

Swingles
by
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INT. KARAOKE BAR, CHINATOWN - NIGHT

A dumpy karaoke bar in Boston's Chinatown.

A guy with a six o'clock shadow and friendly smile who looks a little old for the vintage Sonic Youth T-shirt and wallet chain-look, VAL DANKO (29) is singing his heart out to--and totally butchering--Grease's "You're The One That I Want."

Twirling the mic, Val's oblivious to how totally indifferent the socializing audience is to him.

VAL
*Cause the power you're supplying/ It's
electrifying!*

A second voice--angelic, mellifluous--comes in perfectly for the Olivia Newton-John part.

NATHAN
You better shape up/ Cause I need a man!

Everyone turns as a smaller, conservative guy in glasses, NATHAN (29) stands up from amidst the cocktail tables with his microphone. Singing, he makes his way to the stage.

Clearly, this is not their first time.

Val still hogs the limelight, but everyone's paying attention now. With Val's enthusiasm and Nathan's voice, the song kicks ass.

VAL/ NATHAN
*... You're the one that I want!/
Ew! Ew! Ew!*

As they finish to huge APPLAUSE, Val bows and swings the microphone over his head and Nathan stumbles to avoid getting clocked.

A hot BACHELORETTE PARTY in the front row whistles and claps. Blowing a kiss, Val beelines for them with Nathan in tow.

EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - LATER

A grinning Val and Nathan flag down a cab while TWO CUTE WOMEN from the Bachelorette Party wait by the bar door.

VAL
Meet, greet and on their feet in twenty minutes flat. They should give Olympic medals for this kind of thing.

NATHAN
We were good, weren't we.

A cab pulls up. Val waves over the Women and gives Nathan a little pat on the back.

VAL

Oh yeah, sure. Helps to have a warm body along.

INT. SPORTS BAR - NEXT NIGHT

500 TV's and all are tuned to the Red Sox. Val and Nathan sit with a couple PARTY GALS. Val has center stage.

VAL

.... So I get this tap on my shoulder. I turn around and this guy tells me to sit the fuck down.

NATHAN

Guy was huuuge. Like WWF huge. With prison ink.

VAL

And I'm like, hey bro I didn't just pay a 175 bucks a pop to sit on my ass for a Bruce Springsteen show!

NATHAN

Val bought the tickets for my birthday. Third row, floor. He gets the best tickets for everything.

VAL

The Boss is cranking a sic "Badlands"--

NATHAN

(soft background singing)
Wanna find one place/ wanna spit in the face of these baaaadlands

VAL

--but every eyeball in section A3 is glued on us as this dude lifts his shirt and shows me he's packing a blade.

NATHAN

More like a machete. I seriously think he was a serial killer.

VAL

So Jeffrey Dahmer reaches for his machete--and I've got no choice but to defend myself. With a hurricane kick-cum-dragon punch.

Val mimes the move on one surprised Party Gal.

NATHAN

Val's nationally ranked at Street Fighter III.

VAL

Mac the Knife folds over like a beach chair. Security ends up escorting him out. Our whole section buys us jumbo beers. And Bruce gives me the thumbs up.

NATHAN

Three months later that song "The Rising" came out.

(pointing at Val)

Who do you think the Boss wrote it for?

VAL

(shrugging)

Well, nobody can prove that.

PARTY GAL 1/ PARTY GAL 2

Very impressive/ Wicked cool.

Val nudges Nathan.

NATHAN

Who's ready for another round?

INT. THE TAM O' SHANTER - NEXT NIGHT

An Irish bar. A pretty, high-strung brunette dressed in a meticulously-matched grey pantsuit with pulled-back hair, DIANE KEELER (33) has an after-work drink with a more glamorous frosted blonde in casual business-wear, RACHEL DRISCOLL (32).

DIANE

He laughed at my swing. So then I won the next fifteen holes.

RACHEL

You don't beat a man on the first date. Especially not in Miniature Golf.

DIANE

It wasn't working anyway. The night ended with me helping him file for a new tax refund loan.

RACHEL

But he was so fun. And cute.

DIANE

The feeling was mutual. He brought you up six times.

RACHEL

Oh. Sorry.

DIANE

It's okay. I gave him your number and said you were a push-over for mojitoes and guys who let you fix their hair in public.

RACHEL

What?!

DIANE

Kidding. But I did give him your number. I never would have met him at that musuem if it hadn't of been for you anyway.

Diane spots Val's strutting their way.

DIANE

Oh no. I told you this bar looked seedy.

Val breezes over like he's known these women for years and zeroes in on Rachel.

VAL

Nobody told me the Gorgeous Convention was in town this week. You ladies know what goes great with your dirty martinis? Melon ball shots.

(to bartender)

Four melon balls shots, Tommy!

(back to ladies)

Hey, what's a sweeter name for a graphic design firm, Graphic Content or Design Cool. My buddy and I are starting our own company and--

Diane holds up her hand.

DIANE

Look--

VAL

Val. Like the initiative, you must be the pack's alpha.

(back to Rachel)

And you must be Rachel, right?

RACHEL

How--

Val shakes a dumbstruck Rachel's hand.

VAL

Saw the monogram on your salescase
and knew you were way too classy to
be some Rebecca or a Rhoda.

DIANE

Hey! My mother's name is Rho--

VAL

Oh how rude. I have a dear friend
too. His name's Nathan.

Val steps aside. Nathan stands behind him and shyly waves at
the table.

VAL

He may look harmless, but watch
your fingers. He--

DIANE

Move it along, Val. What you're
selling, we're not buying.

Val and Nathan exchange looks. Nathan's lip trembles.

NATHAN

Sorry, it's all my fault. I'm
ruining your game. I can't do this.

An emotional Nathan hurries off to the Men's Room. Val looks
at the Ladies with a Now-Look-What-You've-Done face.

VAL

Would it have killed you to have a
drink with us? My boy just got mega-
dumped by his high school sweetie.
Walked in on her servicing the Pest
Control Guy if you have to know the
gory details. All I wanted was to
show him a decent time.

Val sighs and walks off.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Wait!

Val spins around just as Nathan emerges from the bathroom to
join him. Rachel holds her shot up in the air to toast, but
Diane's buried her head in her hands.

RACHEL

One drink.

The guys smile and head back to the table.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Nathan waves down a cab, a tipsy Val holds the door open as Rachel and Diane climb in. Val grabs Nathan before he gets in.

VAL

Refresher course. Diedre's the high-maintenance bru and Reba's the blonde that's into me.

Nathan sighs like this is all too common.

NATHAN

Diane's the brunette. Rachel's the blonde. And I thought she seemed kinda into me?

VAL

Whoa. Who stole my wingman and left me this cockblocker? Don't mess with a winning formula. Let's roll.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

The foursome are piled into the back of a cab.

VAL

To the Bamboo Room, good sir! 1403 Burton street.

DIANE

It was already last call.
(leaning up)
Can you drop us at Charles and Beacon stre--

VAL

Easy there, Diane. We've got plenty of time. Bamboo Room's open until, what--three?

NATHAN

Five. New management.

DIANE

Impossible. How have I never heard of it?

VAL
It's a pretty exclusive club, but
my boy Nathan will get you in.

Val cozies up to a disinterested Rachel.

VAL
Don't tell them you're half angel.

EXT. APARTMENT (AKA THE BAMBOO ROOM) - NIGHT

A door bangs open as the foursome emerge into the most
tricked-out bachelor pad not on a college campus.

Strung-up Asian lanterns, Xmas lights and Polynesian island
music blast on with the flick of a switch. A neon sign
reading Bamboo Room buzzes to life. There's a Tiki Bar in the
corner.

VAL
Not too crowded. I see some seats
at the bar.

The women exchange looks.

DIANE
I don't know whether to laugh or
run for my life.

Rachel gives Diane a can-we-stay look.

DIANE
One drink. But that's it.

With a lei around his neck, Val's already behind the bar.

VAL
One drink coming up.

Val places one gigantic Buddha-head bowl in front of them and
begins filling it with booze as Nathan lights it on fire.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Rachel flirts with Nathan in the doorway to his bedroom.

NATHAN
...The plus side is I can eat my
lunch on the roof or sneak out to
the park until someone needs a
Computer Tech Guy and beeps me. The
downside is I'm... the Computer
Tech Guy.

RACHEL

Don't sell yourself short. I bet the ladies are always beeping you to come bend over their computers. I wish we had one of you at my office.

Val sits slumped at the Tiki Bar with an uptight Diane-- neither look happy about this situation.

DIANE

So... When you're not reliving your mid-twenties, what exactly do you do?

VAL

Graphic designer. Sure you don't want a little spike in that decaf?

DIANE

No. Where?

Val glances over Diane's shoulder to check on Rachel and Nathan.

VAL

It's called Quality Manuals Inc. We--

DIANE

Make direction manuals primarily for assemble-at-home products. My law firm does your taxes. Who did you vote for last election?

VAL

Taylor Hicks all the way. That voice gives my goosebumps goosebumps.

DIANE

Is this the part where I'm suppose to giggle uncontrollably?

VAL

I get it now. Good cop, bad cop. When you two go out tomorrow night, will you play the cute one in the naughty blouse and she'll be the scary shrew in sensible shoes?

DIANE

Ten hours a day I scrutinize tax returns and lock horns with the IRS, but five minutes with you just gave me the week's first migraine.

Val swivels away.

VAL
Who needs a refill? Plenty more
party punch over here!

Rachel and Nathan are too busy chatting to even look over.
Rachel shuts the bedroom door behind them.

Val sighs and drains his drink.

VAL
At least it's only Thursday. You
wanna split a pizza?

Val turns around to find Diane's already putting on her coat.

DIANE
Looks like my work here is done.

Diane pushes by Val as he ladles himself another punch.

VAL
Ball-buster.

EXT. PARK - MORNING

Val and Nathan jog on the path along the Charles River.

VAL
Soooo?

NATHAN
So?

VAL
I took one for the team last night.
I better be getting some details
and I'm talking wide-screen
Technicolor play-by-play.

NATHAN
Things were going well. We were
nestled on my bed. Intimacies being
initiated and so forth.

Val sings a little strip-tease song: Ba-dup, ba-dup, danana..

NATHAN
I had the iPod playing your special
Cool Tunes Number Eight mix. Some
Mazzy Star came on.

VAL
Oooh. I'm loving it.

NATHAN

Unfortunately, you're not my target audience. Rachel stopped like a deer in headlights. Said she hadn't heard that song since college. Five minutes later, she was gone.

VAL

So "Fade into You" was playing on repeat when she got drunk and double-teamed a couple frat boys senior week. Those girls were brutal anyway.

NATHAN

You ever think our routines are getting a little... old?

VAL

Let's slow down. You're not getting enough oxygen to your brain.

NATHAN

Sean Murphy just had his third kid. I'm going to the baptism next week.

VAL

Huh, my invite must of gotten lost. Thank god. If he asks, tell him I'm in a coma.

NATHAN

I'm serious.

VAL

Five minutes you're at the baptism before Seany shakes you down for swingles stories. We're the envy of our friends.

Val points to a YOUNG FRAZZLED DAD coming up the path. He's pushing a stroller, talking on his cell's headset and has a BABY screaming bloody murder strapped to his chest.

YOUNG FRAZZLED DAD

You don't have to shout, Julie!
I'll hit the sale at Gap Kids and we'll meet up at Chuck E. Cheese's in an hour.

VAL

(re: screaming devil baby)
Cute kid.

The Dad offers a defeated kill-me-now smile as he passes.

VAL

We'll have more fun tonight than that
guy will have in the next ten years.

Val jogs right with the path as Nathan keep running straight.

VAL

Where you going? The sunbathers
will be out by the Halfshell.

NATHAN

Think I'll do the long route today!

Val shrugs and jogs towards the crowded side of the park
while Nathan runs off by himself.

INT. POOL BAR - NIGHT

A hip pool bar. Val and Nathan sit at a table with a couple
twentysomething CO-EDs. Val is telling his well-worn story.

VAL

... And I'm like I didn't just pay
two hundred bucks a pop to sit on
my ass for a Bruce Springsteen
show.

Val pauses, but Nathan's staring at his beer. Val nudges him.

NATHAN

What? Oh.
(soft background singing)
*Wanna find one place/ wanna spit in
the face of these baaaadlands.*

VAL

No, no. Whatever.
(glaring at Nathan)
I bought the tickets for Hot Dog's
birthday. I always gets the best
tickets.

NATHAN

Right. Sorry.

The Co-Eds exchange confused looks.

VAL

Anywho, every eyeball in section A3
is glued to this stand--

A cell phone RINGS (playing "You're The One That I Want").
Nathan answers it.

NATHAN

Hello? Oh hey! Nothing. What about you--

Nathan swivels away on his stool. Val clears his throat.

VAL

Where was I? So, Bruce was playing--

CO-ED 1

Is Bruce Springsteen still alive?

Val's mouth flaps open in shock.

INT. T-TRAIN - NIGHT

Val and Nathan sit on the nearly empty T. A drunk couple sloppily makes out at the other end of the car.

VAL

You missed your cues. Took a phone call. Next time I'm closing, why not just pour a pitcher of beer over my head.

NATHAN

I said I was sorry.

VAL

Who was that anyway?

NATHAN

Who? No one really.

VAL

You gave "You're The One That I Want" to 'no one really'?

NATHAN

Rachel.

VAL

She the one with the kiss-me lips and the make-love-to-me eyes?

NATHAN

No. I mean, I dunno. Rachel the pharmaceutical rep, remember? We met her at the Tam a couple weeks ago.

VAL

Oh right. I do all the heavy lifting and you thank me by sticking me with that frigid basketcase.

NATHAN

Well, Rachel's not a basketcase.
The other night she treated me to
dinner and let me chose the movie.

VAL

And you fell for it? Everyone knows
the nicer a girl is on the first
date, the more of a crazy effing
loon she'll be by date two.

NATHAN

We've been out a few times.

VAL

Oh, she's crafty alright.

NATHAN

Rachel's stylish, sweet and smart.
She's great. She's more than great.
She's--

Nathan stops short. Val is staring at him like he has two
heads.

NATHAN

Well she is.

VAL

Give her three more dates.

INSERT TITLE CARD: Three Dates Later.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Boxes are scattered around. Val does a crossword puzzle on
the couch as Nathan packs up his things. Nathan approaches
the bar, reaches for the Buddha head-bowl.

VAL

Over my dead body!

Nathan grabs the ice bucket he was reaching for.

NATHAN

Relax. Rachel wouldn't even let
that thing in the front door.

VAL

Another reason not to move in. You
barely know this person. She could
be a serial killer.

NATHAN

It's a little premature, granted. We talked about that. But I told you, her roommate scored some big promotion and needs to be closer to work.

VAL

Bet she's the life of the office party.

NATHAN

Rachel can't swing the rent alone and we're going to move in together eventually.

VAL

We're going to be incontinent and toothless eventually too, but why rush it.

NATHAN

I'm leaving you the stereo speakers and a month's extra rent.

VAL

You think I care about the money? I'm just looking out for my number one boy. Remember Maria Mallardi junior year?

Nathan looks up from his packing.

NATHAN

Of course. I was too much of a wreck to leave my dorm. You brought over a ball keg and eighteen videos worth of The X-Files and hung with me all week.

Val and Nathan exchange an affectionate, but manly hug.

NATHAN

C'mon, Val. It's me, Hot Dog. I'm only moving three T-stops away. We'll probably end up seeing each other more than ever.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Val gazes out the top window of their Allston triple-decker, watching as Nathan packs his last box into Rachel's Saab.

Just as Val opens the window to wave bye, Rachel pulls Nathan close. As they make-out, Val makes eye contact with Rachel-- they squint suspiciously at each other.

INT. VAL'S CUBE, QUALITY MANUALS INC - AFTERNOON

A grey corporate office. Suit n' tie execs trudge back and forth in front of Val's cube.

In a Kill Rock Stars T-shirt, Val cradles his phone. A photo of he and Nathan on a Jamaican beach is pinned to the wall. Val taps his foot impatiently as the line rings and rings...

NATHAN (O.S.)

Hey Val.

VAL

Where you been? I been IM'ing you all morning.

NATHAN (O.S.)

Canceled my account. You wouldn't believe how much work I've been getting done.

VAL

Then at least you won't be late meeting me at the Middle East.

NATHAN (O.S.)

Is that tonight? Damn.

VAL

Ludvico Technique's playing. They're about to break huge, trust me. Remember how into me Kinky that hottie-bodied bassist was?

NATHAN (O.S.)

Rachel's god-cousin's fiancée is bringing over his Hawaii pictures. I'm locked in.

VAL

Funny, the phone line's must have just momentarily crossed. Let's say pre-game at eight.

NATHAN (O.S.)

Sorry, Val.

MR. EXLEY

(thick Boston accent)

I wanted these sub-headings to look proactive and edgy. Since when is Arial Narrow edgy?!

Val looks up at his paunchy boss, MR. JERRY EXLEY (40's), standing at his cube with an open pamphlet.

VAL

Call you later. Western civilization as we know it is hanging by a thread.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

With much of the furniture and decor gone, the apartment is a lot sparser. CDs, dirty dishes and laundry are everywhere. Val paces with the phone.

VAL

Hey Marty! Yeah man, been a dog's age... I was thinking we should hit this band tonight and grab a couple beers... AA?

CUT TO:

Still on the phone, Val squints into his cloudy fish tank.

VAL

Hey Jamal, it's Val Da-- Hello?

Val notices his beta fish is floating upside down.

CUT TO:

With a 1999 Boston College Directory, Val's still on the phone.

VAL

Yeah, it's great to catch up with you too Hank. So whaddya say we go out tonight?

(smile fading)

Sorry. I didn't mean like that. Damn, but you got so much tail in college?

INT. "MIDDLE EAST" CLUB - NIGHT

A club with wall-to-wall scenesters. A loud emo band, The Ludvico Technique, plays with a sexy bassist with Betty Paige-bangs, KIKI, strutting around with a stage scowl.

Val's alone in the crowd, bobbing his head to feedback. As the song ends, Val whistles and claps the loudest.

VAL
Fuck yeah! Great bass!

The bassist squints cluelessly out at the audience.

INT. "MIDDLE EAST" CLUB - LATER

Guys are all checking Kiki out as she drinks by the bar. Val squeezes over.

VAL
Hey, you know what goes great with vodka? Melon ball shots!

Val signals to the Bartender.

KIKI
I'm drinking water.

VAL
Not for long. Hey, you should have me do your website. Great show btw. Very sexy with the whole Karen O meets Patti Smith vibe you put out. You rip on axe, Kinky.

KIKI
It's Kiki. And, who are you?

VAL
Good one.

Kiki's waiting.

VAL
I met you after your show the other week. Bought you a few drinks.

Kiki looks blankly.

VAL
We sat right over there. I told my Bruce Springsteen story.

Still blank.

VAL
My friend Nathan--

KIKI
Oh yeah! Right, right.

She remembers now. The Bartender delivers three shots.

KIKI
Who's the third one for?

Val realizes his mistake and shrugs. They cheers, do the shot. An awkward lull...

VAL
Really hot show. Very, very... sexy.

KIKI
Thanks... Again.

Kiki checks a patron's watch. Out of material, Val glances around, but there's no one there to save him.

VAL
Anyway, I--

KIKI
I have to go, um, over there.

Kiki walks off. Val watches as she's approached by A YOUNG STUD AND HIS WINGMAN--they have her laughing in no time.

EXT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Yuppie Beacon Hill neighborhood. With a pizza and a twelve-pack, Val rings the doorbell to a brownstone duplex.

VAL
Come on, come on.

He simultaneously knocks the knocker and presses hard on the bell. Looking dapper in a blue blazer, Nathan opens the door.

NATHAN
Val? What are you--

VAL
Sox verse the Yanks, byatch! Got your fav--green peppers, extra cheese. Sorry I'm late.

Nathan glances nervously behind him--the SOUNDS of guests.

VAL
You already have peeps here?

NATHAN
Yes. No. I mean, look Rachel--

Val pushes his way in.

VAL
No worries. I got enough 'zza to
feed a small African country.

INT. LIVING ROOM, RACHEL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Starbucks jazz plays. In pearls and a cocktail dress, Rachel serves hors'doeves. Diane is furiously wiping a stain off the tie of her bland, silver-haired date, DR. RICHARD, 42.

Val bursts into the living room.

VAL
Go Sox! Thank God, Shilling's back.
Hey Rach, props to the hostess with
the mostess!

Val shrugs his coat off, hands the steaming pizza to Richard.

DR. RICHARD
Ow!

Val cracks a couple brews, holds them up for Rachel's approval.

VAL
You want? Don't worry, lite beer.
Where's your boob tube?

Nathan hurries in, whispers to Val. Val's smile fades.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

An intimate dinner party. A fifth chair has clearly been added to the tiny table to fit Val. As the rest of the guests chatter, Val leans over to Nathan.

VAL
Better haul ass with dessert or
we're not even gonna catch last
inning.

NATHAN
I told you we're not watching the
game. It's a dinner party. For
godsakes, mingle.

Nathan turns towards the group conversation. Val cuts into his chicken and elbows Diane next to him. She clicks her front teeth on her wine glass.

VAL
That's gotta hurt. My bad, Debbie.

DIANE

Diane. Should I carve it on my forehead?

VAL

Sorry. I've tried to erase that night's interrogation from my memory. I'm surprised you didn't ask for a piss test.

DIANE

No offense, but you were out of the running at What's Your Name. The rest was just making conversation for Rachel's sake.

VAL

Gimme a break. I was the one taking one for the team and you were the grenade. How goes the Great White Hubby Hunt?

DIANE

It's called looking for a real emotional relationship.

VAL

Like I said, Hub Hunter.

Val points his knife to older Dr. Richard blowing on his soup.

VAL

Nice to see you don't discriminate against the elderly. Is he house trained?

DIANE

He spearheaded the Doctors without Borders program in Afghanistan, has rock-hard abs and loves to cook. What do you do again?

Rachel dings her fork against her glass.

RACHEL

I've got a little something to say.

NATHAN

Rach.

RACHEL

Oh why not? Thanks to Val's considerate little drop-in, we've got a full house.

Rachel grabs Nathan's hand from across the table.

RACHEL

Last weekend, Nathaniel and I drove up to the Adirondacks. The fall colors were just transcendent. We stayed at the most gorgeous little B&B on Lake George and--

VAL

Did you take her to the Rusty Nail?! We used to go there junior year. Mechanical bull and the best patty melts you've ever had.

Rachel flashes Val a teeth-clenched smile, clears her throat.

RACHEL

Anyway, we took a hike up Mt. Little Bear at sunset.
(voice-cracking)
And that's when Nathaniel knelt down and--

Rachel's burst of tears makes the rest inaudible, but everyone gets the drift--almost everyone.

DIANE

OHMYGOD!! OHMYGOD!!

A sobbing Diane knocks her chair over and gives Rachel a big tight hug. Too tight.

RACHEL

Thanks. Oooh, I can't breathe honey.

As everyone chatters with excitement, Val sits perfectly still in a state of complete denial.

VAL

And?... What am I missing?

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE, RACHEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Val and Nathan stand out on the fire escape.

VAL

I'm the one that first took you camping at Lake George. That's our spot!

Val offers Nathan another beer. Glancing back at Rachel inside, Nathan declines.

VAL

Do you realize how insane this is?
You've known this woman what, three
months?

NATHAN

Six in December. I know it's
impulsive, crazy and totally unlike
me. And I love it.

VAL

It's not just me I'm worried about,
Hot Dog. What about our business
venture?

NATHAN

You mean the one we've done nothing
but talk about for four years. And
just quit calling me Hot Dog;
Rachel can't stand it.

VAL

Your first few dates, she was
letting you pick the movie. Now no
nicknames or binge-drinking. It
just kills me to see you missing
out. I've been meeting more
lovelies than Clooney with a cute
baby at a half-off sale. My phone's
at digit capacity!

NATHAN

Don't you understand. I'm walking
on air, Val. I'm in love.

Val moves closer and squints at Nathan.

VAL

Nathan? Are you in there?

NATHAN

What is your problem? If you're not
happy for me, then just... fuck off.

Stunned, Val takes a second to recover.

VAL

Okay. Jeez, take it easy. I'm just
looking out for my best friend. I'm
sure you'll be very happy.

NATHAN

Thanks.

VAL
If you decide to actually go
through with it.

RACHEL (O.S.)
A-hem.

Val starts--Rachel's at the window.

RACHEL
(gritting teeth smile)
Dessert's ready!

INT. KARAOKE BAR, CHINATOWN - NIGHT

A lonely Val sings his heart out to "You're The One That I
Want."

VAL
*I got chills/ They're
multiplying...*

When Nathan's part chimes in, Val sings it too.

VAL
*You gotta shape up/ Cause I need a
friend...*

Going back and forth in different voices, he's like a bad
ventriloquist. This may be the worst performance in karaoke
history. A MAN hurries by, heading to the bathroom.

VAL
You're the one that I want!
(spotting Man)
What the F, man. I'm singing my
heart out up--
(back to song)
Ew! Ew! Ew!

Val spots tonight's Bachelorette Party. Trailing the mic, he
jumps off stage and serenades the Bachelorette--she cringes.

Suddenly, the music's CUT OFF. Val shoots the shrugging DJ a
dirty look as his mic squeals with feedback.

INT. DUMPY BAR - LATER

Last call in Boston's most depressing dump. A tipsy Val sits
alone... He fumbles for his cell phone and drunk-dials.

NATHAN (O.S.)
(half-asleep)
Hello?

RACHEL (O.S.)
Who is it? This is the third time
this week.

NATHAN (O.S.)
Hello!

Val hesitates.

VAL
The fish died.

NATHAN (O.S.)
Wha--

Val rushes to hang up. He accidentally drops his phone right
in his beer.

EXT. PHOTOCOPY ROOM - MORNING

A hungover Val sips from a coffee mug reading "World's Best
Roommate". The copier stalls. Val groans and tries to open a
stuck panel--he spills coffee all over the machine.

ELI (O.S.)
Rough night?

A hip intern, 21, in a knit-tie, short-sleeves and iPod
headphones smirks behind him.

VAL
Eli, right? Hey, we should hang. I
hear the happy hour across the
street is wall-to-wall talent.

ELI
Pick up women in bars? Yeah right.
And then bring them back to our
caves. C'mon. My dad goes to
singles bars.
(off Val's cluelessness)
I scored dates with four horny
10's... just this morning. I only
date on-line, grandpa.

VAL
On-line? Ha! Sorry, not my scene,
poindexter. I'm a people person.

INT. VAL'S CUBICLE, QUALITY MANUALS INC - AFTERNOON

Val checks over his shoulder. He returns to typing furiously
away on Myspace.com.

VAL
 (under breath)
 What a coincidence. Smiley face. I love
 extreme sports too--really extreme.
 Laugh out loud. Let's meet up.

INT. GROUND ROUND STEAK HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

A dark steak house chain. An animated Val sits in a booth.

VAL
 ...I was always artistic, so I got
 into graphic design. My best friend
 and I are starting our own company--
 with a real cutting-edge aesthetic,
 no more corporate BS. Geez, listen
 to me rambling on like this.

REVERSE SHOT: An overly elegant young woman, KATRINA, wearing
 a dramatically-angled sunhat sucks her tall drink dry.

KATRINA
 Please, continue. It's delightful.

VAL
 Delightful? Wow. You're very
 sophisticated. I like that.

The WAITER approaches with more drinks.

WAITER
 Vodka tonic. And another piña
 colada for the lady. With extra,
 extra cherries.

Val squints as Katrina sucks down her drink--something's odd.

VAL
 Is that a... Hello Kitty watch?

KATRINA
 No. Yes. I dunno. It was a, um,
 family heirloom.

Val pushes back the drapes--the parking lot's sunshine
 streams in. Katrina smiles shyly--she's about 15!

VAL
 Check! Now! Checkcheckcheck!

INT. ACCOUNTANT'S CUBE, QUALITY MANUALS INC - MORNING

An ACCOUNTANT works in his cube. On a desk radio, "You're The One That I Want" is barely audible. Val bursts in and rips out the radio plug.

VAL

I don't want to hear that song ever again!

(in Accountant's face)

And that goes for the Broadway version, the Dolly Pardon cover and the Norwegian dance remix!

INT. VAL'S CUBE, QUALITY MANUALS INC. - LATER

Val cradles the phone at his desk.

VAL

I haven't seen you in weeks, Hot Do-okay, Nathan. Well, it feels like weeks. Let's hit the park this weekend... Monday or Tuesday?... I could juggle things and be free Thursday. What about grabbing a beer tonight?

MR. EXLEY

Val.

Val looks up and sees his boss.

VAL

I said get those templates done ASAP!

Val hangs up as Exley enters.

MR. EXLEY

Look Val, I know you've been out all night burning down the house. I can smell the booze sweating out of your pores right now.

VAL

Mr. Exley, I'm so sorry-

MR. EXLEY

Sorry's not cutting the mustard. I just overheard you looking for a partner-in-crime to toss back a few brewskis... Well, look no further.

VAL

Excuse me?

MR. EXLEY

Tonight's the Better Business Bureau's Fund-raiser for MS or ALS, something debilitating. I got two tickets and one estranged wife living in Swampscott with her Pilates instructor. Let's make it a boy's night out.

Eli cruises by and shoots Val a You're-So-Fucked-look.

VAL

I would love to, Mr. Exley but--

MR. EXLEY

Marriott. Seven sharp. Call me Jerry.

INT. MARRIOTT CONVENTION ROOM - NIGHT

A bland event room. A crappy band plays Mustang Sally. Ice sculptures melt over a cheap buffet. Tired biz-types in nametags swill watered-down drinks and exchange cards.

In a campy cowboy shirt, Val picks his way through the buffet... A moussed-up Mr. Exley bounces over. Out of the office, Exley is a totally different person--this is not a good thing.

MR. EXLEY

There's my wild-man! Put down that rubber chicken, there's a hottie buffet right behind you.

(wagging tongue)

All you can eat. Grrrrr!

VAL

Jesus, Mr. Exl-- Jerry. Take it easy on the Budweiser Selects.

MR. EXLEY

While you been chip n' dipping, I been laying down game with some grade A beef in the corner. FYI, I drive a Mercedes CL500 and my wife perished in a terrorist attack.

VAL

What?!

MR. EXLEY

Strategies of Seduction. Chapter six, page 495. Create sympathy.

(double-take)

Don't tell me you haven't read it?

(MORE)

MR. EXLEY (cont'd)
 It's the War and Peace of sexual
 strategizing. Anyway...
 (motioning across room)
 One o'clock, killer.

Val spots a depressed middle-aged Businesswoman eating a hot
 fudge sundae by a fake plant.

VAL
 I only see one.

MR. EXLEY
 That's all there is.

VAL
 Shucks. Well, you kids have fun.

Val is about to walk off, but Exley grabs him.

MR. EXLEY
 Whoa, I wouldn't ditch my new
 wingie. There's plenty of love to
 go around.

Val stares blankly. Exley takes away his dinner plate.

MR. EXLEY
 Save your appetite, dawg. Boss
 man's talking about a sex sandwich.

A stunned Val chokes--shakes his head 'NO!'

MR. EXLEY
 Already booked a suite upstairs on
 the company plastic. Look, she
 thinks you're cute as a bug in a
 rug. If you bail, the whole deal
 might go down in flames.

VAL
 Sorry, but I'm really tired.
 Exhausted. And I've got a ton of
 work to do in the morn--

Mr. Exley steps closer.

MR. EXLEY
 Look Val. If you wanna still have
 an office to go to in the morning,
 you might wanna buck up and play ball.

Val looks from Mr. Exley to the lonely woman with the sundae.
 He's screwed. Suddenly, he sees Diane walking by.

VAL
 HEY!

Diane turns around.

VAL
 (trying to remember)
 Ddd...ooo...uuuu...eee...DIANE!
 There you are! Where'd you
 disappear to?

Val leans in to Mr. Exley.

VAL
 Love to join in, but I've already
 got this one in the bag.

Exley nods, understanding.

DIANE
 What are you doing here?

VAL
 Waiting for you. Diane, Jerry
 Exley. Jerry, Diane. Are we leaving
 already? Yes, we are.

Val winks at Mr. Exley and grabs Diane's arm. He hustles Diane across the room as she tries to squirm away.

DIANE
 You've got ten seconds to explain
 why you're touching me before I
 gouge your eyes out.

MR. EXLEY
 Hey, call me later! The three of us
 can meet up for a nightcap in my room!

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

Bursting from the hotel, Diane walks briskly down the street as Val keeps pace.

VAL
 I owe you one big-time. Let me pay for
 your cab. How far away do you live?

DIANE
 I'll consider saving that woman a
 lifetime of therapy my good deed.

VAL
 Hey, do I look like that kind of
 person?

DIANE
 Something tells me if she looked like
 Jessica Alba, you'd be more than happy
 going ass-to-ass with your boss--

Diane stops short.

VAL
 What?

She pushes Val aside to peer through a restaurant's window.

DIANE
 You're right. You do owe me.

She grabs Val and pulls him into the restaurant.

INT. PORTERHOUSE GRILL - NIGHT

An upscale steak house with dark paneling and bow-tie
 waiters. Val and Diane sit at a corner table.

VAL
 What are we doing here? I already
 ate my weight in cocktail shrimp.

Diane's looking over his shoulder.

DIANE
 Shut up.

Val goes to turn around. Diane kicks him under the table.

DIANE
 Don't look.

VAL
 Ow!
 (standing)
 You can't tell me what--

DIANE
 Sit!

She pulls Val down.

DIANE
 Troy Fitzgerald Jr.'s sitting two
 tables away.

VAL
 Who?

DIANE

We went to the same summer camp in 8th grade. During my vegan stage, he was the only one who signed my petition for our cafeteria to go meat-free. I can still feel his thigh pressed against mine in the potato sack race.

VAL

What happened to your last victim?

DIANE

Total commitment-a-phobe. With a vasectomy, two failed marriages and eight years on me, you'd think he would of tried harder to control that facial tick when I asked him to cat-sit.

(putting it behind her)

Now just relax, have a roll and chew with your mouth closed. Okay?

Diane takes a deep breath and gives Val a diplomatic smile. It's the first time she's really looked at him.

DIANE

My God! That's what you wear to a business event?

VAL

I came from work.

DIANE

That's what you wear to work?

VAL

As the graphic designer, they let me dress like I do at home.

DIANE

That's what you wear at home?

She waves down a young WAITRESS.

DIANE

Will you get my companion a dinner jacket please.

The Waitress looks them over and hurries off.

DIANE

I'm surprised you haven't heard of Troy. Folding box entrepreneur. Extreme sportsman.

(MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)

Boston Mag's Most Eligible Bachelor
two years running.

(sigh)

Ever since he moved back from New York
this fall, I've been trying to find
just the right scenario to bump into
him and reintroduce myself.

Val gets a glimpse back at Troy though his steak knife. A
dapper handsome man sitting by himself.

VAL

So what better time then now. He's
alone and looks bored as hell.

DIANE

Approaching someone at dinner is so
tactless. We'll wait until he's
leaving and I'll intercept him at
the door.

VAL

Jesus, we'll be here all night.
What are you waiting for? You're
all duded up, although I'd
recommend a little cleav. Make like
you're going to the john, then
recognize him as you pass his
table. Ask him to join us. I'll act
like it's my birthday, order a
couple rounds of shots, then get an
emergency phone call from my best
friend who's in the ER, but insist
I go see him solo cause it's some
embarrassing groin-related injury.
You and bachelor number one will be
alone, tipsy and playing footsie by
dessert.

DIANE

Huh... It's not the worst plan.
(deep breath)
You're revolting, but right.

Diane's on her feet. Val watches as she strides across the
room towards Troy's table.

DIANE

Why hello there. I'm--

Just as she's advancing, a Blond Bombshell arrives and kisses
Troy. Diane turns so hard on her heel, she stumbles into a
passing Waiter.

She runs back to the table and plops down in her seat, hair
strewn across her face....

Wearing the restaurant's plaid sportscoat, Val drops a shot of whiskey into a beer, belts it back and stifles a burp.

VAL
Don't feel bad. You can't compete with that. She is smoking hot.

Defeated, Diane waves out to the Waitress.

DIANE
Give me whatever he's having.

INT. PORTERHOUSE GRILL - LATER

The restaurant is almost empty. Diane stirs her cocktail.

DIANE
(sarcastic as hell)
And to think I thought I'd be lonely when Rach got engaged.

VAL
Think you've had it tough. Since Nathan started dating your little friend, I haven't even gotten my jimmy waxed--

Val stops short. Diane raises an eyebrow.

VAL
Jimmy's my... cat.

DIANE
Our waitress might wax your cat. God knows why, but she's been eyeing you since we walked in.

Val swivels around. Across the room, the Waitress is checking him out--she casts her eyes down.

VAL
Jesus, you're right! Okay, I'll leave my phone number with a fat tip. No, no, I'll say there was a hair in my beer and now she has to buy me a drink. No, I'll ask her--

WAITRESS
Can I get you anything else tonight?

Clearing his throat, Val is instantly way-too-much swagger.

VAL
Hell yeah. What time you shut this joint down?

WAITRESS

Excuse me?

VAL

You heard me. There's a great bar across the street. Two for one body shots and the best karaoke book in town. Lemme guess, you're an alto.

WAITRESS

(weirded out)

What?

VAL

I--

DIANE

We're looking for a place to have a private party. There's a great bar down the street, but this place would be perfect depending on what time you close.

WAITRESS

Oh. Well, we're usually open until one.

DIANE

Great. This would be a really fun event. Val here just won a big award for his graphic design work. You know that Dunkin' Donuts ad with the rapping crueller?

WAITRESS

So cool. Congratulations.

Val's totally thrown off.

DIANE

My cousin didn't even want to have the party if you can believe it, but work insisted.

VAL

I--

Diane kicks Val under the table.

DIANE

He's shy.

A shrugging Val smiles. The Waitress can't keep her eyes off him as she scribbles out the check.

WAITRESS

Well. Have a good night.

As the Waitress walks off, Val shoots Diane a look.

VAL

What was all that? I was doing fine.

DIANE

You have all the tact of a lunch-hour construction crew. You were holding a conversation with her chest.

VAL

Well what good did you do? Look, she went and hid in the kitchen.

Diane turns over the check: CALL ME, MARGO. 938-3948!

DIANE

You can thank me by picking up the check and never mentioning this to anyone ever.

Diane stands and leaves a stunned Val staring at the bill.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Diane's hailing a cab when Val runs out of the restaurant.

VAL

I just wanted to say, you know, muchas gracias for the back-up in there.

Val jumps out of the way as a cab slides up.

VAL

Look I was thinking. The two of us just lost our wing people. If we joined forces, we could clean up around town.

Diane rolls her eyes and gets in the cab.

VAL

Battle of the Bands on Boston Common tomorrow. We work the Beer Garden and it'll be like shooting fish in barrel.

DIANE

I have plans. And if I didn't, I'd make some.

Val jumps back as Diane's cab pulls away.

DIANE

Try getting a puppy and some dress shoes.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - AFTERNOON

A PRIEST drones on in front of an open casket. Black-clad mourners crowd the pews. A lonely Diane sits in an empty pew all by herself.

VAL

These are you big plans? I could be buzzed and crowd-surfing right now.

In the restaurant's stolen blazer, Val plops down next to Diane. They bicker in hushed voices.

DIANE

What the hell are you doing here?

VAL

Called Nathan for your number. He said he and bridezilla stood you up to go register. Figured you needed some back-up.

DIANE

What?

VAL

Seriously, a woman who can't even find a funeral date might as well be DOA herself.

Diane scoots down the pew, Val follows.

VAL

You did me a solid. I'm here to return the favor. Like Strangers on a Train, but with getting lucky.

DIANE

Just get out of here!

Mourners turn to look back--including a chiseled well-dressed bachelor in the front row, ZACH, 30. Mortified, Diane gives Zach a little wave--she clearly has a crush. Everyone's attention returns to the Priest.

VAL

Tell me you're not here to scoop that ass.

DIANE

You're sick. We're old friends...

(off Val's look)

(MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)

Ok, so he's hauntingly attractive.
But I'm here out of respect only.
I'm just going to slip right out
after the service.

VAL

Funerals are a great place to meet
singles. Facing mortality's the
ultimate turn-on.

Diane ignores him. Val stands.

VAL

But suit yourself. If you don't
want my help, I'll go lube up for
the park.

Totally torn, Diane reaches out and pulls Val back down.

DIANE

Ok, ok. Maybe you're right. But
what can I do?

VAL

First things first... Partner?

Val extends his hand. Diane reluctantly shakes it.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

Zach greets a line of well-wishers. A nervously-beaming Diane
approaches with Val in tow.

DIANE

So sorry about your Grammybear,
Zach. Mildred was a vibrant,
wonderful woman.

VAL

(mouthing)
Hug him.

ZACH

Thanks Dia--

Diane gives Zach an inappropriately tight hug. Val clears his
throat.

DIANE

Oh. And this is Val.

Val gives Zach his most mature nod and handshake.

VAL
 Sorry for your loss. My darling
 here canceled our trip to Antigua
 the moment she heard.

DIANE
 Val.

ZACH
 Good old dependable Diane. You've
 always been such a rock.

Zach claps her mannishly on the shoulder. Diane winces.

DIANE
 Call me if you need anything...

ZACH
 Thanks.

DIANE
 ... Bring you dinner, lunch, a
 snack. Go to a movie. Or rent. I've
 got a time-share up in Stowe...

ZACH
 Okay then.

DIANE
 ... If you need an ear to bend,
 shoulder to cry on, hand to hold--

Diane's neurotic desperation is palpable.

VAL
 Let's not cover the whole body,
 sweetie.

Val pulls a fawning Diane away to make room for more
 mourners.

DIANE
 How the heck are we supposed to
 make him jealous when you've got a
 stain on your-- My God, is that the
 restaurant's jacket?

VAL
 Don't fault my fashion sense. You
 went from wall flower to wonder
 wife in under sixty.

DIANE
 I was doing like you said.

VAL

I said be "spunky," not a doormat.
The lemme-fix-you-a snack-bit works
if you wanna be his wet nurse, not
his personal hump bunny.

DIANE

It's hopeless now.

Diane motions over to where a cluster of sexy black-clad
women are gushing over Zach.

DIANE

I'm getting my coat.

Diane pushes by Val. He lingers.

INT. FUNERAL - MOMENTS LATER

Zach has stolen off to pray at his grandmother's open coffin.
Val drops down next to him on the kneel bench.

VAL

Your Gummybear was one good-looking
woman.

ZACH

(annoyed)

Grammybear is what we called her.

VAL

So how long you known Diane?

ZACH

We went to high school together.

VAL

Mm-mm. She must have been something
in a cheerleader's uniform.

ZACH

Diane? She was never the
cheerleader-type. I wouldn't know
anyway.

VAL

... Gay?

ZACH

No! Hell, no. Diane was just one of
those girls that it was always
platonic with. She's nice and all,
she's just way too... demanding for
my taste.

VAL

Sure, I know what you mean. She's a real taskmaster between the sheets. Most guys couldn't handle it.

Zach tries to concentrate on his dead grandmother. He can't.

ZACH

For real?

VAL

The obscure positions, all the paraphernalia, the hours of pelvic exercises.

(off Zach's double-take)

Tones the vaginal muscles. Believe me, it's like the Vulcan death grip down there.

INT. WAITRESSES'S APARTMENT - NEXT NIGHT

Val is on his cell phone.

VAL

I told you he'd call. Don't thank me, Diane. That's what a wingman does... My date?

PULL BACK: Val's in pink bed adorned with stuffed animals. He's eating a bag of Doritos and watching a late-night movie (The Great Escape) on TV. Margo the Waitress is asleep next to him.

VAL

I'd say it's going pretty well.

Val hangs up, keeps munching. ON TV: Steve McQueen motorcycles across the countryside with Nazis in hot pursuit.

Hair everywhere, the baffled Waitress wakes from her pillow.

WAITRESS

What the-- You're getting Doritos in my bed.

With eyes on the screen, Val points to the TV and offers her the bag of chips.

VAL

Sssshh! This is the best part.

WAITRESS

It's midnight and you're watching Vietnam movies.

VAL
Hello? Nazis. McQueen. World War
Dos has never been better.

The Waitress grabs the remote and shuts OFF the TV. She mimes
a stuffed monkey dancing in Val's face.

WAITRESS
We want to leave early if we're
going to beat the Cape traffic and
do a beach brunch.

VAL
Tommorrow? I thought those plans
were for, you know, the future.

WAITRESS
(sing-song)
*The future is no place/ To place
your better days.*

The Waitress nestles onto Val's chest.

VAL
(cringing)
Um. Did you just quote The Dave
Mathews Band?

She's already asleep. Val's left in an awkward position,
awake and looking trapped... He strains for the remote
control that's just out of his reach.

INT. LOBBY, OFFICE BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Val steps out of the elevator with Mr. Exley, Eli and other
employees and walks through the lobby

MR. EXLEY
Val, how's about grabbing a couple
TGIF samplers and cruising the Mary
Kay convention downtown.

VAL
I would love to so bad, but I've
got plans.
(help me-face)
Right Eli?

ELI
Your Blackberry's on the fritz.
I've got a hot Friendster date with
Naughty Natalie.

Exley throws an arm around Val.

MR. EXLEY

If half of what I've heard in the mailroom is true, these Mary Kay reps get wild.

Diane bursts through the lobby doors and beelines towards Val. Val shrugs with relief at Exley.

VAL

Like I said, plans.

Diane SOCKS Val across the face with her leather bag.

MR. EXLEY

Another time then.

Exley hurries off as Diane attacks Val.

DIANE

You told Zach Delacroix I was way into "Slop Dogging"? I don't even know what the hell that is!

VAL

Big deal. Finger here, tongue there. You improvise.

DIANE

I don't want to start a relationship with someone who thinks I'm a raging nymphomaniac!

VAL

Fair enough. So we have different goals.

Val cowers behind a potted plant as Diane tries to get at him. Rubber-necking employees walk by.

VAL

I'll call him up and tell him I was kidding. Just quit hitting me!

Drained, Diane relents and drops her bag.

DIANE

Forget it. He jammed his tongue in my ear and told me he was wearing a diaper.

VAL

Ouch. If it makes you feel better, my waitress and I got in a fight over the remote control and she booted me out.

DIANE

You don't get it. I'm ready for something real. I want to make a connection with someone.

VAL

You want to make a connection with a guy? Stop using phrases like "make a connection." Reality check: you need you some Vitamin Val.

DIANE

Never again.

VAL

So we had a couple dud dates--we're fine-tuning our game. Now you gonna run home and take it out on a pint of Ben & Jerry's or you gonna get back in the saddle with New England's number one wingman?

DIANE

You need the reality check. You might as well be holding a sign that says Will Work for Sex. Without Nathan, you're like a shot of tequila with no chaser.

VAL

I may have a few rough edges to smooth out, sure.

Diane shakes her head and storms off.

VAL

You'll never get a man to take you seriously, if you don't show him you know how to have fun first!

With her back to Val, Diane's stopped at the lobby door.

DIANE

... How?

INT. THE LAST DROP (COLLEGE DIVE) - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: Atop the bar, a half-dressed girl screams in delight as tequila's poured down her chest and a young guy drinks from her belly-button.

Diane and Val watch in a dive decked out with pennants, bar games and packed with sloppy-drunk college kids.

DIANE

You've got to be kidding.

Diane gets a splash of tequila spilt down on her.

VAL

Don't be so judgemental, at least not until you've had a couple drinks.

Val orders as an out-of-place Diane tries to rub out the spot on her blouse.

VAL

Okay, we're gonna pull the Don't-I-Know-You-From-High-School routine. All we need is a target.

Val hands Diane a foamy beer.

DIANE

I wanted a chardonnay. There's something floating in here.

Val points to the corner.

VAL

How about that guy? Sweet 'stache, kinda cute.

DIANE

The one funneling a beer?

VAL

Yeah, we'll wait till he finishes.

Diane turns towards the jukebox, fishes into her change purse.

DIANE

I didn't even go to places like this when I was in college.

VAL

Just relax. Try to blend.

Diane selects a song--Phil Collin's sappy "Against All Odds" blares. Every head turns towards them and glares.

VAL

For the love of God, please tell me you hit the wrong button.

DIANE

I like Steve Winwood. This is a very effective ballad.

VAL

First, this is Phil Collins.
Second, who knew counsel had a
sappy side.

DIANE

I do not have a sappy anything.

VAL

Remind me to burn you Val's Indie
Essentials Mix volumes 1 thru 12.
Seriously, you grow up Amish or
what?

DIANE

I admit, I didn't drink a full beer
until college. I still wear my
retainer to bed. Up until I made
junior partner last year, I was
working thirteen hour days so sorry
if I haven't kept up with who's on
this week's cover of "Rolling
Stone".

VAL

"Rolling Stone"? Whatever. This is
like bar-hopping with my mom.

DIANE

Oh like you blend?

VAL

Hell yeah. This place has always
been lucky for me. Just last month
I was macking down on that
foozeball table with a stunning
junior.

Nearby, a couple TRASHY SORRORITY GIRLS spin around.

SORRORITY GIRL

That was you?! Ohmygod, I was so
obliterated.

SORRORITY GIRL 2

Holy fuck! You made out with a narc?

As the Girls erupt in giggles, Diane gives Val a pointed
look.

DIANE

I know a good tapas bar on Beacon.

Diane turns to drag Val out, but a trio of baby-faced COLLEGE
DUDES in backwards baseball caps block her way.

HOT COLLEGE DUDE
 Like your suit. What can I buy you?
 Lemme guess. Kettle one martini
 with twist?

HOT COLLEGE DUDE'S WINGMAN
 Seriously, you are MILF-tastic.

Lavished with attention, Diane can't help but blush. Val
 grabs her.

VAL
 You're right. Let's go!

INT. TAPAS BAR/ RESTAURANT - LATER

Val and Diane share a table at an upscale tapas bar bustling
 with beautiful young professionals.

VAL
 You ready?

DIANE
 I'm not doing this. Rach and I
 never stooped to "routines".

VAL
 And Nathan and I never cruised any
 place with a valet, these women all
 look totally high-maintenance.

DIANE
 You mean of voting age, yes.

VAL
 I'm just saying compromise is key.
 You picked the venue, at least let
 me pick the strategy.
 (challenging)
 ... but if you're getting cold
 feet?

DIANE
 I'll have you know my Lady Macbeth
 had my whole high school terrified
 of me.

VAL
 No doubt. But we're not going for
 Oscar gold here, we just wanna pull
 some ass.

DIANE

It feels dishonest. It's one thing for you, but I don't want to start off on the wrong foot.

VAL

And how's that working out for you so far?

(off Diane's glare)

Look, if everybody walked around with their heart on their sleeve, nothing would ever get done. C'mon, were Nathan or Rachel totally honest with each other when they met?

DIANE

(deep breath)

Good point.

Val spots the Waiter. He reaches over and undoes the top-button of Diane's blouse.

VAL

It's go time.

The Waiter drops off the bill. Val gives Diane a meaningful nod. She takes a deep breath---and goes for the check.

DIANE

(loud, reciting)

Don't worry babe, I've got this!

Val grabs her hand.

VAL

No, let me.

DIANE

No, I insist.

Diane snatches it back.

VAL

Goddammit! You know how small it makes me feel when you do this. The four-star restaurants, the Superbowl tickets, the new motorcycle.

DIANE

That's just how I show affection.

VAL

It makes me feel like... less of a man.

People are starting to look over, especially a couple dashing sharp-suited STOCK BROKERS by the bar.

DIANE

It doesn't matter if I make a hundred thousand a year more than you or that all your friends are always hitting on me--

VAL

I--

Going "off-script", Diane grabs Val's hands.

DIANE

Or even that I get you off a hundred times for every orgasm you give me.

A few Women at the bar sneer in Val's direction. He shifts uncomfortably.

DIANE

Don't you see--I love you.

VAL

I'm sorry. I just can't do this anymore. You deserve so much better.

Val shoots to his feet and hurries blindly out of the restaurant. Diane goes to run after him---but he's long gone.

One of the Brokers blocks her.

DASHING STOCK BROCKER

Hey, I couldn't help overhear. Your boyfriend's right. You are too good for him.

(offering his card)

You want to have a drink with someone who can appreciate you, I really hope you'll call me.

Diane beams as she takes the card.

INT. YOGA CLASS - MORNING

An Ashtanga yoga studio. Sweat profusely, Diane performs a down-facing dog next to a sexy redhead, CANDACE. Diane nudges a little closer and nervously clears her throat.

DIANE
 ... Don't look now, but that new hottie in class is giving you the eye.

CANDACE
 Excuse me?

DIANE
 Um.... I, uh, said don't look now, but that new hottie in class is giving you the eye.

Candace looks up. Among the many serious students, Val looks out of place trying to maintain his balance in zooba pants and a Free James Brown T-shirt.

CANDACE
That guy?

DIANE
 Doesn't he look familiar? I think he might be a Kennedy.

Candace's expression softens as she checks Val out.

DIANE
 I saw him with his shirt off last class. You could do laundry on those washboard-abs. He's amazingly limber. I wonder if he's a junior Yogi.

Luckily, the women switch positions and turn away--just as Val pulls a muscle and freezes in a painful contortion.

INT. DOG PARK - AFTERNOON

Gruppie owners socialize while dogs run leash-free in the park.

Dressed in a Patriots jersey and Bo Sox cap, Diane tries tossing a tennis ball to a MANGY LITTLE MUTT. He just stands there snarling and drooling at her.

DIANE
 Come on doggie. Good doggie.
 (sighs)
 This is asinine. And I don't see how these clothes are flattering.

Incognito on a nearby bench, Val flips down his sports page.

VAL

I told you. Men open up to women who like dogs, short skirts, contact sports and quality indie music. Sweater sets and Phil Collins aren't gonna get you laid-- I mean emotionally-involved.

(pointing to mutt)

For chrissakes, bond. Rub his belly or something.

DIANE

I'm allergic. He looks like he wants to chew my lips off.

VAL

He couldn't of been friendlier when I found him behind the liquor store.

Before a shocked Diane can respond a jockish black guy, ALFRED, jogs over with his Labrador.

ALFRED

Interesting pup. What is he?

Val winks at Diane, hides behind the newspaper.

DIANE

He's, um, an Alaskan Cocker... Poodle. Very rare.

ALFRED

A dog lover and a Pats fan. What time are you due back in heaven?

Diane smiles--this is too easy.

ALFRED

I'm Alfred by the--

Alfred steps towards Diane and the stray mutt lunges and sics onto his ankle.

ALFRED

Jesus!

Bark! Bark! The Labrador paws defensively at Diane as she tries to rip her dog off Alfred's pants leg.

DIANE

Doggie! Heel! Heel, doggie-dog!

Cringing, Val watches the melee over the top of his newspaper.

Diane frantically digs into her purse. She throws a Ziploc-bag sandwich and the dogs stop attacking and descend on it.

ALFRED

Phew.

Embarrassed, Alfred straightens up. Diane smooths her mussed hair--and goes for the kill.

DIANE

Looks like you owe me lunch.

INT. ELEVATOR - MORNING

In the elevator, Val is happily humming a little Jethro Tull standing between Eli and Mr. Exley.

MR. EXLEY

At first I thought a church potluck sounded like a snooze. But thank god I still make a mean mac n' cheese. Let's just say plenty of ladies wanted to get my special recipe... You?

ELI

Barely left the apartment.

MR. EXLEY

Bo-ring.

ELI

Sasha from Match was over Friday. Brianna from Myspace on Saturday. Both back for seconds on Sunday.

MR. EXLEY

Whoa.

ELI

I'll forward you their photos.

Exley and Eli turn to Val to hear about his weekend... He finally notices and stops whistling.

VAL

Wha-? Me? Oh, nothing much.

(evasive)

Downloaded some music. Caught up on Netflix. Flossed.

The boss and intern both squint with suspicion.

MR. EXLEY

It's Monday. Why are you almost smiling?

ELI

Is that a hickey on your earlobe?

MR. EXLEY

What is it you're not bragging about to us?

The guys are closing in on Val when the elevator dings at their floor. Val hurries out.

MR. EXLEY/ ELI

Val!

INT. SUSHI BAR - AFTERNOON

A conveyor belt with sushi dishes moves along the counter for customers to pick from. Val sits at the counter next to a stunning, yet icy Asian woman, NAMIKO.

VAL

Would you mind passing the wasabi.

Without even looking at him, Namiko passes it.

VAL

Tha--

DIANE

Val! What a coincidence. You come here on your lunch break too?

A dramatic Diane rushes over and hugs and kisses Val hello.

VAL

Your office is in Rhode Island.

Diane juts her hand out to Namiko.

DIANE

I'm Diane. You are?

NAMIKO

(mouthful)

Excuse me?

VAL

This woman's just sitting there. We don't know each other.

DIANE

She's cute. Bony, but cute... Know that new Beacon Hill spot that's booked solid all winter. Guess who has din-din reservations Saturday? I'll pick you up.

VAL

Look, we went out for a month--two years ago. You're a wonderful woman, but you need to move on. I'll pay for a vacation, therapy, whatever you need.

DIANE

Okay, so we'll play Saturday by ear. Call me! Call me! Call me!

Diane backs out of the restaurant miming Call-Me to Val and flashing dirty looks at Namiko.

NAMIKO

My god, that woman's certifiable.

Diane blows a kiss through the picture window.

VAL

She's actually a really sweet normal person. She just can't let it go.

(shaking head)

Anyway. I'm so, so sorry.

Val returns to his meal. Namiko watches him from the corner of her eye....

NAMKIO

... Hi. I'm Namiko.

INT. THEATRE MEZZANINE (INTERMISSION) - NIGHT

Holding cocktails, a dressed-up Val (in a suit two sizes small) and Diane stand in the corner of a mezzanine bustling with well-dressed theatergoers. Their eyes scan the crowd.

VAL

Four o'clock's pretty's hot.

DIANE

Salt n' pepper with the chin cleft?

VAL

No, red dye-job with pouty lips.

DIANE

Your tramp radar is impeccable, but tonight's my night, remember.

Val bites his lip, calculating the last few nights.

VAL

I don't see why you have to be so rigid. It's not a competition.

DIANE

Says you... And I thought I told you to burn that suit.

VAL

Flame-retardent. I thought I told you to show a little skin. We're out at the opera, not the mosque.

DIANE

It's a play. If you're going to be idiotic, keep your voice down.

VAL

If we're only here for the intermission how am I supposed to know.

DIANE

Hey, I offered to buy tickets if you promised to stay awake. I adore the theatre.

(nodding)

Two o'clock. With the silk scarf.

Val follows Diane's gaze.

VAL

To date or do your draperies?

Diane shoots Val a look. The LIGHTS dim to signal five minutes to curtain.

VAL

Let's move in. "Fighting First Date."

DIANE

Not again. Let's do "The Gal Pal."

VAL

Ok--Hold it. What routine is that?

Leading the way across the room, Diane smiles confidently.

DIANE

I just made it up. Try and keep up.

Val can't help but look impressed... Diane approaches a stylish stud with a silk scarf, MARCUS.

DIANE

I'm sorry, but my friend here thinks you are just gorgeous and is too shy to ask for your number.

Marcus glances over Diane's shoulder at a slack-jawed Val.

VAL

What? I can't. Oh no no no.

Mortified, Val hurries off through the crowd.

DIANE

See? So shy.

MARCUS

You've got to be kidding. Hey, look I'm not gay.

DIANE

Oh, I'm so sorry! How embarrassing.
(second look)
... You sure?

MARCUS

Yes, I'm sure! Hell yes. Is it the scarf? Look, I'm the farthest thing. I love ladies. Love, love, love them.

DIANE

Uh-huh. Of course. My mistake.

Diane nods politely. Frustrated, Marcus checks her out.

INT. THEATRE INTERMISSION - MOMENTS LATER

Punching a number into her Trio, a smirking Diane joins a furious Val hunched over the bar.

DIANE

Another minute and he would have tried to ravage me right here.

VAL

A wingman has limits. You owe me-- big.

INT. SOUTH BOSTON YMCA - NIGHT

A smoky little arena packed with blue-collars, nostalgia buffs and the odd hipster. Val and Diane are in the stands.

DIANE

This isn't fair. You were gay for less than two seconds.

VAL

Sometimes that's all it takes. Stop complaining, sporting events are a great place to pick up.

DIANE

This hardly qualifies as a sport.

Val motions with his popcorn: flashing lights and loud music blare as scantily-clad ROLLER DERBY GIRLS bash the crap out of each other on the track below.

VAL

Tell that to Switchblade Suzy. Get a load of the calves on these women.

On the track, ferocious SWITCHBLADE SUZY skates in circles with two screaming opponents in headlocks.

DIANE

This place smells like pee and feels illegal.

VAL

Look, I've been dying to date a roller girl since that Jim Croce song.

(singing)

She was five foot six and two fifteen/ A bleached-blonde mama/ With a streak of mean... And don't get me started on Heather Graham circa "Boogie Nights".

DIANE

Trust me, I won't.

VAL

Chin up, you're my validation. These derby girls see me with a sharp-looking class act and it sets me apart from the rest of these shitbags.

A couple SLEAZY DUDES glance over at Val with offense.

DIANE
 "Sharp-looking class act"?
 (softening)
 I can live with that.

VAL
 Plus, they're more likely to pick a
 couple.

Diane stares blankly.

VAL
 Amateur round at half-time. I
 entered our names at the concession
 stand.

DIANE
 WHAT!?

A buzzer stops the round. A chauvinistic "REFEREE" with a pompadour and a circus showman's flair is on the microphone.

REFEREE
 (always echoing)
 It's time for tonight's lucky
 couple to come on down! And join
 our sexy rollers for the amateur
 round!

Drumroll as the Ref dips into a fishbowl filled with names. He checks out a few before he picks one.

REFEREE
 Give it up for... Betty Ballbreaker
 and Drop-Kick Dan!

A banner (HoneyBaked Ham's Debutante Brawl Half Show!) lowers. The crowd goes ballistic. Diane sighs with relief.

DIANE
 Thank you God--

She stops. Val couldn't look more thrilled.

VAL
 Well, we needed badass names.

INT. ROLLER DERBY TRACK - MOMENTS LATER

Val and Diane are outfitted in opposing team T-shirts (Derby Dolls, Roller Sluts), pads and skates.

Val cockily mugs at his team of black-lipsticked, gothy DERBY DOLLS including team captain Switchblade Suzy.

Diane is scrutinizing a clipboard of paperwork.

DIANE

I'm a lawyer and I've already spotted a dozen made-up words.

REFEREE

Hup-two, legs. This crowd's ready for blood. Tonight's prize is a honey-baked ham.

Val gives Diane a "pleeease" look. She reluctantly signs.

DIANE

Fine, okay. So what are the rules?

The Ref rolls his eyes at Val.

VAL

Rules? Very funny. She's kidding.

The Ref skates into the middle of the track and takes over the mic.

REFEREE

Okay sports fans, on your feet! Tonight's couple's competing for some fresh smoked meat!

The Derby Dolls and Roller Girls (Catholic school girl motif) crack their knuckles, line up on the track.

DIANE

Can't we be on the same team? I don't even know how to play.

Val tosses her a helmet.

VAL

Look mean, skate fast... But not as fast as me.

CUT TO:

Queen blares over the PA. With helmets strapped on to signify their positions as their team's "jammers", Val and Diane skate at the back of a pack.

Diane tries to skate ahead--she's blocked by a couple tough Dolls.

DERBY DOLL

(whiskey-voiced)

Don't even try, missy. Just run the clock out like a good girl and I'll make sure you don't break a nail.

Diane sets her jaw and glares at the Dolls.

CUT TO:

With a Chesire-grin, Val is being man-handled like a ragdoll by his sexy teammates.

VAL

Don't hold back. I'm not ticklish.

He's "whipped" by his teammates--sent hurtling up closer to the front of the pack. He skates alongside Switchblade Suzy.

VAL

I was front row when you broke
Loretta Lynch's nose in Saugus. Buy
me a drink and we'll call it even
on my cleaning bill.

Switchblade breaks through a couple blocking Sluts, making way for Val to skate past.

VAL

You gals should form a band. Josie
and the Pussycats meets the Suicide
Girls. I'm kind of a big wheel on
the local music scene.

A Slut swinging a folding chair comes skating right at Val. Switchblade trips her.

VAL

And don't worry about the brunette.
She's just an old friend with a
puppy-love crush.

SWITCHBLADE SUZY

Just concentrate on the game, okay
jackass!

Switchblade knocks another Slut out of the way and saves Val's ass again.

VAL

Real's name Val. And you are?

CUT TO:

In competitive mode, Diane gracefully fakes out one Doll, then does a balletic spin to avoid two others.

Her limber skating alludes her strong-arming blockers and she breaks for the lead. Annoyed, Val glances back.

VAL

Ease up! I'm trying to dazzle here!

DIANE

I've never taken a fall for a man
and I'm not about to start.

Diane does a seemingly-choreographed pivot to avoid Switchblade who slams hard into the railing and falls off the track and into the crowd. Diane's poetry in motion.

DIANE

Figure skating junkie in middle
school. I wanted to be Cinderella
in Disney on Ice.

Diane is neck and neck with Val with the rest of the players in hot pursuit. They skate at breakneck speed. The crowd's never seen an amateur round like this and roars for blood.

Val tears at Diane's T-shirt as she breaks ahead.

DIANE

Get your hands off me!

She slaps him.

VAL

You don't even like ham!

Diane swings Val into the railing. He spins out of control and goes sprawling across the track. Dolls and Sluts can't stop fast enough to avoid smashing into him. He moans under a rain of passing skates.

Unfettered, Diane daintily loops the track and the Sluts scoreboard lights up with points. She does an Olympic salchow as the buzzer goes off.

REFEREE

Wowee! This ref's never seen such a
gracefully badass slut machine.
Give it up for Ballbreaker Bet--

Diane squeals to a stop and wrenches the mic from the Ref.

DIANE

My name is Diane. And I'm not a
slut machine or a ballbreaker. I
worked my way through Yale. Now
gimme my prize.

Diane holds up her ham and spins as the crowd goes wild.

INT. DIANE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

A spacious office with a view. Val is chowing a huge meatball sub and Diane a Cobb salad at a corner table.

VAL

Tomorrow I've got drinks with sushi girl, Saturday's the brunette from the driving range and the Indian barista's Sunday. Three dates in one weekend, not too shabby.

DIANE

A little shabby. Compared to four.

VAL

(glancing around)

So how come you're the only one that gets to chow down in here?

DIANE

I guess you were too busy making eyes at our intern to notice my name on the door.

Val chokes on his sub.

VAL

Seriously? This is the size of our employee lounge.

A knock on the door. A receptionist, AGNES, 50, hurries in.

AGNES

Oh Ms. Keeler, Sasha just got engaged! We're having an ice cream cake over in accounting.

DIANE

Thanks so much, Agnes. Mr. Danko and I just have so much more work to do on his IRS affidavit. I'll make it over later.

Val offers Agnes a bite of his sub. Agnes smiles, backing out of office.

VAL

You make her call you Ms. Keeler. She's ten times your age.

Diane fingers her window blinds and motions for Val to look: a cluster of suits are gathered around a giddy woman with a huge lit cake.

DIANE

Yesterday was a cake for Rosario's maternity leave. Friday was a cake for Janice's engagement. Tomorrow, we'll have one to welcome back Angie from her honeymoon.

(MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)
 If they stuff any more cake down my
 throat, I'll never get married.

VAL
 It's not a race. Don't you ever
 just want to date for fun?

DIANE
 You don't think I have?
 (sigh, coming clean)
 Senior year and three years out of
 college, I dated Aaron Aaronson. We
 had fun. Big fun. We made love on
 my parent's roof.

VAL
 You dated a chimney sweep?

DIANE
 We were engaged on my 25th
 birthday. But our six month
 engagement kept getting extended
 for one reason or another. On my
 26th birthday, I found him sleeping
 with the salesgirl at Tiffany's who
 sold him my ring.

VAL
 No wonder you hate cake. Sorry.

DIANE
 Don't men ever want to date for
 anything but fun?
 (off Val's blankness)
 Don't you want to find that one
 special person who compels you to
 say and do all those cheesy crazy
 cliché things that usually make
 your skin crawl?

VAL
 You mean like...
 (wincing)
 ...drop the L-Bomb?

Frustrated, Diane throws her salad container in the trash.
 Val awkwardly pats her on the back.

VAL
 C'mon now. No worries. Thanks to
 moi you've got four scorching hot
 dates this weekend. Five if you
 call Switchblade Suzy.

DIANE
 I guess you're right. The odds are
 on my side.

Diane does a ballerina's pirouette in the office.

VAL
Damn straight!

Val high-fives Diane. She winces from the slap, but smiles optimistically.

DIANE
Damn straight!

She high-fives him back even harder.

INT. THE DRISCOLL'S HOUSE (ENGAGEMENT PARTY) - NIGHT

Rachel's parent's colonial in the 'burbs. A formal cocktail hour in a tastefully-decorated living room.

Nathan small-talks with stuffy MR. SAM DRISCOLL, 60, and his semi-circle of WASPY New England cronies.

NATHAN
Four years at my old job and most people still just called me 'Hey Tech Guy'. One week at Infinity Funds and everyone knows my name.

MR. DRISCOLL
You've got a bright future. With Rachel and Infinity.

NATHAN
Mr. Driscoll, you took a chance on me and I won't let you--

VAL
Bachelor party countdown! Fourteen days, sixteen hours and twelve minutos!

In a Ween T-shirt and blazer, Val sneaks up from behind and smacks Nathan's ass.

VAL
Found this in my closet. I wanted to save it for the bach party, but I couldn't resist!

Val puts one of those novelty hard-hats with the beer holders on Nathan's head. Nathan immediately takes it off and fixes his hair.

NATHAN

Val, thanks so much for coming.
Hey, grab yourself a drink and I'll
find you in a sec to talk.

Nathan turns away before Val can show he already has a drink.
Val looks around for a place to put the stupid beer-helmet.

DIANE

You really know how to class up a
party.

Diane comes over.

VAL

It's a private joke. I thought he'd
get a kick out of it.

Val tosses the helmet behind a couch.

VAL

So who'd you bring? Lemme guess.
Capped teeth guy from the aquarium?

DIANE

Andy left an eight percent tip
after perfect service. Jason would
vote for Bush again in a heartbeat.
Calvin doth protest a little too
much about his past bisexual
experience. And Xavier threw a
hissy fit when I beat him out of
twenty dollars playing Suduko.

VAL

You dig too deep for a first date.
Keep it light. Favorite movies,
ideal porno names, dead people you'd
like to party with. And Jesus, no
betting. Why do you push so hard for
these poor guys to keep up?

DIANE

I don't even need them to keep up.
I just need them to... try.

VAL

Hey, what about Dog Park guy?

DIANE

Alfred was supposed to come
tonight. Instead he had his lawyer
call--he's suing for two stitches.

Val watches at a cute Caterer pass by.

DIANE
 (glancing around)
 Where's your slut-du-jour?

VAL
 I had some fun dates. And that
 Namiko is one freaky hellcat. She
 carries a ball-gag in her purse and
 does this thing with her leg--

DIANE
Way too much information.

VAL
 Right. Anyway, in the end inviting
 a date to an engagement party
 seemed like it would send too
 strong a message.

DIANE
 Wow. You've elevated fear of
 commitment into a kind of art form.

VAL
 But not only that. I mean
 (motioning to crowd)
 ... why bring sand to the beach?

DIANE
 Being your wingwoman could put me
 off men forever. To think I wasted
 so many plumb opportunities in
 college to go lesbian.

VAL
 C'mon, look around you. Thank God
 Alfred's suing you. This place is
 gonna be the hottest gene pool in
 greater Boston tonight.

DIANE
 Rachel is always talking about how
 adorable her cousins are.

As a Caterer passes, Val grabs two drinks off the tray.

VAL
 That's the spirit. What better
 place to mingle and be single.

He hands both drinks to Diane and grabs a third for himself.
 Diane can't help but smile and toasts with Val.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

As the polite cocktail hour continues--a rowdy crowd's gathered around the piano in the corner.

A tipsy Diane shares the piano bench with one of Rachel's "adorable" toe-headed cousins, SKIP (17) as they play the "Cheers" theme song. Val leads half-a-dozen relatives in off-key song. Someone's uncle is sporting Val's beer hardhat.

EVERYONE

*Where everybody knows your name/
And they're always glad you came!*

Nathan cuts through the crowd and puts coasters under the cocktail glasses on the piano. A concerned Rachel stands behind him.

NATHAN

Val? Val?!

DIANE

Primo party, Nathan.

VAL

Sounds like the marrying man wants something a little more thematic. Diane, you know White Wedding?

Diane shakes her head and belts back her drink. But Skip plucks out a couple notes of the Billy Idol hit.

DIANE

So brilliant. Why didn't I know a sweet boy like you when I was 17.

SKIPPY

18 in May.

They start banging out the tune as Val leads the singers.

EVERYBODY

*Hey little sister what have you
done/ Hey little sister who's the
only one!*

NATHAN

Seriously Val, I need to talk--

A Caterer rings a dinner BELL--hauling the singing and sending everyone rushing for the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A cavernous room with hunting red walls. The long table is crowded with friends and family. It's toast time and an uncharacteristically drunk Diane waltzes around with the microphone.

DIANE

... And I'm just so glad that my Rach found Nathan! And Nathan's such a sweetie-sweetheart. Look at how sweet he is.

Diane leans over and tickles Nathan. She stumbles and Val steadies her.

DIANE

He doesn't care if she sobs during reality shows and she doesn't give a flying fig if he has a girly-laugh. That's the mysterious connection that we call 'love'.

VAL

Here, here!

The guests exchange worried looks. Only Val seems genuinely interested in Diane's sloppily-heartfelt speech.

DIANE

All their joy, mutual admiration and great sex is palpable in the air tonight...

Rachel widens her eyes at Nathan to do something.

DIANE

...Everyone close their eyes for a second and just smell the love in this room--

Coming to her rescue, Val shoots to his feet and starts CLAPPING.

VAL

Great speech! Smell the love is right.

Val pulls Diane into a hug and helps her into her seat amidst a smattering of applause. Nathan stands up shyly.

NATHAN

I'll be brief. I just want to thank my future in-laws for hosting such an amazing party. And most of all, for raising such an amazing daughter.

"Aaawws" and applause.

NATHAN

I'm not much of a public speaker. Especially compared to who I've asked to give the next toast. I think you all know this funny man.

Bursting with pride, Val winks at the surly albino teenager, TEDDIE (15) slouched next to him.

NATHAN

Give it up for my Best Man...
Teddie Jr!

Val springs to his feet, throws his arm around Nathan and grabs the mic.

VAL

Hey, hey! How's everybody doing?! I've known Nathan since freshman year... and I hope for Rachel's sake he's done something about his snoring. Ha, don't worry bud, I won't roast you too bad. Seriously, this guy's my best amigo--

Confused chatter from crowd. Nathan whispers to Val and points to young Teddie who smirks haughtily.

VAL

Wha-- The braceface?

Mortified, Nathan cups the microphone.

NATHAN

He's Rachel's little brother. I tried to say something before, but you were playing TV theme song.

Nathan reaches across Val and hands Teddie the mic. Stunned, Val drops down in his seat. With a big orthodonture-heavy grin, Teddie pushes back from the table and bumps Val along the way.

TEDDIE

What's crackin' people?! Great spread, but hey dad save a little something-something in the bank for me!

The room explodes with laughter and applause.

INT. TV DEN - LATER

The party's LITTLE KIDS are having a wrestling match atop a pile of the guests coats as a Pixar movie blares on TV.

As dinner continues, Rachel drags a dizzy Diane into the room and shuts the door.

RACHEL

You think we're at Evening at the Improv? My god, how many Cape Codders did you have?! This is so not like you, Di.

DIANE

What's happening? I'm becoming one of those women on "Starting Over". Oh God, I'm the world's worst friend. I'm so, so sorry.

RACHEL

It's not your fault. It's that Val. I finally pry Nathaniel away and now he's got you in his grips.

DIANE

Without you, I'm such a retarded leper in social settings. He's just trying to help me meet some nice guys.

RACHEL

It's my engagement and you two are draped over the piano like a lounge act. He's dragging you down and I don't like it.

Rachel glances at the Kids wrestling on the coats.

RACHEL

Connor, stop tickling her there! That's your first cousin!

DIANE

Val's not so bad. He's a very clever guy, he's just immature too. And a really terrible dresser.

Feeling woozy, Diane leans against the mantle. She gets hit in the head with a Furby thrown around by the Kids.

DIANE

Rachel, if someone was going to get ill in the next few seconds where would be the best place--

Rachel rushes Diane to the window to vomit. The Kids stop rough-housing to snicker and make gross-out faces.

EXT. POOL PATIO - NIGHT

As dinner continues, Nathan shivers with Val on the patio.

VAL

How's that fifteen-year-old snowman gonna throw you the world's most insane bachelor party?

NATHAN

Look, you're still a groomsman.

VAL

Yeah, so's your godbrother with hairlip. I can't believe you let your ball n' chain-to-be chisel me out of Best Man.

NATHAN

Jesus, you really are a jackass.

VAL

That's so Rachel talking! Why don't I just have this conversation with her.

Nathan pushes a shocked Val. He stumbles back and slams against the house.

NATHAN

All those years you acted like you were the main attraction and I was just this sideshow puppy who should be grateful to hang with you. Well now look. I'm marrying a ten and you're new drinking buddy is our psychotic maid of honor.

VAL

C'mon, ten's a bit high. And Diane's not totally psycho. Is that was this is about? You're getting married because I didn't appreciate you enough. Fine.

(shouting, cupping hands)

Nathan "Hot Dog" Carlyle is the best wingmen in the worl--!!

Nathan rushes Val. Val stumbles and falls over chaise lounge. He tackles Nathan and smashes him into the bird bath. Val has him in a headlock as Nathan flails wildly, trying to sock him in the balls.

VAL

Say I'm not a jackass. Say it!

The porch door opens and a livid Mr. Driscoll pokes his head out. The guys freeze.

MR. DRISCOLL

Nathaniel. Before you destroy all my patio furniture maybe you would care to join your party for the aperitif.

NATHAN

Yes, sir.

Nathan smooths his hair, sheepishly hurries inside. Val fixes the over-turned chairs as Mr. Driscoll glares, then shuts the door.

INT. VAL'S CAR - NIGHT

As the party continues inside, a sickly Diane cools her forehead against the window as Val starts his car. His lights illuminate the driveway--they're blocked in by cars.

VAL

Fuck. We're trapped by luxury cars.

DIANE

Well I can't show my face back in there. My humiliation quota for the night is full.

VAL

Forget them. It's not our fault we know how to have a good time.

DIANE

It was pretty stuffy until we high-jacked the piano.

VAL

Hell yeah. Without us, it'll wind down real quick. We'll wait.

Val and Diane sit and watch through the window as the party winds down inside the house.

VAL

So... who you got on tap for Saturday night?

DIANE

Remember Marcus from the Theatre? He's very sharp--started a chain of organic markets. Anyway, he's taking me to my tennis club's Spring Solstice. I've got a good feeling... You?

VAL

I've got the redhead from yoga. I Googled some smoking photos from her field hockey days. Taking her on the Freedom Trail Pub Crawl. I think it could be a slam dunk.

DIANE

Maybe by the time you stick your tongue down her throat, you'll even remember her name.

But Val's not listening. Diane follows his gaze to the window where Nathan and Rachel small-talk with guests. Val white-knuckles the wheel.

VAL

When I met Nathan he was still listening to Pantera and couldn't talk to a girl without breaking into hives. I did so much for him and he ditches me the second Rachel snaps her fingers. What's she ever done for him?

DIANE

Loved him. Given him confidence. Got him a new job. Bought him designer glasses.

VAL

Yeah, yeah, yeah. This coming from the Maid of Honor.

Diane moans and bangs her head against the window.

VAL

You gonna barf again?

DIANE

If you keep on about Nathan--yes!
 Maybe if your feelings weren't all
 tied up with him, you could spare a
 few for the women you spend so much
 time hunting down and so little
 time getting to know. Nathan's
 moved on, stop being a big pissy
 baby and do the same!

Chastised, Val turns the volume up on a Neko Case CD and stares forlornly ahead... Finally, Diane sighs and pats his neck.

DIANE

He was a weenie not to have picked
 you. You'd be a great best man.

VAL

Thanks... but, you're totally
 right. It's silly. I don't even
 like weddings anyway.

DIANE

Now I'll have to dance with Teddie.
 That little shit grabbed my ass
 twice tonight.

Val and Diane laugh... They listen to the sad songs and watch the party wind down inside.

INT. DRISCOLL'S DRIVEWAY - DAWN

The sun rises over the Driscoll house. The driveway is long since cleared out. The CD's skipping. Val sleeps against the window with Diane passed out on his shoulder.

TEDDIE

Too cheap to spring for a motel?!

Val's shoots awake to Teddie's ass pressed against his window. Diane wakes too.

VAL

What the---!

In a prep school blazer, Teddie runs off. Diane and Val look at each other and scoot to opposite sides of the car.

EXT. TROPHY ROOM, COUNTRY CLUB - NIGHT

An evening-gowned Diane and Marcus are among a throng of well-dressed guests walking towards ballroom. Marcus slows to peruse the wall plaques and trophy cases.

MARCUS

Diane Keeler. Number four on the tennis ladder. And second place in the chip n' volley.

DIANE

I had a head cold that weekend.

MARCUS

(flirty)

I don't want to hear any excuses when I get you out on my court. Red clay. Not this asphalt you've been spoiled with.

Marcus keeps walking, but Diane sets her jaw at the challenge.

INT. APARTMENT (FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE BAMBOO ROOM) - NIGHT

Val's is no longer the messy bachelor crib, but a spotless pad with Ansel Adams pictures, mood lighting and coffee table books. Bocelli's operatic tenor thunders on the stereo.

Val and Candace (the redhead from yoga) are not at the Tiki Bar, but in front of a huge cascading chocolate contraption.

CANDACE

When you asked me back to your place for dessert, I was a little skeptical. But this chocolate fondue fountain is to die for.

They dip skewered strawberries into the chocolate and eat.

VAL

It was a gift from mom. I live to cook. Hmmm. This Bavarian chocolate makes me so thirsty. More champagne?

Val refills a couple ridiculously tall champagne flutes.

CANDACE

Mind if I snoop?

Candace peruses framed photos of Val at the Great Wall of China, on safari, etc (which look suspiciously Photoshopped).

CANDACE

Wow. Great pics.

VAL

My name is Val Danko and I'm a travel-aholic.

She comes to a series of framed baby photos.

VAL
Nieces and nephews of my third cousin.
God, I could just eat them up.

Impressed, Candace moves on to the bookshelf.

CANDACE
Morrison, Lamb, Franzen. I've read
all these too!... Aren't they all
Oprah selections?

VAL
Huh. Are they?

Candace spins around and wipes a bit of chocolate off Val's
cheek--then licks it off her finger.

CANDACE
I'm gonna use the little girl's
room.

Val watches Candace walk down the hall--her dress is static-
clinging to reveal a leopard-skin thong. Giddy, Val refills
the champagne. His phone rings, he picks up.

VAL
Bamboo Room should have been
condemned years ago. Your
redecorating tips were pure genius.

INT. BATHROOM STALL, COUNTRY CLUB - CONTINUOUS

In her gown with hair splayed everywhere, Diane's perched on
top of a toilet, holed up in a bathroom stall.

DIANE
Theatre Guy walked out on me.

VAL (O.S.)
What?

DIANE
We were arm wrestling. He got upset
and stormed out.

VAL (O.S.)
Arm wrestling? It's a first date,
not the President's Challenge.

DIANE
He actually beat me. Unfortunately,
he ripped his blazer pretty bad.

(MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)
 How could I spend my life with
 someone who's such a bad sport?

VAL (O.S.)
 You don't have to spend your life!
 You were just having a drink for
 godsakes! I gotta go. We'll rustle
 up some fresh man meat tomorrow---

DIANE
 I'm already at the club. Alone!
 Everyone's seen me. You have to
 come play my date.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

VAL
 Mission impossible, partner.

DIANE (O.S.)
 What about the wingman code?!

VAL
 You've seen too many movies.

DIANE (O.S.)
 Please Val! This is an emergenc--

Val hangs up just as Candace emerges from the bathroom.

CANDACE
 Hmm, I love a man with bathroom
 potpourri.

Candace lunges for Val and jams her tongue in his ear.

VAL
 That feels really-- Oooh, you got
 that wedged in there deep.

Val's cell buzzes on the counter. Val can't help see the name
 on the call screen flashing over and over: WINGWOMAN.

INT. MAIN ROOM, COUNTRY CLUB - LATER

A grandiose ballroom. A swing trio plays in the corner. Val
 and Diane dance among the refined couples.

VAL
 I could be down-facing dog with
 Candace right now.

DIANE
 I said 'thank you'. I have tennis
 elbow and hate golf.
 (MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)
That means I'm paying a mint in
dues for the Easter buffet and
this.

VAL
So let's get busy...
(scanning room)
How's about two o'clock?

Diane follows Val's gaze. A preppie man in a bow-tie, AARON
(32), catches them looking. He smiles politely back.

DIANE
Oh good God, no.

VAL
You're right. Bow-tie look is so
Log Cabin Republican. How about--
Ow, my hands.

Diane's squeezing Val as she hyperventilates.

DIANE
That's my ex-fiance.

VAL
What?

DIANE
We've got to get out of--

Diane spins around and comes face to face with smarmy Aaron.
Diane is instantly all smiles.

DIANE
Hello Aaron! What a surprise!

AARON
Diane! What's it been--four, five
years. Thought I should pop over
and say hello.

DIANE
Hello! Hello! Hello!

Damn, this is awkward. Aaron gives Diane a flirty looking-
over.

AARON
You've taken pretty good care of
yourself. You should call me
sometime if you want to look at
condos or just chat about old--

A sparkle-lipped blonde at least ten years younger, STACY,
bounds over and throws her arms around Aaron.

STACY

There you are. This place is so huge, I almost got lost coming from the little girl's room.

Things just got ten times more awkward.

AARON

Oh... This is Stacy. Sweetheart, this is Diane Keeler, an old... school friend.

STACY

Ms. Keeler? I think I interned for your firm last summer!

DIANE

Oh my. What a wonderfully small world.

STACY

You were so amazing to watch work. By the way, thanks for my recommendation letter. Of course, I won't really be needing it now...
(displaying huge ring)
Aaron and I are tying the knot in May.

Diane's huge smile is frozen. Val chimes in.

VAL

Aaron, Val Danko. Major props on the bow-tie, so many people just look like pretentious idiots wearing one.

AARON

Um, thanks. Well, we'll see you around. We just got a membership here last month.

DIANE

Great news. Greater than great. I'll be gunning for you at the chip n' volley.

Aaron pulls Stacy away. Val continues dancing with Diane.

DIANE

You know what? I need to go right now. I have an obscene amount of work to do.

VAL

What?

DIANE

There's finalizing the Robelson's trust, Monday's deadline on the Carnegie will, the Women Center's non-profit status--

A frantic Diane's pulling Val across the dance floor. He jerks her back.

VAL

I should be lathered in chocolate right now, but I'm here for your big night and you want to turn tail?

DIANE

I strongly suggest you remove that hand. I'm feeling a lot of hostility to your gender right now.

VAL

What else is new? You cross-examine anything with a penis, yet when the one person who really deserves a ride in your bitch-mobile saunters over, you give him the widest shit-eating grin I've ever seen.

Diane sees Val's dead serious. Over at a corner table, Aaron's harassing his waiter while Stacy nuzzles his neck.

DIANE

I really, really, really hate when you're right.

INT. CORNER TABLE, COUNTRY CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron and Stacy are eating when Diane struts over with Val behind her.

DIANE

(to Stacy)

He's addicted to internet porno, cheats at boardgames and if he hasn't gotten selfish about oral yet, just wait. I hope for your sake he didn't buy that ring at Tiffany's.

Diane turns on Aaron.

DIANE

I'm glad you enjoyed all those dinners on my tab enough to get your own membership.

(MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)
 You don't have to worry about
 bumping into me here again, I'm
 canceling mine. This place has
 really gone to shit.

Diane yanks Aaron's bow-tie undone and walks off. Val peels
 n' eats a shrimp from Aaron's plate and eyes Stacy.

VAL
 You're way too hot for this clown.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

A giddy Diane bursts outside and almost mows down incoming
 country clubbers. A laughing Val follows.

DIANE
 Jesus, I should have done that
 years ago! I feel like I just
 dropped fifty pounds. Did you see
 the look on his smug little badger
 face?!

VAL
 You ask me, you dodged the bullet
 with that guy. He couldn't keep his
 eyes off my package.

Diane gives Val a kiss on the cheek.

DIANE
 You were so right. Thank you.

On a high, Diane gives the confused red-jacketed VALET her
 ticket and a peck on each cheek too.

DIANE
 So where to now?

VAL
 We'll hit that jazz place or the
 tapas bar.

DIANE
 No, no. I wanna go some place fun!

INT. KARAOKE STAGE, CHINATOWN - NIGHT

Val's singing his heart out to "You're The One That I Want."

VAL
*Cause the power you're supplying/
 It's electrifying!*

A second voice--shy, unsure--chimes in.

DIANE
You better shape up?

Diane awkwardly stands up from amidst the cocktail tables with a microphone.

DIANE
 I don't think I can do this, Val.
 (back to singing)
Cause I need a friend!

Val waves at her to come on stage.

VAL
 You're a natural. Am I right?!

He appeals to the crowd who clap for Diane. Singing, she makes her way up to join Val.

VAL/ DIANE
You're the one that I want!

Val tries to take over the spotlight, but Diane's suddenly enjoying herself too. They both work for it.

VAL/ DIANE
Ew! Ew! Ew!

As Val sings, he watches Diane's profile in the footlights... He can't keep his eyes off her.

CUT TO:

It's getting late. A tipsy TRANSVESTITE SINGER with a five o'clock shadow croons "Forever in Blue Jeans" on stage. Val and Diane are huddled together, flipping through the songbook.

VAL
 How about "Under Pressure"? How's your falsetto?

DIANE
 What's that one crazy duet you put on one of my mixes?
 (punk crooning)
How do you do that cool dance/ Baby don't split those hot pants!

VAL
 Disc four, song six. Peaches and Iggy Pop singing...

DIANE/VAL
 "Kick It"!

VAL
Stellar choice. Why didn't I think
of that?

As Diane looks it up in the book, Val checks her watch. Diane catches him.

DIANE
I love it! I'm out-lasting the
original party animal. Is midnight
past your bedtime?

VAL
(a little uneasy)
In your dreams.

Diane turns towards the Sumo wrestler-sized BARTENDER.

DIANE
āçā Sé÷ê_ìïïðéö äøéöï.

The Bartender trudges off.

VAL
Whoa, back up. You speak Chinese?

DIANE
Basic Mandarin. I did a year after
college there teaching ESL in farm
communities.

VAL
Not bad. My year after college I
was selling kind burritos on Phish
tour.
(off Diane's blank look)
That's a band. What did you say to
him anyway?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!!!

The Trannie Singer on the mic leads the bar in "Happy
Birthday" as the Bartender appears with a flaming cake.

VAL
Holy shit. How did you know?

DIANE
Noticed it on your release form for
Roller Derby. No big deal.

TRANNIE SINGER
Give it up for the lovely couple.

The whole bar applauds.

DIANE

Welcome to your 30's, Mr. Danko.

A grateful Val smiles at Diane as he blows out the candles.

INT. THE GLASS SLIPPER (STRIP BAR) - NIGHT

A red-lit Combat Zone strip bar. Nathan's bachelor party is whooping it up with Strippers. Like a kid in a candy store, Teddie Jr. is running around shoving one dollar bills in every thong in sight.

Nathan (decked out with a cone-hat, feather boas, etc.) and Val share a sofa in the corner and receive private dances from TWO STRIPPERS.

NATHAN

I am so sorry, Val.

VAL

Forget about it. It's okay.

NATHAN

With the wedding and everything,
your 3-0 just slipped my mind.

VAL

Nathan. It's cool. Seriously.

Nathan sees Val's sincere.

NATHAN

Okay, well at least let me take you
out. How's this weekend?

VAL

Sorry, got a couple dates.

NATHAN

Monday? Tuesday?

VAL

Ditto, shoot.

NATHAN

Jeez. How many women are you
juggling?

VAL

With Diane as my copilot, sky's the
limit. Women see a grounded, sexy
one of their own with me and assume
I'm the whole package.

NATHAN

Huh. Diane is kinda sexy I guess.

Feeling ignored, Val's Stripper is dancing up a storm. Val gets a bra flung in his face and doesn't even notice.

VAL

You should see our new routines. The other night we did this one "Topsy Cousins" and next thing you know, this 6 foot American Apparel model's inviting me to a Cuddle Party on Thursday.

NATHAN

You lucky bastard. They say no dry humping allowed at those things, but I don't believe that for second.

VAL

The kicker is I can't even make it.

NATHAN

What? Are you having surgery?

VAL

Thursday's Diane and I's theatre night. You wouldn't believe all the talent you can scoop up at intermission.

NATHAN

Let me get this straight. You're turning down a sure thing date with a ten to go out and get more digits to get more dates--

VAL

Huh... Yeah... I guess so.

NATHAN

--With Diane.

VAL

Of course with Diane. I was skeptical at the get-go, but she's a natural. Fast on her feet, theatrical flair, very adaptable. You should have seen us at karaoke--

NATHAN

You took her to... karaoke?

VAL

Yeah, sorry. Hey, don't go all brokeback on me.

NATHAN

I'm not going all broke--
 (flustered)
 I'm just saying the whole thing's a
 little weird, that's all.

Val gets bumped in the nose with the Stripper's ass.

VAL

Enough, enough. Thank you very
 much, Layla. That's was a religious
 experience.

STRIPPER

What? The song's not done.

Val sticks a couple twenties in her g-string.

VAL

Do some thong-shopping on me. I
 want you to go Romper-Room on this
 guy here.
 (slapping Nathan's knee)
 Happy bachelor party, buddy.

Val stands up and walks towards the jukebox.

NATHAN

You know what I'd say if I didn't
 know you?

Hair-askew, Nathan peeks out from in between the two
 Strippers now dancing for him.

NATHAN

I'd say you had a thing for Diane.

VAL

Ha-ha-ha! Keep telling yourself
 that if it helps get you through
 your last week of freedom.

But Val walks off with a troubled look on his face.

INT. THEATRE MEZZANINE (INTERMISSION) - NIGHT

Val and Diane are in their usual spot. Having traded in her
 pantsuits for a V-neck dress, Diane looks dynamite.

DIANE

I always worried I wouldn't be
 taken seriously at work or look as
 good as Rachel if I wore something
 a little daring.

(MORE)

DIANE (cont'd)

But I had four co-workers offer to pick me up lunch today. You were right as rain, Val.

VAL

You sure you're not cold?

Val makes a show of glancing around, shakes his head.

VAL

I'm not seeing anyone up my alley.

DIANE

Are you blind? Four o'clock. Busty, young and clearly inebriated. Your prime demographic.

VAL

Eh. Too... desperate. Let's boogie.

DIANE

Okay. The tapas bar has a good Tuesday scene.

VAL

I thought we could do something mello, take in a flick.

DIANE

Hmm. I spill popcorn on a target and you just happen to be sitting next to them with extra napkins?

VAL

How about taking the night off? The Coolidge is having a Wong Kar-Wai retrospective.

DIANE

(looking past him)
Ohmygod.

VAL

I know you just gave me those DVD's to keep chick flicks around the apartment, but I watched "In the Mood for Love" and was kinda hooked-

Diane slaps Val in the chest, cocks her head. Across the mezzanine, Troy Fitzgerald Jr is flipping through his Playbill! He's with his dignified mother, MRS. FITZGERALD.

VAL

Uck, he's really pushing the envelope with her. Never would have pegged him as into cougars.

DIANE

That's clearly his mother.

VAL

You sure? Looks like an old working gal from here.

DIANE

He's taking his mom to the theatre. What a sweetheart. Let's move in.

VAL

Slow down, Speed Racer. You do remember whose night it is?

DIANE

You're pulling out the rulebook after the bimbo buffet you've been having since you met me?

VAL

For your information--

DIANE

My white whale, my Holy Grail, my reson detre is less than twenty feet away. Are you not seeing how drop-dead gorgeous he is?

VAL

If you're into the big-chinned metrosexual thing. He's not gonna be cast in the next "Ocean's Eleven" or anything.

DIANE

He's very accomplished.

VAL

Work-a-holic. Probably at the office until ten and keeps a bottle of DeWar's in the bottom drawer.

DIANE

Doesn't drink.

VAL

Oh boy. Ex-alkie.

DIANE

Nope. Health nut.

VAL

Fitness junkie. Worst kind of narcissist.

DIANE
Enough. We're moving in. Let's do
"The Stunning Tie."

VAL
That's so played out. I don't think
this is a good--

But Diane's already pulling Val across the room.

DIANE
What a stunning tie!

Diane approaches Troy and Mrs. Fitzgerald with a winning smile.

DIANE
My cousin's colorblind so when I
see something I like for him I
always write down the brand name.

MRS. FITZGERALD
How sweet.

DIANE
Mind if I peek?

Diane pulls Troy close. He gets an eyeful down her dress and she swishes her hair across his face.

DIANE
Burberry's. What good taste. I'm
Diane by the way.
(dramatic double-take)
You know, you look very familiar.

TROY
Likewise.
(studying her)
Did you ever go to Camp Sebago up
in Maine?... Diane?

DIANE
YES!!!

Diane screams it and gives Val a can-you-believe-it-look. Val covertly pinches her ass to quiet her down.

DIALOGUE
(recovering cool)
Lemme think...um... hmmm... Troy?

TROY
Good memory. I remember you were
very competitive.
(MORE)

TROY (cont'd)

We were in the potato sack race together and I was terrified of what you would do to me if we lost.

DIANE

How times have changed. Oh, I'm very easy-going now. Low maintenance Diane. Easy-peezy Japanesie that's me, right Val.

Val shrugs.

DIANE/ TROY

You look great.

They both laugh at their simultaneous compliment. The LIGHTS dim signaling the upcoming curtain.

VAL

We should probably get to our seats, hon.

Val's "hon" stops Diane, Troy and Mrs. Fitzgerald like a bucket of ice-water.

TROY

I'm sorry. I thought you were her--

VAL

Of course, right. I'm her queer friend.

TROY

--Cousin.

DIANE

(flustered)

He's not gay, just colorblind and mentally-challenged. I'm sorry, so how are you liking the show?

MRS. FITZGERALD

We better get back to our seats.

TROY

Mom's right. Nice seeing you.

A weirded-out Mrs. Fitzgerald is pulling Troy off.

DIANE

Maybe I'll see you again some--

Troy quickly disappears in the crowd rushing to their seats.

VAL

Oops.

Val chuckles at his faux paus, elbows Diane to join in--she's NOT laughing.

EXT. THEATRE STEPS - MOMENTS LATER

DIANE
HON?! Hon?! Are you out of your
mind!?

Val has his arms up as Diane thrashes him with her purse on the steps.

DIANE
I've been having dreams about him
since the mid-90's. His mother
almost liked me for godsakes!

VAL
I got confused. I forgot which bit
we were doing.

Diane relents. Val pulls himself up by the steps railing.

DIANE
What bit do you call me "hon" in?

VAL
I haven't taught you that one yet.
It's, um, called "Hey Hon." It's
like gold.

Diane squints at Val.

DIANE
I know what's going on here.

VAL
(nervous)
You do?

DIANE
You just cockblocked me.

VAL
What?! No. No way. And watch your
mouth.

DIANE
You were bitter because it was your
night, so you sabotaged me. Low
blow, Val.
(heading inside)
I'm getting my coat.

VAL
Diane! Wait--

But she's gone.

VAL
(sotto)
Stop being such a puss. Just say
it. Say something.

Out in the cold, Val nervously paces the sidewalk, muttering to himself.

ELDERLY CASHIER (O.S.)
You two must really love this show.

Val looks up. The ELDERLY WOMAN at the ticket booth smiles.

ELDERLY CASHIER
I've seen you three or four times.
You're a darling couple. My husband
and I saw "Cats" 26 times when we
were dating.

VAL
Wow. "Mem-o-ries!" That's nice.
(smiling)
We are a darling couple, aren't we.

Val digs into his wallet.

VAL
Hey, how about two tickets for this
Saturday night.

ELDERLY CASHIER
Sold out... All I've got is a box
seat, but it's \$350 plus tax.

VAL
Holy shi-- What the hell. Charge
her up.

Val hands over his credit card and grins.

VAL
She's gonna be floored by this.

The Cashier is handing over the tickets when...

DIANE
AAARRGGGH!

... Diane bursts out of the theatre. Val puts his arms up for cover--but these are screams of joy. She jumps into his arms.

DIANE

He said yes! He said yeeesss!

Diane dances around like she just won Bob Barker's Showcase Showdown. Passersby rubberneck on the street.

VAL

What said who? Slow down.

DIANE

(breathless)

Troy was coming out of the men's room! I walked right up to him. I told him you were just a nutty friend who convinced me to try and pick him up with a routine. He thought it was hilarious. Anyway, I asked him out to dinner Saturday. He didn't even hesitate!

Val watches as Diane spins around. Seeing Val's not thrilled, she comes to a stop.

DIANE

Oh no... Do I have something in my teeth?

Val opens his mouth to speak.

VAL

I'm... um... so psyched for you.

Val slips the tickets in his pocket and smiles bravely.

INT. VAL'S CUBICLE, QUALITY MANUALS INC. - NIGHT

Pinned to the wall is a photobooth strip of Val and Diane making faces. In the empty office, Val is on the phone.

VAL

Hey Diane. Look, sorry I almost blew things for you the other night... Good, cool... So we still on for sushi tonight?... Another dinner with Troy?

EXT. BALCONY, CONDO - CONTINUOUS

A balcony of a plush condo. Diane overlooks the city with a glass of wine and the phone. Through the window behind her, an apron-clad Troy is cooking up a huge meal.

DIANE

He's exactly what I was looking for. I keep expecting to open a closet and find a stack of dead bodies... So... naturally, I have to put the brakes on our nights out... Val?

VAL (O.S.)

(quietly)

Huh. Oh I'm here.

Troy gives Diane the finger-guns through the window.

DIANE

Now don't be grouchy. You told me you had more numbers now than you knew what to do with anyway. But if you get in a pinch and need back-up, call me.

INT. VAL'S CUBICLE, QUALITY MANUALS INC. - CONTINUOUS

Slumped over in his chair, Val still talks a big game.

VAL

Don't worry about this guy. I've got a date tonight too, so I was just calling to cancel... Oh, that's Dog Park Girl on the other line. Gotta go--!

Val hangs up... and kicks his wastebasket. The office is dead quiet---except for typing in the distance.

INT. BREAKROOM, QUALITY MANUALS INC. - MOMENTS LATER

The lights are dimmed. Eli munches a Hot Pocket for dinner as he types on his laptop. Val walks up, flicks on the lights.

VAL

What are you doing in here?

Eli starts--he drops his gooey Hot Pocket all over his keyboard and hurries to wipe it up.

ELI

Do you mind?! My stoner roommate forgot to pay our wireless bill.

VAL

I thought you had another scorching J-date with--

Val notices the laptop screen.

VAL
(off screen)
Melissa?

Eli hurries to cover the screen, but Val hovers over it.

ELI
She has a headache and couldn't
meet me.

VAL
This says she lives in Missouri.
And that you're 6'5! And that's not
even close to how you spell
"cunnilingus".
(looking up from screen)
You've never even met any of these
women, have you?

Caught, Eli swallows all pride. The sound of an unanswered
reply BLEEPs and bleeps from his laptop.

ELI
Dating this way is much more...
economical. And hassle-free. Plus no
STD's. It just makes better sense.

Val looks from Eli to the computer and sighs.

VAL
Yeah. You're probably right.

Val pats Eli on the back, walks out as the Night Janitor
vacuums the hall.

INT. YOGA CLASS - MORNING

Val's in an expert camel pose with the rest of the class. The
pony-tailed male YOGI walks by and nods approvingly.

YOGI
Beautiful work. And no holes in
your sweatpants today either.

VAL
Thanks Yogi. Hey, you seen Diane in
class this week?

The Yogi leans in, eager to gossip.

YOGI

Her new beau flew her to his summer
digs in Maine for the weekend. He
has his own ashram.

Val's pose momentarily falters.

YOGI

Easy student. Hey, if I were you
I'd move in on Candace. She's
begging for it.

The Yogi arches his eyebrows across the studio. In a totally
different position than the rest of the class, Candace is
blatantly dry-humping her mat as she stares at Val.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The baby pictures and fondue fountain are gone--instead framed
album covers and Shepard Fairey prints adorn the walls. The
place looks good. Val folds laundry with the TV on.

Phil Collin's "Against All Odds" video comes on a Remember-
the-80's type show. Val moves to the music.

VAL

*So take a look at me now/ I'm just
an empty--*

Val catches himself singing along. He bangs the TV off. His
phone rings and he abruptly answers.

VAL

Wha?!... Namiko from sushi?
(deepening voice)
No, this is Val's roommate. Val's
down at Foxwoods again. Guy's got a
real gambling problem... Not to
mention his manic depression and
eating disorder.

INT. SOUTH BOSTON YMCA - NIGHT

Diane, Rachel and Nathan are in the stands at Roller Derby.
Troy waves up at them from the concession stand.

DIANE

He answers everything I ask,
doesn't sulk when I beat him at
poker. I haven't even slept over
and he's already cleared a shelf
for me in his medicine cabinet.

Switchblade Suzy rolls by on the track and slyly winks at Diane. Diane waves back.

RACHEL

Sounds great... So you're into him?

DIANE

I must be. I mean, he's passed every test with flying colors.

NATHAN

Sounds like the perfect man. Or just your run-of-the-mill cyborg.

Troy returns holding a big concessions box, a Derby Dolls T-shirt, hat, Styrofoam finger.

TROY

They were out of Diet Sprite, so I over-compensated.

Troy thrusts the concessions box on Diane. Rachel drapes her arms around Nathan to feed him popcorn. In the same move, Troy pushes a hot dog at Diane's mouth.

DIANE

Oh? Um. Thank--
(taking a bite)
This place is kinda fun in a campy way, right?

TROY

Sure thing... If you love it, I love it.
(to Nathan and Rachel)
Hey gang, why don't I get us season tickets?!

Nathan and Rachel each force a smile--this guy is too much.

DIANE

Troy, what would you say if I said I entered our names to be part of the half-time show?

TROY

Well we are supposed to meet mom for our reservations pretty soon...
(glancing at watch)
But goddamn I love how impulsive you are. What the hell!

Troy jumps on his seat Tom Cruise-style, addresses the crowd.

TROY

I don't know whether to have this wild woman committed or ravage her with kisses!

Troy clasps Diane into a tight hug. Diane gives a what-more-could-I-ask-for look. Nathan and Rachel exchange worried winces.

INT. JOHNNY D'S (ROCK CLUB) - NIGHT

An Afrobeat orchestra jams on stage. At the back of the crowd, Val sips a Coke and watches the show. Kiki, the sexy bassist, struts by with a bunch of admiring guys in tow.

VAL

Kiki.

KIKI

Oh. Hi.

She keeps walking, but Val squeezes past her entourage.

VAL

Hey listen... Remember I mentioned doing your website? You can relax-- this isn't me angling to go out with you anymore.

KIKI

We already have one.

VAL

Yeah, that your drummer probably did between bong hits on MS Front Page. I could grow a moustache in the time it took to load up.

KIKI

Actually, I did the site.

VAL

I'm just saying, only suckers buy CDs anymore and the concert poster is a dying art. A indie band's website is the number one way for them to get the word out.

KIKI

I'd have to talk to the band.

VAL

I'll even do this one on the house. If you don't love it, don't use it.

KIKI

Huh... guess I can't argue with that.

Kiki looks Val over--he seems different. And she likes it.

KIKI

So... why aren't you angling to go out with me anymore?

INT. VAL'S CUBICLE, QUALITY MANUALS INC. - MORNING

Val sits in his cube with Eli and a huge Japanese guy (SAKI DREAD) with Rasta dreadlocks and a pot leaf T-shirt.

VAL

The first window will be a Jamaican jungle... with a Tokyo bullet train running through it! The tabs will be old-school graffiti and labeled mp3's, lyrics, contact info--

SAKI DREAD

Whoa, mon. My groupies are wild. The X-rated photos these ladies send me are some serious stalker shit.

VAL

Eli here deals with all fan email traveling through all our band's sites. Oversexed groupies are all in a day's work for him.

(winking)

Right?

ELI

No problem!

VAL

Fans will not only download songs from the site, they'll get metadata-

MR. EXLEY

Val, did you finish the--

Exley walks in--and stops short seeing Eli and Saki Dread.

VAL

New drafts are on your desk.

MR. EXLEY

But? What is-- I don't--

VAL

Oh, meet Saki Dread. He's the Japan
meets Jamaica hybrid artist right
now. Saki D, meet Jerry. My boss.

The Asian Rasta blows Exley a kiss through his dreadlocks.

MR. EXLEY

My office. Now!

INT. MR. EXLEY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

An indignant Mr. Exley sits across from Val.

MR. EXLEY

Just cause you've decided to get
your work done on time, you think
you can turn your cube into
Burning Man?

VAL

My new biz venture--"Graphic
Content". Kickass websites for
kickass bands. Eli's interning too.
Check out a sample of my handiwork
at www.dwarfrimjobquartet.net

MR. EXLEY

You have a job!

VAL

About that. I'm probably gonna be
AWOL in six months or so.

Val knocks wood on Exley's desk.

MR. EXLEY

And you think I'm gonna let you
moonlight until you're good and
ready to quit.

VAL

Or you could fire me. And I could
use my last paycheck to get bombed
and drunk-dial New York to let them
know you've been putting stripbar
benders and no-tell motels on
company plastic.

Exley tries to stare Val down. Val stares back...

MR. EXLEY

Goddamitt. Think as a kid I dreamed
about making assembly manuals?!

(deflating)

(MORE)

MR. EXLEY (cont'd)

Get your work done perfectly and on time and use the Coffee Bean downstairs for guests. Other than that, do whatever the hell you want.

VAL

You're a real prince, Jerry.

Val reaching for the door when he glances back. Exley is staring at the framed photo on his desk... of his wife and daughter.

VAL

Listen, I know this redhead from yoga. She's single, spunky and melts for fondue. Swing by class tomorrow for a meet n' greet.

Val takes some tickets out of his pocket, hands them over.

VAL

Two boxseats for Cirque de Solei with your name on them.

MR. EXLEY

... Thanks, but what's the point? No spunky young thing wants to date me.

VAL

(leaning over desk)
Who said anything about dating?
She'd be the ideal... wingwoman.

Intrigued, Mr. Exley instantly straightens up.

INT. BACKROOM, NORTH END ITALIAN RESTERAUNT - NIGHT

Nathan and Rachel's Rehearsal Dinner in the backroom of an elegant Italian restaurant. The last guests trickle in.

Dapper in a new suit, Val chats with Nathan and Rachel, but is clearly speaking for Diane's benefit next to him.

VAL

...So now I'm negotiating with an indie label about doing their whole client roster at a discount.

Val casually slides Diane his fluorescent businesses card.

NATHAN

Wow. It's like I'm talking to Val 2.0.

RACHEL

I never thought I'd see the day.
Clean shaven and in a new suit too?

VAL
This? No, just a little something I
had hanging--

Teddie walks by and plucks the price tag off Val's collar.

VAL
--around.

Val, Rachel and Nathan all turn to Diane who's been silent.
Val flashes his most confident smile.

DIANE
New business, new suit.
Impressive... But where's your new
arm candy?

VAL
Oh, I didn't really feel like
asking anyone.

DIANE
Of course. Why bring sand to the
beach?

Val gulps, embarrassed. He leans closer to Diane.

VAL
I have to admit, I'm glad you're
solo too. I've been missing our--

TROY
Sorry I'm late, gang!

Troy bursts into the room. He gives Rachel a European-style
kiss and ruffles up Nathan's hair...

TROY
Incoming!

... and leans over to give Diane a big, lusty kiss.

TROY
My New York meeting ran late.
(to Nathan and Rachel)
Next time, we'll make it a couples
weekend. You didn't start the
speeches yet did you? I prepared a
doozy for you two.

Nathan and Rachel exchange looks.

TROY
Move over bacon. Thanks for warming
my seat.

A jealous Val is forced to move a seat down as Troy plops down next to Diane.

INT. BACKROOM, NORTH END ITALIAN RESTERAUNT - NIGHT

Everyone's enjoying dinner. Val's waiting in line for the bathroom when Diane slips over.

DIANE

Cute coat-check girl at two o'clock is checking you out. I've got time for a quick "Topsy Cousins".

VAL

No. It's cool. I'm taking the night off.

Diane can't help look a bit disappointed.

VAL

So... how are things with Troy?

DIANE

He's, you know, everything I said I always wanted.

VAL

Hey, that's great. Now just don't drop the m-bomb too soon.

DIANE

That's just it. Troy doesn't have a problem with m--

TROY

Somebody's ears are burning!

Flush. The Men's Room door opens and Troy bounds out.

TROY

The wedding will be in Manhattan. Better for business. It'll be big. Not tacky-Bradifer-big, but large enough so you don't have to sweat an invite.

Troy slaps a horrified Val on the back.

VAL

Hold it. You're... engaged?

DIANE

No, no. But Troy's even more neurotic than me about planning ahead. Don't get him started on the honeymoon.

TROY

Engaged to be engaged. I was never one to sit around on my meat mittens. And when you meet a successful woman who's also this much fun, why wait. She took me to this little karaoke dive the other--

DIANE

Troy, Val doesn't want to hear all this.

VAL

(clearly hurt)
Sounds like a blast.

The banging of silverware on glasses as Rachel and Nathan are spotted kissing back at the table.

TROY

That'll be us someday, Princess Di.

Troy pulls Diane back towards the table. She catches Val watching them with a longing look.

DIANE

Let me know if you change your mind about the coat-check girl.

Val smiles until Diane turns back around. His smile drops-- this sucks. He heads into the bathroom vacated by Troy.

VAL

(waving air)
Uck! Jesus.

INT. BACKROOM, NORTH END ITALIAN RESTERAUNT - LATER

The party's clearing out. Val takes his coat from the cute Coat Check Girl without a glance--he's too busy watching Diane across the room.

RACHEL

What kind of lady-killer are you?

Val turns to find Rachel watching him.

VAL

Huh?

RACHEL

Think I didn't notice you staring all night? So you stopped double-fisting and can color-coordinate now. Goodie for you. None of that means diddly if you don't say a few simple things to her.

Rachel motions to the door where Troy is telling a story with his arms around a miserable Nathan and bored Diane.

VAL

First of all, I don't know what the hell you're talking about. Second...
(defeated)
she's clearly met her dream dude.

RACHEL

You know as well as I, Diane loves equations. Troy-boy's a perfect fit on paper, but anyone can see her heart isn't in it. My girl needs rescuing ASAP.

VAL

I thought you thought I was an immature prick.

RACHEL

You're the favorite guy of my two favorite people. Maybe I reconsidered.

Val takes a step forward... but stops short as Troy pulls Diane close and they prepare to leave. Val spins around.

VAL

Christ, I'm not used to working solo. I mean, he's this wet-dream of a catch and I don't even know what the hell I would say to her anyway!?

Rachel shakes her head at him and walks off.

RACHEL

Or maybe I was right about you to begin with.

EXT. ST. VINCENT'S CHURCH - AFTERNOON

The church's back room is abuzz. The bridesmaids chatter. A chubby priest, FATHER JUAN, goes over last minute details. In the corner, Teddie pulls from a pocket flask.

Radiant as maid of honor, Diane makes one last adjustment to her hair in the mirror. Troy appears behind her to help-- Diane waves him away.

TROY

What do you think about emerald green for our bridesmaids?

DIANE

What are you doing back here?

TROY

Is green too conservative for you? And you're okay with mother being in your bridal party, right?

DIANE

Sure, fine.

Troy hogs the mirror now, checking his own look.

TROY

You know what I really want? Bagpipes. Really makes me well up inside. Do you have any Scotch in you? I think--

DIANE

For chrissakes, it's been three weeks. Just step off, Troy!

The bridal party spins around. Troy glowers like a child.

DIANE

Sorry, it's a hectic morning... Why don't you lend the ushers a hand outside?

Troy hurries off. Diane sighs and goes back to her hair... when Rachel pops up in the window in front of her.

DIANE

My God!

Beautiful, but frazzled in her wedding dress, Rachel holds her finger to her lips.

RACHEL

(mouthing)

EMER-GEN-CY!

Rachel waves for Diane to come outside. Diane slips out the exit door without anyone noticing--except Teddie who spots her and follows.

INT. VAL'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Looking sharp in his tux, Val drives with the stereo playing. In shotgun, Kiki looks sexy, yet trashy in a skimpy black thrift store dress that shows off more than a few tattoos.

KIKI

Fans can't stop raving about the site you made us. Consider your cover waved at the next gig.

(re: stereo's music)

Olivia Tremor Control. I love this album.

VAL

Really?

KIKI

So better than Neutral Milk Hotel. I've got a ton of Elephant Six bootlegs at home... If you're lucky, maybe I'll invite you over to hear some later.

Kiki grins slyly in case the invite wasn't blatant enough.

VAL

Cool. Hey, I'm glad you could come.

Val smiles at Kiki, but she's busy digging in her huge purse.

KIKI

Yeah, the earlier we can slip out of this thing the better. Monogamy's such a bogus social construct. I hate weddings.

VAL

Yeah, I know what you mean. There's so much pressure and--

KIKI

I mean I really fucking hate them!

Val jumps a little at the outburst.

KIKI

This is open bar, right?

VAL

Oh, I imagine so. It should be fun--

Val coughs and waves SMOKE away. Kiki's smoking an enormous joint. She exhales in his face.

KIKI
 Don't worry, there's some crushed
 Ritalin in this hash, so we won't
 be complete zombies.

Kiki passes the joint to Val, but he waves it off.

KIKI
 Relax, I've got Rice Krispie treats
 in my purse if it's a long service.

EXT. ST. VINCENT'S CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Val pulls into the mostly empty church parking lot.

Holding up her pink dress, Diane dashes out of nowhere,
 across the pavement and bangs on his windshield.

DIANE
 Thank God!

Startled, Kiki drops her roach in her lap.

KIKI
 Fuck.

Val screeches to a stop, hops out.

VAL
 Jesus, what's wrong?! Am I late?

DIANE
 Nathan's locked himself in the
 rectory bathroom!

VAL
 What?!

DIANE
 Guests should be here any minute.
 He says he'll only talk to you and--

Diane double-takes as a dazed Kiki stumbles from the car.

VAL
 Oh. Diane, Kiki. Kiki, Diane.

The women exchange fake-friendly smiles.

DIANE
 (hushed)
 The sushi bar? Yoga?

VAL
 I met her on my own.

DIANE
Oh. Really.

Diane keeps checking Kiki out. Val clears his throat.

VAL
Um. Nathan?

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE, CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

At the door to the basement restroom, Rachel stands behind Teddie as he bangs on the door.

TEDDIE
First you barf on me at the bach party, now this. I never would have been best man if I knew what a pussy you were!

Rachel pushes Teddie away.

RACHEL
I said I don't need your help, Teddie!
(knocking herself)
Nathaniel! Please now sweetheart, stop being such a pussy!

DIANE
Cavalry a-coming!

Diane runs over with Val.

DIANE
You've got five minutes. No pressure. Good luck.

RACHEL
Whoa, whoa! My fiance's got cold feet and I'm supposed to send you in there?

DIANE
He said he wants Val.

Val puts a reassuring hand on Rachel's shoulder.

VAL
(sincere)
Worst case scenario. We still have a kickass reception and you meet some really cute distant cousin.

Rachel buries her face in her hands.

VAL
 Everybody back up. Give a man some
 breathing room.
 (to Teddie)
 This never would have happened on
 my watch, Frosty.

Val knocks on the door.

VAL
 Yo Hot Dog! It's V-Chip!

A tense beat... The door creaks opens. Val takes a deep
 breathe, goes inside.

RACHEL
 Nathaniel!

Rachel slams up against the door just as it closes shut.

INT. CHURCH MEN'S ROOM - MORNING

A rust-stained restroom with a crucifix on the wall. A
 tuxedo'd Nathan sits in the shadows by the toilet looking
 like a skinny Brando in "Apocalypse Now".

Val slides down the wall next to him.

NATHAN
 Kinda like the time I freaked out
 backstage when our band played the
 student center?

VAL
 Kinda. Except that was a forty-five
 minute set for a dozen dorm geeks
 and this is the rest of your life.

Nathan dry heaves into the toilet. Val smacks his head back
 against the wall.

VAL
 Sorry. My bad. Can we start again?

NATHAN
 At the rehearsal dinner I saw
 you've got your new business,
 ladies chasing you, you look great--

Val checks himself out in the mirror

VAL
 Must be the yoga. I'm trying to cut
 out weeknight beer too.

NATHAN

--and I'm thinking to myself, what the heck am I getting into? I think I want... to be single again.

VAL

C'mon. When a groom wants out, he holes up in an out-of-state motel room with an eightball of booger sugar and some hookers. Not in the church john. It's probably just butterflies.

NATHAN

I could have asked any one to come give me the just-butterfiles speech. But I picked you, Val... to be honest with me about all the things I'm missing out on!

Wowie. Val looks very tempted.

EXT. SIDE OF CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Diane and Rachel walk back to the front of the church.

DIANE

Last minute jitters. It's going to be just fine-- Rach?

Rachel's pulled up her dress, waded into a flower bed and is crouched over a small basement window. Val and Nathan's voices can be heard echoing from the bathroom.

DIANE

Rachel!?

RACHEL

Help me squeeze down there. I'll strangle them both before I let that jackass sabotage today.

Diane grabs a hysterical Rachel as she tries to squirm away.

DIANE

Calm down! Val will take care of things.

RACHEL

Oh really? And how do you know?

DIANE

For all his faults, I trust him. Probably more than any guy I know. He doesn't have a phony bone in--

Diane catches herself.

DIANE

Besides, you'll never fit down there anyway.

RACHEL

My wedding and you're taking potshots about my ass. Thanks Diane.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM, CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Nathan sits on the floor, while Val paces in front of him.

VAL

My date today has the best legs in greater Boston, plays bass in a hot band, loves tying on a good buzz and believes in open relationships.

NATHAN

That's it. Wedding's off.

VAL

She's everything I was looking for, but guess what? I don't care. What does it matter if she has every Mission of Burma album including the hard to find export-only EP?

NATHAN

Because you always said they're the best Boston band besides the Pixies.

VAL

Lately, I just feel like dating's this stupid quest to fulfill all these hang-ups masking as standards.

NATHAN

The alternative being what--sex for sport? The priesthood?

VAL

I guess, love. When you're in love you throw the standards out because you just want to be with that person, no matter how different they are or crazy they make you.

NATHAN

This is the most important conversation we'll ever have. I'm gonna kill you if you're quoting from a movie.

VAL

I don't think so. Even if I am, that doesn't mean I didn't think of it too.

NATHAN

Jeez. I should have asked for Kegs Hannigan to come in here... So you don't want me back?

VAL

Of course, I do. But I want you happy more. And I've never seen you more happy than when Rachel was smothering the hell out of you.

NATHAN

But what about the swingle life?

VAL

Screw all that! Look, you were right. I fell for my wingwoman! Hard. Last night I downloaded the whole Phil Collins catalogue. I had more fun with Diane than I've ever had with anyone. Sorry. I mean it wasn't all fun. Sometimes I wanted to strangle her. But she made me want to be a better guy. The duds, the career stuff, the buff new physique--

NATHAN

I never said--

VAL

All for Diane. I lo-- Well it's too late now, isn't it.

Above them, the CHURCH BELLS start ringing.

VAL

All I can say is you don't want to make the same mistake I made... Cause it totally sucks.

Val goes to use a urinal. Nathan stays on the floor--a smile blooms over his face.

EXT. SIDE OF CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

A flushing sound. Having overheard everything, Diane and Rachel straighten up from the window.

RACHEL
Oh my God. For a total jackass,
Val's really sweet.

Shocked, Diane has her hands over her mouth.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

A smiling Nathan stands with Rachel at the altar.

In the packed pews, Kiki munches a Rice Krispie treat, dribbling some down her dress. Troy elbows the Wedding Photographer aside to snap his own photos. Val stands with the flank of Groomsman. Father Juan clears his throat.

FATHER JUAN
Good morning. I want to welcome you
all to a very special day to---

There's already SOBBING. The wedding party turns to Rachel-- but she's dry-eyed.

Diane is the one crying up a storm. She snorts back her tears and smiles apologetically.

FATHER JUAN
... To celebrate the marriage of
Nathaniel and Rachel.

Diane looks affectionately over at Val. He's already staring at her. They exchange smiles.

INT. WEDDING RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

A big reception in a hotel banquet room.

Teddie pinches a Bridesmaid's ass. Father Juan holds his wine glass up for a refill. A cheesy band plays with the sweaty lead SINGER "improvising" lyrics as he points at the crowd.

CHEESY SINGER
Proud Rachel keep on rolling!
Rolling! Rolling! Rolling on with
Nathan!

Diane dances with a totally boogieing-down Troy (think swing dance meets disco with jazz hands).

TROY

I love that you're a sobber.

DIANE

I'm not. I never cry. That was a once in a lifetime sob.

TROY

You better at our wedding. It always feel anti-climatic when there are no tears. Nathan and Rachel dropped the ball on that one... Di?

Diane's watching Val and Kiki dancing.

DIANE

That woman keeps undressing you with her eyes. That's it! I'm going to slap that sexy smirk off her--

Diane starts to walk off, but Troy grabs her.

TROY

Relax Princess. I didn't realize you got so jealous.

DIANE

Bad enough she shows up in that dress. Looks like she should be dancing with a pole. Is she so insecure she has to show the world what a phenomenal body she has.

Troy takes a good long look.

TROY

Huh... Just, you know, forget her.

Troy pulls Diane close, but keeps an eye on Kiki.

CUT TO:

Val and Kiki are dancing. Kiki dances like she's at a rave.

KIKI

The prerequisite cover band, the lecherous uncle over his martini-limit, the garish cake. Uck, the whole thing is like a lame fucking parody of itself.

VAL

I bet you're a hoot at birthdays.

Kiki double-takes: Val is dancing like a total dork. She looks over at Troy and sees Val's mimicking his lame moves.

KIKI

Why are you dancing like that guy?

VAL

Am I? Sorry. He just looks so cool. How does he do that swivel thing with his hips?

KIKI

Looks like the white man's overbite dance to me.

VAL

You aren't taking his whole straight arrow shtick seriously are you? Oh, Troy's the ultimate hipster. First guy I knew to sport a totally ironic moustache. I think he's on ecstasy too.

KIKI

No shit?

As Kiki and Val continue dancing, Kiki glances over at Troy. He catches her eye and gives her a flirty smile.

INT. WEDDING RECEPTION - LATER

Troy and Kiki are deep in conversation by an empty corner table. Val spots them across the room and smiles--good. He turns to look for Diane--she's standing right by him.

DIANE

Hope you don't mind. I did a little stealth wingwork to ditch Troy.

VAL

Simpatico city. Funny, not long ago I thought Kiki was the perfect girl.

DIANE

Same with Troy.

VAL

The only reason she's going out with me is because she thinks I'm going places. I owe that to you.

DIANE

Just like Troy thinks I'm soooo wild.

VAL
I miss hanging out.

DIANE
Me too. More than I could have ever imagined. All the time I spent looking for something "real" and I didn't even notice when I found it... But maybe you just miss your wingwoman?

VAL
No. I miss hanging out as in... Well you know what I mean... right?

Val hedges like he might wimp out.

CUT TO:

Nathan and Rachel dance cheek-to-cheek and watch Val and Diane.

RACHEL
Do you think he's finally saying it?

NATHAN
We gave him every opportunity. We can't make it him say the words.

RACHEL
We were good, weren't we? You should have seen Diane's face when I waded through the flower bed.

NATHAN
All that tap-dancing I had to do in the bathroom to get Val to come clean. I thought I really might be late for the wedding.

RACHEL
Too bad we're married. You're the perfect little wingman.

Nathan kisses Rachel passionately.

CUT TO:

Diane crosses her arms. Val's still struggling to be sincere.

VAL
I'm saying we had mad fun together, so we should go out again like before... but different--

Up on stage, Teddie takes the microphone.

TEDDIE

All you honeys gather round! Big sis is chucking out the bouquet!

The female guests flock to the dance floor as a spotlight beams on Rachel and Nathan. The band starts a thundering drumroll. Diane stays next to Val.

VAL

I thought you'd be leading the stampede.

DIANE

I thought you had something to say worth hearing. Maybe I was wrong.

A nervous Val looks back and forth from Rachel and the bouquet to Diane. Rachel winds up and tosses the bouquet over her back... And Val runs off.

DIANE

Val?

Val breaks through the crowd, slides across the floor, bumps away a couple grabby Bridesmaids and snatches the bouquet.

VAL

Gotcha!

The whole crowd moans. Nathan buries his head in his hands.

FATHER JUAN

What a dick.

Val races over to where Diane stands at the edge of the crowd and slides to his knees.

DIANE

Careful. I might start to think you like me.

VAL

I just made the biggest commitment of my life... and I've never felt more carefree. I love you.

He offers her the bouquet.

VAL

Would you go to karaoke with me tomorrow night?

Diane takes the bouquet and kisses him. The crowd erupts in applause.

THE END