's blanket. Carla is a little attracted to him, but she could go either way, mostly the other way.

STEVE
 Yeah, nothing like film. Speaking
 of it, how 'bout doing some
 modeling?

CARLA

Well I really don't model. I'm just doing acting now.

STEVE

But who couldn't use some new 8x10's for their portfolio?

CARLA

(trying to be polite)

Ah ... well, no thank you, I don't really need any new pictures.

INT. MARK'S PINTO - AFTERNOON

Just then, Mark passes a yellow Mercedes, parallel-parked in the street.

MARK

(excited)

My God! Is that her car!?!

EXT. STREET NEAR PARK - AFTERNOON

Mark comes to a jerky stop next to a Mercedes. He backs up and quickly gets out to inspect. It looks like Carla's - but no one is around.

EXT. PARK - STEVE & CARLA - AFTERNOON

STEVE

I'm not asking you to bare any skin.

(joking, sort of charming)

CARLA

(laughs, but firmly)

No. Really, no thank you!

(she smiles a little)

Steve lays along side of her on the blanket and looks up at the trees, fluttering his eyes - trying to be cute.

STEVE

Beautiful day, isn't it?

CARLA
(now getting a little
inhibited)
Yes it is.

STEVE
Hey, you don't have to be afraid of
me ... I won't bite ...
(pause, then
provocatively)
... unless of course you ask me
to.

CARLA
(definitely inhibited)
Hey, I think I should get back to
my reading now.

STEVE
I bet ...
(places his hand on her
knee)
... you're incredible in bed.

CARLA
(he crossed the line)
Would you please leave!

STEVE
What?

CARLA
(emphatically)
Hey, get out of here!

STEVE
Hey, I'm only trying to give you a
compliment.

CARLA
(angry)
Look, if you're not leaving, I am!

STEVE
What's wrong?

CARLA
(closing her script,
standing up)
That's it. I've had it.
(more to herself)
What is it about this neighborhood?
(starts leaving)

STEVE
 (calling after her)
 You've got a sexy little bottom my
 dear.

Carla bolts for her car, dragging the blanket as she tries to stuff it, and the script into her bag. She's now crying and seething at the same time.

EXT. STREET NEAR PARK - AFTERNOON

Mark is placing a piece of paper under the windshield wiper of the Mercedes as Carla barrels up a small incline towards her car.

Carla is in no mood and does not recognize Mark at all - all she sees is red - and a complete stranger tampering with her car.

Mark, suddenly seeing her, takes about six paces towards her - quite enthusiastic and happy to finally find her.

MARK
 (real warmly)
 Hi, remember me? You smiled at me
 the other day in a parking lot.

CARLA
 (real cold)
 Oh, God, not another weirdo!
 (looking over at Mark's
 car)
 Get out of my way.
 (sacks him with her bag
 real hard)
 Please! Get a way from my car.

MARK
 What's wrong, Sweetheart?

CARLA
 (giving him all barrels)
 Don't talk to me that way, you
 asshole.

MARK
 What way?

Mark, hurt and confused, starts for her to comfort her by placing his hand on her shoulder. She screams (which stops Mark cold), and jumps frantically into her Mercedes and peels off - poem still under the windshield wiper and everything.

Mark stands there for a few moments next to his unmistakable, beat up Pinto wondering what in the world happened. He then gets into this Pinto.

SLOW DISSOLVE:

EXT. MINELLA'S RESTAURANT - LATE AFTERNOON

Mark is now seated with his head down on the counter as Steve enters.

STEVE

Tell me about the women around here.

MARK

Really. One moment they're smiling, the next they're hitting you with their bag.

STEVE

That's why men are forced to take responsibility for initiating intimacy.

MARK

Whatever.

STEVE

Yep, if we didn't take responsibility, hell knows what would ever get done on this planet.

MARK

(cheering slightly)
You mean ... the planet might neglamate into a waste land.

STEVE

Neglamate?

MARK

It's a new word I have just added to the English language.

STEVE

O-kay.

(back to the subject)

Yeah, they doll themselves up and as soon as we show an interest, pow

...

we're just another piece of shit
slithering up to pay homage to
their breasts.

MARK

Possibly true.

STEVE

In fact, what we should do is act
more nonchalant. Disinterested.
Maybe even act like aggressive
pigs, show 'em we don't care about
'em. That way they'd be more
attracted to us if they thought we
weren't so easy to get.

MARK

Yeah. Know what makes me sick?
Those sex numbers. Who do they
think we are, going on TV with all
that degrading horseshit,
(mocking)
Want a date? Call me ... no call
me, I'm waiting for you, only \$3.90
a minute.

STEVE

You know what? I think *I'M* gonna
get a 900 number ... go on TV ...
reverse the tables. They're gonna
call ME dude!

A dude WAITER, overhearing their conversation, interjects:

WAITER

Yeah, let's let THEM play the sex-
starved puppy routine for awhile.

MARK

Now that's poetic justice NOT
working overtime.

STEVE

(laughs)
Whatever.
(beat)
Wanna hit a few places tonight?

MARK

Thanks, but I don't like to go out twice on a weekend - why advertise your desperation? So I guess I'll give Lisa a call. She was nice.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BERWYN TAVERN - EARLY EVENING

This is a smaller club with an outside deck and bar that stretches the length of the main room. It's somewhat less crowded, being Saturday evening.

ANGLE - OUTSIDE TABLE

Carla and Lisa are just arriving and take a nice little table in the outside section to look over the scenery. Carla is dressed to catch (and gut) some fish tonight.

LISA

How 'bout it ... just the place to get your mind off all those low-class weirdos.

Carla shrugs politely as Lisa glances around for Mark. Suddenly, a guy, who looks like a farmworker, in fact the same guy who got a dance with Betty the night before, leans over.

FARMWORKER

(to Carla)

Hello, beautiful. Isn't your name Betty?

CARLA

(flames)

No it's bitch-woman.

With this, Carla turns her head away, and the Farmworker "ceases to exist."

LISA

(laughs mockingly)

Boy, that sure was vicious, "Betty."

CARLA

(laughs a little too)

Well, I'm just getting warmed up.

The two sit back and relax. They look around and finally start to talk more fluidly.

CARLA

(reaching into her purse)
You know, it's strange, just when
you hate men the most, one of them
actually does something kind of
classy.

LISA

Like what, sets himself on fire and
jumps off Niagara Falls?

CARLA

No. Some guy, left this really
beautiful poem on my car.
(handing it to her)

LISA

Your car?! A poem? I thought that
went out in the 60's.

CARLA

Yeah. He was placing it under my
windshield wiper after that other
weirdo had his way with me.

LISA

You mean he stalked you to the
park!?

CARLA

Now that's a little imaginative.

LISA

Imaginative! Carla, it happens.
You don't know what kind of creep
this poet could be. Did you call
the police?

CARLA

No. Of course not.

LISA

I think you should at least make a
report. He could be some kind of
serial rapist. Or a kook.

CARLA

Well the thought *did* run through my
mind, but then I read the poem.

LISA

(amazed)
The poem was that good?!

Carla just nods her head in reverence. Lisa looks down and starts reading the poem in her hand.

LISA
Your wondrous glance pranced across
that pasture of chance ...

EXT. OLD FORGE POOL - NOON

Relaxing at the Old Forge pool with about 20 CONDO RESIDENTS (to burn off their respective hangovers), is Diane, Bill the Builder's Ex. She's lying in the sun when suddenly Bill approaches her, looking at a GIRL IN SWIMSUIT as he does. Diane's eyes automatically notice, she's so used to it.

DIANE
Stop looking at her you bastard.

BILL
Looking at what?

DIANE
You know what.

BILL
No what!?

DIANE
That girl.

BILL
(pissed)
Ah, you're psycho. Leave me alone.
I spend the night with you, try to
patch up our marriage, and you
bitch at me.

With this, Bill gets up and dives into the pool. He swims to the other side of the large communal pool (with SEVERAL SWIMMERS) and props up against the poolside with a pissed-off look on his face. As he hangs there, he is surprised to notice Mark, a short distance away at a picnic table, with one of the residents, Lisa.

EXT. OLD FORGE PICNIC TABLE - NOON

Lisa and Mark are sitting at a picnic table near a beautiful pond under some weeping willow trees. Four other PICNICKERS are nearby cooking and eating.

LISA
Thanks for coming over.

MARK
I'm glad you gave me your number.
It's a beautiful place.

LISA
Yeah. Is next weekend the last
weekend for the horse show?

MARK
I believe so.
(after a moment)
So how long have you known Diane?

LISA
Oh we grew up together - at least *I*
did. In fact, she's staying here
with me and my roommate, Carla,
until she gets a place of her own.

Mark has no idea that Carla -- the girl that smiled at him --
is *Lisa's* roommate.

MARK
I see.

LISA
At any rate, Diane's not getting
along well with her husband even
though she's trying to patch things
up. That's probably the reason she
was so rude to you. But to make
things worse, he comes over to
visit her all the time just to get
laid.

MARK
I'm sorry to hear that. I guess I
didn't help things either.
(pausing to find something
more pleasant to discuss)
So, what do you mean, 'that's not
what smiling usually means'?

LISA
What?

MARK
What you said when I asked you what
it means when a girl smiles at a
guy.

LISA

Oh. Well let me give you an example, just between you and me. My roommate, Carla, she's a real nice girl generally, except she doesn't know how to handle herself with men.

(beat)

Say, are you getting hungry?

MARK

(interested)

Yes, a little.

LISA

We can grill something, I have some fish at my place ... any rate ... she vacillates between being too nice, smiling all the time and being too bitchy.

MARK

Why's that?

LISA

Well every time she smiles at a guy, he thinks she wants him and goes after her. Sooner or later it pisses her off that she can't just be friendly without repercussions so she gives the next guy total hell to neutralized the situation, I guess.

MARK

(wondering)

I think I know what you mean.

LISA

Then the next day or so, she feels really guilty for treating someone like that when all they were doing is expressing admiration.

MARK

You sound like a psychologist. I knew there was a reason I called you.

LISA
(laughs, then continuing)
So, to make up for being a bitch,
she goes out and starts
indiscriminately smiling at men as
if she's trying to make amends to
the world.

MARK
I see ...

LISA
... then ultimately, they start
chasing her and she gets pissed and
the whole cycle starts over again.

MARK
And so this is a microcosm of why
the sexes endlessly misunderstand
and conflict with each other ...
unnatural rejection.

LISA
(laughing)
Exactly.

Lisa is starting to really like Mark.

LISA
(with admiration)
Hey you should be the psychologist.

MARK
Well actually, I'm trying to make a
living selling my poetry.

LISA
Isn't that extremely difficult? I
hear most poets starve to death.

MARK
As time goes on, less and less do
because civilization is maturing to
the point where people are
beginning to realize that the arts
are really where it is at.

LISA
In a way, poets try to
psychoanalyze the entire planet.

MARK

Exactly. And then write down their observations in such a way as to inspire someone to better appreciate the awesome beauty and cruelty of the existence.

LISA

(touched)

Really? I would love to hear one of your poems sometime.

MARK

Sure.

(beat)

Oh wait. I might have one I'm still working on in these pants.

Mark searches his pockets and pulls out a ragged paper.

MARK

I guess you're lucky today.

(hands it to her)

It's only a draft, but here's a sample.

LISA

(reading out loud)

Your wondrous glance pranced across that pasture of chance.

(suddenly shocked)

... Oh my God this is the same poem Carla showed me last night! Are you the one who stalked her to the park?

MARK

(clueless)

What!

LISA

(realizing, to her horror)

... You're the one ... and you're here pretending NOT to know her.

MARK

What are you talking about?

LISA

(loudly)

Get out of here!

She starts freaking, just as the Bill the Builder walks up.

MARK
Lisa ... please, what's happening?

BUILDER
(real pissed)
Hey buddy. What are YOU doing here?

MARK
Lisa invited me over.

LISA
(adamant)
I think you should leave now.

BUILDER
(showing his rage)
You heard her. If you're not out of here in a second, kook, I'm calling the fuzz.

Mark seeing that it is no use, starts to back off, just as Diane walks up too.

DIANE
(to Mark)
What are you doing here you pig!?

MARK
Lisa invited me over.

DIANE
Lisa, how could you after what he said to me the other night?!

LISA
Well you deserved what he said the other night, but stalking Carla ... really ... get out of here you weirdo.

DIANE
Yeah you fucking pig!

She picks up a folding chair and starts charging him.

MARK
What is your problem lady?

BUILDER
(joining in)
Buddy, you're pushing it far past the stretching point.

DIANE

Get out of here, you pig! I don't
ever want to see around here again!

BUILDER

Freak. I think it's time to take
your poems and say bye, bye.

MARK

Hey, calm down.

Wrong choice of words. The Bill the Builder has his fists
clenched and is moving into position: he's not about to get
his ass kicked by a poet *twice*. Mark has no idea what's
causing all this insanity, so he splits in a hurry, disgusted
with them all.

Diane watches Mark leave and then turns her glance to the
Bill the Builder and Lisa:

DIANE

It's real simple. Men are pigs. We
deal with it.

LISA

(a little guilty)
Did we gang up on him too much?

BUILDER

No I would have liked to have
punched that punk ...
(a beat, then to Diane)
... and you too, I think.

As he is walking out the gate, Carla is coming in a different
gate to take a swim. Mark does not see her but she notices
Mark's bashed up car and starts to run to catch up with him,
but he's gone in an instant.

EXT. STREETS - NOON

Mark's Pinto rips past CAMERA and disappears in the distance.
Mark is in deep thought as he drives, disappointed in
everyone and everything.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. MARK & JOES' KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON, NEXT WEEKEND

Joe is stirring a cup of coffee punching vitamins out of an assortment of bottles as usual. A glass of water and the *want-ad* section are present, as Mark enters.

MARK

(flatly)

... I'll never ask you to buy a roll of toilet paper again, Joe.

JOE

(sarcastically)

So, you hit it off good with Lisa too.

MARK

I'll tell you ... nothing that glitters is gold

JOE

(with a no-kidding-cosmo look)

Okay ... so?

MARK

Joe, I'm telling you, they're out there, but the ones you want, you can't find and when you do find them, you get more than you wanted.

JOE

(testing him)

Now that's horseshit, Mark.

MARK

And I'm telling you, that's simple reality.

JOE

(testing some more)

Well I doubt that.

MARK

(Mark laughs)

Well I doubt THAT!

The two are now at their usual stalemate, but there is change blowing in the wind.

MARK
(sarcastically)
I think I'm almost ready to try
some of *your* date politics.

JOE
(floored)
Ah, come on Mark! Why don't you
just get out your *cash* - girls
don't want to hear that you're a
poet or a politician. They want
beaucoup bucks, fancy restaurants,
flashy diamonds, and fast cars,
remember?

Just then the door bell rings and Roger drops by.

ROGER
Mark, Joe what's happening?

MARK
Oh, Roger. How are you?

ROGER
Fine. Mind if I join you?

JOE
Not at all.

ROGER
Where would Steve be?

MARK
Probably weight lifting in
preparation for next weekend.

JOE
So what's new with you?

ROGER
I finally broke my record, got laid
by three different chicks in one
week.

JOE
(jealous)
That's great. It's too bad chicks
give you such a hassle just because
you're not a millionaire.
(looks at Mark)

ROGER

I know, they're not much more
trusting than banks ...

MARK

Burn that into stone.

JOE

Well you just have to use the right
tool to crack each situation.

ROGER

And what might that tool be?

JOE

A shovelful of bullshit and an
honest \$10 grand on your VISA line.
Nebulous intentions.

ROGER

Knowing who you want to do next
after you quickly forget who you
did last.

MARK

Of course you would think a nice
poem might help, but I guess not.

JOE

It's a number's game dudes. We can
take the hills,
(cups his hands)
through mutual cooperation.

MARK

Well I still say if you express
your feelings and let her know who
you are as a Being, a girl should
love you for telling her the truth.

JOE

Dream on Mark. Only a poet would
think that way.

ROGER

Come on let's go out and have some
fun.

(as he runs his "bird"
finger under his nose)

I smell a full-moon evening.

EXT/INT. ROGER'S HUMMER, COUNTRY ROAD - SUNSET

The weekend warriors are already in high gear, shredding down a country road. Roger is so inebriated, he's allowed *Joe* to drive his Hummer -- something Roger would never do only *half* drunk. Joe can hardly keep his hands on the steering wheel, the vehicle is bouncing around so recklessly. Roger and Mark are sitting in the back, semi-paralyzed, but "enjoying" the ride.

MARK

Beautiful sunset today.

JOE

(looking over his
shoulder)

Gee, this thing's great! Thanks
for letting me drive it Roger.

As Joe is looking back, the Hummer crashes over a curb and starts down someone's steeply graded lawn and bushes.

MARK

(yelling)

Joe. What the fuck!

After a few moments of shredding through bushes, tall grass, branches, trash cans and a mail box, they make it safely to another road and keep humming along.

ROGER

(sotted)

I say screw these seat belts ... I
wanna be able to get outta this
damn thing fast if we hit anything.

Joe calms down a little. Roger pops a beer and hands it to Mark.

ROGER

(after a beat)

So Mark, why don't you tap into
your trust fund too. Man, if I had
your money, we'd most definitely
have a harem by now.

JOE

See Mark. Roger agrees. Flashy
diamonds, fine restaurants and fast
cars are the only way to deal with
the crisis.

MARK

Joe, I don't want some chick to
like me just for my money.

ROGER

Then why not tell 'em,
(beat)
your grandfather was T.S.?

JOE

Yeah, with something like that we
could impress the piss out of 'em.

MARK

(after a moment)
Because that was *his* success. I
want my own.

As Joe rounds a corner 35 miles per hour over the speed
limit, TWO POLICE in a CAR notice and take off after them.
Joe floors it.

ROGER

Joe. Let's get the hell out of
here. A pig's on our ass.

JOE

(after looking down, to
Mark)
Now let me demonstrate the REAL
reason Hummers are so popular.

EXT. HUMMER - SUNSET

Joe shreds past CAMERA jumping over a small bridge and swings
a left hand turn into a field running under high tension
wires. The policeman attempt to catch up, but their pig cars
get bogged.

INT. HUMMER - SUNSET

Screaming over an arched bridge, no one pursuing.

MARK

(looking back)
Joe you better slow down or you're
going to hurt someone.

JOE

Ah, come on Mark, loosen up.
You're going to be an old asshole
before we even spend your first
distribution. Besides you got
lawyers.

ROGER

(sarcastically)

Joe, are you trying to be a bad
influence on Mark's corpus?

(after Mark gives Roger a
look)

Hey. Let's hit the Paddock,
there's bound to be some nice girls
there that just want to get married
and have babies.

JOE

(totally sarcastically)

Good plan! You gotta make calls to
get the results.

ROGER

That's right. It's a number's
game. That's why I get laid every
other weekend or more.

MARK

Take me home Joe, I think I'm going
to be keeping a very low profile so
long as Roger is in the area
muddying up the waters.

(then as a fun
afterthought)

On the other hand, maybe I'll get a
BMW and blow this piece of crap
away.

JOE

(spur of the moment)

Oh, you guys mind if I make a quick
pit stop here I want to grab some
fruit. Besides I can't stand the
language in this car.

EXT. TRADER JOES PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Roger's Hummer screeches to an obnoxious stop. Several GOOD-
LOOKING GIRLS look over and smile warmly as Joe gets out of
the Hummer, the epitome of cool.

JOE

It's going to be a good night
tonight, gentlemen!
(then jabbing Mark)
The stuff poems are made of, right
buddy?

MARK

Unfortunately.

ROGER

Ah come on Mark. Tonight is not
the night for low profiles. *Let us
go and make our visit.*

CUT TO:

INT. TRADER JOES - EVENING

Joe is standing in the fruit section feeling-up a couple of grapefruits. As CAMERA pulls back, we see Diane working her way towards him on the other side of the fruit stand. Joe, finally noticing her, quickly puts the grapefruits into his hand basket and starts to duck away when he realizes that she doesn't know or even recognize him. Seeing a primo opportunity to test out the "good-guy, bad-guy theory," Joe swipes his nose and inches over for the kill.

JOE

(to Diane)

Say, weren't you at the Paddock
last weekend?

DIANE

(very suspicious)

Why yes, yes I was. Why do you
ask?

JOE

Well I was there too and I couldn't
help over-hearing what that crude
guy said to you.

DIANE

(suddenly interested)

You did?! Why, I tell you, he was
so obnoxious, we were abhorred.
And the manager didn't even do a
thing about it.

JOE
I know. I'm told men are all such
dirty, smelly, loud-mouths.

DIANE
(with forceful angry)
You mean pigs?

JOE
(slipping into agreement)
Yes, I mean pigs.

DIANE
(glaring)
I'm going to chop his nuts off the
next time I see that asshole.

The two start walking down the isle. She begins to warm up since she has now been able to discharge some of her anger to an "understanding party." After a brief moment of shopping.

DIANE
(smiling)
You seem like a nice guy.

... But the thought has just crossed Joe's mind that she might not be his type.

JOE
(lying)
Yeah, I but I would be even nicer
if I weren't married so much.

Diane takes what Joe means the wrong way.

DIANE
(stronger interest)
Oh, I know what you mean. I'm in
the same situation - I was married
to this jerk I couldn't stand - all
he did was watch football, have
affairs and drink beer.

JOE
(getting desperate)
I know what you mean. I drink a
lot ... of beer too. Quite a lot.

There's an awkward silence, as she justifies this out-point in her thinking.

DIANE

But you shop here at Trader Joes.
Healthy food cancels beer out.

JOE

(loosing his train of
thought)

Oh, no we usually shop over at
Paoli Memorial.

DIANE

At a hospital?!

JOE

(flustered)

I mean Center! Paoli Center.

DIANE

Oh.

(beat)

Say ... how'd you like to go to
lunch sometime?

JOE

Thanks ... but we don't eat lunch.

DIANE

We?

JOE

(lost)

My wife and I ... we fast ... all
the time.

Frantically, Joe points to one of the SHOPPERS across the market, a mean-looking, heavy-set woman comparing the weights of two wads of mozzarella cheese.

DIANE

She doesn't look like she's
fasting.

JOE

Well I'm fasting for both of us
this week, and I gotta hurry.

DIANE

(puzzled)

Oh. Well, nice to meet you anyway.
Maybe I'll see you around sometime.

JOE

Yeah, maybe.

With this Joe fades out of her presence, indebted forever to the institutions of marriage and beer. Diane, watching him through the store window, waves goodbye and, with a warm flow of affection, wonders why he's leaving without his wife and getting into a Hummer full of drunk guys. Luckily she doesn't notice Mark, who's bent over, throwing up.

FADE OUT:

INT. THE BERWYN TAVERN - TOWARDS MIDNIGHT

Carla and Lisa, looking good, are standing at a bar leaning into it, talking. Carla is a little drunk and Lisa is a little sober. Their incredibly tight, sexy dresses are having the effect of male-flypaper on a nearby POOL OF STUDS.

CARLA

I don't know what to do anymore.
We both like and hate the same guy.
I can't remember what he looks like
and you don't even have his phone
number.

LISA

Well apparently you saw him first.
The question is, is that good or
bad?

(to Carla, drunk, looking
over at the studs)

I hope one of those guys tries
something!?

CARLA

I guess Mark's not going to show up
here tonight, I hope. I think.

LISA

(looking around, in drunk
epiphany)

Guys are ALL weirdos.

Carla puts her head down on the bar, just as the door opens and in come two more studs: Joe, looking wealthy, as possible. Roger looking cocky, as usual. Mark has gone home.

LISA

One of those guys looks familiar.
(pointing to Joe)

CARLA
 (looks over, sees Roger)
 ... Oh my Gawd, that's the one I
 was telling you about ... the
 weirdo at the park.

LISA
 Who?

CARLA
 The jogger.

LISA
 No way. Let's go to the ladies
 room.

CARLA
 No way. I'm going to stay here and
 get into a *meaningful* conversation.

With this, she turns and gives Roger a big, sexy smile and,
 like a typical male puppy dog, he comes over salivating at
 the bate. Joe keeps his distance at the bar.

ROGER
 Well hello Carla. Nice to see you
 again.

CARLA
 (covert and drunk)
 Nice to see you too - Roger. Say,
 I wanted to apologize for being a
 little snooty today in the park. I
 just got my period.

ROGER
 Oh, that's okay.

CARLA
 So how was the Villanova
 Auditorium?

ROGER
 Great!
 (a beat)
 Say, how'd you like to grab a slow
 dance?

CARLA
 Why, I'd love to, Roger, but why
 don't we just stay here and make-
 out first ... it would save a lot
 of time.

ROGER
 (not taken-back at all)
 Of course.

CARLA
 (drunkly)
 You must be very busy now that
 you've graduated and are working
 over at Drain, Moron and
 Heckler ...

Carla, snuggles up to Roger a little, cautiously placing her
 arms around his neck.

ROGER
 (overlooking the
 mispronunciation)
 Yeah, college was all worth it.

CARLA
 ... And you know, I am sorry I
 chased you off like that ...

ROGER
 Me too.

She pulls him closer, as though she is about to give him a
 kiss, but then she whispers in his ear.

CARLA
 ... because what I should have
 done, if I was more prepared ...

Just then, Roger, being his cocky self, finds the liberty to
 squeeze her bun a little. Carla immediately pulls back and
 grabs a spoon.

CARLA
 (continuing)
 ... was to push your freaking face
 into the trash ...
 (waiving the spoon at him
 like a knife)
 ... like I am better prepared to do
 tonight if you bother me and my
 friend one more millisecond you
 fuckin' shit-eating weirdo! Got
 it?!

ROGER
 Oh come on honey. You know you
 like it.

CARLA
How dare you, you slime.

With this, Carla bops Roger right on the forehead with her spoon. He finally gets the message, and struts off as Lisa rolls her eyes back.

LISA
(astonished)
Carla!

CARLA
(recklessly)
Ah, don't worry, he has a thick skull, he's a lawyer-in-the-making.

Sets the spoon back down in its place on the table.

LISA
(regaining her composure)
I really don't think that was a good idea, it could be misconstrued.

CARLA
No. *I'm* tired of being misconstrued.

LISA
(after a beat)
I know Carla, I just don't understand what's with these guys. You try to be friendly and they think you wanna take them home and fuck them ...

Just then a STUD from the pool of studs approaches Lisa.

STUD
Excuse me sweetheart, would you like to dance?

CARLA
Going psycho and picking up the spoon again.

CARLA
No she wouldn't, asshole!

The Stud slinks off real fast as Carla bandishes the spoon. Lisa resumes the conversation as if Carla had just swatted a mosquito.

LISA

... I guess the only thing you can do is walk with your eyes focused on the ground and act like you don't see anyone.

CARLA

But, then the colder you act, the more they feel they must prove they exist.

LISA

Yeah, then they get out the flashy diamonds or try to impress you with restaurants and fast cars.

CARLA

All that stuff most girls could care less about.

(getting griefy)

Gosh Lisa, all this strife is so sad.

LISA

Maybe guys just have too many hormones.

CARLA

Maybe guys should write more poems ...

She takes the crumpled up poem Mark wrote out of her pocketbook and looks at it.

CARLA

... He might have been the only decent guy I will ever come across and we blew him off. I feel so mean.

Lisa tries to console her.

LISA

Oh Carla, you're not mean. It's not so bad. Take another stab at love. Sooner or later you'll meet a really sweet guy.

INT. MARK & JOE'S APARTMENT - AFTER LAST CALL

Mark has had a quiet night in. He's thumbing through a book of his poetry, one of about three big volumes spread out on the coffee table. Joe and Roger come stumbling in - quite inebriated.

JOE

Mark. Guess who was at the Berwyn Tavern tonight and, believe me she is no lady.

MARK

Who?

JOE

That one that smiled at you in the parking lot, then slugged you in the park. Not only that -- and you won't believe this -- but she was with Lisa.

MARK

(shocked)

You're kidding! They *know* each other?!!

ROGER

Yep. The bitch network. Her name is Carla, and I'm filing a law suit on her tomorrow.

MARK

What!?

JOE

Yep. She pulled a knife on me.

MARK

I don't *believe* that.

JOE

Well it was knife-like; it was a spoon. And she HIT Roger with it.

MARK

Oh come on!

Just then Mark's eyes narrow on Roger's forehead - where a nice, perfectly round, one-inch red bump has grown.

MARK

That's awful!

(after a beat)

She must be under some terrible stress or something. Poor thing.

ROGER

Well I don't know if I have a case on her, but I might be able to get her for intimidating a partial stranger with a non-lethal weapon.

MARK

I hate to say it, Roger but you were probably cruising for it.

JOE

(mocking Clint Eastwood)

Hey, we're all cruising for it.

Joe pulls out a beer for himself and Roger, as Mark lights up another cigarette.

MARK

(after about 10 seconds)

You know Joe. Maybe you're right. I've poured my guts out on all these poems for years and who gives a worm's toenail? It's just not the same world it was for my grandfather.

JOE

True!

MARK

(after some reflection)

I think I really am going to go out and buy a BMW or something.

JOE

Ah, time to turn back and ascend the stair.

MARK

It's so hard to decide what character you want to play on the stage of life.

JOE

I think you'd be a much happier character with a prop - a fast car.

I know *I* would be much happier.
Much.

MARK

It *does* seem like all the good
looking ones ultimately turn out to
be mean.

JOE

But you get that BMW and we put our
plan into action ... *we'll* be the
mean ones.

MARK

I don't know, maybe the bald fact
is women simply want to multiply
and men simply want to screw and
all my ideals are just horseshit.

JOE

You know, we should put our heads
together and *co-operate*.

MARK

What do you mean?

JOE

Well, let's be realistic, women
have superior networking
capabilities than guys. You can
break up on Monday and by Tuesday
at lunch, every chick within a 30
mile radius knows all the
incriminating details.

ROGER

(an understood fact)
Right, the bitch network.

JOE

So ... instead of competing with
each other, we should try and take
the hills,
(cups his hands)
by cooperating with each other.

ROGER

Right?

MARK

Well?

JOE

Well! I got a pre-tested idea. We go out as a team. I plant myself right next to a target chick. You come up looking like you don't know me from shit and ask her in a gentlemanly, truthful way if she wants to fuck.

MARK

(sarcastically)

Oh, the direct "honest" approach!

JOE

One of two things will happen. A certain percentage will say "yes," in which case you score with a minimum of wasted time ... OR, she'll just freak, in which case, you simply walk away. Then, I turn to her and say, "Sweetheart what did I hear that asshole say?" ... and suddenly, I'm talking to an otherwise unapproachable chick because we have a common enemy.

ROGER

(cogniting)

The good-guy, bad-guy routine!

JOE

Exactly! Either way, one of us will score and we take turns providing services for each other.

ROGER

Sounds fabulous!

JOE

Yeah, the BASTARD network!

With this, Joe and Roger clash their cans together. Mark looks on, not knowing what to think.

EXT. PADDOCK NIGHTCLUB - NEXT FRIDAY NIGHT

Establishing shot of the club door where A FEW PATRONS are paying a cover charge to enter. A BOUNCER, sitting on a stool, collects cash, while ANOTHER BOUNCER checks IDs.

INT. PADDOCK NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Roger and Steve are sitting at a tall-table. Joe and Mark, pretending not to know each other, have planted themselves at the bar next to a beautiful lady, BETTY, who's talking with her foxy friend, LAURA. Joe gives the signal.

STEVE

Okay, Roger, go crack some ice.

Roger leaves the table and walks over to Betty.

ROGER

Excuse me miss. Would you like to engage in some short-term sex out in the parking lot?

Betty looks Roger up and down and then over at her friend.

BETTY

(whiskey-baritone voice)
Would you mind, Laura?

LAURA

Hey, Betty, I'm not your mother.

She looks at Roger for the plan.

ROGER

My Rolls Royce or yours?

BETTY

(snootily)
How 'bout mine.

The two walk out of the club. Joe looks at Mark astonished. Figuring both girls must be similar -- if they're friends -- he slides over to Laura.

JOE

So what did you say your name was, beautiful?

LAURA

Look, just because my friend is loose doesn't mean I'm a slut too. So please, get lost.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGLE AT A DISTANT TABLE - LATER

Mark, Joe and Steve have regrouped.

MARK

Well we won one and we lost one.

JOE

I want to be the bad-guy on the next round.

STEVE

Go for it Joe.

JUMP CUT:

Mark is now sitting at the bar next to a nice girl, NANCY, who is talking to her friend, SARA. Joe comes up to Nancy and sits down.

JOE

Excuse me, would you like to get laid in the parking lot tonight?

NANCY

Yeah, and who's going to do it, asshole?

SARA

Hey, your time has run out buddy. Scram or I'm going to call the manager.

JOE

Hey no problem, but before I go, let me give you some advice: you need a little more work on your thighs and buns.

(walks away)

MARK

(trying to play the part)
What did I hear that asshole say?!

SARA

Oh there's always several in every crowd.

MARK

Well that's not okay. Would you like me to punch an apology out of him?

NANCY
 (looking warmly at Mark)
 Nah ... we can handle it.

Just as she's about to get up, Steve arrives.

STEVE
 (super macho)
 Hey Mark. What's up?

MARK
 That guy that was just standing
 here ... he was extremely rude to
 this lady ... I'm sorry, my name's
 Mark. What was yours?

NANCY
 Oh I'm Nancy ... and my friend's
 Sara.

The bastard network's plan is working, but the dishonesty is making Mark feel real stiff.

MARK
 Nancy, Sara, nice to meet you. This
 is Steve ...

STEVE
 Hi Nancy, Sara.

SARA
 Nice to meet you Steve.

NANCY
 Would you excuse me. I'll be right
 back.

As they are becoming old friends, just like clockwork, Nancy smiles at Steve and leaves.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

In the foreground we HEAR and SEE a set of legs waving wildly in the air from a ROLLS ROYCE. In the background, Joe is wandering our direction to see how Roger is doing with Betty. He starts methodically looking in each car as he approaches CAMERA.

INT. NIGHTCLUB LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT

As Nancy enters, there are three women LAURA, SUE, DONNA, in here working on their looks and networking.

LAURA

... the guy with the red hair. I think his name is Roger.

SUE

Right.

LAURA

Well you gotta steer clear of him. He was also going out with Nancy for about a year before he dumped Linda.

SUE

That's not the same prick that was dating Sara before that?

DONNA

No not that guy, I know who you mean. He was really nice - at least to me.

NANCY

Let me warn you girls, you better stay away from that little one, the one with the nice jacket and polished shoes.

(starting to laugh)

Do you know what he just said to me ...

DONNA

(looking away from the mirror)

... Laura you know where Betty went?

LAURA

Yeah ...

NANCY

... You know what that little asshole said to me at the bar?

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Joe, the "little asshole," is still wandering around the parking lot, looking in car after car. Finally he hears something familiar. He walks up to a nice Cadillac and looks in the window. The Bill the Builder and Anna look up from what they were doing. She screams. Joe runs.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PADDOCK NIGHTCLUB - LATE THAT NIGHT

Mark and Steve are escorting Sara and Nancy away from a table and towards the exit of the club. Mark is holding Sara's hand and Steve is nibbling on Nancy's ear. They couldn't be getting along better. Suddenly Joe walks up, forgetting that he does not know his "good-guy" friends.

JOE

Mark. You won't believe who was out there making it in a parked car?

STEVE

(like an idiot)
Joe, you talking about Roger?

JOE

No, that prick who fired Mark and me from the construction job.

Suddenly Nancy and Sara catch on.

NANCY

You guys know this little creep!

SARA

Yeah, what's going on?

Mark and Steve look at each other and then at Joe like they are going to kill him. Pissed, the two girls start to stalk out of the club past a BOUNCER.

BOUNCER 1

You ladies need your hand stamped if you want to come back in.

NANCY

Well you need your face stamped, asshole.

Nancy grabs the stamp out of the Bouncer 1's hand and stamps it on Steve's forehead as she puffs out of the club with Sara.

MARK

(after a beat)

Joe, you nitwit. You blew our entire deal!

STEVE

(pissed, grabs Joe)

Yeah, you little turd.

Just then, Carla, Lisa and Diane show up. Diane sees Steve assaulting Joe.

DIANE

You get your hands off that sweet man, you pig.

(she sacks Steve)

Then Carla remembers Steve's behavior towards her in the park the other day.

CARLA

Yes, you aggressive pig.

(she sacks Steve too))

Bouncer 1, who has been looking for his stamp on the ground, finds it and then, noticing these women hitting the club's customers, jumps in and starts to place his hands on Diane and Carla to usher them out.

BOUNCER 1

You girls are getting a little rowdy. By authority of section 86, I'm going to have to ask you to leave the premises.

Joe looks over at Diane, then back at Mark and Steve and runs. Mark looks over at Steve and back at Carla, Lisa and Diane and starts slinking away in the opposite direction, just as Carla recognizes him as the "stalker-poet." She gets frantic as another bouncer, BOUNCER 2, comes over to help Bouncer 1 bodily remove her, and Diane, from the club.

CARLA

(to Mark)

Hey, you. Could I please talk to you.

BOUNCER 2

Sweetheart, you're not talking to anyone.

DIANE

Carla. That's the pig that I was telling you about last weekend.

Diane wiggles away enough to sack Mark with her pocketbook for emphasis.

DIANE

There's your blow job, asshole.

BOUNCER 1

Okay, lady, you're outta her for sure.

Both Bouncers now fully involve themselves with the physical removal of these two unruly women as Diane goes totally psycho and Carla is no picture of perfection either. Yet a third Bouncer, BOUNCER 3, comes up to help with the removal. Lisa and Steve are the only ones left standing there in total disbelief at their friends conduct. Then they both walk out at the same time, disgusted.

CARLA

(screaming at Mark)

Could I please talk to you.

Mark stands there not knowing what to do with all his "friends" as the bouncers drag Carla and Diane away.

EXT. NIGHT CLUB PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Bouncer 2 deposits Carla in the parking lot and is keeping an eye on her where she stands silently, looking like she's about to kill herself.

Diane is several feet away, on the ground in the semi-darkness, occupying the services of Bouncers 1 and 3 who are trying to physically stand her up. She is kicking and screaming "keep your hands off me you pigs, you pigs, you pigs" -- putting up a supreme resistance, so much so, a passing POLICE CAR stops to see what all the commotion is about. Carla watches, not knowing what to do either, as Diane is now getting the complete attention of the OFFICERS in the police car because they think she is calling them pigs.

ANGLE ON STEVE & LISA

Bouncer 1 now begins to drag Diane towards the patrol car right past Steve and Lisa. As Steve and Lisa talk about their common dilemma we hear Dian's filthy mouth in the background complete with screaming and chaotic noises.

STEVE

(Lisa to Steve)

Are these your friends?

LISA

I don't think so.

STEVE

Some people just don't have a lot of class.

LISA

Really. This is the last time I'm ever going out with any of my friends.

STEVE

I hear ya? So where you headed?

LISA

Home I guess.

STEVE

Are you hungry, maybe we could go grab something to eat?

LISA

I guess so, no use letting the whole night be a waste.

ANGLE ON CARLA

Into this ugly soup Mark suddenly walks up to Carla.

MARK

(to Bouncer 2)

Hey it's alright. She's had a rough day. I'll take care of her.

BOUNCER 2

Okay, buddy but keep her outta here and off the road.

MARK

Okay.

(Bouncer 2 leaves)

At this point, Carla and Mark have so much attention on each other, they don't notice Steve and Lisa and don't care about Diane, the Bouncers, the Police or anything else.

CARLA
(in a calm tone of voice)
Can we talk?

MARK
Sure, but first I have to tell my friend I'm going. He's parked somewhere around here.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Mark and Carla begin looking from car to car (for Roger and Betty) as the below dialog unfolds:

CARLA
... I really want to apologize ...
I was totally out of line to hit you like that the other day when you really didn't do anything wrong except admire me ... and that poem you wrote for me was just beautiful.

MARK
Well, what can I say. Thank you.

CARLA
(taken back a little)
That guy back there and this other creep, some jogger, at the park were really bothering me just before you came by.

Mark continues to look from car to car for Roger.

MARK
Really ... my friend should be in one of these cars with his girlfriend.

CARLA
Oh, that's sweet.

MARK
(looking over)
I don't believe him, his car's gone. He was my ride.

CARLA
I don't mind giving you a lift.

MARK
I'm the one who's supposed to give
you the lift.

CARLA
You already have.

CUT TO:

INT. NICE LITTLE COZY PLACE - WEE HOURS

Mark and Carla are finally getting the chance to be together,
away from all their nutzo friends.

MARK
(a little shy)
This is a wild and weird little
world.

CARLA
(also shy)
Say that again.
(beat)
You know Diane is my friend -
unfortunately.

MARK
Well you can be sure she hates me,
and frankly I'd care except I think
she's a little psycho.

CARLA
Tell me about it. Lisa actually
stuck up for you when you told
Diane off. I was pissed about what
you said, until Lisa straightened
me out.

MARK
You're kidding?! Well why did Lisa
get so bent out of shape at the
pool when she found out that I was
the one who wrote the poem?

CARLA
I guess she felt you were using her
to find out more about me ...

MARK

No? I guess it was just bad timing ...

CARLA

... And it probably wouldn't have mattered except she was beginning to like you.

MARK

She was? Past tense I hope?

CARLA

Probably. That's what she told Diane anyway.

MARK

Really?

CARLA

Me and Lisa were out at the Berwyn Tavern last weekend and I ran into one of the jerks that was hassling me in the park.

MARK

What's he look like?

CARLA

Red hair. Tall. Druggy.

MARK

Sounds like Roger.

CARLA

Jogger?

MARK

Yep that's him. Good for you, standing up to him.

CARLA

So you must know that little cocky one too.

MARK

Yep. That's my roommate, Joe.

CARLA

You sure keep an assortment of friends.

MARK

Yeah, but they're all good guys,
they just go about things the way
they feel they have to.

CARLA

I don't know, I think some of them
are losers, if not outright
assholes. You don't by any chance
also know that guy who walks around
with the sex number on his shirt?

MARK

You must mean Steve.

CARLA

(exasperated)

I don't believe it! All your
friends are total weirdos. Are you
normal?

MARK

You'll just have to find out for
yourself.

CARLA

(with a sexy smile)

I might enjoy that.

MARK

(after a moment)

So, why did you smile at me the
other day, in the parking lot?

CARLA

I was just in a good mood and felt
like smiling.

MARK

(a little disappointed)

Really? Just in a good mood!

CARLA

(suppressing a smile)

No, not really. Actually, I could
tell in a second that you were a
real person.

MARK

(holding it in)

You could? Real? Even though I
was driving a piece of crap.

CARLA

Hey I don't care about a guy's car.
Or his clothes, for that matter. I
care about who he is. WHAT he is.

MARK

You do?! Boy would I love to hear
you say that to my little cocky
friend Joe. Maybe next weekend.
Do you like horse shows?

CARLA

No, but it would give me the chance
to read some more of your poems.

The two smile warmly at each other. Could this be happening
amidst all the chaos? Mark gently places his hand on her
shoulder as the two walk out of frame.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEVE'S NEW CONDO - WEE HOURS

Steve and Lisa arrive at Steve's new condo where they run
into Joe sitting on the deck.

JOE

Steve. I'm so sorry I blew that
for you and what-was-her-name?

Steve could care less because he has Lisa with him now to
replace Betty. Lisa looks over at Joe not knowing what he is
talking about.

STEVE

(very emphatically)
... forget it Joe, no hard
feelings.

JOE

(cockily)
And I forgive you for the beating.

STEVE

(laughs)
No problem, Joe. Forget it!

LISA

Beating who?

JOE

Me. Steve was rightfully beating me for opening my big mouth when I should have had it shut. At least more shut.

Steve is starting to get pissed. His huge mussels bulging.

STEVE

I said, Joe ...
 (with a clenched jaw)
 ... forget it. I'm NOT mad any more about it Joe.

Lisa looks over at Steve and begins to have second thoughts about staying for breakfast. She recalls the ladies room. Maybe this guy *is* violent?

LISA

Would you two rather be alone?

STEVE

(getting real sweet again)
 Oh no Lisa.

LISA

Nevertheless, it is late, I think I better be going.

JOE

(realizing he's dead meat if she goes)
 No Lisa don't go or he'll kill me!

STEVE

(calculated)
 Really Lisa, I'm not going to kill anyone.

LISA

Well you didn't have to say it. Just the same, I don't think this was such a good idea.

With this she starts to walk out ... and Steve starts walking towards Joe, looking like he can't wait to get his hands around that little vitamin-swallowing neck.

JOE

Lisa, please stay for breakfast. I promise I won't let Steve beat you. It's only 2AM.

Lisa walks out faster than ever. Just as Joe feels his life is coming to an end, Roger bursts in, glowing.

ROGER

I knew I would find you guys here.
Nice place Steve ... Jesus-tit, did
the Bastard Network hit gold or
what?!

JOE

Yep, all in all, the battle plan
seemed to work like a charm.

ROGER

Steve, you did great! We just have
to polish our act a little, work
out the bugs.

STEVE

(glaring over at Joe)
Yeah, like that little bug right
there.

JOE

(now taking offence)
Hey, everyone gets chicks but me.
All I get is put down and beat.
Potentially beat.

ROGER

(feeling sympathy)
Not at all. Don't worry Joe we
will get you laid.

JOE

(happier)
So, how'd it go Roger?

ROGER

Fantastic!
(runs his "bird" finger
under Joe's nose)
Only hitch was she wanted my PHONE
number afterwards, so I gave her
... yours Steve.

STEVE

(feeling more cheerful
now)
Hey, thanks Roger.

JOE

What about my number?

Roger, who is inebriated, puts his arm around Joe.

ROGER

Joe, I just ran into Mark at this little place and he told me he has some very special numbers lined up for you.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JACK KELMER JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Mark and Joe have just concluded the purchase of some outrageous diamond rings and other assorted jewelry with two JEWELRY SALESPeOPLE. They walk out of the store, suited up, looking like a million dollars, get into a \$125,000 silver BMW and drive away.

INT. SILVER BMW - DAY

Joe is now in his element, his reason for existing manifest. He has finally, with the help of his good friends, fully converted Mark to the "cult of reality," or at least so he thinks. Joe throws his head back and screams with abandon.

JOE

Wa, ha, ha ... let's kick some ass Spike!

MARK

Yeah, fuck poetry. Don't need it any more.

JOE

What time do Steve and Roger get off?

MARK

They said they'd meet us over at the house to help re-open it.

JOE

Finally, you are making use of your real assets.

MARK

More than you know.

EXT. THE ELIOT HAYWARD ESTATE - DAY

Joe and Mark speed past a guard gate saying "Eliot Hayward Estate" and up the driveway of a \$15 million mansion which hasn't been used for some time. Mark Hayward is the grandson of the late John Davy Hayward, a close friend of the late Thomas Sterns Eliot. Known as the "Keeper of the Eliot Archive," Hayward inherited many of the copyrights to T.S. Eliot's works, King's College in Cambridge, England inheriting the rest.

Roger's Hummer is parked outside. The garage doors are open so we can SEE into the six-car garage. One bay has a dusty Rolls Royce another a black BMW, the third a green Jag, the fourth, Mark's beat up new Pinto and the fifth - a yellow convertible Mercedes.

JOE

I don't understand how you could just let this place waste all this time. And what I really don't understand is why you keep that 1981 piece of shit Pinto.

MARK

Just in case I need it again. Besides, it's a collectors item.

JOE

Well, let's hope the Bastard Network is here, I want to get to this horse show early. Hey, when did you get a yellow Mercedes?

MARK

I've had it for years.

INT. MANSION - DAY

Roger is already there kicked back having a philosophical debate with Steve. A BUTLER has just served them a drink.

STEVE

... Who says you have to multiply just because you're not good looking yet. We're not supposed to be here for the sole purpose of restocking the 9 to 5 slaver.

ROGER

It's the churches and governments.
If people don't multiply, new
housing starts and church
memberships eventually go down
hence, real estate values don't
continue to go up.

STEVE

And if every female on the planet
were to have eight kids, they still
wouldn't be happy.

ROGER

*I have known them all already,
before the taking of a toast and
tea.*

Joe and Mark enter discussing some remnant of a topic.

JOE

... Well I hear a lot of chicks,
that we don't already know, DO
hang out over there.

ROGER

(seeing Joe enter)
Joe, remember I said we had a very
special number for you one of these
weekends ... well now's the
weekend. You wanna tell him about
the plan Mark.

MARK

Sure. Joe, I have decided I am
going to give you an expense
account of a million Federal
Reserve Notes and see how you
handle it provided you first find a
girl who loves you: FOR YOURSELF.

JOE

Cool. I like this plan ... the
best of any plan so far, I think.

ROGER

So, looks like you will have to
wander *certain half deserted
streets, the muttering retreats of
restless one-night cheap hotels* to
find that perfect soul mate Joe.

MARK

Well you guys wander the streets.
I have found all I need in a
parking lot.

Just then Carla comes into the living room and walks over to Mark and hugs him. Now that Carla has found all that *she* needs, it is much easier for her to tolerate others, and their less than poetic ways.

CARLA

Mark, would you read me another
poem before we go?

Joe's jaw drops, as he realizes the implications of Mark's philosophy.

EXT. DEVON HORSE SHOW - EARLY EVENING

Joe, Roger and Steve are walking through the horse show grounds towards their box in the main grandstand. Joe is carrying a full tray of hot dogs, pizza, french fries and sodas.

JOE

Now this is the place one can meet
a soulmate. The sole place to work
'em over. Their minds will be on
watching the horses, not warding
off advances.

ROGER

And who in their right mind would
try such at a HORSE show? Don't
answer that, I can think of at
least one ... make that two. Maybe
three.

JOE

At the very least, you can be
assured they won't sack, cuss or
shoot you at a horse show and a
fringe benefit is - there are no
managers!

STEVE

Now that's a thought with some
muscle.
(then to a passing lady)
Hi, how are you?

She passes without even look up at Steve.

ROGER

I've had enough of this horseshit.

JOE

Me too. I'm sick and tired of being ignored by good-looking women especially now that I have to find one that loves me.

STEVE

Look at these girls. What's wrong with them, none of them even look you in the eye when they pass.

ROGER

That's because they're of such high class they don't even HAVE to associate with men: they all have trust funds. And if they ever grow up or get horny, they will find that their trust fund MANAGERS will continue to fuck them.

Just then they start to approach ear-shot of a HIGH CLASS SNOOTY GIRL.

STEVE

(to the girl as she approaches)

Pretend I don't even exist when I pass, Honey.

Then Roger catches the eye of DEADPAN SNOOT, who gives him a you're-dead-if-you-talk-to-me look. So he says to her as she passes.

ROGER

(in a real bad tone)

Don't smile Snoot. I might think you want to fuck me.

The girl gives him that perfectly-explicated-poem look.

JOE

Easy Roger. I think you're being a little obnoxious. I don't want to upset the horses.

An IGNORING SNOOT suddenly approaches looking at the ground, obviously avoiding eye contact. As she passes ear-shot.

ROGER
 (loudly)
 I command you to stare at the
 ground for the rest of your
 existence, *Bitch*.

She pretends to not-hear this psycho.

JOE
 Hey, let me do the next one. She
 could be my soulmate.

STEVE
 Go ahead, Joe, *disturb the
 Universe*.

A perfect, TOTAL SNOOT approaches. As she passes in ear-
 shot.

JOE
 Yo, pretend I'm not here, *Bitch*.

The girl immediately grinds to a halt, right next to Joe.
 She's about twice as tall as him. Steve and Roger keep
 walking as if they don't know this weirdo.

TOTAL SNOOT
 What was that *Buddy*?

JOE
 (regrouping his thoughts)
 I said, pretend I'm not here Mitch.

TOTAL SNOOT
 Who's Mitch?

JOE
 Oh my dog. Where is he?

TOTAL SNOOT
 You're a weirdo. Why don't you
 just vanish.

JOE
 (blankly)
 Yes I will. Vanish.

He walks off, not watching where he is going and walks right
 into Diane's stomach (spilling her tray of hot coffee, grape
 drink and assorted refreshments all over).

DIANE
 (screaming)
 Fuck! You're a REAL star ...

Several BYSTANDERS stop to see who the celebrity someone is screaming about is. Mark and Roger have disappeared.

JOE
 (thrilled)
 I am?

DIANE
 ... you little asshole! And you aren't married to that woman who you said was fasting.

JOE
 I'm not?

DIANE
 And that asshole Mark Hayward is your roommate.

JOE
 (trying to make lite)
 So, wanna come to a party later?

DIANE
 Don't be snippy with me.
 (she smacks him)

JOE
 (remembering Mark's deal to find a soulmate)
 Hit me again, soulmate. I deserve it because I really love you. Let's talk. Maybe we can even get married.

Diane starts to walk away as Joe throws himself at her. She continues walking as she literally drags Joe behind.

JOE
 I don't drink beer and I love Trader Joes. And all my friends ARE assholes ...

Diane suddenly stops and looks down at Joe, pathetic and begging.

EXT. BOX IN GRANDSTAND - EARLY EVENING

The horses are doing their thing. Roger and Steve have joined Carla and Mark, who are nestled in a grandstand box looking as happy as can be. Two high-class girls, CHERYL and TERRY, sit in the box next to them, where Steve has engaged them in conversation.

CHERYL

(amazed)

Really?!

STEVE

That's right. He's getting some refreshments and he should have been back by now, but he's probably making an over-seas call to his horse breeders.

MARK

(interjecting)

Quiet, this is him coming now.

(whispering)

He's worth millions so be nice.

ROGER

You wouldn't know it to look at him, but I'd say that's a good estimate, wouldn't you Steve?

STEVE

Yep.

CHERYL

(reverently)

No kidding!

ROGER

Hey, would I need to lie to a complete stranger? I was talking to my stock broker last week and he said, Joe has, or will have, real estate all over the country.

TERRY

Ocean front?

MARK

Yep ... He's having a small handful of friends back at his mansion next weekend, for a poetry reading, so if you and your friends want to join us ...

but of course you'd have to clear
it with Joe first.

CHERYL
How many friends can I bring?

STEVE
(elsewhere)
Oh, not older than ... I mean not
MORE than nineteen.

Just then Joe, "the millionaire," arrives at the box. He has one slightly reddish eye and a selection of fluids dripping down his new suede jacket, BUT he's holding hands with Diane. Mark does a double take, smiles and lights up a cigarette, as he imagines what Joe must have gone through.

MARK
(happily)
Hey Joe, looks like things are
going well for you. Each to each.

Suddenly, Terry slides over next to Joe and asks in a real affectionate tone of voice.

TERRY
Hi Joe, I'm Terry. Is it okay to
bring some friends over to your
place?

Joe can't understand why suddenly he is getting this affection, so he looks suspiciously at Roger.

DIANE
... no the reading is just for
people that are capable of
understanding poetry.

CHERYL
I just can't tell you how much I
love poetry.

JOE
Oh, sure, bring all the friends you
want.

Suddenly Cheryl slides closer to Joe's other side as Diane hits Joe with her pocketbook.

DIANE
I thought you said you wanted to
marry me and I was your soulmate.

CHERYL

(close to Joe)

Well Joe, let's take a quick ride together ... on the Ferris wheel I mean, before you get married?

JOE

(almost overwhelmed)

Ah, sure.

TERRY

Can I come too?

JOE

(almost cocky)

Sure.

DIANE

Well I'm coming too lover.

All four get up and start off for the Ferris wheel, which can be seen in the distance. As Joe recedes into the crowd with three beautiful women, one of which may even love him, he looks back at Mark and his good friends with an ear-to-ear grin. Mark smiles and kisses Carla as, Steve and Roger look at Joe, happy to see that every one has their philosophy of life, and most philosophies can work just fine.

FADE TO BLACK: