

# Burning Annie

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January 2000

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FADE IN:

INT. MAX'S DORM ROOM- DAY

MAX is sitting on a stool in his dorm room, addressing the camera. Max is 20 years old and fairly average looking. He's casual but uptight, a little shy and awkward.

The background suggests a typical guys' dorm room, with scattered books and C.D.s, a dresser with a stereo resting on top, and posters of rock bands.

MAX

I never liked Woody Allen when I was a kid. My parents were always watching his movies when I was younger, but I never got it.

It was the same problem I had with the Beatles, who were such a part of my background that I took them for granted until, I don't know... I must have been about 16 when I realized how silly it was to rebel against my parents by ignoring the Beatles or the other cultural artifacts of their generation, even if I did spend much of my youth and adolescence listening to my father go on and on about how none of the bands that I listened to mean anything because they're not the Beatles.

Thinking about that argument now, that's silly. Sure, The Beatles were great and they changed pop music forever, and there's no question that they were the defining musicians of my parents generation. But you could say the same thing about Nirvana and my generation, or the Sex Pistols and their generation.

And even considering what I think of Nirvana, I would never push them on anyone the way my Father pushed the Beatles on me, because who's to say that the icon of my parents' generation is more important or better than the icon of mine?

Shit, I really got off track there, didn't I?

INT. MAX'S HOUSE (15 YEARS AGO)- DAY

The living room of the house where Max grew up. The style of the furniture, decoration, and clothes on the characters indicate that it is roughly 15 years ago, and that this is a middle class family.

YOUNG MAX is about five or six years old and watching the movie *Bananas* with his FATHER, who is in his mid-thirties. His father is a large, relaxed man with a mustache, reclining on the couch and smoking a cigar. Young Max is sitting on the floor, curiously watching the movie.

(ADULT) MAX (O.S.)

The whole point of that long-winded introduction is that, like the Beatles, I was force-fed Woody Allen movies at a young age. I remember this one time when I was about five years old, when I was watching *Bananas* with my father.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

Adult Max standing and watching Young Max and his Father watch the movie.

ADULT MAX

This was the family room of the house where I grew up, in a dull suburb of New York City. Hey, there we are watching the movie. My father looks so young.

The scene in *Bananas* when the woman is bit in the breast by a snake and is then chased by a group of soldiers is taking place on the TV that they are watching.

YOUNG MAX

Daddy, why are they all running after her?

FATHER

Someday, you'll understand.

INT. MAX'S HOUSE (4 YEARS AGO)- DAY

16-YEAR-OLD MAX, in pajamas, is sitting in front of a different TV in the same room as the previous scene (with more modern furniture, and white painted walls replacing the previous wood paneling).

This time, *Annie Hall* is playing onscreen.

(ADULT) MAX (O.S.)

Oh yeah. This wasn't the first time I ever saw the movie *Annie Hall*... but it was the first time I saw it when I was mature enough to appreciate it. It was a Saturday afternoon and I was flipping channels when I stumbled onto this movie, and I loved it.

I was surprised at myself, surprised to find that my parents were right all along. It's a slow painful part of becoming an adult— realizing that your parents might not always be wrong after all. Oh well, maybe someday I'll apologize for being wrong every once in a while.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY (4 YEARS AGO)— DAY

16 Year-Old Max is walking alone to class.

(ADULT) MAX (O.S.)

Oh God, here I am in High School. I hated this place, didn't fit in at all. I was a junior in High School when I gave up trying to fit in and began to accept my place as sort of an outcast. There was something in the movie *Annie Hall* that I identified with; maybe it was Woody's character, or maybe it was the style of humor or the defeatist attitude, I don't know. But it gave me hope that there was more to life than the depressing surroundings that I found myself trapped in at 7:25 every morning. Different people are inspired by different things, and strangely enough, my source of inspiration was a 20-year-old movie about a failed relationship.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS— DAY

Present day (four years after the previous scene). It's late January and the campus "green" is showing signs of the season. Some remnants of snow are visible, and all of the grass is dead and the trees are bare.

Max and CHARLES are walking toward the camera, across the green. Charles is taller and better looking than Max, but just as thin, with a slightly goofy appearance.

MAX

Charles, you're not Jewish, you don't understand what it's like. It's ridiculous, that even at a liberal school like this I have to put up with this shit.

CHARLES

So you got a C+! Don't you think you're getting a little carried away?

MAX

Well he couldn't just fail me— think about it. He had to give me a grade that he knew would hurt my average... but he couldn't give me a terrible grade, because then I might complain.

CHARLES

You're crazy.

MAX

It's ingenious, really.

CHARLES

Your paranoia has always been out of control, but now you've lost it.

MAX

How can you say that! The paper was a family history about my grandparents' experience in the Holocaust! He gave me a C+!

SAM

Was that the paper that you handed in two weeks late?

Max and Charles are approaching the University Center.

MAX

Yeah, but... you know what else? I think the professor might be German.

CHARLES

Would you stop it! What do you want to do tonight?

INT. UNIVERSITY CENTER (CONTINUOUS)

MAX

I'm not sure. we could watch *Annie Hall* again, continue the tradition of watching it at the beginning of every semester.

CHARLES

*Annie Hall*, shit. You know I love that movie, but... it might be time to break that tradition. It's only brought us bad luck.

MAX

What are you talking about? We've watched it every other semester, since second semester freshman year. If you're sick of it, that's one thing, but don't blame your problems on a movie.

CHARLES

I'm telling you, man. The movie is cursed. It has a power.

MAX

Oh, what are you talking about?

CHARLES

Max, ever since we've been watching it, what has your love life been like? What has mine been like? Every semester, we watch this movie and then spend the semester alone.

MAX

That's quite a theory, but I don't think so. Your theory fails to account for our collective dorkiness and bad haircuts. Coffee?

CHARLES

Yeah, cool.

INT. UNIVERSITY CENTER STORE (CONTINUOUS)

They enter the small convenience store, walk directly toward a coffee machine in the back, and pour coffees as they talk.

MAX

You know, any crazy theory can be "proven." I took a class last semester with a professor who claimed to prove that the planet is being destroyed by white, male, meat-eating, capitalists.

CHARLES

That might not be too far off.

MAX

I brought a Big Mac to the first class, and I was sure that I was going to be a victim of some sort of bizarre vegan-socialist uprising.

CHARLES

I think I've seen their demonstrations. Are they the chicks with the meat whip?

Max gives Charles a look that says "don't push it."

CHARLES (cont'd)

Oooohh, we can do another Star Wars marathon instead. You know, they have that old Ewok cartoon movie at Spaceship video. I haven't seen that since I was a kid.

MAX

There's a reason why you haven't seen it since you were a kid- it's a fucking cartoon about muppets. I don't know, I still sort of want to watch *Annie Hall*. I might watch it by myself if nobody else wants to see it.

CHARLES

Max, you can't start every semester with a downer like *Annie Hall* and expect to get lucky. You know, I bet all of our troubles with girls here were caused by that movie.

MAX

What does that mean? You really are trying to blame all of your problems on a movie, aren't you?

CHARLES

Think about it. Remember the first time we saw it, freshman year? We were in your room, and who was there?

At this point, Charles and Max are standing in the middle of the store talking and drinking their coffees. The cute, female hippy CASHIER looks slightly annoyed.

MAX

It was, let's see...

CHARLES

It was the two of us, and Sam and Jen right after they got together, and Ann.

MAX

Are you sure she was there? I don't think she was there.

CHARLES

Oh, she was definitely there.

MAX

I'm pretty sure she wasn't there.

INT. FRESHMAN DORM (TWO YEARS AGO)- NIGHT

There are five people in the room, and all have silly haircuts. SAM is short and stocky, with a moppy, Beatles-esque haircut. JEN is about Sam's height, cute with a slightly nerdy appearance, laying next to him on the floor. Charles and Max look just about the same as they did in the last scene, but they both have longer, silly haircuts. Max is sitting on one bed, and Charles is sitting on the bed along the opposite wall of the small room. ANN is sitting on a large, ugly reclining chair set up between the two beds.

As the scene begins, they're waiting for the video tape to rewind.

JEN

Are you comfortable, honey?

SAM

Jen, I'm fine! I was worried about you. Are you sure you don't want me to move over?

JEN

Oh no, no, if you're comfortable, that's good enough for me.

Charles gives Max an exasperated look. Ann catches the look on Charles's face and laughs.

SAM

What happened?

MAX

Ann was just getting comfortable.

CHARLES

Comfort is good. Max, are you comfortable enough over there?

MAX

Actually, I'd appreciate it if you could slide over a bit.

Charles slides over a little— remaining on the opposite side of the room as Max.

JEN

(trying to change the subject)  
Is that tape rewound yet?

SAM

Let me check.

TWO HOURS LATER

They've just finished watching *Annie Hall*.

CHARLES

Wow. That was a lot better than I thought it was gonna be.

JEN

Didn't you think it was a little depressing?

SAM

I don't know, I liked it.

ANN

Oh, that was so sad! Relationships don't have to be like that!

(to Max)

I can see why you like this so much. It reminded me of you.

MAX

Uh, thanks, I guess. Does that mean you liked it?

Everyone but Max and Ann fade into the background.

ANN

I didn't say I liked it, I said it reminded me of you. It reminded me of what I didn't like about you, the cynicism, the neurotic insecurity, and all of the other reasons why we were never really more than friends.

MAX

(sarcastic)  
Thanks.

(sincere)  
At least you're being honest.

ANN  
Of course I'm being honest. This is a  
fantasy extrapolated from a flashback.  
Would I lie to you?

MAX  
(addressing the camera)  
I'm the only person I know who gets  
insulted in his own fantasies.

EXT. CAMPUS— DAY

This scene takes place a year ago, making it a year later  
than the previous scene.

BETH and Max are walking outside on the campus. Beth is  
upbeat but moody; thin and pretty. Max looks the same as he  
does today.

MAX  
Listen, now that we're alone there's  
something I've been meaning to talk to  
you about.

BETH  
Yeah? What is it?

MAX  
Beth, it's just that, um, look this is a  
really hard thing for me to do and it  
hasn't always worked out all that well  
when I've tried to do this sort of thing,  
so bear with me and let me get through  
it.

BETH  
Go for it. Relax, you can ask me  
anything.

MAX  
Okay, well it's just, you know Stacy  
right?

BETH  
(suddenly curious about where this  
conversation is going)  
Yeah...

MAX

Well, we were hanging out in her room the other night, just the two of us, and we had both been drinking a little, and she asked me to stay over.

BETH

Ugh. Did you?

MAX

No, but I couldn't figure out why, you know? I had nothing to lose, I used to have a thing for her and sometimes I still think about her like that... but I left.

So there I was, laying awake in my own bed, drunk, at 3 in the morning. The lights are out, Sam's asleep, and I'm staring at the ceiling trying to figure out why I didn't stay with her.

BETH

And?

MAX

And the only thing I could come up with, even though I kept dismissing it- the only thing running through my head was, "What about Beth?"

I mean, I know we're just friends, and I'm happy with that, but you really mean a lot to me and we've been spending a lot of time together lately...

And maybe... I guess what I'm saying is, can we try going out on a date or something?

BETH

Max...

MAX

I mean, I know it would be weird but it wouldn't have to-

BETH

Of course.

MAX

We wouldn't have to- really?

BETH

I'd love to. How's tomorrow night?

MAX

Um, yeah, it would have to be after-  
yeah, tomorrow night's fine.

INT. LIBRARY TV ROOM- NIGHT

Max and Beth are sitting next to each other on separate chairs, covered with blankets, both wearing headphones, and watching the opening credits of *Annie Hall* on a smallish T.V. Around them, students are hard at work.

BETH

Isn't this great? I'm so glad we're doing this!

MAX

You know, when we talked yesterday, this might not have been what I had in mind.

BETH

What do you mean?

MAX

I don't know. I have a serious problem with spending any time in the library when I don't have to. I'm here a couple of times a semester as it is. Any more than that and I feel like I'm being tricked into something.

BETH

I love the library. It's so quiet. I come here whenever I need to chill out.

They put on their headphones.

MAX

What's the point of watching a movie with another person if you're both going to be wearing headphones? Why not just watch the movie alone while sitting next to a life-sized cardboard cutout?

BETH

Shh.

MAX

That way you can watch the movie with someone famous, like Shaquille O'Neal, or

even a dead person. Wouldn't you rather be with James Dean?

BETH

Enough already! Can't you just enjoy the moment?

MAX

Elvis?

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

After the movie, Max and Beth are walking outside, near the library.

MAX

I mean, I can't believe how many great lines there are in that movie. Even the little throw away lines- like when she parks on the street and he says, "that's okay, we can walk to the curb from here." That's perfect.

BETH

Yeah. I loved it, I'm serious. I'm really glad we did this.

MAX

Yeah, me too.

BETH

But at the same time, it is a little depressing, isn't it? The film's basic argument is that relationships usually don't work out.

MAX

I don't know, I'm not sure I agree with that. There are plenty of people out there with good relationships.

BETH

That's true, but the movie makes it all seem so futile.

Max doesn't quite know what to say, and Beth is pausing for effect.

BETH (cont'd)

The movie's right, isn't it?

MAX

I- It doesn't have to be.

They both stop walking.

BETH

Look Max, about all of that talk yesterday of us becoming more serious, it might not be such a good idea. We get along so well now, maybe we should just stay friends.

MAX

But— what is this, because of a movie? What does that have to do with us?

BETH

No, it's not just because of a movie. I just, I don't know what I want right now, everything is so complicated.

MAX

Well... then what the hell are we doing here?

BETH

I just thought... I don't know.

A beat.

BETH (cont'd)

Shit, shit, I hope it's not too late. I hope we didn't fuck this up. We're still friends right?

MAX

Yeah, yeah, whatever, of course.

BETH

You don't even know how much your friendship means to me.

MAX

I'm starting to get the idea.

DISSOLVE TO:

MAX, deep in thought.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

INT. UNIVERSITY CENTER STORE

Max is standing in the exact same place and position— sipping his coffee in the middle of the store— he was in before the flashback began.

MAX

You know Charles, you just might have a point.

CASHIER

Are you gonna pay for that coffee, or what?

MAX

(anxiously looking for Charles, who left the store while Max was daydreaming)  
Charles?

INT. APARTMENT— NIGHT

A party in a crowded apartment. The furniture is the type of antique furniture that can be bought in a thrift shop on a college student budget— -wooden and dignified, but not quite old or nice enough to be "antique." A jazz record is quietly playing, and pretentiously-dressed college students are sipping wine and eating cheese and crackers.

In one corner of the room, Max, Charles, and Sam are standing and talking.

MAX

Cheers to a new semester, full of potential that will surely go to waste.

Sam and Charles raise their glasses to meet Max's glass.

CHARLES

This is it, I'm telling you. This is the semester that I get all "A"s and find the girl of my dreams.

MAX

Good luck.

SAM

Sometimes I envy you guys. Being in a long term relationship isn't always a blast.

MAX

Uh oh. Do I sense problems between you and Jen?

SAM

No, it's not exactly like that. I like spending time with her, but it gets to be a little... suffocating. Between Jen, my homework, and labs I hardly have much time for anything else.

MAX

Suffocating? You're not gonna dump her, are you?

SAM

I don't think so. It's just too much sometimes.

CHARLES

You could always change your major. If you weren't a chemistry major, you'd have a lot more free time.

SAM

I kind of feel the same way about science that I do about Jen. It's a lot of work, but it's worth it. I think.

MAX

It sounds like you can imagine Jen playing a smaller role in your life.

CHARLES

Would you guys ever change your major for a girl?

MAX

Why would that ever be an issue?

SAM

Yeah, it's not like studying interferes with what's important to Max- like video games or wall-papering the bathroom with Post-it notes.

MAX

Fuck you. I only did that once...

SAM

Once a semester, maybe.

MAX

Once a year, all right? I might not have as much work as you do, but I care about what I'm studying.

SAM

Every time I see you doing homework, you're taking a break.

MAX

In order to take a break I have to work sometimes, right?

SAM

You call that work?

CHARLES

OK, so hypothetically...

SAM

(to Max)

You're the best I've ever seen when it comes to procrastinating.

MAX

I should be! Procrastination is one of my favorite hobbies. Isn't it funny that my two favorite hobbies rhyme?

#### ANOTHER CORNER OF THE PARTY

SARA, a fairly attractive freshman, is talking to two GIRLS, also freshman.

SARA

Aren't these parties just the best?

GIRL1

Great Brie.

GIRL2

There's nothing like a good Brie. This wine is fabulous!

GIRL1

I hear that the bottle cost over ten dollars. They had to find someone over 21 to buy it, because they had to go to a liquor store that checks I.D.s.

SARA  
(sincere)  
They went to great lengths.

GIRL1  
It's like, exquisite and shit.

GIRL2  
If I drink enough of this stuff, I might even be able to save that 40 I bought for tomorrow.

GIRL1  
Cool! Hey, is that Charles over there?

SARA  
Where?

THE SAME CORNER AS BEFORE

Charles, Max, and Sam, still talking to each other.

MAX  
I don't know, it just all seems so pretentious and phony to me. Who are they trying to be, with all of this wine and cheese?

CHARLES  
I can get into this. It's better than any of the frat parties.

SAM  
That's not saying much.

MAX  
This music is too much. And why don't they get some real snacks, like chips or something. It's fuckin'— a bunch of 21-year-olds who want all the 19-year-olds to know how mature and sophisticated they are.

SAM  
I'd kill for a cheap beer right now. Even a really nasty, warm, skunked \$5.99-a-case beer would be great right now. Anything.

MAX  
Freak.

Charles takes out a cigarette and lights up.

CHARLES

Max, want one?

MAX

Sure.

SAM

(to Max)

What are you thinking?

MAX

I need a new hobby. I thought about boxing or race car driving, but I wanted to do something dangerous.

Max takes a cigarette from Charles, unsuccessfully lights a match, and then awkwardly lights the cigarette with Charles's lighter. Max then takes a light puff, and finally, coughs his lungs out.

SAM

(to Charles)

You're such a putz.

CHARLES

It's okay, he's not even inhaling.

MAX

Not only don't I inhale, but I've been doing this since I was 16. It's not like I'm going to suddenly become addicted after years of smoking.

Max puffs, as Sam reacts disapprovingly.

SAM

Hey, Charles, is that Sara?

CHARLES

Yeah.

MAX

Brace yourself, it looks like she's coming this way.

CHARLES

Brace yourself?

Charles turns and sees Sara approaching.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Shit.

Sara joins the group.

SARA

Hey guys, what's going on?

SAM

We were just talking about... the mediocre resonations of magnetic fields.

MAX

I can't believe you think they're mediocre. Those guys rock.

SARA

Oh. Well I just wanted to stop by and say hey to my favorite guys. How was everyone's break?

SAM

Pretty good.

MAX

The usual. How about you?

SARA

It was all right. Partied with my best friend Melanie, who I haven't seen in ages. Hey Charles, are you going to the frat party after this?

CHARLES

Nah.

SARA

Are you gonna be back at your suite then? Maybe I'll stop by.

Sara tugs on Charles's shirt.

SARA (cont'd)

I missed you when I was home.

CHARLES

Uh huh. We should be back at the suite in a couple of hours.

SARA

All right, yeah cool. I'll catch up with you guys later. I'm gonna go check out that party first.

CHARLES

It's good to see you.

Sara waves and then walks away.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Shit, I was hoping to avoid her for at least a few more days.

MAX

She's not that bad. Charles, why don't you guys get together?

CHARLES

I don't know, she kind of gets under my skin.

SAM

Isn't that a good thing?

CHARLES

Not if she makes my skin crawl. And anyway I'm starting to think Amanda's a really great chick.

SAM

She'll never go for anyone else as long as Scott's around, you know.

MAX

And Scott is your roommate- he's around when you are.

CHARLES

Yeah, I know.

SAM

I'm gonna see what I could do about finding a beer. Does anybody else want anything?

MAX

No, I'm fine.

CHARLES

Me too.

Sam walks away.

CHARLES (cont'd)

I hope there isn't a line at the bathroom. I have to drop the kids off at the lake.

Charles walks away.

MAX

(To Charles, as he's walking away)  
All right, I'll be here. I hope it all works  
out in the end.

JULIE, an attractive girl sitting alone nearby, overhears  
Max's last comment. Max sees Julie and is suddenly  
embarrassed.

JULIE

Hope what works out?

MAX

Uh, I... what?

JULIE

What's wrong with your friend?

MAX

What do you mean? Why?

JULIE

You just said "I hope it works out" to  
your friend. I'm sorry, I shouldn't have  
said anything. I was being nosy.

MAX

It's OK.

JULIE

So is everything all right?

MAX

Oh, yeah, he's just got to, um, drop  
something off... in the other room.

JULIE

Oh.

MAX

It's really nothing.

JULIE

Oh.

MAX

Some party, huh?

JULIE

It's a good time, but it seems a little  
fake. And I can't even find a beer. All  
they have is this gross wine.

MAX

Yeah, I...

JULIE

You're Max? Is that right?

MAX

Uh, yeah... why?

JULIE

I've heard about you.

MAX

Really? Well, I never believe anything I hear about myself. Especially the story about the goat and the mayonnaise.

JULIE

(laughs)

Well, most of what I heard was good. But I am starting to have my suspicions...

Sam and Charles are walking toward Max and Julie.

JULIE (cont'd)

These are your friends, right?

SAM

What kind of college party has no beer? Let's get out of here. I'm supposed to call Jen soon anyway.

CHARLES

Max? You ready to bounce?

MAX

Yeah, sure, one second.

(to Julie)

Nice to meet you. See you later.

Sam and Charles are at this point standing by the door with their coats on, waiting for Max.

JULIE

Yeah. Bye.

INT. STAIRWELL (CONTINUOUS)

SAM

(as they all exit the apartment, and walk downstairs)

Who was that? She's cute.

MAX

I don't know.

SAM

You didn't even get her name?

MAX

No. But she knew mine. She said she's  
'heard about me.'

SAM

That can't be good.

CHARLES

You don't even ask what her name is?  
You're even worse at picking up chicks  
than I am!

MAX

Charles, you have no idea how bad I  
really am.

SAM

Hey, you can always move to India and get  
an arranged marriage.

Max suddenly has a thoughtful look on his face, as if he's  
considering Sam's suggestion.

INT. MAX'S COMMON ROOM- NIGHT

Two in the morning, the same night. A crowded, smallish  
common room (living room) in Max, Sam, Charles, Scott, and  
Tommy's dorm suite.

Cheap, battered couches line three walls, and several small  
fridges and two televisions piled on top of each other- one  
for TV, one for video games- stand against the fourth wall. A  
beat-up wooden coffee table sits in the middle of the room.  
Large posters from movies and rock bands cover the walls, and  
the only light in the room is from blue Christmas lights  
lining the ceiling, and a neon, Guinness sign in the window  
above one of the couches.

Max, Sam, Charles, SCOTT, TOMMY, AMANDA, Jen and Sara are all  
there, drinking beers and watching an infomercial for a golf  
putter. Scott is a quiet guy with a very cynical sense of  
humor. Tommy is more preppy than anyone else in the group,  
but manages to match his friends' neurotic goofiness. Amanda  
doesn't quite feel comfortable in the group even though she's  
known most of them for a couple of years.

JEN  
How was the party?

SAM  
It was all right.

JEN  
(to Sam)  
It would have been nice if you waited for me, but whatever.

SAM  
What do you mean?

JEN  
Nevermind.

SAM  
You told me you were gonna be studying.

JEN  
That was this morning. You could have called before you went out!

AMANDA  
So Scott, you guys had a good time?

SCOTT  
I didn't go. I was working on some graphic design stuff.

AMANDA  
Oh really? I thought you were gone. But it's all right, don't worry about it. I got a lot done.

TOMMY  
That's why the beginning of the semester rules. Before I get too much work, I have a chance to party.

SCOTT  
What do you mean "party"? You were studying all night too.

TOMMY  
But it feels good to be taking a break now. I think I'm gonna finish this beer and then... then I'm just going to get like two or three more problems out of the way before I go to bed.

SCOTT (mocking Tommy)

I think I'm gonna finish this one, and then I think I'll get three or four more beers out of the fridge before I pass out on the floor.

TOMMY

And you need to be up by 12:30 tomorrow, don't you? It must be tough, maintaining a tight schedule like that.

MAX

It's not his fault that you wake up early on weekends.

SARA

All you guys ever fuckin' do is argue!

JEN

(to Sara)

I know. It's so funny. This is what they do: sit in front of the TV, playing video games and arguing with each other—

SARA

And what the hell are we watching anyway?

JEN

(to Sara)

And then they complain that they don't have girlfriends.

TOMMY

(answering Sara)

It's about a putter. Leave it.

MAX

All of us except Sam, who's too busy complaining about the girlfriend he has.

AMANDA

Max!

SARA

(laughing)

Oooh! I can't believe you just said that.

JEN

It's okay, they're all just jealous.

CHARLES

(trying to watch TV)

Shhh. They're coming to the good part.

SARA

You know, if the rest of you tried a little harder, there are plenty of girls around who would be interested.

SCOTT

You don't think we know that?

TOMMY

(completely sincere)

Is someone interested in me?

SCOTT

The last time I was with your mother, she kept moaning your name in bed. I don't know if that helps... but it helped me.

TOMMY

(gives Scott an amused look)

Very funny. Now be quiet, seriously, I'm trying to watch this.

MAX

This is the time of our lives. We should be living it up. Is this all there is? Golf infomercials and cheap beer?

TOMMY

Sounds good to me.

SCOTT

You know what we need? A double Barca lounge.

CHARLES

But five of us live here.

MAX

I'm just a little restless.

SCOTT

(to Charles)

So?

CHARLES

(to Scott)

So where would the rest of us sit?

SARA

(to Max)

You don't have to be here. Aren't there any girls that you could be hanging out with?

MAX

'Hanging out' has such bad connotations.  
It sounds like such a struggle.

SARA

It would be more exciting than this.

SCOTT

(to Sara)

We're exciting enough to get you to come over.

SARA

Exactly. That's what I'm talking about.

SAM

Anybody wanna fire up the video hockey?

INT. ANNIE'S- DAY

A small, not-too-brightly-lit, greasy spoon of a diner.  
Amanda, Scott, Max, Beth, Sam and Jen are sitting a table  
toward the back.

MAX

I'm not lazy, don't try to turn that into  
the issue.

SAM

That is the issue...

MAX

But I don't want to waste my time on  
something that's pointless, waste my  
energy on something I don't believe in,  
you know?

SCOTT

I'm just talking about going to the gym.

MAX

But it's like, shouldn't I use that  
energy for something more productive?

SAM

Everything isn't a moral dilemma. Scott  
and I don't care if you never come to the  
gym with us, and if you don't care  
either, then no one cares.

JEN

Calm down! For something that you don't  
care about, you're getting awfully worked  
up.

MAX

It's not his fault. We probably spend too much time together.

SAM

It's true.

BETH

Someday they're gonna get married.

JEN

This is their third year living together. That's longer than most marriages last today.

BETH

The only difference is that they don't have sex.

JEN

What makes you think married people have sex?

MAX

Oh, like any of us would know.

10 MINUTES LATER

They're all still sitting at the table, examining menus.

AMANDA

Why do you guys always come here? It's so dark and the menu is tiny.

SAM

That's why we always come here.

AMANDA

How big is the small orange juice?

SCOTT

Small.

AMANDA

What about the large?

SCOTT

It's also small.

INT. UNIVERSITY CENTER CONCOURSE- DAY

The crowded concourse, during the post-lunch rush. Max, Sam and Scott walk in, and stop walking near a stairwell.

SAM

Mail?

MAX

I'm gonna hit the ATM

SCOTT

Good. Don't think that I'm gonna forget about the five bucks that you owe me.

MAX

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Scott and Sam walk away, and Max walks over to an ATM machine, where several people are waiting in line ahead of him.

After Max has been standing there for a moment, Julie drifts through the flock of people and joins the line, standing directly behind Max. They both recognize each other immediately, and after an awkward bit of silence, Julie speaks.

JULIE

Can you believe how crowded this place is?

MAX

(pretending he hadn't noticed Julie)  
Oh, hey! Yeah, wow, it's a mess. I hate coming here this time of day.

JULIE

Me too.

MAX

But I need money, you know, gambling debts and all.

JULIE

Me too, I mean, I'm not in debt, but I need money. "Me too," for money.

MAX

ATMs are such a pain in the ass.

JULIE

I think they're great, they save so much time. Think about what life must have been like before ATMs.

MAX

That's true, but I mean, how can I support an acronym without knowing what it stands for?

JULIE

I think it's access to money.

Max reacts, disbelieving, and then speaks a moment later:

MAX

Could be. So the other night you said that someone else told you about me. Anyone I know? Well I guess it would have to be someone I know.

JULIE

I could tell you, but that wouldn't be any fun.

MAX

You're right, but— huh. I don't know. I'm going to go crazy trying to figure it out. Why haven't I seen you around much? Are you a freshman?

JULIE

I'm listed as a sophomore, but I've taken some time off.

It is now Max's turn at the ATM.

MAX

So what are you studying?

JULIE

Why is that always the first question?

MAX

It was my second question.

JULIE

And how would you answer the question?

MAX

What? Oh, political science. I'm majoring in political science.

JULIE

Cool. More power to you. I've never been interested in the sciences, I mean, who cares that you can prove a theory? I'm leaning toward majoring in art.

Max is done with the ATM, and Julie steps up to take her turn. Just as Max is finishing, Scott and Sam are walking toward the ATM machine. Max is hovering near Julie and the ATM as she begins to use the machine.

JULIE

Max, are you trying to watch me punch in my code?

MAX

What? No, I mean... um, I have to go anyway. It's just that, now you know all about me and I don't even know your name.

JULIE

It's Julie, no nickname. My friends used to call me Jewel, but I won't let them call me that anymore.

MAX

For obvious reasons, I guess.

JULIE

Obviously.

MAX

Well, Julie with no nickname, it was nice meeting you. I um, I'll see you around?

JULIE

Probably.

Max walks toward Sam and Scott, who are waiting for Max.

SCOTT

Max, you ready to go?

EXT. UNIVERSITY CENTER— DAY

Sam, Scott, and Max exit the building and begin walking toward their dorm.

SCOTT

She's the same girl from the party, right?

MAX

Yeah.

SAM

She's cute.

MAX

Yeah.

SAM

Get her name yet?

INT. PHOTO PROCESSING ROOM

There is a large sink along one wall of the small room, a long table against another wall, and a large, metal, stand-up closet along a third wall. The fourth wall is reserved for the door.

Max is shaking up a tumbler as Amanda watches and keeps time—the two are processing negatives for the photography class they're taking.

MAX

Amanda, how much longer do I have to do this?

AMANDA

Less than 2 minutes. We're almost done.

MAX

Good.

A beat, until the silence becomes a little awkward.

MAX (cont'd)

So what else is new?

AMANDA

Not much. And you?

(poking Max)

Huh? Huh?

MAX

(Disturbed by the poking, but trying not to show it.)

Classes are all right so far. I'm not sure if I'll ever get the hang of this photography thing.

AMANDA

I like it.

MAX

I prefer art forms that don't require complicated chemical reactions.

Another beat.

AMANDA

Does it bother Scott when I'm around?

MAX

(stunned)

What... why? Well, I mean, I don't...

AMANDA

It's just that, sometimes it seems like it does.

MAX

I know why you might think that, but like, um, I don't exactly know what to say, I mean...

AMANDA

I know he's not interested in me, but... sometimes it seems like he is. I just don't want it to be awkward. Does he wish I wasn't around? Please, just tell me the truth.

MAX

The truth is that... it's not a topic! That's what I'm trying to say.

AMANDA

What—

MAX

It doesn't bother him, or us, or, I mean at least he doesn't talk about it—

AMANDA

(disappointed)

So he never talks about me.

MAX

No I mean—

AMANDA

I knew it.

Amanda is clearly upset, and Max is straining to make her feel better.

MAX

Wait, listen. What I'm trying to say is, you're not a topic that comes up very often.

AMANDA

Great, so you're saying that, with all of the time we spend together, none of you have any opinion of me?

Amanda storms out of the room.

MAX

Well, that's not, you know what I mean. No- what- oy.

Amanda returns, still upset.

AMANDA

It's time!

MAX

What?

AMANDA

It's time. It's time to unroll the film.

MAX

Oh.

Max begins to open the tumbler.

MAX (cont'd)

Listen, Amanda, Scott has nothing against you. He likes you. He might not like you as much as you wish he would, but he does like you.

AMANDA

Really?

MAX

You're welcome to come over whenever you want, you know that.

AMANDA

Thanks.

MAX

What I was trying to say was that we like you, so that doesn't leave us anything to talk about.

AMANDA

Okay. It's just sometimes, I wish...

MAX

Yeah, I know.

Max has by now opened the tumblers and is examining the finished negatives

AMANDA

How do they look?

MAX

Pretty good. Here, I think this one's yours.

AMANDA

Let me see.

Amanda examines the negatives that Max has just handed her.

AMANDA (cont'd)

Yeah.

Amanda opens the door to a stand up closet in a corner of the room, hangs her negatives from a clothespin in the closet, and leaves the room as Max approaches the closet.

Max examines the closet, noticing a shortage of clothespins and a condition of two to three rolls of negatives hanging from each pin. After a moment of consideration, Max selects a clothespin, and when he pinches it and tries to stick his negatives in, all three negatives fall off of the clothespin.

Max attempts to pick up the negatives, and manages to step on all of them before picking them up. He holds the crumpled negatives up to examine them as Amanda shouts, from outside of the room:

AMANDA (O.S.)

Max? What's going on in there?

MAX

Nothing. I'll be right there.

Max hangs up the crumpled negatives and begins to walk toward the door when he realizes that a negative is stuck to the sole of his shoe.

MAX

Shit!

Max takes the negative off his shoe, throwing himself off balance and almost knocking himself over.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Why does it always take you so long in there?

Max quickly throws the negative in the closet and leaves the room.

INT. THE PUB- NIGHT

It's a new wave dance party in the Pub- a small, loud club in the basement of the school's University Center.

A DJ and his equipment are set up on the small stage in the front of the room, and the DJ is sitting back in a chair and wearing headphones while his record is spinning. There are maybe 40 people there, which isn't much, but it's still kind of early. Most of the people are dressed in black. Roughly half of them are dancing. The rest are sitting at the few tables near the coffee bar in the back of the room, drinking coffee and talking. Max, Scott, and Charles are sitting at one of the tables.

CHARLES

I was talking to Amanda the other day.

SCOTT

That must have been during the five minutes on Tuesday when she wasn't following me around.

CHARLES

I wouldn't mind if she started following me around..

MAX

Scott, why don't you go for her? She obviously likes you, and you seem to get along pretty well.

SCOTT

Sometimes she's not bad. But she follows me around now. If we were sleeping together I'd never be able to get rid of her.

CHARLES

If you ask me, that's a small price to pay!

SCOTT

Look at Sam and Jen.

MAX

Good point.

SCOTT  
Besides, Amanda has nothing to say.

MAX  
Interesting choice of words.

Max, looking O.S., suddenly has an anxious expression on his face.

MAX  
Shit, she's here.

CHARLES  
Who?

We see Julie walking through the crowd toward the back of the room, and Max.

MAX  
Julie.

Julie stops at another table, talking to friends.

CHARLES  
Who's Julie? Is she the one from your History class?

MAX  
No. She's... she's just a girl. It's nothing exciting or anything. It's not even worth mentioning that I saw her.

SCOTT  
But you did mention it.

CHARLES  
Oh, it's the girl from that party again, right? What's her name?

MAX  
*Julie.*

CHARLES  
You really like her.

MAX  
Kind of, I mean, she seems really interesting and she's cute, but— I don't know if I would say that I "really like

her." I'm sure she has some flaws I don't know about.

SCOTT

If you don't care than what are you so worried about?

CHARLES

Shit, this is worse than I thought. I could tell it was serious when you said her name, like "Julie." But man, now you think she's cute and interesting. That's the kiss of death. A combination like that is trouble every time.

MAX

Hmm. I wonder if... maybe I should go say hi.

CHARLES

Why not?

MAX

I don't know. I should. I will.

CHARLES

Max, if you don't go hit on that girl, I will.

MAX

Yeah, yeah, I guess you're right. Fuck it, I'm gonna... I'm gonna go say hi.

CHARLES

Good luck.

As Max gets up and turns to walk toward Julie's table, he notices that she is walking in his direction.

MAX

Shit, shit, shit, she's coming this way. Fuck. What am I...

CHARLES

You have no choice. If you back away now you'll show her what a wuss you are, and she'll never get to see the rest of your annoying personality traits.

MAX

Yeah you're right. I couldn't deprive her of that.

Max sips his coffee for effect, then defiantly walks toward Julie.

MAX (cont'd)  
(feigning surprise)  
Hey!

JULIE  
Hey! What's going on. I hope you're not leaving yet, I was just walking over to say hello.

MAX  
Oh no, I was just, actually to be honest I was... about to start dancing, actually.

JULIE  
Oh really? Wow, huh. I wouldn't want to keep you...

MAX  
Oh no, no, it's fine I um, I can probably use a break anyway.

JULIE  
Oh. Good. I'm glad I could fit into your schedule.

MAX  
Yeah, I can fit you in anytime. Oh, I'm- you know.

JULIE  
Oh, I know. Hey, I was listening to your radio show the other day and I thought that was great, that thing with phone sex operator...

MAX  
Oh shit, I can't believe you heard that. I hope nobody else did.

JULIE  
No, I thought it was great.

MAX  
I have to convince myself that nobody is listening, or I can't do my show. Now you just ruined it for me, and I'll never be able to do a show again.

JULIE  
I was dying. She had no idea what to say.

MAX

I guess it's not every day that someone calls a phone sex operator to talk about politics.

JULIE

(laughing)

Yeah... and she hung up on you! When she said, 'this isn't the place for that kind of talk'... that was great.

MAX

Yeah, it's like, for four bucks a minute we should be able to talk about whatever I want, even the intellectually obscene.

JULIE

The country must be in trouble when someone who makes a living pretending to give blow jobs thinks talking about politics is beneath her.

MAX

Yeah, and that's ironic, because politics and blow jobs so often intersect.

JULIE

Well, you never know what her situation is. Maybe she regularly has politicians beneath her.

MAX

(amused)

That's a good point. Or maybe she's been screwed by politicians in other ways. I know my ass is still sore.

JULIE

Hmm, well.

MAX

(embarrassed by his last comment)

Uh, yeah. So where do you live?

JULIE

In Shelly.

MAX

Does it bother you to live in an all female dorm?

JULIE

No, well a little, sure. But it's quiet and I can always go visit whoever I want.

Plus my parents sort of insisted. They're a little old fashioned.

MAX

Uh huh.

JULIE

There are always boys around anyway. You should see what happens when there are fire drills in the middle of the night, more guys than girls come out sometimes.

MAX

What are the girls like?

JULIE

They're all right.

MAX

And the guys?

JULIE

They come and go.

MAX

I bet they do.

#### ANOTHER CORNER OF THE PUB

Charles and Sara are dancing to a song by The Cure. Amanda walks past them and over to Scott, who had been sitting alone. Amanda sits down next to Scott, who looks like he'd rather be alone, and they start talking.

#### A DIFFERENT TABLE IN THE PUB

MARK and ANDY sitting at a different table. Andy is your basic hippy-type, wearing a ridiculous green shag jacket, has longish hair, round glasses, and a torn pro-marijuana T-shirt. Mark is sort of normal looking, the kind of person who thinks he's a hippy because he's wearing a Phish baseball hat.

Julie approaches, with Max right behind her.

JULIE

Hey guys, do you know Max?

ANDY

Uh no, hey Max.

JULIE

Max, this is Mark, and Andy.

MARK

Hi Max.

(to Julie)

I was beginning to wonder what happened to you...

JULIE

What can I say, I'm very easily distracted.

MARK

Yeah, well, I was starting to wonder.

ANDY

So Max, what's going on?

MAX

Not much. I uh, really like your jacket. Is that real carpet?

ANDY

Oh yeah. Hey, you like this? I couldn't believe my luck when I saw it. This shade of green shag is so rare these days. I bought it at that crazy thrift shop down on Highland Street. That place is a kick, man, you'd dig it.

MAX

It's rare huh...

ANDY

Totally. This place is way out there.

MAX

Well I have a car and a good map, so getting there shouldn't be much of a problem.

Julie laughs.

MARK

Hey Andy, are we gonna burn this or what?

ANDY

Yeah, yeah man. I insist. Looks like we got to go spark this one up. But hey man, you guys are like all invited, if you can handle some kind bud... Maui Wowey, you know.

MARK

Yeah, Julie, you should really come along.

JULIE

Yeah, that sounds pretty all right. Why not. Max, you gonna come with us?

MAX

Um, I- yeah, okay.

INT. ANDY'S KITCHEN- NIGHT

Everyone is in the small, sparsely-decorated kitchen because it's the only room in the apartment that will seat four people. Plus it's late, and a drunk guy is sleeping on the couch in the tiny living room. Mark, Julie, and Max are sitting around a wooden table, and Andy is looking for beer in the fridge.

ANDY

I'm sorry, but all we've got is Sam Adams.

MAX

Well, I mean, it's not Schlitz but it'll do.

MARK

Schlitz... is that any good?

MAX

No, it's crap.

MARK

Oh. I have some buddies that like Schlitz.

ANDY

(offering beers)  
Mark, you want? Julie?

MARK

You know it.

JULIE

Yeah. Sure. Max, are you a big beer drinker?

Andy brings over three beers and gives them out. He is also holding one for himself, which he uses his keychain to open before handing the keychain off to Mark.

MAX

I wouldn't say I'm a big beer drinker, but I don't drink much hard liquor and I do like beer.

JULIE

So what kind of beer do you usually drink?

MAX

I like Guinness, Bass.

ANDY

Cool, cool.

MAX

That's what I like, but I also buy a lot of cheap beer too. I drink a lot of Bud and Rolling Rock.

MARK

I want to like Guinness, but I can't stand it. My friends drink it, but it makes me nauseous, and I don't know about you, but I don't like being sick.

ANDY

Understandable. Puking sucks, dude. Man, I still get shivers when I think about last Tuesday. That's why I've been smoking a lot of weed lately. It's just easier— you get high right away and there's no hangover.

Andy pulls out a little baggie of marijuana, and begins looking through a closet in the room.

MAX

Yeah, I don't know. It never did it for me.

MARK

Shit, really? Some people just can't handle their bud.

MAX

I just... I don't know. It makes me feel like I'm inside out, or listening to Rush Limbaugh or something.

MARK

(to Julie, about Max)  
Pssh... whatever.

ANDY

Julie, you don't smoke either, right?

MARK

(to Julie)

Is that right?

JULIE

Yeah. I used to, sometimes, but when it started to become my social life I knew I needed to stop.

MAX

That's kind of like why I stopped playing Dungeons and Dragons. It was uh, in eighth grade, but it was kind of similar.

Andy finds what he was looking for in the closet— a gigantic bong made from what appears to be an old vacuum cleaner. He sets it up in the middle of the room and Andy and Mark start to smoke.

MAX

(reacting to the bong)

Wow. I bet you could use that for yard work.

ANDY

Yeah. It's great. I bought this at a yard sale— it was a vacuum cleaner when I bought it, and now it cleans out my head.

Andy walks over to a CD player on the counter, sorts through a pile of CDs in the cupboard, and then puts one on.

ANDY

(to Max)

Hey man, you like Zappa?

MAX

I don't know. I haven't really heard enough to make any judgment.

JULIE

You should listen to "Apostrophe" some time.

MAX

"Apostrophe"?

MARK

It's an album.

MAX

I thought Julie was just being overly grammatical.

MARK

What? Hey Andy, why don't we go smoke in the living room?

ANDY

No, no, the living room's out tonight. Ampersand's crashing on the couch. He's going through rough times, you know, with his girl and everything.

MAX

(not sure that he heard correctly)  
What's his name?

ANDY

Ampersand.

MAX

Ampersand? Where's he from? What kind of name is that?

ANDY

Oh, this is a funny story. This guy was named Mike, which is a fine name but he couldn't cope with it. He thought it was, who knows, too straight or something. He wanted a name that would tell people, here is a person that only the brave will ever understand! Here is a person living beyond the walls!

MAX

He must have been listening to "Apostrophe" at the time.

ANDY

I don't know. Anyway, when Prince went and changed his name to whatever the fuck that thing is, the artist, you know. When Prince did that, Mike thought the idea was great, but it was impractical because no one could ever remember what his name looked like. And forget about ever trying to type it.

MARK

Dude, fuck that.

ANDY

So Mike changed his name to Ampersand.

JULIE

(amused)  
Really? That's great.

ANDY

It's on the keyboard, so it's easy. He paid to have it changed and everything.

MARK

How much did that cost? Because a friend of a friend wants to change his name to Not/Bill.

MAX

Is his name Bill?

MARK

No, Not/Bill.

JULIE

What about originally?

MARK

Originally he wanted to change it to something else.

& walks through the kitchen in a daze, on his way to the bathroom. He's wearing nothing but boxers.

MAX

Was that &?

ANDY

Yeah, man just try to keep it down a little, he's trying to sleep. I hope we didn't wake him up.

JULIE

Looks like we already did.

ANDY

Why? Because he's walking? My man sleepwalks, you can't base on that.

MARK

Yeah, he's a grad student, right?

ANDY

Yup, environmental studies or something. He's way into it.

MAX

I think he said something about the ozone layer as he walked by.

ANDY

For him, that's it. The environment and fat bowls are his two loves in life.

MAX

Isn't the Carbon Monoxide in marijuana bad for the environment?

ANDY

No, no man. Weed keeps him in touch with his mother— mother nature.

MAX

And like his mother, it probably helps pay the bills.

EXT. STREET— NIGHT

A run-down city street, at night. Julie, Max, and Mark are walking home from Andy's apartment.

JULIE

I can't believe I only had two beers. I feel so out of it.

MAX

I can never tell how drunk I am until I try to walk. I can't wait until I'm 21. Going to bars is gonna be great.

JULIE

Like you don't go now.

MAX

I do sometimes, but it's tricky, my stupid fake I.D. doesn't always work, and even when it does, I just worry about getting caught the whole time I'm there.

JULIE

You know, you worry way too much.

MAX

I thought that was what you liked about me.

MARK

Since I turned 21 I've been going to bars all the time. Bars rule.

They get to the corner where they will have to part ways—  
Max's dorm is in one direction and Julie and Mark live in  
another direction.

MAX  
My dorm is over here.

MARK  
So you okay from here?

MAX  
I can make it.

Max crosses the street.

MAX  
Goodnight.

JULIE  
Goodnight, Max.

MAX  
(mostly to himself)  
Goodnight.

Max quietly continues toward his dorm.

INT. COMMON ROOM— NIGHT

Sam walks in and Max is playing video hockey. Sam looks  
upset.

MAX  
Hey.

SAM  
Hey. What are you doing?

MAX  
Playing hockey. Remember the scene in  
*Swingers* when they play this? That was  
great.

SAM  
Hmm.

MAX  
Wasn't there also a video hockey scene in  
*Mallrats*?

SAM  
No, you're thinking of *Chasing Amy*.

MAX

Oh yeah. *Mallrats* had all the *Star Wars* references. That rocked.

SAM

(suddenly pissed off)  
I hate it when movies spend too much time talking about other movies.

Sam sits down on a couch. Max notices that Sam is upset.

MAX (cont'd)

What's up?

SAM

Why don't we get out of here. Come on, let's go down to the bar.

MAX

If we can get in. I-

SAM

I'll buy you a drink.

MAX

You and Jen broke up, didn't you!?

SAM

Yeah. How'd you know?

MAX

Well, the only time you ever offer to buy me a drink is when something's really gone wrong... and you haven't been complaining about your lab work all week.

INT. BAR- NIGHT

A mostly-empty local dive bar. A classic rock song is playing from the jukebox. Sam is sitting alone at a small table. Max is at the bar. The BARTENDER approaches Max.

BARTENDER

I'm gonna need to see some I.D.

MAX

(reaching into his pants pocket)  
Sure. Oh shit, actually I think I left it at home.

BARTENDER

See ya.

INT. COFFEE BAR- NIGHT

A dive that looks a lot like the bar in the previous scene.

Sam is sitting alone at a small table, in a shot that mirrors the shot in the previous scene. Max is at the bar, ordering a couple of coffees. The BARTENDER brings the drinks to Max, who pays the bartender and then walks over to a table and sits across from Sam.

During this scene, Sam and Max fit the stereotype of a couple of guys sadly talking over their problems at a bar- except that it happens to be a coffee bar.

MAX

Cappucino, 2 sugars, cinnamon?

SAM

(accepting the coffee)

Thanks.

MAX

So what happened with Jen?

SAM

It's hard to say. It gets to the point where you've been with a person for a long time, and if you know you're not completely in love, you're sort of in limbo.

It's like those old Road Runner cartoons. You can only float through the air until you look down. I looked down.

Max gives Sam a confused look, reacting to the Road Runner analogy, then speaks.

MAX

Whatever. So why did you finally decide to end it? You basically seemed happy.

SAM

It wasn't planned. It was kind of an accident.

MAX

You broke up by accident?

SAM

No, I think it's for the best... I just didn't want it to happen like this.

MAX

How did it happen?

SAM

We were just hanging out, watching TV, and she told me that she loves me. It was completely out of the blue, and for some reason I was just stunned. I mean, we weren't even sitting on the same couch at the time.

MAX

Then what?

SAM

I wasn't sure what to say. She says things like that sometimes, but usually when we're in bed or something. But this time it was different... all we were doing was watching TV.

MAX

Were you watching porn?

INT JEN'S LIVING ROOM- DAY

The scene shifts to Jen's living room, with Sam sitting on a chair and Jen on a couch, both facing the TV, and talking. Max is standing by the TV, as if observing the memory through Sam's retelling of the story.

When Sam talks to Max in this flashback, Jen is oblivious. She can't see Max either. When dialogue that she does not hear is taking place, Jen remains frozen in place.

SAM

(to Max)

No, look, it's just "Star Trek." Anyway, I tried to explain how I felt as honestly as possible.

(to Jen)

We've been together a long time and I really care about you, but I don't know if I love you. This is a tough thing to say, but I think something might be missing from our relationship

JEN

Something's missing?

SAM

Let me see if I can explain this. I really care about you but— okay. My philosophy is that there are different aspects to each individual's personality, and these aspects are compatible in different ways.

JEN

I've always thought the best thing about us is that we are so compatible!

SAM

Well, I think we are, in a way. There are three things I look for in a girl: mind, heart, and body. Jen, you've definitely got the body.

Max is stunned and starts laughing, he can't believe his ears. Jen is also stunned, obviously upset, and after a moment of silence she storms out of the room.

MAX

How... what... Sam, how could you say that to a girl that you've been with for two years? Wow, you think you know someone pretty well and then they do something like this.

REVERTS TO:

COFFEE BAR

SAM

What? Is that really so bad? I couldn't lie to her.

MAX

What are you, an asshole? Don't you know that no matter how often girls tell you they want complete honesty, they never really mean it? No one does. I can't believe you haven't figured that out by now.

SAM

I don't see why it's bad, if it's what I think.

MAX

Well how did she take it? Have you talked to her since that conversation?

SAM

Yeah, actually she came back right after that and slapped me in the face and asked me to leave. Then she called and she was crying and she wanted me to come back over.

MAX

I guess you didn't make up.

SAM

No. When I got there, she kicked me out and said she never wants to see me again.

MAX

Fifty bucks says there's a message on the machine when you get back.

SAM

Hmm.

MAX

It's too bad it ended like this. I'm really sorry.

SAM

Me too. I'm upset, it's going to be hard to get used to. But it would have only been harder if we had broken up later.

MAX

Yeah. I agree.

A beat passes.

MAX (cont'd)

I can't believe you said that to her. That's so cool.

SAM

You think?

MAX

No.

INT THE PUB- NIGHT

About fifteen minutes later, in The Pub. There is a ska band playing on the small stage in front, about 75 people half-filling the room.

Many of the kids in the club are wearing the attire associated with ska "rude boys": dressed in black suits and black dress shoes, with white shirts and black or checkered

ties. Some of the boys are wearing pork pie hats, and some are wearing black sunglasses even though the club is fairly dark. They are also *skanking*— or performing the traditional ska dance, which isn't helping anyone retain their dignity.

Max walks in and nods to a couple of people as he makes his way through the dancing crowd. He recognizes Sara, Charles, Scott, and Amanda standing near the bar and approaches them.

MAX

Hey guys. What's up?

CHARLES

Max! Good to see you buddy.

AMANDA and SCOTT

Hey Max.

MAX

How's the band?

CHARLES

These guys are rocking! I'm taking a break from skanking.

SCOTT

I hate ska.

SARA

(to Charles, returning to the conversation they were having before Max showed up)

So can you believe they cast Jon as the lead in *Equus*?

CHARLES

I think he can pull it off. I just hope Mike does a good job preparing everybody.

Max is looking through the crowd, and Amanda notices Max's wandering eye.

AMANDA

Who are you looking for?

MAX

I don't know, I mean, no one.

AMANDA

You've been looking for no one since you walked in.

MAX

All right, you win. I'm looking for a girl I met last week.

AMANDA

Looks like you'll have to settle for Beth.

Beth is standing near the entrance, talking to a FRIEND, having apparently just entered the pub. A moment later, Max approaches them.

MAX

Hey.

Beth gives Max a hug.

BETH

Max! Max! It's so good to see you.

MAX

Yeah, it's good to see you too, Beth. What's up?

BETH

Not a lot. I've been studying all night and I thought I'd come down here and take a break.

(referring to the band)

Are these guys any good?

MAX

They're all right. It's, you know, ska. It's good if you like it, and elevator music if you don't.

FRIEND

I'm gonna go say hi to someone. I'll be back.

BETH

Mm hm.

(to Max)

So how are you doing?

MAX

I'm okay, I mean, as okay as okay goes, which is reasonably okay.

BETH

You're so weird.

MAX

That's what they tell me. How about you?

BETH

I try not to think about it.

MAX

That bad, huh?

BETH

Oh shit, there's Steve.

Beth is looking across the room at STEVE, a fairly good looking guy who is talking to a guy and a girl.

BETH (cont'd)

Who is he with? Is he with someone?

MAX

I don't know.

BETH

He never calls me anymore. I think he might be seeing someone. Have you heard anything?

MAX

About Steve seeing someone?

BETH

Yeah.

MAX

(slightly jealous)  
No. I haven't heard anything. I'm sure nothing's going on, and even if something were, why would I hear about it?

BETH

I know something's going on.

MAX

I... it's possible.

BETH

(distressed)  
You think so?

MAX

Well, I mean, anything's possible.

BETH

(distracted, watching Steve)  
What? You're right. I'm sorry. I'm so  
sorry.

MAX  
Don't worry about it. I've been there.

BETH  
Why are we always attracted to people  
that are completely wrong for us? Is it  
because they excite us?

MAX  
I guess so.  
(exaggerating for effect)  
You know, sometimes I wait until the last  
minute before returning a video. And  
once, I didn't even rewind.

BETH  
(laughing)  
That's funny. I can be a rebel too. Every  
once in a while I forget to floss.

MAX  
(laughs)  
Man, our lives are so pathetic.

BETH  
Speak for yourself, loser.

Max smiles.

BETH (cont'd)  
I don't think it's pathetic, I think it's  
good. We're okay, you know, but I feel  
like... sometimes... you know.

MAX  
Yeah. Me too.

BETH  
Can I ask you something? Is Scott  
interested in Amanda at all?

MAX  
What, has she been talking about this  
lately?

BETH  
A little. You know, it's on her mind.  
Does he talk about her at all when she's  
not around?

MAX

Scott never talks about anything like that. He opens up like a can of sardines: rarely, and whenever he does, something smells fishy.

INT. CAR- DAY

Late afternoon. Scott, Max, and Amanda are on the way to the drug store.

AMANDA

...sometimes she just gets on my nerves, that's all. I just wish she was more considerate sometimes. It's like she just doesn't get it. I mean, none of us even care.

MAX

Uh huh.

SCOTT

Sounds familiar.

The car pulls up to a CVS.

MAX

I'll, uh, I'll be right back.

SCOTT

Okay.

AMANDA

Have fun.

A beat.

AMANDA

Scott, can I ask you something?

SCOTT

I guess.

AMANDA

It's just that, sometimes, you're really cool and other times you act like I'm not even here. Or like you don't want me around.

SCOTT

Uh huh.

AMANDA

Well I was wondering if... nevermind.

SCOTT

Okay.

Another beat.

AMANDA

Okay, look, I'm just going to come right out with it: I think I like you. I think I... really like you.

SCOTT

I know.

Just as Amanda looks like she's about to respond, Scott calmly leaves the car and walks into the store.

INT. THE PUB- NIGHT

About 10:30 P.M. A band is playing onstage to a medium sized crowd.

Max is walking through the crowd, hoping to see Julie. He stops near the back of the crowd and watches the band play. Julie soon appears beside him.

JULIE

(straining to be heard over the band)  
Hey!

MAX

Oh, Hey! It's good to see you.

JULIE

(laughing)  
Yeah, it's been a while.

MAX

Long enough.

Both pause to watch the band, which is loud but not very good.

MAX (cont'd)

I...

Max is distracted in the middle of his thought by the SINGER, who begins smashing the microphone stand against a wall on one side of the stage. He next motions the stand threateningly toward the crowd, who respond by stepping away from the stage.

SINGER (shouting)  
You're all a part of the conspiracy!  
You're all human! Every one of you wore  
diapers! You're all full of shit!

The singer storms off stage. The band finishes up the song and a moment later follows the singer off stage and O.S., as the crowd politely applauds.

MAX  
I sense some kind of deeper meaning, but that was really too stupid to even think about.

JULIE  
Yeah, that's their trademark, they insult the crowd at the end of the set. Sometimes he breaks the mic two songs into the show, and they storm off stage. We were lucky tonight. They played for over 40 minutes.

MAX  
Luck had nothing to do with it.

JULIE  
(pointing at the stage)  
Look, the mic isn't even broken. They were just tired of playing, but they wanted to give us something to remember. It's modern showmanship.

MAX  
It was entertaining, but you have to wonder about any band whose highlight is their exit.

JULIE  
It worked for The Who.

MAX  
Who?

JULIE  
The Who.

MAX  
I know, I know, just playing.

ANOTHER BAND ON STAGE

This band is as bad as the first band, and less interesting.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

Max and Julie sitting at a table, watching the band play. They're both a little bored.

JULIE  
Let's get out of here.

MAX  
What? Really?

JULIE  
Why not, these guys suck.

MAX  
All right, sure. But what, I mean, what do you want to do?

JULIE  
I don't know, I can barely hear you. Why don't we take a walk? I want to get a drink upstairs.

They both grab their coats and get up.

INT STUDY LOUNGE— NIGHT

A quiet, empty study lounge, which has a view of the Pub and its moshing crowd through a large window, which drowns out most of the sound of the band.

Julie and Max sit down next to each other on a couch.

MAX  
Oh, did you want to get a drink?

JULIE  
No, I'm fine.

MAX  
Okay.

JULIE  
Yeah.

MAX (cont'd)  
So, what, you said you're a sophomore, right?

JULIE  
Yeah.

MAX

I'm a junior. So how come we never met before last week?

JULIE

I've been hiding in all the right places.

MAX

It must have been luck, you know?

JULIE

Luck? Come on, this school is too small. We were bound to meet eventually.

MAX

But you know, even though this is a small school, there are certain people I see around who I would like to get to know, but who I never meet. You know what I'm talking about?

JULIE

Like, you want to meet someone but you don't know how? I don't— whenever I want to say anything, I say it. I don't spend my time trying to justify talking to someone or whatever. That's stupid.

MAX

Well I guess.

JULIE

You limit yourself too much if you do that. If you spend too much time worrying you don't spend enough time living, right?

MAX

But what would life be like without worrying? Telling me not to worry is like, I don't know, asking a bear to use toilet paper.

JULIE

You didn't have much trouble approaching me at that party.

MAX

I know. It was one of those weird, drunk, uncharacteristic moments.

JULIE

You're not fooling me. I can see right through this aloof image you project...

MAX

What?

JULIE

It's not an insult. I get the sense that there's this whole other side of your personality.

MAX

I hope he's a better dancer.

JULIE

See, this is the side you show everyone—playing everything off whenever anything gets serious. But I know there's more to you.

MAX

What are you talking about?

JULIE

Why don't you tell me something about yourself, something I never would have guessed. And before you try to come up with some dopey line, don't bother— I'm looking for a serious answer.

Max is speechless for a beat, clearly thrown by the question.

JULIE

I should get going.

Julie gets up.

MAX

I know we barely know each other, but you're all I think about.

JULIE

I said something I never would have guessed.

MAX

Oh, thanks. I bare my soul and now you're the funny one.

JULIE

Sorry. That wasn't quite what I was looking for, but I'll accept it as your answer.

MAX

So now it's your turn, right?

JULIE

Let's see. Okay, here's one: I have a boyfriend.

MAX

I sure wouldn't've guessed that.

JULIE

Yeah, I had a feeling.

MAX

It's not the guy we smoked pot with, is it? Mark?

JULIE

Oh god, no. He's been following me around for years. Good guy, but kind of a jerk.

MAX

So who is it?

JULIE

Actually I sort of lied— I don't really have a boyfriend, anymore.

MAX

Oh?

JULIE

Yeah. Rick and I were together since high school, but we broke up over break.

MAX

Oh. Since high school, wow.

JULIE

Yeah. He's kind of a jerk. It was all a waste of time. Sometimes I... I don't know. Max, why don't you have a girlfriend?

MAX

What?

JULIE

There are a lot of girls around that go for guys like you.

MAX

Know any?

JULIE

This is like one of those moments in a movie, when a character has a chance to say something, and of course they do, and it becomes a movie moment.

MAX

What?

JULIE

...And it's always the kind of thing that  
would never work out in real life?

Just as Max and Julie are trying to figure out what to say,  
the building manager drifts through the room.

MANAGER

Building closes in five minutes.

MAX

Oh, sure, yeah.

The manager walks toward the door, and Max and Julie put on  
their coats and start walking toward the door.

MAX

Do you— are you hungry at all? I know  
this crappy little place across town  
that's open late. The food is terrible,  
but it is overpriced.

JULIE

Let's go.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CENTER— NIGHT

MAX

Damn.

JULIE

What?

MAX

It's 25 degrees, and I can't remember  
where I parked my car.

JULIE

Oh. You have a car?

Max has a confused look, reacting to Julie's comment.

INT. CAFÉ— NIGHT

The place is nearly filled with nicely dressed (and a few not  
as nicely dressed) couples.

Max and Julie are sitting opposite from each other at a table  
in the corner.

JULIE

This is a nice place. Ritzy, ritzy.  
Interesting mix of people here, you've  
got the young businessmen and their  
dates—

MAX

That wasn't a very P.C. comment.

JULIE

Screw P.C. You think the chicks here that  
are with these guys are pulling in the  
same money?

MAX

I don't really know...

JULIE

If they were, what else would the men  
have to offer?

MAX

So you're saying that men are only good  
to have around on payday? That's  
offensive to both men and women.

JULIE

No no no, you're misunderstanding me. I'm  
saying that these men with the fancy  
suits, taking their waitress girlfriends  
here to impress them into bed because  
they're not attractive enough to get them  
into bed any other way, these are the  
guys I'm talking about. Really, as if a  
fast car can ever make up for a small  
dick.

MAX

If it did, do you think I'd be here right  
now? I'd be working, doing whatever I  
could to save up some money.

JULIE

To buy a big dick?

MAX

Well, sure, there's that, but it would  
also be nice to have a car with air  
conditioning.

The WAITER shows up with two coffees and two pieces of cake.

MAX and JULIE (to the Waiter)

Thanks.

The Waiter leaves.

MAX

Do you ever just feel completely out of place in the world, I just— there are times when nothing makes any sense, and the adult world seems so foreign.

JULIE

I can see that. The world doesn't make sense if you think about it too deeply. It has a certain logic that's consistent with itself, but it all falls apart if you take it out of context.

MAX

Kind of like a *Star Wars* movie.

JULIE

Yeah, especially the new one. Most people, they realize that life has holes in the plot at a certain point and then spend the rest of their time trying to ignore it by, I don't know, getting a life. Why you think about these things so much, I don't know.

MAX

But, if I didn't think about it, wouldn't I just be one of the men in the fancy suits?

JULIE

Not necessarily. You understand the larger picture, but that doesn't mean that you have to obsess over it.

MAX

I'll have to change, you know, get a life and all the crap that comes with it. I'll have it all soon enough. Being a rebel from the sidelines is okay when you're a college student, but then what?

JULIE

Well, you know, everything doesn't always work out perfectly. Life is in the acceptable middle ground.

MAX

What are you, a fortune cookie all of a sudden?

EXT. SHELLY HALL (JULIE'S DORM)— NIGHT

Max and Julie approach the door.

MAX

I um, tonight was an interesting night.

JULIE

Good coffee. Can't say much for the band. Will you call me tomorrow?

MAX

Yes.

There is a brief but awkward silence as they stand near the door, neither committing to a movement in any direction. Just as the pause is becoming too long, a STUDENT opens the door from the inside and holds the door open for Julie. Julie grabs the door and the student walks away.

JULIE

I'll see you tomorrow.

MAX

Yeah. Well, goodnight.

Julie enters the building, and Max turns around and walks away.

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT— DAY

Max and Beth are in a common fast food restaurant having lunch, seated opposite each other at a small table. Max is eating some kind of hamburger meal, and Beth is working on a salad.

BETH

So what's new with you? Any girls on your mind?

MAX

Not really, I mean, there's nothing even worth mentioning.

BETH

But there's something?

MAX

It's nothing.

BETH

Who is it? Do I know her?

MAX

I don't think so. Her name is Julie.

BETH

What's the story?

MAX

We met at a party last week...

BETH

And you talked for a while.

MAX

Not that long, just a few minutes. Then I saw her a couple of nights ago, and we hung out with some of her friends, and then last night... we hung out again.

BETH

Did anything exciting happen?

MAX

No, not really. But she's really cool. I like her a lot.

BETH

That's great though. It's exciting, it's something to think about, you know?

MAX

Well, whatever. How's the new guy?

BETH

What new guy?

MAX

Oh come on, you know who I'm talking about. The guy you were telling me about the other day.

BETH

It's not serious. He's cute, but he's just another guy. You know?

MAX

Sort of.

BETH

How serious could it be? He dropped out of college to work in a video store.

MAX

Well, he must have some ambition, right?

BETH

He wants to watch every video in the store. Seriously, his idea of a romantic evening is renting a Demi Moore movie instead of something with Jackie Chan.

MAX

Demi Moore, huh?

BETH

Yeah.

MAX

Ouch.

BETH

You don't like her?

MAX

She was okay in *Ghost*, but I don't think she's made a good movie since then..

BETH

I like some of her films. She's one of the only female stars making a ton of money as much as a bunch of actors, and I have to respect that.

MAX

Oh come on! She only makes that kind of money because she has plastic breasts.

BETH

That shows what a woman needs to do to make it.

MAX

Is that a reason to respect her?

BETH

Come on, you'd fuck her.

MAX

What does that prove? I'm a guy.

BETH

(playful)  
Would you rather have her or me?

MAX

What?

BETH

You heard me. Who would you rather sleep with?

MAX

What would your new guy think about this?

BETH

Forget about him, this is a serious hypothetical question.

MAX

I don't know. Do you really want an honest answer?

BETH

I didn't at first, but after this build up, I'm dying to know what you're going to say.

MAX

Okay, well, it would be you.

BETH

I knew it!

MAX

But don't be too flattered, it's only because you'd laugh at more of my jokes in bed. It adds a whole other dimension—I'd feel like you were laughing with me instead of at me.

BETH

(amused)

You talk while you're in bed with girls?

MAX

Yeah.

BETH

That's so weird.

MAX

It's not that strange...

BETH

The weird part is that I do the same thing. Guys usually think it's so annoying.

MAX

Girls think I'm a loser.

BETH

I don't.

(looks at her watch)

Oh, damn! I have to go.

MAX

You have to go? We just got here.

BETH

I know, I'm sorry. I have rehearsal at 1.  
I'm sorry, you must hate me, I always do  
this.

MAX

No, it's- it's fine. I was finished  
anyway.

Max and Beth put on their coats and pick up their trays.

MAX (cont'd)

I'll walk you over to the theater.

INT. MAX'S COMMON ROOM- NIGHT

Julie is sitting on one of the couches, watching Max flip  
through a bookshelf full of videotapes.

MAX

We don't have much, ugh- *Eraser*.

Max holds up the video tape.

MAX (cont'd)

A lot of shitty movies. I think Scott  
joined a video club.

JULIE

What do you mean? Doesn't he return them?

MAX

No, I mean, it's a video club. It's like  
a CD club except they send you videos if  
you forget to return the card.

JULIE

Oh. Oh all right. Anything good?

MAX

(still looking at the videos)

Um...

JULIE

You mentioned something about Woody Allen the other night, didn't you? Do you have any of his movies lying around?

MAX

(hesitant)

I've got *Annie Hall* lying around here somewhere.

JULIE

*Annie Hall*? Cool! That's one of my favorite movies of all time.

MAX

Oh wow. Me too. But I don't know if I want to watch it now...

JULIE

I'm a really big Woody Allen fan and that's my favorite movie of his... come on, throw it in.

MAX

I- I watched it a couple of weeks ago. What if we watch *Airplane* this time and *Annie Hall* next time?

JULIE

*Airplane*? Good compromise. Throw it in.

Max takes the video off of the shelf and puts it in the VCR. The movie starts. Julie and Max are sitting next to each other on the same couch.

HALF AN HOUR LATER

*Airplane* is still playing on the small TV.

Julie is leaning on Max, and they are sharing a blanket. Max turns to say something to Julie just as her head is turning toward him, and their lips somehow end up in the same place. As they are about to kiss, Julie appears to back away.

JULIE

(more confused than upset)

What are you-

MAX

What?

JULIE

Why did you back away?

MAX

I didn't, I thought you did.

JULIE

It wasn't me.

MAX

Oh. I'll, I'll have to remember that later.

Max pauses for a beat, watching the movie.

MAX (cont'd)

You know, actually, my memory's not what it used to be. If I don't act on this information now, I might...

Max leans in again, and kisses her. She kisses him back.

JULIE

Right.

Julie then kisses Max, and Max pulls the blanket up over the two of them. The sound of kissing is audible from under the covers, followed by the following:

JULIE

Ow.

MAX

Sorry.

JULIE

No, it's okay.

More kissing sounds.

MAX

Are you comfortable, I mean, is this okay?

JULIE

It's okay. Shut up already.

Scott, Sam and Tommy enter, oblivious to what is happening on the couch. By the time anyone notices that Max and Julie are in the room, all appearances indicate that they were just watching a movie.

TOMMY

You're crazy! Do you know how important your sense of smell is?

SCOTT

(to Tommy)

Oh come on! What about the sense of touch? Missing out on the smell of rotting milk is a small price to pay for the ability to enjoy sex.

(to Max)

Hey Max.

MAX

Oh, hey. Guys, um, this is Julie— Julie, this is my roommate Sam, and that's Tommy, and Scott, who also live here.

TOMMY

(to Julie)

It's nice to meet you.

SAM

Hi. What are you kids up to?

MAX

Watching a movie.

JULIE

Actually I was just leaving.

MAX

You're leaving?

JULIE

I kind of have some work to do before class tomorrow.

MAX

You don't even want to finish the movie?

JULIE

No. I'm sorry, but I didn't realize what time it was. I have to work on a paper.

MAX

Do you... want me to walk you home?

JULIE

Sure, all right. Boys, it was nice to meet you.

TOMMY

Bye.

(to Scott)

What about body odor?

SCOTT  
 (sarcastically)  
 Yeah, I'd miss that.

Max waves as he exits with Julie.

EXT. CAMPUS— NIGHT

Max and Julie are approaching Julie's dorm.

JULIE  
 I still have to write six pages tonight.

MAX  
 Six pages? That's nothing. Triple spaced,  
 in 14 point type, that's only like 500  
 words. If a picture's worth a thousand  
 words, that's like half a photo.

They reach the door and Julie takes out her card  
 entry for the building.

JULIE  
 I don't know what my Professor would  
 think about that. Maybe some other time.  
 Thanks for... you know, everything.

MAX  
 Any time.

Max kisses Julie, catching her off guard.

JULIE  
 I'd ask you to come up but, but I wasn't  
 kidding about that paper.

MAX  
 Hmm.

JULIE  
 I won't be able to concentrate on it now  
 anyway, but if I don't finish it tonight  
 I'll be in deep shit.

MAX  
 I understand. It's not a—

JULIE  
 Are you going to call me tomorrow?

MAX  
 Only if you want me to call you.

JULIE

I do.

MAX

Good, because I was probably gonna call you anyway.

JULIE

Yeah, I had a feeling you were.

A SLEEPING FIGURE

An alarm clock goes off and the figure slams the alarm clock off with an outstretched hand. The figure stirs.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

INT. MAX AND SAM'S DORM ROOM— MORNING

where Max is sleeping in his bed on the other side of the room. Sam rises and sits on the edge of his bed, silent as if in thought. A moment later, Max looks up from his pillow and speaks.

MAX

Is it 8:00 already?

SAM

The alarm clock seems to think so.

MAX

What's with you?

SAM

The usual. Every morning lately, I spend 5 minutes sitting in bed trying to figure out whether the rest of my life ever really happened or if it was all just a bad dream.

MAX

(cheery)

Ouch. I guess you're still upset about the Jen situation. Well, life has it's high points and lows. These things tend to work themselves out for the best. It might take a little time, but everything is going to be A-OK.

SAM

What the hell is your problem?

MAX

What do you mean?

SAM

Why do you have to be so damn cheerful  
all of a sudden?

MAX

I really like this girl. We kissed last  
night.

SAM

Give her a chance. For all of my whining  
about Jen, I'll do it all over again as  
soon as I get the chance. But let me be  
bitter for a little while.

MAX

We've gotta stop talking about this shit  
so early in the morning.

SAM

When are you awake this early in the  
morning?

MAX

That's a good point. I'm going back to  
bed. Have fun in your early class.

SAM

Bastard.

INT. JULIE'S DORM- DAY

The small, messy room has a couple of posters of black and  
white photos, alongside posters of Elvis Costello, Neil  
Young, and a movie poster for *The Jerk*.

Julie is sitting at her desk, typing at her computer. There's  
a knock at the door, and she opens the door- it's Max.

MAX

Hey.

JULIE

Hey! Max! Wow, I'm surprised to see you.

MAX

Yeah, I was gonna call you later, but  
then I was walking by your dorm...

JULIE

Max, you're so funny sometimes.

MAX

I'll assume that's a compliment. This is a nice room. A little cozy, but it must be nice to not have a roommate.

JULIE

Yeah, I had a double my freshman year, and I couldn't deal with it at all. She was always having guys over and stuff, all kinds of craziness. It's part of the reason why I needed to take a little time off.

MAX

It's always hard to live with someone. I guess I got lucky finding Sam and my other suite mates.

JULIE

I think guys are also easier to live with.

MAX

Maybe. What are you doing? Did you finish your paper?

JULIE

Oh, yeah. This is a different one. I'm taking the intro to English class and I've got a paper on *Much Ado About Nothing*. So what's going on?

MAX

I don't know... not too much. I sort of just came by to say hi, see what you were up to.

JULIE

Oh.

MAX

I also wanted to invite you to dinner tonight, a bunch of my friends are going. Have you met my friend Amanda?

JULIE

I don't think so.

MAX

Well it's her birthday today, and it's no surprise to those of us who know her that she's making a big deal out of it, and

forcing us all to go out to eat at some annoying, over-priced restaurant.

JULIE

If she's your friend, you should probably go.

MAX

Yeah, I am. Do you want to come with us? It would give you a chance to meet all my friends. And it would probably make it a lot more bearable for me.

JULIE

Yeah, sure. Sounds like fun.

MAX

Cool, I'm glad you're gonna come. I think you're really gonna like my friends.

JULIE

Your suite-mates seemed nice.

INT. RESTAURANT- NIGHT

Max, Sam, Tommy, Scott, Amanda, Sara, Jen, Julie, and Beth are seated around a large table at a moderately-priced restaurant.

JEN

Everybody already wants to know what I'm going to do when I graduate. But I don't know, I honestly have no idea... but if you tell people that, they look at you like you're a loser. So I started making up stories to tell people. Over break I ran into a relative who asked me if I'm looking forward to going back to school, and I couldn't remember whether I told her I was going to grad school, or I wanted to teach.

BETH

I can't believe I'm graduating next year. My whole life, I've known what was next. But when I graduate, all I have to do is... something.

JEN

Something that will pay the bills.

TOMMY

Grad school baby. Stay out of the real world as long as possible.

MAX

You need to do whatever makes you happy.

SAM

Hopefully you can afford to.

MAX

My grandfather once gave me great advice: he told me that if you love your job, you'll never work a day in your life. He also told me that I should take care of my knees because they're the first to go. He's 98 years old, and he sits around watching CNN and giving me a hard time.

BETH

(laughing)

Your family is so funny.

JEN

I just don't know if I'll find a job I like.

JULIE

(confrontational)

I can understand worrying, but I've worked real hard to be where I am, and the thought of having to leave here and do "something" that isn't outlined in a course catalog doesn't give me fits.

BETH

Okay...

JEN

So you don't worry?

JULIE

Doesn't it make you feel guilty to know that with all the crazy shit going on in the world, you're worried about having to work for a living?

MAX

We are lucky to be here. Sometimes the bigger picture gets lost in the shuffle.

SARA

I can't wait to graduate. I'm gonna be on MTV!

Everyone reacts.

INT. RESTAURANT LOBBY

Tommy, Scott, Amanda, Sara, and Jen are standing near the door, waiting for Max and Sam to get back from the bathroom. Julie is standing away from the group, and Beth approaches Julie as the scene begins.

BETH

Hi.

JULIE

Hey. Nice place, huh?

BETH

Yeah, it's really nice. And I had a really good time. It was good to finally meet you, Max has been talking about you since you guys met.

JULIE

I like Max a lot too.

BETH

I love Max. He's one of my best friends.

JULIE

This is a bit personal, but were you two ever...

BETH

Oh, no. I mean, not really. We kind of talked about it. Some times I think we should have given it more of a chance, but I'd hate to risk losing our friendship. But Max is- you could do a lot worse.

JULIE

I know. Max is great.

BETH

Well, he's not perfect. You could say he has issues.

JULIE

I've noticed that too. Have you ever noticed how he can't shut up in bed?

Max and Sam are walking back toward the lobby.

BETH

Just don't hurt him, okay?

JULIE  
(smiling)  
I'll see what I can do.

Max approaches.

MAX  
(to Beth and Julie)  
You guys ready?

INT. JULIE'S DORM ROOM- NIGHT

Max and Julie are laying in bed next to each other, exhausted.

JULIE  
I wish I had a cigarette.

MAX  
Do you have any cup cakes?

JULIE  
Just finished the box. Listen, I'm sorry if I was a little rude at dinner. I probably shouldn't have snapped at your friends the way I did.

MAX  
It's not a big deal. But you didn't exactly give them the best first impression.

JULIE  
I'm sorry, you're right. Sometimes I can come off a little hostile.

MAX  
Don't worry about it, it's not a big deal.

JULIE  
Tell them, tell them I'm not always like that, okay?

MAX  
Yeah.

JULIE  
Thanks. They were all right, though. You and Beth are pretty close, huh?

MAX  
Yeah. We're pretty good friends.

JULIE

She really cares about you.

MAX

Yeah, I know.

JULIE

What are you going to do with yourself when you finish here?

MAX

Oh come on, don't tell me you're gonna bother me about my lack of ambition now, too.

JULIE

I'm just trying to get to know you better. It seemed to be on all of your minds at dinner.

MAX

I'm thinking about journalism. The media gets a lot of flack, but it still seems to be one of the least corrupt things I could do with myself, short of teaching or becoming a doctor.

JULIE

Why not do that?

MAX

The sight of blood and children makes my skin crawl. How about you?

JULIE

I don't know. I can't stand this place anymore. I hate the way college students are babied by everyone. I want to go home and work for a little while, and then see if I still want a degree.

Everyone's in school for the wrong reason. Nobody wants to learn anything, they just think they need a degree, and private schools like this stay in business because they show students a good time for four years. It's all bullshit.

Max looks at the clock. It's 2:24.

MAX

Oh, shit. It's 2:30 already. I have to be up in six hours!

JULIE

Why don't you skip?

MAX

I missed a class last week, and the Professor is real strict about absences.

JULIE

Six hours of sleep is plenty.

MAX

Are you kidding? Maybe for you, but I can't function if I don't get at least 10 to 12 hours of sleep. I'm gonna go.

JULIE

Okay.

Max is still laying in bed, comfortably resting next to Julie.

JULIE (cont'd)

So, get up and get out of here.

MAX

Okay.

After a pause, Max slowly gets up and puts his shoes on. Julie gets up and stands near the door.

MAX (cont'd)

What are you up to tomorrow?

JULIE

I have homework to catch up on.

MAX

There's always going to be homework to catch up on. Oh damn, I have my radio show tomorrow night. You don't want to hang out with me in the station, do you?

JULIE

Give me a call, and I'll see what's going on. I have work that can't be avoided.

MAX

The worst kind.

They quickly kiss. The door closes behind Max, leaving Julie standing alone in her room, deep in thought.

INT. RADIO STATION- NIGHT

Max is sitting alone, DJing a radio show. He is sitting behind a desk/table with a mixing board, stacked CD and cassette players, a phone, a pile of CDs, and two record players. A couple of CD racks are visible in the background, and posters of rock bands on independent labels are hanging in the room.

Max is looking through a stack of CDs and listening to the monitors. He looks at the phone and reaches toward it before changing his mind and backing away.

A moment later he grabs the phone and dials.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH BETH'S DORM ROOM

where Beth is laying in bed in her pajamas as she picks up the phone.

BETH  
Hello?

MAX  
Hey Beth.

BETH  
Max! What's up?

MAX  
Not much. I'm just down here at the radio station, kind of bored.

BETH  
You still do a radio show? Doesn't it bother you that no one listens?

MAX  
It only bothers me that my friends don't listen.  
(sarcastically)  
I mean, I know you were listening, but the rest of them don't care. They wouldn't notice if I dropped off the planet.

BETH  
(sarcastically)  
That's true. I'm sure it has nothing to do with the crappy music you play.

MAX

The music- oh shit. Hold on.

END SPLIT SCREEN

Max is interrupted by the end of his song and the sound of dead air. He puts down the phone, plays with the mixing board, and speaks into the microphone.

MAX (cont'd)

Okay, we're back. That was The Replacements with "Left of the Dial."

Max plays with the mixing board.

MAX (cont'd)

Caller, what's your request?

BETH

I'm not on the air, am I?

MAX

Yeah, you're on the air. Don't get too excited. More people would hear you if you were yelling out the window.

BETH

I would like to hear "Everybody Hurts" by...

Max plays with the mixing board and Beth's voice trails off in mid-sentence.

MAX

What? I'm sorry, the connections getting a little fuzzy. It sounds like you said you want to hear Bruce Springsteen's *Born to Run* album. Which is funny, because that's just what I had cued up.

The song starts and Max returns to the phone.

RESUME SPLIT SCREEN

Beth is now sitting at her desk chair, flipping through a magazine.

BETH

What was that all about?

MAX

I'm sorry, but do you know what would have happened if I had played that song? My ratings would have plummeted. That song did very badly in the latest focus group survey. The fans seem to want to hear more Bruce Springsteen. Go figure.

BETH

When did you get fans?

MAX

Prank callers, mostly. Some with stories about cucumbers. But every listener counts.

BETH

I don't know why you bother. How are things with the new girl?

MAX

I don't know. Just when it seems like things are going well, she doesn't call me back or stop by...

BETH

She seemed a little... aggressive at dinner.

MAX

Yeah, I was surprised to see her, you know, so strongly disagree with you. I'm sorry about that.

BETH

It's not your fault. At least she doesn't seem to have a problem expressing her opinion.

MAX

Nope, that's a problem she doesn't have.

BETH

She's cute too. Did you go back to her place after dinner last night?

MAX

Yeah, and I was there pretty late. But all I can think about now is that she said she'd stop by, and she hasn't.

BETH

(joking)  
You must have been terrible last night.

MAX

(doesn't know whether to laugh or  
cry)  
I, well...

BETH

Come on, I was kidding. I'm sure she just  
couldn't stand your stupid jokes.

MAX

Ha ha. Well, my jokes are always bad,  
but they're not as bad as this.

BETH

Maybe she'll still stop by.

MAX

Not likely. I'm getting out of here in 15  
minutes.

BETH

Well, it's not a big deal. Maybe she has  
a lot of work to do. Or-

MAX

So what, she doesn't have time to give me  
a call? How long does that take? Fuck,  
fuck, fuck, I can't believe I ever  
thought this might work out.

BETH

Don't you think you still might be  
blowing this out of proportion a bit?

MAX

I do- yeah, all right, maybe I am, why  
shouldn't I? At least I'm secure enough  
to accept my insecurity. That's more than  
I can say for some of my friends.

BETH

With all that going for you, it's amazing  
you can still be so insecure.

INT. MAX'S DORM ROOM- DAY

Max is sitting at his desk staring at the phone. A moment  
later he picks it up and dials.

CROSS-CUT AS NEEDED WITH JULIE'S DORM ROOM

where Julie is sitting on her bed.

JULIE  
Hello?

MAX  
Hey, Julie.

JULIE  
What's up?

MAX  
Uh, not much. Actually, I was wondering  
of you wanted to do something tonight.  
Get a movie or something?

JULIE  
Okay. Why not. I have to work for a few  
hours, but I should be done by 10. I'll  
stop by after that, okay?

MAX  
Yeah. Great. See you later then.

JULIE  
Right, bye.

MAX  
(to himself)  
"Why not"?

INT. MAX'S COMMON ROOM— NIGHT

Max is sitting alone on the couch. Scott walks into the room.

SCOTT  
What's wrong?

MAX  
Huh? Oh, nothing, I'm just waiting for  
Julie.

SCOTT  
If she doesn't show up, are we still not  
allowed in here all night? I'm missing a  
rerun of "The Simpsons," you know.

MAX  
It's 11 already?

SCOTT  
Five after.

MAX  
She'll be—

Max is interrupted by a knock on the door.

MAX (cont'd)

That's her.

Max quickly gets up and opens the door.

SCOTT

Oh, man...

Scott goes to his room. Julie enters.

MAX

Hi.

JULIE

Hey. I'm sorry I'm late. You wouldn't believe what cross-campus traffic was like.

MAX

I, um, I can imagine. Don't worry about it, I've been busy with school work anyway. Do you wanna hit the video store?

JULIE

(disappointed)

Oh, you wanted to go rent something. I've been looking forward to seeing *Annie Hall* all day.

MAX

Yeah, that's cool.

(mostly to himself)

I can't hide from that movie forever.

JULIE

No, well, we can go rent something else, if you want. I don't want to force you-

MAX

No, no it's all right, that's silly. It's right here. I'll put it on.

JULIE

Cool.

Max puts the movie in the VCR and sits on the couch next to Julie. She seems a little more distant toward Max than when they watched *Airplane*.

TWO HOURS LATER

The movie is over, and Julie and Max are in the same places.

MAX

I can't get over how depressing the ending is. You hardly ever see a movie that ends like that.

JULIE

It's sad, but it's not the end of the world. Life goes on, you know? If they were meant to be together, they would have stayed together.

MAX

Really, you think so? I don't know, I thought they had something special, I mean, it wasn't perfect, but what is? What is...

JULIE

Relationships are very difficult to maintain. There are so few really successful couples.

MAX

Well, that's very cynical. What's successful? I mean, I usually think about my parents, and they seem happy enough, but—

JULIE

My parents are divorced.

MAX

I can think of plenty of relationships that are successful. I just mentioned my parents because that was an easy example. But there are plenty...

JULIE

It happens, but you have to admit that forced relationships that make people miserable are a lot more common.

MAX

That's interesting. I guess that's your opinion, but I don't know.

JULIE

I should get going.

MAX

Really? It's still early. What, do you have a lot of work to do?

JULIE

Not really. I haven't seen my friends upstairs for a while and they've been bugging me to stop by. Thanks for showing me the movie. It was great.

MAX

Sure.

Julie gets up and starts walking toward the door. Max follows. Julie opens the door and turns to Max, who tries to kiss her. She backs away.

MAX

What?

JULIE

I don't know if this is a good idea right now.

MAX

What—

JULIE

Listen, Max, since the other night, I've been doing some thinking.

MAX

That's your mistake. Mindless happiness is always better than thoughtful reservation. Unless you're talking about bungee jumping...

Julie returns to the couch and sits down. Max stands, facing her.

JULIE

I don't think that this would be a good time for us to bungee jump, or any other kind of jump, or leap, or whatever into a relationship, when we might not know what we're getting ourselves into.

MAX

Well, we don't have to jump, or make, um, any other kind of awkward movement into anything if that's not what we want. But what if we like... glided, you know?

JULIE

Look, the word isn't important. We both know what we're talking about here. I like you, but I told you, I just got out of a serious relationship. I don't think I'm ready for another one yet.

MAX

What if we gave it a shot?

Tommy, half asleep, walks into the room in his pajamas, grabs the remote, turns on the TV, and sits down on the couch. Julie looks upset, and Max gives Tommy a look.

TOMMY (cont'd)

I think I saw that episode already.

Tommy exits.

JULIE

I don't think I can try yet. I'm sorry. I mean, I've been trying but it's hard.

MAX

What the hell was all this, I mean, was any of this- I don't know.

JULIE

I don't know what I was doing. I didn't think about where this might lead until the other night. I never said I was perfect...

Max stands up and starts pacing. He's upset.

JULIE (cont'd)

Say something. Are you okay?

MAX

Yeah, what do you want me to say? I'll be okay. I like you and I'm disappointed. But it'll be all right.

JULIE

Max...

MAX

That's life, you know? That's life.

JULIE

I'm sure this sounds insincere right now, but I hope we can still spend time together. I wasn't lying when I said I like you just now.

MAX

I have enough friends. I don't know, sure, whatever. I don't want to be rude but I think you should go.

JULIE

(stands up)  
I'm sorry.

MAX

(sits down)  
I'm fine. Don't worry about me.

JULIE

Call me some time, okay?

INT. COFFEE BAR— NIGHT

Later that night, Max and Charles are sitting opposite each other at a small table, drinking a couple of coffees. The bar is dimly lit and not very crowded, and the jukebox is playing rock songs.

MAX

You know, the thing I don't get is that it was all going so well.

A beat.

MAX (cont'd)

There was a moment a couple of days ago when we kissed, and it was more than just a kiss. There was something behind it. It was like we broke through all of our outer layers, you know, all the manners and defense mechanisms and daily crap we use to protect ourselves, and I saw a flash of something in her, a glimmer of hope or happiness or whatever drawn across her face. I don't know if you know what I'm talking about. But now it's over and we're strangers again, and I'll never see that part of her again.

CHARLES

I think you're just upset about some other parts of her that you'll never see again.

MAX

(amused)  
It's okay, I'll get over it.

CHARLES

I'm sorry. I've been there, man.

MAX

Aww, you're just saying that because that's what you're supposed to say.

CHARLES

That's what friends do, right?

MAX

Yeah, thanks. And not just for this. Thanks for being a good friend. Thanks for being there.

CHARLES

Anytime. I really am sorry it didn't work out with Julie. You both seemed into each other.

MAX

I thought it was going well too, until the bottom fell out from under me like one of those fuckin' amusement park rides that spin you around in circles till you throw up.

CHARLES

What do you mean, like a roller coaster or something?

MAX

No, no. You ever see that ride where, it's you know, you're standing in this small circular thing and it starts spinning like crazy, and the next thing you know the ground you're standing on is moving lower and lower, and you're in the same place, and it feels like you're stuck to the wall...

CHARLES

That's a ride? You sure some punk didn't slip LSD in your cotton candy?

MAX

That's always a possibility. You know what those carnival people are like.

CHARLES

Actually, I know what you're talking about. I hate that ride.

MAX

I threw up on one of those things once.

CHARLES

Oh, that's gross. They must have been mad when they had to stop the ride, huh?

MAX

Why? What, I didn't throw up while the thing was spinning! Now that is gross.

CHARLES

What's grosser than gross?

MAX

I don't know, what?

CHARLES

Shit, I can't remember the punch line. Sorry. I'm bad with jokes.

MAX

It's all right. I wouldn't have laughed anyway. You know, when it comes down to it, I think all of my troubles with girls are caused by insecurity about the size of my dick.

CHARLES

Could be, but how does that explain my problems with girls?

MAX

I think it has to do with your haircut. Shit, you know what the saddest part of this is? I'll probably be bald by the time I'm 30. If I can't get girls with hair, then what the hell am I going to do in 10 years? I've got to get out there and meet people while I still can.

CHARLES

Max, you're really some catch.

MAX

This school suddenly seems too small.

CHARLES

I know how you feel. Sometimes I think about hooking up with Sara, but the girl pisses me off! She can be great to talk to, but then she'll say the dumbest thing. Like today, she said the Breeders are better than the Beatles.

MAX

Sometimes, happiness really is a warm gun.

Charles is stunned, missing the reference to the song that both bands recorded.

CHARLES

Sometimes I worry about you.

MAX

Do you still think about Amanda?

CHARLES

Yeah, sometimes. She's been a little more friendly lately, but still, we all know she's hung up on Scott.

MAX

Maybe you should give it a shot. I mean, Scott won't mind...

CHARLES

Come on, let's get out of here. I saw *Annie Hall* sitting on the table. We have time to watch it before bed and still get to sleep early enough to wake up by lunch time.

Watching *Annie Hall* is the last thing in the world Max wants to do.

CHARLES (cont'd)

(seeing the look on Max's face)

What?

MAX

I'm ready to burn that damn video tape.

EXT. STREET— NIGHT

Max and Charles are outside, walking back from the coffee shop at night.

The streets are quiet, with the exception of a drunk, over-friendly man and woman walking about half a block ahead of Max and Charles.

MAX

All these couples that I see walking down the street— I want to hack them to pieces

with a rusty saw. Not really, but you know what I mean.

CHARLES

Yeah. I do.

MAX

There are some nights that I can handle it, but tonight I just can't.

INT. MAX'S COMMON ROOM- NIGHT

Max, Sam, Tommy, Scott, Charles and Amanda are sitting around on the couches, looking fairly bored. A bottle of vodka and several beers are sitting on the coffee table along with a few cups containing mixed drinks. Mellow music is softly playing in the background.

Sam is reading a magazine. Max looks depressed. Amanda is sitting next to Scott. Tommy is laying across one of the couches. Charles is looking in the fridge. The general mood in the room is of waiting for something to happen.

SAM

Why are humans so much smarter than chimpanzees if we have 90% of the same genetic material?

MAX

What?

SAM

Nevermind.

SCOTT

Look who you're asking. Max is the only person I know who thinks a red blood cell is a prison for a gang member.

MAX

Very funny, Mr. Wizard. You know, if I learned anything useful in any of my classes, I'd be rubbing it in your faces right about now.

CHARLES

(pulling something out of the fridge)  
Found it!

SAM

Anything good?

CHARLES

Yeah! It's the rest of the buffalo wings from when we went bowling!

SAM

Cool. Hey, when did you go bowling?

TOMMY

Whoa! That's not from—

CHARLES

Yeah. I lost them for a little while.

SAM

Someone's needs to clean out that fridge.

TOMMY

(to Charles)

Dude, they're just buffalo wings— it's not worth it.

AMANDA

(to Scott)

How was your day?

MAX

(to Charles)

If you're firing those up, I'll take a couple.

SCOTT

(to Amanda)

Fine.

Charles takes his wings and sits down next to Tommy.

CHARLES

(to Max)

I think I'm gonna polish these off as-is. You still want a couple?

MAX

I think I'll pass.

TOMMY

(to Amanda)

Today sucked. I spent 6 hours in the lab after sitting in class for 4 hours, and then I come home and have to study because I have two tests next week.

MAX

Ouch.

TOMMY

It'll be worth it when I get into a good grad school program.

CHARLES

(to Amanda)

What about you Amanda? How was your day?

AMANDA

Okay, the usual. I worked all morning, and then had English class after that. Then I sat around all afternoon and watched all the talk shows.

TOMMY

That's cool.

AMANDA

Scott, how's the computer program coming?

SCOTT

Slowly. There's a couple of problems.

AMANDA

Huh.

Scott gets up and leaves the room.

CHARLES

Listen, I have an extra ticket to this theater dinner thing tomorrow night. Anyone want to go?

It soon becomes clear that no one is going to respond.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Amanda, do you want to go with me?

AMANDA

I don't know. Why don't you call me tomorrow during the day.

CHARLES

Okay, cool.

TOMMY

I might be interested.

AMANDA

Well, it's been a long day, and I don't want to fall asleep on your couch again. See you guys later.

SAM

Bye.

CHARLES

See you tomorrow.

Amanda exits.

CHARLES (cont'd)

I hope she ends up coming with me.

SAM

Don't you think she's still hung up on Scott?

CHARLES

It's not like I expect anything, I just like to spend time with her.

Scott returns.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Scott, you don't mind if I take Amanda to the theater dinner tomorrow night?

SCOTT

Why would I?

CHARLES

I didn't think you would.

TOMMY

But he's got to ask, it's the guy code. You can't do anything with someone any of your friends is involved with. That's just wrong.

SCOTT

She's not my girlfriend.

TOMMY

I know, but—

SCOTT

And they're not going on a date.

TOMMY

It's nothing serious, but it is a date.

MAX

Yeah, but they're going as friends right?

CHARLES

We are friends.

TOMMY

And she isn't definitely going.

Charles stands up, walks toward the bathroom.

CHARLES

When I come back from the bathroom, someone better give me an update on my sex life.

MAX

So then how could it be a date, if she might not be going, and if she does it's just as friends?

TOMMY

A date doesn't always have to be sexual. It's doesn't have to be that formal, either. Can't it be a guy and a girl hanging out and getting to know each other better?

SCOTT

You're the one who's making it formal. I'm surprised you didn't give Charles a permission slip for me to sign.

TOMMY

I'm sorry, I didn't think it was such a big deal! I just wanted to make sure it didn't bother you.

SAM

This conversation is starting to bother me.

TOMMY

(sarcastic)

Oh, sorry. I didn't mean to disturb you.

SAM

Give me five bucks and we'll call it even.

TOMMY

Deal. By the way, Max, what ever happened with that girl you were seeing?

MAX

I don't think we were ever seeing each other. By your definition we might have been dating, but she definitely wasn't my girlfriend. Officially we were just

hanging out, and depending on who you ask, we may not have even been doing that. At this point, it's all revisionist history anyway.

TOMMY

So it's over?

MAX

Yeah, I think so. She told me she just ended a long relationship and she doesn't want anything serious.

TOMMY

Well it doesn't have to be serious. You don't want to get serious too quickly anyway.

MAX

No, it's dead. It's over. She said that she just wants to be friends, and I doubt she even wants that much.

TOMMY

Ouch. Too bad it didn't work out.

CHARLES

She's a girl. They'll always be a mystery. I wish I knew what Sara sees in me— then I'd know what to stop doing.

TOMMY

(to Sam)

Is Jen still giving you a hard time?

SAM

She's been miserable since we broke up. I feel bad about it, but the only thing that's going to help her feel better is time away from me.

MAX

(to Sam)

How will she manage?

SAM

(to Max)

Very funny. Tough week for us, huh?

MAX

Well, at least you got to make your own decision.

SAM

You made your own decision too.

MAX

(annoyed)

Haven't you been listening to any of this?

SAM

Yeah, she kind of dumped you, but you accepted it. I mean, did you ever tell her how you really feel about her?

MAX

Sort of. Actually, yeah, I did.

SAM

Have you even spoken to her since then?

MAX

No, but she made it clear..

CHARLES

She did ask you to call her, right?

MAX

Yeah, but I mean, she made her feelings clear. I was there and you guys weren't.

You know what's funny? Two nights ago, you know, the last time I saw Julie, we watched *Annie Hall* together. A few days before that we watched *Airplane*, and that night I went back to her place after the movie. We didn't watch *Annie Hall* this semester and it looked like my luck was beginning to turn around, and then I watch the movie with a girl I like, and everything gets fucked up.

(to Charles)

Your theory may be dumb, but it is holding up.

CHARLES

That's funny. You watched it with Beth too, didn't you?

MAX

Yeah, and Ann.

CHARLES

That movie is a jinx.

SAM

Come on, putting the blame on a movie is silly. Think about it, it's just a movie.

MAX

That's what I thought, but look at the evidence.

SAM

Yeah but, you've basically shown that movie to everyone here that you care about. You can't blame all the bad stuff on that movie any more than you can blame all of the good things that have happened. You've just got to suck it up and stop looking for excuses to not go after what you want.

MAX

You're probably right.

SAM

Do you still think about her?

MAX

Well, yeah.

SAM

Then why don't you go look for her right now. It's a Friday night, she's not going to be working or anything. This is the perfect time.

MAX

You're right, I should go do this.

SAM

If you don't go, I don't want to hear you complain about this anymore.

MAX

All right, you talked me into it. You're right.

Max exits.

CHARLES

Hey Tommy, can I borrow your red tie for the dinner tomorrow night? I want to look powerful. I heard that red is a really powerful color.

SCOTT

I have a red tie. I'll get it for you.

CHARLES

Cool, yeah.

Scott and Charles exit.

SAM

(to Tommy)

You think Sports Center is still on?

EXTERIOR OF A DORM ROOM DOOR

Max is pacing back and forth in front of Julie's dorm room. After a few laps, he pauses, then knocks. No one answers. Just then, a drunk JUDY enters the hallway and begins to unlock the door across the hall from Julie's room. She notices Max, and turns.

JUDY

Hey, are you looking for Julie?

MAX

Yeah, why? Do you know where she is?

JUDY

She's still there.

MAX

What? Where?

JUDY

At the party...

MAX

This was a mistake, nevermind, don't leave her any message or anything. No you know what, can you just tell her, shit, tell her...

JUDY

Hey! Are you Max?

MAX

Yeah.

JUDY

Oh wow! You're just how she described you. Hi, I'm Judy. I'm sure Julie mentions me all the time.

MAX

Oh, yeah, Judy. Right.

JUDY

You know, she likes you. It's too bad about what happened with everything. Sometimes she can be so... you know?

MAX

Yeah.

JUDY

This may be completely inappropriate, but can I ask you something about the tattoo? Did it hurt?

MAX

(confused)

Tattoo?

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN- NIGHT

Max enters, looking a little upset. Five people- including Mark and Andy- are standing around a table. It's loud and everyone is drinking beer from plastic cups.

ANDY

(friendly)

Hey! Max! Just on time to do a shot with us!

MAX

Hey. Excuse me.

Max walks past the group, into the next room.

MARK

(smiling, to Andy)

Think he's looking for Julie?

INT. LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Another bunch of people, sitting on couches and folding chairs. Among them is Julie, sitting on a couch, fairly drunk and talking to a handsome guy named JEFF. Max approaches her.

MAX

Hey.

JULIE

Max? Hey! What are you doing here?

MAX

I don't know, I just wanted to see you.

JULIE

Well here I am!

JEFF

Hi, I'm Jeff. I live here.

MAX

Hi. Julie, can we go for a walk or something? I just, there are some things I need to say to you.

JULIE

Sure, I was gonna go smoke a butt anyway. Jeff, could you save my seat?

JEFF

No problem.

EXT. APARTMENT BALCONY- NIGHT

Max and Julie are alone. Julie is trying to light a cigarette, but having trouble because she's drunk.

JULIE

Jesus, I think I hit my limit. One more and I might not make it home. I haven't seen you in a while.

MAX

Yeah, I've missed you.

JULIE

Really? I've missed you too.

MAX

Well, I mean, I miss hanging out with you. I want to start spending time with you again.

JULIE

Max, I like you a lot, I do. And I want to hang out with you. But the two of us are not meant to be together.

MAX

Julie, why? I care a lot about you and we have fun together.

JULIE

Don't you think there's a little more to it than that?

MAX

Maybe, maybe not...

JULIE

Look, there's someone else out there. We can't get in the way of that.

MAX

Is this still about your high school ex? Or the guy in the party?

JULIE

No, you know, you're not even listening. There's someone out there for you. All you have to do is open your eyes.

MAX

That's very nice of you to say so. And I guess I have what I came for.

Max starts to walk away.

JULIE

Max, I'm too drunk for white lies. I meant everything.

MAX

Me too. See you later.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. APARTMENT- NIGHT

ON SCREEN TITLE: "some time later"

The setting is almost identical to where Max first met Julie: A crowded, over-dressed living room crowded with over-dressed college students. Opera music is playing in the background. Almost everyone in the room is sipping wine from glasses, while in a corner of the room, Max, Scott, and Sam are sloppily dressed and drinking cans of cheap beer.

MAX

I've gotta hand it to you, Sam- bringing our own beer was a great idea. I don't get the whole wine thing.

SCOTT

All you do is whine.

SAM

You could have bought some better beer. This is the last time we send you to the liquor store alone.

MAX

Look, I was the one who...

Max suddenly trails off, obviously distracted by something in his field of vision.

MAX (cont'd)

Holy shit.

Scott and Sam turn to see what Max finds so interesting, and then react to:

JULIE

smiling and talking to Jeff and Judy in another corner of the room. We watch for a moment from Max's POV as Julie laughs at something Jeff just said.

CUT BACK TO: Max, Sam, and Scott watching Julie.

SAM

There's a face I haven't seen in a while.

MAX

Yeah, me neither.

SAM

Have you seen her at all since you, you know, ended your little thing?

MAX

I saw her once in the University Center a couple of weeks ago, and we talked for a few minutes. It was good to see her, but a little strange. We talked about maybe getting together, hanging out or something, but I knew it would never happen.

SAM

Are you going to say hi to her?

CUT TO: Julie and Jeff. They're still talking, and Julie is sipping wine. Judy is nowhere in sight.

MAX (O.S.)

I don't know, I don't think so. It looks like she might be with that guy.

SAM (O.S.)

Why? Because she's talking to him? Go talk to her... you're just looking for excuses.

MAX (O.S.)

And even if she isn't...

Jeff leans over and kisses Julie on the cheek. She smiles back at him.

MAX (O.S., cont'd)  
I'm just looking for excuses, huh?

SAM (O.S.)  
She kissed him on the cheek, it could be anything.

CUT TO: Sam, Max, and Scott in their corner of the room.

MAX  
It doesn't matter. Either way... I mean, what's gonna happen? Are we going to become friends? Hang out all the time? I have enough friends. There aren't enough hours in the day for me to worry about someone who isn't thinking about me.

SCOTT  
Wuss.

MAX  
(pissed, pushes Scott)  
I AM NOT A WUSS!

Several people standing nearby turn around and give Max a curious look.

EXT. CAMPUS GREEN- DAY

Max and Beth are alone on the campus green, in the middle of the afternoon, having apparently just bumped into each other.

MAX  
So how was your Valentine's Day?

BETH  
Whatever.

MAX  
Yeah. Mine too.

BETH  
I hate Valentine's Day. It sucks. It's a reminder that there are people in love. Why does anyone need to be reminded of that? If you're in love, you're in love, right? And if you're not in love, who wants to think about it? I want to be in love so badly. Don't you?

MAX

I don't know. I'm not sure what I think about love... what it is, or if it exists, or any of that. But from what I can tell it seems like it's more trouble than it's worth.

BETH

Max, I can't believe you just said that. Love is scary, it's a willing suspension of disbelief, but it's worth the risk and the hassle!

MAX

Well Beth, that's a nice statement but I'm not sure how well it holds up.

BETH

Look at Julie. She was very real, honest. I liked her.

MAX

The only difference between honest people and the rest of us is that you can tell when they're lying.

BETH

Oh come on, I know you don't think she was lying. Maybe the guy you saw her with at that party was her ex-boyfriend, and they got back together.

MAX

It doesn't matter. It's not so much that I think she might be lying, as I think it's part of some larger conspiracy. It's like some kind of X-Files thing.

BETH

Yeah, a group of aliens is trying to ruin your life. I can't believe you. You talk like there's no hope, like everything is out of your hands. I don't get that. Sometimes you can be the most pessimistic person in the world.

MAX

Obviously you've never met my mother.

BETH

There are so many people out there to meet, there's so much to see and do, and we're all so young with so much potential. I don't understand how you

could possibly be so jaded already. You have a lot going for you, you only need to believe it.

MAX

Sometimes I think you're right. And thanks, you know, thanks for always being the one to say it. But as time goes on, it seems more and more like there's no one here for me.

BETH

That's not true, there's a lot of people, there's...

MAX

Yeah, you might be right. I don't know. I'm sorry, I don't want to talk about this now. It's been a long day. I'm gonna, I don't know, go play video hockey or something like that.

BETH

That's not...

Max starts to walk away.

MAX

I'll talk to you later.

BETH

Okay. Try not to be so down on yourself. Will you call me later if you want to watch a movie or something?

MAX

Yeah.

Max walks away, leaving Beth standing alone.

MAX WALKING AWAY

MAX (V.O.)

That conversation with Beth, and the whole thing with Julie and everything, all sort of reminds me of a joke I heard recently. A bear is taking a dump in the woods when he hears a rustle behind a bush. He looks behind the bush and finds a cute little rabbit, also taking a crap. The bear was always having trouble with shit sticking to his fur, so he asks the rabbit if he ever has trouble wiping. The rabbit smugly answered that he doesn't

have that problem, because shit just slides right off his fur. So the bear picks up the rabbit and wipes his ass with him.

I don't know why I keep thinking about that joke... maybe I'm the rabbit. Or maybe I'm the bear, bit in the ass by an angry rabbit. Who knows.

BETH WATCHING MAX WALK AWAY

A moment later, she turns and walks away.

MAX (V.O.)

I bumped into Julie a few more times that semester. We don't talk unless we have to. Unless it's awkward not to, I guess. She seems to feel guilty about the whole thing, and to me, it's kind of embarrassing. If I can't avoid her, I try to be friendly, but it never really seems to come out that way.

CUT BACK TO: MAX WALKING AWAY

MAX (V.O.)

The last time I watched *Annie Hall* was with Julie. Every time I walk past the shelf of videos, Annie and I both try to ignore each other. So far so good. There are lots of other movies out there. Luckily we have a good video store nearby. Even so, it may seem weird, but I think I miss Annie more than Julie.

FADE TO BLACK

CREDITS