

CUPID

By
Rob Thomas

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

TEASER

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

An eclectic group of twenty-somethings sit in a ragged circle in a funkily remodeled Tribeca warehouse space. A sign on the door lets us know it's "Singles Night." Dr. Claire Allen, her classical beauty obscured only slightly by her professional attire, moderates a discussion that centers on relationships-- or the participants' lack thereof. Claire takes copious notes.

LOUNGE BOY

So, ladies, tell me. Why is it that when you get asked to dance, you get this look? It's like you've just been asked for your bone marrow.

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD

Ah, asking to dance... That's where you stumble into a girls' night out, spill a couple drinks, and ask the largest pair of breasts at the table if you haven't seen them there before.

YOUNG WOODY ALLEN

Well, maybe, if you had your girls' nights out at places other than "Deca-Dance" or "Caligula's," we might be less confused.

PIERCED NOSE

At least there it makes sense. A guy ballsy enough to ask you out in a grocery store is probably so hopped up on testosterone that he carves notches in his headboard.

METS CAP

Wait a minute, I thought I read in Dr. Allen's column that a grocery store was a safe place to encounter potential relationship material.

Claire looks up from her notes warily.

CLAIRE

What I said, regarding grocery stores was this: they afford you the opportunity to subtly note commonalities. Say you're vegan, and he's toting a half pound of veal. Cross him off. If he's holding a pint of hummus, a bouquet of gladiolas, Italian mineral water, cross him off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The women in the group glance around, confused.

METS CAP

(as if it's obvious)

He's gay.

CLAIRE

At least that's been my experience.

PIERCED NOSE

Once, this guy in the produce section
asked me to squeeze his...

That line is interrupted by the chirping of Claire's cell phone. She turns in her seat, checks the incoming number, then puts a finger in one ear and flips open the phone. The debate continues behind her as she speaks to her colleague Dr. Greenburg.

CLAIRE

What is it? I'm in a meeting.

DR. GREENBURG (O.S.)

Claire, we need you to come down here.
Tonight, if possible.

CLAIRE

Why? McCormack's on call.

DR. GREENBURG (O.S.)

Yeah, but this one you won't want to
miss. He's right up your alley.

Claire turns her attention back to the group. Things have deteriorated into a male/female free-for-all. Claire sighs.

CLAIRE

It's going to take me a while.

INT. BELLEVUE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Claire walks next to an older male, Dr. Greenburg. Assorted extras from One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest wander the halls. Claire refers to a file.

CLAIRE

Picked up on Forty-Second for drunk and
disorderly... Why isn't he sleeping it off
at some precinct house?

DR. GREENBURG

No point. Breathalyzer was negative.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE
Drugs?

DR. GREENBURG
Nope.

Claire shrugs. A beat...

DR. GREENBURG (cont'd)
He was brawling with a pimp. Seems the fellow was standing on a corner offering to find people dates.

CLAIRE
The pimp?

DR. GREENBURG
The patient. The pimp took umbrage.

CLAIRE
Naturally you thought of me.

DR. GREENBURG
More to it than that, but you'll see for yourself.

Claire refers back to the file she's carrying.

CLAIRE
I assume his name isn't John Doe.

The Dr. Greenburg stops at a door. A reasonably attractive female nurse exits the door, giggling and blushing. Claire observes this phenomenon with a degree of suspicion.

DR. GREENBURG
Good instincts, Claire.
(beat)
You've been working on that follow up to your first book for a long time now. How's it coming?

CLAIRE
(mildly uncomfortable)
Honestly? It's not. Still researching. Considering returning the advance money. I hate to admit this, but love and romance--from a scientific standpoint--may be a dry well. Why do you ask?

Dr. Greenburg smiles coyly as he unlocks the door revealing a man seated at a table.

(CONTINUED)

Dressed in a rather expensive, though rumbled, Italian suit, the man is regaling a pair of doe-eyed nurses. The patient, ruggedly handsome--not pretty, oozes confidence. His swagger makes him appealing...and he knows it.

CUPID

Of course my Mom has arms, baby. They just fell off the statue.

The nurses nod appreciatively. Dr. Greenburg turns his attention from Cupid to Claire.

CLAIRE

He thinks he's Cupid?

DR. GREENBURG

Keep the advance money. There's your best seller.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. BELLEVUE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Claire, all business, is seated across a table from Cupid. She jots notes on a yellow legal pad.

 CLAIRE
Name?

 CUPID
Cupid.

 CLAIRE
 (matter of factly)
I've got all night.

 CUPID
Terrific. It appears I'm free, too.
 (motioning towards door)
Maybe we should hang the "do not
disturb."

 CLAIRE
I'll ask you to refrain from that sort of
innuendo.

 CUPID
You will? When?

 CLAIRE
Now.
 (beat. re: herself)
Doctor.
 (re: Cupid)
Patient. Clear?

 CUPID
Sure. It's one of my favorites.
 (initiating game)
Doctor, I think I may have a hernia.

Cupid gives a couple smart-assed coughs. Claire glowers... Despite the obvious "No Smoking" sign, Trevor withdraws a cigarette and from his inside coat pocket. He sticks it in his mouth.

 CLAIRE
No smoking.

 CUPID
I can read. Besides, I'm not smoking; I'm
sucking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

6.

Claire jots, reads what she's writing.

CLAIRE
..."oral fixation."

CUPID
You wish.

CLAIRE
You wish I wish.

Claire realizes she sounds ridiculous. Returning to task...

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Occupation?

CUPID
Deity.

CLAIRE
(sarcastically deadpan)
How long in current position?

CUPID
(frustrated)
I'm not applying for credit here, Hon.
(beat)
Eternity.

CLAIRE
I can't help you unless you let me.

CUPID
You want to help me? Get me out of this
place. I've got a job to do that I can't
do in here.

CLAIRE
Understand this: I am your ticket out,
but I can't help you until you help
yourself.

Claire lets that sink in for a minute.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Now... Tell me your name.

It's "Cupid's" turn to sigh.

CUPID
The name is Cupid.

Claire's expression tells us it's going to be a long night.

INT. FLOWER STORE - DAY

Close up on a Claire's photo next to her Village Voice column. The column is held by Laurie, a cheerful if less-than-dedicated teen-age employee leaning on a cash register. Store owner Madeline Robinson is busily clipping stems.

LAURIE

According to Doctor Allen, the number one reason women don't date much once they hit thirty is because they expect perfection. Do you think that's true?

MADELINE

The number one reason thirty year old women don't date more is because the talent pool has been drained by all those chicks who made landing Mr. Right a priority at twenty four. If men have managed to stay single, there's either a good reason they're single, or they're looking for someone closer to your age.

LAURIE

(reading)

"All of the good ones are taken" is the frequent riposte of women whose ideal man exists only in Camelot and Merchant/Ivory films."

MADELINE

Let me see that.

Madeline takes the Village Voice from Laurie and stares at Claire's column.

INT. BELLEVUE INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

It's a new day. Claire is in a new outfit. "Cupid" is now wearing standard issue Bellevue patient-wear. He's in full rant, pacing the width of the small room.

CUPID

Before we begin today. A word about the accommodations. I couldn't find the concierge, so you're the lucky one. Jot this down. Why am I telling you this? That's all you do. You jot. Number one: new tailor. Number two: new chef. Number three: a better clientele. There's a man out there hiding ping pong balls in a place where ...well, let's just say I won't be signing up for the tournament.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE
Yesterday you mentioned a job.

CUPID
Your hair would look better down.

CLAIRE
A job?

CUPID
Taking notes--while picturing me naked--
tell me, is it hard?

A beat as Claire considers the double entendre. She stands...

CLAIRE
When you decide you're ready to get
serious, let one of the bellhops--they're
the fellows in the white suits--know...

CUPID
All right. All right.

Claire stops. She returns to her seat.

CUPID (cont'd)
The job. Punishment, more like it. One
hundred couples matched up before I'm
allowed back.

CLAIRE
Back where?

CUPID
Olympus.

CLAIRE
But of course.

CUPID
You asked.

CLAIRE
So this is punishment. Interesting choice
of words. Did you do something wrong?

CUPID
Hera found me passed out in her bed. No
idea how I got there. The entire night
was a blur, but from what they tell me,
it also involved spelling my name along
the walls of the Parthenon.

CLAIRE
What? Like graffiti?

CUPID
Sort of. I'd been drinking. A lot.
(beat)
It's a guy thing. You wouldn't
understand.

CLAIRE
Drinking is a guy thing?

CUPID
Spelling your name is a guy thing.

A beat. Claire realizes.

CLAIRE
Let me get this straight. You're saying
you've been sent back to Earth for
whizzing on the Parthenon and waking up
in the bed of a random mythic figure?

CUPID
(considering)
Oh, at the expulsion hearing they
yammered on about relearning my craft,
the screwed up state of love and romance,
gross recidivism on my part, yada yada.
Frankly, I had trouble taking the whole
thing seriously.

CLAIRE
Why's that?

CUPID
A hundred couples. I used to do that
before lunch.

CLAIRE
Really? How'd you pull that off?

CUPID
My bow. My arrows. They're magic. Or
haven't you heard?

CLAIRE
Do you have those with you now?

"Cupid" has trouble relating to the question.

CUPID
You mean ...at this moment?

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

Maybe you could shoot me, and I'd more fully understand this...magic.

CUPID

Do you see a bow?

CLAIRE

Well, if you don't have a bow and arrow, how can you claim to be Cupid?

CUPID

That's the point. They sent me back solo. On my own. No weaponry. No magic.

CLAIRE

...to Manhattan.

CUPID

Zeus' idea. Laughed his ass off. Said something about if I could make it there.

CLAIRE

Hardly the easiest place to find love.

CUPID

That was his point. In Venice, I would've slipped a Nat King Cole single into a cafe jukebox...made a weekend of it.

Though she fights it, Claire is amused by the notion.

CLAIRE

And here.

TREVOR

I'm thinking a couple weeks. Max.

Trevor has no idea the way in which his arrogance offends Claire.

INT. BELLEVUE RECREATION ROOM - DAY

"Cupid" is playing a game of strip chess with a silent female patient. Her slippers and pajama bottoms are on the table. She's still adequately covered by a robe. He's down to a pair of boxers and a T-shirt. A group of patients have gathered around. "Cupid's" opponent moves her queen and takes one of "Cupid's" rooks. A guffawing bystander, Bob, cackles.

BOB

Check! Ha. I told you, Mister Thinks-He's-God. Didn't I tell you? Samantha Shaw.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BOB (cont'd)
Grand master at twenty-two before she
clammed up.
(to a fellow patient)
Pressure, made her snap.

CUPID
First off.
(re: a bystander)
Stewart there thinks he's god, singular.
I'm Cupid. One of the pantheon of gods
tampering haphazardly in your everyday
affairs. Why just this morning Bob, when
you couldn't find your medication? That
was me.

Bob frowns as "Cupid" takes off his shirt.

CUPID (CONT'D)
Sweetheart, you always play this well or
are the pheromones kicking in?

A sweet, shy smile spreads slowly across the woman's face.
"Cupid" slides his bishop across the board. Hector, a beefy
male orderly, elbows his way up to the table.

HECTOR
Yo, Cupid. Put on your clothes before I
write your crazy ass up. You too,
Samantha.

The crowd begins to disperse. "Cupid" slips on his robe.
Samantha remains behind staring at the board. We linger on
her as "Cupid" walks away with Hector. She frowns. Her
eyebrows furrow. Eventually she allows a head-shaking smirk.
She reaches up and tips over her own king.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
C'mon. Dr. Allen's waiting. She's not a
good waiter.

CUPID
Yeah. Yeah. So, Hector, guess who I saw
checking out your ass at breakfast?

HECTOR
Who?

INT. BELLEVUE CORRIDOR - DAY

Hector and "Cupid" pass through double doors into a corridor.
They don't notice Claire who comes out of a separate office
door behind them. Claire observes the exchange.

(CONTINUED)

CUPID

Eleanor.

HECTOR

Nurse? B-Wing? Eleanor?

CUPID

Long cool woman in a white dress Eleanor.

HECTOR

Man, she don't like me.

CUPID

You're gonna tell me that--the way her eyes were popping outta her head?

HECTOR

So what do I do?

Claire rolls her eyes. She can't believe she's hearing this.

CUPID

You tell her.

HECTOR

Tell her what?

CUPID

Start off with her smile. After she laps that up, tell her the best part of your day is when she touches your hand when she laughs.

Trevor gives a jerking off hand motion indicating that the mushy stuff is nothing more than a necessary step.

HECTOR

(hesitantly)

Okay.

CUPID

Next, tell her you you like watching her silhouette when she medicates the old timers in that big bay window at dawn...

HECTOR

You noticed that, too, huh?

(beat)

I can't tell her that.

As "Cupid" continues, Claire follows. Her expression changes from amused, to intrigued to mildly turned on.

(CONTINUED)

CUPID

Tell her you think about her. Tell her you think about her fingernails ...what they could do to your arms, ...your back, ...your sheets. You like her lips, Hector?

HECTOR

Oh yeah.

CUPID

Let her know. Tell her you want...no, "long"...you long to taste them, that you're sure they're some rare combination of honey and wine. Tell her you lie awake at night remembering the way she smells. Let her know you think there's something sexy about her stealthiness, the careful way she walks heel to toe in her size eight, green, Manolo Blahniks, never suspecting that you're constantly aware of her...

CLAIRE

All right. That's enough.

CUPID

...presence.

Hector glances down at Claire's feet. She's wearing the shoes "Cupid" described.

CLAIRE

And they're sevens. Do what he tells you, Hector, and you'll probably end up facing sexual harassment charges.

CUPID

Who're you going to listen to, Hector? The god of love? Or Madame Rorschach?

HECTOR

Well, she is the relationship expert.

CUPID

(shocked)
She's what?

INT. DR. GREENBURG'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Claire enters Dr. Greenburg's office. He looks up.

(CONTINUED)

DR. GREENBURG

Ah, there you are. I just wanted to see how things are shaping up with Cupid.

CLAIRE

Let's stick with John Doe, shall we?

DR. GREENBURG

Just the two of us here. Didn't think there was a danger of either of us getting caught up in the delusion.

CLAIRE

Not after tonight, anyway. I'm holding up the mirror.

DR. GREENBURG

Reality therapy. Dangerous.

CLAIRE

He's not fragile. Not the least bit.

DR. GREENBURG

Well good luck...

(beat)

though...

Dr. Greenburg trails off.

CLAIRE

Though what?

DR. GREENBURG

It's just been fun; that's all. The staff, the other patients, they've really responded to him.

CLAIRE

Kings used to keep down syndrome servants around court to keep everyone in good spirits.

Dr. Greenburg smiles forlornly and shakes his head.

DR. GREENBURG

Claire, you're a good doctor, but sometimes I wish you'd...

CLAIRE

Yes? .

DR. GREENBURG

Lighten up.

INT. BELLEVUE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Claire sits across from "Cupid". She holds a copy of "Classical Mythology--A Compendium." She begins to quiz her patient.

CLAIRE
Olympus.

CUPID
Yes?

CLAIRE
Tell me about it.

CUPID
Non-stop, clothing-optional party.
Everyone's beautiful. Eat whatever you
want. Drink whatever you want. Sleep with
whoever you want. An amazing place. You
have no idea.

CLAIRE
I saw Boogie Nights. Neptune. Details.

CUPID
Good guy. Gives me a team of oxen every
year for my birthday.

CLAIRE
That's not what I mean.

CUPID
Oh, I see what you're doing. Fine.
Neptune--Jupiter's older brother, he
helped defeat the titans. Rules the seas.

CLAIRE
Venus and Mars.

CUPID
Mom and Dad. C'mon...

CLAIRE
We started easy. Romulus?

CUPID
Founder of Rome.

LATER...

The clock has moved ahead another hour. Claire is deeper into the book. "Cupid" is deathly bored.

(CONTINUED)

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dave Collier, 30, sits in his plush if slightly offbeat office. He's not a suit and tie guy. Posters imply that he's the creator of Volkswagon's Da Da Da advertisements as well as the Six Degrees of Levi's campaign. He sits at his desk staring at a bag of potato chips. A custodian in his early twenties pushes his supply cart into Dave's office.

DAVE

Curtis!

CURTIS

Grave Dave! Burnin' the midnight oil as usual. Been meaning to thank you. Those Jets tickets were unbelievable. So close, man, I had two catches for twenty yards.

DAVE

Glad you could use 'em.

Curtis begins cleaning around Dave. The two have an easy rapport that suggests that they see each other often.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Now for the payback: potato chips. Tell me how to make them seem post modern.

CURTIS

Close up of the chip. Slogan reads, "They're tasty!"

DAVE

Why didn't I think of that?

CURTIS

Your brain is fried. Go home. You know, to everyone else here, I'm the trash can fairy magically emptying these things in the middle of the night. You're the only one who's actually seen me.

DAVE

Does this mean I get your pot of gold?

CURTIS

You already got a pot of gold, Dave. So why are you still here?

As that question settles uncomfortably on Dave's face.

CLAIRE
Minotaurs.

CUPID
Nasty creatures. Bull's head. Man's body.

LATER...

CLAIRE
Peneleos.

CUPID
A Theban leader during the Trojan War.
Lactose intolerant.

Claire is frustrated. This hasn't worked like she planned.

CLAIRE
Fine. Fine. You know your mythology.
Anyone can study a book. I give up. So
tell me, how did Psyche react when the
gods sent you back to earth.

CUPID
Who?

CLAIRE
Psyche.

"Cupid" has a blank look.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Psyche--Cupid's wife.

CUPID
My what?

CLAIRE
His wife. She was a mortal. He fell in
love with her despite the god's
objections. I can't believe you don't
know this! This is the best known myth of
Cupid.

"Cupid" seems shaken. For the first time, his cockiness seems
to evaporate.

CUPID
You're saying Cupid was married?

The third person reference makes Claire beam. She's done it.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

Yes, he was.

Off "Cupid's" troubled/confused expression.

INT. BELLEVUE HEARING ROOM - DAY

A three-member mental health panel sits at a long table in front of the room. "Cupid" sits next to Claire facing the panel. Weeks have flown by. He's back in his nice Italian suit, and his facial hair has grown out into a full goatee. He is quiet and passive, his spark now completely gone.

CLAIRE

In summary, after weeks of therapy, I believe I can safely say that this patient is no danger to himself or to others. He's shown absolutely no aggressive behavior which is why I'm recommending his release. Additionally, he's taken great strides in overcoming his delusional state.

DOCTOR 1

And yet you still have no idea as to his true identity. No name?

Before Claire can respond.

CUPID

It's Trevor.

(beat, as if he's remembering)
Trevor Hale.

Claire looks at her patient. This news surprises her.

DOCTOR 2

Well, good. That eases one of my qualms. Now, does he have any money? A place to go?

CLAIRE

He had a hundred and seventy dollars when we found him. There are a number of shelters, as you know, that we work with...

DOCTOR 1

A hundred and seventy dollars won't last long in this city.

CLAIRE

If you'll review the documents I prepared, you'll see that his aptitude scores are off the chart, he'll have no trouble finding employment.

DOCTOR 1

Are you willing to accept responsibility for that?

There's a slight moment of hesitation as Claire glances over at Trevor. He remains passive, beaten.

CLAIRE

I am.

DOCTOR 1

Good. I think I can speak for the committee when I say we'll approve the release of Trevor Hale under the following conditions. One: he finds employment, and two: you continue to monitor his progress on an out-patient basis.

CLAIRE

But...

DOCTOR 3

Good work, as usual, Doctor Allen.

CLAIRE

My caseload is such that...

DOCTOR 1

Thank you, Doctor Allen. Next case.

Off Claire's weary look.

EXT. BELLEVUE - DAY

Trevor stands on the steps of the building taking in the bustling streets of Manhattan. Claire catches up with him and hands him a card.

CLAIRE

(gently)

Tuesdays and Fridays. I mediate a group. A singles group. That's the address. It'll be a good place to deal with some of your issues in the romance department.

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR (CUPID)
(attitude fully restored)
A singles group? Fish in a barrel.

Trevor fires up his battered cigarette. Claire can't believe what she's hearing. With trepidation...

CLAIRE
What are you saying, Trevor?

TREVOR (CUPID)
I'm saying I've got a job to do. A hundred couples before I get to go home. I sure wasn't going to get it done inside there.

CLAIRE
Look, Trevor, I just staked my entire professional reputation on you.

TREVOR (CUPID)
Thanks, Toots.
(re: a street vendor)
Pretzel?

CLAIRE
(losing her patience, furious)
You are not a god! You are not Cupid. You are a man who...

Trevor interrupts.

TREVOR
Hector, Eleanor! Have a good weekend!

Claire turns to see Hector and a woman we assume is Eleanor bounding down the steps hand in hand. Claire rolls her eyes and is silent. She's lost this round. Trevor turns to her.

TREVOR (cont'd)
(re: the couple)
Put that in your notes.
(beat)
See you tonight. Sounds like these people need me.

Claire dejectedly watches as Trevor bounds down the steps. She loses sight of him in the throng of New York pedestrians.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. BELLEVUE SECURITY DESK - DAY

Claire, still steaming from her encounter with Trevor, walks past the hospital security desk, pauses, then takes a few steps back and approaches Phil, the officer on duty. She stands momentarily as if she doesn't know quite what to say.

PHIL

Dr. Allen. Something I can help you with?

CLAIRE

Yeah. I think there is. Can you run a missing persons check for me?

PHIL

Not a problem. The name?

CLAIRE

Trevor Hale. It's a long shot.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A singles session. We recognize a few attendees from the original meeting, but there are two new members in the group: Trevor and Madeline. Through the window we see a heavy rain.

MADELINE

I may be lonely from time to time--now. But that sure seems better than a lifetime spent with someone who doesn't rock my world.

CLAIRE

When I say women expect too much, I'm not suggesting we should settle. What I am suggesting is that we've been raised on fairy tales, and we've come to expect one of our own. True?

Madeline glances around the room, a bit embarrassed.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Go ahead. We've all shared ours.

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD

Railroad tracks. Canadian Mounty.

PIERCED NOSE

Hot day. Good Humor man.

Trevor double takes at the comment. Madeline hesitates, then...

(CONTINUED)

MADELINE

Okay. There's this thing.

CLAIRE

(knowingly)

Uh huh.

MADELINE

The Way We Were--when Robert Redford spots Barbra Streisand at the fraternity party with James Woods. He gives her this look...

The women in the room obviously do know. There's a round of nodding and dreamy looks.

MADELINE (cont'd)

...and the way he crosses the room, you know, with a purpose, like he's just found the answer to a question he'd never asked himself before. They dance. He leaves without saying a word.

(beat, sadly)

No one even dances any more.

CLAIRE

That's a great fantasy. Now, give up on it. It won't happen. It doesn't happen. That's a movie. Lasting relationships are built on friendship and compatibility.

TREVOR

Ha.

Everyone's attention turns to Trevor.

CLAIRE

Group. This is Trevor Hale. He's new.

(to Trevor)

Perhaps you'd just like to audit the session this week, Trevor?

TREVOR

Someday it's going to happen. She's going to see her dream man across the room. But there'll be this problem: some geek who shares her interest in ornithology will have his arm draped over her.

CLAIRE

And what do we know about this guy with the Robert Redford walk? Maybe he has different ideas about children.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Maybe he's unemployed. Maybe he lives with his mother.

TREVOR

So?

CLAIRE

So? So, that's unacceptable for most women.

TREVOR

Maybe he has to take care of his invalid mother. Or he quit his job to conquer Sparta.

This comment raises eyebrows around the room.

TREVOR (cont'd)

The only reason he has different views on children is because he's never met Madeline here.

CLAIRE

And as the years go by, you would tell this woman to wait. Wait for someone who reminds her of a perfect looking man in perfect lighting.

TREVOR

It may not be exactly that, but it sure won't stop to check off items on an "ideal mate" list. Because love isn't compatibility. Love is chemistry, doll. Love is heat.

Claire glances around the room. A disturbingly large percentage of the attendees seem to be nodding along to what Trevor is saying. She gets a bit angry.

CLAIRE

For six months. If you're lucky. Then it's working things out, compromise, friendship.

TREVOR

And then you die.

Claire fixes Trevor with an icy glare. The rest of the attendees are a bit uncomfortable.

CLAIRE

I think this is as good a place as any...

Trevor interrupts and addresses the entire room.

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR

And by the way... Looking for love? Let's get real here. Forget your obsessive mothers. Disregard your inner child.

(re: greasy male)

You. Hygeine.

(re: Young Woody Allen)

You. Dentyne.

(re: a flat chested female)

You. Saline.

(re: an overweight female)

And you? What are you doing at a single's group? I walked in and assumed you were married to Jack Spratt.

CLAIRE

Trevor, shut up!

People are aghast, and in some cases, amused. After a moment, Mets Cap hops up. He breaks the tension with an announcement.

METS CAP

A reminder. Tonight is karaoke night across the street at the Cock & Fiddle. Claire, don't forget you promised you'd come this time.

Claire gives a reluctant nod.

CLAIRE

I'll be there.

(beat, coldly)

Trevor, stay.

Trevor hangs back as people file out.

TREVOR

Yeah, what is it?

CLAIRE

Fifteen years of training has prepared me to help these people.

TREVOR

Oh, and being the Roman God of Love for three thousand years--what's that prepared me for? Writing greeting cards?

CLAIRE

Let's just say, for a moment, that you are Cupid. Remind me again how you made your matches.

(CONTINUED)

Trevor isn't sure how to respond.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Oh, that's right. You shot them. Random people falling madly in love. They had heat. They had chemistry. Look around you, Cupid. The divorce rate. The personals. Your methodology didn't work. You were sent down for being such a screw up. Now let someone who actually cares about these people take a shot.

Now it's Trevor's turn to be left speechless.

EXT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

The Cock & Fiddle hops on Friday nights. The rain has stopped but the streets are wet. A car slams into a puddle and nearly soaks the people waiting to get in the bar. Trevor takes note. The camera follows Trevor who steps in and out of would-be patrons, moving closer to the front. The door is manned by Champ Terrace, late twenties, black.

CHAMP

Whoa, there, cowboy. Let me explain the theory of a line..

TREVOR

Is this place authentic. You're not looking exactly Irish, there, Seamus.

CHAMP

(in note perfect Irish accent)
Fair play to ye, but you've never heard me and the lads on the bodrain and pipes.

TREVOR

Sorry I doubted you. Carry on.

Trevor slaps Champ on the shoulder and disappears into the club. The camera stays on Champ who doesn't react for a moment. He glances up at the next person in line.

CHAMP

Wait.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

The camera follows Champ as he enters the packed, rowdy pub. He spots Trevor, but Trevor's already too far out of sight to be worth the effort. We're vaguely aware of a mediocre karaoke version of "Love Is A Battlefield" in the background. A waitress walks by with a tray full of pints of beer.

(CONTINUED)

Champ takes one. Camera stays on the waitress. She stops at a table where three men wait on beers. She sets down the beers. We catch the first man in mid-sentence.

WAITING ON BEER 1

...so she says, "does this mean we're dating, are we seeing other people," and I'm like...

(noticing missing beer)
We had one more here.

WAITING ON BEER 2

You two take those, I gotta see a man about a horse.

Camera stays on Waiting 2. He takes a few steps toward the "men" sign, glances back over his shoulder, then takes a turn and heads toward a pretty brunette. He takes a deep breath.

WAITING ON BEER 2 (cont'd)

Hey, my name's Carl. I've seen you here before. You were playing darts, and...

BRUNETTE

My boyfriend's at the bar, Carl.

The brunette escapes. Camera follows. Though it catches Carl mouthing the word "bitch." The brunette approaches an equally attractive woman at the bar.

BRUNETTE (cont'd)

Leave me again like that and die.

Camera pans over to the couple next to them. They're making out furiously. They come up for breath.

GUY KISSER

Are you sure you never went to Kennedy High?

She shakes her head no, then pulls his face back to hers. We continue panning over. Dave, looking glum, is seated next to the amorous couple. He calls out to a passing male bartender who doesn't hear him. We follow the bartender to the end of the bar. He hands the beers to Mets Cap. Mets Cap hands the bartender a ten.

METS CAP

Keep it.

We follow Mets Cap to a table next to the dart boards where Claire's group sits. Mets Cap sets one of the beers next to Madeline.

(CONTINUED)

METS CAP (cont'd)

Twenty ounces of liquid courage.

MADLINE

(amused, but firm)

I'm not getting up there.

METS CAP

C'mon. All the cool kids are doing it.

And the camera proceeds. We land on Trevor. He's throwing darts with one hand, slugging down beer with the other.

TREVOR

So what do I need to close.

LOUNGE BOY

Seventeen, double nineteen, double ten.

TREVOR

You know what I like about darts?

Trevor throws his first dart while drinking. He nails the seventeen. The group is suitably impressed.

YOUNG WOODY ALLEN

(chewing gum)

The way they embody the Olympic spirit?

TREVOR

The fact that you only need one hand to play.

Trevor nails the double nineteen.

TREVOR (cont'd)

Now allow me to put you out of your misery...

Trevor faces completely away from the dartboard. He lines up his shot in the reflection supplied by his beer mug, but just before he releases it, he sees Claire come in the door. It's the first time he's seen her not dressed professionally. Her hair is down. Trevor's jaw drops. His dart misses badly.

While someone warbles "Mack the Knife," Claire approaches the bar. As she gets closer, she's pushed out of the way by a giant. The guy elbows his way all the way up to the bar, causing a bit of a scene. The first thing he does is reach into the big tip jar and start pocketing all the cash. The bartender we've seen earlier approaches hastily. Everything the giant says is delivered a la Johnny Carson.

(CONTINUED)

BARTENDER

Hey, buddy, what do you think you're doing? That's my money.

CARSON THUG

Not so, Armadillo breath.

He holds up a wad of bills to his head and becomes Karnak.

CARSON THUG (cont'd)

Giant Stadium. The East River. Your bookie's deep freeze.

The Carson Thug pretends to blow open an envelope and read an answer. The bartender stares at him dumbfounded.

CARSON THUG (cont'd)

Places they're gonna find your body.
Ooooh.

The thug grabs a second tip jar and begins fishing out its contents. The bartender is frustrated, frightened and angry.

BARTENDER

The Jets were supposed to cover.

CARSON THUG

The Jets are so bad..

The bartender remains silent, his eyes wide, a statue. The thug isn't hearing what he wants to hear, and he's genuinely peeved about it.

CARSON THUG (CONT'D)

The Jets are so bad..

Again, no response from the bartender. The thug reaches over the bar and pulls the bartender off his feet and nearly to eye level. Claire, observing the exchange, is horrified.

CARSON THUG

The Jets are so bad..

BARTENDER

(meekly)
How bad are they?

CLAIRE

Small penis.

The thug drops the bartender and swivels around to face Claire.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Violence often stems from feelings of sexual inadequacy.

CARSON THUG
I did not know that.

The words out of his mouth are funny. His body language and expression are anything but. He takes a step towards Claire and grabs ahold of her jaw between his thumb and fingers.

CARSON THUG (cont'd)
Weird. Weird and wacky stuff.

Claire is clearly frightened. She had no idea what she was getting herself into. Trevor appears out of nowhere. He looks the thug square in the eyes.

TREVOR
Bad idea, Johnny.

CARSON THUG
Are those the olives talking, Ed?

The thug gives a Johnny-esque snicker at his own joke; but it becomes clear that Trevor is deadly serious.

TREVOR
You ever watch Fame, Johnny? You know what I have in common with Bruno, Leroy and Coco? I'm gonna live forever. What about you Johnny? Are you gonna live forever? Do you want to?

Trevor leans in closer to the thug. He's practically whispering in his ear. Claire watches, impressed despite herself.

TREVOR (cont'd)
I just got out of Bellevue this morning. It's the first time in years I've been out in public without a catcher's mask and straight jacket on. Do you hear what I'm saying?

The thug looks hard at Trevor who doesn't flinch. The thug drops the Carson act as he speaks to the bartender.

CARSON THUG
Mister L wants the five hundred last week. I suggest you get it to him.

(CONTINUED)

The thug gives Trevor one last curious look before exiting. Claire stares at Trevor. Then, something occurs to her...

CLAIRE

Fame? You get cable on Mount Olympus?

TREVOR

Omniscience, baby. Look it up.

Trevor glances up in time to see a fortyish woman, bar owner Linda Strahn, slapping bills into the bartender's hands.

BARTENDER

I can't believe you're doing this Linda. This is great. It'll never happen again.

LINDA

I know it won't, Tommy. You're fired. I've been losing a hundred every night that you've been behind the bar. I've got a good idea why.

Tommy starts to open his mouth.

LINDA (cont'd)

Don't.

Tommy pockets the money, throws his apron on the bar and takes off. Linda surveys the crowded bar with a bit of apprehension. A number of customers who've been observing everything and appear vaguely shell-shocked are holding out bills waiting to order. Trevor takes the apron off the bar and begins to put it on.

TREVOR

Need help?

LINDA

You know anything about bartending?

TREVOR

That rum and Coke drink always stumps me.

LINDA

I'll guide you through it. The name's Linda. Consider this your audition.

TREVOR

(to Claire, smart-assed)

She must recognize my aptitude. What can I get you for?

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

The bar has cleared out a bit. It's getting late. There are still a few stalwarts from Claire's group hanging out at a table near the karaoke stage.

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD
So, Claire, who is that new guy?

CLAIRE
Just someone I know from work.

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD
(intrigued)
A doctor?

CLAIRE
(adamantly)
No. Just a guy.

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD
Kinda sexy.

CLAIRE
(glancing at Trevor)
Sexy how?

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD
Sexy in that I'd-like-to-have-sex-with-him kind of way.

CLAIRE
(perhaps too quickly)
No, he's not.

Obligatory Brassy Redhead gives Claire a look. Across the table. Mets Cap is still chatting up Madeline.

METS CAP
If you don't you'll hate yourself tomorrow.

MADELINE
If I do, people might point and stare.

METS CAP
There's always...

An incredibly gorgeous, young woman walks past, and Mets Cap can barely keep his train of thought together.

METS CAP
...that chance.

(CONTINUED)

Madeline regards his brain lock as par for the course.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

Back at the bar, Trevor notices solemn Dave. He sets a pint in front of him.

TREVOR

Let me guess. A chick?

DAVE

I haven't had sex in more than two years.

TREVOR

I'm hoping you said two beers.

DAVE

Well, I've quit trying. Have you noticed we live in an age where money is the ultimate aphrodisiac.

TREVOR

And which age wasn't it?

(beat)

Dream girl. Describe her to me. Let's see what we can do.

A new karaoke song. "Our House." Madeline is singing.

DAVE

Dream girl? Hmmm.

(beat, finally)

Warm.

TREVOR

Warm? You're gonna have to do better than that. Give me a type. Geisha. Amazon. Naughty school marm.

But Trevor doesn't get a response. Dave's stopped paying attention. Instead he's focused on Madeline on stage singing.

TREVOR (cont'd)

Buddy, ever see The Way We Were?

Dave turns to Trevor, ready to listen.

SECONDS LATER...

Madeline standing next to the group's table. Mets Cap is talking to her, but we can tell she's only mildly interested in what he's saying. She looks up and sees Dave from across the room. He walks towards her purposefully.

(CONTINUED)

The pair can't take their eyes off each other. Though Mets Cap continues to babble, Dave doesn't even seem to notice his presence. He holds out his hand. Madeline glances around. No one else is dancing, though an unusually talented singer is working his way through "This Masquerade." A bit reluctant, though certainly enchanted, Madeline takes Dave's hand. The remaining group members are stunned. Reactions run the gamut from amused to envious, though the couple's indifference to their presence generally wins the crowd over. As the song ends, Dave presents Madeline back to a flabbergasted Mets Cap. Dave walks past the bar.

DAVE
(to Trevor)
Could you call me a cab?

Dave exits the club. Madeline watches him go. Trevor picks up the phone. There's a sticker with the cab company number on it in plain view, but Trevor considers for a moment, then returns the phone to the cradle. Mets Cap approaches the bar with his empty pitcher.

METS CAP
Refill?

Trevor glances over at Madeline.

TREVOR
(anxiously)
Don't you work?

METS CAP
Tomorrow's Saturday.

We can see the wheels churning in Trevor's brain as he pours the beer. He wants to get Madeline out the door. As he hands the pitcher back to Mets Cap, Trevor pours a shot of Jaegermeister.

TREVOR
This is for Madeline from the guy in the corner. Says he's trying to work up his nerve to come over and talk to her.

Mets cap glances towards the corner--a fairly simian-looking hulk glowers from over his beer.

METS CAP
Her lucky day.

Trevor watches as Mets Cap takes the drinks back to the table and speaks to Madeline. We see Madeline glance towards the corner and immediately begin gathering her things to leave.

Trevor stifles a laugh, picks up the phone and dials. Champ sits at the bar reading Variety, circling casting notices.

TREVOR
...Yeah, I know what I'm asking. They'll get a laugh out of it. Trust me.

Claire approaches as Trevor is hanging up the phone.

CLAIRE
And who could you be talking to?

TREVOR
Oz. That was the wizard. He says your libido's in.

CLAIRE
Every time you speak, I get a clear picture of what Macauley Caulkin is going to end up like. And to think I was coming up here concerned that you were going to end up sleeping on a park bench.

Linda walks by. She overhears Claire.

LINDA
Honey, you're looking for a place?

TREVOR
No.

CLAIRE
Yes.

LINDA
Champ, are you still desperate for a roommate?

Champ looks up from his paper cautiously.

CHAMP
No reactionary politics. No aromatherapy. No reading Dave Barry out loud over breakfast.

TREVOR
Key parties?

CHAMP
In the privacy of your own room. Nine hundred a month.

Trevor glances at the tip jars stuffed with bills.

TREVOR

I'll take it.

EXT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

Madeline walks out into the night. She's surprised to see the mysterious stranger waiting by the curb glancing down the street in either direction. She approaches.

MADELINE

Excuse me. You should know I left a slipper in there with the bartender. I'm expecting you to track me down.

DAVE

(pleasantly surprised)

I usually end up with the wicked stepsister.

An awkward moment ensues. Neither is confident enough to make the next move. Finally...

DAVE (cont'd)

Listen. I know it's late, it's just that I'm not a good sleeper. I'll understand if you don't want to, but maybe we could go somewhere. Talk.

The gorgeous, barely-legal and barely-clothed patron we saw earlier exits the club and moves between Dave and Madeline. Madeline is very aware of both her presence and the fact that it doesn't even seem to register to Dave.

MADELINE

Where? It's two in the morning.

DAVE

There's this place I know. They do a great Civil War Re-Enactment but you have to get there before three. Plus, there's bowling.

MADELINE

(laughs)

Can you get coffee?

DAVE

Served by Stonewall Jackson.

At this moment, a cab comes flying by so close to the curb that it hits the puddle and drenches Dave and Madeline. The cab screeches to a halt, grinds into reverse and backs up toward the pair. Madeline breaks the silence.

(CONTINUED)

MADELINE

At the risk of sounding forward, I have a dryer.

Dave hesitates.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Now before any laundering takes place, I insist on a name.

DAVE

Dave.

MADELINE

Dave, I'm Madeline.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

Trevor picks up a case of empty liquor bottles and hauls them outside making it outside just in time to see wet Dave helping wet Madeline into a cab. He gives a satisfied smile.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

Trevor has taken his apron off. He takes an empty seat next to Claire. He's jazzed about his success with Madeline and Dave, and he's anxious to share the news with Claire.

TREVOR

One down. Ninety-nine to go.

CLAIRE

What?

TREVOR

I found Madeline her Hubble Gardner. She just left with him in a cab.

CLAIRE

You did what? She left with some stranger. Trevor, you can't interfere wi...

TREVOR

Did Madeline seem warm to you? She seemed warm to me, but without those fifteen years of training...

CLAIRE

Don't start...

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR

And hey, kudos to whoever suggested you dress like a woman tonight. Must've been someone here you were hoping to impress.

Trevor jackhammers his eyebrows. Claire rolls her eyes and shakes her head.

INT. MADELINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave is huddled next to a radiator. We hear the faint sound of a dryer in the background and Madeline banging around in a kitchen. Dave wears a tight-fitting YWCA sweatshirt and a towel. The pair is playing a skewed version of the "best" game from The Way We Were.

DAVE

Best product sold through a comic book.

MADELINE (O.S.)

Sea Monkeys. No wait, that hovercraft. The build-it-yourself hovercraft. Okay, best Conquistador.

DAVE

Ponce DeLeon.

Madeline enters carrying coffee.

MADELINE

(playfully)

I don't know. I'm a sucker for the work of Vasco DeGama.

DAVE

Best pipe dream.

Madeline has to think about it for a moment.

MADELINE

White picket fence. You?

DAVE

I was going to say international rock stardom, but... suddenly it felt pretty shallow. I think I like yours better.

Madeline surprises Dave by kissing him. She pulls away a bit embarrassed.

MADELINE

I'm sorry, I don't know what I was thinking. I was just briefly overwhelmed...

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

No. No. It was me. It's just... It's just
been a long, long time since anything
felt that...

This time Dave kisses Madeline. And she kisses back.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. TREVOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's very late when Trevor and Champ enter Champ's dingy Manhattan apartment. Trevor begins checking out the place.

CHAMP

I've got one of those blow up mattresses you can use for right now. Until you get a real bed.

Trevor holds up a trophy that rests on a coffee table.

TREVOR

What's this for?

CHAMP

Put that down! That's my student Tony.

TREVOR

Your student what?

CHAMP

Tony. Best Actor. School for the Performing Arts. Nineteen ninety. That's what I do. I'm an actor.

TREVOR

Yeah, you were pretty convincing as a bouncer tonight. You brought a realism to the role, that...

CHAMP

All right. Watch it. Just so you know, I could be swilling Pelligrino at Le Cirque right now if I'd play the game.

TREVOR

What game's that?

CHAMP

The black actor game. Folky wisdom provider. Cocky boxing opponent. By-the-book police lieutenant. Sacrificial Star Trek crew mem--.

TREVOR

I get the point.

(CONTINUED)

CHAMP

You won't find me at any audition that specifically says "black" actor.

TREVOR

So you're not that interested in working.

CHAMP

Not true. I'll work cheap. Fifty bucks, and I'll play just about anything.

(beat)

You know what I won that Tony for?

TREVOR

Student Tony.

CHAMP

Whatever. Odysseus in a stage production of The Iliad.

TREVOR

Odysseus, really? Show me.

CHAMP

Show you?

TREVOR

Are you an actor, or what?

Champ looks at Trevor suspiciously for a moment, then reluctantly launches into the role. He is quite good.

CHAMP

Fair Penelope, sail not with these ships of Sparta. Theirs is a cursed lot.

Trevor starts to chuckle, pissing off Champ.

TREVOR

I'm sorry. It's just that, Odysseus had a lisp and a limp. I mean, what you did was good, but in real life it would have been...

(doing Odysseus as Daffy Duck)

Fair Penelope, thail not with thethe thips of Thparta...

Trevor is cracking up. Champ looks at him with a sense of foreboding.

CHAMP

Where were you living before here?

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR
Bellevue.

CHAMP
The hospital?

TREVOR
(off handedly)
They didn't believe I was really Cupid.

CHAMP
I better get that first week in advance.

INT. TREVOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Champ awakens to the sound of a hammer pounding. He grumpily trudges into Trevor's bedroom where he finds Trevor installing a pool hall counter on his ceiling. (The device consists of a hundred beads that slide across a wire stretched between two blocks.)

CHAMP
Yo, Olympus Fats. Tell me you're not opening a pool hall in here.

TREVOR
Nope. This'll tell me when I get to go home. Nothing personal, but this place rots.

CHAMP
New York'll frappe your ass.

TREVOR
I meant Earth.

CHAMP
Oh that's right. You're on a mission. So ...what? You get a point every time a couple you hook up gets to... you know...

Champ punches his palm to get his point across.

CHAMP (cont'd)
...knockin' boots.

TREVOR
That'd be nice, but nope. Not that. Doesn't matter if they say they love each other. Doesn't even matter if they get married. It only counts if the gods decide it's...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR (cont'd)
(as if it makes him ill)
"true love."

CHAMP
So how're you going to know when that happens?

TREVOR
I'll know.

Trevor slaps all the beads to one end of the rack. He gazes out the window towards a distant bridge. Below it is a small park--imagine the park from Manhattan. The sun is rising. The morning mist makes the vision postcard-worthy. Trevor appears to be memorizing the view.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

The group is in session. The usual suspects speaking.

MADELINE
...but where can you go if you really want to impress somebody?

METS CAP
You want to find romance in New York? Try the Staten Island ferry.

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD
Ladies and gentlemen...Eddie Murphy has spoken.

CLAIRE
For a view, there's always drinks at the Rainbow Room.

TREVOR
Yeah, they can sit in the Rainbow Room in their "I love New York" t-shirts, clutching their Lion King tickets, hoping that during their carriage ride through Central Park they spot Detective Sipowicz roughing up John Gotti.

CLAIRE
By all means, Trevor. Feel free to participate.

TREVOR
For a spot to be truly romantic, it can't try that hard.
(beat, Trevor eyes Madeline)
Take this park I know...

EXT. BRIDGE PARK - DAY

Dave and Madeline wander out from under the bridge eating vendor food--hot dogs, pretzels, etc. A lone cello plays.

MADELINE

It was a symbiotic, though perverse, relationship. I think he stuck around because he didn't want to be lonely while he waited for someone better to come along.

DAVE

Symbiotic? What did you get out of it?

MADELINE

An excuse to not try. Because I hate trying. The most unattractive I've ever felt was when I've been out there, you know, on the hunt. Trying to be attractive. Putting on the lipstick. Practicing my "coy." I feel ridiculous. What about you? How did you make it thirty odd years without popping the question to some sweet young thing.

DAVE

Actually.
(beat)
I did once.

MADELINE

What happened?

DAVE

When I proposed I made a big production of it. Skywriting was involved. I did the full bended knee thing, gave her this ring--this emerald ring that had been grandmother's then my Mom's.

The expression on Madeline's face let's us know she thinks this is terribly romantic.

DAVE (cont'd)

She acted like I had pulled it out of a Cracker Jack box.

MADELINE

(playfully)
The bitch! Good riddance!

Dave smiles.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

You know, you've never asked me what I do for a living.

MADELINE

Does it involve the internet and credit cards?

DAVE

Nope.

MADELINE

Then I'm not sure I really care. You may be the first man I've met who doesn't act like what he does is who he is.

Dave takes Madeline's hand. They walk away from the camera. As an afterthought...

DAVE

I play shortstop for the Yankees.

MADELINE

Derek Jeter plays shortstop for the Yankees.

Dave stops. He's struck paydirt. He turns and kisses Madeline with abandon. The reserve he's shown previously is gone.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Batted two eighty seven last year.

Dave begins working on her neck, her ears. Madeline laughs.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Named rookie of the year in ninety-fi...

But she doesn't get the final words out as Dave covers his mouth with hers. As we pull back, we see the cello player that we've assumed to be part of the soundtrack. Joggers zip by; boats skim across the water; ducks wander up from the bank. The entire world seems to be in motion except for Madeline and Dave. The final image is of Trevor dropping a ten into the cello case of the street musician as he takes a long drag on his cigarette.

CELLO PLAYER

You done with me now?

TREVOR

Five more minutes. Thanks, buddy.

INT. BELLEVUE CORRIDOR - DAY

Claire enters the hospital with Dr. Greenburg. The two of them are almost all the way past the security office before Phil gets Claire's attention.

PHIL

Dr. Allen!

Claire hears her name called. She and Dr. Greenburg return to the security office.

CLAIRE

Yeah, Phil. Did you learn something.

PHIL

I think you'll find this interesting. An R.T. Hale in the Chicago area was reported missing four years ago.

CLAIRE

R.T.?

PHIL

Apparently, it's just R.T.--doesn't stand for anything, but it's as close as I got. I talked to the cop who worked the case. Hale was a professor at Northwestern and the university was investigating him for misconduct. Something about a relationship with a female student. I've got someone hunting down the file.

CLAIRE

I don't suppose you found out what subject he taught, did you?

PHIL

Uh, no.

CLAIRE

(to Greenburg)

Ten to one it was mythological literature. Thanks, Phil.

Claire and Dr. Greenburg reach the elevator.

DR. GREENBURG

Feeling vindicated?

Claire thinks about it for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE
(w/a measure of doubt)
I suppose.

DR. GREENBURG
Reality can be a bitch.

The elevator doors close on Claire's uncertain expression.

INT. FLOWER STORE - DAY

Madeline enters her store with a bagel and a cup of coffee. Laurie looks up from her copy of Interview. A bouquet of flowers sits on the counter.

LAURIE
These are for you. Again. Does the guy know you own a flower store?

MADELINE
He does. It doesn't make them any less special.

LAURIE
(laden w/innuendo)
If I'da known it meant daily bouquets, Jerry Davis might've had better luck the weekend his parents left town.

MADELINE
F.Y.I. I'm not putting out for roses.

LAURIE
Playing hard to get?

MADELINE
Nope. He is. But I think I'm wearing him down.

Madeline is pleased to see she can shock her teenaged employee.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - DAY

A clock tells us it's 4:45 p.m. An older, suited colleague of Dave's enters the office carrying a layout of the chip ad.

DAVE'S BOSS
Dave, I just got through looking at the mock ups for the chip campaign. "Tasty."
You really think that's enough?

(CONTINUED)

He looks up to see that Dave is gone. He checks his watch, then leaves, shaking his head.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - DAY

Close up of a foosball halfback smacking a ball into the goal. We retreat to find Dave, relaxed, laughing, having a good time. He's playing Trevor. Trevor is frustrated. He drops the ball in the slot and the two continue to battle it out.

DAVE

...Dinner at her place tonight.

TREVOR

Gonna bust the piñata?

Dave gives Trevor a look.

DAVE

Sorry, did you oink something?

(beat)

There's still a lot we don't know about each other.

TREVOR

You're starting to piss me off. At this rate...

DAVE

At this rate, what?

Trevor resists his urge to strangle Dave.

TREVOR

Nothing. Look, social security numbers can come later. Tell me what you do know.

Dave can't suppress his smile.

DAVE

That she's the first thing I've felt passionately about--other than work--since, ...well, ever, maybe.

TREVOR

Then shut up and quit analyzing.

Dave slaps a shot past Trevor's goalie.

TREVOR (cont'd)

Exactly.

INT. CLAIRE'S OFFICE - DAY

Madeline is already talking to Claire.

MADELINE

The boy is driving me nuts. I feel week-kneed around him. Like he could do anything he wants with me, and that there's this Nike billboard on my forehead saying just do it.

CLAIRE

Madeline, are you asking me for permission to seduce him?

MADELINE

(embarrassed)

No. Not exactly. Maybe. Yes.

CLAIRE

Often, in the beginning of relationships, the participants don't stop to talk about big issues. They talk about movies they like. Favorite restaurants. No one stops long enough to ask the big questions.

MADELINE

The big questions?

CLAIRE

If those check out, I say jump him.

MADELINE

I've got to thank you. Before I started coming here, I'd taken myself out of the game. I need to thank Trevor, too.

CLAIRE

Trevor?

MADELINE

I wouldn't have Dave without him.

Off Claire's quizzical expression.

INT. MADELINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Madeline's legs are wrapped around Dave who is still seated in his dinner chair, the meal itself, half-eaten, is spread out behind them. They're kissing, groping, panting.

MADELINE

So spirituality is important to you?

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

Uh huh.

Dave stands and blindly carries Madeline to what he hopes is a bedroom. Madeline unbuttons Dave's shirt between kisses and questions.

MADELINE

Me, too. Kids?

DAVE

Are kids important?

Dave is kicking off his shoes as he's carrying her.

MADELINE

That's a closet.
(more kissing)
Do you want them?

DAVE

Someday. Yeah.

Dave untucks Madeline's blouse, his hands run up her back.

MADELINE

Deforestation?

DAVE

Bad.

MADELINE

Dogs?

DAVE

Good.

They fall back onto Madeline's bed. Madeline pauses and takes Dave's chin in her hand.

MADELINE

Casual sex?

DAVE

Nothing casual about it.

Madeline attempts to take Dave's whole face in her mouth. They're through talking for the evening.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

Claire, professionally dressed, sits down at a stool. Trevor is bartending. He sees Claire, quits chatting with an elderly gentleman and approaches Claire.

TREVOR

Looking for Mr. Goodbar? Johnson there says he fantasizes about doing it with a Mousketeer. I know a costume shop on...

CLAIRE

(ignoring him)
Trevor, let's talk.

TREVOR

Talk? Like two people talking or talk like a doctor and a patient?

CLAIRE

I've got a love story I want to share with you.

TREVOR

Great. I've got a break coming. Let's go for a walk. Grab some food.

CLAIRE

You know the rules.

Trevor sighs.

TREVOR

Doctor. Patient. How could I forget?

CLAIRE

Stop me if you've heard this one. It's about a scholar ...a university professor.

TREVOR

Gotcha.

CLAIRE

Anyway. He falls in love with one of his students.

TREVOR

Old story.

CLAIRE

This one's different. He falls madly in love with her. She reciprocates. But something happens.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE (cont'd)

She takes advantage of their relationship. Something simple. The change of semesters. For her it was a passing fling. For him it was much more.

TREVOR

Like I said, old story.

CLAIRE

Maybe, but it doesn't end there. He can't stop thinking about her. He follows her. Shows up at her house in the middle of the night. Leaves drunken messages on her machine. She reports him to the university. He's forced to resign in disgrace. He snaps. Gets as far away from her as possible. Changes his identity. Eventually, he can't even remember who he is. He tells people he's the god of love.

TREVOR

Okay. Not bad, but I've got a better one. Let's take your college professor. This time, let's say he's a total ass hound. Always picking out a coed for "private tutoring." Then, unexpectedly, he actually falls for one of them. A grad student. Someone closer to his own age. Head over heels. He can't get her out of his mind. This vain, pompous man, finally finds someone who completes him. Someone who makes him the man he was supposed to be.

Claire is rapt. She believes she's hearing Trevor's real backstory.

CLAIRE

Go on.

TREVOR

Then some jealous coed he tossed away the year before makes it her mission to spoil his happiness. She tells the new woman about the girls he's seduced. Gives her names, phone numbers. Too much information for it not to be true. The professor's lover can't take it. She wants to escape, to sleep until it doesn't hurt any more. She finds a bottle of pills. Figures the more she takes, the longer she sleeps.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR (cont'd)

Our Prince Charming finds her in his bed,
but no matter how many times he kisses
her, she won't wake up.

Trevor sees the story has had an effect on Claire.

TREVOR (cont'd)

Drips with poetic justice, don't you
think? Or is it irony?

CLAIRE

Trevor, I know I can help you...

TREVOR

I'm not sure about your ending, either.
Sort of hackneyed. Instead of the
insanity thing--let's say he starts
wrestling Minotaurs for sacks of gold.

Claire speaks now with a warmth we haven't heard before.

CLAIRE

Trevor. Hector and Eleanor broke up
today. There was a big scene at the
hospital. You have no magic. You aren't a
god.

Trevor lets that sink in for a moment, then...

TREVOR

(exasperated, weary)

No bow and arrow. I've explained that. I
can't make you believe me, but after
tonight, ask Madeline, ask Dave. They'll
say they believe in Cupid.

INT. MADELINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Madeline is asleep in bed, curled up around Dave. Dave stares
up at the ceiling, a profound sorrow etched upon his face. He
shakes his head. He's made a mistake and we all know it.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. MADELINE'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Madeline awakens. The realization that Dave is no longer next to her confuses her. She gets out of bed and turns on a lamp. She spots something on her dining table--a note. Madeline picks it up and begins reading. The contents knock her down into the chair. By the time she gets to the bottom of the page, she is weeping.

INT. BELLEVUE HEARING ROOM - DAY

Claire is waiting to participate in a release hearing for one of her patients. She sits in the same room in which Trevor's release was approved. We see Samantha, the mute chess champion, seated next to a psychiatrist addressing the same three doctors we've seen before.

PSYCHIATRIST

Samantha's recovery has been nothing short of miraculous. In my fifteen years...

His voice fades as Claire reviews her notes. She glances up momentarily and something catches her attention. Engraved in the marble above the doctors is the slogan...

AND LOVE SHALL MAKE THE EARTH TREMOR
AS IT'S REBORN IN A STORM OF FIRE AND HAIL

Claire glances at the sign. Something about it bothers her. She figures it out. Close up of the final two words of each line--TREMOR, HAIL. Claire shakes her head and allows a smirk. She pulls her cell phone out of her purse and dials.

CLAIRE

Hello, Phil, yeah, this is Dr. Allen.
That Trevor Hale investigation? Cancel
it. I've wasted your time.

(beat)

Yeah, I'm sure. Thanks. Bye.

Samantha turns in her seat. As she speaks for the first time, we see an item she's clutching in her hand--it's her king.

SAMANTHA

(kindly)

Shhhhh. This is important.

CLAIRE

(shocked)

Samantha?

(CONTINUED)

Claire's expression tells us the world has turned upside down.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A singles session is in full swing. All the regulars, plus Trevor and Claire.

YOUNG WOODY ALLEN

No, but my question is, is monogamy ever assumed? Do woman figure that's the case once you're sleeping together?

OBLIGATORY BRASSY REDHEAD

Condom or no condom?

CLAIRE

What?!

Madeline bursts into the room looking like hell. Her eyes are red. She fixes them on Trevor.

MADELINE

You!

Trevor is baffled. He has no idea what's going on.

MADELINE (cont'd)

You're to blame for this. You pushed him my way.

TREVOR

Yeah... But I thought... It sounded like...

MADELINE

He's married!

The line drops like a bomb. People in the group are shell shocked. Madeline begins to weep. Claire attempts to comfort her.

CLAIRE

Madeline, the pain you're feeling...

But Madeline is in no mood for Claire's help. Her sorrow gives way to anger again.

MADELINE

What about the pain I'm feeling? You treat love like it's a math problem. What could you possibly tell me about feelings?

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE
(quietly)
That's not fair.

MADELINE
Please, tell me all about what's fair.
You sit in here playing god, and we soak
it up. Well here I am. A disciple. And
look where it got me.

Madeline surveys the room, shakes her head disgustedly, and exits.

INT. THE COCK & FIDDLE - NIGHT

Trevor is behind the bar. Dave enters. Trevor greets him coldly.

DAVE
I told her.

TREVOR
I heard.

DAVE
Not Madeline. My wife.

Trevor greets this news with sarcastic applause.

TREVOR
Maybe you should work another bar. I so
much as see you glancing at a woman here...

DAVE
It's not like that. I wasn't looking to
meet a woman. I didn't lie when I told
you I hadn't had sex in two years. My
marriage died a long time ago.

TREVOR
Divorce is legal in this country.

DAVE
I'm about to find out the hard way--given
the circumstances. I'm giving it all up.
She gets the apartment, the car, that
obnoxious diamond ring.

TREVOR
Tell me you didn't come here for
sympathy.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

I came here to explain one thing. This wasn't an affair. This was the real thing. My divorce will be final in a hundred and twenty days.

TREVOR

Madeline ain't real high on you, buddy.

DAVE

I know. But I'm going to make her understand. Even if it's pointless. I'll be like that guy, you know, the one who pushes the rock up the hill.

TREVOR

Sisyphus.

DAVE

Yeah, that'll be me. Proving my love.

Trevor takes a moment to reassess.

TREVOR

Then why wait?

INT. FLOWER STORE - DAY

A rather dejected Madeline is behind the counter at the flower store. This time Laurie is tending to the flowers. A man in a gorilla suit enters, walks past a dumbfounded Laurie and up to Madeline, places a tape recorder on the counter, presses play, and does a hilarious soft shoe to "Tea for Two" culminating in the presentation of a small package to Madeline. Madeline watches the performance through dead eyes. Initially she's too sad to respond, but she can't help but be slightly amused by the finale.

Laurie moves closer as Madeline nervously opens the package. She flips open a small box. The contents take her breath away. She holds the item up--an emerald ring. Madeline doesn't know what to do with it. Her first reaction is to throw it away. Almost immediately she fishes it out of the trash. Then she repeats the process.

LAURIE

Are you insane?

This time Madeline slides it on her finger. She takes it off. She has a tin can on a shelf behind the counter. She settles on that, dropping it inside. Madeline notices the gorilla still standing there ...observing. Madeline becomes suspicious, possibly angry. As the gorilla turns to leave...

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

Madeline was right. I just needed a focus group. Guinea pigs for my next book.

TREVOR

Who cares about the original motivations? At least you give a damn. I look around that room and think--Buddy, get a dog. Order the complete cable package.

CLAIRE

There's someone for everyone, Trevor.

TREVOR

See, you say that and even though I know better, I almost believe it.

CLAIRE

You've never been in love?

TREVOR

Not for more than twenty minutes.

CLAIRE

It's going to take someone very special, strong-willed, patient, but there's a woman out there for you.

TREVOR

A mortal? Not likely. They'd never let me go back, and sister, I'm getting back as soon as I can.

CLAIRE

Cupid fell in love with Psyche. She was mortal.

TREVOR

I'm telling you that never happened.

(long beat)

You know what? The weather, the work, the getting yelled at--it would all be a little more tolerable if I could just get a decent Italian meal.

CLAIRE

The best Italian food in the world is in Manhattan. I know a dozen places...

TREVOR

Let's go.

There's an awkward, silent moment as Claire considers.

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR (cont'd)
I could use the counseling, Dr. Allen.

CLAIRE
(suspiciously)
Suddenly having doubts about your
identity?

TREVOR
No.
(beat, sincerely)
Homesick, maybe.

After a lengthy pause.

CLAIRE
Meet me at the twenty-second street
subway stop.

Trevor gets up from his chair and wanders back towards his
room.

TREVOR
(surprised, happy)
Good, afterwards, there's this stain on
my ceiling I think you should see.

CLAIRE
Trevor...

TREVOR
Don't get all sweaty-palmed, Claire.
Professional curiosity, that's all. The
shape, I think it could be an abstract
representation of innocence lost...

CLAIRE
Or?

TREVOR
...a ducky.

The sound of Claire's laughter causes a grin to spread
reluctantly across Trevor's face. It's the first time he's
heard the sound.

CLAIRE
How does thirty minutes sound?

But Trevor doesn't answer immediately. He's facing his
window, staring at something. He appears to be almost in a
stupor.

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR'S POV: we see the pool hall counter. One bead has moved all the way across.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Trevor?

TREVOR

(mystified)

I'll be there.

But the camera doesn't stop there. It zooms in beyond the fluttering curtains toward the bridge outside Trevor's window.

EXT. BRIDGE PARK - NIGHT

We see Dave. He's still staring down at the Hudson. But beyond him, we see Madeline. She walks towards him. Dave turns and sees her. He smiles, we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR