

# ON THE MAINLINE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PAOLI LOCAL - MORNING

CAMERA glides down the tracks of the Paoli Local, a train that runs parallel to Lancaster Avenue from Philadelphia to Paoli. TITLES start to superimpose.

NARRATOR

Welcome to the Main Line, probably the first suburbs in the nation, but the last place anyone in their right mind wants to live.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LANCASTER AVENUE - MORNING

Lancaster Avenue runs past endless last-century shops, a mishmash of renovations and face-lift architecture.

NARRATOR

I'm Joe and I have lived here for over 20 years, ergo, I'm probably no longer in my right mind. What's the deal? I'll let you figure that out ... and be the judge.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CUMBERLAND FARMS - PARKING LOT - MORNING

JOE BURNS and MARK HAYWARD, two men in their late twenties, drive up to a convenience store in a beat up PINTO. Joe went to Conestoga High School and Mark, the driver, went to Episcopal Academy. Mark puffs on a cigarette while Joe is looking out the window. Excerpts from the works of classic poets -- such as Eliot, Whitman, Kipling and Yeats -- are painted all over Mark's car.

ANGLE - THROUGH PASSENGER WINDOW

Mark and Joe are dressed in "work" clothes looking for a job. Although Joe is a "realist" his attire is much flashier than Mark's. Mark, the eternal idealist, however is quiet and internally strong, the nicest guy you could ever meet.

Mark listens as Joe reads job opportunities from *The Suburban Times*, but has massive amounts of attention on several women (LAURA and SUE) bopping in and out of the convenience store. As yet another woman (DONNA) struts by, Mark turns to Joe.

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  
go to church regularly.*

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

JOE  
Church?! What kind of crap is  
that? (beat) 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 girl, probably from Agnes Irwin, ANNA, struts by Mark's face. As she passes:

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

Anna swings around, glares then looks at his old car.

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

ANGLE - MARK & JOE

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

MARK

(after a moment)

I think we should move to another neighborhood.

JOE

Why? We just moved here.

MARK

Too many stuck up girls around this place. Try to be friendly, and they practically sneer at you.

JOE

They're the same all over.

(he looks Mark over)

It's your car and clothes. You look low-class.

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

Suddenly an expensive MERCEDES convertible with a Baldwin School emblem pulls up, top down. The driver, CARLA, is an exceptionally good-looking chick whose dad probably works for a major law firm in Philadelphia. She has short, Brunette hair and is in her twenties. Mark's eyes pop out.

ANGLE - MERCEDES

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

ANGLE - MARK & JOE

MARK

(awed)

Wow! Religious experience!

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

JOE

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

Joe chuckles and goes back to circling job opportunities.

MARK

You know Joe, 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.

JOE

(agreeing)

Really.

Mark, hearing a CAR STARTING in the background, looks over and sees Carla.

ANGLE - CARLA CLOSE UP

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

ANGLE - MARK CLOSE UP

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

MARK

(excited)

Hey ... you have 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 five 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 calls me an asshole.

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

JOE

Whooaaa ...

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 and backs away leaving Joe in frame with 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 down Lancaster Avenue after the 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 - MARK IN PINTO

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 into Spread Eagle Village. Realizing his mistake, Mark slams on the breaks and comes to a screeching, sloppy stop as a bunch of WEALTHY OLD LADIES look at him in disgust.

ANGLE - CARLA IN MERCEDES

Vaguely hearing a screech in the background, Carla looks in her rear view mirror, but keeps going, oblivious to Mark's obsession.

INT. MARK IN PINTO

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!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VALLEY FORGE PARK - MORNING

Carla's Mercedes pulls into Valley Forge Park and parks by a statue of General Anthony Wayne. She gets out and starts walking to a grassy area holding an old, cloth bag from Strawbridge & Clothier.

EXT. CUMBERLAND FARMS - PARKING LOT - MORNING

Joe is standing there talking on his cell as Mark pulls in. Joe ends his call and walks up to Mark, 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 Joe a sour look.

EXT. VALLEY FORGE PARK - LATE MORNING

Carla has laid down a blanket near a couple of Revolutionary War log cabins. She's getting a copy of *Macbeth* out of her bag for a quiet, peaceful read. In the background we see a MOTHER and her little BOY sitting on a bench near a cannon.

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 in the  
day?

CARLA

(laughing, then)

Oh, I like it here. It's quiet,  
peaceful ...

BOY

That's why my Mom comes here.

CARLA

(smiling)

Right.

(beat)

Okay ... listen ... I have 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 old's mouth.

EXT. BENTLY CONSTRUCTION - LATE MORNING

CAMERA pulls back from a pick-axe hitting dirt to track past a busy construction site where an expensive 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 woman.

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 have  
lunch with me later on?

LINDA

Thanks ... but we brought our  
lunch.

JOE

We?

LINDA

My husband and I.

She quickly indicates one of the carpenters, GARY, at some distance who is 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, BILL, 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. BENTLY CONSTRUCTION - BY HOUSE - LATER

Joe and Mark are sitting on a pile of lumber eating lunch. Mark is writing on a notepad as Joe looks over his shoulder.

JOE

What are you writing?

MARK

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 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. He then 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 balance. Bill 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 third leg?!



BUILDER

Punk, you're getting me pissed off!

MARK

You better calm down 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 APT - BATHROOM - EVENING

Mark and Joe live at the Sugartown Mews, a nice, but inexpensive, apartment complex in Devon. 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' APT - 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. LANDMARK NIGHTCLUB - STRAFFORD - NIGHT

This is a nicely-appointed nightclub with the right volume of fast-paced music and about 50 ATTRACTIVE PEOPLE dancing and having fun.

ANGLE - MARK & JOE'S 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 as he does not see the girl in the Mercedes anywhere in the club. Joe, sensing Mark's disappointment, 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 rudely turns her head away. Joe looks  
dejected, as the MUSIC ends.

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 - DIANE & LISA'S TABLE

A willowy brunette from Shipley School, DIANE, sits  
enthusiastically talking (about her ex-) with a redhead,  
named LISA (also from Shipley), as she stuffs popcorn in her  
mouth. Mark approaches their table after a moment, bends  
over Diane's shoulder, and, in a 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 interrupting)  
... Excuse me. Would you like 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 wad 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 ahead 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 probability  
is, I'm not going get a date with a  
chick if she won't even dance with  
me.

LISA

(breaking the silence)  
You're a real asshole!  
(takes a sip from her  
drink)

ANGLE - DIANE & BARTENDER

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 - 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 rude to you, so I'll  
consider a dance.

Mark extends his hand 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 - DIANE & MANAGER

Diane is explaining "everything" to the MANAGER as the two make their way 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.

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

Diane sulks.

MANAGER

(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 and stalks away, 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 rudeness 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.

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 divorce 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 & JOE'S APT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Joe walks from the stove stirring a cup of coffee. He sits at the breakfast table and starts to punch 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 70's.

MARK

I doubt that.

JOE

Well I doubt that.

The two are now at their usual stalemate. 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 from Harriton High School, 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 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 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.

STEVE

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

MARK

... speaking of ... I ran into this  
real cute one at CUMBERLAND FARMS,  
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 catch.

JOE

And the ones you DO catch could  
still care LESS about you unless  
you're filthy rich.

MARK

Well I don't know if I would go that far, Joe. There ARE a lot of really nice ladies out there. You just have to use the right tools on them.

STEVE

You mean tool?

MARK

Tools, Steve. Plural.

JOE

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

MARK

Well obviously, an honest, genuine smile. Good intentions. In other words: not being a PIG or low-class, Steve. Being caring, understanding, perhaps even having a sense of humor. In a sentence: the exact opposite of the way you, and certain others (looks at Joe) act around here.

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 and that she's special.

JOE

Total, unrealistic, horseshit Mark!

MARK

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

STEVE

(breaking in)  
You guys are both full of shit.

None of that crap will even get you up to bat. To do that you need abs and the rest of it.

JOE  
(interjecting)  
And maybe a BMW ...

STEVE  
Abs. Biceps. A tan. You gotta have a physique that she can't stop thinking about. Maybe even a tat or two.

MARK  
I don't know Steve. I think you are over-rating things. Most of the women on the Mainline are happy if you don't beat them, make them laugh and go to church.

JOE  
Please. All of the women around here have trust funds and ride horses at Devon. You think they need a MAN! You have to be superrich to even register 1 on the Richness Scale.

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

JOE  
She could be anywhere Mark. Besides she's probably a lesbian, otherwise why would she have bothered to smile -- she KNOWS there's no possibility.

MARK  
(undaunted)  
She's gotta live around here close, otherwise she would shop at some OTHER convenience store.

JOE  
(sighing)  
You haven't got anything better to  
do?

CUT TO:

EXT. CARLA'S CONDO - OLD FORGE CROSSING - MORNING

Carla's Mercedes sits parked, right outside a nice condo,  
just as Mark reasoned.

INT. CARLA'S CONDO - KITCHEN - MORNING

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

DIANE  
Where's Lisa?

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

DIANE  
(miserably sarcastic)  
I'm fine. Especially once I'm  
firmly able to internalize the fact  
that some guys ... correction ...  
ALL guys, are total fucking pigs  
... I'm fine.

CARLA  
Hey they are not ALL going to be  
like your ex. This guy 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 a  
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 PINTO - MORNING

Mark's battered Pinto rounds a corner (just missing CAMERA) as he scans each driveway for Carla's Mercedes.

INT. MARK IN PINTO - MORNING

Mark is earnestly searching, when he suddenly thinks of something.

MARK

(to himself)

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

(after thinking a moment)

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

EXT. VALLEY FORGE PARK - MEMORIAL ARCH - MORNING

Carla has now settled at another place to study and nibble on a sandwich when ROGER, a tall man from Lower Merion High 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, stops and walks back to Carla, 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. 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 IN 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. VALLEY FORGE PARK - MEMORIAL ARCH - MORNING

Roger is now occupying the edge of Carla's blanket. He's  
 trying to develop a conversation, but somehow Carla isn't  
 very comfortable.

ROGER  
 ... and I just graduated summa cum  
 laude from Penn and naturally took  
 the best offer:  
 (lying)  
 deputy counsel, Eastern Regional  
 Division of Duane, Morris &  
 Hechure.



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 Haverford  
School 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 spoons in the car.

CARLA  
(tongue-in-cheek)  
Real holistic!

ROGER  
(quickly turning)  
Great! Follow me.

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

ROGER  
Oh, I'll take your cell and hook up  
with you 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 in her life."

INT. MARK IN PINTO - MORNING

Mark is staring at his GPS device and 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. BUILDER'S CONDO, CHESTERBROOK - 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 sloppy sex in a queen-size 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.

The Builder, pops a Jaegermeister and walks into the bathroom where we can distinctly hear him 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 starving and want to  
eat something.

ANNA  
Well I have a luncheon with my  
friends so would you please drop me  
off.

CUT TO:

INT. BUILDER & ANNA IN PORCHE - LATE MORNING

ANNA  
What's her top speed?

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

ANNA

I like fast cars.  
(beat)

BUILDER

Where do you want me to dump you?

INT. MARK & JOE'S APT - LIVINGROOM - NOON

Back at the apartment, Mark is slouched on the couch, feet up on the coffee table, remote-controlling his way through endless religious programs on cable. Nearby, Joe is polishing his riding boots, though he doesn't own a horse.

JOE

They always look at your heels to see if you have money ... see if you're well-heeled. Get it Mark? A Joke ...

(seeing Mark's  
despondence)

Forget her Mark. Wayne is probably the biggest town on the Mainline.

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 boots.

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 fucking parking lot.

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

ROGER

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

JOE

As I told him ... the prettier they are ... the bitchier they HAVE to be. Nothing personal, just the way they're genetically PROGRAMMED.

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

Or maybe she's goes to church too much. Ever notice how many religious freaks there are all over this area.

Unlike LA where every girl on the map wants to fuck the shit out of you just to get some RELIEF from their BOSSES who are always hitting on them.

MARK

OK gentlemen ... now that we solved THAT let's get something to eat.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLA & LISA'S CONDO - NOON

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

CARLA

Lisa. Diane.

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

CARLA

(exasperated)

Gawd, you wouldn't believe this CA-REEP at 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 these ASSHOLES leave us alone?

(several beats)

Are you going out tonight?

LISA

Yeah, BT. I hope I run into this really cute guy I met last night at the Landmark.

CARLA

Not that PIG that insulted Diane!

LISA

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

CARLA

(in her mood)

Yes. Yes that is a crime! Asking ANYTHING of a woman when she doesn't want to talk is a crime.

LISA

Oh come on Carla. Calm down. Why don't you join me ... I'll drive so you can get drunk.

CARLA

Okay, I think you'll need to. I'm feeling particularly vicious today.

(after a moment)

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

LISA

Because a guy like this probably won't occasion the same place two nights in a row. He's got class.

INT. BERWYN TAVERN - AFTERNOON

Sure enough, Mark, Joe, Roger and Steve are at BT, but starting the evening early. On what looks like their 3rd round, they listen to another intellectual point from Mark.

MARK

... I don't know exactly HOW one would spell it, Roger, but there must be many "R"s in it.

ROGER

Okay, listen more carefully this time ...

With this Roger lets out a LOUD and obnoxious BELCH, one that sounds like it would probably be spelled with a series of "R"s and "O"s. SEVERAL CHICKS nearby pretend to not hear. After an embarrassing silence:

JOE

I agree. There must be at least ten "R"s and five "O"s in it.

All laugh in mutual agreement, 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)

Some women are just "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 score.

MARK

(sincerely)

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

ROGER

Yep. Looked like she never even heard of the place.

MARK

She must be from California.



JOE

(joking)

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

ROGER

Hey, what kind of a person do you  
think I am? I do not lie, and I do  
not cheat ... unless it's  
absolutely necessary to get laid.

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 another "back off" look, so Roger starts mis-  
quoting some more 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 ...

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  
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 also create the excitement!

ROGER  
Really!

Joe clashes mugs with Roger.

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. She probably  
doesn't even live around here  
otherwise she'd be driving a grey  
SUV.

MARK  
Very Mainline.

INT. THE GREY POODLE - AFTERNOON

At a little round table Anna sits with her luncheon friends,  
Diane, Betty and Linda - networking. Their jackets and  
pocketbooks slung over chairs.

BETTY  
I think we should move to another  
neighborhood.

DIANE  
Really?!

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

LINDA

(to Betty)

Speaking of, I don't believe you making it with that pig, Roger, in the parking lot.

BETTY

Hey, he went to Harvard.

LINDA

Oh, well excuse me. I usually tell them I'm pregnant. That stops 'em dead. That's what I told that little creep, Joe, the other day.

ANNA

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

DIANE

... like a nice religious guy who makes you laugh and cleans the dishes.

All laugh.

LINDA

Yeah. I HATE these guys that think they OWN me just because I smiled at them ... or fucked them.

(accusatively)

Know what I mean Diane?

DIANE

No. It's been a long time, so I actually 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

Macy's, King of Prussia.

LISA

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

ANNA  
Ended 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.

LINDA  
Anna, don't be TOO disgusting ...

ANNA  
What about Bloomingdales? Any  
sales on there? I need a new pair  
of jeans.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - NEAR VALLEY FORGE 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 play.

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 IN 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. VALLEY FORGE 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 IN PINTO - AFTERNOON

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

MARK  
 (excited)  
 My God! Is that her car!?!

EXT. VALLEY FORGE PARK - STREET NEARBY - 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. VALLEY FORGE PARK - 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. VALLEY FORGE PARK - STREET NEARBY - 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 DINER - 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 get done on the 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 assholes or pigs ... show 'em we don't care. That way they'll be more attracted to us.

MARK

Yeah. Know what makes me sick? Those phone-sex ads. Who do they think we are, going on and on 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. 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 - CARLA & LISA'S 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 ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CARLA & DIANE'S CONDO - 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  
comes to visit, eyeing a GIRL IN A SWIMSUIT as he approaches.  
Diane automatically notices as she's 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 CROSSING - 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

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

LISA

Yeah. Is next weekend the last weekend for the Devon 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 neutralize 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 ...

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.

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. MARK IN PINTO - 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 & JOE'S APT - KITCHEN - LATE NOON, 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 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 "fuck"  
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 seat belts ... I wanna  
be able to get outta this thing  
FAST if we hit something.

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 limos.

ROGER  
Then why not tell 'em something to  
impress the hell out of 'em ...  
(beat)



... like your grandfather was T.S. Eliot?

MARK

(after a moment)

Because he was. 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. ROGER'S 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. ROGER'S 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. Right?

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 Landmark, there's bound to be some nice girls there that just want to get married and have babies by the fireplace.

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 *on the Mainline* 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 - EVENING

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  
supple 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 Landmark  
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."

DIANE

(smiling)  
You seem like a nice guy.

But the thought is now crossing 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.  
What church do you go to?

JOE

St. David's. But I'm usually over  
at Casey's Pour House every Sunday  
morning.

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 out the door, throwing up.

FADE OUT:

INT. BERWYN TAVERN - TOWARDS MIDNIGHT

Carla and Lisa are standing at a bar talking and looking  
sexy. Carla is a little drunk and Lisa is a little sober but  
their incredibly tight 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  
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 God, 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 bait. 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 Haverford  
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 well 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  
fucking, shit-eating weirdo! Got  
it?!

ROGER

Oh come on honey. Haven't you read  
Fifty Shades of Grey?

CARLA

Of course I've read it. And you  
are a slim, not a Christian.

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'll be a perfect lawyer  
someday.

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 fuck them ...

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

STUD  
Excuse me Sweetheart, would you  
like to dance?

CARLA  
No she wouldn't, asshole!

STUD  
What are you her agent?

Going psycho, Carla picks up the spoon again.

STUD  
Fuck you bitch.

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

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

CARLA  
Or constantly use your cell phone.  
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 the 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 APT - LIVINGROOM - AFTER LAST CALL

Mark is having 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 at work. Her name is Carla, and I'm filing a law suit on her tomorrow.

MARK

What?!

JOE

She pulled a KNIFE on me.

MARK

I don't believe that.

JOE

Well it was KNIFE-like in the dark.

ROGER

It ~~was~~ a spoon and she hit ME with it.

MARK

Oh come on!

Just then Mark's eyes narrow on Roger's forehead - where a perfectly round, one-inch diameter 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 semi-lethal utensil.

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 faster car. I  
know I would be a much happier  
supporting character. 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. CLUB 29 - 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. CLUB 29 - 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 - MARK, JOE & STEVE'S 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 Bryn Mawr College girl, NANCY, who is talking to her Vilanova 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. CLUB 29 - 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. CLUB 29 - LADY'S ROOM - NIGHT

As Nancy enters, there are three women LAURA, SUE, DONNA working over 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 boots.

(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. CLUB 29 - 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. LANDMARK 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 if  
you want to continue to exist.

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 wing-man network!

STEVE

(pissed, grabs Joe)

Yeah, you little turd.

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

DIANE

Get your hands off that sweet man,  
you pig.

(she sacks Steve)

Then Carla remembers Steve's behavior in the park.

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. LANDMARK NIGHTCLUB - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Bouncer 2 deposits Carla in the parking lot where she stands silently, looking like she's about to cry.

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 - 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

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 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 - 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. LANDMARK NIGHTCLUB - 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 when you really didn't do anything wrong. And your poem. It was beautiful.

MARK

Well thanks.

CARLA

(taken back a little)

That guy back there and this other creep -- that jogger -- were really bothering me just before you happened to come 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. GENERAL WARREN INN - WEE HOURS

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

MARK

(a little shy)

The Mainline is a wild and incestuous place.

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. And I was pissed about what you said, until she 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 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 phone-sex number on his  
shirt?

MARK

You must mean Steve.

CARLA

(exasperated)

I don't believe it! All your  
friends are 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 decent person.

MARK

(holding it in)

You could? Really? 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 as a person. WHAT he is.

MARK

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

CARLA

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

NARRATOR

Could this be happening? Some actual communication amongst all the chaos? My story's not quite over.

Mark and Carla smile warmly at each other as Mark gently places his hand on her shoulder and the two walk out of frame.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEVE'S NEW CONDO - CHESTERBROOK - 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 muscles 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. Gone. Joe feels his life is almost gone as Roger bursts in, glowing.

ROGER  
I knew I would find you guys here. Nice place Steve. 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 "fuck" 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 ran into Mark and he told me he has a very special plan for you.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WAYNE 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 Tesla and drive away.

INT. JOE'S NEW TESLA - 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 as he drives his new silver Tesla car.

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.

JOE

Where?

MARK

You'll see.

EXT. ELIOT HAYWARD ESTATE - DAY

Joe and Mark speed past a guard gate saying "Eliot Hayward Estate" and up the driveway of a \$20 million mansion which hasn't been used for some time.



## NARRATOR

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. This is how one puts poems to some good use.

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

Is this legal?

MARK

I haven't told you about this.

Joe's face goes white.

MARK

But, I kept it just incase I needed a pad someday.

JOE

And the Pinto?

Similar idea.

JOE

And when did you get a yellow Mercedes?

MARK

I've had it for years.

INT. ELIOT HAYWARD MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roger is already there, lounging on an expensive couch, having a philosophical debate with Steve. A BUTLER has just served them a drink.

STEVE

... Who says we have to multiply?

ROGER

Churches and banks. If people don't multiply, new housing starts and church memberships go down. Then real estate values go down and the masses are too immoral to slave off their loans.

STEVE

BUT, if every female on the planet has eight kids, everything goes up.

ROGER

I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floor of silent seas.

Joe and Mark enter, arguing over some remnant of a topic.

JOE

... Well I hear a lot of chicks DO hang out there.

ROGER

(seeing Joe enter)

Joe, remember I said we had a very special plan 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 to give you a Bastard Network expense account of a million dollars provided you first find a soulmate that 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.

CARLA

Mark, read me another poem before  
we go?

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

EXT. DEVON HORSE SHOW - EARLY EVENING

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

JOE

Now THIS is the place to meet a  
soulmate. And the place to work  
one's charms because their minds  
will be on HORSES, not warding off  
MEN.

ROGER

And who in their right mind would  
try THAT? Don't answer, 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 here!

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 at you when they pass.

ROGER

That's because they're of so high class they don't even HAVE to look. They all have trust funds and horses, so why do they need pigs? AND, if they ever DO happen to grow up and get horny -- they'll find that they can get all the screwing they need right from their trust fund MANAGERS.

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

STEVE

(to the girl as she approaches)

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

Then Roger catches the eye of TRUST-FUND 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 probably from Haverford College 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. Steve and Roger keep walking as if they don't know their "weirdo" friend.

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.

TOTAL SNOOT

So why do you want your DOG to pretend you're not here if you don't even know where your dog IS?

JOE

It's good for their training.

TOTAL SNOOT

You know, you are a weirdo. Why don't you vanish.

JOE

(blankly)

Yes I will. Vanish.

He walks off, not watching where he's going, and walks right into Diane -- spilling her tray of hot coffee, grape drink and assorted refreshments all over her white, pleated pants.

DIANE

(screaming, not realizing who ran into her)

Fuck! You're a real STAR!

Several BYSTANDERS turn to see who the "star" is. Joe thinks she's talking about him.

JOE

(thrilled)

I am?

Suddenly realizing it's Joe from the Trader Joes encounter.

DIANE

YOU ... little asshole! You aren't married to that woman you said was fasting.

JOE

I'm not?

DIANE

And that asshole Mark Hayward is your roommate.

JOE

(trying to make lite)

He is? So, wanna come to a party later?

DIANE

Don't be snippy with me you little  
piece of horse-shit.

(she smacks him)

JOE

(remembering Mark's reward  
if he finds a soulmate)

Hit me again. I deserve it. I  
love you. Maybe we can be  
soulmates, and even go to church.

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

JOE

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

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

EXT. DEVON HORSE SHOW - GRANDSTAND - EARLY EVENING

The horses are doing their thing. Roger and Steve have joined Carla and Mark, who are nestled in a grandstand box three tiers up 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

Yep. Just treat him like a regular guy.

CHERYL

Oh, I will.

ROGER

I was talking to my stock broker and he said Joe has real estate all over the country.

TERRY

Any ocean front?

MARK

Yep ... In fact 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?

TERRY

Absolutely.

ROGER

But of course we will have to clear it with Joe first.

CHERYL

Of course. How many friends can we bring?

STEVE

(elsewhere)

I'd say not older than 20 -- I mean MORE than 20.



Just then Joe, "the millionaire," arrives at the box. He has one slightly reddish eye and a selection of fluids all over his new suede jacket, BUT he's holding hands with Diane, his new soulmate. Mark does a double take and lights up a cigarette, imagining 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 poetry reading party?

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

DIANE

(guarding her man)

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

CHERYL

Oh.

JOE

So bring all the friends you want.

With this Diane sacks Joe with her pocketbook as Cheryl slides closer to his other side.

DIANE

Hey, I thought you said we were getting married and I was your soulmate.

CHERYL

(close to Joe)

Joe, I could be your soulmate too.

TERRY

Joe, let's take a quick ride on the Ferris wheel before you get married and everything?

JOE

(almost overwhelmed)  
Ah, sure.

CHERYL

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 for himself -- he looks back at his friends with an ear-to-ear grin. Steve and Roger smile at Joe as Mark also smiles and kisses Carla. Everyone seems to just be in a good mood.

NARRATOR

Maybe this isn't such a bad place to live, even if one IS out of their mind. After all, everyone seems to have their philosophy life AND and their philosophy of love, here on the Mainline.

FADE TO BLACK: