

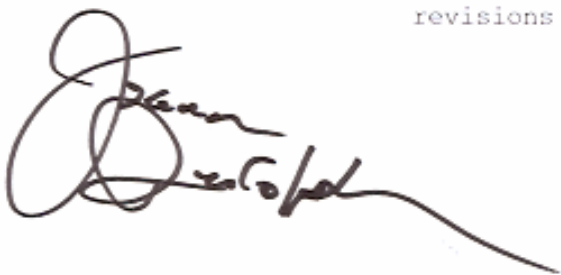


BURNING ANNIE

art imitates life imitates art imitates life

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FADE IN:

Abrupt CLOSE UP on MAX, a plain wall behind him.

1 INT. LIMBO RADIO

1

He is 20, normal looking, not too nebbish, punkish, bookish, or stylish. He is a high-strung guy, enjoying a rare moment of un-self-consciousness.

MAX

There's an old joke. It comes from "The Iliad," but I think it was popularized by Oscar Wilde. It goes like this:

...A bear's taking a shit, like, out in the woods one day. And he sees this rabbit, also taking a shit. The rabbit, wait, I mean, the bear, he's shitting up a storm, cuz he's been eating Mexican. The wiping's taking forever, and his shit keeps sticking to his fur. Wait, what happens next? Oh, right— he asks the rabbit if he ever has trouble wiping. The rabbit says no, shit just slides right off him. So the bear picks the rabbit up and wipes his ass with him.

(pause, as if for applause)

Well, I never said it was a good joke. And see, that makes it perfect, because it's pretty much the story of my life.

We can now see that he's perched on a stool, wearing a REM t-shirt and old jeans. He gesticulates vaguely as he talks.

MAX (cont'd)

Growing up, my parents were huge Woody Allen fans. Still are. Personally, I hate him. Same thing with the Beatles, such a part of my background that I must have been about 16 by the time I realized how useless it was to rebel by ignoring the Beatles or any other cultural artifact of their generation. Even if I did spend my childhood hearing my father go on and on about how, like, Nirvana would never mean anything because they're not the Beatles, blah-blah. I don't know, this is all starting to sound a little bit too angsty, you know, and that's about the last thing I'm going for here... Shit, I really got off track there, didn't I?

As Max shakes his head, a hanging RADIO MIKE comes into view. It has the call letters of a college radio station on it.

High on the wall behind him, a glowing "ON AIR" light is revealed. The perspective is skewed, the studio appears cavernous and completely barren.

2 INT. MAX'S CHILDHOOD HOME - FLASHBACK - DAY 2

YOUNG MAX, about five, sits on the floor and watches *BANANAS* with his FATHER, a large, relaxed man with a mustache who reclines in a tacky 80's chair and smokes a cigar.

MAX (O.S.)

Anyway, like the Beatles thing- and this is the point of that whole long-winded example- I was force-fed Woody Allen from a young age. I remember watching *Bananas* when I was about five. Of course, I hated it.

Young Max is laughing hysterically at the screen.

Max stands to the side, watching his younger self and his father. The radio mike hangs in front of him.

MAX (cont'd)

This is my old house. We lived here, in a dull suburb of New York, until I was ten, when we moved to a different house in a different dull suburb of New York.

On TV, a woman is bit in the breast by a snake and is chased by a group of soldiers.

YOUNG MAX

Daddy, why are they running after her?

FATHER

(kindly)

Someday, you'll understand. Pay attention, you'll learn something.

Young Max turns back to the screen, wide-eyed.

3 INT. MAX'S SECOND HOME - FLASHBACK 3

In pajamas, ADOLESCENT MAX, 16, watches a newer TV in an identical family room. This time, *ANNIE HALL* is playing.

MAX (V.O.)

Oh yeah. This wasn't the first time I saw *Annie Hall*, but it was the first time I actually appreciated it. I was flipping channels on a Saturday afternoon, and there it was, and I was stunned to find I loved it, more stunned to find that my parents may have had a point all along.

[more]

MAX (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Although, they were definitely wrong
 about *Bananas*.

CLOSE ON: Adolescent Max, totally engrossed in the film.

4 INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY – FLASHBACK 4

Adolescent Max walks alone to class. Other students rush by in groups. He looks a little lost.

MAX (V.O.)
 Oh God, high school. I hated this place.
 I was a Junior when I gave up trying to
 fit in. Fortunately, being a social
 outcast is a lot easier when your school
 is filled with idiots.

A pair of GOTH POSERS pass. Max keeps his distance. From the other direction, a 6 FOOT TALL GIRL makes eyes at Max. He walks into a water fountain, drops his books.

5 INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM – FLASHBACK 5

Adolescent Max gets hit in the face with a volleyball. Everyone laughs at him, including the COACH.

Max stands to the side and winces.

MAX
 There was something in *Annie Hall* I
 identified with. Maybe it was the style
 of humor, or the defeatist attitude, I
 don't know. All I know is, I kept going
 back. Different people are inspired by
 different things, and my source of
 inspiration became a 20-year-old movie
 about a failed relationship.

The volleyball rolls over and he picks it up.

6 INT. RADIO STATION – PRESENT 6

From behind Max, we see the station as it really is: small, dark, cramped, and totally filled with crap. Max wears headphones, sits before a large console and audio gear.

He now holds a volleyball.

MAX
 So after high school I ended up here.
 There was never really any choice, not
 going to college was not an option. Of
 course, I brought *Annie* with me. Good
 thing, too.

[more]

MAX (cont'd)
 Watching it quickly became about the only
 thing I could count on to go right.

7 INT. JEN'S ROOM - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

7

Max is with five friends in the double, and they all have lingering style-baggage from high school (eg. bad haircuts).

MAX
 (to camera)
 It was freshmen year when we started
 watching *Annie Hall* as a tradition.
 (looking around)
 Jeez, this must have been the very first
 time. What's Amy doing here? I'm pretty
 sure Amy wasn't here.

AMY is attractive, bookish, and sitting on Max's bed.
 CHARLES, a skinny guy in a large chair, tries to get her
 attention by wiggling his eyebrows seductively.

Max puts the tape in the VCR, hits rewind, and moves to sit
 on his bed. He pauses when he sees how close he'll come to
 Amy. Finally, he climbs over her and awkwardly sits at the
 far end.

Amy watches, rolls her eyes, and looks at BETH, who shakes
 her head sadly. Beth is pretty in an earthy way, spunky and
 sad at the same time. She looks sympathetically at Max, who
 is trying not to act nervous (and failing).

The couple is SAM, who's short and charismatic, with a cool,
 slightly punkish personal style; and JEN, same height, cute
 and serious, conservative dress. They lie on the floor
 together.

MAX (cont'd)
 (to camera)
 That's Sam and Jen. Sam was the alpha-
 male of our group, which tends to consist
 mostly of zeta-males. He had been going
 out with Jen a couple weeks and we were
 all waiting to see if she would change
 him..

Sam slides a pillow under her.

SAM
 Are you comfortable, honey?

JEN
 I'm fine, Sam. I was worried about you.
 Sure you don't want me to move over?

SAM

Oh no, no, Jen, if you're happy, I'm happy.

Max and Charles exchange a look-- there they go again. Max makes a show of putting a pillow under a large Darth Vader doll. Beth laughs, Amy is amused. Sam looks back and is embarrassed. Jen rolls her eyes and gives Sam a look.

JEN

Are we gonna watch this movie or what?

DISSOLVE TO:

8 INT. JEN'S ROOM - FLASHBACK - LATER

8

Annie Hall's credits roll. Sam snaps on the lights.

SAM

Wow, what a good movie.

AMY

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?

Max and Amy stand and face each other as the lights fade to black around everyone else.

AMY

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 oh yeah, when you started calling me every day. All the reasons we were never more than friends.

MAX

Well, at least you're being honest.

AMY

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

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

Charles walks by, Amy takes his arm, and they disappear into the surrounding darkness, which DISSOLVES TO:

9 INT. LIMBO RADIO - PRESENT 9
 and again Max is alone.

MAX
 Anyway, Amy set the tone for the rest of
 college..

10 INT. THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 10
 The movie is *Annie Hall*. The theater is emptying. Suddenly, ERICA bursts through the crowd. Erica is mad. Max follows behind her, placating.

ERICA
 AND WHAT IS IT WITH JEWISH MEN AND THEIR
 PENIS ISSUES?!

Max freezes in place. The entire crowd of students turns to look at him. He manages a weak smile and turns back to Erica, but she's gone, out the doors into the night.

Max turns back to the crowd and shrugs, but the crowd turns away. Max suddenly sees someone: Beth, looking at him. He blushes, self-conscious, and hurries away.

MAX (V.O.)
 And even when it went right, it didn't.

11 INT. STACY'S ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 11
 Max and STACY stumble in, inebriated, laughing.

MAX
 ...And then I, then I, after I called the
 pizza place, I called an ambulance, and
 timed them.

STACY
 Who won?

MAX
 The pizza, of course. The paramedics took
 35 minutes to arrive.

STACY

I can't believe you! Did you get in trouble?

MAX

The Station Manager said I couldn't go on the air ever again.

STACY

So what'd you do?!

MAX

I gave him the pizza!

They collapse on the bed, laughing. Stacy rolls over and kisses Max on the lips. His eyes go wide and he frantically crawls backwards.

STACY

What? Don't you like me?

MAX

It would never work.

STACY

How would you know?

MAX

I know. I have a sixth sense.

STACY

You see dead people?

MAX

I see dead relationships.

Stacy sits up, frustrated, the mood ruined.

MAX (cont'd)

(to camera)

That was all true, but there was something else, though. I mean, there I was, drunk, in a girl's bedroom, and the only thought running through my mind was...

12 EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - DAY - FLASHBACK

12

Max speaks to someone O.S.

MAX

..."What about Beth?"

Max is talking to Beth. It's a beautiful Spring day.

MAX (cont'd)

I mean, I know we're just friends, 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, maybe we could try going out on a date or something?

BETH

Max...

MAX

I mean, it wouldn't have to be, uh...

BETH

Sure.

MAX

We wouldn't have to... What?

BETH

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

MAX

Um, yeah, it would have to be after, or maybe... Yeah, tomorrow, uh, tomorrow night's fine.

BETH

Great. I know the perfect thing.

She splits, leaving Max befuddled at his change of fortune.

13 EXT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

13

Max and Beth are walking through the night in overcoats.

BETH

Never?

MAX

Not until Sam and Jen.

BETH

A perfect record. Wow.

MAX

I don't get what the fuss is. I knew you and that Chris guy wouldn't last a week as soon as I saw you together.

BETH

But you can tell with everybody? I don't know if that's sad or incredible.

MAX

Or incredibly sad. I'm amazed I'm the only one who can tell. Take any couple. If it's not incompatible lifestyles, it's conflicting priorities. If it's not that, it's usually clashing levels of self-esteem. It's always something.

BETH

Living with you would be a nightmare. I'd be afraid to bring any boyfriends home. Oh, uh, sorry.

Awkward pause.

MAX

Well, just because I see it, doesn't mean I talk about it. I don't say a word to my suitemates.

BETH

You guys never talk about anything important anyway.

MAX

Oh, come on, we have philosophical discussions all the time.

BETH

Like whether Voltron could kill the Transformers?

MAX

To name one hot-button issue, yes. You want us to talk about girls? Sam is nearly married to Jen, Charles doesn't want his relationships to last, Tommy's girlfriends are located in online chatrooms across the country, and Scott, well... you know.

BETH

For such "close" friends, it just seems weird, that's all. I must admit, I'm a lot closer to you than any of them.

They are at the Library.

MAX

What are doing here?

14 INT. LIBRARY LOBBY

14

Max and Beth remove their coats, revealing formal wear. OTHER STUDENTS give them looks. An older female LIBRARIAN approaches.

LIBRARIAN

Ah, you must have the reservation for booth seven.

BETH

Yes, that's us.

MAX

What?

LIBRARIAN

Right this way, then.

MAX

"Reservation"?

LIBRARIAN

You'd be surprised how many of you lovebirds we get in here.

She winks and leads them to the elevator. Beth smiles shyly and looks at Max, but he is merely embarrassed. Her smile fades.

15 INT. LIBRARY MEDIA ROOM

15

Max and Beth are watching the opening credits of *Annie Hall* on a tiny TV in a cubicle. They are surrounded by other students in cubicles.

BETH

Isn't this great?

MAX

Well, this isn't exactly what I had in mind.

BETH

What do you mean?

MAX

For starters, I have a serious problem with spending any time in the library when I don't have to. I'm here once or twice a year as it is. Plus...

(holds up headphones)

What's the point of seeing this together if we're wearing headphones?

[more]

MAX (cont'd)

Why not be with a life-sized cardboard cut-out? That way you can be with someone famous, even a dead person. Wouldn't you rather be with Elvis?

BETH

Oh, shhh...!

MAX

Or Batman?

BETH

Can't you just enjoy the moment?

MAX

I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

(sighs)

I'm a little nervous. It's like, our first date and everything.

BETH

Oh. Yeah.

16 EXT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

16

Max and Beth leave the library. Their dispositions have switched: Max is perky while Beth is subdued.

MAX

I can't believe how many great lines there are. Even the little throwaways, like when she parks and he's like, "That's okay, we can walk to the curb from here."

BETH

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

MAX

Yeah, me too.

BETH

But man, relationships are a lot of work, aren't they?

MAX

Uh, sure, sometimes...

Beth stops him, and they sit on a bench. The night is cold. They sit close and lean in, speaking in hushed tones.

BETH

If I'm going to jump into anything with you, Max, I need some sign that you're serious about it. About me.

MAX

What? You want me to get a tattoo or something?

BETH

Look, you've gotta admit, you're the most pessimistic person in the world.

MAX

Obviously you've never met my mother.

BETH

Can you be serious for a second?

MAX

I guess you really haven't met my mother..

Beth isn't laughing.

BETH

Look, Max, this isn't going to work.

MAX

Wait a second.

BETH

Okay. No more jokes. Now. Tell me how you feel.

MAX

About what?

BETH

About me.

MAX

I, I...

(exasperated)

Why are you doing this? Since when have you gotten "serious" about relationships? Your last boyfriend dumped you after four days.

Beth sits up, pulls her jacket closed.

BETH

Well, that was intimate. Thanks, Max.

MAX

No wait, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, hold on.

BETH

Max, I don't think this is such a good idea. I mean, it would be really foolish to jeopardize our friendship.

MAX

No, it wouldn't!

BETH

We shouldn't have rushed into this. I'm sure you know it wouldn't have worked out.

MAX

I don't know that.

BETH

Please tell me we haven't hurt our friendship. You don't even know how much you mean to me.

MAX

I'm starting to get the idea.

He's dazed, slightly ill. Beth touches his arm gently and walks away. Max turns to us. A radio mike swings into view.

MAX (cont'd)

Things weren't the same after. We quickly became the kind of friends who say Hi on the paths but don't stop walking. Then, she moved across campus and changed majors, and basically, except for the random phone call, I haven't seen her in ages.

DISSOLVE TO:

MAX, thoughtful. PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

17 INT. LIMBO RADIO

17

Max, speaking in the empty station, suddenly gets intense.

MAX

All these dates had one thing in common! And it took Charles, of all people, to point it out to me.

18 EXT. CAMPUS QUAD — TODAY — FLASHBACK

18

It's late January and the campus is showing signs of a temperamental winter.

MAX (V.O.)

This morning, we were skipping class.

Max and Charles walk across the quad towards us. At first, they are only specks in the distance.

CHARLES

Max, you're insane.

MAX

It's ridiculous that even at a liberal school like this, I have to put up with anti-Semitism.

CHARLES

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

MAX

He couldn't just fail me, think about it. The paper was about my grandparents' experience in the Holocaust.

CHARLES

Your paranoia has always been out of control, but this is absurd.

MAX

You don't understand, you're not Jewish.

CHARLES

Neither are you!

MAX

But the professor probably thinks I am.

CHARLES

And wasn't that the paper that you handed in two weeks late?

MAX

You know what else? I think he might be German.

CHARLES

Professor Wang? Will you stop it..

We can now see that Charles has a fedora cocked back on his head, and is wearing incongruous "Vegas" clothes.

They walk past and into the University Center.

19 INT. UNIVERSITY CENTER – CONTINUOUS

19

It's a low-traffic time of day.

CHARLES

So what do you want to do tonight?

MAX

I'm not sure. It is the beginning of the semester, it's time for our *Annie Hall* night.

CHARLES

Have you ever noticed that the more *Annie Hall* you watch, the less successful you are romantically? I think we'd do much better if we watched, say, *Ocean's 11*.

MAX

What are you talking about? If you're sick of *Annie Hall*, that's one thing, but don't blame our sad little lives on it.

20 INT. GENERAL STORE – CONTINUOUS

20

Charles picks out breath mints.

CHARLES

No, I'm telling you, I was thinking about this over break. Ever since we started watching it, what has your love life been like? And mine? Every semester, we watch this movie, and then spend the semester alone.

MAX

Alone? Last semester you hooked up with like a dozen women.

CHARLES

You know actresses don't count.

(poignantly)

I'm looking for a meaningful, sophisticated relationship. Like Frank and Ava. No more shallow dames for this cat.

MAX

(agitated)

Where did you get this grudge against my favorite film?

CHARLES

I'm just kidding around, Max. We'll watch it tomorrow. Tonight, there's a party.

MAX

And anyway, your theory fails to account for our collective dorkiness and bad haircuts. Plus, look at Sam.

CHARLES

Sam hasn't seen *Annie Hall* since freshman year, and he's in his third year with Jen.

MAX

So look at what not watching can do to you.

CHARLES

Ouch. Why are you still on this? I said I was kidding.

21 INT. RADIO STATION - PRESENT

21

MAX

What a nightmare. I dunno why I can't stop thinking about these things. I guess I've been a little restless lately, since getting back from winter break. Everything's been kind of weird lately.

He grabs a CD from a rack.

MAX (cont'd)

Hope you enjoyed this week's Reggae Revelry Hour. This is Max filling in for Rasta Ronnie, taking you out with a little Bad Religion.

He puts in the CD, hits "Shuffle/Repeat," and leaves. The caller request lines blink furiously.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "SUNDAY"

22 INT. COMMON ROOM - MAX'S SUITE - EVENING

22

Max's dormitory suite: four bedrooms off a common room, which has three battered couches, a coffee table, and in a corner, several small fridges and two televisions in a pile.

Christmas lights are still up. A neon 'Guinness' sign dwarfs it all.

Max and Charles are here, standing, while Sam and Jen sit on one couch and SCOTT and AMANDA sit on the other.

Charles puts on his gloves and coat.

CHARLES

Max, you're coming and that's the end of it. When's the last time you went to a party?

MAX

Who cares? It's unnatural. If I went into a stranger's house and ate their food under any other circumstance, I'd be arrested.

CHARLES

I'm not taking no. With Sam on board, it's gonna be like old times.

He gestures at Sam, who stands. Unlike the hipster from freshman year, Sam now resembles a middle-aged accountant. There are bags under his eyes and square clothes on his back.

SAM

Yeah, I haven't been out with you guys in ages.

Jen looks up from her magazine with disapproval.

JEN

You're going out?

SAM

Aw, honey, just for a little while.

JEN

You know I have to work until midnight. It's not my fault the supervisor won't let me out of it.

She glares. He teeters between his friends and his girlfriend. His girlfriend wins. He sits back down, trying to hide his disappointment.

SAM

She has a point, guys. I should catch up on my chemistry reading anyway.

The guys roll their eyes, let down but unsurprised.

Across the room are SCOTT, perpetually poker-faced and reserved, and AMANDA, understated, with the subdued manner of a long-suffering wallflower.

She sits off to the side, sneaking looks at Scott. He's watching a golf-related infomercial.

AMANDA

So Scott... How come you're not going out with Charles and Max?

SCOTT

Can't go. Graphic design work.

AMANDA

Oh really? I have work, too, but it's okay, I got a lot done today. What do you have to do?

SCOTT

Graphic design work.

TOMMY enters. He's preppier than anyone else, conservative clothes capped off by a goofy smile and thick glasses.

TOMMY

What's up, all?

MAX

Tommy, at last. Save me from this lounge lizard.

CHARLES

Yeah, what are you doing tonight?

TOMMY

Physics lab. Fortunately, the semester's just begun, so before the work piles up, I can party. That's why the beginning of the semester rules.

CHARLES

Great, so come party with me.

TOMMY

I can't, I have physics work.

He disappears into his room. Charles takes Max's hat from a hook, jams it on his head, and shoves him towards the door.

23 INT. COLLEGE APARTMENT — LATER

23

A typically lame college party, still early in the night. The furniture is "student budget modern" type. A jazz record plays quietly, while pretentiously-dressed PARTY-GOERS sip wine and eat cheese and crackers.

Max and Charles survey the room, drinks in hand.

MAX

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

They toast.

CHARLES

This is it, I'm telling you. This is the semester I pass all my classes and meet the dame of my dreams.

MAX

Good luck, and may she have a sister.

CHARLES

More importantly, may she grant us our occasional freedom.

MAX

Ah, forget about Sam. I don't like it any more than you.

CHARLES

He's become a total non-entity. Freshman year, we were like Frank and Deano. Now it's like Frank and freakin' Peter Lawford.

MAX

Hey, he was one of my best friends. Now we share a room and he's like a stranger.

CHARLES

Hottie at 3 o'clock. Keep an eye on her for me so it doesn't look like I'm interested.

MAX

Yeah, right, then if you fail to sodomize her, you'll blame me. Me, or *Annie Hall*.

CHARLES

Look, all I said was, it would explain our lives.

MAX

The problem is, every crazy theory explains something. I took a class last semester with a professor who claimed that the planet is being destroyed by white, male, meat-eating capitalists.

CHARLES

So? Everybody knows that.

MAX

But she had a theory that explained how: apparently racism, sexism, socialism, environmentalism, and vegetarianism are all inherently linked. I brought a Big Mac to the first class, and I thought I was going to be the victim of a vegan-socialist uprising.

Sam walks in and makes a beeline for the guys. Excitement.

SAM

Hey! I made it!

CHARLES

I can't believe it.

MAX

Wow, the laws of nature have stopped working. Maybe I should try to meet some chicks after all.

CHARLES

How'd you get away?

SAM

I told her I was going to the lab. She doesn't mind if I'm working while she is. How's the party?

MAX

Sucks. Who are they trying to be, with this wine and cheese? What kind of party doesn't even have beer?

CHARLES

I can get into this. It's better than those frat parties. Check out the fox in the beret.

SAM

Man, it's so good to be out. Between Jen, homework, and labs, I hardly have time for anything.

CHARLES

You could always change your major. You'd have a lot more free time.

SAM

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

[more]

SAM (cont'd)

I have doubts about both, actually. But still, what could be dumber than changing your major for a girl?

MAX

Changing your girl for a major.

CHARLES

Would you do it?

MAX

It wouldn't be an issue.

SAM

Of course not, when has studying ever interfered with what's important, like video hockey or your radio show that nobody listens to.

MAX

I meant, I'd have to have a girl first. And lay off the radio show. There's a reason I took the 3am slot.

SAM

And every time I see you doing homework, you're taking a break. 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?

Charles' expression turns sour as he looks across the room.

CHARLES

Oh, shit, Sara's here.

SARA, good-looking and excitable, arrives with a theatrical flourish. Her age and manner indicate, among other things, that she is a freshman.

SARA

Ta-daaa! Hey guys, what's going on?

SAM

(deadpan)

We were just talking about the mediocre resonations of sub-hybrid fields.

MAX

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

SARA
 (doesn't get it, doesn't care)
 Oh. Well, I just wanted to stop by and
 say "hey" to my favorite guys. So hey!
 How was everyone's break?

She is clearly talking to Charles, who is scanning the room
 over her shoulder.

SAM
 Good.

MAX
 It could have been better but it could
 have been worse. For me, that's good.

SARA
 Mine was great! I partied with my best
 friend Melanie, who I haven't seen in
 ages. Aren't these parties just the best?
 So much better than the theater group
 parties.

MAX
 I dunno, it's a bunch of 21-year-olds who
 want the 18-year-olds to know how mature
 they are.

SARA
 Hey, Charles, you going to the fraternity
 party after this?

CHARLES
 Ugh, no.

SARA
 You gonna be back at your suite then?
 Maybe I'll stop by.

CHARLES
 Uh, yeah, we should be back in, uh, many
 many hours.

SARA
 Okay then, I'll catch up with you guys
 later.

She tugs on Charles's shirt.

SARA (cont'd)
 (stage whisper)
 I missed you.

She leaves.

CHARLES

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

SAM

What do you have against her? She seems nice.

CHARLES

First, she makes my skin crawl. Second, if word gets out, it'll ruin my reputation in the freshman dorms.

Sam looks to Max for the real story.

MAX

Never hook up with people in your cast.

CHARLES

I am a world-class knucklehead.

A pretty girl approaches.

JULIE

I'm sorry to interrupt, I thought I heard one of you say "Max."

CHARLES

One of us is Max.

JULIE

(to Charles)

Oh, great, just as I hoped. I just wanted to say, I heard your radio show last week and I thought it was great. Thoughtful and poignant and funny, too. You know, you look just like I imagined, too.

CHARLES

Thanks.

MAX

I'm Max.

JULIE

Huh?

MAX

I'm Max.

(suddenly struck)

Oh my God, you heard my show?

JULIE

You're Max? Then who are you?

CHARLES

Charles. I'm an actor.

JULIE

(to Max)

You okay? You look like you're in pain.

MAX

You don't get it, I can't do my show if I even suspect someone is listening. Now I have to change time slots. Again.

JULIE

I'm sorry, I didn't realize I wasn't supposed to listen.

MAX

(inconsolable)

No, it's no good, the whole episode is ruined. This is a disaster.

CHARLES

I work in theater a lot.

JULIE

Alright, listen. I was kidding. Your show actually kind of sucked.

MAX

What?!

JULIE

Just kidding! It was awesome.

CHARLES

I also direct.

MAX

Uh, when did you tune in? I need to know which episode you ruined.

JULIE

At one point you dialed a phone sex line. It was hilarious. It's not every day someone calls 1-900-4RIMJOBS to discuss politics.

Sam quickly pulls Charles away as he starts to comment.

MAX

And she hung up. "This isn't the place for that kind of talk..."

JULIE

Yeah, it's like, for four dollars a minute, you should talk about whatever you want. You know the country's in trouble when a phone sex operator thinks talking politics is beneath her.

MAX

Perhaps she'd been screwed by politicians. Phone sex is just pretend but politics... I know my ass is still sore.

He catches himself and falters. Julie notices something.

JULIE

Listen, I'm being flagged down by my over-protective friends. It was nice meeting you, though.

MAX

Wait, wait. How did you know about my show?

JULIE

Someone mentioned you.

MAX

Anybody I know? Oh, duh, I guess it would have to be someone I know.

JULIE

It was from a good source. I was told I'd like you, but to really know you, I should hear your show.

MAX

What, really?

She appraises him for a beat.

JULIE

It was Beth.

And with that, she leaves. Max watches her, loses her in the crowd. Something catches his eye across the room.

MAX'S POV: Sam is in a corner, trapped by an upset Jen. From his gestures, he is on the defensive.

Charles moseys over.

CHARLES

Check it. Jen traded shifts and got out of work, so she went to the lab to surprise Sam. He wasn't there, and then Tommy gave away that he was here.

MAX

Busted.

CHARLES

And how. Let's bail before the beheadings begin. Plus, *The Rat Pack's* on HBO later.

They put on their coats.

MAX

How can you stand that show?

CHARLES

I told you, it's research. It's why I got three phone numbers, Max, while you were talking to that cutie.

24 INT. COLLEGE APARTMENT STAIRWELL

24

MAX

"Cutie"?

CHARLES

That's right. You get her name?

MAX

We just met. I was working up to it.

CHARLES

Man, you're worse at picking up chicks than me. We are one sad couple of bozos.

Max looks at him like he's insane.

25 INT. MAX AND SAM'S ROOM - LATER

25

Alone, he kicks snow off his boots as he sheds his winter layers. He taps the answering machine.

BETH

(on machine)

Uh, hi, Max. Guess who? It's Beth. Been a while, huh? Since that lunch last August that somehow never happened. Anyway, uh, just checking in, I guess. Hope your break was okay. Uh, and—

BEEEEEEEP. The machine cuts her off. Max sighs, picks up the phone, dials.

MAX

Hello? Beth?... Sorry... Hello...? Hey, how's it going?... Yeah, in person... Too long... So anyway, I just wanted to say hi, and also, stop telling people to listen to my show... Of course I'm serious... Stop laughing... Of course I haven't changed...

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "MONDAY"

26 INT. COMMON ROOM — THE NEXT MORNING

26

Sara sleeps on a couch. Charles, wearing only boxers, hung over and mostly asleep, passes through the living room. He stubs his toe and crashes into the wall.

CHARLES

Ow! Shit! Ow!

He continues into the bathroom. Sara wakes up and looks around groggily. A FLUSH. Charles walks out of the bathroom and blinks at Sara with surprise.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Jeezzus! Shit, sorry you um...

SARA

It's all right, this isn't the first time this has happened. At least this time I'm not the naked one.

CHARLES

It's just that, I mean, I'm just surprised to see you here.

SARA

Hmm, yeah, I must have shown up after you came back, or something. I was planning to go home, but I guess I fell asleep.

She waits for something from Charles. He doesn't respond. She reluctantly gets to her feet.

SARA (cont'd)

Anyway, I, uh, I've got a bunch of stuff to do. I'll see you later.

CHARLES

Bye.

As she leaves, Max comes in, still in last night's clothes.

MAX

You all right?

CHARLES

She's around all the time! I chose to live with my hombres, not her. She's got to realize that we're not right for each other and get on with her life.

MAX

No, I mean, I thought I heard you fall or something.

CHARLES

Oh, what? I just stubbed my toe.

MAX

That sucks. Bad way to start the day.

CHARLES

The toe's the least of it.

MAX

This is funny, in a way. Yesterday you were complaining about not having any girls. Now you're complaining because you have one.

CHARLES

I know. It's a shame. And I was attracted to her once, too. What happened?

MAX

Want me to tell you?

CHARLES

No! I think I've heard enough from the Nostradamus of failed relationships to last a lifetime.

MAX

Speaking of failed relationships, I was thinking about your *Annie Hall* theory. Specifically, I was thinking that you're insane.

CHARLES

I said I was joking, so why do you keep bringing it up?

MAX

It's like you insulted my religion. Like, "Hey, Cardinal, I think Jesus might be why you're not getting laid..."

CHARLES

Your attitude's too dour. You've gotta be more fun.

MAX

It's not my fault *Annie Hall's* honest about the futility of romance.

CHARLES

You're just a wuss. The very thought of not seeing that movie scares you. You're like a junkie, you need movie methadone. Like, from now on you can only see *Manhattan*.

MAX

Forget it, I hate *Manhattan*.

CHARLES

You think addicts like Methadone?

MAX

My Uncle Harry didn't seem to mind.

CHARLES

So what are we doing for lunch?

Scott enters.

SCOTT

You mean breakfast.

MAX

Actually, I'm supposed to eat with Beth.

He doesn't look excited at the prospect, but Charles does.

CHARLES

Beth? Wow. She hasn't been around in ages. Say hi for me.

27 EXT. FRANNIE'S - DAY

27

Max walks with Beth down the city street. She carries an umbrella and scans the skies.

BETH

Wasn't it supposed to rain?

MAX

I dunno.

BETH

Max, it's been ten minutes and we're still discussing the weather.

MAX

So? Think of all the people who've died in hurricanes. I bet they think it's a worthy issue.

BETH

I just feel like there are other things we could be talking about. You're the one person I could rely on to say something original.

MAX

Okay, okay.

(beat)

So, what classes are you taking?

BETH

This was a mistake, wasn't it?

MAX

What? No.

They stop in front of Frannie's, a small greasy spoon.

BETH

Look, let's just call it a day. I was excited to hear from you, but I can't take you like this.

A COUPLE exit, the guy holds the door for them. They hesitate. Suddenly, from inside:

CHARLES (O.S.)

Max! Beth! Come sit with us!

MAX

No, I'm sorry. Don't worry about it. To be honest, it's nice being with someone besides my suitemates for a change.

They look in and see...

...Charles, Scott, Amanda, Sam and Jen, seated around a huge table. They are waving them in. Beth enters, Max reluctantly follows.

JEN

Oh my, God, Beth! It's great to see you!

AMANDA

It's been so long!

Everyone scoots over to make room. Max is still stunned but has no choice. He sits.

JEN

How did we ever fall out of touch? We shouldn't let that happen again.

BETH

I know! I even miss this place. I live on the wrong side of campus now. You guys still come here? It's so dark and the menu is tiny.

CHARLES

It never changes, that's why.

SAM

(to Jen)

What are you gonna get?

JEN

Maybe an omelet.

MAX

Do you have to get eggs? I'm allergic.

JEN

So don't get the eggs.

MAX

It's just that, it's the smell. It's the smell that bothers me.

JEN

Are you serious? How can you be allergic to the smell of my eggs?

BETH

Don't worry about it, Jen. He's just incredibly picky about food.

CHARLES

Even other people's.

MAX

Look, if you're going to have eggs, let me at least switch seats with Sam, so I'll be farther away from it.

SAM

Max, what's up with you today? Join a support group.

CHARLES

If it really bothers you, why don't you and Beth switch?

This would put Beth next to Charles. She looks at him and he smiles. Unable to help herself, she smiles back.

SAM

What about people at other tables? Should we ask the management to stop serving egg-products to people upwind of you?

JEN

Why can't you just get along with everyone for once?

MAX

Alright, alright, you win, we'll switch. Come on, Beth, get up.

BETH

(jokingly)

What makes you so sure I'm gonna switch? I don't think I'm gonna move.

CHARLES

Don't give in, Beth. I've got your back.

MAX

You owe me. Remember when you threw that egg at me in the dining hall?

BETH

Okay, I'll get up. But I'm ordering an omelet.

She sits down next to Charles and they smile at each other.

29 EXT. ATM NEAR THEATER — LATER

29

Max walks down the street toward an ATM, where a long line of college students has formed. Next to the ATM is an arthouse theater. The marquee reads "Thru Valentine's Day: ANNIE HALL and CASABLANCA."

He joins the ATM line. A moment later, Julie walks by. She notices him and stops.

JULIE

Hi. Look at this line.

MAX

Oh, hey. Yeah, I hate coming here this time of day, but I need money. You know, gambling debts and all.

JULIE

Aren't ATMs great? They save so much time. Think about what life must have been like before them.

MAX

I can't support an acronym without knowing what it stands for. I once joined NAMBLA because I thought it was an animal rights group.

She laughs.

MAX (cont'd)

So, are you a junior, too?

JULIE

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

MAX

What're you majoring in?

JULIE

Why is that always the first question?

MAX

It was my second question.

JULIE

And how would you answer it?

MAX

I'd be honest. Oh, wait. Media Studies. This week, I'm majoring in Media Studies. I used to be a double-major, Renaissance Footwear and Neurosurgery, but, ya know, it was just too hard to get course credit for watching movies.

JULIE

I bet. Me, I'm in Soc., but I'm leaning toward Business, or Psych. Or Art History.

MAX

Why don't you just be undeclared?

JULIE
Not my style.

Max's turn-- but he spots *ANNIE HALL* on the marquee. Impulsively, he turns Julie to face him, so that her back is to it. In doing so, he steps away from the ATM.

JULIE (cont'd)
Are you okay? I thought you needed money.

MAX
Uh, I forgot, my bookie takes checks now.

JULIE
Seriously, is everything okay?

MAX
Actually, yes. But I need something from you.

JULIE
What?

MAX
Your name.

JULIE
It's Julie, no nickname. Don't even think of calling me "Jewel."

MAX
Okay, Julie with no nickname, I, um, I'll see you around?

JULIE
Probably.

She leaves. Max goes back to the end of the line.

30 INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

30

Lounging are Max and Charles, Sam and Tommy, and Scott and Amanda.

Charles pulls a bottle of vodka from a newsbox.

CHARLES
Come on, which of you cats is in?

MAX
It's only Monday.

CHARLES

Shit, it's only Monday? Now I really need a drink.

SAM

I'm in.

Charles takes two mugs off the floor, throws their contents into a plant, and pours.

Tommy is on one end of a couch, sneaking looks at Amanda, in the middle, who is sneaking looks at Scott, on the other end.

AMANDA

(to Scott)

How was your day?

TOMMY

(answering her)

My day sucked. I spent six hours in the lab and four hours in class. And tonight, I have to study for two tests.

CHARLES

Ouch.

TOMMY

It better be worth it when I get into grad school.

AMANDA

Scott, how's the design project coming?

SCOTT

Slowly. There are a couple problems.

AMANDA

Huh.

Scott gets up and leaves the room.

TOMMY

Listen, I have an extra ticket to this concert tomorrow night.

Charles, Sam, and Max look on with alarm: is he really going through with this, here, now? Amanda takes the bait.

AMANDA

The Ani DiFranco show? Awesome!
That's been sold out for weeks!

TOMMY

It's not Ani DiFranco, it's better-- two, front row seats at the Campus Choir charity show.

AMANDA

Oh.

TOMMY

So do ya wanna go?

AMANDA

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

TOMMY

Okay, great.

AMANDA

It's getting late. See you guys later.

SAM - MAX - CHARLES

Bye.

TOMMY

See you tomorrow.

Amanda exits.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Wow, that went pretty good.

CHARLES

Using Ani DiFranco to get laid. I've gotta try that.

SAM

She'll never give up on Scott.

TOMMY

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

Scott wanders back in with a copy of Wired magazine. Tommy stands.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Scott, do you mind if I take Amanda to a concert tomorrow night?

SCOTT

Why would I?

TOMMY
I didn't think so, but not asking would be wrong.

SCOTT
No, it wouldn't.

TOMMY
But...

SAM
It's not even a date.

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

CHARLES
But they're going as friends.

SAM
They are friends.

MAX
She probably won't even go.

Scott sits and reads his magazine. Tommy drops heavily into a chair.

TOMMY
Whenever you're done, someone please give me an update on my sex life.

CHARLES
How does "sex life" enter, if she might not be going, and if she does, it's just as friends?

SAM
Wait, can you be on a date with someone you're not dating?

CHARLES
Yes. No.

TOMMY
I didn't think it was such a big deal!
(to Scott)
I just wanted to make sure it didn't bother you.

Scott looks at him like, *Are you kidding?* and goes back to his magazine. Tommy looks frustrated.

MAX

This conversation is starting to bother me.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "TUESDAY"

31 INT. DARK ROOM – THE NEXT DAY

31

Max shakes a tumbler as Amanda keeps time.

AMANDA

Tired yet?

MAX

This is ridiculous. What other art form involves industrial toxins and complex chemical reactions? Nobody ever got cancer from dancing.

AMANDA

You're so paranoid.

MAX

I'm serious. Chemicals make me very nervous. Isn't this how the Unabomber got started?

He continues shaking.

AMANDA

Max, do I bother Scott when I'm around?

MAX

Uh, boy, this fixer smells delicious...

AMANDA

'Cuz, sometimes it seems like I do. I know he's not, like, interested, but then, sometimes it seems like he is. I just don't want it to be awkward. Please, tell me the truth.

MAX

I, uh, I mean, the truth is, it's not a topic. It doesn't bother him, or us. Or I mean, he doesn't talk about it.

AMANDA

So he never talks about me?

MAX

Yes, I mean, no, not with us, anyway.

AMANDA

I knew it.

MAX

Listen. All I'm trying to say is, you're not a topic that comes up very often.

AMANDA

So with all the time we spend together, none of you have any opinion of me?!

Amanda storms out of the room.

MAX

Well, that's not... what I meant. Oy.

Amanda returns, still upset.

AMANDA

It's time! To unroll the film.

Max, startled, fumbles open the tumbler.

MAX

Listen, Amanda. Scott likes you as much as we all do, so it doesn't leave much room for discussion. We mostly only talk about what we hate.

AMANDA

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

MAX

Yeah, I know.

Amanda takes the negatives, opens the door to a closet, hangs them from a clothespin, and leaves. Max takes his, selects a clothespin, and knocks several others to the floor. He tries to pick them up, and manages to step on them.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Max? Are you coming?

He throws the crumpled negatives in the closet and grabs his bag. At the door, he notices one stuck to his shoe.

MAX

Shit!

He takes the negative off his shoe, almost knocking himself over, and hurries out.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Why does it always take you so long in there?

32 INT. COMMON ROOM — LATER

32

Max enters to find Sam playing video hockey.

MAX

Hey, remember the scene in *Swingers* when they play this? That was awesome. I love movie scenes I can relate to.

He sits down next to him.

SAM

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

MAX

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

SAM

Which one had all the comic book stuff?

MAX

They both did.

SAM

What about the *Star Wars* stuff?

MAX

Mallrats, *Clerks*, and *Dogma*.

SAM

What about the last one?

MAX

Doesn't count, it was just an ad for all his other films.

SAM

You gotta admit, it's fucking cheap for a movie to refer to other movies.

MAX

Why? We do it real life. We're doing it right now. What you're saying is, if this was a movie, it wouldn't be any good.

SAM

Yeah. Our lives would make an awful movie.

MAX

But if our lives were a movie, you'd never be able to say that. You'd be giving the critics the perfect quote to pan it with.

SAM

So fucking what? It's a shitty movie!

Sam drops his controller and gets up.

MAX

Are you okay?

SAM

How come you only play this one video game?

MAX

Video hockey is my game. Like a swan, I mate for life.

SAM

More like the loon.

Max looks him over.

MAX

Holy shit, you and Jen broke up.

SAM

Yeah. Your prediction finally came true. Come on, let's hit the bar. I need a drink.

33 INT. COFFEE BAR — DAY

33

A crummy collegiate dive. Sam and Max drink coffees.

MAX

Okay, so what happened?

SAM

We were just hanging out, and she told me she loves me. Completely out of the blue. She says things like that sometimes, things like "I love that you're my boyfriend," ya know? But usually when we're in bed or something. But this time it was different, all we were doing was watching TV.

MAX

Porn?

SAM

Almost. It was "our" show, the one we like to get romantic to...

34 INT. JEN'S DORM ROOM – SAM'S FLASHBACK

34

Sam and Jen watch "The X-Files." Max stands, observing. Jen can't see him.

SAM

(to Max)

I was just tired of trying to tell her what she wanted to hear all the time, so I tried to be honest.

(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 tough to say, but I think something might be missing from our relationship.

JEN

Something's missing?

SAM

Well, not completely... I don't know if I can explain it. See...

(fumbling)

There are three things I look for in a girl: heart, body, and mind. And well, you've got the body.

Max is stunned and laughs. Jen is stunned, too, and runs out.

MAX

(to camera)

Jesus. You think you know someone pretty well and then they do something like this.

SAM

When she comes back, she slaps me in the face and makes me leave. Then she calls, crying, and asks me to come over. When I go back, she kicks me out and says she never wants to see me again.

MAX

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

Max sits, and the background DISSOLVES back TO:

35 INT. COFFEE BAR — PRESENT

35

SAM

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

MAX

Don't you know that no matter how often girls tell you they want honesty, they never really mean it? Nobody does!

SAM

Look, I fucked up, alright? I didn't know what to say.

MAX

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

SAM

Me too. It'll be hard to get used to, but at least we ended it early.

Sam throws some money on the table and they get up.

SAM (cont'd)

Hey, you know what I'm in the mood for? *Annie Hall*.

MAX

Jesus, that film...-- Have you heard Charles' theory?

SAM

Come on, Max, I can only deal with one mid-life crisis at a time.

MAX

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

SAM

You think?

MAX

No.

SAM

Gee, at least I can hang out with my friends again.

36 INT. THE PUB – LATER THAT NIGHT

36

“New wave dance party” in The Pub, the small, grungy club on campus. A DJ plays something obscure from the 80s. Some people dance, while the rest, including Max, Charles, and Scott, sit at tables by the coffee bar in the back.

CHARLES

I was talking to Amanda the other day.

SCOTT

Was that Thursday? Because there was that half hour when she didn't call or visit.

MAX

Scott, why don't you go for her? You seem to get along well.

SCOTT

She follows me around now. If we slept together, I'd never get rid of her.

MAX

You're exaggerating.

SCOTT

Look at Sam and Jen.

CHARLES

Ouch.

MAX

Bad example: it could never get that bad.

CHARLES

Ouch.

SCOTT

Then look at Charles and Sara.

CHARLES

Okay, ouch for real this time.

Max looks O.S. and goes pale.

MAX

Shit, she's here.

Julie walks through the crowd in their direction, but stops at another table, talking to friends. Max exhales slowly.

CHARLES

That dame from History class?

MAX

No. She's, she's just a girl. I shouldn't have mentioned it.

SCOTT

But you did mention it.

CHARLES

Ohhh, that's the one from the party.

MAX

Yeah.

CHARLES

Get her name yet?

MAX

Yeah, it's "Julie"... Julie. She's cute, and she seems interesting, but I'm sure she has all kinds of horrible flaws I don't know about.

CHARLES

Uh-oh. This is bad.

MAX

What do you mean?

CHARLES

You're thinking about her. You're already making yourself nervous and you barely know her. You do this every time!

MAX

I wonder if maybe I should go say hi.

CHARLES

See, this is what I'm talking about. If you don't go hit on her, I will.

MAX

Do you know the guys she's talking to?

SCOTT

Yeah. The guy in the jacket is annoying.

Julie sees him. He freezes like a deer in headlights.

MAX

Shit, shit, shit, she's looking this way. Fuck. What should I...?

CHARLES

You have no choice. If you back away now, she'll never get to see the rest of your annoying personality traits.

MAX

You're right. I can't deprive her of that.

37 INT. THE PUB – JULIE'S TABLE

37

Julie is with ANDY and MARK. Andy is your basic hippie, resplendent in a ridiculous green shag jacket. Mark has a cap and is wearing a J Crew long-sleeve shirt over a Dave Matthews Band t-shirt.

Max approaches.

JULIE

Max! What's going on?

MAX

Hey.

JULIE

Do you guys know Max? This is Mark...

MARK

Wassup.

JULIE

...And Andy.

ANDY

Hey Max, how's it hanging, bud?

MAX

Fine. I, uh, really like your jacket. Is that real carpet?

ANDY

Yeah, man. I couldn't believe my luck when I saw it. This shade of shag is, like, so rare. I was like, woah...

MARK

Hey, are we gonna burn this or what?

ANDY

Yeah, man. Hey, you guys are like all invited, if you can handle some kind bud... "Maui wowey," you know?

MAX
Aloha?

38 INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT — A LITTLE LATER

38

Mark, Julie, and Max sit around a wooden table in a small apartment's kitchen. Andy puts on a CD.

ANDY
Hey man, you like Zappa?

MAX
Dweezil or Moon Unit?

ANDY
Frank.
(then gets it, laughs)
Man, that isn't even funny. You should check out "Apostrophe" some time.

MAX
"Apostrophe"?

MARK
It's an album.

MAX
I thought he was correcting my grammar.

MARK
Can I get anyone beers? Julie?

JULIE
Sure.

ANDY
You know it.

MAX
Okay.

Mark distributes beers to everyone but Max.

MARK
Sorry, Max, we don't have enough.

MAX
Uh, yeah, sure.

JULIE
You want mine?

MAX

No thanks. I'm kinda picky about beer.
I'm more into stuff like Guinness, Bass,
Killians.

MARK

(disdainful)
That's so... British.

MAX

It's a coincidence, I swear.

Julie has trouble opening her beer. Mark rushes over with his keychain.

MARK

I thought Guinness was going to be cool,
but it sucks. Made me nauseous.

ANDY

Dude, puking blows. That's why I smoke
weed. You get high right away and no
hangover!

Andy pulls out a baggie of marijuana, and rummages through the closet.

MAX

Yeah, I don't know. Giving me pot is like
letting Richard Simmons smoke crack. I'm
paranoid enough as it is.

MARK

Yeah, well, some people just can't handle
their bud.

Mark glares disparagingly at him while Max pretends to examine the ceiling. Julie pulls out cigarettes, lights up.

JULIE

Andy, what are you looking for?

Andy finds it: a gigantic bong made from a vacuum cleaner. He sets it up on the counter.

MAX

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

ANDY

Julie, you don't smoke either, right?

MARK

Really?

JULIE

Yeah. I used to, but when it became my social life I knew I needed to stop.

MAX

Kind of like why I stopped playing Dungeons and Dragons. It was, uh, in sixth grade, but it was kind of similar.

MARK

Why don't we go smoke in the living room?

ANDY

Oh, Ampersand's crashing on the couch tonight.

MAX

"Ampersand"? What kind of name is that, Esperanto?

ANDY

Well, his name was Mike, but he couldn't cope. He thought it was, like, too square. He wanted a name that would tell people, here is a person that only the brave will understand! Here is a person living beyond the walls!

MAX

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

ANDY

Or Prince, cuz, like, Prince's name was a squiggly-thing. But Mike wanted something powerful, meaningful, and above all, something you could type. Therefore, "Ampersand." It's already on the keyboard and everything.

MAX

How much did that cost? Because I have a friend who wants to change his name to Not Bill.

JULIE

Is his name Bill?

MAX

No, Not Bill.

JULIE

What about originally?

MAX
Originally he wanted to change it to something else.

Mark steps forward and pushes up a sleeve.

MARK
Hey Julie, check out my new tattoo.

He's got an anchor on his right biceps. Max snickers.

JULIE
Gee, Mark, that's really cool.

MARK
I know it's not what you suggested, but I needed something more... masculine.

Max quietly whistles "Popeye the Sailor Man."

MARK (cont'd)
You think you're pretty funny, huh?

MAX
C'mon, I thought hippies were mellow.

MARK
You just call me a hippie?

MAX
Sorry, Popeye, I guess I was thrown by the Dave Matthews merchandise.

MARK
I'm in a frat, geek.

MAX
Well shouldn't you be back there date-raping someone?

MARK
Julie, where did you find this creep?

Max and Mark both look to Julie-- she must pick a side. She pulls on her cigarette, then turns to Mark.

JULIE
Mark, lay off. Go take a hit off the Hoover and mellow out.
(turning to Max)
Max, I'm sorry.

MAX
Hey, it's okay. I'm cool.

He takes a beer from the table, fumbles, and drops it.

JULIE

Nah, it's time. It's getting late anyway.

She puts out her cigarette and grabs her coat.

39 EXT. JULIE'S DORM - NIGHT

39

Max and Julie approach Shelly Hall.

MAX

So you live here, huh? Does it bother you to be in an all-female dorm?

JULIE

No, well, a little, sure. But there are always men around. During fire drills, more guys come out than girls. Never the same ones either. They come and go.

MAX

I bet they do.

Julie catches herself and laughs. Max shares a smile with her in the doorway.

JULIE

I had a good time tonight, but next time, let's have some real fun.

MAX

Oh, fine, uh, next time I'll bring Jack Nicholson and a case of Schnapps.

JULIE

Good night, Max.

Julie enters the dorm. Max watches her through the glass.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "WEDNESDAY"

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE UP of a schedule's column heading: "Wednesday"

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

40 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE RADIO STATION - DAY

40

Max reads the schedule on the door. His watch says 11am; he finds Wednesday 11am: "Julio's Death Metal Jamboree." He peeks behind the door-- the station is empty.

He starts to slip inside when...

BETH (O.S.)

Max!

He whirls, closing the door guiltily. Beth comes down the hall, laden with books.

MAX

Uh, hi...

BETH

It was great running into your friends, but... you know... I feel bad about what I said. Do you want to get together later?

MAX

I don't know, I'm sure I have something to do that I've forgotten.

BETH

Come on, it's bad enough we fell out of touch, but we can't even have lunch?

MAX

We had breakfast.

BETH

Every time we try to do anything, you have an excuse, or forget to show up, or you cancel.

MAX

You cancel on me, too.

BETH

I'm sorry. Things have been a little, you know, awkward.

MAX

Look, the whole thing was my fault. Let's drop it, okay?

Beth throws up her hands, turns away.

MAX (cont'd)

Okay, lunch, you win.

BETH

Now you're only going because I gave you a hard time.

MAX

Guilt is a powerful force. Just be glad it's on our side for once.

BETH

Okay, how is the Kidney Bean at noon?

MAX

Awful, just like every other time of day. Their food is just birdseed prepared fancy.

BETH

The Fabulous Diner, then. Friday at noon?

MAX

Fine.

She leaves. Max finds his old slot on the schedule and crosses it out. Then he slips into the station.

41 EXT. CVS

41

A shitbox pulls up. Sam drives, Max rides shotgun. Scott and Amanda are in back.

AMANDA

And then I got to thinking, you know, I really think I like vanilla.

Sam turns off the car.

SAM

I'll be right back.

MAX

Me too.

They get out and go into the store.

42 INT. CVS

42

They enter an aisle and Sam grabs various items as he talks.

SAM

Jen called yesterday, while we were at the bar.

MAX

You call her back?

SAM

Yeah. I went over there to talk again today. She's taking it hard.

MAX

Imagine that.

SAM

We're having dinner tonight. Wanna come?

MAX

Don't put me in the middle of this. Are you definitely broken up? Because it seems a little up in the air.

SAM

Yeah, we're definitely broken up. I guess sometimes it seems like we're sliding back into our old patterns.

He takes some Vaseline from a shelf. Max looks horrified.

SAM (cont'd)

It's not what you think. I need a petroleum jelly for the polymers class I'm TA-ing.

Suddenly a rack of condoms catches his eye. Max sees it too.

MAX

Don't even think of it.

SAM

What-the-heck.

He takes a box. His arms are totally full now.

SAM (cont'd)

I need a basket. Hold this.

He dumps his pile of stuff into Max's arms, the Vaseline and condoms on top, and disappears around a corner. Max sighs, turns around... and bumps into Julie.

JULIE

Hello... Big night?

MAX

Um, it's for a friend.

JULIE

I would hope so.

MAX
No, seriously, I just got a job at a
petting zoo.

JULIE
(laughing)
Oh, of course.

MAX
And the best part is, it's work study. I
think the Psych. department's involved.

JULIE
Hey, that's my new major. I got so sick
of Soc.

MAX
So, uh, got any plans tonight?

JULIE
Well, there's a great local band playing
the Pub. You should come.

MAX
Um, sure. Might be cool to catch a band
before success ruins them.

JULIE
Great. I'll see you there.

She leaves with a wave. Sam turns the other corner.

SAM
No baskets.

MAX
I can't believe what you just did to me!

SAM
What?

MAX
Julie was just here!

SAM
Who's Julie?

Suddenly, Scott arrives.

SCOTT
Hi. I need socks.

MAX

What were you doing sitting in the car then?

SCOTT

Nothing.

43 EXT. CVS – FLASHBACK

43

The car pulls up.

SAM

I'll be right back.

MAX

Me too.

They leave.

Amanda and Scott are alone in the back. Amanda looks tense.

AMANDA

Scott, can I ask you something?

SCOTT

Okay.

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

Yeah.

AMANDA

Well, I was wondering if... never mind.

SCOTT

Okay.

A moment passes.

AMANDA

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

SCOTT

I know.

As she opens her mouth, Scott opens the car door and exits.

44 INT. CVS – PRESENT

44

SCOTT
So where are the socks?

45 INT. PUB – THAT NIGHT

45

An absurd metal band plays on-stage. The room is packed, and the crowd is mostly one big mosh pit.

Max wades through the slamdancers, freaked. He makes it to the coffee bar. Julie soon appears, sweaty. She's been here awhile.

JULIE
Hey!

MAX
Oh, hey! It's good to see you.

The surging crowd shoves Max into Julie. They fall against each other. Max is near panic but Julie's laughing, getting off on the energy of the room.

The SINGER smashes the mic against the wall, then brandishes the stand menacingly at the crowd, who step back in alarm.

MAX (cont'd)
Who are these guys?

JULIE
They're Anhedonia. They're "sludge-core."

SINGER
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. The band follows. The crowd applauds with some confusion. Julie whistles loudly and claps.

JULIE
That's their trademark. They insult the crowd at the end of the set. Sometimes he breaks the mike two songs in. We were lucky: they played for almost 40 minutes.

MAX
Luck had nothing to do with it.

JULIE

Look, the mike's not even broken. They were just tired of playing, but they wanted to give us something to remember. Now that's showmanship.

MAX

You have to wonder about any band whose highlight is their exit.

JULIE

It worked for The Who.

MAX

I'm sorry, the who?

JULIE

Ha ha. Come on, is that the kind of a joke a celebrity DJ would make?

MAX

I still can't believe you tuned in. It's like an invasion of privacy.

JULIE

You're a riot. Let's get out of here.

She pulls him away.

46 INT. STUDY LOUNGE — UNIVERSITY CENTER — MINUTES LATER

46

The lounge is empty. Julie sits on a couch. Max sits next to her, but seems uptight about getting too close.

MAX

So, uh, I'm sorry about that thing with, uh, Chip was it?

JULIE

Oh, Mark. He's been following me around for years. He's easily threatened.

MAX

He's lucky, I, uh, almost pulled a Jackie Chan on his ass, but, you know, my kung-fu's gotten rusty since I left the Hong Kong military.

JULIE

Don't worry about him, he isn't a threat. You're far more interesting.

MAX

Right. Asking me not to worry is like asking a bear to use toilet paper. There's this joke that sums it up for me..

Julie leans in and looks at him with intensity.

JULIE

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

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, playing everything off as a joke whenever things gets serious. But there's more to you.

MAX

Did I ever tell you about the bear and the rabbit in the woods—?

JULIE

Quick. Now. Tell me something about yourself, something I never would have guessed. And don't even try to come up with some witty retort.

Max, agape, is on the spot, helpless. Julie grabs her coat.

JULIE (cont'd)

I should get going.

She stands.

MAX

Wait.

She sits.

MAX (cont'd)

Okay. Okay.

(a deep breath)

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

JULIE
(off-balance, covering)
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.

MAX
Now it's your turn, right?

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

MAX
Fuck. I sure hadn't guessed that.

JULIE
Okay, well, not anymore. Eric and I were
together in high school, but we broke up
over break.

MAX
Since high school, wow.

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

MAX
(on the spot)
Uh, I have a friend who says it's because
I watch *Annie Hall* too much.

JULIE
That's crazy.

MAX
Exactly. That film practically raised me.

JULIE
And it has a very positive message, too.
I wish more guys were into it.

MAX
Be careful what you wish for.

JULIE
You don't know what I'm wishing for.

MAX
Snowtires?

JULIE
Max, there are a lot of girls that would go for a guy like you.

MAX
Know any?

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

Julie starts to lean in. Suddenly, the BUILDING MANAGER walks in. He's a dead ringer for Woody Allen. Max starts violently.

MANAGER
Building's closing. Everyone out.

He exits. Max is beside himself. Julie sees that the moment's over and gets up.

JULIE
Are you hungry at all?

MAX
Sure. I know this place. Their food is bad, but they compensate by being overpriced.

JULIE
Sounds perfect.

They walk out.

MAX
Say, did that guy look like...?

JULIE
Ernest Borgnine? Yeah, I noticed that too.

47 INT. JULIE'S CAR — NIGHT

47

Max is relaxed and chatting while Julie drives.

MAX

I've been able to do it since high school.

JULIE

That's a scary gift. I mean, even if people are destined to break up, the will to stay together is very powerful.

MAX

That's the real tragedy. Look at all the unhappy couples in the world.

JULIE

I don't know if your gift is really that special, Max. I mean, we break up with everyone we ever date... Until the one we stay with forever.

MAX

See how ridiculous dating is?

JULIE

How did you get this attitude if you love *Annie Hall*?

MAX

What do you mean? That's what *Annie's* all about.

Julie looks dubious. Max flicks on the radio.

DJ

..."college radio for the masses," and that's it for me.

(sound of CDs falling)

Whoops! Anyway, next up is Verbal Diarrhea, with Todd Duke.

MAX

Why is your radio set to the campus station?

JULIE

Actually, it's stuck on it. It's how I first heard your show.

MAX

I thought Beth told you about me.

JULIE

It doesn't matter, Max. Now that I've met you, your show's not important.

48 INT. PRETENTIOUS CAFE - A LITTLE LATER

48

The kind of place that's perfect for Parents Weekend. At this late hour, it is filled with young professionals. There's a dance floor, where couples dance to the standards. Max and Julie are at a table in the corner, looking out of place.

JULIE

(smirking)

This is a nice place. Ritzy. Interesting mix of people here, you've got these men with their suits, taking their waitress girlfriends out to impress them into bed, because they can't get them any other way. 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? I'd be down at the Porsche dealer with a ski mask and an Uzi.

JULIE

Guys, always obsessed with dick size.

MAX

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

JULIE

Let's guess which couples are destined to break up. How about them?

Indicates a COUPLE dancing.

MAX

No, I can't tell just by looking. I need some info.

Their waitress, DONNA, arrives.

JULIE

Hi! Do you have a boyfriend?

Max is aghast. Donna stares a beat.

DONNA

Yeah.

JULIE

(to Max)

What do you need to know?

MAX

Uh, just a description.

JULIE

Describe him for us. It's okay, I'm a psyche major.

DONNA

Well, he's tall... ish. Brown hair. Funny. Very friendly. Fixes cars. Close with his brother. Uh, what else? Believes in God. Has a sweet tooth. Uh...

MAX

That's plenty.

DONNA

So can I take your order?

JULIE

We're not ready, thanks.

Donna puts her pad away.

DONNA

So what was that all about then?

JULIE

Max here thinks you're going to break up with your boyfriend.

DONNA

What?

MAX

Sorry. It's all in there. You qualified "tall" so as not to make him appear too handsome, said "friendly" like a euphemism, chose "fixes cars" instead of the more dignified "auto mechanic," and finally, mentioned his brother á propos of nothing, like you're threatened by him.

The waitress looks like she's been slapped. After a pause, she turns her back and walks away.

JULIE

Hey! Don't shoot the messenger!

MAX

I'm such an idiot. She's going to shit in our food now. I can't believe you asked her that.

JULIE

Hey, we're all people here, right? If you want to talk to someone, talk to them. I don't spend my time trying to justify talking to people or whatever. You limit yourself if you do that. If you spend too much time worrying, you don't spend enough time living, right?

MAX

What are you, a fortune cookie?

JULIE

You have to keep yourself open to possibilities in life. I'm the first one in my family to go to college. Sometimes I can't believe I'm here, at a semi-prestigious university getting a halfway-decent education-- this has always been my dream. How did you end up here?

MAX

I had a coupon.

JULIE

I know what you mean, financial aid is a bitch. And the university experience itself is kind of disappointing. All those rich students with no idea how lucky they are. But I don't think about them. I think about me, I think about where I want to be someday: a world traveler, running some huge company, or, you know, doing some fantastically important work. And when the day comes that I can relax, I'm going to charter a boat, sail around the world, and see the Seven Wonders.

MAX

I thought they broke up when Stevie left.

JULIE

Come on, aren't you curious about the world? Doesn't the sheer scope of life fill you with wonder?

MAX

Wonder, horror, it's such a fine line...

JULIE

Ah, Max...

But she's smiling at him, and he can't help but return it.

49 INT. COMMON ROOM – NIGHT 49

Tommy sleeps while the TV proclaims golf products. Max comes in and quietly shuts it off. Tommy gurgles and rolls over.

TOMMY
...swallowed a bug...

Max goes to his room. Sam's bed is empty. He shakes his head, picks up a key from his desk, and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

50 INT. LIMBO RADIO 50

Max sits on a stool, as in the beginning, but this time we are PUSHING IN...

MAX
Sometimes I look around and wonder where
the hell my friends came from.

51 INT. COMMON ROOM – FLASHBACK 51

Tommy and Sam are in each other's faces, yelling. Tommy waves a book and Sam waves a newspaper.

MAX (V.O.)
Like, the other night Tommy and Sam
nearly got into a fistfight over whether
the X-Files is based on a true story.

52 INT. BATHROOM – FLASHBACK 52

Charles makes out with a GIRL in a stall covered in colored paper. She has a cigarette on a black holding stem, which brushes the paper.

MAX (V.O.)
Before that, Scott covered the entire
bathroom in multi-colored post-it notes,
which Charles somehow set on fire, nearly
getting us kicked out of housing.

53 INT. COMMON ROOM – FLASHBACK 53

Max, Sam, Scott, and Tommy are there, reading fanclub newsletters: *X-philes*, *Font-ain of Youth*, *Men Are From Mars* *Women From Venus*. Charles walks in, arm in arm with a woman who is obviously a PROFESSOR, and escorts her to his room.

MAX (V.O.)
They're great friends. I feel safer among
them than among my own family.
[more]

MAX (V.O.) (cont'd)

They always know what not to say, how not to make things uncomfortable.

After a beat, the group resumes reading like nothing happened... except Max, who can't believe what he just saw.

54 INT. RADIO STATION (LIMBO)

54

Max in CLOSE-UP. Over his shoulder, images of Beth arguing with him from various moments in their history.

MAX

Even when Beth was part of the group, she didn't fit in. Like, she never just lets things be. She always has to know exactly what I'm thinking. It was sort of cute when we were friends, but now it's like a proctology exam.

(sighs)

Hard to imagine a friendship going more wrong.

The image of Beth STOPS on a shot of her looking at him with undisguised disappointment. She DISSOLVES into a image of Julie, beaming.

MAX (cont'd)

Ah, but Julie. Juliejuliejulie. She's smart, she's funny, isn't constantly hassling me. How she can stay such a dreamer is beyond me... Hey, I wonder if she's listening now.

The thought stops him cold. The image over his shoulder VANISHES, replaced with a plain cement wall.

55 INT. RADIO STATION

55

We ZOOM OUT fast. Max is back in reality, the station crowded and claustrophobic. He tries to regroup.

MAX

(taps the mike)

Hello? Uh, Julie...?

(clears his throat)

So, uh, as I was saying... Um. My friends.

Yeah. My friends are weird. Shit.

(long pause)

I think it's time for some music.

He grabs for a CD.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "THURSDAY"

56 INT. U.C. GENERAL STORE

56

Max and Charles stir their coffee.

CHARLES

Fuckin' hate this flavored shit. Anyway, I can't believe the cat in the shag jacket was Andy.

MAX

I don't want to talk about it.

CHARLES

When I knew him as a freshman, he was pre-law... Whew. Anyway, it sounds like things are going well between you and Julie.

MAX

Yeah. This is a real change of pace. Staying away from *Annie Hall* is like some kind of magic trick.

CHARLES

I was wondering about that. You seem different lately.

MAX

You know how when things are going badly, there are certain parts I like to watch?

CHARLES

Like how you spent your whole sophomore year watching that lobster scene on repeat?

MAX

I realized that I don't know what part to watch when things are going well.

CHARLES

You know, I actually regret mentioning that theory. In fact, Sam and I were thinking of watching it tonight. You in?

MAX

Are you on crack? I meet a girl I really like, that I may actually have a chance with, and you want me to put it all in jeopardy?

CHARLES

Come on. Watching it without you would be weird. Unnatural. That film is you, Max, face it.

MAX

But it's ruining my life.

Charles drinks his coffee and shakes his head.

CHARLES

Listen, Max. I have to tell you something. I scored last night.

MAX

See? The theory works for you, too.

CHARLES

With Beth.

Max drops his coffee, thunderstruck.

MAX

What?!

CHARLES

It wasn't premeditated.

MAX

(angry)

How could you sleep with Beth?

CHARLES

Look, nobody knows about it. It won't happen again.

MAX

Happen again? Of course not! That might constitute a relationship!

Max is at a loss. The CASHIER looks over suspiciously.

CHARLES

I'm sorry, Max. I wasn't sure if you'd care.

MAX

I don't care! Oh God, this is my fault! If only I hadn't called her...

CHARLES

What do you want me to say? I'm sorry, man. Let me pay for your coffee.

MAX

You've gotta be kidding.

He starts to leave.

CHARLES
Going back to the suite?

MAX
I dunno where I'm going.

57 EXT. CAMPUS THEATER – DAY 57

Max, distressed, passes the campus theater, where someone is tacking up a poster for *Annie Hall*. Max sees it and averts his eyes.

58 EXT. KIDNEY BEAN – DAY 58

He walks past the Kidney Bean. Something catches his eye through the window. He changes direction and enters.

59 INT. KIDNEY BEAN – DAY 59

Max sees Beth eating alone at a table, reading a Tom Robbins book. He walks over. Beth isn't thrilled to see him.

BETH
Max? What are you doing here? A sudden craving for bird-seed?

MAX
Yeah. I figured I'd had enough actual food this week.

BETH
Well, be careful, someone in the corner is eating egg salad.

Max sits down across from her. After an awkward pause:

BETH (cont'd)
Are you okay?

MAX
Yeah, why?

BETH
No reason. Something about you sounded different.

MAX
What? Now?

BETH
No, actually, last night on the... Oh no, he's here.

MAX

But I just left him in the General Store..

But she isn't talking about Charles: she's looking across the room at STEVE, a good-looking guy who is talking to a GIRL.

BETH

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

MAX

I don't even know him. What's so special about this guy, anyway? I mean, are you and he...?

BETH

Sort of. Well, no, I guess not.
(distracted)

I know something's going on. I'm such a fool. Why are we always attracted to people that are completely wrong for us? Is it because they excite us?

MAX

I guess so. You know, we should try to be more exciting. Like the other day, I waited until the last minute before returning a video. And next time, I swear I'm not going to rewind.

BETH

I can be a rebel too. The other day I went to bed without flossing.

MAX

Boy, are we pathetic.

BETH

Okay, it's pathetic, but we're okay, you know? But sometimes, I feel like...

MAX

Yeah. Me too.

She puts on her coat and gathers her things on her tray.

BETH

I'm glad you're here, Max. I didn't realize how much I missed you.

MAX

I feel the same way about the Sex
Pistols. Missing them is far cooler than
having them around.

BETH

That's not what I meant, Max.

She heads for the exit.

60 INT. COMMON ROOM – EVENING

60

Sam looks dubiously at Max, who waves his arms and shouts.

MAX

What do you mean, you saw Julie with
someone?

SAM

Just that. Nothing more.

MAX

So what are you saying?

SAM

Nothing. They were having lunch.

MAX

Who was he? What did he look like?

SAM

You're over-reacting.

MAX

How could she see someone else?

SAM

You're not even dating!

MAX

But we might be! I can't handle
competition, Sam, I'm not the competitive
type.

SAM

It was just lunch in the cafeteria. He
looked completely normal.

MAX

I can't compete with that!
(he fumbles with his coat)
Man, it's all gone so wrong, so fast.

He rushes out the door.

61 INT. DORM HALLWAY — SHELLY HALL

61

Max knocks on the door to Julie's suite. Nothing. He paces, frustrated. Suddenly, JUDY comes out of a stairwell.

JUDY
Hello? Can I help you?

MAX
Yeah, do you know where Julie is?

JUDY
Hey! Are you Max?

MAX
Yeah...

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

MAX
Oh, yeah, Judy. Right.

Judy unlocks the door and holds it open.

JUDY
Come in, come in. Make yourself at home.

MAX
Uh, thanks.

62 INT. JULIE'S SUITE

62

Max enters cautiously. The common room couldn't be more different than his own, clean and tasteful.

Judy hangs her coat up.

JUDY
This may be completely inappropriate, but
can I ask you something? The tattoo— did
it hurt?

MAX
(thinking fast)
Uhhhh... No! I mean, not much.

JUDY
Why didn't you use your frat's logo?

MAX

Well, uh, the guy said it's too hard to draw two grown men kissing. Say, which one is Julie's room?

JUDY

On the left. She's got the single.

Max pushes Julie's door open with one hand while keeping an eye on the front door.

MAX

So...! Uh, do I come here often, would you say?

JUDY (O.S.)

What?

The front door opens and Julie enters.

JULIE

Max! What are you doing here?

MAX

Judy let me in!

Judy comes out of her room.

JUDY

You know, I think I'm going to get a tattoo, too.

JULIE

Judy, Mark has the tattoo. This is Max.

JUDY

What? You're Max?

JULIE

Yeah, isn't he great?

JUDY

Sure.

Glaring at him, she goes into her room and closes the door.

JULIE

What a surprise! What brings you here?

MAX

I was, uh, in the area and thought I'd pop in. Find out how your day went.

JULIE

It was excellent, how was yours?

MAX

Great. I had lunch with a dear, dear friend.

JULIE

Yeah? Anyone I know?

MAX

Probably not. She's a foreign exchange student. Spends a lot of time modeling.

JULIE

Really?

MAX

Yeah, the agencies won't leave her alone. We had, uh, quite a lunch. Lots of shellfish, and wine. And, uh, rhino's horn.

JULIE

For lunch?

MAX

Well, yeah, uh, she's on the kosher meal plan. Look, I gotta go. Nice seeing you again.

He splits, leaving Julie wondering what that was all about.

63 EXT. JULIE'S DORM - NIGHT 63

Outside, Max beats himself in the forehead several times. Then, a picture of misery, he trudges off--

64 INT. RADIO STATION 64

He walks in on someone doing a show. He leaves dejectedly.

65 INT. COMMON ROOM 65

He goes back to his suite, where Sam and Jen sit like statues, watching "The X-Files." He makes a quick exit.

66 EXT. JULIE'S DORM - NIGHT 66

Passes by Julie's dorm again.

67 EXT. UNIVERSITY CENTER - NIGHT 67

Eventually finds himself approaching the University Center.

68 INT. THE PUB – NIGHT

68

A ska band plays "These Boots Were Made For Walking" before two small lines of skanking rude boys.

Charles is alone at the bar. Max sits down beside him.

MAX

I just made an ass of myself.

CHARLES

Oh, is it the weekend already?

MAX

Ha-ha.

CHARLES

Don't worry about it. Your troubles don't compare. Sara blew up at Stacy and nearly destroyed our first rehearsal.

MAX

Yeah, you've got real problems. Do you have time to talk?

CHARLES

Uh-oh, here she comes.

SARA

Charles! Can you believe Stacy at rehearsal?!

She jumps on the stool next to him. Charles turns to Max for help but he's already gone.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "FRIDAY"

69 INT. COMMON ROOM – THE NEXT MORNING

69

Max plays video hockey. Charles comes in.

CHARLES

Studying for a test?

MAX

You shouldn't talk, theater major.

CHARLES

Hey, I have a test on lighting next week that'll make your hair go grey.

He sprawls on the couch.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Thanks for bailing on me last night. I had to hear Sara gab for an hour.

MAX

Why didn't you just leave? At least you can escape your problems.

CHARLES

What do you mean?

MAX

I just got my textbooks for this term.

Max holds up a thick book, *Post-Modern Semiology*. The entire cover is a still from *Annie Hall*.

CHARLES

Holy shit.

MAX

When the gods give you a sign like that, there's only one thing to do.

He passes a controller to Charles and they play.

CHARLES

By the way, I saw Julie last night.

MAX

Was she alone?

CHARLES

Not if you count this huge purse she had. She was rummaging through it and finally had to dump the thing out. I swear, I'm surprised Kennedy's brain didn't fall out of that thing. Anyway, it made me think of Annie Hall.

MAX

Oh, great.

CHARLES

Although Julie dresses better.

Max slowly lowers his controller.

MAX

What are you saying, I like her because she's like Annie Hall?

CHARLES

I didn't say that.

MAX

Oh my God, I think you're right.

CHARLES

I didn't say that.

MAX

I don't want to like someone because she reminds me of someone in a movie. Now I'm wondering why I like her. Maybe I don't.

CHARLES

Good Lord, Max. Take some harder classes.

Sam returns, sees what they are playing.

SAM

Look at you two. Wouldn't something else be fun for a change? How about Goldeneye?

CHARLES

Great game.

MAX

No. I don't know how to play it.

SAM

Lucky for you, I actually have time to teach you. Normally I would be having lunch with Jen.

MAX

Oh, shit, I forgot about lunch!

Max gets up and runs out. Charles and Sam exchange a look.

SAM

Man, he'll do anything to avoid change, won't he?

70 INT. THE FABULOUS DINER - DAY

70

Beth is alone, working on a salad. Max runs up and jumps into the booth.

BETH

(not looking up)
So glad you could make it.

MAX

Hey, I'm here, right?

BETH

Thank God for small favors.

MAX

I'm sorry. Are you still upset about the thing with Steve?

BETH

Yeah, a little. This semester isn't shaping up too well. It's tough getting back into the groove of things and, you know, being on campus. Yourself?

MAX

Well, you know. Nothing even worth mentioning.

BETH

But there's something? Really?

MAX

It's nothing.

BETH

Who is it? Do I know her?

MAX

Actually, um, yeah, it's Julie.

BETH

Julie! She's great. Why aren't you thrilled?

MAX

Well, I'm not sure I'm that into her.

BETH

This I gotta hear.

MAX

She reminds everyone of Annie Hall.

BETH

Well, of course, why do you think I sent her to you?

MAX

God, I'm such an idiot! That film is finding more and more ways to ruin my life.

Max pounds his head against the table but Beth is amused.

BETH

What're you talking about?

MAX

Look at my life. Look at this thing with Julie.

BETH

Jeez, she's not like Annie when the film starts, she's like Annie at the end. Or maybe, the Millennium Edition.

MAX

The worst part is, maybe I knew this all along.

BETH

Max, what's really the problem here?

MAX

And Annie Hall's not even my type.

BETH

You have a type?

MAX

I'm into bipeds with most of their teeth. No Lutherans or fictional characters.

BETH

Who would you rather sleep with, Julie or Annie Hall?

MAX

That's not two choices, that's one.

BETH

Okay, Annie Hall or me?

Max knocks over her soda.

BETH (cont'd)

Stop delaying. This is a serious hypothetical question.

MAX

Well, I must admit, it would be... Annie Hall.

Beth snorts, then laughs.

MAX (cont'd)

Don't feel bad, you came in second.

BETH

I'll take what I can get.

MAX

It's only because you'd laugh at more of my jokes in bed. It adds a whole other dimension-- you'd be laughing with me in addition to at me.

BETH

You joke while you're in bed?

MAX

Yeah.

BETH

That's so weird.

MAX

I'm weird.

BETH

No, it's weird because I do the same thing. Guys find it annoying.

MAX

Girls think I'm a loser.

BETH

Julie doesn't. And you really like her.

MAX

Yeah. It's corny, but there's something about her that brings me happiness.

BETH

Happiness? Max, you wouldn't know what to do with it if you had it.

71 INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

71

Max frantically cleans up all the pizza boxes, wrappers, and empties. Charles leans on the wall, arms crossed.

CHARLES

You've gotta be kidding.

MAX

Look, either go somewhere else, or stay in your room.

CHARLES

Can't I even meet her?

MAX

You already did.

Max stuff the trash with paper, squirts lighter fluid all over it, and takes *Annie Hall* from the shelf.

CHARLES

What are you doing?

MAX

Julie's coming over to watch a movie. I don't want to take any chances.

He carries the tape over the trash but Charles snatches it from him.

CHARLES

Dude, Sam and I were gonna watch that.

Annoyed, he puts it back on the shelf and goes to his room.

The doorbell RINGS. Max smooths his hair one last time...

DISSOLVE TO:

72 INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

72

Max and Julie browse a shelf full of videos.

MAX

Since Scott joined a video club, we've got a lot of shitty movies you'll ever need. Oo, here's *Buffalo '66*, that's a great flick.

JULIE

It is, but I saw it a couple of weeks ago. I don't think I can sit through it again. You mentioned something about *Annie Hall* the other night. Do you have that lying around?

MAX

Ummm, no.

JULIE

Isn't that it on the end there?

MAX

No.

JULIE

Sure it is.

MAX

Um, no, it's just the box. The tape inside is wrestling.

JULIE
No, it isn't.

MAX
Um, it's been recorded over...

JULIE
You don't believe your friend's theory,
right?

MAX
No, of course not.

JULIE
Because it's insulting. A cop-out.

MAX
I, I know, it's just, I watched it last
week. How about *Airplane*?

JULIE
Oh, good idea. But next time, *Annie Hall*.

Max puts in *Airplane*. Julie and Max sit on a couch together.

DISSOLVE TO:

73 INT. COMMON ROOM — NIGHT — LATER

73

Airplane plays. Julie and Max share a blanket. Max turns toward Julie just as she turns toward him, and their lips end up in the same place. Julie pulls back.

JULIE
What are you—?

MAX
Huh?

JULIE
Why did you back away?

MAX
Why did you?

JULIE
It wasn't me, I wouldn't have backed
away.

MAX
Really? I'll, I'll have to remember that
later.

Max turns back to the movie. A beat passes. Julie looks at him, amused.

MAX (cont'd)

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

They kiss. Max pulls the blanket up over them. The sound of KISSING. Then:

JULIE

Ow.

MAX

Sorry.

JULIE

No, it's okay.

More KISSING.

MAX

Are you comfortable, I mean, is this okay?

JULIE

It's okay. Shut up already.

Suddenly, the sound of a LOCK TURNING. Max and Julie quickly get out from under the covers. Sam and Tommy enter, oblivious to the quick recovery of innocence on the couch.

TOMMY

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

SAM

Come on! What about touch? Missing the smell of rotting milk is hardly equal to not being able to enjoy sex.

(seeing them)

Oh, hey, Max.

MAX

Hey. Guys, um, this is Julie. Julie, this is my roommate Sam, and that's Tommy, who also lives here.

JULIE

Nice to meet you guys, but I was just leaving.

MAX

What?

JULIE

I have work to do before class tomorrow.

MAX

But the movie is... Okay. Do you want me to walk you home?

JULIE

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

Max leaves with Julie.

TOMMY

Bye.

(to Sam)

Okay, so what about body odor, then?

74 INT. JULIE'S ROOM

74

Max and Julie collapse onto the pillows, exhausted from sex. Her room is extremely disorganized, decorated in an idiosyncratic mix of punk rock icons and nature scenery.

JULIE

I wish I had a cigarette.

MAX

I wish I smoked.

JULIE

Me too. It's strangely sexy when guys smoke.

MAX

Yeah, and it's the only thing between me and my dream of becoming Steve McQueen.

They lie in each other's warmth, under the blanket.

JULIE

So. You and Beth are pretty close, huh?

MAX

You call that pillow talk?

(shrugs)

We used to be. There were times I would have been lost without her. Other times, it was like the lost leading the lost.

JULIE

She really cares about you.

MAX

We tried something once, but it was a disaster.

JULIE

It's great that you're still friends.

MAX

Sometimes I'm not sure if I have a say in it. On a campus this small, it's like she's everywhere.

JULIE

Sometimes this place annoys me. There's so much bullshit. My semester off was the right idea. What happened to old-fashioned hard work?

MAX

That's what summers are for. The school year is for reckless debauchery.

Max looks at the clock.

MAX (cont'd)

Jesus, I have to get going. I'll never get my homework done if I sleep all weekend. Ah, fuck it, who cares.

JULIE

Why not just set your tuition on fire?

MAX

This, coming from the girl who thinks college is bullshit.

Max just lies there, comfortably resting with a small smile.

JULIE

So, get on up, lazy.

Max sits up and puts one foot on the floor before realizing he'll be naked if he stands. He tries to grab his jeans with his toes. Julie observes him dryly.

JULIE (cont'd)

How can you be shy, after, you know...?

MAX

It's different. Some things aren't quite as impressive in the light of day.

JULIE

You have a problem with nudity.

MAX

Of course not. I'm a big fan of it.

Max picks up his pants. Julie taps him on the shoulder and flicks the sheet up to flash him. He starts and drops them. She laughs.

JULIE

It's too easy.

Max puts his jeans on, shoves his underwear and socks in his pocket.

MAX

What are you doing tomorrow?

JULIE

A double-shift, I get out at five. This week's gonna suck. I have homework that can't be avoided.

MAX

The worst kind.

Max is dressed. They smooch. Max leaves. Julie lies in bed, thoughtful.

Nick Cave begins to croon "Into My Arms"...

75 EXT. JULIE'S DORM – SUNRISE

75

Max leaves the building and stops to look at the winter sunrise.

SUPER: black on white: "SATURDAY"

*I don't believe
In an interventionist God
But I know, darling
That you do*

76 EXT. LIBRARY – SUNRISE

76

Students work in the library as light refracts through icicles in the window.

*But if I did
I would kneel down and ask Him
Not to intervene
When it came to you*

77 EXT. STREET – SUNRISE 77

A boy and a girl hold hands as they cross an icy street.

78 EXT. QUAD – SUNRISE 78

Squirrels play in the light.

79 EXT. UNIVERSITY CENTER – SUNRISE 79

The sun reflects off the University Center windows and back onto the snow.

*Not to touch a hair on your head
To leave you as you are
But if He felt He had to direct you
Direct you into my arms...*

80 INT. RADIO STATION 80

The lights are low. Max is at the console, staring into space. Nick Cave is playing softly on the monitors.

*Into my arms... oh Lord...
Into my arms... oh Lord...*

The phone RINGS. Max snaps out of his reverie and stares at it in horror. After several rings, he answers it.

MAX
Hello. Nobody is here right now. Please
leave a message. BEEEEEEEEEP.

SPLIT SCREEN between Max and

81 INT. JULIE'S ROOM 81

Julie, in bed, smoking.

JULIE
Nice try, Max. I thought you had homework
and stuff, you liar. Great song, by the
way.

MAX
You're listening? I told you not to
listen!

JULIE
Come on, you're funny, you have good
taste in music...

MAX
Hey, where'd the music go?

82 INT. DORM ROOM – CONTINUOUS 82

Two STUDENTS, lying in bed together, listen to the radio.

JULIE (O.S.)
(on the radio)
I don't know.

MAX (O.S.)
(on the radio)
I don't get it, it stopped when I picked
up the phone.

83 INT. RADIO STATION – CONTINUOUS 83

Max pushes up a slider and hears the following coming out
over the monitors:

JULIE (O.S.)
I'm just calling to say that you left
your underpants and took mine.

Max reacts, then SCREECHING FEEDBACK rips over the airwaves.

MAX
Woah!

Continue SPLIT SCREEN with

84 INT. JULIE'S ROOM 84

Where Julie is frantically pulling the chord out of the back
of her radio.

Max fades the phone out, the music up.

MAX
Don't be too proud of your five seconds
of fame. More people would hear us if we
shouted out the window.

JULIE
My radio days are over, I'm now deaf.

MAX
Didn't I tell you not to listen to my
show?

JULIE
You were only playing music.

MAX
Well, all these songs are about you.

JULIE

Wow... You're a real piece of work, you know that, Max?

85 INT. MAX AND SAM'S ROOM - MORNING

85

Max enters and takes off his coat. Sam sits up, annoyed.

MAX

Man, I'm sorry. Go back to sleep.

SAM

What's the point? I have to be up in 15 minutes anyway. Not that I could sleep.

MAX

I didn't sleep either, but for some reason I'm still refreshed. I feel great.

Sam stares at him.

SAM

What the fuck is your problem?

MAX

It's Julie. Last night we officially became a couple.

SAM

Officially?

MAX

We hooked up.

SAM

That doesn't mean anything.

MAX

It meant something to me.

Sam considers him.

SAM

I don't believe you. Just last week you told me the happy should be quarantined. I don't know you anymore.

MAX

Still down about Jen, huh?

SAM

We broke up for good last night.

He gets out of bed and starts dressing.

MAX

Oh, man, I'm sorry.

SAM

I thought I knew what I was doing. Ever since she became my girlfriend, I've felt more and more constricted. Like I was trapped under the weight of the label. "My girlfriend." "Her boyfriend."

MAX

You guys were together a long time.

SAM

Yeah, we were.

MAX

Have fun in Saturday lab.

SAM

Ah, eat shit and die.

86 INT. COMMON ROOM – HOURS LATER

86

Max is alone, playing "Goldeneye" with a dopey smile on his face. Charles comes in, rolls of blueprints under his arm.

CHARLES

What's this, "Goldeneye"?

Charles sits and they play against each other.

MAX

Yeah...

CHARLES

Have you been here all day?

MAX

Yeah, this game's so much fun.

CHARLES

Max, gotta tell you, you're really creeping me out.

Tommy comes out of his room, dressed in a shirt and tie.

MAX

Sam said the same thing. He's still depressed.

CHARLES

Still can't believe he broke up with Jen. I saw her yesterday and she looked sad.

[more]

CHARLES (cont'd)

I asked her how she was doing, and she said "Fine," and asked me why I was asking.

MAX

A non-denial denial. I invented that. She's learned from the best.

TOMMY

I saw her, too. She didn't seem upset to me.

Charles kills Max with a rocket launcher.

CHARLES

I was hanging with Sara. That girl pisses me off! She'll say the dumbest things, like, the Breeders are better than the Beatles.

MAX

Happiness is a warm gun.

CHARLES

I wouldn't go that far. She's just a daffy dame, that's all. Now, Stacy's foxy, but she's too serious.

MAX

What about Beth?

CHARLES

What about her?

Sam comes in, totally morose. Silently, he joins them in three-player mode, then quickly kills himself with a rocket launcher.

MAX

You just came from Jen's, huh?

SAM

Yeah, we just broke up for good.

CHARLES

Oh, man, I'm sorry. Was it you or her?

SAM

Me. Us. Both. It was just time, I guess.
(puts down the joystick)
I have to go, uh, mail a letter or something.

He puts on his coat and leaves. Charles, Tommy, and Max exchange looks. Max turns off the game.

MAX

Well, that took the wind out of my sails.

CHARLES

(noticing Tommy)

What's up with you? Got another date with Amanda?

TOMMY

It wasn't a date.

CHARLES

A no-show, huh?

TOMMY

Yeah, but it's okay. Today's her birthday, and she invited me out for dinner at a nice restaurant.

CHARLES

She invited all of us.

TOMMY

Oh? Well, that's cool, too.

MAX

It's barely lunch, why are you dressed up?

TOMMY

I don't want to wait til the last minute to pick out my clothes.

CHARLES

Are you really wearing that tie?

TOMMY

Damn, I knew this was the wrong one!

He runs into his room. Charles laughs at him.

MAX

I don't wanna go to a birthday party. I'm broke, and I wanna hang out with Julie.

CHARLES

So take her. And pray Sara's not there.

87 EXT. CAMPUS PARKING LOT — EVENING

87

Max and Julie walk through the snow together, toward a parking lot. She's taking deep drags off a cigarette.

JULIE

This has been some crazy week. I still have a six page paper due Monday.

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 a bad photocopy.

JULIE

Don't worry about it, I needed a break. Good to get out and enjoy the weather.

MAX

What are you, from Maine?

JULIE

No.

MAX

Phew, because I don't know if I'd be able to handle something like that. That's a hard thing to drop on a person.

JULIE

I'm from northern Vermont. Not too far from Canada.

MAX

Shit, I'm sorry.

JULIE

It sucked but I managed. Read a lot. Had a few close friends. That's all you need. It's quiet up there, dull but nice.

MAX

It sounds it.

They get to her car, and he surprises her by kissing her. She responds, after a hesitation.

88 INT. JULIE'S CAR — EVENING

88

Max sits tensely in the passenger seat.

MAX

Look out for that truck!

The truck's about two blocks away.

JULIE

Will you relax? I know how to drive.

MAX
Watch the driveway!

JULIE
(annoyed)
I've got it under control, Max!

MAX
Anyway, everyone's dying to meet you.

JULIE
Oh, yeah?

She drags on her cigarette.

MAX
This is going to be fun. All my friends,
meeting my girlfriend. It's going to be
great.

JULIE
Did you just call me your girlfriend?

MAX
Uh, yeah...

JULIE
(considers)
Ah well, I guess that's alright.
Boyfriend.

She looks at Max and smiles.

89 INT. PRETENTIOUS CAFE – EVENING

89

We PAN around a long table: Beth at one end, then Jen and Sam, Charles (looking annoyed) and Sara, Tommy at the other end, then Scott and Amanda, and two chairs. Everyone's talking and looking at menus.

Max and Julie enter. Max looks around, paranoid. He sees Donna the waitress glaring at him, and hurries after Julie, who is already at the table introducing herself.

AMANDA
Beth, I can't believe you're graduating
so early.

MAX
What, really?

BETH

Yeah. I've spent my life learning how to be a student, and at the end of the semester it will all be useless. Everybody already wants to know what I'm going to do, and I have no idea. I started making up stories to tell people. An aunt asked me if I'm excited about Chicago, and I couldn't remember if I'd said I was moving to the city or going to see the band.

CHARLES

Something similar once happened to me, except I didn't know Nashville Pussy was a band.

Tommy laughs and blows tea out his nose.

BETH

I can't believe I'm graduating. My whole life, I've known what was next. But when I graduate, the next step is... something?

JULIE

Something that pays the bills.

MAX

My grandfather once told me that if you love your job, you'll never work a day in your life. He's 98 years old, addicted to C-SPAN, and had to be removed from a supermarket recently for shouting about Republicans.

JULIE

Now I know where you get it from.

AMANDA

You should do whatever makes you happy.

TOMMY

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

Sam and Jen sit close together and are both subdued.

SAM

I can't believe I'm graduating next year. I already have a recurring nightmare about it.

JEN

You have plenty of time, dear.

She rubs his arm soothingly. Behind her back, Charles rolls his eyes and sticks his finger down his throat. Sara sees it.

SARA

Come on, Charles, show a little dignity.

He whirls on her.

CHARLES

Dignity? You've been following me around like a lost dog since break, and you're talking about dignity?! You're always in my way, I can't get away from you!

SARA

What are you talking about?!

CHARLES

If they're making me sick, that's my business! Leave me alone already!

SARA

Fine!

She storms out. The table is aghast. Julie averts her eyes politely. Beth pokes Max, urging him to do something.

JEN

We make you sick? Sam, say something to him!

SAM

Why should I? We've made him sick for years.

JEN

How dare you!

SAM

It's true!

Beth smacks Max's leg: *Do something!* He begs off.

JEN

You think everything's okay if it's true, but some things are true and not okay!

SAM

When are you going to realize I'm a different person and entitled to my opinion? It's my goddamn life!

Jen turns away, glaring. Max anxiously looks at Julie, who stares above her menu.

AMANDA

Please, guys, it's my birthday. We're here to celebrate.

SCOTT

(as "Cartman")

"Can't we all just get along?"

AMANDA

Goddamn it, Scott, I am so sick of you making fun of me! You are the meanest person I've ever met and I don't know why anybody even talks to you! You are such an asshole!

They lock gazes for a beat.

SCOTT

Sorry.

Sara comes back in and sits down, sullen. There is a long, uncomfortable silence.

A WAITER arrives.

WAITER

Are you ready to order?

JEN

No.

SAM

Yes.

Unsure, he turns to the next couple.

CHARLES

Yes.

SARA

No.

The waiter looks around, notices the tension.

WAITER

Why don't I come back?

He leaves. Awkward silence.

BETH

(clears throat)

Ah... So... Julie. I heard you switched majors.

JULIE

Yes, I'm Psych now. I didn't like Soc.

JEN

I'm a Soc. major.

JULIE
Oh sorry, I just meant, I needed something more, ya know, relevant.

SAM
Psych is relevant?

JULIE
(slightly defensive)
Well, look, I'm only in college for the degree. Most of the stuff they teach us is pointless anyway.

Julie looks at Max: *Say something.*

MAX
(feebly)
Heheh, I bet that's why they call it "academic."

JEN
College is a great opportunity. It's about more than getting a job.

JULIE
Yeah, it's about avoiding the real world for as long as possible.

CHARLES
I work in theater, so this is great training for me.

JULIE
You call theater the real world?

SARA
Hey!

Now Julie is hitting Max's leg: *Help me out here!* But Max is petrified, watching his worst nightmare unfold.

JEN
Some of us work really hard to get through school.

JULIE
Look, my parents worked their whole lives to give me the opportunity to be here. But the truth is, private schools like ours make money by showing students a good time for four years. It's bullshit.

AMANDA
You think social work is bullshit?

JULIE
That's not what I--

CHARLES
This "bullshit" is going to put me in
debt for the next forty years.

Julie punches Max in the thigh. He jumps, blinks.

JEN
Why don't you just drop out if
everything's such bullshit?

MAX
So what's everybody going to order then?

JULIE
God. What a bunch of spoiled, whiny
college brats.

Nobody has anything more to say. Everyone looks away. Max is
shell-shocked.

TOMMY
I'm gonna work for NASA!

90 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE MAX'S DORM - NIGHT

90

Julie's car pulls up. Her bumper sticker: "EAT ANIMALS, DON'T
'LOVE' THEM"

Max opens the door, gets halfway out, turns back.

MAX
Are you sure?

JULIE
No, it's okay. I just need a few hours to
work.

MAX
It'll be fun, just the two of us.

Julie lights a cigarette off her old one.

JULIE
Okay, see you later.

She peels out.

91 INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

91

Max straightens up. Scott comes out of his bedroom.

SCOTT

If she stands you up, are we still not allowed in here? It's my time to watch "South Park."

MAX

Why would she do that?

SCOTT

(shrugs)

It's already past eleven.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

MAX

See?

Max gets the door. Scott exits, disappointed. Julie enters, smoking.

JULIE

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

MAX

That's the worst excuse I ever heard. I mean it. So... you wanna hit the video store?

JULIE

No, you've got something here that I've been looking forward to all week.

She grabs *Annie Hall* from the shelf.

MAX

Ah, shit, no.

JULIE

You must face your fears. Relax, it's a very positive film. You just have to know how to look at it. It's really refreshingly positive.

DISSOLVE TO:

92 INT. COMMON ROOM — 98 MINUTES LATER

92

The closing credits are rolling. Max and Julie look somewhat disconcerted.

MAX

Boy, what an uplifting movie. Such a refreshingly positive message.

She doesn't respond.

MAX (cont'd)

Right?

JULIE

You know, I think I prefer *Manhattan*.

MAX

How can you say that? *Annie Hall* is so uplifting!

JULIE

It's just deeper, more sophisticated, I guess. Listen, thanks for dinner and the movie tonight, but I should get going.

MAX

But it's still early.

Julie goes to the door. Max follows. He tries to kiss her. She pulls back.

JULIE

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

MAX

Okay, how about right... now?

He tries to kiss her again. She ducks it, comes back into the room, sits down. Max stands, tense.

JULIE

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

MAX

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

JULIE

I don't think that this is a good time for us to jump, or leap, or whatever, you know, together. Into a relationship.

MAX

But, but... we just saw a movie about how relationships are worth it, no matter what happens.

JULIE

Did we?

MAX

Yeah, I guess we really did.

JULIE

Well, you're right, Max, and this relationship was worth it.

MAX

Was? Is. Wait... Oh, shit!

Max covers his face, breathes deep.

JULIE

Are you okay? Will you please calm down? I like you very much, but I told you, I just got out of a serious relationship, and it ended really badly. We saw each other almost every day at the beginning, but by the end of the semester, I hadn't seen him in a month. He stopped returning my calls and stuff, and I mean, he basically avoided me, then I heard he was seeing one of my friends.

MAX

But that was him, not me.

JULIE

It's nobody's fault, I know. I mean, I've been trying but it's hard. Relationships are very difficult to maintain. There are so few successful couples.

MAX

What's successful? Like, my parents have been married thirty years, but--

JULIE

My parents are divorced.

MAX

Okay, bad example. But why think ahead? We're here, now. Can't we just enjoy our time together?

JULIE

Max, I did, believe me.

MAX

What was all this, I mean, was any of it--

JULIE

I don't know what I was doing. I didn't think about where this might lead until it was too late.

MAX

But it might lead to... happiness.

Tommy walks in, half asleep, in his pajamas. He turns on the TV and sits down. Max stares at him. Tommy suddenly realizes he isn't alone.

TOMMY

Uh, re-run.

He turns it off and quickly exits. Max tries to pull himself together.

JULIE

Say something. Are you okay?

MAX

I knew that damn film was cursed! Why did I listen to Charles instead of *Annie*?

JULIE

Jesus, Max. It's not an anti-relationship movie.

MAX

What are you talking about? It's a fucking textbook.

She stands.

JULIE

You're not listening to me, Max. Just like you're not listening to *Annie*. No matter what you think right now, this was worth it. Because I got to meet you, and got to be close to you.

MAX

I know. I don't know. I mean... Good-bye.

Julie leaves. The VCR whirs to a stop and *Annie Hall* ejects. Max stares at it, upset and thoughtful.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: white on black: "SUNDAY"

93 INT. COMMON ROOM — LATE AFTERNOON

93

PAN left to right across people's chests: an X-Files shirt, a lounge shirt with a wide collar, a Stephen Hawking shirt, an Ani DiFranco shirt...

PULL BACK to reveal, l to r, Sam, Charles, Tommy and Amanda, sprawled on the couches, from Max's POV in the doorway.

They're drinking vodka out of coffee mugs. The TV is on but the sound is off. Everyone looks tired and sad.

Max sits. Sam thumbs a copy of Scientific American.

SAM

Why are humans smarter than chimps if we have 99% of the same genetic material?

MAX

Who says we're smarter?

SAM

Look who I'm asking. You think a red blood cell is a prison for a gang member.

MAX

Very funny, Mr. Wizard. If I learned anything useful in my classes, I'd be rubbing it in your face.

In Scott's usual spot is Amanda and Tommy.

TOMMY

So Amanda. Have a good weekend?

AMANDA

Yeah.

TOMMY

Mine was good too. Get any good birthday presents?

AMANDA

Yeah.

She gets up and leaves the room.

SAM

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

MAX

She just ended a long relationship and she doesn't want anything serious.

CHARLES

Can't you have something that's not so serious?

MAX

No, it's dead. And the thing I don't get is, it was all going so well. There was a moment when we kissed, when it was more than a kiss...

His openness is making the other guys uncomfortable.

MAX (cont'd)

It was like we broke through all our layers, you know, all the manners and defense mechanisms and daily crap, and I saw a flash of something, a glimmer of hope or happiness or whatever, something I inspired in her. But now it's over and I'll never see that part of her again.

CHARLES

I think you're upset about not seeing some other parts of her again.

The joke is half-hearted-- Max has made everyone reflective.

CHARLES (cont'd)

She's a girl, Max. They'll always be a mystery. You'll never know why they love you and you'll never know why they don't.

SAM

Relationships are incredibly complicated. Like polypeptide strings. There's an attraction at first, but if the bonds don't form right away, nothing can make the connection work.

MAX

There's a metaphor we can all relate to.

SAM

It was like with Jen and I. But I know it was for the best.

CHARLES

I finally dropped out of the play I was directing, just to get rid of Sara. God, my career is in shambles.

TOMMY

Tough week all around, huh? How about some video hockey?

Max gets up and puts on his coat.

MAX
I think I prefer Goldeneye.

He leaves. Sam sighs and picks up the remote.

SAM
Wanna watch Sports Center?

CHARLES
Nah. I think I'm gonna call Sara...

He gets up and leaves as Sam registers this news. He puts the remote down.

94 EXT. CAMPUS GREEN - DUSK

94

It is moist and foggy as Max trudges across the deserted campus.

BETH (O.S.)
Max!

Max stops in the middle of a path as Beth walks up.

BETH (cont'd)
Hi there. Happy Valentine's Day.

MAX
Oo, witty.

BETH
Yeah, I hate Valentine's Day, too. If you're in love, you're in love. And if you're not, who wants to think about it? I want to be in love so badly, don't you?

MAX
You know, there's this joke...

BETH
Ah, forget it, Max.

MAX
You know the joke?

BETH
Does a bear shit in the woods?

MAX
Yeah, that's the one.

BETH

You told it the night of our date. I hate that joke, Max. It's not a philosophy.

MAX

But I think I know what it means now.

BETH

Yeah, and it's dreary and depressing, right?

MAX

Not this time.

BETH

No?

MAX

(intimately)

Beth, I just want to say, before it's all over and I don't have the chance, that I'm sorry. For everything. Last semester and last year.

Beth is speechless; she never though she'd ever hear that.

MAX (CONT'D)

You mean the world to me, and I was an idiot to throw it away. You were right: if I can't be a friend to you, how could I be a boyfriend? I've done a lot of things wrong, and I've been confused as hell, but I think it's time for a change.

Beth looks him over, as if for the first time.

BETH

Really?

MAX

Really.

BETH

Then allow me to recommend a movie that you've never seen before. It's called *Annie Hall*.

MAX

I was going to see it tonight. Do you want to join me?

BETH

I would love to, but I think you need to do this alone.

MAX

No, you're right.

BETH

But I'll see you later?

MAX

Sure. After the movie, I'm doing my last radio show. It's going to be all requests. You should tune in.

BETH

The end of an era.

MAX

The start of a new one.

He smiles and walks away. The fog begins to obscure him.

Beth opens her backpack and removes a Walkman. She hits POWER and the LED changes from TAPE to RADIO.

MAX (V.O.) (cont'd)

And that's how I let go of her. Although, it's probably more honest to say that she let go of me. Julie, Beth, and Annie. Three women in my life and I was desperate for one.

REVERSE ANGLE. Beth stands alone, watching him go. She snaps the headphones over her ears.

MAX (V.O.) (cont'd)

Of course, I saw her again. It's a small campus. The last time was at a film festival. We're better friends now than ever, and there's always a chance we can have some kind of future together. So far, so good.

Finally, Beth turns and walks away.

CUT BACK TO: Max still walking, getting smaller and smaller. Soon all we see is fog.

MAX (V.O.) (cont'd)

She'll always mean a lot to me, and it's nice to run into her and reminisce about what we, ya know, went through. It was a weird period of my life. I mean, shit, I really got off track there, didn't I?

FADE TO BLACK