

DATE ME

Written by

Aaron Mebesius

[Mebesius@gmail.com](mailto:Mebesius@gmail.com)

Based on actual events.

**INT. FUGGIRE, AN ITALIAN RESTAUNT - JESSICA'S TABLE**

We are in an upscale, and seemingly pricey establishment.

Jessica walks towards us. She takes her seat across from her date, who looks on, bored and irritated. Jessica is an attractive, conservatively dressed, 20-something woman, though at the moment, her carefully done makeup seems disturbed, and her eyes are red and puffy.

**NATE**

Jessica, you were in there for like an hour. I've had three drinks since you ran in there.

**JESSICA**

(hopeful)  
I'm glad you stayed.

**NATE**

I'm not staying, not in the long term. If you want to do some kind of casual thing, that, we can discuss.

The emotion of the previous event returns.

**JESSICA**

I'm sorry, I...  
(beat)  
Why don't you see me in the long term? I thought we'd discussed getting married and finally letting our lives begin. And now this...

**NATE**

See, I don't know what that means. Life begin? What's that even mean? Aren't we alive right now?

**JESSICA**

You know, actually begin adulthood. We've overcome so much. If we took the next step I know we could work through anything, maybe even in pre-marriage counseling.

**NATE**

Marriage is a cure all?

**JESSICA**

It's the natural progression.

**NATE**

Jess, what would change? Say we're married. How would things be any different or easier? Because once the relationship is legal and on paper we wouldn't have to work at it?

Jessica shrugs, at a loss for words.

**NATE (CONT'D)**

When I close my eyes and envision our future I see a nightmare. A jumble of sorority reunions trying to make up for your lack of actual friends as you continue to force your way into everything I do.

**JESSICA**

That's not true at all. Dave and Sean, all those guys...

**NATE**

Are my friends. And, you are, were, my girlfriend. They're loyalty is to me, not you.

**JESSICA**

What about loyalty to the plan, our plan, to start a life together?

**NATE**

That was never my idea.

**JESSICA**

What?

**NATE**

You were the one always going on about marriage. I just signed off on it to prevent any waterworks.

Jessica sits back stunned.

**JESSICA**

So this new idea, this exclusively casual thing, what's that?

**NATE**

Like, you know, I'll be dating you, and you can date me, but we can also see other people.

**JESSICA**

You mean fuck other people.

**NATE**

No.

**JESSICA**

Yes. That's what it means. That's what it always means, except saying I want to fuck other people never sounds like a compromise.

**NATE**

I still care about you.

Jessica scoffs.

**NATE (CONT'D)**

And I know you. You'll struggle with this.

**JESSICA**

So?

**NATE**

So, if you need some... comfort, I'll be there for you.

Jessica is aghast.

**JESSICA**

As what Nate, your fuck friend? That's your solution for fixing our relationship?

**NATE**

Our relationship is over.

Nate can't look into her eyes.

**NATE (CONT'D)**

It's been over for awhile.

Jessica silently sits back, her sadness turning to anger.

**JESSICA**

Who?

**NATE**

Come on, stop with that.

She slams her fists into the table, causing a LOUD NOISE, and drawing the attention of everyone in the restraint.

An attractive 20-something year old woman seems to be paying closer attention than most, and while every other patron resumes their conversations, she keeps staring.

**NATE** (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter who.

**JESSICA**

You... pig.

**NATE**

Scathing. Listen...

**JESSICA**

No, you listen. Your weakness isn't my fault. I've always been the bigger person and forgiven you with all the others. The random girls in college, the girl who came on to you at church who you said you were just friends with until I found her bible with a condom wrapper in it, and the "friends" you needed, because long distance was too lonely, but this... Jesus, that's what this is? This casual thing? You want me to sign off on your bullshit? Cook, clean, be at your beck and call, always around your schedule by the way, we always do what you want to do, and now, if you want to "date" someone else, I'm just supposed to look the other way because, what, we've talked about it?

Nate stands and gets out his wallet.

**NATE**

I've reached a point where I don't care if you stop doing those things. I just don't want to keep lying to you. It's a sin, and it's making me a bad person.

He pulls out some cash, and puts it on the tab.

**NATE** (CONT'D)

If you ever need some... support. Just give me a call, or text, whatever works for you.

Nate grabs his coat, and without a second glance, leaves.

Jessica is fuming with frustration and sadness as she watches him walk away. She opens her mouth as if to say something. Overwhelmed, she can't find the words. She composes herself as The Waiter places a second bill at her table.

**JESSICA**

Excuse me, what's this?

**WAITER**

He asked for separate checks.

Rolling her eyes, she goes into her purse for her wallet.

From across the room, the gorgeous 20-something year old woman is still mesmerized by the unfolding drama.

**INT. FUGGIRE, AN ITALIAN RESTRAUNT - NOLAN'S TABLE**

**ALICE**

Oh my God, I think he didn't pay. I think he dropped her flat and left her the check.

Jessica pays the bill with cash, gets up, and walks to the exit away from Alice's table.

**NOLAN**

Alice, you're staring.

Nolan looks back and over his shoulder. He sees Jessica walking away from us towards the restraunt's exit.

**ALICE**

And to rip her heart out in public, ballsy.

**NOLAN**

More like merciless.

Nate and Jessica's waiter approaches their table.

**WAITER**

And how are you two this evening?

**NOLAN**

Better than Nicole Brown and OJ over there.

(looking over menu)

I think the fusion salad with salmon on the side sounds fun. Alice, what are you feeling?

**ALICE**

I don't love you.

The Waiter and Nolan are both stunned as Nolan looks up from his menu.

Nolan gives a nervous laugh, but Alice is unyielding.

Nolan's expression drops.

THUNDER CRASHES. SMASH CUT TO BLACK. FADE IN: DATE ME

**EXT. CITY STREETS - HEAVY RAIN - EVENING**

Nolan walks alone, carrying a folded umbrella. He looks like a guy who just got dumped by a perfect 10 who basically told him that he wasn't interesting enough.

On the street, he passes multiple signs that read: 20th ANNUAL OKTOBERFEST! RESERVE YOUR TABLE NOW!

He sees a homeless man taking refuge from the weather with a piece of cardboard. He stops, and offers his umbrella.

The homeless man takes it, and Nolan continues.

**INT. JESSICA'S PARENT'S HOME - LIVING**

Jessica's mother is watching television with a small dog on her lap. Her appearance is overly done up for an activity so mundane.

She hears the door UNLOCK, but barely glances away from the screen as Jessica enters.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

You're back early.

Throwing her purse on the counter, Jessica walks into the laundry room. She's soaked.

Jessica's mother howls with laughter at the television. While we don't see the program she's watching, we can hear the laugh track in the background.

**JESSICA**

(from the laundry room)

Do we have any fresh towels?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

In the drier.

We hear the drying machine OPEN and CLOSE. Jessica exits the laundry room drying her hair.

Noticing Jessica's reflection in a window, Jessica's Mother turns toward her, giving her her full attention.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

God, you're drenched. Why didn't Nate drop you off closer?

**JESSICA**

He didn't drop me off at all, mom.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

What do you mean, at all? What's happened?

Jessica gives a knowing glance.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

Who?

**JESSICA**

He wouldn't say. Oh, except this time he added a nice twist to the whole thing, this time, he wanted me to be apart of his booming harem.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

But, he's not a Muslim.

**JESSICA**

Mom, just leave it, it's over.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Only if you quit on him, I bet if you call tomorrow you two can work this misunderstanding out.

**JESSICA**

Did you not hear me? He's a pig. A devious, rotten, piece of spam.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

What did you do?

**JESSICA**

What do *I* do?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Yes. You must have given him a reason. Good men only step out if there's a reason.

Disgusted, Jessica storms off to her room.

**JESSICA**

The reason is he'd rather get his dork wet with random strangers than try to build something with me.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

But you have so much history, and he has such a good career. I thought you two had been talking about getting married?

**JESSICA**

Apparently, I was the only one doing the talking.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

And giving it away for free.

**JESSICA**

What did you say?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

So what's your plan now? Hm? Just live with us forever? Stay on our health care plan and not pay rent until we kick you out? How do you expect to start a family on your own?

Jessica reaches her room and SLAMS the door behind her.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

Nate's your future, don't you see that?

**INT. JESSICA'S PARENT'S HOME - JESSICA'S ROOM**

Jessica sits at her desk in front of her computer, too angry to cry. Looking around her room, we see the large mounted greek letters: Chi Omega, and framed photos from over a dozen wedding receptions mounted on her wall. Jessica is a bride's maid in many.

She fires up Facebook, and is bombarded with status updates from her sorority sisters: Dinner with my man was fabulous! =) Can't wait to get our new dog! Just went through closing, scared and excited!

A post from Sondra stands out amongst the sappy posts: Moving to PDX to start my Residency @ OHSU.

Jessica looks back to her wall of photos. We see Sondra and Jessica dancing at multiple receptions in different dresses.

Sondra is a curvy, non-white, attractive 20-something year old woman.

She picks up her phone and dials.

**JESSICA**

Hey Sondra, it's Jess. Hey! I just saw your status, congratulations! I do still live in Portland, and that's part of... have you signed a lease yet?

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING**

The front door swings open. Behind Nolan, it's still raining hard. He stands silhouetted in the doorway, dripping, like a some kind of horror movie monster.

He puts his hand on the light switch, but after a moment of hesitation, decides not to turn it on.

Entering the dark apartment, he closes the door behind him. His socks and shoes SQUISH with each step as he moves to the kitchen.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN**

Nolan grabs a bottle of whiskey, and pours a tall drink.

He stares at the generous drink, seemingly contemplating whether it was too large. He sets it on the counter, and instead, takes the entire bottle, leaving the glass on the counter.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM**

He plops onto the couch, and takes a giant swig from the bottle.

Around the room, we see framed photos of Nolan and Alice. Most notably, the fireplace has several framed photos on the mantle.

He stands, walks to the fire place, and picks up a particularly sappy photo.

Taking another drink, he slowly places the frame back where he found it, and then gently turns the framed photo face down.

He repeats this process for all the photos with Alice in them, and upon finishing, returns to his same spot on the couch.

He glances at his phone which reads: 10:34. Set in the background, is a photo of him and Alice posing for the camera. They're both wearing Oregon State University sweaters.

He texts a message to Anderson: Emergency. Call me ASAP.

Defeated, and with the alcohol kicking in, he lays his head back, and closes his eyes.

**INT. COLLEGE DORM LOBBY/REC ROOM - FLASH BACK**

**ANDERSON**

It's not stupid.

Rubbing his eyes, Nolan stands, grabs a pool cue, and walks over to the table. He walks around Anderson, a very attractive 20-something man. Of all the male characters we're going to meet, he is by far the best looking.

The two are in a small rec room that bleeds into a much larger lobby. The pool table they're playing on is worn down, and is surrounded by soiled couches and other pieces of used furniture.

Nolan is wearing the same sweater from his phone's photo.

**NOLAN**

It is. Monumentally.

**ANDERSON**

What part?

**NOLAN**

The whole thing, Anderson.  
Operation Wife Lockdown?

**ANDERSON**

OWL as it will be called.

Nolan takes a shot. He misses his intended ball horribly, and unintentionally pockets the 9 ball, winning the game.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

I seriously cannot believe your luck. Somehow, you trick the hottest talent in school to be your girlfriend, and not only is she attending the same college as you, she ends up in *our* God damn dorm.

**NOLAN**

Sometimes it's better to be lucky than good.

**ANDERSON**

OWL *is* good.

**NOLAN**

Please, don't call it that.

**ANDERSON**

I pitched it to our new neighbors, Adam, and, um, Drew I think was the other guy's name.

**NOLAN**

And?

**ANDERSON**

Adam was down, Drew seemed like he needed some convincing.

**NOLAN**

Ugh, sheep, all of them.

**ANDERSON**

How do you not see the appeal of going out every single night looking for girls?

**NOLAN**

Not girls, wives. Potential wives. Your words.

**ANDERSON**

I can't help that I think long term.

**NOLAN**

We've been here less than 12 hours!

**ANDERSON**

College is a marketplace, and now is the time to buy before all the prime real estate gets a dick in it.

**NOLAN**

Jesus Christ.

**ANDERSON**

Nolan, you just lack motivation because you've already got an advantage over all of us.

**NOLAN**

Advantage? You mean Alice?

**ANDERSON**

Yeah, you've got yours locked down. You're telling me you've never thought about potentially marrying her?

**NOLAN**

Not once.

**ANDERSON**

Dude, you should. She's a ten and you're like... a seven. Your stock might rise once you get a degree and career going, but right now, she's out of your league.

Alice enters the lobby pushing a cart with boxes stacked on it. She sees Nolan and Anderson, and gives an excited wave hello. Nolan happily waves back.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

You're on a tight rope and you don't even know it. One mistake and she's gone.

As she begins walking over, a group of male students walk passed her. They oggle her as she walks away from them. While Alice is unaware, Nolan and Anderson see everything.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

Plus, there's always that to contend with. Every guy on the campus is going to be sniffing around, looking for insecurities and unhappiness. They'd kill for a chance at her, they'd kill you for the chance.

Nolan's expression changes from happiness to fear.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

She's in her prime, what've you got? If it were me, I'd be doing everything in my power to keep her happy.

Anderson begins setting up a new 9-Ball rack.

**ALICE**

Hey! What do you want to do now?

**NOLAN**

(nervously swallows)  
Whatever you want.

Anderson smiles, and BREAKS.

The cracking 9-Ball rack blends into CRASHING THUNDER.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Nolan is startled awake as the door NOISILY OPENS, sounding somewhat like the CRASHING THUNDER. The lights come on.

In the doorway, Josh playfully taunts his date about the weather as the two deal with their soaked umbrellas.

**JOSH**

I told you it wasn't too far to walk. Just leave them out here.

**NANCY**

We should have taken a cab.

**JOSH**

For twelve blocks? That is not the Oregonian way.

**NANCY**

I'm from California.

**JOSH**

Don't I know it.  
(startled)  
Whoa!

Nolan's first impression with Nancy isn't a good one. He looks like a drowned rat.

Nolan checks his phone, now reading 1:21.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Hah, this is a good look for you. What happened? Forget your umbrella?

Nolan drunkenly shakes his head.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

No, you didn't forget it? So you brought it and didn't use it?

He gives him a drunken thumbs up.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Nothing like a cliched walk home in the rain. And you're drinking straight from the bottle? Always a classy move.

**(MORE)**

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Nancy, this is my roommate  
Swampthing. Some know him as Nolan,  
but only in daylight.

**NANCY**

Hello.

Nolan barely responds with a half wave.

Josh notices the turned over picture frames.

**JOSH**

(quietly, to himself)  
Shit.  
(beat)  
Nancy, why don't you head upstairs  
to my room while I tend to my  
fallen comrade here.

**NANCY**

You said we were going to watch a  
movie! Is this some plot to get me  
up to your room?

**JOSH**

Even though that's not the case,  
you should be impressed by how  
elaborate it is. Come on, I'll  
bring you a Sunny Delight?

Josh's date stares at him blankly, until...

**NANCY**

(mumbling quietly to  
herself, walking up to  
his room)  
This is bullshit, you know I love  
Sunny Delight....

Josh smiles. We hear his date WALKING above us. His room's  
door OPENS and CLOSES.

**JOSH**

She wants the D.

His joke gets no reaction out of Nolan. Josh's smile turns to  
concern as he walks over.

Josh picks up the whiskey bottle, and gently shakes it.  
Empty.

**NOLAN**

Don't you want to know what  
happened?

**JOSH**  
(compassionately)  
Obvious; isn't it?

Nolan slowly nods his head. He looks like he's about to cry and be sick.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**  
I'm sorry man. Friends?

**NOLAN**  
She didn't offer.

Josh grimaces.

**JOSH**  
That's tough. I would have pegged her for the "let's be friends" exit strategy.

Now Nolan really looks like he's going to be sick. He leans forward, putting his head in his hands.

**NOLAN**  
I'm going to die alone. What am I gonna to do?

**JOSH**  
Tonight? Nothing.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - NOLAN'S BEDROOM**

Nolan crashes onto his bed with Josh's help.

**JOSH**  
Well Eor, I hope you enjoyed your one man pity party, because there's no room for it starting tomorrow.

**NOLAN**  
(falling asleep)  
What happens tomorrow?

**JOSH**  
Resurrection.

Josh quietly closes Nolan's door. He begins typing a text message. It reads: Alice cut Nolan loose. Need dude support ASAP. He addresses the message to three contacts: Adam, Drew, and Anderson.

He hits send, and opens the door to his room. Nancy is sitting on his bed.

**NANCY**

Sunny D?

**JOSH**

We're out.

He closes his room's door.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - NOLAN'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING**

Nolan is asleep in the same position Josh left him in. A digital clock on a night stand next to him reads: 10:59.

We zoom out to see Josh standing in the same room intently watching the clock. In one hand he holds a cup of coffee, and in the other, a digital remote.

The clock changes to 11:00. He takes a sip of his coffee, raises the remote, and hits play.

METALLICA'S "SAD BUT TRUE" comes blaring on, right at the chorus "You know it's sad but true!"

Nolan is jolted awake.

**JOSH**

(happily)  
He is risen!

Nolan sinks back into his pillow.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

A hung over Nolan sits at their small dinning table. In front of him sits a steaming cup of coffee.

Josh is happily cooking a breakfast of bacon and hash browns.

**NOLAN**

(in despair)  
Why that song, Josh? Why not something hopeful, like Journey's "Don't Stop Believing?"

**JOSH**

Many reasons. One, "Don't Stop Believing" has been forever tainted since it was used in the Sopranos' finale abortion. Two, "Sad But True" is an honest assessment of your current situation, and three, and this is the more important reason, because Metallica rocks.

**NOLAN**

They killed Napster.

**JOSH**

Don't speak ill of my beloved  
Metallica, their songs are fit for  
any occasion.

**NOLAN**

That's seems unlikely.

**JOSH**

Think so? Did you see a little  
movie called Zero Dark Thirty,  
where America, lead by, strangely  
enough, Tony Soprano, hunt down and  
murder Osama Bin Laden?

**NOLAN**

Yeah.

**JOSH**

Do you remember the trailer for  
said movie? Got you fired up to see  
it, didn't it?

**NOLAN**

Yeah, I guess.

**JOSH**

You know what was playing in the  
background, getting you fired up?

**NOLAN**

I'm guessing Metallica?

**JOSH**

(steps on Nolan's line so  
they say Metallica at the  
same time)

Fucking Metallica, that's right.

Nolan sits back, and rubs his temples.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

I know you're hurtin, but don't  
worry, I've already rallied the  
troops. We'll probably see them  
tomorrow...

(beat)

if they get permission.

**NOLAN**

Thanks, but I think I just need to be alone for awhile.

**JOSH**

Actually, what you need is to move on. The whole no friends deal? That means she's been done for awhile.

**NOLAN**

I loved her.

Hearing that, Josh takes a moment. He knows what he's about to say could go over poorly if not delivered smoothly.

**JOSH**

But, she didn't love you.

**NOLAN**

Easy...

**JOSH**

That's the hard reality, I'm sorry.

**NOLAN**

She accused me of not having any hobbies, and that when I did do something, it was for her and not myself.

Josh finishes prepping the food, and slides Nolan his plate.

**JOSH**

Well, there's some truth to that.

Nolan looks up, hurt.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

You haven't had to grow or whatever, because you've had a strangle hold on a ten since high school.

**NOLAN**

What am I supposed to grow into?

**JOSH**

I don't know. What are you in to? Now that she's dead and gone, what do you want to do tonight?

Nolan tries to speak, but can't think of anything he knows will meet Josh's criteria.

**NOLAN**

I've been meaning to catch up on Game of Thrones.

**JOSH**

No. Good show, but no. Tonight, we hunt.

Nolan picks up a piece of bacon.

**NOLAN**

Pass. Everything is still pretty fresh, okay?

As he's about to eat it, Josh snatches it away.

**JOSH**

See this? This is the bacon you thought you had, that you thought was yours. Well guess what, you can't eat it; because it just dumped your ass. Now, you can cry over the fact that you no longer have bacon, or...

Josh picks up a different piece of bacon from his plate, and puts it into Nolan's open hand.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

You can be a fucking Narwhal, and go get another piece. And once you taste the sweetness of the new, you'll forget all about the predictability of the old.

Josh smiles.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

There's more than one way to jack a dick, so sober up, because tonight, we're gonna find you a new piece of meat.

Josh confidently takes a bite of bacon.

**EXT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - MORNING**

Jessica nervously pulls up to a tiny house driving a well maintained Volkswagen. Sondra is moving boxes out of a rented moving truck.

Jessica's car is bursting with boxes and clothes. She clearly left in a hurry.

Sondra comes down to meet her as Jessica exits her car.  
Sondra is all smiles.

**SONDRA**

Hey! You found it!

The two hug.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

(noticing her boxes)

Wow, you weren't kidding. It looks like you're a fugitive.

**JESSICA**

Yeah. It happened pretty fast.

**SONDRA**

(inspecting the boxes)

I bet. The whole Nate break up thing can't be easy.

Sondra is instantly aware of her tactless error.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

Oh Jesus, oh fuck me. Jess...

**JESSICA**

How did you...?

**SONDRA**

I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to...

**JESSICA**

You're fine, but how did you know?

**SONDRA**

He changed his relationship status on facebook.

(grimacing)

And added some photos.

Jessica is stunned.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

That guy is a piece of shit, you know?

**JESSICA**

(relief)

Thank you!

(she takes a breath)

That's about as much closure as I'm going to get, isn't it?

**SONDRA**

Sadly, it's become what seems to matter. Where's your bed?

Jessica is suddenly aware that she didn't have the foresight to think about where she was going to sleep.

**JESSICA**

I guess, I'll just have to buy a new one.

Jessica's fragile state is obvious, and Sondra notices.

**SONDRA**

There is absolutely no pressure here. I mean, I know I can find someone on craigslist or something.

Jessica waivers for a moment. Her phone VIBRATES, interrupting her train of thought.

We see a stern photo of her mother on the caller ID. She silences the call.

**JESSICA**

How did you do it? Just move out here without a roommate? Weren't you worried about money?

**SONDRA**

I just knew I'd figure it out once I got here. I always do.

**JESSICA**

I could never do something that impulsive.

**SONDRA**

You just left your parents' place.

**JESSICA**

Fled is more like it. I've been dying to get out of there. I just assumed it would be with Nate.

**SONDRA**

What else haven't you done?

Jessica takes a moment.

**JESSICA**

(matter of fact)  
I've never been to a club in Portland.

**SONDRA**

Jess... no. Come on...

Jessica shrugs.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

Not one? Even with the girls?

**JESSICA**

All I needed was him. I just sorta lost touch with everyone. Plus, I was going to weddings it seemed like every month, so I caught up then.

**SONDRA**

Jess, that sucks. You suck. You've been here since graduation.

**JESSICA**

He never wanted to go out. We'd usually just stay in. Or, actually, I would just stay home and he would go out...

The reality of that situation suddenly sinks in.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

What a piece of shit.

**SONDRA**

Such a piece of shit.

Jessica begins slipping into depression, but Sondra won't have it.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

No. No! Fuck that, and fuck him. What have you got to wear in that Volkswagen?

**EXT. BAR TURNED CLUB - NIGHT**

A small unassuming building with a line of people waiting outside.

We slowly scan over a sign hanging outside reading: Free beer, topless waitresses, and false advertising. But seriously, Lock It Down, tonight only.

**INT. BAR TURNED CLUB - NIGHT**

Lock It Down is playing modern electropop beats.

Lights beam and flicker as the bass booms, transforming the mellow bar into a surreal setting of color and sound.

A small group of people, about thirty, are dancing. However, most lean against walls, or sit at the bar, chatting.

A bartender places two mixed drinks on the bar. Sondra puts a twenty down, and takes them. She is provocatively dressed and fits in seamlessly.

She walks over to Jessica who stands in the middle of the room. She looks good, though her sense of style is a bit too conservative given her surroundings. Her body language is awkward and nervous.

Sondra hands her a drink.

**SONDRA**

Please, stop what you're doing.

**JESSICA**

What?

**SONDRA**

(commenting on her stance)  
Whatever this is.

**JESSICA**

You *know* it's a little early for this.

**SONDRA**

Having fun?

**JESSICA**

Being out, looking for guys.

**SONDRA**

They're looking for us, but that's the game. Meeting people, seeing if they might be a fit or not.

**JESSICA**

They might be fun to date too.

Stunned, Sondra gives Jessica a wide eyed stare.

**SONDRA**

(laughing)  
Look at you! Making a dick joke, finally loosening up.

**JESSICA**

That's what he...

**SONDRA**

(deadpan)

Okay, let's reel it in a bit.

(beat)

All I'm saying is you may not even know what you want until you stumble into it. But, you sure as shit won't find it sitting at home watching Grey's Anatomy.

**JESSICA**

I know what I want.

**SONDRA**

So you've come around on that?

(beat)

Tell me.

**JESSICA**

I want a nice guy with a good job, who will be a caring husband and make a loving home for me and our children. And a cat, or possibly a dog, if he's a dog person.

**SONDRA**

Holy shit, can we just pump the brakes on the game of life? Jesus, you make me want to cry. You're a super hot, sort-of-independent, 20 something year old chick, living in Portland, the whitest city on the planet. And Jess, you're as white as that iPhone you're sporting.

**JESSICA**

I wanted a black but they were all out!

**SONDRA**

Don't we all, but good luck finding one in this town.

(beat)

Relax, you're in demand even if you don't know it. Your world doesn't have to end with Nate. Not everything has to be deep and long term. Short and shallow has its advantages too.

Lock It Down finishes their song.

**SINGER**

Thanks everyone for coming. We brought complimentary glow sticks for those who want to partake.

The singer takes out a folded flier from his pocket, and begins reading.

**SINGER (CONT'D)**

Also, just a quick reminder, that dateme.com will be hosting a mingle event at the upcoming Oktoberfest. Dateme.com has social events every week so act now, and reserve your spot online.

(he goes off script)

Act now? How are they going to act now when they're already at a show? Dateme.com, for people who have no game, and know it. Okay! Shameless plug over. Commence song!

They immediately start jamming.

**JESSICA**

I guess I could always wave a white flag and try to meet a guy online.

**SONDRA**

Not a bad plan, I'm on there.

**JESSICA**

Date me?

**SONDRA**

Yeah, sure. That's how I found out about this place.

Jessica is floored.

**JESSICA**

Aren't you afraid of stalkers, being abducted, roofies?

She steps in closer to Sondra.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

(quietly)

Do you always have to put out?

Sondra laughs.

**SONDRA**

It's a dating site, not an escort service. I've used it a lot over the years, actually. Whenever I've been relocated for work, I make an account in that city. Still, there's no substitute for the random encounter...

A man bumps into Sondra's back, spilling her drink as she lurches forward.

She turns around.

**PLAYER 1**

Why'd you bump into me?

**SONDRA**

Excuse me?

**PLAYER 1**

I spilled my drink and yours too. What's your problem?

**SONDRA**

I was standing right here. You crashed into me!

**PLAYER 1**

Well Dave Mathews, I don't know about that, but it looks like you and your friend are both looking a little light anyway.

He turns to the bar, grabs two of the exact drinks Sondra and Jessica were enjoying, turns back, and hands Jessica and Sondra the fresh drinks.

**PLAYER 1 (CONT'D)**

There, no harm, no foul.

(to Jessica)

So what's your story? You gotta name?

Sondra is giving a suspicious squinty-eyed stare at this guy as Jessica answers.

**JESSICA**

Jessica. I love Dave! Have you been to the gorge?

**PLAYER 1**

Jessica, nice to meet you. I'm Kyle, and yes, I have. Did you two go together?

Sondra is still squinting at him.

**SONDRA**

That was clever.

**PLAYER 1**

(coyly)  
What?

**SONDRA**

The whole bump thing. Very clever.

**PLAYER 1**

Don't know what you mean.

**SONDRA**

Oh come on, our drinks ready after you spilled them? Please, how dumb do we look?

**PLAYER 1**

Not very.

**SONDRA**

So why'd you do it?

He takes a moment, considering whether to reveal his method.

**PLAYER 1**

In my experience, girls have an invisible wall up when you go to talk to them. They expect the typical; pick up lines, buy them a drink, that sort of thing. Would you agree?

**SONDRA**

For the sake of argument, sure.

**PLAYER 1**

Well the bump gets around all that, it doesn't put you on the defensive like a line might. Rather, it makes you the aggressor expecting an apology from me. And then when I don't give one, it's on.

**SONDRA**

It's on? I thought you were a total cock.

**PLAYER 1**

That's the pivotal moment. I refill your drinks, which I've already confirmed with the bartender, and then shift the conversation to something else. Here I am, freely talking to both of you. The wall is gone. No more wall.

**SONDRA**

And that works?

**PLAYER 1**

Not tonight it would seem.

**SONDRA**

It would seem not.

**PLAYER 1**

Well, enjoy your cran vodkas, I'm sorry I wasted your time.

He begins to turn away.

**JESSICA**

Hey, wait a sec.

He stops.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

Why the manipulation? Why not just say we look nice or something?

He gives a condescending smile.

**PLAYER 1**

That never works, it's too obvious.

Jessica gives a confused look.

**PLAYER 1 (CONT'D)**

If you want to go home with someone, you can't comment on their appearance, you need to put your time in, and give the impression you like them as a person.

(beat)

You want to be... a boy's dream?

Jessica gives a look of complete disgust. Behind her, Sondra gives a conceding nod.

**PLAYER 1 (CONT'D)**

Another time maybe.

Player 1 exits the game.

Jessica is overwhelmed by how direct this man was. She stands speechless. Sondra is watching him walk away.

**SONDRA**

He's right, it is too obvious.

**JESSICA**

What?

**SONDRA**

There's no sport if he just comes right out and says you're hot. He might as well ask you to blow him in the bathroom.

**JESSICA**

Is that all this is? Guys who want me to grind their denim boner hoping for the off chance that I'll hook up with them the same night?

Sondra shrugs.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

How am I supposed to find a guy worth dating where this is what's expected?

**SONDRA**

Who said anything about dating? You think any of the guys here are thinking I want to find a girl who I can romance and woo and grow old with?

**EXT. BAR TURNED CLUB - NIGHT**

Nolan is checking out the other guys in line.

**NOLAN**

Dude, I think my pants aren't tight enough. When did that become a thing?

**JOSH**

It's not. Well, it kinda is. But you're not skinny enough, and you don't want it. All those guys look like angry lesbians with beards.

Josh pays the bouncer.

**INT. BAR TURNED CLUB - MOMENTS LATER**

**SONDRA**

Jess, this is the scene. It's okay to have fun with a guy for a night as long as you both know the rules. If you want to go on dates, maybe *dateme.com* *isn't* such a bad idea.

Repulsed, Jessica turns, and leaves. Sondra is conflicted, but follows her, walking right by Josh and Nolan, who have just entered. Josh checks out Sondra as they walk by.

Josh surveys the room.

Lock It Down is jamming hard. The dance floor is more crowded and active than before.

**NOLAN**

You didn't say I'd have to dance.

Ignoring Nolan's comment, Josh moves to the bar with Nolan tailing him like a lost puppy.

Josh reaches the bar.

**JOSH**

(to bartender)  
Two AMFs and a Heff please.  
(nodding to the dance floor)  
What do you see over there?

**NOLAN**

Girls.

**JOSH**

Meat. And what is the meat doing?

We see the lead singer looking directly at a group of girls. They're barely dancing, mesmerized by the singer.

**NOLAN**

Dancing, I get it. But, some are drooling over the lead singer.

**JOSH**

And why's that?

**NOLAN**

Because he's a rock star.

**JOSH**

That's a common misconception, but no, that's not why.

**NOLAN**

Those girls want his cock.

**JOSH**

Course they do, but look around, we're not at a concert, we're at a dive bar turned night club, and that fuckin guy isn't Kanye West. So, again, why are they into him?

Nolan shrugs.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Because he's confident. He's probably the most confident guy in the room. The guy is playing his music, in a small venue, to a crowd that's probably mostly his friends.

The bartender returns with his drinks. Josh pays with cash and takes the drinks.

He hands Nolan the AMF shot.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

To the new testament.

They take the shots together.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

You know that expression, "nice guys finish last"?

**NOLAN**

Sure.

**JOSH**

Know why it's true?

**NOLAN**

If I say yes, will you stop with the rhetorical questions?

**JOSH**

It has nothing to do with the nice guys like you. It's because assholes are saturated with confidence. You ever met an asshole who wasn't completely sure of himself, wasn't an arrogant fuck?

**NOLAN**

Can't say I have.

**JOSH**

And that's what you need, it's what you lost. Confidence. By contrast women can't stand a guy with the stink of failure on him.

**NOLAN**

I'm no failure, my relationship just ended is all.

**JOSH**

Believe me man, the what doesn't matter, they can sense it. That guy on stage, the fact that he isn't a star, doesn't affect women's perception of him because he's doing what he loves.

**NOLAN**

So, your master plan for me is what, to become an asshole?

**JOSH**

Not at all. Long term, what you need is to find something your passionate about, to be confident in. That, and practice. For the last eight years your life has been the relationship. Now, you need to find something to fill that void.

**NOLAN**

I guess I wouldn't mind filling someone's void.

Josh is stunned.

**JOSH**

Look at you, making a vag joke.

**NOLAN**

I wasn't.

**JOSH**

Oh. Well, either way, the confidence thing is only going to come through trial and error, and there's no time like the present.

Josh puts his arm around Nolan, and begins walking to the dance floor.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Now, thankfully, you're not starting completely from square one. Alice had you in all that ballroom shit, right?

**NOLAN**

Yeah, salsa, waltz, nothing like this.

We see a group of girls grinding and dancing in raunchy euphoria.

**JOSH**

Dude, you're probably over qualified. Just go out there, find the rhythm, and imitate what everyone else is doing.

Josh pushes him out onto the floor.

**NOLAN**

You're not coming with me?

**JOSH**

Fuck no, I can't dance. I'm just here for moral support. You don't see Mick getting into the ring with Rocky do you?

Nolan rolls his eyes, turns, and walks onto the floor.

Nolan awkwardly approaches. He looks back to Josh, who, from the bar, raises his beer in support.

Nolan starts grooving. It's actually not that bad. Somehow, he's able to combine his formal dance training into something that doesn't look horrible.

One of the girls notices, and smiles. He smiles back. They start to dance in the same vicinity. Her approval is just what Josh was hoping for, and Nolan starts to really cut loose. The Dancing Girl loves his openness, and moves in closer. From the bar, Josh looks on, bobbing his head with the rhythm with a wide smile.

The music's pace slows, and the sound softens.

**NOLAN**

What's your name?

**DANCING GIRL**

What?

**NOLAN**

I said what's your...

The girl is suddenly bumped from behind, and she spills her drink all over Nolan's face and shirt.

She turns around, and we see it's Player 1, fresh drink ready.

**PLAYER 1**

The hell, why'd you bump into me?

**DANCING GIRL**

What?! You ran into me!

**PLAYER 1**

Maybe...

(he hands her a fresh  
drink)

Here, now we can be friends.

With her back now to Nolan, she smiles, and shakes her head as the music picks up. Player 1 and The Dancing girl begin to dance together. Dejected, and with his confidence shattered, Nolan backs away from the dance floor.

He walks towards us, the dance floor behind him, as he wipes the spilled drink off his face.

Josh intercepts him at the bar's exit.

**JOSH**

Man, I saw that.

(looks to the dance floor)

That was fucked.

Nolan moves around him.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Where you goin?

**NOLAN**

Look, I appreciate your concern but this...

**(MORE)**

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

(motioning to the whole  
bar)

this isn't my thing.

Nolan turns away from Josh and walks out.

Josh watches Nolan leave. His concerned expression turns to a scowl as he looks over to Player 1 who is still dancing.

Unaware, Player 1 is happily dancing with The Dancing Girl. Suddenly he's struck, hard, by something behind him, sending him tumbling to the floor.

He looks up to see Josh standing over him, his arms crossed.

**JOSH**

(sarcastically)

Hey man, why'd you bump into me?

**PLAYER 1**

The fuck? You just crashed into me!

**JOSH**

(mocking)

Fuckin Dave Mathews over here.  
You're an honorless cunt, you know  
that? Who steals another dog's  
meat?

Player one scrambles to his feet.

**PLAYER 1**

Get fucked cock sucker!

Josh open palm SLAPS him, hard, across the mouth. Grasping his jaw, Player 1 stumbles backward into one of the large speakers. Josh moves in, staring him down. Player 1 is shocked and afraid.

Josh gets within inches of his face. He points his index finger right between Player 1's eyes.

**JOSH**

(slowly and sincerely)

It's not polite to bump into  
people.

Player 1 rubs his mouth, Josh has totally emasculated him.

His work done, Josh turns, and heads to the exit as the bouncer from outside rushes in.

Josh raises his hands from the elbows as he walks passed the bouncer.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Leaving.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - JESSICA'S ROOM**

Jessica enters, and tosses her purse onto her desk.

She sits at her computer, and logs in to Facebook. In her news feed, we see photos of Nate with a new girl in every photo.

She opens a new tab, and in the address bar, types: dateme.com.

We scan the site, and pick up on key bits of information. 7 of 10 relationships begin online. Largest network of people under the age of 30. Women join for half price.

Liking the sound of that, she pulls out her credit card, and creates a profile. For her username she enters OmegaChiGal25.

Arriving at the COMPLETE TRANSACTION button, she holds her breath, and after a brief moment of hesitation, clicks it.

A confirmation page pops up. It reads: Congratulations! Start browsing our members and making connections! A button reads: BEGIN!

She clicks the button, and is sent to a page with dozens of thumbnails of men's profiles. There are all types, young, old, attractive, unattractive, and mixed races.

Overwhelmed, she glances at her clock which reads 1:32. She rolls her eyes, and closes her laptop.

She falls onto her bed, and stares at the ceiling. Next to her rests a small journal. She opens it. Down the side of the page is a column with the question "How do you feel, 1 to 10?." She draws a cartoon piece of poop with flies buzzing around it, and closes the journal.

Laying on her bed, still fully clothed from the dance club, she lets out a regretful sigh, and shuts her eyes.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - NOLAN'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING**

Nolan is in a dead sleep.

We zoom out and see Josh standing in the same position the day before, coffee and remote in hand, intently watching the clock which reads: 10:56.

Nolan slowly wakes, and is startled to see Josh in his room.

**NOLAN**

You're not going to make a habit of this are you?

**JOSH**

Only if you keep sleeping in to eleven.

Nolan notices the clock, which flips to 10:57.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

So close.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Josh sits Nolan down at his computer.

**NOLAN**

(still waking up)  
What's this?

We see on the display a blank profile for dateme.com

**JOSH**

This, is our new plan.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - BREAKFAST TABLE**

Sondra is sitting at the table in her pajamas, eating a bowl of cereal, and reading a medical textbook.

Jessica enters, laptop in hand.

She sets the computer on the table.

**JESSICA**

Morning.

**SONDRA**

(a bit curt)  
Morning.

**JESSICA**

Listen Sondra...

**SONDRA**

It's alright. Maybe it was a little aggressive, being out so soon.

Jessica gives a sigh of relief. She grabs a banana from the table's fruit bowl, and opens her computer.

It instantly loads the dateme.com profile search screen.

Embarrassed, she quickly tries to minimize the window, but she's too slow, and Sondra notices.

**SONDRA** (CONT'D)

What was that?

**JESSICA**

Nothing.

**SONDRA**

(happily)

Oh no! You didn't sign up did you?

**JESSICA**

I'm canceling my subscription today.

**SONDRA**

You can't, no refunds.

Jessica holds firm on her bluff for a moment, until:

**JESSICA**

Damn it.

Jessica maximizes the window, and we see a glaring bit of copy: "no refunds, enjoy the ride!"

Sondra slides over next to Jessica.

**JESSICA** (CONT'D)

How is that legal?

**SONDRA**

How far did you get in your profile?

**JESSICA**

Not very, I just paid and passed out.

**SONDRA**

You want some help?

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM**

**NOLAN**

You signed me up for a dating site?

**JOSH**

Relax, it's on me. I felt...

**NOLAN**

Bad?

**JOSH**

Something... about how things went down. I just sorta realized that this might be a better fit for you. You don't need an intro game, you just go on dates. Isn't that what you want?

**NOLAN**

Actually, yes. Why Date Me?

**JOSH**

I've had success with it. That's how I heard about the show. I'm on a different site now to prevent any... cross pollination.

**NOLAN**

You used this? But, I see you with a new girl, what seems like every week.

Josh nods.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Shit. I just thought you were a prodigy.

**JOSH**

The online thing, if done right, is more effective than any line could ever be. And thankfully for you, I'm a pro. Now, what do you have in the way of photos?

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - BREAKFAST TABLE**

**SONDRA**

The site is able to sync with your facebook profile, it'll make selecting which shots you want easier.

**JESSICA**

Do I have to show photos of myself?

**SONDRA**

Would you go on a date with someone who wouldn't show their face?

Jessica stares at Sondra.

**JESSICA**

Which ones do I want?

Sondra browses Jessica's photos, and finds a nice photo of her giving a wide and cheerful smile.

**SONDRA**

Your head shot is a good place to start.

Sondra begins cropping the photo, preparing it to be the main profile pic.

Jessica spots a different image with a group of her girl friends pursing their lips for the camera.

**JESSICA**

I like that one.

**SONDRA**

No.

**JESSICA**

Why not?! It's cute.

**SONDRA**

Jess, look, this thing is like a resume, you want to sell the best version of yourself. It should be clean and professional, not look like an ad for one of those ex-girlfriend porn sites; because, chances are, they're looking at those too.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM**

Josh has just finished cropping a head shot of Nolan.

**JOSH**

Boom, off and rolling. Now for some lifestyle.

Nolan scrolls through a library of photos. Nearly all of them are photos of him with his arm desperately around Alice. As we flip through the photos, we get a see a gradual progression of emotions from Alice, from happy to annoyed.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Jesus, fused at the hip weren't ya?  
Don't you have any of just you?

**NOLAN**

Why can't we use any of these?

**JOSH**

Because you're single, not in a relationship with a hot blonde. It sends mixed signals. This gives the impression you're some kind of polygamist.

(Nolan scrolls into a batch of wedding photos)

Here we go, Drew's wedding. This is perfect, you're in a suit, you look dashing, you're in action, all good things.

Nolan checks 4 of the wedding photos and keeps scrolling. We come to a group of camping photos of Nolan and Alice.

**NOLAN**

What if we crop Alice out?

**JOSH**

Dude, don't say her name, it gives her power, but yeah these aren't horrible. It shows you're into the outdoors, which is a Portland must.

Nolan scrolls to a photo of him cheesily flexing for the camera with his shirt off.

**NOLAN**

That's a keeper.

**JOSH**

Nope.

**NOLAN**

What? Why?

**JOSH**

You know who likes big muscles? Guys like big muscles. Women are more interested in you as a package, tone as you are.

**NOLAN**

So no skin?

**JOSH**

(shaking his head)

No.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - BREAKFAST TABLE**

**SONDRA**

Yes.

**JESSICA**

I'm not sure I feel comfortable showing people how I look in a bikini.

**SONDRA**

Jess, the girls look good, there's no harm in showin' em off.

**JESSICA**

But, wont they get the wrong idea?

**SONDRA**

Believe me, they're going to do that regardless.

(moving on)

We already got some good photos of you at parties, and we avoided any shots of you holding up drinks like some drunken skank winning a medal.

**JESSICA**

I still don't understand why you wont let me put any photos of my nephew.

**SONDRA**

It's an evolutionary thing. Men don't want to raise someone else's kid, plus, they may not know if they even want kids. Better to not plant the idea.

(beat)

Actually, I think you're good on photos, let's move to compatibility.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM**

Nolan is sitting at the computer. Behind him, Josh walks around the room like he's dictating a letter.

**JOSH**

For this stuff, you want to select anything and everything you've done. You went golfing last summer, right?

**NOLAN**

Only once.

**JOSH**

Mark it. Weight lifting, jogging, reading, anything you're half interested in, get it in there. Except video games, omit that. The more things you select, the more profiles you'll be matched with. You don't want to lie, but you don't want to leave anything out.

**NOLAN**

It's asking me about my income? That seems kind of invasive.

**JOSH**

Why? You make decent bread.  
(beat)  
The strangest part of the whole online thing is this: it's a competition. And, if you want to land a good one, money will help separate you from the pack. Besides, it's a range, not an exact number. Make it happen.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - BREAKFAST TABLE**

**SONDRA**

I actually wouldn't recommend it.

**JESSICA**

Why? I'm a nurse, I make great money.

**SONDRA**

I know, and that's the problem. Men get weird when a woman makes more. Plus, if they see a big number, they may not pay. Trust me, leave it blank.

**JESSICA**

Alright.  
(moving on)  
Body type. Body type?

**SONDRA**

Crucial... but I'm going to let you pick which one best defines you.

**JESSICA**

(reading from the list of selections)

**(MORE)**

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

Big and bold, average and awesome, sensibly thin, fitness freak? Who writes this?

**SONDRA**

You need to choose one.

**JESSICA**

This seems extra shallow.

**SONDRA**

It kinda is, but it's essential. Guys do searches by body type.

**JESSICA**

What would you pick for me?

**SONDRA**

No way.

**JESSICA**

Come on.

**SONDRA**

(insistent)  
Fuck you, no way!

**JESSICA**

Fine, I'm leaving it blank. They have my swimsuit shot anyway. I can't believe anyone would define themselves by this.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM****NOLAN**

Fitness Freak, right?

**JOSH**

Shit yeah, dude.

They high five.

**NOLAN**

Count it.  
(moving on)  
Looks like I'm done with multiple choice, now I just have to write about me, or did you want to do that?

**JOSH**

Nah, that's all you. I'm going to take a shower, I'll take a look when you're done.

Josh exits the room and Nolan begins TYPING. The typing sound fades into the next scene.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - BREAKFAST TABLE**

Jessica is busily TYPING. She triumphantly strikes the final key, completing her profile.

**JESSICA**

Done!

Sondra comes over, and surveys her work.

**SONDRA**

Why are there hordes exclamation points and smiley faces?

We see her profile is overrun with smiley faces, and sentences ending with rows of exclamation points.

**JESSICA**

The smiley faces make everything seem friendly. And the exclamation points, as I've been writing this I've been getting kind of excited.

**SONDRA**

And you want to shout it at the reader? Lose the exclamation marks, one smiley face.

**JESSICA**

One?

**SONDRA**

One.

Jessica sadly looks at the screen, and starts editing.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM**

With his hair wet, Josh leans over Nolan's shoulder to see his progress.

The profile he's written is incredibly lengthy. The character maximum, which is set at 1500, reads: 1489.

**JOSH**

Holy shit, I said write about yourself, not the next great American novel. No chick would ever read all this. God damn.

Josh takes the mouse and starts editing.

**NOLAN**

Hey, how I vote is important!

**JOSH**

Politics? Christ, no. If you say you love Obama, you might alienate a girl who voted for McCain or that Mormon. The same goes for all this other stuff, it's too specific.

He finishes editing.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

There. See? You can read it quickly, it's positive and general, that's all you want.

He mouses over the PUBLISH BUTTON and clicks it.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

We'll get into e-mail protocol later, but we're going to be late for lunch.

**NOLAN**

I haven't showered yet.

**JOSH**

Them's the breaks. Let's go.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - BREAKFAST TABLE**

Sondra is reviewing Jessica's edits.

**SONDRA**

Not bad.

**JESSICA**

How do I search for people?

**SONDRA**

(knowingly smiles)  
You're not going have to worry about that.

Jessica suddenly notices the time: 1:34.

**JESSICA**

Oh Shit! My shift starts in 30 minutes!

Jessica runs from the table into her room. Sondra smiles, and hits the PUBLISH BUTTON.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER**

Jessica exits her room in a rush, wearing medical scrubs, car keys in hand. Her phone DINGS. She has a new e-mail, it's a personal message from dateme.com. She moves to her computer, and clicks the message alert.

An e-mail message pops up from a man with the screenname Searching4SexyU. In his photo, he is clearly much older than she would like, sporting grey hair, a beach red tan, and a cheesy grin.

The message reads: I think my daughter has that exact swimsuit! ;)

Jessica slowly backs away from the computer like it's a mad dog. On her phone, she changes her settings to no longer allow message alerts to be sent to her e-mail.

**INT. MARTINI BAR - AFTERNOON**

Walking towards us, Nolan enters with Josh behind him.

Nolan smiles, and walks out of frame.

Josh, however, gives a look of surprise and dismay, stopping dead in his tracks.

Nolan walks over to a table where their friends have already arrived. At the table, are two women and one man.

Josh spots the odd man out at the bar.

**INT. MARTINI BAR - BAR****JOSH**

Drewsky.

**DREW**

Hey Josh.

They shake hands like old friends, but there is a strange tension between the two of them.

**JOSH**

I'm glad you made it.

**DREW**

We wouldn't miss it.

**JOSH**

Yeah about that, why are the wives here?

**DREW**

What do you mean?

**JOSH**

This is supposed to be a guy thing. You know, dude support? And where the hell's Anderson for that matter?

**DREW**

He called me, said he couldn't make it. Ariel had something they couldn't get out of.

**JOSH**

He called *you*?

**DREW**

Yeah, he called me. And I can't speak for Diana over there, but you know Cindy, she's one of the guys.

Josh's dumbfounded stare slowly turns into an overly polite smile.

**JOSH**

Okay. Cool, no problem. I just, uh, would liked to have known that they were coming, is all.

The bartender sets five martinis on a platter. Drew picks up the platter of drinks.

**DREW**

Well, Cindy had plans today, but they fell through, so, you know...

Drew walks over to the table.

Now alone at the bar, Josh watches Drew walk to the group.

**INT. MARTINI BAR - BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER**

**NOLAN**

And that was it, no friends no nothing, just game over.

Drew arrives and distributes the martinis.

**CINDY**

That's awful Nolan, right in the middle of Figgure? You must have been so embarrassed.

**NOLAN**

Yeah, the location didn't help.

**ADAM**

So, what have you been up to in the meantime? Just hangin' out?

**NOLAN**

Well, actually, Josh has kinda been going Full Metal Jacket on me. He wont let me have any down time.

**CINDY**

Not even to mourn?

**NOLAN**

Not sure I'd use that word, but no, not really. We actually went out last night.

**ADAM**

Hah, really!? What's it been, like a day? How'd that go?

**NOLAN**

Not well.

**CINDY**

That's not surprising, you can't be over her yet, that's way to fast.

**NOLAN**

He thinks the best way for me to get over her is by meeting someone new.

Cindy rolls her eyes.

**CINDY**

He would think that.

Josh sets a beer down on the table.

**JOSH**

Think what?

There is an uncomfortable silence as nobody answers.

Drew and Cindy are sitting in the center of a booth meant for three people. Across from them, Diana, Nolan, and Adam sit comfortably.

Cindy looks up at Josh who is standing next to her, politely smiling, waiting for her and Drew to slide over so he can join them. She gives him a half smile, and coldly looks back to Nolan.

**CINDY**

Well I think you just need some time, Nolan.

Josh gives a sad half nod, looks behind him, and grabs a chair from an unoccupied table.

**JOSH**

See Cindy, I sorta have to disagree with you there.

(beat)

Oh, happy birthday by the way.

Cindy gives him a fake smile as Josh brings the chair to the head of the table, and sits. He looks especially isolated sitting at the head of the table, holding his single beer compared to their five martinis.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Jesus, what've you got him drinking? Drew, I thought we were going to meet at Henry's Tavern?

**CINDY**

I just thought Nolan might be more comfortable here, so I changed it.

**JOSH**

So he could be more comfortable?

Josh gives a condescending smile.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

That fits.

(beat)

But back to your point, I think Nolan wallowing in self pity isn't wise. It certainly wont help his confidence, if anything it'll make things worse.

**DIANA**

In time he should get back out there, of course, but don't you think he needs a break?

**JOSH**

Nah, he took a swing and struck out, but so what? He's too young to retire.

**CINDY**

That's such a guys' logic.

(beat)

By the way, didn't you "retire" from your job?

Oh snap.

**JOSH**

(a bit embarrassed)

I did. I'm trying to find a new career. Something... better.

**CINDY**

Still doing "research" for that gaming job?

**JOSH**

Hey, those terrorists aren't going to kill themselves, actually, you know what, they might.

Adam laughs. Josh is happy to break the tension with a joke.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

(heartfelt)

Adam, you should come play the new COD, it's madness.

Adam looks at Diana, who gives him a stern glare. Adam stops laughing.

**ADAM**

Yeah, maybe.

**DIANA**

I don't see what the rush is, it will just happen when it happens. Probably when he least expects it.

**JOSH**

Like when you met Adam?

**DIANA**

Yeah.

**JOSH**

Is that how history will be remembered?

**EXT. OREGON COAST - SUNNY - FLASH BACK**

It's a beautifully clear day at the beach. Adam, Drew, and Anderson are all dressed in athletic beach attire, and are standing shoulder to shoulder, staring at something intently.

**ANDERSON**

It's not like we haven't dealt with anything like this before.

**ADAM**

This is different

**DREW**

Very.

**ANDERSON**

How?

**DREW**

Because they're in thongs.

We pan around, and see what they're concentrating on. In the distance, the future wives are laying out on the beach.

Josh walks over to the guys, a football under his arm.

**JOSH**

We going to play or...  
(notices the girls)  
Hah, if you guys need some lube,  
sun tan lotion is great in a pinch.

**ADAM**

We're planning our attack.

**JOSH**

Right, that bird wing-man thing.

**ANDERSON**

OWL.

**JOSH**

Whatever. And talking's out because...?

**DREW**

It's not that simple, you need an in, something that seems genuine.

**JOSH**

Genuine?

**DREW**

Yeah, something organic.

**JOSH**

Okay, easy. Drew you're on offense and Adam, you're D. The both of you run towards them, I fire a tight spiral out to Drew, he makes an amazing catch thus impressing the mice, and giving you both the opportunity to talk.

**ADAM**

Mice?

**JOSH**

Yeah, owls eat mice. Now get the fuck out there.

Josh pushes Drew and Adam towards the girls. They reluctantly start jogging towards the unsuspecting women.

**ANDERSON**

Adam'll never let him catch it.

**JOSH**

I know. Genuine event, incoming.

Josh fires a pass towards a running Drew and Adam. Drew is about to make the catch, but before he can, Adam tackles him, hard, sending both of them tumbling into the group of the sunbathing girls.

From a distance, we see the girls are stirred awake. They begin chatting with the charmingly befuddled Drew and Adam, though we can't hear what about. Josh and Anderson watch the unfolding drama. They stand shoulder to shoulder, arms crossed, as they continue their conversation.

**ANDERSON**

That was surprisingly effective.

**JOSH**

Not really, Drew can't help but be anything but himself, and he's the nicest guy I know.

**ANDERSON**

What about Nolan?

**JOSH**

Good guy, but disloyal. This beach trip is our reunion...

**ANDERSON**

The fifth annual.

**JOSH**

And where is he? With his tenured girl friend.

**ANDERSON**

Tenured. Interesting word choice.

**JOSH**

She could give him Hepatitis A through Z and he wouldn't fire her.

The girls stand, and with Drew leading them, they begin walking over to Josh and Anderson.

**ANDERSON**

Can you blame him? They survived college, now he's going to do everything he can to keep her.

**JOSH**

You don't see a problem there? They only do what she wants. He's off on a hike with her right now. He hates hiking. He wanted to play football with us today.

**ANDERSON**

It's not our place to judge his relationship. We should support him regardless.

**JOSH**

Even if it's unhealthy?

**ANDERSON**

I wouldn't go that far.

**JOSH**

And when it goes sideways?

**ANDERSON**

*If it does...* I'll be there to pick up the pieces.

**JOSH**

(looks at Anderson)  
You will?

Anderson nods.

**JOSH** (CONT'D)  
 (back to approaching  
 group)  
 Fair enough.

The group of girls and Drew reach the guys.

**DREW**  
 Anderson, Josh, this is Diana,  
 Ariel, and Cindy.

Anderson smiles at Ariel.

**ANDERSON**  
 (about the girls)  
 Nice catch.

**INT. MARTINI BAR - BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER**

**JOSH**  
 It was a strike, a calculated  
 event, and now that we're not in  
 school, he'll have to find new ways  
 to make connections. Hell, maybe  
 he'll be reckless and join one of  
 those online dating sites.

The table is silent.

**CINDY**  
 Those sites are for pathetic losers  
 with no social skills.

**JOSH**  
 Right, because only the pathetic  
 would try to meet someone online.

**CINDY**  
 Right.

Josh looks right at Nolan.

**JOSH**  
 Right.  
 (beat)  
 What do you think Nolan? Think  
 you'll ever lower your standards  
 enough to give online dating a go?

Josh is clearly looking for some validation, but if Nolan doesn't side with Cindy, there will be repercussions between him and Drew.

**NOLAN**

It'll probably just happen, when it happens.

**JOSH**

(smiles, hurt)

At your own pace I guess. We're all here to support you. Although for Anderson, I guess his spirit will have to do.

Josh looks down at his pocket like he's getting a text message, but we can see he isn't.

He gives a huge smile.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Wow, speaking of call of duty... I think this chick might actually be the one.

He stands, and downs what remains of his beer.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Drew, you can give Nolan a ride back?

**DREW**

Uhhhhh...

**JOSH**

(before he can finish)

Great. Until next time.

Josh leaves.

**CINDY**

Why does he always have to be like that?

**NOLAN**

He's just giving me the advice he thinks is best.

**CINDY**

But consider the source. A single, unemployed, college drop out. We know what's best for you Nolan, we're the ones who are married. We know what it takes to make a relationship work.

**NOLAN**

And what's that?

**CINDY**

(smiling)  
Compromise, of course.

**JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - EVENING**

An exhausted Jessica enters. She smells something.

**SONDRA**

(from the kitchen)  
Hey! I made lasagna. How was work?

**JESSICA**

Brutal. Word was out that I was single, so today, I got about 30 reminders why guys in the medical field are undatable walking erections.

Sondra exits the kitchen and sets a hot plate of food next to Jessica's computer, still displaying the creepy message.

**SONDRA**

They won't be the last.

**JESSICA**

Ugh, that's so gross. A guy vomited on me today but this made me feel dirty.

**SONDRA**

Yeah, that's a good one. I once had a guy offer me a grand if he could get a pair of my underwear, post date.

**JESSICA**

That's disgusting.

**SONDRA**

Yeah, and the son of a bitch didn't pay up when I delivered.

(beat)

Come on, let's see how you did.

Jessica sits.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

I gotta tell you, it took a lot of restraint to not hit refresh.

Jessica grimaces.

**JESSICA**

I kind of don't want to know.

Sondra grabs Jessica's hand, and uses it to click the mouse.

The computer starts processing. After what seems like an eternity we finally see: 158 new messages. Then 159.

**JESSICA** (CONT'D)

Good Lord.

**SONDRA**

Damn, I need more bikini shots.

Virtually all the subjects for the e-mails are the same and read: Hi!, Hello!, Hey!, or Sup?.

**JESSICA**

Who has time to go through these?

**SONDRA**

Sort by body type and age, that'll clean things up.

Jessica gives a questioning look.

**SONDRA** (CONT'D)

I told you it was important.

Following Sondra's instruction, the number of messages drops to 47.

**JESSICA**

This guy just sent me a message that says "DTF?" What's that mean?

**SONDRA**

Down to...

**JESSICA**

Oh God.

**SONDRA**

The written letter is a dying art.

**JESSICA**

And I have to respond to all these?

**SONDRA**

Just the ones you like.

**JESSICA**

I think I'd rather be writing the messages.

**NOLAN'S APARTMENT - JOSH'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

Josh is typing away on his computer. We hear the front door CLOSE. Josh stops typing for a moment, but then resumes.

Nolan KNOCKS on the open door. Josh doesn't respond.

**NOLAN**

Josh...

**JOSH**

Forget it. I probably unknowingly antagonized her. Again.

**NOLAN**

She, uh, hates your guts. What the hell happened there?

**JOSH**

The short version is she's an overly sensitive, unforgiving, narcissistic cunt. And the long version, actually, there is no long version, that's pretty much it.

Josh turns and looks at Nolan.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Well, while you've been playing politics, I've sent a few messages with my irresistible preformulated message. I was about to send this one out.

Josh stands, and motions for Nolan to take his seat.

**NOLAN**

(sitting and reading)

Hi. I read your profile and enjoyed what you had to say about yourself. Any plans for Halloween? What was the last thing that made you laugh? Talk soon, Nolan.

(beat)

That's it?

**JOSH**

That's it. Short, sweet, comment on their profile without actually reading it, ask questions that seem topical but really aren't.

**(MORE)**

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

You can add little details from their profiles if you want, but you'll get more responses with this than any specialized message.

**NOLAN**

It just seems so... disingenuous.

**JOSH**

This is a numbers game and the shotgun blast is king. You want to try and write the perfect message, go ahead. But, for every ten messages that go out, you'll only get one back.

(beat)

Speaking of which, you have a date. Coffee, next Tuesday.

**NOLAN**

That fast?

**JOSH**

I usually prefer drinks, but she insisted. I wouldn't stop sending e-mails though. Copy and paste, those are the only words you need to know right now.

**INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY**

Nolan sits at a table for two, anxiously watching the door.

The door's bell RINGS. He looks up. Not her.

The waitress comes over.

**COFFEE WAITRESS**

Can I get you something?

Nolan checks his phone: 12:13.

**NOLAN**

(reaching for his wallet)

Um, yeah, can I get a...

Nolan's expression drops. There is nothing in his pocket. He's forgotten his wallet.

The door's bell RINGS. A gorgeous young woman, who looks strikingly like Alice, enters. She sees Nolan, smiles, and comes over to the table.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)  
 (before she arrives)  
 Actually, could you just bring a  
 couple of waters?

He stands up to greet her.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**  
 Hi. Nolan?

**NOLAN**  
 Yes, that's me.

He extends his hand for a handshake, while she opens her arms for a hug. They have an awkward exchange, as Nolan is overly formal.

They sit.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**  
 So, do you know this place?

**NOLAN**  
 (happily)  
 No.

She stares at him, waiting for him to further the conversation, but he doesn't.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**  
 Well, the muffins are outrageous.  
 They're huge! I can't eat a whole  
 one, but maybe we could share?

**NOLAN**  
 Sure.

She stares at him again, waiting. But, just as before, nothing. Luckily, the waitress returns with their waters, breaking the silence.

**COFFEE WAITRESS**  
 Can I get you two anything else?

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**  
 Yes, I'll have a sugar-free iced  
 hazelnut mocha,  
 (to Nolan)  
 and I think we were going to split  
 a Muffin?  
 (back to waitress)  
 What's in season?

Nolan is squirming in his seat. He knows he can't pay.

**COFFEE WAITRESS**

We have blueberry, raspberry,  
strawberry, and pumpkin.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

Oh, the pumpkin sounds good.  
(to Nolan)  
What do you think?

**NOLAN**

Um, actually, this is super, super  
embarrassing, but I kinda forgot my  
wallet. I would be happy to pay you  
back though, for whatever you get,  
and for me too, of course.

Both his date and the waitress stare at him in disbelief.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

(to waitress)  
I think I'll just stick with water.

**COFFEE WAITRESS**

Okay.  
(she looks at Nolan)  
Two, waters.

The waitress leaves.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

So, what do you do for fun Nolan?

**NOLAN**

You know, go out, hang with  
friends, that sort of thing.  
(beat)  
What about you?

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

Well, I love the outdoors. I kayak,  
rock climb, go hiking, camping,  
wake board, and occasionally go  
fishing with my dad.

**NOLAN**

(a bit threatened)  
All that? I'm almost afraid to ask  
what you do.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

I'm a nurse. I work at one of the  
local hospitals.

**NOLAN**

Sounds like you've got a pretty full life.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

Yeah, I'm blessed. I just haven't been able to find that special someone.

**NOLAN**

(trying to be funny)  
Well, maybe the search is over?

She gives an uncomfortable smile.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

So, how has your experience been?

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

On Date Me?

**NOLAN**

Yeah.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

Fair. I've met some interesting people, but nothing I'd like to pursue. I actually have another date tomorrow.

**NOLAN**

(trying to be funny,  
again)  
Well I hope it goes poorly!  
(beat)  
What are you looking for?

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

Nothing serious. Friends first, then who knows. It's why I wanted to do coffee, more casual.

**NOLAN**

I really wouldn't know, you're my first date.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

(sarcastically)  
I'm shocked.  
(beat)  
You're doing fine.

Nolan let's out a noticeable sigh, and relaxes.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE (CONT'D)**

(hoping)  
Do you have any other dates lined up?

**NOLAN**

I feel weird telling you.

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

It's okay, everyone does, everyone is dating. A word of advice, don't take a girl out to dinner on the first date.

**NOLAN**

Why's that?

**COFFEE SHOP DATE**

It comes off as desperate. The guys who want instant relationships do that. It's hard to tell online, but the quarter life crisis seems to hit guys especially hard. They don't care who they're with, so long as they're hooked up.

**INT. UPSCALE RESTRAUNT****DESPERATE MAN**

You're the girl I'm going to marry.

Jessica slowly nods, giving a dazed look of shock.

**DESPERATE MAN (CONT'D)**

I know it's early, and I shouldn't say that, but, I... I can just tell.

The restaurant is dimly lit, its atmosphere intended for romance. Jessica is dressed appropriately, while her date is dressed overtly formal.

**JESSICA**

(trying to make light)  
We'll see, I guess. There's no harm in hoping.

**DESPERATE MAN**

See, I like that. You think long term, I think long term. I think we'd be a great couple.

**JESSICA**

(trying desperately to  
change the subject)  
So, what do you do?

**DESPERATE MAN**

I'm a car insurance salesman. I  
work for the one with all the  
animal mascots.

**JESSICA**

You know, I saved a lot of money on  
my car insurance last year.

**DESPERATE MAN**

Really? How?

**JESSICA**

By fleeing the scene.

He let's out a thunderous laugh, attracting the attention of  
a nearby elderly woman, and most of the restraint. His laugh  
goes on for far too long.

**DESPERATE MAN**

(wiping tears from his  
eyes)  
Mother is going to love you.

**JESSICA**

(making light)  
Well, I'm great with mothers.

**DESPERATE MAN**

I'm sure you'll be a great one  
someday.

The man gives an expecting smile.

**DESPERATE MAN (CONT'D)**

Maybe I can help you there.

Jessica looks away and takes a large drink of wine.

**DESPERATE MAN (CONT'D)**

Would you like to meet her?

**JESSICA**

Who?

**DESPERATE MAN**

My mother.

**JESSICA**

(trying not to be rude)  
Of course, I'm sure she's a  
delight.

**DESPERATE MAN**

Wonderful.

The man stands, and walks over to the nearby table where the elderly woman was seemingly disturbed by this loud laugh. He starts chatting with her, though we can't hear what about. Suddenly, the elderly woman, and a couple in their fifties seated at the table start moving. They surround Jessica.

**DESPERATE MAN (CONT'D)**

(regarding the 50 year old  
woman)  
Jessica, this is Anne.

Jessica, still sitting, shakes her hand.

**JESSICA**

(dazed)  
Hi.

**DESPERATE MAN**

Mom...

Jessica's eyes go wide.

**DESPERATE MAN (CONT'D)**

Dad, this is the girl I'm going to  
marry.

The family erupts with laughter and praise. The father comes over to her, and gives her an enormous hug and a big wet kiss on the cheek. The grandmother, a very short woman, grabs her waist and hugs her tightly.

We zoom out and see the whole restaurant is clapping.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - KITCHEN**

Sondra looks on, her hand over her mouth, stunned.

Jessica is staring at her, slightly nodding. She looks like she's just relived a Vietnam War story.

**SONDRA**

Okay, I only have one question.

**JESSICA**

What?

**SONDRA**

Can I be in the wedding?

**JESSICA**

Fuck you.

**SONDRA**

Okay, not in the wedding, but still invited, right?

Jessica leans back and starts laughing.

**JESSICA**

Sure!

**SONDRA**

Jess, wow. That... that sounds like something out of the Twilight Zone.

**JESSICA**

I know.

**SONDRA**

Worse than the Twilight Zone. And everyone thought you'd just gotten engaged?

**JESSICA**

A man paid for our meal saying that someone did the same for him when he proposed to his wife.

Sondra grimaces.

**SONDRA**

Good God. Please tell me you didn't give him your number?

On the table, Jessica's phone begins VIBRATING.

The two of them stare at it as it slowly vibrates across the table.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

How often?

**JESSICA**

Often.

**SONDRA**

That's a rookie mistake.

**JESSICA**

(rubbing her eyes)  
Yeah, I'm getting that. One I won't  
make again, believe me.

**SONDRA**

Over all, you must be feeling  
pretty good though.

**JESSICA**

Yeah? How's that?

**SONDRA**

One date, one proposal. You were  
with Nate for six years and got  
goose egg.

Jessica smiles.

**JESSICA**

That's one way of looking at it.

**SONDRA**

You enjoyed his desperate optimism,  
didn't you?

**JESSICA**

A little. I was kind of flattered.  
Is that wrong?

**SONDRA**

(shaking her head)  
You're overdue for some attention.  
The others can't get any worse.

**JESSICA**

Let's hope.

Her phone starts VIBRATING again. Jessica and Sondra both  
look down.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM**

We see what we think is Jessica's phone, except it isn't  
vibrating. We zoom out and see it's Nolan's phone, and he's  
watching it intently.

Nolan and Josh are both sitting on their couch. Nolan has his  
laptop open, and Josh is playing the video game: Call of  
Duty, an ultra violent war simulator.

**JOSH**

I don't hear copying and pasting.

**NOLAN**

She said she wanted to see me again, and that she would call.

**JOSH**

First of all, you want her to be waiting for you, and second of all, you said she was hot.

**NOLAN**

Smokin' hot.

**JOSH**

The good lookin' can have their pick of the litter. She either found somebody else, or decided she was out of your league. You have other dates lined up don't you?

**NOLAN**

You know I do.  
(beat)  
But I liked her.

Josh pauses his game and looks at Nolan.

**JOSH**

A little rejection is healthy...  
(he points to the laptop)  
And in that game, common. Don't fall for every girl you meet. That's what happened to you and she who shall not be named.  
(beat)  
You said she had lots of hobbies, right?

**NOLAN**

Yeah.

Josh resumes his game.

**JOSH**

See, that's a tough one. You want a girl who is insecure. If she has no hobbies, give specific examples of lots of things you do. If she's a transplant, say you're a local. You'll sound more confident. Then all you have to do is spot the signals, and make a move.

**NOLAN**

How will I know?

**JOSH**

It can be subtle, but the most obvious is they'll go out of their way to touch you.

**NOLAN**

Why wouldn't I want to wait until a second or third date?

**JOSH**

Because you're trying to box out all the other cock trying to blow up your spot.

**NOLAN**

Makes sense I guess.

**JOSH**

It's always better to err on the side of aggression.

In his game, Josh violently stabs another player in the back.

**INT. DIMLY LIT BAR - EVENING**

Nolan sits at a table for two with an attractive second date. He looks much more relaxed than before.

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

It's just been really hard for me to meet people, you know? I never meet guys in the real world.

**NOLAN**

What do you do?

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

I'm a pediatric nurse.

**NOLAN**

No kidding?

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

It's hard for me to meet guys who aren't infants or toddlers.

**NOLAN**

I like kids. They say what they think. And they're great on Halloween.

(beat)

It's my favorite holiday, but it's not the same as an adult.

**(MORE)**

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Last year, I went as the Adam West  
1960's era Batman.

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

Ha! With the spandex and speedo?

**NOLAN**

Oh yeah.

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

Sexy.

(beat)

You know, I took my nephew trick-or-  
treating, and he went as Batman.

**NOLAN**

I like the way the man thinks.

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

I actually think Superman is  
better, but we had fun.

(beat)

I ended up going as Pocahontas, but  
of course it was a skankified  
version.

**NOLAN**

(deadpan)

I wanna hear more about that... but  
you lost me at Superman is better  
than Batman.

She starts laughing and grabs his arm. Nolan knowingly  
smiles.

Her laughter carries over to Jessica's table

**INT. DIMLY LIT BAR - ELSEWHERE IN THE ROOM****JESSICA**

It's never come up.

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

How is that even possible? It's  
like two months away!

**JESSICA**

Maybe I haven't been on enough  
dates.

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

Well, at the risk of sounding overly ambitious, you should absolutely come to Oktoberfest with me.

Jessica sheepishly smiles, loving the attention.

**JESSICA**

My ex always avoided public events.

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

Sounds like a guy whose insecure. Did he have a reason?

**JESSICA**

I'm kind of a light weight, and he's a jealous moron.

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

There it is. Are you planning on going?

**JESSICA**

He's dead to me, so I think so.

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

But not with me?

Jessica hesitates.

**JESSICA**

Maybe. We'll just have to see if we go out again.

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

(smiles)  
That's a given, right?

**JESSICA**

(smiling)  
It all depends, I guess.

A waiter places a check down.

**INT. DIMLY LIT BAR - BACK AT NOLAN'S TABLE**

Nolan has picked up the check and is looking it over. His date goes for her purse.

**NOLAN**

What are you doing?

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

We can split it.

**NOLAN**

(grabbing some cash)  
Please, you insult me.

He sets the paid check on the table.

**NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

I'm a feminist you know, I'm not sure I feel comfortable with you paying for the whole thing.

**NOLAN**

You can get the next one.

**INT. DIMLY LIT BAR - BACK AT JESSICA'S TABLE****WAITER**

Another round?

**JESSICA'S SECOND DATE**

Is that what you want?

**INT. DIMLY LIT BAR - BACK AT NOLAN'S TABLE****NOLAN'S BRUNETTE SECOND DATE**

You think there's going to be a next time?

The screen splits in two. Nolan and Jessica are both smiling.

**JESSICA**

Yes.

**NOLAN**

Yes.

We linger on their faces beaming with confidence. Metallica's "Seek and Destroy" comes ripping on. What follows, is a montage of Jessica and Nolan's different dating experiences, all set to the song.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - NOLAN'S BEDROOM**

Nolan falls onto his bed with his date, making out vigorously. Nolan seems a bit surprised that it's happening. As the girl begins kissing his neck, he glances at his night stand and sees a condom. Drawn on the wrapper with a sharpie is a smiley face with a "-J" next to it. He smiles, and continues.

**EXT. JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING**

Jessica's date is leaving. Jessica closes the door behind him.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRA'S NEW APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER**

She grabs her diary and opens to the appropriate date. For "how she feels" she enters a 6, and smiles. Noticing her computer, she starts previewing other messages, and setting up other dates.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - NOLAN'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

A blonde woman is asleep in his bed as his phone vibrates. The text message reads: Hi! This is Alisa from DateMe, when do you want to meet up? He glances back to his sleeping date, and then starts typing on his phone.

**INT. BAR 1**

Jessica sits at a table with a new guy. He is talking to her while she sits confidently, absorbing the attention. The check comes, and he grabs it while Jessica fakes going to her purse to help pay.

**INT. BAR 2**

Nolan sits a table, with a different girl. She is laughing hysterically at something he said. Her leg flirtatiously touches his under the table. He smiles at her confidently, and raises a finger asking for the check.

**EXT. OKTOBERFEST GROUNDS**

The festival is being set up, and we can see now that the season is changing with the leaves turning. Jessica and a new date are in a pedal cab for two. The man is talking to her while she listens intently.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN**

Nolan sets a brown bag on the table. He reaches in, and takes out a 6 pack of hard cider. In the bag, we see a large pack of condoms.

**EXT. BAR 3**

Jessica hugs a man goodbye. As she turns away from him, she immediately gets on her phone. We see her list of contacts is mostly male first names with "DateMe" set for their last names. She smiles, and begins to text.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM**

Josh is playing Call of Duty as Nolan enters with a new date. Josh nods with approval, and holds up an opened hard cider.

Nolan rolls his eyes and escorts his date to his room.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - JESSICA'S ROOM**

Jessica is previewing a new conservative outfit for Sondra. Sondra gives a mediocre look of approval.

**INT. BAR 5**

Nolan sits at a table, supposedly listening to his newest date. He checks out the hostess as she walks by, and eyes other women in the bar. He smiles, his confidence is growing.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - NOLAN'S BEDROOM**

Having just returned from his date at Bar 5 alone, he fires up dateme.com, and sorts the profiles by the Fitness Freak body type. He opens up a text document with a number of preformulated messages in it, and begins copy and pasting the text into new e-mails.

**INT. BAR 6**

Jessica is previewing a much more revealing outfit for Sondra. Sondra nods in approval.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM**

Josh is playing Call of Duty as Nolan emerges from his room, his hair and clothes messed up from what we can assume is the aftermath of sex. He walks passed Josh, who doesn't seem to notice, to the kitchen.

Nolan emerges with a gallon of Sunny Delight. Josh notices, and is appalled. Nolan mischievously smiles, and shuts his room's door.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - JESSICA'S ROOM**

Jessica opens her digital calendar, and we see virtually every evening is booked with a date with a different guy.

She opens a profile from a received message, and while she is initially uninterested in his appearance, when she sees how much money he makes, she gives a conceding nod, and begins messaging him back.

**INT. BAR 7 - EVENING**

A bundle of flowers is on their table. Jessica is wearing a provocative outfit, and the man is keenly aware of this. The check comes, and Jessica makes no move to even attempt to pay.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - JESSICA'S ROOM**

The bundle of flowers is placed in a vase on her desk. Jessica picks up her diary, and writes a 9 in for the self esteem piece. Logged in to dateme.com, she decides to update her body type to Fitness Freak. She hits the UPDATE BUTTON.

**EXT. OUTSIDE A DATE'S CAR - EVENING**

In front of her car, Nolan hugs a heavier date goodbye. She waves hopefully at him. He gives a halfhearted wave in return. After she drives away, he takes out his phone and deletes her contact information.

He places his phone back in his pocket, and begins walking home. It no sooner hits his pants, and it begins to ring.

Seeing who it is, he smiles, and answers.

The music montage abruptly ends as Nolan takes the call.

**NOLAN**

Mr. Anderson. What can I do for you, sir?

**INT. BAR 5 - THE NEXT EVENING**

The hostess that Nolan was eyeing earlier directs Anderson to Nolan, who sits at a booth, confidently texting.

**ANDERSON**

There he is!

Nolan looks up, surprised and happy.

**NOLAN**

Buddy, good to see you. Please, step in to my office

**ANDERSON**

(taking his seat)  
Your office?

**NOLAN**

This is one of my go to's. They have a great happy hour.

A waiter comes over.

**BAR 5 WAITER**

Nolan, taking the night off, eh?  
What can I get for you and your  
friend?

**NOLAN**

House IPA for me.

**ANDERSON**

I'll have the same.

The waiter nods, and leaves.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

So you ended up on a dating site  
after all?

**NOLAN**

I did. It's been... enlightening.

**ANDERSON**

Really? It's not full of...  
weirdos?

**NOLAN**

No, well, a little bit. I got the  
bait and switch the other night,  
but it's been generally positive.  
Mostly working professionals, too  
busy to find someone in their free  
time. Lots of nurses, lots of  
teachers.

**ANDERSON**

Huh, makes sense.

**NOLAN**

I meet a new girl every week it  
seems like. I literally have so  
many dates I had to set a budget.

**ANDERSON**

So Alice is totally gone?

**NOLAN**

(annoyed)  
You should know this. Didn't Ariel  
tell you? I know she's good friends  
with Diana and Cindy.

**ANDERSON**

It never came up.

**NOLAN**

Where were you on that by the way?  
I was really in a dark place, and I  
heard you were what, shopping for  
sheets?

Anderson is ashamed, but tries to play it off.

**ANDERSON**

Well, you know how Ariel is, that  
appointment meant the world to her.

**NOLAN**

And Alice meant the world to me.

The two stare each other down as the waiter brings their  
drinks.

**ANDERSON**

She's my wife.

**NOLAN**

And I was your best man.

**ANDERSON**

Nolan, we're not in college  
anymore. The days of a close circle  
of friends solving problems  
internally is over, you need to  
learn to stand on your own two  
feet.

**NOLAN**

Oh, that's why you weren't there?  
To teach me the lesson of  
independence through neglect?

**ANDERSON**

That's overstating things.

**NOLAN**

And like you're one to talk, you  
founded OWL, and then married Ariel  
after less than three months.

**ANDERSON**

Hey, when you know you know.

**NOLAN**

Or you were desperate.

That stops the conversation cold. The two take a moment of  
intense silence.

**ANDERSON**

I'm gonna let that go because I know you've been spending a lot of time with Josh, and he's clearly rubbed off on you. But don't pretend like you were any better. If your relationship with Alice hadn't started before you could drive you would have been right there with us.

**NOLAN**

You still haven't given me a good reason. Not just for that day, but for all of it. Why you're so hard to get a hold of, why you flake on plans, and don't return emergency texts. Why does her happiness trump your friends'?

**ANDERSON**

She's my wife.

**NOLAN**

And she comes first, I hear you. But, that can't be all.

Anderson takes a moment.

**ANDERSON**

If I had insisted on going... it would have caused a fight, and I didn't want to have a fight. Marriage is work, and I'm always looking for the path of least resistance.

**NOLAN**

What does that... You can't voice your opinion?

**ANDERSON**

Of course I can. But, it would make waves. And, rather than do that, it's simpler to just let her run the show. I know I'm losing my balls or whatever, but it makes things easier for me.

**NOLAN**

Can't stand up to your woman, that's the why?

**ANDERSON**

God, you sound like him. Quick to anger, quick to accuse.

**NOLAN**

You let yourself be a slave.

**ANDERSON**

Is it slavery if you get what you want?

**NOLAN**

You know, Josh has it figured out. I've been with ten times as many girls in the past few months as I ever was in college.

**ANDERSON**

Weren't you only with Alice?

Nolan nods.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

Wow, that's an intense rate of fuck. But don't delude yourself, Josh's method isn't perfect.

**NOLAN**

How? There's no risk, no chance of being hurt.

**ANDERSON**

That's the price you pay to play the game. It's safe because there's no intimacy, it's just the act. Josh doesn't believe in sacrifice or compromise, ever. You think he could even maintain a relationship if he wanted to?

**NOLAN**

Maybe. He doesn't seem to make it a priority.

**ANDERSON**

When I talk to him he seems pretty far gone, obsessed with keeping things overly simple.

**NOLAN**

And that's what's happened to me?

**ANDERSON**

No, but it seems like the road  
you're on.

Nolan scoffs. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his  
phone.

**NOLAN**

You see this, this is who I'm going  
on a date with next week.

**ANDERSON**

I'm really not trying to tell you  
what to do, do what you want, but  
don't be so quick to move on to the  
next. You might be missing out.

Anderson's phone RINGS a techno melody of Disney's "Under the  
Sea," from The Little Mermaid.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

The bonds of slavery beckon.

Anderson stands.

**ANDERSON (CONT'D)**

Remember, Josh comes from a broken  
family, he doesn't exactly have the  
highest regard for the institution.  
The longer you stay single, the  
more desensitized and jaded you'll  
become.

They shake hands, and Anderson walks away leaving Nolan  
contemplating his warning.

Nolan checks his phone, and we see a view of Jessica's  
profile.

He glances up, and we see that we've changed locations and  
Nolan is dressed differently.

**INT. BAR 7**

Jessica is walking straight for his table, looking beautiful  
as ever. He smiles, puts his phone in his pocket, and stands  
to greet her.

**NOLAN**

Jessica, it's so nice to finally  
meet you.

Without any hesitation, he walks up to her, and gives her a  
huge hug.

**JESSICA**

Likewise.

**LATER**

Both look uninterested and bored with one another. Finished drinks are scattered across their table.

**JESSICA**

So what do you do?

**NOLAN**

I manage events at the Expo center and help organize annual festivals downtown.

**JESSICA**

Like Oktoberfest?

**NOLAN**

Especially Oktoberfest. I'm actually responsible for moving that event down to the waterfront, and as a perk, I get the inside pick on the best tables.

**JESSICA**

That's pretty cool.

**NOLAN**

Yeah, it can be. It's coming up in a few weeks, you know.

**JESSICA**

I've never been.

**NOLAN**

Never?

Jessica shakes her head, expecting him to invite her, but instead...

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Well, you should go, it's a great time. Do you like German beer?

Her expression drops. Nolan isn't giving her the validations she is used to receiving.

**JESSICA**

I'm more of a vodka gal.

**NOLAN**

(smiling)

My roommate's kind of like vodka.

**JESSICA**

How's that?

**NOLAN**

They both give me headaches.

Jessica gives a polite smile, and looks away. She takes her hands off the table, and places them on her lap. Nolan notices.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Listen, I'm going to break one of my own rules here.

Jessica perks up.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

This isn't happening, is it?

Jessica smiles.

**JESSICA**

What do you mean?

**NOLAN**

This date, it just doesn't seem... we're not clicking.

**JESSICA**

You're the one who started off by telling me how many nurses you've been on dates with.

Nolan laughs.

**NOLAN**

Admittedly, that was probably a tactical error.

(beat)

So what's it like on your end, being so valued and prized?

**JESSICA**

You can't do that.

**NOLAN**

Do what?

**JESSICA**

Ask for a peak behind the curtain.  
It's against the rules. You're  
supposed to pretend like you're  
Neil Armstrong and I'm the moon.

**NOLAN**

Well, as you just pointed out, I  
already screwed that up. Plus, it  
doesn't seem like we have anything  
to lose, so...

Jessica sits back, enjoying his directness.

**JESSICA**

Alright, alright.  
(beat)  
It can be overwhelming to tell you  
the truth.

**NOLAN**

Being a hot chick on date me, or  
just in general?

Jessica laughs, this is more what she was expecting.

**JESSICA**

Personally, I don't think I'm that  
much more attractive than most  
women, but online, I dunno, maybe I  
just photograph well.

**NOLAN**

Such a burden. How many e-mails do  
you get a day?

**JESSICA**

I'm not telling you that!

**NOLAN**

Hey, shine's off the apple,  
remember?

She smiles, and does some thinking.

**JESSICA**

Well, at first it was an avalanche.  
But now it's more steady, I'd say  
about 30 a day.

**NOLAN**

That's incredible. Man, the damage  
I could do with 30 e-mails a day...

**JESSICA**

And you?

**NOLAN**

(scoffs)

Pfft, that's way too personal.

**JESSICA**

What!? You just said you would tell me if I told you!

**NOLAN**

No, I didn't!

**JESSICA**

You jerk!

**NOLAN**

(playfully)

I get about two a week.

**JESSICA**

(stunned)

No.

**NOLAN**

Sad but true.

**JESSICA**

But, you're a good looking guy and you have a good job. I'm shocked.

**NOLAN**

I appreciate that.

(beat)

So how many dates have you been on?

**JESSICA**

Are you going to tell me if I tell you?

Nolan nods.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

I'm probably coming up on forty.  
You?

**NOLAN**

About half that.

They both smile at each other. Ironically, talking about how they weren't hitting it off is actually bringing them together.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)

I guess you win.

**JESSICA**

I haven't won anything yet.

**NOLAN**

No relationships? Why? Nobody could fit the bill, or are you interested in just doing the casual thing?

**JESSICA**

Absolutely not.

Jessica looks down at her drink.

**JESSICA** (CONT'D)

My last relationship was a mess, and I was too caught up in the thought of *being* in love to see it for what it really was. I just want to be sure of my next bet before I place my chips.

Jessica looks up, a bit embarrassed.

**JESSICA** (CONT'D)

That's a first on a date for me.

**NOLAN**

(genuine)

I'm honored.

(beat)

For me, I've developed a kind of check list of must haves and can't stands.

**JESSICA**

Jesus, guys always have to have a strategy don't they? What's on this list?

**NOLAN**

Nothing unreasonable. Size 2 waist, perfect cans.

**JESSICA**

Well, I'm screwed, I've only got one of those things.

Nolan laughs.

**NOLAN**

She's kind, good sense of humor,  
loves to cook, doesn't do drugs,  
doesn't drink a ton, and...

(he looks at her  
questionably)  
doesn't have any tatoos?

**JESSICA**

Just one.

Nolan playfully grimaces.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

Deal breaker?

**NOLAN**

It depends on what and where.

**JESSICA**

My sorority's letters.

Nolan gives an accepting nod.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

And I'm not telling you where.

**NOLAN**

That means it can only be in about  
one of two locations

They both laugh. She playfully hits Nolan in the shoulder.

Nolan looks up from the shoulder Jessica hit, and smiles.

**EXT. BAR 7**

**NOLAN**

You turned out alright.

**JESSICA**

Just alright?

**NOLAN**

I had fun. It was interesting  
hearing the girl's perspective.

**JESSICA**

They've probably never got a word  
in before.

Nolan laughs. He steps in, and gives her a big hug. He pulls  
back, each of them in each others arms.

They kiss.

Jessica pulls away.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

A little fast...

Nolan collects himself.

**NOLAN**

Maybe we could get together again  
this week?

**JESSICA**

(coyly)

Maybe.

They separate. Jessica turns, and begins walking to her car.

Nolan lets out a happy sigh as he watches her walk away.

Jessica is walking towards us, a reluctant smile on her face. Her phone buzzes with an e-mail from a new guy: When do you want to meet up?

She hesitates, but responds: Does 8:00 work for you?

Conflicted, she looks back to where Nolan was standing, but he's gone. She resumes walking down the street away from us.

**INT. JESSICA AND SONDRAS NEW APARTMENT - LATER**

Jessica enters. What she sees stops her in her tracks, a look of horror on her face. Her mother is sitting at the kitchen table with Sondra. Jessica's laptop is open in front of both of them.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

I got tired of calling.

**SONDRA**

(like she screwed up)

We chatted a bit about your dating  
life.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

So you're on a dating site now?

Jessica sets her purse on the kitchen table, and sits. Sondra gets up, and mouths "sorry" to Jessica. She grabs Jessica's computer, and goes to her room, SHUTTING the door behind her.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

It's been months...

**JESSICA**

I've been busy.

There is a brief moment of silence.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

(uneasy)

I'm glad to see you.

Jessica doesn't respond.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

Aren't you glad to see me?

**JESSICA**

Thrilled.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Well, I sense your sarcasm, you don't need that. Part of why I'm here is to apologize.

Jessica softens.

**JESSICA**

You? Apologize? Your therapist told you to come here, didn't she?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

She's illuminated a lot of things about my behavior.

**JESSICA**

Like?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

My choice, and ultimately your choice in men.

**JESSICA**

I should have guessed. You came here to talk about Nate?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

In a way. You're father is a good provider, but he's a cheater. He's cheated on me at least a dozen times, maybe more. And each and every time I forgave him, because I didn't have the courage to stand on my own.

(beat)

Sound like anyone you know?

**JESSICA**

What's your point?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Jessica, I don't want you to make the same mistakes I did. You're a kind and caring person, but you're going to be attracted to men who cheat based on the scandalous environment you grew up in.

(becoming emotional)

And, if you're not careful, you might end up living to support someone else's life instead of living your own.

**JESSICA**

(scoffs)

Every guy I meet is going to turn out to be a cheating piece of shit?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

No, but users are what you're going to be attracted to at first. Men like Nate, who are charming and flatter you for your looks, but don't care about you as a person.

Jessica gives a heavy accepting sigh.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

But maybe you can break the cycle.

Jessica sits back, she doesn't know what to say to all this.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

So tell me more about this site.

**JESSICA**

It's fine. I've been on some dates.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

I think it's great. The more perspective the better.

(joking)

Do you always have to put out?

Jessica laughs.

**JESSICA**

You're really not good at making jokes.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

I made you.

**JESSICA**

Cute.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Is that where you were tonight?

Jessica shrugs.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

How'd it go?

**JESSICA**

He was nice, but, I just didn't feel it.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Hm.

**JESSICA**

What?

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Bit of an uggo?

**JESSICA**

No, he was handsome actually, and he had this directness that I liked...

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

But, you're not attracted to him?

Jessica looks away, and sighs.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)**

Are you going to see him again?

**JESSICA**

I'm not sure.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Sounds promising. Maybe the fact that you're not heads-over-heels is a better sign than you think.

**JESSICA**

(whispers)  
Maybe.

Jessica's mother smiles.

**JESSICA'S MOTHER**

Just a thought.

**INT. NOLAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING**

Nolan is on his computer e-mailing dates. He sees a new message from Jessica. Josh walks by.

**JOSH**

That looks like a good one.

Upon reading the message, Nolan reacts with utter surprise.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

What?

**NOLAN**

She says doesn't think we'd be a good fit.

**JOSH**

So?

**NOLAN**

So, the date was good, kind of a slow starter, but things ended well.

(beat)

I'm going to follow up with her.

Nolan opens a new message and begins typing as Josh walks into the kitchen.

**JOSH (O.C.)**

She's made up her mind, man. You're just spinning your wheels. You should be working anyway.

Nolan looks up, and stops typing. He closes his laptop in frustration.

He picks up an Oktoberfest poster. It has notes marked all over it, and appears to be a work in progress. We zoom in on the Oktoberfest logo.

**OKTOBERFEST - DAY**

We zoom out of the Oktoberfest logo on an event banner.

Jessica and Sondra casually stroll underneath the banner. They are surrounded by a rambunctious crowd. People wait in line for food, beer, or partake in the drunken festivities.

**JESSICA**

I waited too long. We're waiting too long.

**SONDRA**

If you had messaged him sooner it would have looked...

**JESSICA**

Desperate. I know. But, I wanted to see him again.

**SONDRA**

Don't hate the game player.

**JESSICA**

I'm no player!

**SONDRA**

How many second dates have you been on?

**JESSICA**

Irrelevant.

**SONDRA**

(smiles)

You could have forced something with any of those guys, but didn't.

**JESSICA**

I just wanted to see what was out there.

**SONDRA**

And get free drinks.

**JESSICA**

Maybe. My subscription comes to an end this week.

**SONDRA**

The fact that you want to move on is healthy. You have been well trained grasshopper, think of this as your graduation ceremony. After this, you'll have to embrace the old ways.

**JESSICA**

Great.

**SONDRA**

Oh come on, think of how much you've learned about yourself. What you want, what you don't want. Don't you think you'll have a keener eye for finding mister right?

**JESSICA**

I guess that's true.

**SONDRA**

And, now we can be single together! I gotta admit, I was a little worried you were going to just fall into another relationship and waste the remains of your twenties.

**JESSICA**

That'll never be me, not again. One thing I'm going to demand is for someone to have their own life so I can live mine too.

**SONDRA**

Sounds good.

(beat)

God, I can't wait. Now I have a super hot friend to lure in the A+ cock.

Jessica gives an appalled look.

**JESSICA**

You're a classy babe, you know that?

Sondra smiles.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

What do you call that maneuver?

Sondra looks at Jessica.

**SONDRA**

An investment paying off.

Looking up ahead, Sondra spots something. She grabs Jessica's arm, and spins her around.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

Come on, let's get in line.

**NATE**

(O.C.)  
Jessica!

Jessica turns around, and sees Nate standing in front of her.

**SONDRA**

Jess...

**NATE**

Wow, look at you.

**SONDRA**

Jess, you're better than this...

**JESSICA**

(dismissive)  
I'll meet up with you later.

Sondra pauses, but reluctantly turns, and leaves.

Sondra walks towards us, frustrated. Behind her, Nate and Jessica are standing toe to toe, staring into each others eyes.

**SONDRA**

Of all the beer festivals in all  
the world, he has to show up here.

She passes Josh and Nolan. They're walking in a different direction away from Nate and Jessica.

Josh checks out Sondra as she walks by, seeing her move towards the hefeweizen line.

**JOSH**

Is that Hef wheat stuff any good?

**NOLAN**

Probably the best brew here. Ask  
for an orange wedge instead of  
lemon though.

**JOSH**

We might have to make a pit stop  
before we grab our seats.

They round a corner. In the distance we see the married couples are sitting at the Nolan's table.

Josh grimaces and closes his eyes.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Why are the wives here?

**NOLAN**

Before you melt down, I know things have been... tense, but this is a great way to mend some fences. Prove that you're still a fun guy to be around, past be damned.

**JOSH**

Prove myself? To them?  
(beat)  
What's your end in all this, why do you care?

**NOLAN**

The group is divided, and I don't you want to be excluded.

**JOSH**

I don't care about "the group" anymore. It's dead. It died when Drew got married.

**NOLAN**

So you *do* blame Cindy?

**JOSH**

No, I blame Drew. He set the horrible precedent of never standing up to your wife as the golden standard for maintaining a relationship. And Adam and Anderson, who were just as desperate to be married, saw that, and took it as gospel.

**NOLAN**

(dismissive)  
That's a wonderfully paranoid conspiracy.

**JOSH**

You were in the exact same position a few months ago.

**NOLAN**

That was different.

**JOSH**

Right, because you were in love and the exception? Everyone thinks their relationship is the exception.

**(MORE)**

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Except every one of your insecure and desperate to be married friends have magically selected females who walk all over them.

**NOLAN**

That's it man, let it all out. Come on. What else you got?

**JOSH**

It's true. I'm overwhelmed with resentment and contempt,  
(beat)  
but it's justified.

**NOLAN**

How!? How can you justify hating your friends!?

**JOSH**

Because we're not friends anymore! We only hang when their wives are busy, never just because. And then, all they do is bitch, and validate their submissiveness by hearing how they're dealing with the same bullshit. We're something else now, we're distant cousins who reunite on holidays.

**NOLAN**

Sounds like envy to me.

**JOSH**

Envy?

**NOLAN**

You should be happy for them. They've got what they want.

**JOSH**

And you think they're happy? The guys I knew found happiness in watching football and exploitation horror movies.

**NOLAN**

And you're surprised their wives don't want to do that?

**JOSH**

So because they don't, what, those interests suddenly vanished?

Nolan tightens up.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

They're not happy. They're delusional. They blew it all up for some misguided American ideal that nothing else matters except being married.

**NOLAN**

So you're anti-marriage now?

**JOSH**

No! But where is the fuckin rush? What's the appeal of getting married, buying a cheap house in suburbia, and calling it a life at twenty four? Now, all they do is what their wives want, and all they want to do is nest. Is that what you want? To be a suburban slave?

**NOLAN**

No. But married? Yeah.

**JOSH**

But not like them?

Nolan says nothing.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

See, you feel something's wrong. Like a person at a symphony, you can hear when a note is off, even if you can't articulate why.

**NOLAN**

Where you going with this Josh?

**JOSH**

I've burned too many calories trying to fix it. If they want to have a relationship with me, they can make an effort too.

**NOLAN**

Or, you could be the bigger person.

Josh grits his teeth.

**JOSH**

I've tried that. To my eternal shame, I apologized to Cindy and Drew, for everything.

**(MORE)**

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

I even bought her flowers, sent her a hand written note. How did things get so far, you're both important to me, blah blah blah. Nothing.

**NOLAN**

Jesus. What the hell happened?

**JOSH**

If you really want to know the specifics, ask them. But the what doesn't matter, my fate was sealed the moment I took a stand against her majesty. Reasonable or not.

(takes a deep breath)

Nolan, Drew was one of my oldest friends, and I lost him over some absurd miscommunication. I don't want any of my friends wives to hate me, but I find my values are constantly at odds with what they find acceptable, and I can't just watch anymore.

Nolan looks over at the married couples sitting at the table.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

You paid for their seats didn't you?

**NOLAN**

You know I get them comped.

**JOSH**

The married only do what directly benefits their interests. They're independent city states, separated from what was once a great nation.

**NOLAN**

Heavy.

**JOSH**

If you made'em pay they'd be somewhere else, probably at home.

(heavy sigh)

Listen, I'm gonna get in line. If you want to chill after, let me know.

Josh turns, and leaves. Nolan is conflicted, but doesn't try to stop him.

**OKTOBERFEST - NOLAN'S RESERVED TABLE**

Nolan sits down at the table, focused.

**DREW**

Hey! You finally made it.

**ANDERSON**

Where's your brew?

**NOLAN**

Cindy, what happened in January?

**CINDY**

Excuse me?

**NOLAN**

Between you and Josh.

**CINDY**

That's really none of your business.

**NOLAN**

I'm making it my business. Josh isn't here because he feels like the tension between you two would bring everyone down.

**CINDY**

Well, I can't change the fact that he's angry.

**NOLAN**

On the surface yes, but what's driving it is sadness. He thinks you've poisoned Drew against him.

**DREW**

That's insane.

**NOLAN**

I know it is. What? Happened?

Nolan is staring her down. The group is shocked he's challenging her.

**CINDY**

I had a party in July, and I didn't invite him. You would have come, but you were at a wedding with Alice.

**NOLAN**

A party?

**CINDY**

Yes.

**NOLAN**

That doesn't make sense. It's not enough.

Cindy shrugs.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Wait, that wedding we went to, we were supposed to do the beach trip.

**CINDY**

There was a scheduling conflict, alright?

**NOLAN**

That's Josh's birthday weekend.

Cindy tightens.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

You knew? You knew it was his birthday, and you planned some party anyway?

Cindy is starting to get upset.

**CINDY**

It wasn't just some party. It was my birthday!

**NOLAN**

Your birthday's just after New Years, I was there.

**CINDY**

I know, but I wanted to celebrate my 25th in some warmer weather for a change. So, I e-mailed everyone, and we changed things.

**NOLAN**

I never got an e-mail.

**CINDY**

I meant the girls silly. I e-mailed Alice. If it weren't for that wedding, you both would have come.

Nolan sits back in his chair.

**CINDY** (CONT'D)

Josh can't declare a monopoly on one of the best weekends of the summer. If you make plans early enough anything can...

**NOLAN**

WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU!?!

Nolan's outburst shocks the group and some of the surrounding people.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)

You celebrated a fake birthday on Josh's actual birthday?

**CINDY**

It was the only weekend everyone could get time off.

**NOLAN**

Everyone gets time off because they're are expecting to go on *his* trip!

**DREW**

Hey Nolan...

**NOLAN**

Save it Drew, you should have yanked back on the leash.

(beat)

God damn, that is some world class narcissism. How the hell did you justify that?

**CINDY**

It was my birthday.

**NOLAN**

No, it fucking wasn't.

There is a moment of intense silence as Cindy and Nolan size each other up. Nolan glares at Drew who looks away.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)

Drew did tell you, didn't he? That it was important to him, to us.

Cindy shakes her head in disgust, as if remembering the conversation.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)

Jesus. Why it had to be that weekend I'll never understand.

**CINDY**

Josh is a bad influence, him and is chauvinistic lifestyle.

**NOLAN**

And they only way you could trump his birthday was by making it yours.

(beat)

Josh saw through that, didn't he?

**CINDY**

He doesn't listen to reason.

(to Drew)

I can't believe you were ever friends with him.

**NOLAN**

It's a good thing you haven't poisoned the well.

(beat)

But, I'm reminded of what Churchill said about Stalin. He said, he's a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch. And, if it weren't for him, the guy you married would still be sitting alone in the dark, eating cheezits, watching Evil Dead, and jacking off into his socks.

**CINDY**

(laughing)

Nolan, this is sad. Even for you. With an attitude like this, it's easy to see why Alice left you.

Nolan composes himself.

**NOLAN**

Is nothing sacred Cindy? Take Josh's birthday out of it, you still felt you could just steam roll our only one real tradition?

**CINDY**

Nothing lasts forever.

Nolan pauses. He looks down at her wedding ring.

**NOLAN**

I hope so.

Noticing his stare, Cindy adjusts her ring, and suspiciously looks back to Nolan.

Nolan lets out a heavy sigh, turns, and walks away.

Almost immediately, he get's an ALERT from his phone.

A text message from Anderson reads: Churchill also said making enemies is a good thing, it means you stood up for something.

Nolan gives a small smile, and begins texting.

**OKTOBERFEST - BACK WITH JESSICA**

**NATE**

You look good.

**JESSICA**

You look... the same.

**NATE**

I can't believe you're standing here. I felt bad how we left things.

(beat)

Why didn't you call me?

Jessica stares at him blankly.

**NATE (CONT'D)**

I got my promotion for work. I'm in the low six digits now.

Jessica gives a contemptuous nod.

Nate takes her hand, and just like that, she falls under his spell.

**NATE (CONT'D)**

Jess, what's the point? A good job, a good house, if there's nobody to share it with? Ever since we broke up, there's been a hole in my life that I haven't been able to fill. I've been selfish, I've been distant, and I can't erase the things I did.

Jessica is softening, and Nate knows it. They've done this dance before.

**NATE** (CONT'D)

But, we have so much history.  
Maybe, it would be worth trying  
again? We could start slow, and  
when you're ready, we could move in  
together, like we've always talked  
about.

She's putty in his hands.

**JESSICA**

Oh Nate...

She pulls him close.

**JESSICA** (CONT'D)

(whispering in his ear)  
I could eat a bowl of alphabet soup  
and shit a better offer than that.

She pats him on the cheek and moves past him. Dumbfounded,  
Nate watches Jessica move confidently through the crowd.

She pulls out her phone, and begins texting.

**OKTOBERFEST - IN LINE**

Josh is standing in line eating an elephant ear. Behind him,  
we hear an obviously drunk man who seems to be pestering him.

**FLIRTY GUY**

I'm serious, I'm just starving,  
can't I have a small bite?

His phone vibrates.

**FLIRTY GUY** (CONT'D)

Just one bite is all I want.

He checks the message and gives a small smile.

**FLIRTY GUY** (CONT'D)

Just one, come on!

At his back, The Flirty Guy isn't asking Josh, but instead is  
accosting some unfortunate girl, though we can't see who.

**FLIRTY GUY** (CONT'D)

Come on, I want you to feed it to  
me.

Josh rolls his eyes and turns around.

**JOSH**

Dude, have mine.

He tears off a bite, and walks toward him like he were feeding an infant. The man is taken aback. He doesn't know how to respond, except to just let Josh feed him.

**FLIRTY GUY**

No, I want her to do it...

Josh slowly puts the bite in his mouth, staring the man down.

**JOSH**

No, no, I gotcha.

The man starts to chew.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

There ya go. You want more? I have more.

**FLIRTY GUY**

Nah.

The guy leaves, perplexed as to what just happened.

Josh turns to the woman he rescued, and we see it's Sondra.

**SONDRA**

That was good.

**JOSH**

Oh, I didn't do it for you, I just didn't want to walk to the trash.

She laughs.

**JOSH (CONT'D)**

Josh.

**SONDRA**

Sondra.

**JOSH**

Good name, Sondra. So, what brings you to the Hef line?

**SONDRA**

I hear it's the best.

**JOSH**

You heard right, but the big question is, do you have a place to imbibe your beverage?

**SONDRA**

Actually, no.

**JOSH**

Well, after we get your stein, which I'm buying by the way, we should head to my friend's spot. He runs this show. It's absurdly epic.

Sondra's phone ALERTS her to a new text message.

From Jessica, it reads: Bridge Demolished.

Sondra smiles.

**SONDRA**

Can I bring a friend?

**OKTOBERFEST - NOLAN'S VIP SPOT - DUSK**

Nolan stands on a platform over looking the majestic Willamette River. The lights of the city and the festival reflect on the water, transforming the setting into a romantic scene of sparkling lights and sound.

Nolan has a look of calm reflection on his face as he gazes out at the water.

Behind him, we hear a pair of FOOTSTEPS approaching. Nolan smiles. He begins speaking while turning, greeting who he thinks is Josh.

**NOLAN**

I hope you brought me one with an orange wedge...

Jessica is standing in front of him holding her phone.

She's just as startled to see Nolan, as he is to see her. Time seems to slow down as we take in this moment.

**JESSICA**

Nolan?

**NOLAN**

Jessica? What are you... how did you know about this spot?

**JESSICA**

A friend of mine told me to meet her here.

Nolan takes a moment to process that statement.

**NOLAN**

Huh.

**JESSICA**

This is freaky weird. But great, actually. I wanted to see you.

**NOLAN**

Did you?

**JESSICA**

Well, yeah. My friend advised me to wait a few days before I messaged you back.

**NOLAN**

But, you did message me back.

**JESSICA**

What?

Nolan gets out his phone, and brings up Jessica's e-mail. He walks over to her, and let's her read it.

Jessica reacts with total shock and confusion.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

I didn't write this.

**NOLAN**

No?

**JESSICA**

No! I was really looking forward to seeing you again.

**NOLAN**

Well, someone sent it.

Jessica thinks back. Her expression sours.

We hear multiple FOOTSTEPS walking up the scaffolding.

**JESSICA**

My mother. She was at my computer when I got back from our date.

Nolan glances at the entrance, then back to Jessica. She is too overwhelmed with anger and sadness to notice.

A happy Josh and Sondra come through the entrance. They are both holding two steins of hefeweizen beer, all with orange slices floating in them. Sondra's expression drops, as she sees Nolan.

**JESSICA** (CONT'D)

That conniving... what's in it for her? Sabotaging me like this?

**JOSH**

Guten tag!

He hands Nolan his beer, and Sondra does the same for Jessica.

**JOSH** (CONT'D)

Looks like you met Sondra's friend. I figured you wouldn't mind.

**NOLAN**

Good name Sondra, but Jessica and I actually kind of know each other.

**JOSH**

No kidding? How's that?

**NOLAN**

We went on a date last week.

Josh looks back to Jessica who is still fuming.

**JOSH**

Oh shit, I recognize her. She's the one who told you not to waste your time.

**NOLAN**

Apparently, she didn't write the message.

**JOSH**

Then, who did?

**JESSICA**

My mother.

**SONDRA**

Jess...

**JESSICA**

God, she's so spiteful. Doesn't she have anything better to do than fuck with my life?

**SONDRA**

Jess, it was me, I sent it.

Everyone looks at Sondra.

**JESSICA**

You?

Sondra starts to well up.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

For fuck's sake, why!?

**SONDRA**

Because, I heard the way you were talking about Nolan with your mother, and I could just tell, you were going to pursue something.

**JESSICA**

Jesus Christ Sondra, so?

**SONDRA**

Every time I relocate I have to start over. New friends, a new life. And I come to Portland and here you are, newly single and hungry. I know it was selfish, but for once, I wanted to have a friend for a little while before I lost you to a man like all the others.

Josh shoots a compassionate glance at Nolan, as if she were talking about him, and not herself.

**SONDRA (CONT'D)**

You don't know the agony of true solitude, of feeling alone in a group as everyone else enjoys their lives.

**JESSICA**

That's a terrible excuse.

**NOLAN**

It's not an excuse it's a reason.

(looks at Josh)

It must be maddening to feel like no matter how much loyalty you show your friends, they're willing to drop you at the first chance of something romantic. And what's worse, it's an unspoken truth that once you meet someone, it's totally acceptable to turn your back on your friends and start a new life.

Jessica takes a deep breath, and looks at Sondra.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)

Forgive her. Turn the page.

**JESSICA**

Why?

**JOSH**

It's what Jesus would do.

**NOLAN**

That, and because her motive, selfish as it was, was to simply spend more time with you. How angry can you be at someone for that?

Jessica is staring Sondra down. It seems as though Nolan's words haven't affected her in the least.

Suddenly, she breaks the tension, walks over to Sondra, and hugs her. Sondra reciprocates.

**JESSICA**

We still have a lot to talk about.

Nolan nods to the entrance, trying to get Josh to leave with Sondra. Josh picks up on Nolan's request.

**SONDRA**

I know. I'm sorry.

**JESSICA**

How to change my password for starters.

Sondra lets out a small laugh, and wipes away some tears from her eyes as the hug ends.

Josh begins moving to the exit, and gently nudges Sondra to come with him.

**JOSH**

Seems like you and I have more in common than I thought.

**SONDRA**

We're both independent and selfish?

Josh looks back at Nolan and smiles.

**JOSH**

Sad but true.

Sondra and Josh begin walking down the scaffolding.

Nolan and Jessica turn their attention to each other as we listen to the fading sound of their footsteps.

**NOLAN**

(overly happy)  
So, how do you like my event?

Jessica laughs.

**JESSICA**

It's great.

**NOLAN**

Better by the water, no?

**JESSICA**

I've never been, so I'll just have to take your word for it.

Nolan gives a small laugh, and resumes looking out over the balcony. Jessica joins him.

**NOLAN**

I thought I was never going to see you again.

**JESSICA**

You could have reached out to me you know.

**NOLAN**

It would come off as desperate.

**JESSICA**

To follow up?

**NOLAN**

It's not that simple and you know it. There's a pace and a rhythm to the whole process.

**JESSICA**

True, but, what's the harm in showing some interest if you know the other person felt the same?

**NOLAN**

So you felt something?

Jessica lightly nods her head.

**NOLAN** (CONT'D)

And yet, we were both too caught up in the game to do anything about it.

Jessica hangs her head in regret.

**JESSICA**

I probably shouldn't tell you this, but after our date, I made plans with someone else.

**NOLAN**

That sucks.

**JESSICA**

Why? I'm sure you had other dates lined up.

**NOLAN**

Yes, but we had a connection, brief as it was. You can't fake chemistry.

**JESSICA**

Or enthusiasm.

**NOLAN**

I know for a fact you get bombarded with e-mails.

**JESSICA**

Most of that's the equivalent of a guy hitting on me at a bar. They're not motivated by the head that's interested in getting to know me as a person.

**NOLAN**

So, how do you tell the difference?

**JESSICA**

I thought I could, or at the very least, I thought I might learn to tell difference if I dated enough, but I don't know, I guess, I stopped caring because I knew I wouldn't see them again.

**NOLAN**

Why didn't you take a shot? And not just on me, on anyone?

**JESSICA**

I don't know. Why didn't you?

**NOLAN**

Because dating is easy. There's no emotional investment like a relationship. I get to pick and choose who I take out, and if I'm lucky, maybe even go home with one.

**JESSICA**

Ah, so that's your angle? You just like the access to fresh girls?

**NOLAN**

No.

Jessica raises her eyebrows.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Well, yes, that's a nice perk.

(beat)

What, you never did?

**JESSICA**

Once. But, it was never my priority.

**NOLAN**

It wasn't for me either... it just sorta turned into recreation.

**JESSICA**

(coldly)

You sound like my ex.

Nolan leans back.

**NOLAN**

Why didn't you pursue anyone?

**JESSICA**

I just told you.

**NOLAN**

No, you didn't.

**JESSICA**

I'm not sure I feel comfortable telling you.

**NOLAN**

Your ex was a piece of shit, wasn't he?

**JESSICA**

Now I really don't want to talk about this.

**NOLAN**

Everything is in the open, why not? But, that's the real reason, isn't it? You're afraid.

**JESSICA**

Afraid? If anything I became addicted to the attention.

**NOLAN**

Maybe. I bet it started that way, but 40 dates and no relationship? Doesn't fit.

**JESSICA**

I'm sorry, did I just step into a psychiatrist's office?

**NOLAN**

Tell me I'm wrong.

**JESSICA**

Let me ask you something, how do you expect to find real chemistry if you always hook up on the first night?

**NOLAN**

Because she's having sex with me.

**JESSICA**

But, sex complicates everything. You say you want something more? You'll never know if you have a real connection if you're on a mission to carve numbers into your headboard with every girl you half hit it off with.

Nolan gives a conceding nod.

**NOLAN**

My last, only, real relationship ended because I didn't have any hobbies. Ironically, dating, became my new hobby.

**JESSICA**

So, we both thought we had it figured out, but really we didn't know what we were doing?

**NOLAN**

Nobody does. The best long term relationships I know work for the wrong reasons, and being a veteran of dating online, well, it isn't all upside either.

Jessica takes a moment, reflecting on what her mother spoke to her about.

**JESSICA**

God, that's terrifying.

**NOLAN**

What is?

**JESSICA**

The idea that you might not be able to trust your own instincts.

**NOLAN**

I guess that's the chance we all take. At least online you get to see what they look like, and get a little back story.

**JESSICA**

But haven't you been on dates where on paper, it looks great. But when you meet, it's like talking to a grouper?

Nolan shrugs.

**JESSICA (CONT'D)**

It's all just one big crap shoot. Even if you maximize your chances.

**NOLAN**

And the house always wins.

We pull back, as they both gaze at the water, taking in the scenery and depth of that statement.

**JESSICA**

Who's the house in that analogy?

**NOLAN**

I dunno. Jesus?

Jessica laughs. They both laugh.

**JESSICA**

So what now?

**NOLAN**

I feel like I should ask for your number.

**JESSICA**

On a date? That's bad form.

**NOLAN**

We're not on a date, this is a random encounter.

**JESSICA**

The last time I gave out my number... things ended poorly.

Nolan gives a small, defeated nod, and turns as if to leave.

**NOLAN**

I can't promise we wont.

He turns back, sets his card on a table, and places his beer on it.

**NOLAN (CONT'D)**

Still, it seems like a number worth betting.

Jessica looks up at him, intrigued but conflicted.

Nolan smiles, turns, and walks to the exit.

**OKTOBERFEST - NIGHT**

Nolan exits the scaffolding into the full excitement festival. He confidently moves through the crowd as we begin to zoom out.

Suddenly, we hear a VIBRATING phone.

We quickly zoom back in on Nolan as he checks his phone.

A message from Jessica reads: Do I get odds?

He smiles, puts his phone in his pocket, and continues walking.

An ACOUSTIC VERSION OF METALLICA'S "NO LEAF CLOVER" plays as we zoom out for real, and FADE TO BLACK.

This song is fitting, not only because it pays off Josh's remark about how Metallica is fit for any occasion, but also tells the story of a boy eager for a big payoff, blinded by ambition. He takes the first offer he gets, only to find that the very thing he wanted is in fact his worst nightmare. This echoes the theme of those desperate to be married, and by contrast, the general theme of exploring options to be a positive choice.

METALLICA'S "NO LEAF CLOVER"

And it feels right this time  
 On his crash course with the big time  
 Paid no mind to the distant thunder  
 Today filled his head with wonder... boy

Says it feels right this time  
 Turn around and found the light lime  
 Good day to be alive... sir  
 Good day to be alive she said

Then it comes to be that the soothing light  
 At the end of your tunnel  
 It's just a freight train comin your way  
 Then it comes to be that the soothing light  
 At the end of your tunnel  
 It's just a freight train comin your way

Don't it feel right like this  
 All the pieces fall to his wish  
 Sucker for that quick reward... boy  
 Sucker for that quick reward they said

Then it comes to be that the soothing light  
 At the end of your tunnel  
 It's just a freight train comin your way  
 Then it comes to be that the soothing light  
 At the end of your tunnel  
 It's just a freight train comin your way  
 It's comin' your way  
 It's comin your way  
 It comes!