

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - SUNDAY MORNING

It's about two in the morning and KATIE and JOSEPH sit at opposite ends of the sofa. They're drunk. They've been out and about all day and are dizzy-tired.

She's about 22 and very cute, driven, and very social.

He's about 23 and he's huge. About 300 lbs., but not grotesque. He has nice eyes and nice features, though they can't distract entirely from his obesity. He's witty, intelligent, and charming.

As they talk, they nurse bottles of beer. Each also has an open bottle of water, hers the small girly size and his the biggest thing you can get in a screw top bottle.

KATIE

You know you're stuck here, right?  
There's no way I'm going to let you  
drive home.

JOSEPH

You think?

KATIE

Only when I have to. Okay, hold on.  
I'll go get you some blankets. Or  
you can share my bed if you want.

JOSEPH

(mopey)  
No. That's okay.

KATIE

Come on, Joseph! You knew she was  
out of your league. You even said  
so before you went up to her. What  
did she say to you? It was like she  
thumped you on the top of your head  
with a hammer.

JOSEPH

Don't worry about it. It's past bed  
time anyway.

KATIE

Come on. Tell me. What did she say?

He is silent and his eyes are downcast. She sits next to him and gives him a one armed hug. There is silence for a few more seconds.

JOSEPH

You are not sufficiently attractive.

KATIE

What?

JOSEPH

That's what she said. I asked her if she wanted to go out and she said, "No." Then I said, "Any particular reason?" And she said, "You are not sufficiently attractive."

He chuckles dejectedly.

KATIE

That's - that's - I don't know what that is. Brutal, I guess.

JOSEPH

Yup. Brutal honesty. Never quite understood that term before.

KATIE

Ouch.

JOSEPH

Yup.

(pause)

I think I've discovered the meaning of hubris? Asking her out, I mean. If this were a Greek tragedy, it would turn out she was Aphrodite, and I'd end up hurtling myself off a cliff in despair.

KATIE

Yeah, but she would have given you the head of a goat first or made you fall in love with a fish. Something. That chick was hot, but she was no Aphrodite.

JOSEPH

Yeah. I suppose. Still hubris though, 'cause she was way the hell out of my league.

KATIE

Yeah.

JOSEPH

Yeah.

KATIE

So why'd you ask her out?

JOSEPH

Because she's gorgeous. And I'm single. And nothing ventured nothing gained. And you never expect the whole truth.

KATIE

But you knew she was going to turn you down.

JOSEPH

Turn me down, yeah, but not fucking smack me down. And salt the emotional earth where I fell so no hope could ever grow there again.

KATIE

It's not that bad.

JOSEPH

Not quite, but it sucks. Anybody who ever said looks don't matter or it's what's on the inside that counts, or any of that other mindless Katlmark drivel is not only full of shit, but deserves a severe beating.

KATIE

Yeah. I mean it isn't the most important thing, but it matters.

JOSEPH

Bullshit. For the vast majority of people under thirty, looks are the most important thing. Let's not kid ourselves, it's only once you geet desperate: Once you start wanting to build a family, start to fear growing old alone that the so-called important stuff becomes important. The first thing people notice is appearance. If for no other reason, appearance is tremendously important.

KATIE

I don't think that's true.

JOSEPH

Okay. You and I get along great, we like the same movies, we have compatible taste and senses of humor and no glaringly incompatible personal habits. Wanna fuck?

KATIE

Are you kidding?

JOSEPH

No. You're really cute, and I'd do you in a second if you were interested, but you're not. And don't look scandalized, because I know better.

There's a short moment of silence, and they both start to grin.

KATIE

Yeah, well, forgive me if I'm not overcome with lust at the revelation that you'd "do me".

JOSEPH

You know what I mean.

KATIE

Yeah, but that's because we've been friends for so long.

JOSEPH

No it's not. I don't hold it against you, but face it, it's because I'm fat. If I was half my size, you'd at least think it. You wouldn't have that look on your face.

She's silent. Looking at him.

JOSEPH

Oh, come on. I'm mentally stable, witty, charming, I have good hygiene, and I'm gainfully employed. And I'm a good kisser.

She's still silent.

JOSEPH  
What?

KATIE  
I'm, um, I'm. . .

JOSEPH  
Trying to imagine half of me,  
right?.

KATIE  
Um, yeah.

JOSEPH  
Tough, huh?

KATIE  
Well, as long as I've known you,  
you've been. . .

JOSEPH  
As long as I've known me too. I've  
always been fat.

KATIE  
But it's more than that. The same  
reason I can't pull the scandal  
routine is the same reason I'm not  
interested like that. We know each  
other too well to date.

JOSEPH  
I don't buy that for a second.

KATIE  
It's a chick thing, I guess.  
(pause)  
How good?

JOSEPH  
Huh?

KATIE  
How good a kisser are you.

JOSEPH  
Want to find out?

KATIE  
Um. . .

JOSEPH  
Or do you mean like on a scale of  
one to ten?

KATIE  
I. . .

JOSEPH  
I'm an eight point five.

KATIE  
I'm gonna get the blankets.

JOSEPH  
No. I'm gonna' go home.

KATIE  
No way.

JOSEPH  
No, I'll walk. Here.

He takes out his keys and pulls his car key off the ring,  
handing it to her.

KATIE  
Come on. It's like a mile and a  
half.

JOSEPH  
I need the exercise.

KATIE  
Joseph, don't be mad.

JOSEPH  
I'm not. I just need the fresh air.

KATIE  
You're in the wrong city for that,  
buddy.

JOSEPH  
You know what I mean.

He smiles at her, but rather than being reassuring, it's  
vaguely unsettling. He rises to leave. She grabs him and hugs  
him.

KATIE  
You are not okay. Not yet. I'll  
call and check on you in the  
morning. Still love me?

JOSEPH

Always.

Joseph drains his water and they walk to the door. He opens it and turns.

KATIE

Don't forget your coat.

JOSEPH

Yeah.

He turns to take his coat from her and unexpectedly sweeps her gently toward him.

He kisses her. This is not a drunken kiss. It's confident, a little passionate even, but restrained. No slobbering and no tongue, just a solid, slightly forceful kiss right on the lips.

JOSEPH

'Night.

He steps out and shuts the door behind him before she has a chance to respond. She leans back against the wall and breaths deep, exhaling audibly through pursed lips.

KATIE

Hmmm -

With just the tip of her tongue, she tentatively licks her upper lip.

KATIE

Hmm.

EXT. SIDEWALK - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Joseph walks alone on one of those L.A. sidewalks that seems to go on forever past the faded fronts of bland buildings and strip mall parking lots with nothing but the asphalt to keep it company.

He walks with his head down and his hands in his pockets, with a solid confident stride that belies his aimlessness.

EXT. SIDEWALK - A FEW MINUTES LATER

He walks past a parking lot. He hears the clicking of a car that refuses to start. He stops and watches.

After a few more clicks, a tall, slim, very attractive BLOND WOMAN steps out of the car with a furious noise.

BLOND WOMAN  
Damn it! Fucking useless piece of  
cast-iron shit!

The parking lot belongs to a closed bar. She walks back toward the door and bangs on it. There is no response so she bangs again.

BLOND WOMAN  
Jimmy, damn it, open the door!

No response, so she bangs three times with both closed fists. Still no response, so she wanders back to her car.

JOSEPH  
(carefully)  
Can I help you?

The woman looks his way, startled. She stares at him suspiciously.

BLOND WOMAN  
I don't know. Do you know anything  
about cars?

JOSEPH  
A little. Try your headlights.

She opens the door and reaches for the switch for the lights. The switch is already on.

BLOND WOMAN  
Oh, shit! They got left on.

JOSEPH  
Okay. Is your car a stick shift.

BLOND WOMAN  
Yeah.

JOSEPH  
I can give you a push start, if you  
like.

BLOND WOMAN  
O-Okay.

JOSEPH  
Just get in and put it in first and  
push down on the clutch.

She does, locking her door and opening the window about an inch. Joseph senses her unease. He walks to the rear of the car.

JOSEPH

Ready?

She leans into the small opening.

BLOND WOMAN

Yeah.

Joseph doesn't even strain as he starts the car moving.

JOSEPH

Okay, just steer for the street.

She does, and he speeds up to a brisk walking pace.

JOSEPH

Okay, pop the clutch.

She does and the car sputters to life. Joseph approaches the window.

JOSEPH

Make sure you keep it running at least at least a half an our. The longer the battery charges, the better. Drive safely.

He turns around, and she opens the window a little further.

BLOND WOMAN

Hey. Thanks. Can I give you a lift somewhere?

Joseph turns and glances back at her.

JOSEPH

No. No thanks. Have a good night.

He quickly turns and continues on his way.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - SUNDAY AROUND NOON

He's still asleep, face down in bed. The phone rings. He groans.

JOSEPH

Oh, crap.

He ignores the phone. It rings three times and the machine picks up.

JOSEPH

(on machine)

555-1776. The thing's gonna beep, you're gonna leave a message, I'm gonna call you back and everybody's gonna be happy.

The thing beeps.

KATIE

(on phone)

Hey. Pick up. Come on. Hey, you were right about one thing last night. You're a pretty good kisser. Maybe even an eight point eight, eight point nine. Okay, don't pick up, but I'm going to call again in an hour and sing to you until you do.

She hangs up.

JOSEPH

(hasn't moved)

Yeah, yeah, talk to you in an hour.

The clock by his bed zips through about a half an hour, at which point he lifts his head and looks at it. He roles over, and lays face up with his eyes closed for a few seconds.

With a groan, he flings the covers off himself. He is bare chested, but wears pajama bottoms. He roles over and rises, and we follow him into the bathroom. Where he begins brushing his teeth.

The apartment is fairly clean and fairly neat. Sparsely furnished, it has a small kitchen and a living room in addition to the bedroom and bathroom.

The living room has a large comfy recliner, sofa and a large coffee table. He has a decent entertainment center and a very large DVD collection.

In a corner he has a desk set up with Power Mac video editing suite. On the coffee table sits a Power Book as well.

When we return to him, he has showered and is shaving in front of a partially steamed mirror. He's just wiping off the last few bits of shaving cream when the phone rings. As he goes to get it, we see that he is naked.

JOSEPH  
Hey, Kat.

KATIE  
(on phone)  
You're awake.

JOSEPH  
You too.

KATIE  
What time did you get to sleep?

JOSEPH  
I don't know. Three thirty, four.  
Something like that.

KATIE  
How are you feeling?

JOSEPH  
A little better, I guess.

As he talks, he examines himself in the mirrored doors of his closet. He sucks in his double chin. The difference is not satisfactory. He sighs and sits.

JOSEPH  
I'm just tired. No. Not tired. I'm  
weary.

KATIE  
Weary of what?

JOSEPH  
I don't know. Of me. Of being me,  
maybe. Of dragging along all the  
same flaws. Of the way people see  
me.

KATIE  
How's that?

JOSEPH  
Nobody takes me seriously. I mean,  
I've got friends who've known me  
ten years and they think of me as -  
hell, they don't think of me. Not  
unless I'm in the room.  
(pause)  
Never mind. I'm talking out of my  
ass.

KATIE

Some of us do think of you, you know.

JOSEPH

And what do you think?

KATIE

That you're funny, you're a fantastic friend. That I trust you and I can depend on you. That you're smart. And that I wish I could make you feel better.

JOSEPH

Thanks. But it's more than that. Haven't you ever wished you could find someone who knows you as well as you know yourself?

KATIE

I have somebody like that. I have my best friend. I'm pretty sure you know everything about me that's worth knowing.

JOSEPH

Do you know me that well?

KATIE

Nope. Not even close. That's just not you. I mean, I can't remember the time I surprised you. You surprise me all the time. I guess you're just more complicated.

JOSEPH

I don't know. Eight point eight, huh?

KATIE

Maybe.

JOSEPH

And I was so tired I couldn't even see straight. Wasn't thinking too straight either, I guess. Should I apologize?

KATIE

No. I think we can let it slide. So how did you know you're such a good kisser?

JOSEPH

I have some experience. But I only seem to attract women who are settling. And I am not a runner-up kind of guy.

KATIE

So what are you going to do?

JOSEPH

Make some changes, I guess. Hell, if I lost a hundred pounds, you wouldn't even recognize me.

KATIE

Yeah. Right.

JOSEPH

Care to make it a bet?

KATIE

What, that I won't recognize you?

JOSEPH

Yeah. And then some.

KATIE

Such as?

JOSEPH

I totally bet I could seduce you. And you wouldn't even know it was me.

KATIE

That is such bullshit!

JOSEPH

And if you recognize me before I score, you win.

KATIE

What do I win?

JOSEPH

What do you want?

KATIE

I don't know. Something big?

JOSEPH

Well, I've got something big, but that's for if I win.

KATIE  
Is that so?

JOSEPH  
Yup.

KATIE  
So what do I get when I win?

JOSEPH  
Shopping spree?

KATIE  
Okay.

JOSEPH  
So we have a bet?

KATIE  
We do. So you really think I won't  
recognize you?

JOSEPH  
Yup.

KATIE  
How's that gonna work?

JOSEPH  
We can't see each other until I'm  
in shape.

KATIE  
Whoah. No way, no fair. That will  
take months.

JOSEPH  
At least a year, I imagine.

KATIE  
So we don't see each other for a  
year? That is not cool, Joseph!

JOSEPH  
We can talk on the phone and stuff.

KATIE  
You're nuts.

JOSEPH  
Probably.

KATIE

I'll make you a side bet of a hundred bucks that you can't go a month without me.

JOSEPH

Deal.

KATIE

Okay. So what now?

JOSEPH

I guess I should get off my sleepy ass and go to the gym.

KATIE

Good luck.

JOSEPH

Thanks. Talk to you later.

They hang up.

JOSEPH

Oh shit. Shit.

He throws some gym clothes into a small duffel bag.

INT. GYMNASIUM - AFTERNOON

Joseph walks out of the locker room wearing sweat shorts and a tee shirt. He heads toward the free weights and loads up a bench press station with 135 pounds. He bends over against a nearby wall and stretches out his spine before he lays down.

He goes through thirty repetitions in the first set then sets the bar back into the cradle.

INT. GYMNASIUM - LATER

He rides a stationary bicycle with a pair of headphones in his ears, sweating profusely.

EXT. GYMNASIUM - DUSK

Joseph exits the building, once again dressed in his street clothes. His hair is wet from his shower and combed straight back.

EXT. TOP OF PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Joseph and PAUL fold and throw paper airplanes from the roof. They write fortune cookie style slogans on them. There is no wind.

PAUL

No way. Game over. You lose. There is no way you're going to pull this off.

JOSEPH

Don't be a buzzkill. I need some motivation.

PAUL

You're not going to nail Katie. I don't care how skinny you get. She has better taste than that.

JOSEPH

Fuck you. Best friend my left nut. Where's the love?

PAUL

Um. Yeah. Go, you! Rock on! Seriously. Getting in shape is a good idea, but you're, um, motivation is a little suspect. This isn't like you.

JOSEPH

You know that hot chick at the movie theater?

PAUL

Dude, there's about a dozen of them.

JOSEPH

The blond one. Long straight blond hair.

PAUL

Yeah.

JOSEPH

I asked her out.

PAUL

(does the whistling crash and burn sound)

JOSEPH  
You have no idea.

PAUL  
What'd she say?

JOSEPH  
You are not sufficiently  
attractive.

PAUL  
No shit?  
(laughs hard)  
I be that hurt like a bitch.

JOSEPH  
Not so much at the time, but it  
sorta festers.

PAUL  
She's right though.

JOSEPH  
Yeah. I know. Out of my league.

PAUL  
Nah. It's not about leagues. It's  
about the G.P.A.

JOSEPH  
What's that.

PAUL  
General Personal Attraction. It's  
like a report card.

JOSEPH  
So what, she's like an honor's  
student and I'm riding the  
aesthetic short bus?

PAUL  
Well, yeah, but only on the  
physical part. And you're not that  
bad off. You can't really rate her  
because she's mostly an unknown. We  
just have her looks to go on. But  
she's riding high. Body, "A." Face,  
"A." Grooming and hygiene, "A."  
Dress sense, "A." But she's  
obviously lacking a little in the  
social graces, so she's not  
perfect.

JOSEPH

So what about me? Special ed, or what?

PAUL

Not quite. Okay, I'm your friend, but I'm going to try to be honest. Body, "D-." You're fat, but you're not a butterball. You have potential. Face, "C+." You've got good features, but still too much fat. Makes your face too round. Grooming and hygiene, "B-." You're clean and you smell okay, but you don't go put a lot of effort into the details. Like you don't shave often enough. Dress sense, "D." You just don't make much effort.

JOSEPH

I have dress sense, it just doesn't make any sense to me to dress up. I feel like a hypocrite if I dress up.

PAUL

No excuses. You want to score the points, get the threads. Like it or not, it counts. Even on the short bus.

JOSEPH

Yeah.

PAUL

Hey, the good news is you score really well on personality. Intelligence, "A." Communication, "A." Humor, "A." Manners, "A+." Confidence, surprisingly, "A." Most of the time. Then there's the externalities. Employment: You're successfully self-employed. That's got to be some points. You're motivated. More points. You're capable, good with tools and such. More points. Take a few points off because you can be a little self-involved. Couple points off because sometimes you're just weird. Really, your only major obstacle is your weight. So go for it. Fix it.

JOSEPH  
Get myself on the honor roll?

PAUL  
It's not impossible. Not easy, but  
not impossible.

INT. GYM - A MONTH AND A DAY LATER

Joseph is again perched atop a stationary bicycle, but he pedals faster and sweats less.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - LATER

He enters and dials the phone.

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

She pick up on the second ring.

KATIE  
Hello?

JOSEPH  
(on phone)  
Hey, Kat. How's it going?

KATIE  
Not much going on. How about you?

JOSEPH  
I'm doing great. I've lost about  
twenty pounds.

KATIE  
That's great! Wish I could see how  
you look.

JOSEPH  
Today's a month and a day.

KATIE  
A month and a day, huh? I guess  
that means I owe you a hundred  
bucks.

JOSEPH  
Aww. How sweet. You remembered. Now  
I won't have to send the knuckle-  
breakers after you.

KATIE

Yeah. I remembered, but you're going to have to collect in person.

JOSEPH

Do I get to collect interest while you're holding my money?

KATIE

Nope.

JOSEPH

That's okay. I can be patient.

KATIE

Come on, Joseph. You're my best friend and I miss you.

JOSEPH

No way. I'm motivated now. I can't afford to lose momentum. But I miss you too.

He leans back into his bed and they continue to talk.

INT. GYMNASIUM - MONTHS LATER

Joseph is now jogging on a treadmill. He's lost about another fifty pounds. [-70] He's still overweight, but you could no longer call him fat.

A blond woman with a really nice ass gets on the treadmill in front of him and off to one side. We watch as he notices her from behind for a good long time.

LATER

Joseph is still going strong on the treadmill when the woman steps down from hers. As she dismounts, she turns so that he can see her face. This woman is JENNIFER REILLY. He recognizes her and loses a step in his surprise. He loses his stride and falls. With his surprised face hanging in mid air, we FLASH TO:

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD 17 YEARS AGO - DAY

This is a flashback. Joseph is about eight years old and he's already a fat kid.

He does laps around an athletic field in the fat kid fashion, running a while, walking a while.

A few moments into the flashback, a pair of cute blond girls come up behind him and slow down to pace him. The first is Jennifer as a girl. She's about thirteen. Her sidekick CHRISTINA is with her. They speak in a creepy, mock-sexual tone.

JENNIFER

Hey, Jody.

Joseph lowers his head a little and battens down the hatches. He doesn't change his pace.

CHRISTINA

Jooooodyyyyyy.

JENNIFER

I want you. I want your body.

He clamps his jaw shut and doesn't say a word.

CHRISTINA

Me too. I want you.

JENNIFER

Come on. We want you. I want to touch that fat, blubbery body.

He doesn't react and the girls get bored. They cackle viciously and run on ahead. Jennifer smacks his ass as she goes by and they laugh again.

Joseph bends down to pick up a big rock, and clenches it white-knuckled. He moves down the track a couple of hundred yards before winding up. Just as he rounds the grassy corner, he hurls the rock. It flies into the chain-link net of the softball backstop.

INT. BACK TO THE GYM - PRESENT TIME

Flash back to Joseph's face as it continues its plummet. It bounces hard off the deck of the treadmill, and the machine spits him unceremoniously to the ground. A RANDOM GUY comes up and smacks the stop button, then extends a hand to help Joseph rise.

RANDOM GUY

Hey, buddy, you okay?

JOSEPH

Yeah. I'm good. Just lost my stride.

He sits on the deck of the machine and cradles his freshly crunched knee.

RANDOM GUY

Yeah. No kidding. What happened.

JOSEPH

Nothing. Just saw somebody I used to know.

RANDOM GUY

Good times?

JOSEPH

Not even a little bit.

RANDOM GUY

Oh, man. That's rough. Which one is she?

JOSEPH

Over there. At the desk.

He points to her, she stands at the juice bar ordering something.

RANDOM GUY

Oh, yeah. I've seen her around a few times. Always got that tight-assed look on her face. Like she smells something bad. 'Course it is a gym. Hey, you sure you're okay.

JOSEPH

Yeah.

The guy stands and offers a hand to Joseph, who takes it and stands carefully. He tests out his knee as he walks toward the locker room.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - LATER

He's playing a networked game with Paul.

JOSEPH

Hey. Guess who I saw at the gym today.

PAUL

Who?

JOSEPH

Jennifer Reilly.

PAUL

From high school.

JOSEPH

And grade school.

PAUL

Oh, man. Is she still a bitch?

JOSEPH

Probably, but I don't know. All I saw was her ass for a half an hour. Then when she turned around I saw her face and I fell off the treadmill.

PAUL

Which was the better view?

JOSEPH

Well her ass looked a lot more friendly. Did I ever tell you what she did to me in third grade?

INT. GYMNASIUM - THREE MONTHS LATER

Joseph has lost another thirty pounds [-100] and is back at the free weights. He does dumbbell butterflies and as he lays flat on the bench we can see the dramatic level of his weight loss.

He is down to about two hundred pounds and at just about six feet tall with a muscular frame, that makes him now only twenty to thirty pounds overweight.

At some point in his workout, he covertly notices Jennifer checking him out.

He heads for the locker room. We watch the clock above the door speed up and a little over a half hour goes by.

He comes through the door looking good. He's freshly shaved, clean as a whistle, and he's styled his hair to be carefully carefree.

He's dressed very well. Nice shoes, jeans and an expensive shirt. He has ditched his standard coat in favor of a a more formal wool coat something along the lines of a peacoat that hangs very well.

He scans the room and sees Jennifer. She's at the juice bar. Joseph times his stride carefully, walking right behind her, just as she turns around. She runs right into him, spilling her juice all over the place.

JENNIFER

Oh, fuck! Shit. Sorry about that.  
Did I get any on you?

She didn't. The lid popped off just enough to spill the juice all over her hand and drip a little on her right shoe.

As they speak, he cleans up her mess while being extremely charming.

JOSEPH

Nope. Don't think so. Let me get  
you some napkins though.

He sets his bag beneath the counter and grabs a few napkins as she sets her drink on the counter.

JOSEPH

Here.

He takes her hand in his and wipes the juice off her. With that done, he wipes up the juice that spilled on her foot and the floor. She gets some water to rinse her wrist.

Joseph glances at her membership badge and speaks.

JOSEPH

So, Jennifer, I've noticed you  
around here for a while. Would you  
care to go to dinner with me some  
time?

Still flustered, she answers hastily.

JENNIFER

Um, yeah, sure, okay.

JOSEPH

Great. When's good for you?

JENNIFER

Oh, crap, I don't know. Um. . .

She's still gathering up her bag and she is distracted. Joseph gently takes charge.

JOSEPH

Okay. Let me make it easy. Are you busy tomorrow night?

She takes a big breath and sighs it out, smiling.

JENNIFER

Tomorrow would be great. Thanks.

Joseph produces a pen and writes his name and number on the cup. He gives her his best eye-sparkling smile.

JOSEPH

Here. In case you change your mind. Meet you here about seven thirty?

She returns the smile.

JENNIFER

Thanks. Seven thirty would be great. It's nice to meet you,  
(checks cup)  
Joseph.

She offers her hand and Joseph grasps it firmly but gently. Rather than shaking, he just holds it for a moment.

JOSEPH

Likewise, Jennifer. Tomorrow then.

He escorts her to the door and holds it open for her. She goes one way, to the parking lot and he turns the other way, walking home. When she turns around he's already waving. She waves back and smiles to herself.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - LATER

On the phone with Katie. As they chat, he leafs through old yearbooks reacquainting himself with his prey.

KATIE

You really did that?

JOSEPH

Yup. We're all set for tomorrow night. I'm not sure where I'll take her. I think I'll give her a choice between Ginnie's, That Place on the Corner, and City Cafe.

KATIE

So what's the point?

JOSEPH

Revenge, baby. Sweet, sweet revenge.

KATIE

I think that's a terrible thing to do.

JOSEPH

That's the idea. If it wasn't terrible, it wouldn't be revenge. That bitch scarred me for life. You bet it's going to be terrible.

KATIE

Couldn't have been that bad if you never told me about it before.

JOSEPH

Repressed memory. It hit me like a freight train when I saw her face.

KATIE

So what's the plan?

JOSEPH

Charm her, date her, pump her, and dump her. As hard as I can.

KATIE

You don't even know her anymore. What if she's changed.

JOSEPH

Everybody changes.

KATIE

You sure have. It's not even a year yet and you're barely even the same person. You never would have done something like this before the stupid bet.

JOSEPH

You're right about one thing. I'm a different person. You wouldn't even recognize me. I've lost just over a hundred pounds. I'm looking pretty damned good.

KATIE  
 Congratulations. Too bad you're  
 using your powers for evil.

JOSEPH  
 It's not evil. It's- It's- not  
 evil.

KATIE  
 Yeah, whatever. Look, I need to go.  
 Talk to you soon.

JOSEPH  
 You'll be seeing me soon too.  
 Couple more months, tops.

KATIE  
 (coldly)  
 I can't wait.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

It's the next day and Joseph is writing. The phone rings.

JOSEPH  
 Felicitations.

JENNIFER  
 (tentative)  
 Joseph?

JOSEPH  
 Jennifer! Hey. What's up. Don't  
 tell me you're cancelling on me.

JENNIFER  
 No, I just wanted to know what I  
 should wear. What kind of place are  
 we going?

JOSEPH  
 I'm thinking semi-fancy. You want  
 some choices?

JENNIFER  
 No, that's all I needed to hear.  
 I'll let you choose.

JOSEPH  
 Fair enough. So I'll see you at  
 seven thirty, yeah?

JENNIFER

Yeah. I'm, uh, I'm looking forward to it.

JOSEPH

Me too. See you then.

JENNIFER

Um, see you.

Joseph hangs up first.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She stands in front of an ornate, full-length mirror. She's in her underwear with various dresses hung and laid out all around her.

She examines her body in the mirror, first turning sideways to look at her butt. Then she faces the mirror and lifts her breasts, willing them to be as perky as possible. She sucks in her belly and lets go with a sigh.

She turns her attention to her face, concentrating especially on the frown line between her eyebrows. She closes her eyes and takes in a deep breath, willing herself to be calm.

She's gorgeous. Her face is beautiful, despite the tense expression she usually wears. Her body is trim and firm, and her hair is a radiant, natural blonde, styled elegantly.

She turns to her array of clothes and chooses a simple black dress. She hangs the dress in a garment bag and continues assembling her outfit.

INT. THE GYM - LATER

Joseph struggles up the climbing wall, firmly attached to an auto-belay system.

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Jennifer runs frantically on the treadmill. That frown line she was so worried about is at full clench.

INT. THE GYM - 6:00

She slows the treadmill to a stop and heads into the locker room.

Peering over the top of the climbing wall, Joseph watches her go. After a moment, he begins his descent.

INT. THE GYM - 6:45

Joseph walks into the men's locker room.

INT. THE GYM - 7:20

Jennifer emerges from the women's locker room dressed to kill. She's in black heels and stockings, the little black dress from before which looks terrific on her, and a flimsy black wrap.

The dress drops to mid thigh, and makes good use of a "V" shaped neckline to show the perfect amount of cleavage. The straps are just a little more than spaghetti straps.

She still carries her bags and practically races to the door, where we see she's still wearing tennis shoes. She disappears on her way to the parking lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

She remotely pops the trunk, throws in her bag and quickly changes shoes.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We join Joseph as he finishes his own preparations. He's combing his hair. He's also dressed up. Nice shoes and pants. A button up shirt and tie with a nice jacket hanging behind him.

When he's satisfied, he shrugs on the jacket on his way out the exit. He finds Jennifer waiting sans bag and now shod with more appropriate footwear. It's exactly 7:30.

JOSEPH

Wow. You look fantastic.

JENNIFER

Thanks. You're looking pretty good yourself.

JOSEPH

Shall we?

They exit, Joseph holds the door and guides her with a hand on the small of her back.

INT. EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - LATER

Joseph and Jennifer sit at a table for two, as the WAITER leaves, his order pad in hand. She holds herself very carefully, and tries just a little too hard to make a good impression. He is completely at ease and works hard to put her in the same condition.

JOSEPH

So I don't know anything about you. What do you do for a living, where are you from, all that first date stuff.

JENNIFER

Well, um, I'm a paralegal right now. I'm working through law school. Born and raised in California. Grew up on the central coast and moved here after college. How about you?

JOSEPH

Also a native Californian. I make commercials.

JENNIFER

That must be fun. Have you written any that I've seen?

JOSEPH

You know the Norelco commercial where they guys are talking about their trimmer settings.

JENNIFER

But it sounds like they're talking about their dicks?

She pauses, a little embarrassed by her forwardness. She continues a little subdued.

JENNIFER

I love that one. I laughed 'til I had tears in my eyes the first time I saw that. "My girlfriend says three is perfect!"

JOSEPH

Yeah. I like that one.

JENNIFER

So how does that work? I mean how do you get involved in that?

JOSEPH

Actually, I'm really lucky. I started out at an ad agency, but I had a few really successful commercials, and I got the chance to start directing a few, now I'm kind of a one man show. I write them, direct them, and sometimes I do my own voice overs. It's a pretty sweet deal.

JENNIFER

So, everybody thinks they have a great idea for a commercial. Is it as easy as people think?

JOSEPH

Well, sometimes. I mean for a really good, distinctive product, it's pretty easy, but you earn your pay when you can come up with a good ad for breakfast cereal.

JENNIFER

Because it's been done a million times, right?

JOSEPH

That, and to be honest, it's not a really fascinating product. It's cereal, and either it tastes good, or it doesn't, and either it's healthy, or it's not. There's really not a lot of excitement there.

JENNIFER

What are you working on now?

JOSEPH

I've got this one thing. It's for Lubriderm. They want to appeal more to men.

She can't help but crack a huge smile.

JOSEPH

Right. So there's the obvious, but you can't really make a commercial out of that.

JENNIFER

So what do you do?

JOSEPH

Well, I've got all these short clips of guys doing really tough work, chopping wood, and welding and turning bolts and all that stuff you do with your hands. And then there's a couple of different shots of these craggy, powerful hands putting on the lotion. Then lastly, there are these same guys all cleaned up, picking up their babies and stroking their wives' hair and caressing their girlfriends' cheeks, and stuff.

JENNIFER

Okay.

JOSEPH

And over the top of these images, there's a voice over. "If you spend all day doing this, you might want to do this, before you do this."

JENNIFER

Oh. I like that. When will I get to see it?

JOSEPH

Actually I've got a rough cut on my laptop. I can show you when we get back to the car, if you like.

JENNIFER

Yeah. That would be neat. So no joke about the other way guys use lotion?

JOSEPH

Actually, yeah. There's these two shots I think I'm going to cut. One is of a guy raising a flag on an army base, and the other is of a couple of firemen wrangling a two inch hose.

JENNIFER  
(laughing)  
Only two inches?

JOSEPH  
Two inches across.

JENNIFER  
Oh, my.

She blushes, and just as she gets it under control, their meals arrive. The waiter serves and leaves.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

They finish a shared desert.

JOSEPH  
So, Jennifer. I'm having a really good time, and I'd love to take you out to a movie, if you can stay out late.

JENNIFER  
That sounds great. So, I've got to ask. Don't you have to, you know, try out a product before you make a commercial for it?

JOSEPH  
Thoroughly.

They share a laugh. He extends his hands across the table.

JOSEPH  
See?

She takes his hand in hers and caresses it.

JENNIFER  
Like silk.

Joseph takes the last bite of dessert on his fork and holds it out for her.

JENNIFER  
Thank you.

She takes the last bite and Joseph rises to pull her chair out for her. They exit.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - AFTER THE MOVIE

They exit arm in arm, laughing.

JOSEPH  
That was a blast.

JENNIFER  
What a sweet movie. I had a great  
time. Thanks again.

JOSEPH  
Truly, my pleasure.

INT. JOSEPH'S CAR - LATER

They are just pulling in to the parking structure. Joseph can see that Jennifer is nervous again.

JOSEPH  
Little nervous?

JENNIFER  
Yeah.

JOSEPH  
So here's what's going to happen.  
I'm going to open your door for  
you, walk you to your car, and kiss  
you good night. Then I'll watch you  
drive away, go home and think about  
you until long after I should be  
asleep. Ready?

She smiles at him.

JENNIFER  
Ready.

He opens the door for her, helps her out of the car and walks her the single parking space width to her car.

He draws near to her, putting his arms around her waist and leans in to kiss her. He starts with a soft, gentle peck on the lips.

She kisses him back, pulling him a little more tightly to her.

He kisses her hard and passionately, capping it off by grabbing her ass in both hands and picking her right up off the ground.

She squeals with surprise and pleasure at the last. Finally they part.

JENNIFER

That was nice.

JOSEPH

Yeah. Now I'll make good on my promise and let you go home.

He slackens his grasp on her, but she returns the butt-grabbing favor and pulls close to him again.

JENNIFER

Oh, come on. Not yet?

She brings her face close to his for one last kiss. It's lingering and passionate, and they fit nicely together. She melts into him just a bit, and he yields to her approach.

He breaks off first.

JOSEPH

Okay. Now I have to send you home if I want to get any sleep at all. I'll call you tomorrow though.

JENNIFER

Okay. I'll be thinking about you.

JOSEPH

I hope so.

She fumbles for her keys, sliding the car key pointedly and suggestively into the lock. Shee looks into his eyes as she twists the key, disarming the car's defenses. He smiles at her.

JOSEPH

Very smooth.

JENNIFER

Thank you.

JOSEPH

Nice metaphor.

JENNIFER

Why, whatever could you possibly mean?

She kisses him passingly on the lips again and slides into the car.

JENNIFER

Good night.

JOSEPH

'Night. And I'll talk to you tomorrow.

He closes her door and watches until she's out of sight. By the time her tail lights are indistinguishable from the sea of red dots, the expression on his face has become positively disturbing. It's satiated and predatory. Like an anaconda that's just swallowed a baby.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM - LATER

She enters with a smile on her face, kicks off her shoes, steps in front of the mirror and slides out of her dress. She briefly examines herself, finding much more satisfaction than the last time.

She retrieves her pajamas, and we circle tight around her face as she slips out of her undergarments and into her comfortable pj's. When we draw wider, she puts her clothes into a hamper and lies flat on her bed. She is motionless for a few moments, staring into space with her hands laced together on her belly.

She wiggles her way under the covers. She closes her eyes and slides one hand through her hair and the other one further south under the covers. A lazy, sensuous grin blooms onto her face.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He stands in front of his own mirror. He still wears his undershirt and everything from he waist down. He examines himself in minute detail.

He flexes his arms into the mirror and approves. They are bulky and cut. He removes the wife-beater undershirt and examines his chest. Pecs look good, but he still has a bit of a belly.

He sinks a finger into his soft belly and grunts. He strips down to his boxers, sits on the floor and plows his way through a series of sit-ups with his feet hooked under his bed. When we finally fade away, he's still hard at it.

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

She's at her iMac, surfing the net, when she comes across a banner ad for "Classmates.com". She's about to click out of the page when she stops. Her cursor moves over to the banner and clicks.

LATER

Jennifer McMahon, 1994 graduate of Regent City High School. Reading through the comments, Katie gets an unremarkable life story.

The profile says she was engaged for a while, but broke up a couple of months ago, then goes on to discuss the importance of trust.

Katie prints out the page just as the phone rings.

JOSEPH

(o.c.)

Hey. What's up?

KATIE

Look, Joseph, either get your ass over here right now, or don't call back. You're becoming a real asshole. You're messing with this poor girl on a really serious level, and I don't want to hear any more bullshit about how she deserves it. You've got to knock this shit off. I've got something you need to see. Be here in an hour, or don't call me again.

JOSEPH

Jesus! What got into you. . .

He is interrupted by the click as she hangs up on him.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - LATER

He's playing video games with Paul.

PAUL

Sounds like she's really pissed at you.

JOSEPH

Yeah. What does she care. She knows what a bitch Jennifer is.

PAUL

Yeah. Still, she's kinda right. This is mean. You should probably just break it off.

JOSEPH

No way. She deserves it and I'm having fun with it.

PAUL

If Katie is important to you, you should really do what she says. It sounds like this is a make or break thing with her.

JOSEPH

Yeah. Well, she'll come around.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - MORNING

He comes downstairs, hair still wet from his shower, and wakes up his computer. The Mail icon in his dock says he has one message waiting.

He opens it up and finds an e-mail from Katie. He opens it, and the only text in the message is a link to Jennifer's page at Classmates.com.

He peruses the information, flips back to Mail, and replies to Katie's message. He simply types, "Thanks." After a moment, he signs it, "Love, Joseph."

INT. GYMNASIUM - LATER

Joseph jogs almost lazily on the treadmill, a slight, predatory grin on his face. He contemplates a nice feminine ass on the treadmill in front of him, as the wheels grind around in his mind.

LATER

He's still on the treadmill. The ass has moved on, so his attention is focused out the window, where he sees Jennifer glance in. She smiles and waves. He returns both with full charm.

A moment later, she's standing in front of the treadmill, smiling as she watches him run.

JENNIFER

Hey there, champ. Looking pretty good.

JOSEPH

Yeah, well, there's this hot blond chick I've been seeing around here. I'm hoping she'll notice me.

JENNIFER

Wow. Really? Which one? Point her out.

As she says this, she steps up onto the front of the treadmill, dropping her bag and grasping the handles.

Joseph grabs the handles so that he can lift his feet slightly off the ground, then without moving his hands, he moves his body forward, so that he can whisper in her ear.

JOSEPH

Okay, look to your right.

Smiling, she does, and for just a second, her smile falters as she does indeed see a really hot blond woman off to her right. The smile returns in full, however, when Joseph nips her earlobe and kisses her neck.

We can see his feet dangling off the ground. The delicate way he's balancing as he holds his body aloft demonstrates a gymnast's condensed strength.

JENNIFER

It's good to see you.

JOSEPH

You too. I was going to call, but I don't know what time you get up on weekends.

JENNIFER

Usually pretty early, but I slept late today. For some reason, I felt too cozy to get up. But I did leave a message on your machine. I wanted to say thank you for last night. I had a great time.

JOSEPH

I'm glad. I did too. So when can we go out again?

INT. GYM - BASKETBALL COURT - LATER

Playing half court one-on-one. Joseph has the ball at the top of the key.

JOSEPH

Okay. So there is a reason you're kicking my ass, right? You played in college, or high school, or something?

JENNIFER

Both, actually. Starting forward.

JOSEPH

And you couldn't have warned me about this before?

JENNIFER

Now what fun would that have been?

JOSEPH

So you're looking for some fun, sweet thing?

JENNIFER

That's right.

JOSEPH

How's this?

He takes a huge fading jump shot and swishes for three.

JENNIFER

Pretty good. Pretty good, but you're still down by six. But we might as well call it eight.

JOSEPH

Oh yeah?

JENNIFER

Uh-huh. 'Cause check this out.

She takes the ball out and comes back in dribbling backwards fast up the right side of the key. Joseph just has time to get out of the way and realign himself before she's rounded the top of the key and comes in for a powerful layup.

As she rounds the key, she switches the ball to her left hand and sinks the layup.

JOSEPH

Whooo. That was very nice. And I do believe that makes twenty one points plus one. Excellent game.

JENNIFER

You too. And I can't believe you're not even going to bring up the fact that you started the game tired.

JOSEPH

Nah. Sore loser crap like that pisses me off. 'Sides, I could have come fresh from a nap with six cups of coffee, and two lines of coke, and you still would have whooped my ass. Wanna go again?

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

She opens the e-mail message from Joseph.

KATIE

Oh, shit! Oh, man.

She raises her hands from the keyboard and drops her forehead into her cupped palms.

EXT. LARGE CITY PARK - AFTERNOON

Joseph and Jennifer walk along the edge of a pond. Each has an ice cream cone. As he finishes his ice cream, Joseph breaks off pieces of the cone to feed to the ducks. There is a lull in conversation.

JENNIFER

Okay. So one time in college I came in third in a wet t-shirt contest.

JOSEPH

I didn't know they actually awarded places in those. Did you get a prize?

JENNIFER

Yup. I got a ribbon. And two hundred dollars.

JOSEPH

So what was the occasion?

JENNIFER

No occasion, really. My boyfriend wanted me to do it, so I did.

JOSEPH

Did he enjoy the show?

JENNIFER

Not like he thought he would. He got all jealous, then he got mad at me. We broke up the next day, I think.

JOSEPH

But you kept the ribbon, right?

JENNIFER

Hell yeah, I did.

JOSEPH

Good for you. It's good to be proud of your accomplishments.

JENNIFER

(laughs)

Yeah. Even your most dubious ones. What about you, any dubious accomplishments?

JOSEPH

Well, yeah, I guess. In the last year I've lost a little over a hundred pounds.

JENNIFER

Wow. Really? That's great. I don't think that's a dubious achievement at all.

JOSEPH

Yeah, but before you can lose a hundred pounds, you have to find them, know what I mean?

JENNIFER

I guess, but you should really be proud of yourself.

She hugs him hard, then plants a delicate kiss on him.

JENNIFER

I am.

JOSEPH

Thanks.

EXT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - LATER

They stand at the door, arms about each other's waists. He kisses her.

JENNIFER

So, um, do you want to come up?

JOSEPH

I want to, but I can't. Jennifer, I really like you, but I have to take this slow. I have the worst luck when I let a relationship go too fast.

JENNIFER

I understand. I guess. But you'd better be worth waiting for.

JOSEPH

(kisses her)

Anticipation is good for you. I'll call you tomorrow.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - MORNING

He finishes a set of push-ups and examines himself in a mirror. He's muscle from head to toe now, almost too thin. His cheeks and eyes look a little hollow. He doesn't see the changes in his face, but smiles at the changes in his body. He hardly looks like himself.

He goes to the phone, and dials Katie.

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The phone rings. She picks up the receiver and checks the caller ID. Seeing that it's Joseph, she lets it ring with an unpleasant sigh.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He speaks to the machine.

JOSEPH

Hey, Kat. I just wanted to see how you're doing. Haven't talked to you in a while. Gimme a call.

He hangs up.

JOSEPH

Or maybe I'll see you around.

EXT. BEAUTIFUL OCEAN VISTA - SUNSET

Joseph and Jennifer share a concrete bench. She sits in front, and he spoons with her as they watch the sun go down. They're dressed casually, but Joseph wears a huge green sweatshirt from before he embarked upon his diet. She wears a pretty cabled sweater, and her hair is up in a pony tail.

Just as the sun touches the water, she snuggles into him.

JENNIFER

Mmm. Keep me warm.

JOSEPH

Just stay close.

They watch in silence. As soon as the sun is down, the other scattered couples depart. When they have the area to themselves:

JENNIFER

Getting chilly here.

JOSEPH

Lean forward a sec.

She does and he pulls the whole front of his sweatshirt up and over her, wrapping it, and his arms around her. She scoots even closer.

JOSEPH

Better?

JENNIFER

Much, thank you. I think this is my favorite sweatshirt now too.

JOSEPH

It will be.

JENNIFER

Oh?

He pulls his arms inside the cavern of the shirt and begins to wiggle. Soon, he pulls her thick sweater out the top of the sweatshirt and drops it onto the bench in front of her.

JENNIFER

Joseph!

Her t-shirt follows suit. Last comes her bra, which he lays on top of the pile.

JENNIFER

Hey!

Grinning, he reaches out one last time and tucks the bra into the sweater. Lastly he removes his own shirt.

JOSEPH

Better now?

JENNIFER

Much, much better. You're so warm.

Underneath the sweatshirt, the outline of his arms can be seen wrapped around her holding her snug.

He nuzzles the back of her neck, steering her head as he desires, kissing, and occasionally lightly biting her neck, ears, and the hollow of her jaw.

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Katie dials Paul's number.

KATIE

What the hell is wrong with Joseph?

PAUL

Katie?

KATIE

He's getting really creepy. You know about the whole bet thing, right?

PAUL

Yeah. It's weird, but it's not that creepy.

KATIE

No. It's this chick he saw at his gym. It's this girl who was really mean to him when he was a kid, and now that he's supposedly all buff and hot and stuff, he's trying to get revenge. He's trying to build this huge relationship, and get her really attached to him so he can dump her flat, just to hurt her.

PAUL

Yeah, but she was just as mean to him.

KATIE

The only thing he told me was about this thing when he was in the third grade. . .

PAUL

I was there that day. And other days. It's not like it just happened once. They did it all the time. And they weren't the only ones.

KATIE

Hey, can I come over?

EXT. OCEAN VISTA - CONTINUOUS

Joseph's hands cover Jennifer's breasts under the sweatshirt. Her reactions are intense.

JENNIFER

(breathing heavily)  
Kiss me.

He leans in to her ear and whispers deviously.

JOSEPH

Not - just - yet.

She lets out a groan of mixed frustration and passion.

He moves his lips to her other ear he nips at it, and continues his thick whisper.

JOSEPH  
You're getting close.

JENNIFER  
Yes!

JOSEPH  
(switches ears)  
Not just yet.

JENNIFER  
Yes, damn it, yes!

JOSEPH  
(switches ears)  
Nope. Not yet.

JENNIFER  
Ooh, you are a wicked man.

JOSEPH  
Yes I am.

As he says this, he moves his hands. His right drops, becoming visible as it seizes her crotch through her pants. His left moves across and below her breasts, squeezing her toward him. The combined grip lifts her completely off the bench as she orgasms intensely.

He stands up, lifting her off her feet as her orgasm continues.

EXT. TOP OF PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

They sit on the ledge and talk.

KATIE  
So what do you think? About Joseph?

PAUL  
I don't know. I mean, you're right. He shouldn't be doing this. But is it really that important to you?

KATIE  
What do I do about the girl, Jennifer?

PAUL

If you're really worried about her,  
send her an e-mail.

KATIE

You don't think Joseph will freak  
out?

PAUL

Oh hell yeah, he'll freak out. But  
what's more important? You have to  
choose.

KATIE

I don't know.

EXT. OCEAN VISTA - CONTINUOUS

Jennifer stands on her own feet, but she still leans on  
Joseph.

JENNIFER

Oh my God. I'm still shaking. You  
are amazing.

JOSEPH

Yeah, pretty much.

She turns around, facing him inside the giant sweatshirt.

JENNIFER

You do this kind of thing a lot,  
then?

JOSEPH

Only when I have someone special to  
do it with.

She wraps her arms around his neck, and her legs around his  
waist, levering herself up to growl teasingly down at him.

JENNIFER

Special, am I?

JOSEPH

Well, not short-bus special, but  
you're beautiful, and intelligent,  
and completely remarkable.

Placing his hands under her butt, he sits again upon the  
bench.

JENNIFER

Seriously, I've never felt anything like that before. How do you do that?

JOSEPH

It's about listening. Kind of listening with your whole body. And it's also about conveying a message.

She begins to slowly dry-hump him.

JENNIFER

Still listening? What message am I conveying now?

He closes his eyes.

JOSEPH

Mmmmm. I really want to. So much. But I can't. Not yet.

JENNIFER

But you just. . .

JOSEPH

No, that was just for you. I'm not ready.

JENNIFER

What's the matter?

JOSEPH

I'm not even sure. I just have a hard time trusting people, and I have really strong feelings for you, but I'm still pretty gunshy.

She pulls as close as she can, wrapping her whole self around him, protecting him.

JENNIFER

It's okay. I can wait as long as you need.

JOSEPH

So long as I keep you happy like that, huh?

JENNIFER

Who's going to say no to that. You okay?

JOSEPH  
(kissing her)  
Yeah. I'm good. You ready to go?

JENNIFER  
I guess. Is anybody around?

JOSEPH  
I don't see anybody.

JENNIFER  
Okay.

She ducks out of the sweatshirt and grabs her tee shirt. She raises it, but before she can lower it, he grabs her by the nipples and pulls her toward him gently but irresistibly.

They kiss.

JENNIFER  
Come on, let me go! I'm freezing.

She steps away, pulling her shirt on hastily.

JENNIFER  
Oh, man, that's just mean. My nipples are freezing.

He grabs her sweater as he steps toward her.

JOSEPH  
Makes it that much more fun when I warm them up again.

JENNIFER  
Yeah, well, you'd better get busy then, before they turns black from the frostbite.

JOSEPH  
That's nasty. If you were any less fine, that would have totally killed the mood.

They embrace and kiss again. She opens her eyes and sees her bra, still lying on the bench.

JENNIFER  
Oh, man! My bra.

He lets her go. She quickly grabs the bra, and contemplates putting it on for just a moment. Instead, she stuffs it into the pouch of his sweatshirt.

She takes his hand and they walk toward his car.

JENNIFER

The heater in that car better be top notch or my nipples are going on strike.

EXT. TOP OF PAUL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

They sit together, Paul's arms around Katie.

PAUL

So let's go out some time.

KATIE

Is that the best you can do?

PAUL

Huh? Oh, no. Sorry. Just practicing out loud.

Silence for a moment.

PAUL

Katie?

KATIE

Yes?

PAUL

I've been thinking now, for the past several minutes, about how much I've enjoyed talking with you. Just enjoyed your presence really. I know we've known each other for a long time, but I guess it's just this recent chance to be alone with you which has given me insight into how extraordinary you really are. I don't know when you might be free, but would you do me the honor of allowing me to take you out on the town some night soon.

KATIE

That's much better.

PAUL

Really? I didn't lay it on too thick?

KATIE  
Picture perfect.

PAUL  
Excellent, because I was afraid I  
went a little over the top. So, is  
that a yes?

KATIE  
That's a yes.

PAUL  
Sweet.

INT. GYMNASIUM - MORNING

Joseph and Jennifer both cling to the climbing wall. She's  
much higher than he, because he's climbing using only his  
arms. He holds his knees slightly bent, keeping his feet away  
from the "rockface."

JENNIFER  
You're gonna get beat by a girl  
again.

JOSEPH  
Looks like it. Should I start using  
my feet?

JENNIFER  
No. That's okay. I like to gloat.

JOSEPH  
(stifles a laugh)  
Hey. Don't make me laugh. This is  
hard enough.

JENNIFER  
(just as she reaches the  
top)  
Wuss, wuss, wuss, wuss, wuss, wuss,  
wuss.

Joseph makes a crazy dash to the top and hangs over the side  
panting. This "wuss" exchanges is a joke between them.  
Borrowed from Kevin Kline in Fierce Creatures.

JOSEPH  
(character voice)  
I am not a wuss! Come on. I'll race  
you back down.

INT. CLUB - LATER

Joseph is alone, prowling the club. He looks very sharp. He has his eye on a pair of very attractive young ladies sitting together at a small table. One is blonde, the other a fiery red-head. He watches while a waiter delivers a trio of drinks he's sent over.

The ladies smile and wave. Taking the invitation, he drains his drink and moves to join them, picking up his fresh drink from their table.

JOSEPH

Hello, ladies. How do we find ourselves this evening?

RED

Very well, thank you.

BLONDE

Doing very well. Yourself?

JOSEPH

I'm in great spirits tonight, as it turns out.

They toast.

JOSEPH

I'm going to apologize up front for my boldness, but the two of you seem to represent a rare opportunity, so I'm going to speak my mind.

RED

What opportunity is that.

JOSEPH

Well, a profound fondness for redheads. But the thing is, I'm also irresistibly drawn to blondes. Truth to tell, I'm hoping the two of you might allow me to conduct a side by side taste test of sorts.

BLONDE

I've always been impressed by bluntness.

RED

As have I.

JOSEPH

The mere fact that I'm not yet  
drenched in Manhattans is  
encouraging.

RED

I'm game.

BLONDE

Let's do him.

Another toast.

INT. BLONDE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Joseph is in bed, a beautiful woman in each arm.

RED

So what get's your vote? Red or  
blonde?

JOSEPH

Too close to call. I think we may  
have to go for a second round.

BLONDE

Should we blindfold you this time?

RED

Keep the test unbiased?

JOSEPH

Couldn't hurt.

INT. BLONDE'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING

Joseph wakes up, the ladies again in his arms.

JOSEPH

Oh, shit. Hey. Girls. Wake up. Come  
on. Wake up, I can't feel my arms.

He shakes them until they wake up, sits up and tries to shake  
some life into his arms.

RED

Oh, man. Your arms fall asleep?

JOSEPH

Fell into a coma is more like it.  
Help me out.

They massage his arms for him until they're all better.

BLONDE  
All better now?

JOSEPH  
Much. And my arms aren't the only  
parts waking up.

INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He's still ruffled from his evening out, doing pushups on the floor. The phone rings, he screens the call. As he listens, his upper lip curls in a snarl. Could be from the effort, or from his intentions, we don't know.

JENNIFER  
Joseph, it's Jennifer. You want to  
go out to lunch?  
(beat)  
Okay. I guess you're gone. Give me  
a call if you get this before noon.

He finishes his set, swings his head around to crack his neck, and almost literally puts on his Mr. Charming face.

JOSEPH  
Hey. Jen. I just got in. I'd love  
to grab some lunch with you. Let me  
hop in the shower, then I'll meet  
you at Aladdin's at, say noon and a  
half?

JENNIFER  
Yum. Sounds great. I'll see you  
then.

INT. ALADDIN'S RESTAURANT - LATER

Joseph is freshly pressed, and reaching for a piece of pita for his hummus. Jennifer is in the middle of the work day and looks it.

JENNIFER  
So what