

"THE PARADOX OF MALE ETHICS"

Written By

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THE PARADOX OF MALE ETHICS

FADE IN:

MONTAGE

INT. OFFICE - DAY

NICK wears slacks, shirt, and a tie. We see him sitting at a desk in a cubicle as he sorts paperwork into small piles.

INT. METAL SHOP - DAY

DONNY wears jeans and boots and a work shirt with his name stitched above the pocket. We see him standing at a work table as he sorts large, oil-stained blueprints.

OFFICE

Nick is talking on the phone with the handset cradled on his shoulder, while typing on his computer.

METAL SHOP

Donny is yelling into a welder's ear with a shower of sparks behind him.

OFFICE

Nick feeds paper into a copier amid flashes of light.

METAL SHOP

Donny is grinding metal amid sparks and welding arc flashes.

END MONTAGE

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

We hear office background noises. Nick picks up his phone and dials.

SPLIT SCREEN

On the left side of the screen we see Nick's cubicle. On the right side of the screen we see the metal shop. Above the metal shop background noises we hear a phone RING and SHOP WORKER ADOLPHO picks up the phone.

SHOP WORKER ADOLPHO
Fabrication.

NICK
Is Donny there?

SHOP WORKER ADOLPHO
Hang on.

Adolpho holds the receiver at waist level and WHISTLES loudly and waves to someone off-screen. We see Nick wince at the noise. Moments later DONNY walks on-screen and takes the receiver.

DONNY
This's Donny.

NICK
Dude, what's goin' on?

DONNY
Just another Friday. How 'bout you?

NICK
I'm headin' out. You going to the Steer?

DONNY
Hell, yeah, 'less it burned down. You?

NICK
Just making a quick stop along the way, but Jeff and Rich oughta be there.

DONNY
You got it. Catch ya' later.

NICK
Later.

END SPLIT SCREEN

INT. METAL SHOP - DAY

Donny hangs up the phone, then glances around. He pulls a folded magazine page from his back pocket, unfolds it, and we SEE it's a full-page photo of a nearly-naked man. He glances around again, then steps over to a workstation and reaches for a sexy "tool girl" calendar. He flips forward to the next month and tapes the male model to that page, then drops the calendar and returns to grinding metal.

INT. COPY ROOM - DAY

Nick is at the copier. We SEE several flashes of light as copies are made. The copier stops and Nick picks up his original, and we SEE it's a photo of Big Brother from the movie 1984. He opens the copier, inserts his copies randomly into the paper supply, then closes the door and walks away.

EXT. AUTOMOBILE - DAY

Nick drives a small sedan along city streets. He is no longer wearing a tie.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Nick pulls into a gas station. He stops at one of the pumps, gets out, and opens the trunk. He removes a small gas can and begins filling it.

EXT. THE BUM STEER - DAY

A patched-up building with a big sign "THE BUM STEER". Nick pulls into the parking lot, which is filled with cars and trucks, and a line of motorcycles out front. Nick parks, takes off his tie, and walks into the bar via the back door.

INT. THE BUM STEER - DAY

Long wooden bar with stools, pool table, neon signs, jukebox, and TVs mounted high on the walls. It's crowded. Nick spots Donny standing at a table with JEFF and RICH and joins them.

JEFF

Nick, how ya' been?

NICK

A week of Mondays. What about you? Still chasing losers?

JEFF
More'n ever. Still workin' for
one.

Nick pours himself a glass of beer

NICK
(to Donny)
And you? How's the shop?

DONNY
OK for now -

Donny makes a throat-cutting gesture.

DONNY
(continuing)
- but it's just a matter of
time. You know screwed up it
is. Monkeys could do better.

NICK
Maybe it's time to get out.

DONNY
Maybe. I like makin' things. I
couldn't imagine sittin' in a
cubicle all day.

NICK
Beats dealing with dropouts
and smelling like cutting
fluid.

DONNY
It gets in your blood. I'd
miss it.

JEFF
I'd say get out before you're
missing fingers.

DONNY
The old timers say you can
still hold a beer with two and
a thumb.

RICH
And how many are they missin'?

WALT walks up to the table. He wears a shirt with a piece of
paper in the pocket. Donny and Nick exchange glances.

WALT
Hey guys. What's up?

DONNY
Not much, Walt. Just sayin' hi
to the weekend.

WALT
Me too, me too. Pretty crowded
tonight, eh?

NICK
Not bad. How's the new car?

WALT
Did I tell you about the
mileage? How good it was?

NICK
Somethin' like 25, 26, right?

WALT
It got better! Look at this...

Walt pulls the paper from his pocket. There are numbers
scrawled across it.

WALT
See, I been keeping track, you
know, how much gas, how many
miles, so I can see.

DONNY
You've got too much free time.

WALT
It's up to 31 a gallon. Can
you believe it!

NICK
You ought be pretty happy.

WALT
Oh, yeah!

JEFF
How'd you do it?

WALT
None of that fast stuff, you
know. I'm playin' it safe--

Walt flaps the paper triumphantly.

WALT (CONT'D)
--and numbers don't lie.

RICH
I don't have a clue what I'm
getting.

JEFF
Me, neither.

WALT
You have to know what a car
really costs. It's not just
filling the tank.

DONNY
An' with all the money you
saved, you're buyin' the next
pitcher, right?

WALT
Uh...

NICK
Hey, there's Billy.
(points across room)
You tell him the news?

WALT
Maybe I should. See you guys
later, right?

Walt rushes away with his paper. The remaining men burst
into laughter.

RICH
Only Walt could be that anal.

DONNY
If buyin' a new car means more
money for pitchers, I'll pick
one up tomorrow.

JEFF
(draining the pitcher)
Speakin' of pitchers, looks
like we need another.

NICK
I got this one.

Nick looks around and spots WAITRESS BONNIE and waggles the pitcher at her. She nods and waves.

DONNY
Hey. Check out the wolfie.

The men all look toward the front door.

FRONT DOOR

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #1 is standing there, looking around.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick places one closed fist above one open palm.

NICK
(to Donny)
Play for her?

DONNY
You're on.

Donny and Nick play a rapid round of paper-rock-scissors. Donny displays "rock" while Nick shows "scissors".

NICK
She's yours.

Donny grins and takes his glass of beer with him as he walks over to Attractive Woman #1.

RICH
(to Jeff)
Side bet a buck he gets shot down.

JEFF
You're on.

In the background Donny talks with the Attractive Woman #1.

Waitress Bonnie brings a pitcher of beer. Nick pulls out his wallet and hands money to her. She starts to make change but Nick waves her off.

NICK
Keep it. Thanks.

WAITRESS BONNIE

Thanks.

(to the other men)

Anybody wanna do a shot?

The men shake their heads. Waitress Bonnie smiles and walks back to the bar. Rich picks up the pitcher and fills the glasses.

FRONT DOOR

Donny is still talking with Attractive Woman #1, then she shakes her head. Donny shrugs and walks back to the table.

BACK TO SCENE

RICH

(to Jeff)

We have a pilot down.

NICK

(to Donny)

No luck?

DONNY

Naw. She's lookin' for friends
an' somethin' about skatin'.

Jeff hands a dollar to Rich.

JEFF

(to Donny)

You still did better than me.

RICH

Which was zip.

DONNY

(to Jeff)

You'll never learn if you
don't try.

JEFF

Just as well. My married
friends seem to fight a lot.

DONNY

Who said anythin' about
married? I'm just lookin' for
a little snuggle.

NICK

Like that snuggle who clawed
the hell out of your back?

DONNY

Susie was a scratcher, all
right, but everythin' healed
up just fine.

Nick stands up and walks toward a hallway with a sign
reading EXIT and a smaller sign beneath reading BATHROOMS.
Jeff gets up a few steps behind. Nick walks out the bar's
back door and Jeff follows.

EXT. THE BUM STEER PARKING LOT - EVENING

JEFF

You leavin'?

NICK

Just playing a little joke.

JEFF

What're you doin' to Donny?

NICK

Not Donny. Come on.

Nick walks to his car, opens the trunk, pulls out gas can.

NICK

You see Walt's crackerbox?

JEFF

(looking around)
Something that small gets lost
easy.

NICK

There it is, next to Donny's.

Jeff eyes Walt's car with a frown.

JEFF

White. Figures.

They walk toward Walt's car. Donny's truck is distinctive,
with primer spots, an NRA sticker, and another sticker
featuring a checkered flag and the words "You Failed To
Qualify". Nick opens Walt's car's gas cap and unscrews the
gas can's spout.

NICK
Remember how excited he was
about the mileage?

JEFF
Who could forget such a
breath-takin' story?

Nick pours gas into Walt's car.

NICK
I've been adding a gallon
every Friday for the last
three weeks--

JEFF
--So it's not gettin' better
mileage, just more gas.

NICK
The more I add, the more
giggly he gets.

JEFF
What about when you stop?
What's he gonna do then?

Nick empties the can and sets it down, then screws the gas
cap back onto Walt's car.

NICK
Stop? Next week I start
siphoning it back!

Both men laugh as Nick puts the gas can back into his car's
trunk, then they walk back to the bar.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

Nick, Jeff, Donny, and Rich are sitting at their table when
CHET walks in. He waves to several people as he heads for
the table with Nick.

CHET
Hey girls, what's goin' on?

NICK
League night at the Steer. How
'bout you?

CHET
Looking for some barley pop
and a little action.

JEFF
You're not cute enough for me.

CHET
That's not what you said last
week, pretty boy.

The men all laugh. Chet waves at Waitress Bonnie, who approaches the table.

CHET
I need a glass.

WAITRESS BONNIE
Sure. You guys need another
pitcher?

NICK
If we don't look thirsty, you
need new glasses.

Waitress Bonnie nods and walks away.

CHET
Not bad. You hangin' out at
truck stops lookin' for jokes?

NICK
Nah. Read it in Dear Abby.

DONNY
Sounded more like Martha
Stewart.

Waitress Bonnie returns with another pitcher and a glass.

WAITRESS BONNIE
You guys wanna start a tab?

Donny starts to answer but Chet cuts him off as he grabs the pitcher and fills his glass.

CHET
Sure. We'll be here a while.

DONNY
Let's take care of it now.

CHET
Come on. We can split it
later.

NICK
I'll get this one and you get
the next.

Nick hands money to Waitress Bonnie, who walks away.

RICH
What's new with this century's
Picasso?

CHET
(drinks)
It's all about texture this
season. Remember you heard it
here first.

JEFF
What kinda texture you get
with finger paints?

CHET
Hopefully the kind that pays
the rent, and soon.

NICK
Nothing sold yet?

CHET
(drinks)
It's tough without a gallery
pimping your work and flea
markets don't give legitimacy
to a thousand-dollar canvas.

RICH
A thousand dollars! You really
think people'll pay that much?

CHET
Once I can get enough of those
nodding-heads to agree I'm
flavor of the month, what
passes for art collectors
start fighting each other to
buy my art.

DONNY

Art? Is that what they're
callin' it these days?

Chet ignores Donny and keeps talking.

CHET

(drinks)

Gallery sales are rigged.
Until a gallery gives you
their blessing, you're nobody,
but once you get the nod, they
take half the sale!

JEFF

Open your own gallery. You say
who's hot.

DONNY

And you take half the dough.

CHET

(to Jeff)

If I had the money for my own
gallery, I wouldn't need to
paint, but right now art isn't
number one.

DONNY

New episodes of Love Boat?

Chet glares at Donny for a second.

CHET

It looks like me and Sandra
are splittin' up.

JEFF

No way! You guys seemed good
together.

CHET

(drains glass)

Yeah, that's what I thought
but it's not gonna work.

DONNY

She decided she likes women
better?

CHET

I wish it was that easy. She's angry all the time. I can't do shit without her gettin' all pissy or weepy. It's the Oprah Syndrome.

NICK

You're blamin' Oprah?

Chet fills his glass, sets the pitcher down.

CHET

She tells women they need this an' that, or find someone to liberate their new inner self.

RICH

That's what Sandra wants? Something new inside?

CHET

She says I'm not satisfying her emotional needs. I'm too cold. I'm distant. I don't do enough around the house

DONNY

Not enough? I'm surprised you did any.

Nick tops off everyone's glass, which empties the pitcher.

CHET

(drinks)

Paintin' all week and workin' UPS nights doesn't leave time for much else.

RICH

Like her emotional needs.

CHET

What about my needs? Oprah doesn't say shit about that.

JEFF

What about counseling'?

CHET

Sure. Pay a hundred bucks an hour so another woman takes pot-shots at me? Fuck that.

NICK

There's men counselors, too.

CHET

Nope, it's toast.
(pauses, squares shoulders)
I'll do better on my own.

Chet finishes his second glass of beer and reaches for the pitcher, but it's empty. He looks across the room.

CHET

While we're waitin' for the next I gotta go talk to Bobby.

Chet gets up, taking his glass with him. He approaches Bobby's table, sits down, and fills his glass from Bobby's pitcher of beer.

DONNY

Wasn't that convenient?

JEFF

Gettin' rid of Chet?

DONNY

The way he ran off when it's his turn to buy.

Waitress Bonnie arrives with another pitcher of beer. Jeff quickly reaches for his wallet

JEFF

I'll get this one.

RICH

(indicating pitcher)
Let's see if Chet notices.

DONNY

A buck says he don't budge 'til Bobby's runs dry.

RICH

You're on.

NICK

Hey, the guy's going through a train wreck. We oughta give him some slack.

DONNY

You think so? I already knew about it and I think Sandra's gettin' the rotten deal.

JEFF

Yeah? Like how?

DONNY

He's been doin' enough slackin' already an' that's why they're splittin'

RICH

So the guy don't help much around the house. I don't see Home & Garden takin' pics of your place.

DONNY

She's workin' a full time job, payin' rent an' buyin' groceries, while he's doin' his goofy art.

RICH

If he sells just one he's gonna have some major bank.

DONNY

Maybe. You seen any of 'em?

NICK

Some are kinda cool, some suck. Guess it depends on what you like and--

JEFF

Check the babes comin' in.

All four men look toward the front door.

FRONT DOOR

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2 enters, followed by ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3. They pause and look around, talking.

BACK TO SCENE

Donny turns to Nick and puts a fist in a palm. Nick puts down his beer and does the same. They play rapidly. Nick wins and stands up.

NICK
Wish me luck, boys.

Nick gets up and approaches the women confidently.

RICH
Side bet, anyone?

JEFF
I'll take Nick.

RICH
You're on. Two's tough.

JEFF
Nick's a pro.

DONNY
And already in trouble.

FRONT DOOR

The women are smiling but shake their heads. Nick motions to his buddies and the women look over and shake their heads again. Nick shrugs and heads back to the table.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeff pulls a buck out of his pocket and slides it over to Rich. Nick rejoins them.

RICH
(to Nick)
Lesbians?

NICK
They're looking for suits, not jeans.

JEFF
They're at the wrong place for suits.

NICK
That's what I said. See, they're already leaving.

In the background, the women exit.

DONNY
Check out Bobby's table.

JEFF
Pitcher's empty.

RICH
And Chet's coming back.

DONNY
Yep.
(to Rich)
Pay up.

Rich hands over the dollar he won earlier from Jeff. Chet walks up and promptly reaches for the pitcher.

DONNY
All that talkin' must be
thirsty work.

Chet picks up the pitcher and fills his glass.

CHET
Yeah, but I gotta leave after
this.

RICH
So soon?

CHET
(drinks)
I gotta meet this guy who says
he can get me in a downtown
show.

RICH
Serious? You think you'll get
it?

CHET
I hope so. It's the only way
I'm gonna get anything sold.

DONNY
So you're gonna drink and run?

Chet nods while drinking. Rich looks at his watch and yawns.

RICH
I better go, too. Big day
tomorrow.

DONNY
(to Nick)
What about you?

NICK
I still have beer on the
agenda.

DONNY
Same here.

Chet empties his glass and slowly sets it down.

CHET
I'm outta here. See you Girl
Scouts later.

Nick, Rich, and Jeff all say goodbye to Chet but Donny says nothing. Chet exits. Rich and Jeff stand up.

JEFF
We OK on the tab?

NICK
You're cool.

RICH
See ya' later.

Jeff and Rich walk out of the bar.

NICK
Well, that was pretty
unexpected.

DONNY
Chet leavin' without payin'?

NICK
No, them getting divorced.

DONNY
Neither one seems too upset.

NICK
Why were you talking to
Sandra?

DONNY

I called lookin' for Chet and she answered the phone.

NICK

And she says "Hi Donny, howya doin', I'm gettin' divorced"?

DONNY

Pretty much. I think she's more relieved than anythin' else.

NICK

I thought they had things worked out.

Both men watch another man and his sexy girlfriend walk past their table.

DONNY

He treats her like an idiot. You know how he mocks people.

NICK

I thought it was just a game.

DONNY

What's she supposed to do? Make a scene?

NICK

What'd you do about it?

DONNY

Right now, I'm more concerned with his moochin' beers off us.

NICK

A couple beers won't break us.

DONNY

It adds up. He got three here an' two from Bobby. That's more'n a pitcher right there.

NICK

You're gettin' harsh on a guy going thru some tough times.

Several loud motorcycles start up outside, then roar off noisily. Donny rolls his eyes and waits for quiet.

DONNY

All I'm sayin' is no more social welfare for someone too lazy to earn his own beer.

NICK

He's pretty busy with his art.

DONNY

He knows every daytime talk show an' he's got enough time to call an' bullshit for an hour.

NICK

I don't want a full-time job and neither do you.

DONNY

But he wants beers and good times without havin' to work for it. That's not fair to you or me or Sandra.

NICK

You seem pretty concerned for Sandra.

DONNY

She's a winner. She deserves better.

NICK

Someone like you?

Waitress Bonnie walks up, lifts the mostly-empty pitcher.

WAITRESS BONNIE

You ready for another?

NICK

Not quite.

She tops off the glasses, takes the empty pitcher with her.

NICK

You gonna take her out?

DONNY
I've been thinkin' about it.

NICK
Don't even try.

DONNY
I'd treat her right.

NICK
That's not the point.

DONNY
Which is?

NICK
Chet's a friend and you don't
date a friend's ex-wife.

DONNY
Says who?

NICK
You're breaking the Code.

DONNY
What Code?

NICK
Come on. We've had this
conversation a bunch of times.

SERIES OF SCENES:

Nick and Donny sitting on lawn chairs in a back yard.

NICK
Don't ever drink your buddy's
last beer.

Nick and Donny walking thru a city park.

NICK
Trashing a pal just to win a
woman sucks.

Nick and Donny riding inside a car.

NICK
Dating a co-worker is like
eating a stick of dynamite.

Nick and Donny sitting on a downtown bench.

NICK
Only losers date a friend's
ex-girlfriend.

Nick and Donny riding on a rollercoaster.

NICK
Friend's ex-wives are totally,
totally off-limits. Forever.

END SERIES OF SCENES

BACK TO SCENE

DONNY
If you wanna limit yourself,
go ahead, but don't expect me
to sign some Boy Scout pledge.

NICK
But you don't go after a
friend's woman!

DONNY
What if the guy treats his
woman like crap?

NICK
Chet's not your friend
anymore?

Donny shakes his head emphatically.

DONNY
Not the way he's been actin'.
Look at tonight. That's a
friend?

NICK
I said I'd cover the beers.

DONNY
Who covers it next time? Not
me. Not for a moocher.

NICK
Whatever's Chet's been doing,
don't call Sandra, all right?

DONNY
(shaking head)
Can't promise that.

NICK
There's no reason to rush.
They're not even--

DONNY
-- Hey. Check out the doll.

FRONT DOOR

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #4 is paused, putting her cellphone into her purse.

BACK TO SCENE

Donny raises his closed fist for paper-rock-scissors.

NICK
No, go ahead. I oughta get going.

DONNY
This early?

NICK
There's stuff I gotta do.

DONNY
You're not leavin' 'cause you're mad, are you?

NICK
I'm disappointed, but it's shit from work.

Both men stand up. Nick tosses some money onto the table.

NICK
That should take care of the tab. See you 'round.

Donny looks again at Attractive Woman #4.

DONNY
Have fun.

Donny walks toward Attractive Woman #4 while Nick exits.

INT. OFFICE LUNCHROOM - DAY

(MONDAY)

Nick sits at a table with his co-worker STU, a middle-aged man eating a homemade sandwich. Other office-type people sit around them, also eating lunch.

NICK

You ever date a woman before she got divorced?

STU

That'd be my second wife.

NICK

And you knew her ex?

STU

Not 'til later.

NICK

Would you do it if he'd been a friend?

STU

Probably not, but I've been divorced twice so maybe I'm not making good choices.

NICK

Who wanted to split? You or them?

STU

Them. Both times. My best just wasn't good enough.

INT. METAL SHOP LUNCHROOM - DAY

The lunchroom has a sink, a microwave oven, and several tables. Donny is sitting with PECK, an old, balding man who is missing a couple of fingers. Both men eat cheap sandwiches from a catering truck. Other shop-type people sit around them, also eating lunch. In the background TIM puts something into the microwave, starts it, then walks out.

PECK

A married one? Hell, no. Had enough grief with my own.

DONNY

What if she's hot and gettin' divorced?

PECK

There nothin' more unstable
than a off-kilter woman an'
nothin's more dangerous than
her pissed-off ex.

DONNY

He's dumpin' her.

PECK

He says now. Wait 'til he sees
you together.

ANITA enters, carrying a plastic container. She sees the
microwave is being used and stops.

DONNY

He's not gonna hear about it.

PECK

Hah! They gonna fight an' she
gonna get mad an' next thing
you know she usin' you like a
club. Whack!

DONNY

(to Peck)

Hold on a sec.

(to Anita)

Anita, go ahead and take that
out.

ANITA

What?

Donny points at the microwave.

DONNY

It's mine in there but I'm not
in a hurry. Go ahead and do
yours first.

ANITA

Thanks, Donny.

PECK

(to Donny)

Now just what--

DONNY

(to Peck)

--Don't you worry, I'll still
get to eat, but you were
sayin' about Sandra--

In the background, Anita takes Tim's container out of the microwave and puts hers in, then starts it.

Donny (cont.)

--She's not like that. She's a
real sweetheart.

Peck stares accusingly at Donny before replying.

PECK

Why's he throwin' her out?
That's what you oughta be
askin'. There's always two
sides.

DONNY

And I like hers better.

PECK

Pick careful. You can't change
back easy, you know.

DONNY

If I gotta chose, it's gonna
be her, but Nick's bein' a
baby about it.

PECK

He wants her, too?

DONNY

He won't touch her and doesn't
want me to, either.

PECK

He'll get over it.

Tim returns to the lunchroom and stops at the sight of his container sitting on the counter, then looks at Anita's happy smile and his expression sags.

PECK

(to Donny)

Bet a buck you screw up an'
piss off everybody.

INT. NICK'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(WEDNESDAY)

Nick hosts a card game with Donny, Rich, and Jeff. They sit around a table strewn with cards, coins, and beers. Cigar smoke floats overhead.

JEFF

Bad news, guys. I can't make cards the next few weeks.

DONNY

Those AA meetings can really be a bitch.

RICH

Some kind of quilting thing with gray-haired grannies.

NICK

Ceramics 101, exploring the possibilities of clay?

JEFF

Three strikes and you're all out. I'm takin' a Tai Chi class.

RICH

Tai what?

JEFF

Tai Chi. It's kind-of an exercise class with some Eastern philosophy. It's cool.

Donny gestures around the messy room.

DONNY

Can't you do it another night? Cards is kinda sacred.

JEFF

It's the only night it's offered.

NICK

We'll need a replacement.

RICH

How do you find a heavy-drinking, easily-bluffed spendthrift on short notice?

JEFF

What about Fidel Castro? He's got time on his hands.

DONNY

We can do better.

NICK

Than Fidel? We've got a week to think about it.

(pause)

Who's deal is it?

JEFF

Mine. Quarter ante.

Donny stands up, holding an empty bottle.

DONNY

I'm in, but I need a beer.

NICK

Grab one for me.

Donny walks away from the table.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Donny enters the kitchen, opens a cupboard, places his empty beer bottle on a shelf next to dinner plates, then closes the door. He pulls several more empty bottles out of the trash and places one in the oven, another in the microwave, another in the dishwasher, then takes two full beers from the fridge and exits.

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

Nick is sitting at his desk, sorting papers. Two co-workers, SAM and TOM, stop to chat.

SAM

We're goin' to lunch. Wanna join us?

NICK

Can't today. Sorry.

TOM

No rest for the wicked, huh?

NICK

Not today, at least. If I don't get this done now, I'll be doing it at the bar tonight.

SAM

Out drinkin' on a weeknight?

NICK

It's that, or stay home watching Wheel of Fortune.

TOM

I heard you go to that biker bar.

NICK

Which one?

Tom looks sideways at Sam

SAM

The Bum Steer. Didn't you say you hang out there?

NICK

Yeah, but I never thought of it as a biker place.

TOM

What about that guy got killed there last year?

NICK

You mean the asshole who knocked down a row of bikes on purpose?

TOM

You're OK with a guy getting killed over that?

Nick rolls his chair back and faces Tom directly.

NICK

What would you do if somebody deliberately wrecked your Lexus? Shake a finger at them? Write a letter to the paper?

TOM

That ain't the same. We're talkin' motorcycles, an' just some dents 'n' scratches.

SAM

Just a bunch of old Harleys, right?

NICK

Some of those old Harleys cost more than your Lexus.

TOM

Bullshit.

NICK

Six custom bikes, two appraised over forty grand each, got trashed. Tanks dented, painted scratched, chrome gouged.

SAM

So? They can fix it.

NICK

We're talking custom here. You have to strip 'em down and start from scratch.

Sam waves his arms like a referee saying "no goal."

SAM

Come on. People make mistakes. You don't kill somebody 'cause he made a mistake.

NICK

The security cameras caught that dumb fuck deliberately knocking the bikes over, then he screamed like a girl when they chased him.

TOM

And killed him, right?

NICK

That's what the papers said. I wasn't there.

Tom shakes his head in dismay.

TOM
Killed him over dented bikes.

NICK
The papers also said the
asshole pulled a knife--

SAM
--Protectin' himself--

NICK
--But the official cause of
death was...?

SAM
Shot!

TOM
Beat to death.

NICK
(shaking his head)
Skull fracture after getting
punched and falling over
backwards.

TOM
Bullshit. They beat the crap
out of him.

NICK
Look it up. The coroner said
the fall's what killed him. By
the time he got stomped, he
was already dead.

SAM
And you feel safe goin' there?

Nick rolls back to his desk, resumes shuffling papers.

NICK
I never touch anybody's bike,
wife, or girlfriend.

TOM
Like I said, it's a biker bar.

NICK

Think about the bikes. Forty grand apiece. How do your "scumbag bikers" afford bikes like that?

TOM

Everyone knows they run drugs.

Sam leans forward as if revealing a secret.

SAM

And I heard about stolen cars and chop shops.

NICK

Most of the guys at the 'Steer are salesmen, plumbers, contractors, shit like that. They buy a fancy toy and dress like Brando and get to feel badass for a day.

SAM

I dunno. Some of 'em look pretty scruffy for salesmen.

NICK

Machinists can look pretty scruffy, too, but they make good money and a chopper's their mark of success.

TOM

So you're slumming with shop guys at a bar with biker gangs killing people. What's next? Shootin' up heroin?

NICK

You wouldn't go there?

TOM

No fucking way.

SAM

Me neither.

NICK

Keep thinking that way. Tell your neighbors and friends, too.

TOM
 (to Sam)
 I'm getting hungry. Let's go.

Tom walks away.

SAM
 (to Nick)
 Don't forget that 2:00
 conference

Sam walks away.

NICK
 (to himself)
 How could I forget something
 so exciting?
 (pause)
 Heroin. What a dip.

INT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT (FRIDAY)

Nick is driving and pulls into the Bum Steer's parking lot. We see Donny's distinctive truck from Nick's POV. Nick pauses for a moment, then backs out and drives away.

INT. FERN BAR - NIGHT

The bar is a clean, well-lighted place decorated with travel posters. Nick sits, talking with JENNY, the bartender.

JENNY
 How come I only see you with
 guys and never women? You're
 not gay, are ya?

NICK
 Most of the time it's guys
 asking me that.

JENNY
 I didn't mean nothing, I just
 never thought of you gay.

NICK
 Don't start now. I'm just not
 seeing anyone.

JENNY
 I got lots of fun friends. I
 can fix you up if you want.

Nick points to a large-breasted, overly made-up woman at the other end of the bar.

NICK
How about her?

JENNY
That tramp? She's slept with half the men here.

NICK
Is there a waiting list?

JENNY
I got way better friends than her.

NICK
Pick one and tell me what does she does for a living.

JENNY
Well, Julie's a grocery checker, so if you're looking for rich she ain't the one.

NICK
I don't care what she's paid, it's how she makes it. I'm just trying to screen out the bimbos.

JENNY
Hmmm. Julie's fun but she ain't the brightest.
(pause)
Karen works in an office. How 'bout that?

NICK
Sounds good. What about kids?

JENNY
She's got a son from her first marriage and he...

Nick's expression turns flat.

JENNY
Lemme guess, you don't kids, right?

NICK
I'm not the daddy type. You
want me being honest, right?

JENNY
You're makin' it tough, but
Wendy doesn't have kids, never
married, and travels all over.

NICK
(interested)
Yeah?

JENNY
Wendy's fun. She even lived in
Spain for a couple years.

NICK
Spain? How'd she manage that?

JENNY
She was there and met some guy
who gave her a job.

NICK
And she moved that easy?

JENNY
Well, she was kinda already
moved. Sometimes she gets fed
up, you know, quits her job
and takes off for a while.

NICK
Sounds kinda flighty.

JENNY
She gets into bad situations
and just wants out, but she's
really fun.

NICK
I guess you can cross her off.

Jenny leans back, rolls her eyes, and makes a face.

JENNY
Now I see why you're single.

NICK

All I want is some
personality, a little
stability, and no baggage.

JENNY

That's never gonna happen and
you know it. Every guy thinks
he's gonna find the virgin
princess but it ain't gonna
happen.

NICK

Don't women want a prince?

JENNY

Yeah, but most of 'em end up
with a frog an' a couple kids.
Get someone with kids who
don't need a sitter, 'cause
that's the best you're gonna
find.

NICK

I never asked what your
friends look like or how much
they weigh, but there's some
things I won't compromise on.

JENNY

Alright, I guess you're not an
asshole. Lemme think awhile,
maybe somethin'll click, but
right now I gotta go thump
some drunks.

Jenny moves down the bar, leaving Nick to drink alone.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

(TUESDAY)

Donny walks thru the front door and we follow him as he
walks past the HOSTESS and into the seating area. EVA and
DAVE wave as Donny walks toward them.

DONNY

Hi. Sorry I'm late.

Donny sits down at the table

EVA

Don't be silly. We just sat
down a few minutes ago.

DAVE

(shakes hands with Donny)
Good to see you. How've you
been?

DONNY

Busy, I guess. Workin' a lot
of overtime.

DAVE

Better busy than bored, eh?

DONNY

Yeah, but it gets old after a
while.

EVA

I'll bet your girlfriend hates
it, too.

DONNY

Wish I had one, but nothin's
worked out.

DAVE

You, of all people, without a
lady?

Donny shrugs, lifts hands as if to convey "oh well."

DONNY

Sad, but true.

EVA

You should've said something
sooner. I've got lots of
single friends who'd love a
man like you. Let's see...
maybe my friend Shauna from
accounting. She's got such
pretty eyes.

DAVE

And a couple of kids, right?
That's not gonna work.

DONNY

Instant family? She'd have to
have damn pretty eyes.

Eva doesn't respond to either man.

EVA

There's Fran, from bowling.
She doesn't have any children
and I know she's available.

DAVE

Isn't she the one joined that
weird cult last year?

EVA

It wasn't a cult, it was--

DAVE

--A cult. Try again.

EVA

Angela, my book club friend.
She's sweet and so pretty.

DAVE

Can't argue with that.
(to Donny)
And no kids or cults.

DONNY

Tell me more.

DAVE

Wait a sec. . . Aren't you
allergic to cats?

DONNY

Sneeze my ass off.

EVA

OK, maybe you might like
Kimmy. She loves to dance,
sees the coolest bands--

DAVE

--And loves tattoos.

Donny slowly shakes his head "no".

DONNY

That's a bad sign.

EVA

Oh, you're just being mean.
You have to let me help.

DONNY

You can help right now by
flaggin' down a waiter.

DAVE

That's the Donny I know. Got
has priorities straight.

EVA

(to Dave)

Stop encouraging him.

(to Donny)

Don't you want a girlfriend?

DONNY

You bet. There's one woman I'm
thinkin' about but some of my
friends don't like it.

DAVE

Why? What's wrong with her?

DONNY

Well... she's kinda married.

Eva looks genuinely horrified.

EVA

Donny! Don't you dare!

DONNY

Hey, she's separated an' got
her own place. It's not like
we're havin' some affair.

EVA

Can't you wait 'til things
calm down?

DONNY

We're just goin' out for
dinner.

EVA

Don't. Let me find you someone
nice instead.

DONNY

Sandra's nice. She's really
nice.

Eva reaches over and pats Donny's arm.

EVA
Put that woman out of your
mind and leave things to me.

DAVE
(to Donny)
Stop fighting. There's nothing
you can do about it.

DONNY
Maybe if we get some food
she'll stop playin' matchmaker
long enough to eat.

EVA
Some things are more important
than dinner.

DAVE
Like interfering?

Eva opens a menu and holds it up to cover her face.

EXT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT (FRIDAY)

Nick pulls into the parking lot and parks next to Walt's
little sedan. He gets out, looks around, then opens his
trunk and pulls out a gas can and a rubber hose. He opens
the gas cap on Walt's car and starts siphoning.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

Donny, Jeff, Rich, and Chet are sitting around a table,
drinking and watching TV. Nick enters and joins them.

RICH
We wondered if you were gonna
make it.

NICK
When have I missed a Friday?

CHET
The time you got scared by
thunder and hid under your bed
like a puppy.

NICK
I think that's one of your
six-years-of-high-school
flashbacks.

Nick fills a glass from the pitcher (which drains it), then leans back and drinks with a satisfied expression.

DONNY
 (to Chet)
 Your turn to buy, sailor.

CHET
 I think you oughta.

DONNY
 Maybe you need to stand at an offramp with a cardboard sign saying "Won't work, need alcohol, God bless".

CHET
 Maybe you need to grow some balls like the rest of us.

DONNY
 (pause)
 That's the best you can do?

NICK
 Let's not have any all-star wrestling, OK? I'll get it.

Nick waves for another pitcher. Donny gets up and heads to the bathrooms.

HALLWAY

Donny stops at a payphone. On the wall around the phone are names and numbers scrawled over the years, along with a ink recreation the POE-OPE "peace on Earth, purity of essence" crossword from the movie Doctor Strangelove. Donny pulls a scrap of paper from his pocket, feeds coins, and dials.

DONNY
 Hey, Sandra.
 (pause)
 Gettin' everythin' unpacked?
 (pause)
 Yeah, it's always tough gettin' settled in.
 (pause)
 The Bum Steer, same as always.

He takes a quick look around, leans closer to the phone.

DONNY

Listen, how'd you like to get
together, maybe get some
dinner, have some laughs?

(pause)

Yeah. Yeah.

(pause)

Sure, Wednesday works.

(pause)

Sounds great. See ya.

Donny hangs up with a smile

BACK TO SCENE

Donny returns and Chet waves the empty pitcher at him.

CHET

Bring us another, will ya
honey?

DONNY

The rules are clearly posted:
You drain it, you buy it.

CHET

You buy this one and I'll buy
the next.

DONNY

(shakes head)

Nick bought that one and I
bought the one before. It's
your turn.

RICH

I haven't bought one. I can
get the next.

CHET

Crisis averted. Rich gets this
one and I'll get the next.

DONNY

(mock dramatic style)

Stop the presses! New
headline! Chet buys rounds,
city reels in shock!

Chet gets up, beer in hand.

CHET

Think I'll go sit and chat
with Jimbo and Slick while you
learn how to relax.

JIMBO'S TABLE

Chet approaches, glass in hand. The bar's music drowns out their conversation as Chet sits and joins them.

BACK TO SCENE

JEFF

Great work, Donny. Now he's
never gonna buy a round.

DONNY

At least he's moochin' off
someone else.

NICK

Why'd you have to be such an
asshole about it? He said he'd
buy the next one.

DONNY

You believed him?

RICH

(maudlin voice)
We'll never know for sure.

DONNY

I do. Take a look.

JIMBO'S TABLE

Chet pours beer into his glass from Jimbo's pitcher.

BACK TO SCENE

NICK

He'll be back. He'll buy one.

DONNY

Side bet, anyone?

Jeff and Rich both shake their heads "no".

DONNY

I'll give odds.

JEFF
 No vende. It's a school night
 and I need to get home.

DONNY
 (to Nick)
 Let's head to your place and
 see what's on Sports Center.

Nick and Donny drain their glasses, then pull out money and
 leave it on the table.

DONNY
 I gotta hit the john first.

NICK
 See you at my place.

HALLWAY

Donny turns and enters the bathroom and Nick exits via the
 back door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Nick unlocks his car, opens door, pulls out something small.

CLOSE-UP ON HAND

He is holding a bumper sticker: Nuke Greenpeace!

BACK TO SCENE

Nick is walking toward Donny's truck. He peels the backing
 off the sticker, kneels at the back of Donny's truck, and
 carefully affixes it to the bumper. He stands and walks back
 to his own car and gets in. As he backs up, WE see a
 slightly crooked sticker on his car: I (heart) Teletubbies!

INT. NICK'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nick opens two beers and hands one to Donny.

NICK
 You still got the hots for
 Sandra?

DONNY
 Yep.

NICK
 Goin' out with her?

DONNY

Not yet. I called her from the
Bum Steer an' we're gettin'
together next week.

NICK

You can't do that!

DONNY

Whattaya mean, can't? We're
already on.

NICK

How many times do I--

DONNY

Don't start. Not again. I
don't care what Chet thinks.

NICK

I can't believe you're doing
this. What about the Code?

DONNY

I just got guidelines an' they
work fine for me.

Nick shakes his head, sits down, and stares at Donny.

DONNY

Your code don't cover all the
bases. What if two guys are
goin' for the same woman? Who
backs off first?

NICK

I guess it depends on who she
wants, but--

DONNY

--What if she's encouragin'
both? Is it OK to lie to make
the other guy back off?

NICK

Never lie to a buddy. You know
I wouldn't I matter--

DONNY

--What if you an' me were goin' for the same girl an' I backed off but you couldn't clinch the deal. Is she always gonna be off limits or can I try again?

NICK

Jeez, I don't know. I can't imagine us trying for the same kind of woman, so does it really matter?

DONNY

We do it all the time--

Donny goes thru the paper-rock-scissors motions.

DONNY (CONT)

--An' that's what I'm gettin' at. Sandra ain't your type, so it's easy to say don't do it.

NICK

You know I wouldn't do that.

DONNY

But that's where it starts. Lots of guys don't follow your code and do OK.

NICK

I'm not going to live some soap opera story where everyone sleeps with each other and Linda Evans throws a drink in my face. What if I'd gone out with that dancer you dated last year?

Donny smiles as if remembering something naughty.

DONNY

You should've. She was hot.

NICK

We both know it would've pissed you off.

DONNY

Maybe when we were still datin', but she dumped me. After that you just woulda been one more sinkin' the pink.

NICK

There's no way I'd date a woman you dated.

DONNY

Sorry I ruin 'em for you, but the only part of your code I truly believe is don't steal your buddy's last beer. Got any left?

NICK

Plenty.
(snaps fingers twice)
Bring two!

Donny heads to the kitchen. Nick picks up a TV remote and we HEAR the sound of cheers.

INT. DOG TRACK BAR - DAY

(SUNDAY)

Donny, Jeff, and Rich sit around a table inside a large bar. Photos of greyhounds line the walls. The men hold beers and betting forms as they watch dogs running on big-screen TVs. We hear cheers coming from outside.

RICH

Let's go back to the stands.

JEFF

Why?

RICH

I want to see 'em run.

JEFF

I like watchin' the ponies better.

Donny leafs thru his betting slips.

DONNY

I don't give a damn what's runnin'. I like slots better.

RICH
 I guess I'm just for the
 dollar beers, but I might as
 well watch 'em run.

Donny makes a grand wave, gesturing around him.

DONNY
 You can see it better on TV
 and the beer's just a couple
 steps away.

JEFF
 The dogs don't look right
 without riders.

RICH
 Don't start with monkeys.

JEFF
 It's like car racin' without
 drivers.

RICH
 Bet they'd be a bitch to
 train.

DONNY
 Make 'em doubly useful and get
 the monkeys to feed the dogs.

RICH
 Let the dogs chase the monkeys
 instead of the rabbit.

JEFF
 They'd never run fast enough.

RICH
 Bungee 'em to the rabbit and
 let it rip.

DONNY
 I'd pay to see that!

RICH
 (whispering)
 Hey. Check out the redhead
 just came in.

Donny and Jeff turn their heads in. WE don't see the woman.

RICH
 (to Donny)
 Whattaya think?

Donny puts his left palm out, places his right fist atop it.

DONNY
 Play you for her.

RICH
 You're on!
 (pause)
 One two three.

Donny and Rich play, but WE don't see who wins.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT (MONDAY)

Donny walks inside and takes a seat at the bar. Waitress Bev, chewing gum, walks over to him.

WAITRESS BEV
 Hey, Donny. Howya doin'?

DONNY
 Damn fine. An' yourself?

WAITRESS BEV
 Damn fine. What can I get you?

DONNY
 I'll take a tall beer,
 cheeseburger medium, an' fries
 crisp.

As she writes the order, her gum chewing slows.

WAITRESS BEV
 You got it. Nick gonna join
 you?

DONNY
 Doubt it. We're sorta on the
 outs.

WAITRESS BEV
 Catfight, I bet. I seen you
 doin' your paper-scissors
 thing. Who you fightin' over?

DONNY
 You know Chet, don't you?

She closes eyes, screws up face, then smiles.

WAITRESS BEV
Paints houses?

DONNY
That's him, an' he an' his
wife are breakin' up an' I
wanted to take Sandra out for
some fun, but Nick says it's
wrong.

WAITRESS BEV
'Cause he wanted her first?

DONNY
'Cause she's a buddy's ex.

WAITRESS BEV
Sounds like somethin' from one
of my mom's romance novels,
y'know? Two girls arguing over
one man? I guess if Chet's a
friend, maybe Nick's right.

DONNY
But if Chet's no friend?

WAITRESS BEV
Then go for it and deal with
Chet later.

INT. STINKY BAR - NIGHT

It's dingy, shadowy, and not very clean. Several people,
mostly women, sit at the bar. Nick sits on a stool, talking
with VIC, the bartender.

VIC
If all you want is gettin'
laid, I can make it happen.

NICK
So you've said.

Vic casually leans across the bar.

VIC

Look at the women. Most of 'em are looking for fun, just like you. They don't want a relationship; just something warm and hard.

(pause)

Like anything you see? We got several pre-owned models to choose from.

Nick appraises the women doubtfully.

NICK

What about that blond at the end?

VIC

She's not likin' men right now.

NICK

The one with the curly hair?

VIC

Better, but second strike. She's herpes positive.

NICK

Maybe I'll just rub one off.

VIC

C'mon, be a man. You don't catch fish with two casts.

NICK

The brunette's kinda cute. The one drinking wine.

VIC

Sara? Yeah, I'll bet she jumps you like a dog on a bone.

NICK

You think so? She hasn't looked at me once tonight.

VIC

I'd bet otherwise.

NICK

Then set up it up before I
sober up.

Vic walks down to Sara and we see them chat. She looks at Nick with an appraising glance, then shrugs and picks up her wine and walks over to sit next to him. She's in her mid-thirties, too much makeup, and slightly unfocused eyes.

SARA

I'm Sara. He said you're nice.

NICK

So I'm told. Nice to meet you,
Sara, What do you do for a
living?

SARA

Secretary, which sucks.

NICK

Why?

SARA

I wanted to be a beautician.

NICK

Why didn't you?

SARA

Too much time. All that school
stuff gives me a headache.

NICK

What do you do for fun?

SARA

(lifts wine glass)

This, watchin' TV, goin'
shopping. Stuff like that.

Nick looks in dismay at Vic, who smiles and makes a "hurry up" motion with his hands.

NICK

(hesitantly)

How about if we go over to my
place for some fun?

Sara looks as if she is about to slap him, then shrugs. She stands up and grabs her purse.

SARA

Sure, why not. Just I gotta
get up early, so I can't stay
too late.

Nick starts to pull out his wallet, but Vic shakes his head.

VIC

It's on the house. You kids
have fun.

Nick takes Sara by the hand and leads her out. Behind the
bar, Vic nods with an approving look on his face.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Nick walks to his car and Sara unsteadily walks to hers.
Both cars start up and drive away.

EXT. NICK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nick parks in the driveway and Sara parks at the curb. She
gets out and wobbles on the sidewalk and he leads her
inside. We see the lights turn on, then turn right back off.

EXT. NICK'S HOUSE - MORNING (TUESDAY)

The door opens and Sara emerges, walking steady. Her dress
is wrinkled, her hair is frazzled, but her face carries a
satisfied expression. Nick stands in the doorway, wearing a
bathrobe. His expression is mild dismay.

INT. OFFICE LUNCHROOM - DAY

Nick is eating lunch with Stu.

STU

That easy? Bullshit.

NICK

Honest. That was it.

STU

What'd your buddy say?
Something about you swingin'
some major wood?

NICK

Damned if I know, but it
worked.

Stu shakes his head and rolls his eyes.

STU

I never had luck like that,
but I guess I never had the
balls to just ask.

NICK

Blame it on being drunk and
horny.

STU

You stud!

NICK

Hey, it wasn't that great.

STU

Yeah, right. You spend thirty
seconds picking her up and she
follows you home and all you
can say is "It wasn't that
great?"

NICK

She just laid there. I thought
she fell asleep at one point.
It was more like masturbating
with someone underneath me

Stu favors him with a lewd leer.

STU

Lousy sex is better than none.

NICK

If you think so, go find Sara
and let's see how you feel
tomorrow.

STU

You think your buddy would set
me up?

NICK

Vic the pimp? Who knows, he
might, but if you end up
feeling soiled, it's your own
damn fault.

INT. - THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

(WEDNESDAY)

NICK

I heard you went out with her

DONNY

Yeah, we had some fun. She needed some laughs.

NICK

That's wrong, and you know it.

DONNY

No, it was very, very right.

SERIES OF SCENES

Donny and Sandra sit on opposite sides of a table in a overly-decorated theme restaurant.

DONNY (VO)

We went for some drinks and had some laughs, but she wanted to get home early...

Donny and Sandra riding inside Donny's truck, with plenty of space between them.

DONNY (VO)

So I took her home and we walked up to her apartment...

Donny and Sandra going up stairs. They pause in front of an apartment door and she reaches for her keys.

DONNY (VO)

And it got pretty hot from there. Lemme tell you, she's one Hell of a woman.

Sandra smiles at Donny as she unlocks the door. She steps inside, turns and waves goodbye, then closes the door, leaving Donny outside.

END SERIES OF SCENES

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

NICK

I can't believe you're doing this.

DONNY

You're fine with all kinds of other crap, like those pranks you pull, but someone looks at your ex-girlfriend an' you go nuts.

NICK

It's not the same. The pranks don't hurt anyone.

DONNY

Oh, yeah? What about you siphonin' gas outta Walt's car?

NICK

Who got hurt? I put a lot more in the car than I sucked out, and it's no worse than you hiding bottles in my cupboards or me putting bumper stickers on your truck.

DONNY

My truck?

NICK

(laughing)

I thought you would've spotted it by now, but you see what I'm saying? Nobody got hurt.

DONNY

So what if Chet gets hurt? He treated her like crap and told everyone she was a loser.

NICK

He liked her enough to marry her.

DONNY

Yeah, an' now he threw her away. You think he's gonna change his mind?

NICK

He's gonna bitch like hell.

DONNY

Let him bitch. I'm going out
with her and that's that.

(pause)

We're dry. You want another
round?

NICK

No, I better get going.

DONNY

C'mon. One more. I'm buyin'.

NICK

(stands up)

If you want someone to drink
with, call Sandra. I'm heading
home.

Nick gets up and exits, leaving Donny alone at the table

SERIES OF SCENES: NICK'S BLIND DATES

Each of the following are about 20-30 seconds length.

Date 1: Nick and SHELLY are having dinner in a restaurant.

SHELLY

It sounds nice Do you own or
rent?

NICK

Own. Eight years now.

SHELLY

And it has a back yard?

NICK

Yeah, it's pretty nice.

SHELLY

Is it big enough for horses?

NICK

(off-guard)

Uh, not really. Maybe if they
don't move too much.

Shelly pulls pictures of two horses from her purse.

SHELLY

These are my babies and I hate
keeping them in a stable...

Date 2: Nick and DOREEN are having lunch at an outdoor café.

DOREEN

Now, you talk about mean, you
shoulda met Jake, my second
husband. What a bastard.

NICK

Oh?

DOREEN

Slapped me around once too
often and the cops took him
away.

NICK

Sounds like you had some bad
luck.

DOREEN

Lemme ask you somethin'. You
ever had a restraining order
against you?

NICK

Not that I remember.

DOREEN

Lucky you. It's no fun dealin'
with lawyers and some pissed-
off judge and--

Date 3: LOUISE is in Nick's living room, looking at his CDs.

LOUISE

You've got a lot of old music.

NICK

I listen mostly to rhythm and
blues and classic rock.

LOUISE

Nothing modern?

NICK

Like punk or rap? Not really.

LOUISE

I've got some cool CDs in my car. Lemme go grab some you might like.

NICK

Sounds good.

Louise walks out the front door. Moments later we hear a car door SHUT, followed by an engine STARTING. Nick looks out the window and we see Louise DRIVING away from his POV.

Date 4: Nick in the Fern Bar, talking with bartender Jenny.

JENNY

I think you'll like Joan. She's a real partier.

NICK

I could use some fun. The last few dates were nightmares.

FRONT DOOR

The front door opens and JOAN walks in. She takes two steps, and GREG, who is walking out, stops and smiles at her.

GREG

Joan! How the hell you been?

JOAN

Damn, Greg, I haven't seen you in ages. You still ridin' that old chopper?

GREG

It's sittin' right outside. Wanna go for a ride?

JOAN

Well, I'm supposed to meet someone...

GREG

Baby, let's roll.

Joan and Greg walk outside.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick is drinking beer when we hear a very loud motorcycle STARTING outside. Jenny puts her hands over her ears and Nicks laughs.

END SERIES OF SCENES

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

(SATURDAY)

Several people stand around holding drinks and music is playing. The front door opens and Nick enters. We hear a SHRIEK of delight and Lucy runs to Nick and hugs him.

LUCY

Nick! How've you been?!

NICK

Real good, thanks. How about you?

LUCY

Great! I'm so glad you came.

NICK

There's no way I'd miss yours after that guy thought he could walk across the pool.

LUCY

You were here for that? Wasn't he an idiot?

NICK

Just drunk.

LUCY

Jimmy had to fish him out and his suit got ruined.

NICK

(looks around)

Jimmy? Where's he hiding? I haven't seen him in months.

LUCY

He moved back to Montana.

NICK

No shit? Missed the trees?

LUCY

I guess.

(pause)

Where's your boyfriend? Didn't Donny ride with you.

NICK

Did you call him?

LUCY

Sure did.

NICK

And you said I was coming?

LUCY

Duh!

NICK

Then I'd guess don't expect him.

LUCY

What happened?

NICK

It's a long story, but right now I need a beer before I shrivel up and die.

Lucy turns and motions for him to follow.

LUCY

I've got a keg on the patio but I bet you still have alcohol in your bloodstream from last night.

Lucy guides Nick thru the party, waves at a few people.

EXT. PATIO - NIGHT

There is a small table with several bags of chips and a stack of plastic cups. Next to the table is a large tub with a beer keg half-buried in ice. Several people are on the patio, talking/drinking.

NICK

I knew I could depend on you for quality refreshments.

Nick picks up a plastic cup and the keg's hose and begins filling the cup.

LUCY
You know me: I hate seein'
friends go thirsty.

PAM emerges from the house.

PAM
Is the keg... aha!
(she sees Lucy)
Hey, girl! What's happenin'!

LUCY
Pam! Oh-my-God, I can't
believe you're here!

The women hug, then Lucy turns to face Nick.

LUCY
Could you pour a beer for Pam

Nick hands over the cup he just filled

NICK
Take this. Plenty more where
it came from.

Nick picks up another cup and resumes pouring. Pam takes a deep drink, then smiles.

PAM
Thanks, stranger.

LUCY
Pam, this is Nick. Nick, this
is my best friend from
college, Pam.

NICK
Nice to meet you, best friend
from college.

PAM
How do you know Lucy?

NICK
Hmmm... It was at the store
and we both wanted the same
can of beets.

LUCY
(laughing)
He knocked me down!

NICK
We wrestled a few minutes,
then took a break in the beer
aisle.

PAM
Sounds like Lucy to give up
for a beer.

LUCY
No way! He gave up first!

Nick raises his cup like a trophy.

NICK
I've got my priorities
straight. So you two went to
school together?

PAM
Just two years. I transferred
in my junior year and ended up
rooming with Lucy and we've
been friends ever since.

NICK
I get the feeling you don't
see much of each other.

PAM
I travel a lot. I'm a trade
show manager for a sportswear
distributor and spend a lot of
time on the road.

NICK
Sounds like fun, if you like
traveling.

PAM
It can be a real pain in the
ass. I get to see a lot of
places and meet lots of
people, but mostly it's a lot
of forgettable hotel rooms.

NICK

Which means times with friends
like Lucy are few and far
between.

PAM

You got it.

LUCY

I think the last time we got--

We hear a loud CRASH inside the house.

LUCY

Gotta go. You two behave.

Lucy trots inside, leaving Nick and Pam alone at the keg.

PAM

What do you do for a living?
Game show host?

NICK

I sit in a cubicle and
strangle a computer to create
reports and charts.

PAM

Sounds thoroughly depressing.

NICK

You're an optimist.

PAM

That's what you dreamed of
doing as a kid?

NICK

Yep. Even went to college to
prep for it.

PAM

Any thoughts about doing
something better?

NICK

You mean like greeter at Wall-
Mart? Sure. They didn't beat
all the imagination out of me.

The music and laughter from inside gets louder.

FX - TIME LAPSE

We see Nick and Pam remain in place, next to the keg, chatting and drinking, as the party swirls quickly around them, then gradually the other people trickle away.

END FX

Nick and Pam are alone on the patio. Nick holds a cup and the keg's hose. Pam lifts the keg half out of the bucket.

PAM
Looks like a floater to me.

Nick drops the hose, then glances around.

NICK
Too late for a beer run?

Pam looks at her watch.

PAM
For me, at least. It's way
past my bedtime.

NICK
I guess I should leave, too.
I'll walk out with you.

Nick follows Pam into the house.

EXT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick and Pam stand next to Pam's car.

NICK
I really liked meeting you.
Good luck on your travels.

PAM
I'm still in town for the next
week. You want to get together
sometime?

NICK
Yeah, I would.

Pam reaches into her purse and pulls out a business card.

PAM
Here. Give me a call.

NICK
Count on it.

Pam unlocks her car door and starts to get inside, then turns and pulls Nick close and they kiss for 2 seconds.

PAM
Don't lose that card.

NICK
Not after that.

She gets in her car and drives away. Nick watches her go, then walks back to Lucy's apartment.

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY (MONDAY)

Nick is seated at his computer, typing with a smile on his face. Stu peeks over the cubicle wall.

STU
You're been smiling all morning. Feeling OK?

NICK
Couldn't be better.

STU
Hooked up with that barfly again?

NICK
(grimaces)
Ugh.

Stu glances around quickly, lowers his voice.

STU
Then what put such a shit-eatin' grin on your face?

NICK
Good weekend, I guess.

STU
Last time I smiled like that I won a thousand bucks in the lottery.

Nick pushes back from his computer.

NICK

I guess you might say I won
the chick lottery.

STU

Yeah? You met someone?

NICK

Can you keep it a secret?

Stu comes around the wall and sits down.

STU

Why's it secret?

NICK

I just don't want the guys
asking about her if it doesn't
work out.

STU

And what about if she wants to
meet them?

NICK

That's another problem. I
can't tell her I'm not talking
with my best friend 'cause
that just opens a big can of
worms.

STU

I think you're taking this a
little too far. You met
someone nice at a party. Maybe
you'll see her again, maybe
not. Don't get so stressed
over it.

NICK

I'm not stressed, just doing
some contingency planning.

STU

A little planning isn't bad,
but not telling friends about
her is going too far.

NICK

I'll think about it.

STU

Listen, the reason I stopped was Lee in Procurement is going to some kind of race this weekend, which I could give a shit about, but Lee thought you might want to go.

NICK

Dirt oval? Midgets?

STU

Midgets? Like, driving?

NICK

Kinda like sprint cars. Big tires, full roll cage, a V8 with straight pipes, and no brakes.

STU

(stands)

No, thanks. Talk to you later.

Stu exits. Nick resumes typing and his smile slowly returns.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

(TUESDAY)

Nick enters and sits down at a table, then notices Walt sitting nearby and walks over to Walt's table.

WALT

Nick, how've you been?

NICK

Good, good. How about you?

WALT

Keeping busy, I guess.

NICK

Better busy than bored. How's the wonder car?

WALT

Jeez, I don't know. It took a crap a week ago. The mileage dropped and I took it back but they say they can't find anything wrong. Can you believe that?

FRONT DOOR

Chet enters the bar, pauses for a room sweep, then sees Nick and heads his way

BACK TO SCENE

NICK
Oh, shit.

WALT
That's what I said. I think they oughta take it back.

NICK
I bet it's gonna even out.

Chet approaches the table and addresses Nick.

CHET
Hey, buttercup. How's life?

NICK
Same shit, different draft.

Waitress Karen approaches their table.

WAITRESS KAREN
(to Nick)
You sittin' here?

NICK
Naw, I'm over there and this lug's probably joinin' me.

CHET
Pitcher of Bud.

NICK
Just a bottle for me.

CHET
Not drinkin' tonight? 'Fraid you might have fun?

NICK
(shrugs)
A pitcher it is.

Waitress Karen nods and walks away.

NICK
(to Walt)
Best o' luck.

Walt drinks as Nick returns to his table with Chet.

CHET
Where's your girlfriend Donny
been lately?

NICK
Working hard, I guess.

EXT. SANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The front door opens and Sandra and Donny walk out and get into Donny's truck. The engine starts and off they go.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

Nick's glass is half-empty and Chet's is totally empty. Chet picks up the pitcher and fills his glass and tops off Nick's.

NICK
You and Sandra patch things
up?

CHET
Nope. It's dead as a losing
racehorse. I'm not puttin' up
with her attitude any longer.

NICK
Is it really that bad?

CHET
Bad? You never heard nagging
like hers. Always bitching,
always whining.
(holds his glass aloft)
Bye-bye, Sandra.

EXT. STEAKHOUSE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Donny's truck pulls into the parking lot. Donny and Sandra hold hands and laugh as they walk into the steakhouse.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

Chet's glass is again empty compared to Nick's half-full glass. Chet fills his glass, emptying the pitcher, and waves for another one.

CHET

I can't believe women these days just don't give a shit. Once she decided I wasn't good enough, that was it.

NICK

That's pretty harsh.

Waitress Karen brings another pitcher and Chet fills up.

CHET

She's a golddigger, just like all the rest, looking for the next chump with a flashier car and a fatter wallet.

NICK

I guess I never saw it

CHET

You weren't a big-enough paycheck, but I think she found one.

NICK

Already?

CHET

I know she's been going out. I call and she's never home. She's outplayin' around.

NICK

What if she's with friends?

CHET

(drinks)

She didn't have girl friends, just guys, 'cause women don't spring for steak and drinks.

EXT. STEAKHOUSE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Through the window of the steakhouse we see Donny and Sandra inside, laughing and having fun. They clink their wine glasses together.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT

Chet fills his glass and tops-off Nick's.

CHET
(drinks)
That's the past and I'm
lookin' to the future.

NICK
Why not work more hours? Bring
in a little more cash? Lots of
people work full-time.

CHET
It's not just having a job,
it's finding one worth doing.

NICK
I think it's more like finding
one that pays the bills, then
try for the satisfaction.

CHET
(drinks)
Office crap is drone work and
drives me nuts.

NICK
For you, that's a short drive.
Nobody likes working, but we
all gotta do it

CHET
(empties glass)
You're just like all the rest.
You got no vision past your
next paycheck. I'm outta here.

Chet stands up and Nick does too. Chet opens his wallet and pulls out several bills and tosses them on the table.

CHET
See you 'round, sport.

Nick pokes at the dollars.

NICK
That's five bucks. We drank
two pitchers at six apiece,
right?

CHET
And you drank most of it.

NICK
When has that ever happened?
What about a tip?

CHET
Here? You gotta get real. The
service sucked.

Chet pulls out another dollar and tosses it on the table.

CHET
But since you're makin' such a
fuss, here's another and
that's it.

Chet turns and exits. Nick shakes his head and starts
pulling money from his wallet.

EXT. CITY BOTANIC GARDEN - DAY (SATURDAY)

Nick and Pam wear shorts and T-shirts, and Nick carries a
backpack. They walk thru rows of flowers and shrubs.

PAM
Have you talked with Lucy
since the party?

NICK
No. You?

PAM
She's amazed we're going out.
Says she never would've
thought to match us up.

NICK
Blind dates suck. I'll never
do another one.

PAM
You had some tough ones?

NICK
Hasn't everyone? Haven't you?

PAM
A couple, but they don't live
around here, so it's no big
deal.

NICK
Are you saying men leave the
state after dating you?

PAM
(laughs)
Something like that. Maybe
they're scared off by my biker
tattoos.

NICK
All my tattoos are famous
sports figures.

PAM
Like who?

Nick runs his hands around his upper body.

NICK
It's kind of a mosaic with
sports heroes, you know, Joe
DiMaggio, Joe Namath, Pele,
all wrapped around like a big
Escher woodcut.

PAM
Pele? It must have really
hurt.

NICK
Not as much as when I have it
lasered off.

PAM
I can see guys in college
doing crap like that because
their friends said it was
cool, and then dealing with it
the rest of their lives.

NICK

There's a lot of idiots in the world. Some go out of their way to prove it.

They reach an area landscaped like a Japanese garden, complete with a pond and Koi fish. Nick leads Pam off to one side and sits down on a grassy patch.

NICK

This looks good.

PAM

Are you sure?

NICK

They actually encourage picnics.

Pam sits down and Nick opens the backpack.

PAM

And they're OK with beer?

NICK

Beer, wine, fruit coolers. It's all considered a picnic as long as you don't try to swim with the Koi.

PAM

And you never got that spun?

Nick pulls a can out of the backpack and hands it to Pam.

NICK

Can I buy your silence with alcohol?

PAM

It'll take more than one.

NICK

I have more but they might get a little warm.

Pam opens her beer. Nick opens his.

PAM

It sounds like speed is of the essence.

NICK

This is no frat party.
 (gestures around them)
 This is beauty and nature and
 Japanese traditions, not some
 drunken frat contest.
 (pause)
 But I hate warm beer, so yeah,
 drink up.

They "clink" their cans together.

NICK

Here's to a picnic in Tokyo.

PAM

Origato.

They both take a long drink of beer.

INT. NICK'S HOUSE - DAY

(SUNDAY)

Nick is sitting on the couch, bag of chips next to him, beer
 in one hand and remote control in the other. In the B.G. we
 HEAR the Looney Toons theme music, and then the phone RINGS.

NICK

Hello.

LEE (V.O.)

It's Lee, from work. Get you
 at a good time?

NICK

Sure. What's up?

LEE (V.O.)

I still got that spare ticket
 and Phil just called 'cause he
 scored paddock passes.
 Whattaya think?

NICK

Serious? Paddock?

LEE (V.O.)

If you wanna see 'em up close,
 here's your chance.

NICK

Hell, yeah. Count me in.

LEE

Smooth. I'm meetin' up with Phil an' some buddies over at the Slapshot Lounge for a few beforehand.

NICK

Sounds like my kind of friends.

LEE

I got directions there. You got somethin' to write with?

Nick puts down the beer and stands up.

NICK

Hold on a sec'.

EXT. AUTOMOTIVE RACE TRACK - NIGHT

TRACK

We see several seconds of cars going around a dirt oval.

BEHIND BLEACHERS

We see Nick walking thru the crowd and hear the ROAR of the unseen crowd in the bleachers. Nick stops to look at two women passing, and as he turns back, he sees Donny.

DONNY

Hey, buddy. Howya been?

NICK

Good. Where've you been hiding lately?

DONNY

I could ask the same thing. You still mad at me?

NICK

You still dating Chet's ex?

DONNY

Went out just last night.

SERIES OF SCENES

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

We see Donny and Sandra together, looking happy.

DONNY (VO)
We ate dinner at some Mexican
place she knew--

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

We see Donny and Sandra dancing energetically.

DONNY (VO)
Then we went an' had a quiet
drink and talked some--

EXT. SANDRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We see Donny and Sandra walking up to her apartment.

DONNY (VO)
She had to get up early the
next day so I took her home--

We see Sandra and Donny kissing passionately. She unlocks the door and pulls him inside and closes the door.

DONNY (VO)
An' that's about it--

EXT. SANDRA'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

The front door opens and Donny emerges wearing the same clothes as before. Sandra is wearing a bathrobe.

DONNY (VO)
Just two people havin' a nice
time.

END SERIES OF SCENES

BACK TO SCENE

NICK
You're playing with fire.

DONNY
She's no troublemaker.

NICK
You know what I mean.

DONNY
(waves at bleachers)
Listen, Jeff an' Rich are
sittin' right over there.

NICK
I'm here with some guys from
work. Maybe I can catch up
with you later.

DONNY
You really are mad.

NICK
Yep. See you around.

Donny stands open-mouthed as Nick walks away.

EXT. RACETRACK BLEACHERS - NIGHT

Donny walks up steps and sits down with Jeff and Rich.

JEFF
Any hotties?

DONNY
Some, but mostly heifers in
heels.

RICH
That's a seriously disturbing
image.

JEFF
I've seen a couple cute ones,
but nothin' breathtakin'.

RICH
(to Jeff)
I'll play you for the next one
goin' past.

JEFF
You're on.
(to Donny)
How about you play the winner
for the deathmatch?

Donny sips his beer, eyes on the track.

DONNY
(quietly)
Naw. You guys go ahead.

Rich nudges Jeff, points to an unseen woman. Jeff nods and they play paper-rock-scissors. We don't see who wins.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - NIGHT (TUESDAY)

Nick and Pam, both holding beers, sit in a slowly-rotating Ferris wheel at a run-down amusement park.

PAM
I still can't believe you brought me here.

NICK
It's not your first time.

PAM
No, but it's been a long time.

NICK
Where would you prefer?
Downtown rave? Video games?
Strip club?

PAM
Yeah, like you'd take me to a strip club.

NICK
Why not? It's got all the right ingredients: cold beer, killer sound system, and people dancing.

PAM
By people you mean women, and by dancing you mean naked.

NICK
Of course. You know a better way?

PAM
We could go to Big Jake's.

NICK
As if you'd really go.

PAM
I've been there before.

NICK
Right.

PAM
I have. Really. Couples get in
free, so I went with an old
boyfriend.

NICK
What'd you think?

PAM
The dancers loved my shoes.

NICK
Must've been one hell of a
pair of shoes.

PAM
Gucci stilettos. I sat with my
feet up on the stage and the
ladies came 'round to see the
treasures.

Nick looks down at her feet.

NICK
What are those?

PAM
Flea market sandals. The
ladies wouldn't trade a crap
sandwich for these.

NICK
I never considered they'd
treat women the way they treat
men, but it makes sense.

PAM
(sarcastic)
You mean they only pay
attention when money's
involved? Who would've
thought?

NICK

They're not exactly dancing
naked for the exercise value.

PAM

I think the girls were more
jealous of the shoes than
trying to take my money.

NICK

Maybe they're not as good
exploiting women as they are
men.

PAM

You mean being exploited.

NICK

Places like Big Jake's soak
the men every step of the way.

PAM

If the guys are dumb enough to
go along with it, why not?

NICK

That's the very definition of
exploitation, so I guess you'd
say the same about the women.

PAM

Maybe. You think they really
make as much as they say?

NICK

There's a lot of lonely guys
out there willing to spend
their last dollar to get close
to a clean, pretty woman.

PAM

Bet they're not always clean.

NICK

They're not always pretty,
either.

The Ferris wheel comes to a halt. The RIDE OPERATOR opens
the front of the seat. Nick and Pam step out.

PAM

Where to next?

NICK
Your choice.

INT. BIG JAKE'S - NIGHT

Big Jake's features topless women dancing, flashing lights, and very loud stereo. We see five seconds of Pam and Nick sitting at the side of a stage with beers in front of them. They are looking up at a dancer who doffs her top. Nick applauds and Pam uses her fingers to whistle loudly.

INT. DONNY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

DONNY
Where you want to eat?

SANDRA
Anywhere, I guess. It doesn't matter.

DONNY
You OK?

SANDRA
It's just Chet. He's bein' a dick again.

DONNY
He's still buggin' you?

SANDRA
He's got some of my stuff, you know, CDs and a couple movies, and won't give 'em back. It's just not fair. He used to be such a nice guy.

DONNY
But you're havin' fun now, right?

SANDRA
Some fun. My apartment's micro and I got all these bills and he's got his drinkin' pals and those goofy paintings and it just makes me mad.

DONNY

Hey, hey. You're not with him.
You're with me tonight an'
we're havin' fun, right?

SANDRA

I'm sorry. I don't mean to
take it out on you. I just get
so tired of this whole stupid
thing! It wasn't supposed to
be like this!

DONNY

A guy at work was sayin'
marriage's the easiest thing
to do an' the hardest to get
free of.

SANDRA

We dated two years an' he was
never this mean.

(pause)

How about pizza tonight? We
could try that place you saw
the other night.

DONNY

Damn fine idea. Hang tight.

Donny floors the accelerator and the truck picks up speed.

INTERCUT

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

(THURSDAY)

Nick is working at his computer. His phone RINGS. With eyes
still on the screen, he picks up the receiver.

NICK

This is Nick.

INT. CHET'S APARTMENT - DAY

Chet is sprawled on a couch in a litter-strewn apartment.
Clothes are on the floor and fast-food wrappers on the
coffee table. A paint-splashed canvas sits atop a dirty tarp
in the background. In the B.G. we HEAR the end music for the
TV soap opera "Days Of Our Lives."

CHET

What's goin' on, master of
monotony?

NICK'S CUBICLE

Nick cradles the phone on his shoulder and continues working.

NICK
Big project with little
interest. You?

CHET (VO)
Thinkin' 'bout lunch. Let's
hook up at the Bum Steer for a
couple burgers.

NICK
Can't. I'm on a deadline and
brought lunch.

CHET (VO)
Sounds like an excuse to me.

NICK
Strong words from someone flat
on his back with feet in the
air.

CHET'S APARTMENT

Chet idly picks lint from his wrinkled sweatshirt.

CHET
Tough love from someone living
in a cube farm. How can you
deal with all that bullshit?

NICK (VO)
I'm a wage slave. The sound of
paychecks being passed out is
like a can opener to a dog.

CHET
They throw a bone and you come
a runnin'. Speakin' of dogs,
where's Donny been lately?

NICK'S CUBICLE

NICK
Damned if I know. You try him
at work?

CHET (VO)
I left messages. He's not
callin' you, either?

NICK
I think we've both been busy.
He'll show up with some wild
story, just wait and see.

CHET (VO)
I've got enough wild in my
life already.

NICK
Hanging with cross-dressers
again?

CHET (VO)
No, it's Sandra. She's seeing
someone.

NICK
That's what you said before.
You knew it was going to
happen.

CHET (VO)
I'm startin' to wonder if she
was gettin' kissy-face before
we broke up. If I find out she
was screwin' around behind my
back, I'll--

NICK
--Hey, I've got a visitor. Can
I call you back?

CHET'S APARTMENT

CHET
Sure. Later.

Chet drops the phone, then picks up the TV remote. We hear
the opening music for the TV game show "The Price Is Right."

NICK'S CUBICLE

Alone in his cubicle, Nick hangs up and continues working.

END INTERCUT

EXT. CAFÉ - DAY

Donny is standing outside a café and sees Sandra pull up in her car. She parks, gets out, and gives him a quick kiss.

SANDRA
Hey, handsome.

DONNY
Hi, honey. Good to see you again.

SANDRA
I missed you the last couple nights.

DONNY
Me too. We need to catch up on some things.

SANDRA
We sure do. Momma's been real lonely.

DONNY
How 'bout tonight?

SANDRA
(pauses)
How 'bout right now, cowboy?

DONNY
Here? Right now?

Sandra points across the street.

SANDRA
What about that nice little motel. I'll bet they've got hourly rates.

Donny looks across at the motel and grins and nods.

DONNY
I'll bet you're right. What about work?

SANDRA
I can be a little late. Are they gonna be mad at the shop if you take a long lunch?

DONNY

There's only one way to find out.

Donny takes Sandra by the hand and leads her across the street and into the motel's office.

INT. OFFICE LUNCHROOM - DAY

Nick is sitting at a table with Stu.

NICK

I can't believe he's really doing it.

STU

I can't believe you're letting it get to you.

NICK

It just bugs me.

Stu leans back, puts his hands on his chest.

STU

Would it be OK if I screwed her?

NICK

You never met Chet, so I guess there'd be no conflict.

STU

But I know about him and can't feel much sympathy.

NICK

But you wouldn't fuck his wife just to piss him off, would you?

Stu moves closer, looks conspiratorial.

STU

I'd give her a sleepless night for the right reasons, but I wouldn't drink pitchers with Chet, either.

(pause)

Are you really that mad?

NICK

I never thought Donny would do something like this, so I guess I'm more dismayed than anything else.

STU

And you've been friends a long time?

NICK

Oh, sure. We go way back.

STU

Then get over this crap and patch things up and leave the rest for Doctor Phil to worry about. Split-tails come and go but friends like Donny are hard to find..

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

A door opens and Donny and Sandra emerge. Donny closes the door and Sandra fluffs her hair.

DONNY

You really gotta go back?

SANDRA

I can do a long lunch but I can't take the whole day.

DONNY

What about tonight?

SANDRA

I want to, but there's some things I have to take care of.

DONNY

And tomorrow?

SANDRA

Let me see how things are going first, OK? I gotta run. See ya!

Sandra gives him a kiss on the cheek, then trots across the street to her car and gets in. Donny looks at his watch, looks back at the room, and walks to his truck smiling.

INT. METAL SHOP LUNCHROOM - DAY

Donny is buying mini-donuts from a machine. Peck enters.

PECK
Still hungry after yer
banker's lunch?

DONNY
Never got anythin' to eat.

PECK
Yer lady didn't show?

DONNY
(grinning)
Oh, she showed all right, but
we skipped lunch an' went
right on to dessert.

Peck cackles and slaps Donny on the back.

PECK
Well, well. Bad boy gets a
nooner. Ain't you the lucky
one.

DONNY
It was fun, all right, but
there's somethin' missin'.

PECK
Whattaya want now?
Conversations?

DONNY
There's just no spark. She's
fun, she's sexy, but I'm not
feelin' any spark.

PECK
Shit, boy, next thing you're
gonna want is kids an' a
house.

DONNY
We're just havin' fun.

PECK

That's how it always starts,
but some guys get all hot an'
bothered an' next thing y'know
they're buyin' some damn ring.

Peck stops and stares hard at Donny

PECK

You ain't lookin' at rings,
are ya?

DONNY

Jeez, no. It's just lust,
nothin' more.

Peck leans forward and pokes Donny in the chest with one of
his remaining fingers.

PECK

Make sure you keep it that
way. You ain't the first been
led around by the small head.

DONNY

I just wonder what's gonna
happen next.

PECK

Huh. Maybe you're seein' what
her ol' man missed.

DONNY

Whattaya mean, missed?

PECK

He musta thought she was hot
shit an' got roped in, then
realized too late she weren't
no prize. Maybe you're already
seein' it.

Donny looks at Peck curiously.

DONNY

I never thought about it that
way.

PECK

'Cause you been thinkin' with the wrong head. What if you was buyin' some hot car? You'd be under the hood tryin' to figure why he's sellin' cheap, right?

DONNY

Yeah.

PECK

Then look her over the same way. There's gotta be a reason yer buddy cut her loose.

DONNY

What if she dumped him?

PECK

What if she dumps you?

DONNY

I guess it could happen. We're just havin' fun right now.

PECK

Donny, you done said that three times already. If you're havin' fun, then have it, but watch out. Meantime, I got some steel needs cuttin' so when you're done chewin' that crap, come gimme a hand.

Peck gets up and exits. Donny sits for a moment, then stands and walks over to a phone and dials a number. We hear several rings, then Nick's voice.

NICK (VO)

Hi, this is Nick, I'm on the phone or away from my desk. Leave a message and I'll call you back.

We hear the BEEP.

DONNY

Hey, it's me. Just seein' what you're up to. Gimme a call when you get a chance.

Donny hangs up and exits the lunchroom

INT. - NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

Nick walks into his cubicle and sees the message light flashing on his phone. He picks it up and punches buttons.

COMPUTER VOICE (VO)
You have one new message.

DONNY (VO)
Hey, it's me. Just seein' what
you're up to...

Nick slowly puts the phone back onto it's cradle, sits down, and starts working on his computer.

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT (FRIDAY)

Pam and Nick are dressed nicely. Pam holds a glass of wine, Nick holds a mug of beer. They stroll, looking at framed, modern art paintings.

NICK
I haven't seen anything that I
couldn't live without

PAM
I saw a few I'd pay the artist
to keep.

NICK
Artist is a generous title.
Anyone who splashes paint
these days calls themselves an
artist.

PAM
Not like the master of splash,
Jackson Pollock.

In the background, the paintings changes from modern art into cheap "starving artist sale" seascapes and forests.

NICK
More than just splashes, more
than just colors, his art
transcends the visual clique
with joyous bursts of action.

PAM

Crap. He dribbled paint and babbled like you just did and the rich fools lined up to be fleeced.

NICK

Artist. He created art.

PAM

I don't like his paintings but I admire his business skills.

NICK

So you agree he was a painter.

In the background, the canvases return to modern art.

PAM

I saw an elephant paint once. It held the brush in its trunk and smeared paint around. Was it a painter, or an artist, or just an animal smearing paint?

NICK

What'd they do with the paintings?

PAM

Sold 'em in the gift shop at two hundred bucks apiece.

NICK

Call him an artist and find him a better agent.

They walk several steps without talking. The artwork becomes even less structured, just big streaks and slashes of color.

NICK

Seen any other artistic animals?

Pam appears distracted and makes no response.

NICK

Hey, you awake?

PAM

I'm sorry. What did you say?

NICK

I asked if the patient was slipping away and it seems she is.

PAM

No, just distracted. I'm sorry.

NICK

I'm not boring you, am I?

PAM

No, I've just got so much going on at work, I guess I keep fixating.

In the background, the paintings become pastel clowns with sad faces and young children with oversized eyes.

NICK

Big show coming up?

PAM

Yes. . . no, not really big, but pretty important.

NICK

You bringing work home?

PAM

Some. Mostly paperwork.

NICK

If you want to cut this short...

PAM

No! I'm having fun. Really. I don't mock art with just anyone, you know.

NICK

OK, but if you fall asleep I reserve the right to leave you snoring.

PAM

It's a deal.

Pam drinks the last of her wine, then looks around. On the walls are photos of kittens playing in baskets of yarn.

PAM

How about we get some refills
before the next gallery?

NICK

If I ever say no to a beer,
kick me right in the balls
'cause you're with an
impostor.

Pam nods and looks ahead where several people are clustered.
Agitated voices can be heard.

PAM

It sounds like things are
getting a little heated.

NICK

Controversy in the art world?
Let's go take a look.

As Pam and Nick approach, the voices grow more agitated.
Several people are looking at two similar-style abstracts.

NICK

I like a lot of abstract but
these don't do it for me.

PAM

The Pollack fan? Hmm. I kinda
like the one on the left.

NICK

Serious?

PAM

It's the odd effect. Look how
the artist combined different
styles to mock pop art itself.

NICK

I thought of it as imitation
but only in a superficial,
overly-commercial way.

PAM

It's the combinations, the
mixtures. Look at the textures
around the border.

When Pam says the word "textures", Nick looks at her.

PAM

I think the artist really has something.

(to MAN #1)

Who painted these?

Man #1, standing in front of them, turns around.

MAN #1

Some idiot with more paint than talent.

MAN #2, standing next to Man #1, turns and laughs.

MAN #2

What do you know about talent? You've got those silly dogs playing poker.

MAN #1

It's a game room. Whattaya expect? Renoirs?

Nick moves past the men and leans over to look at the white card next to the painting in question.

CLOSE-UP OF WHITE CARD:

Ectoplasmic Irritation #3
Oil and Gesso on stretched canvas
Chet Berwick, USA

BACK TO SCENE

After reading the card, Nick straightens up and backs away.

PAM

Who painted it?

NICK

Chet Berwick.

PAM

Never heard of him.

MAN #1

Like I said, a nobody with no talent.

PAM

I like it.

MAN #2

You tell him, sister.

MAN #1

(to Man #2)

You accept his bleak outlook?
You really think art offers
nothing beyond this myopic
distortion?

MAN #2

Look past the bleakness and
absorb the message. There's
more to mere visual, more than
we've been shown. You don't
see the art here because it
doesn't fit your frame of
reference.

Nick looks oddly at the two men.

MAN #1

Like the natives who couldn't
see the European invader's
ships in their own lagoon
because they couldn't conceive
of such things?

MAN #2

Exactly. The art's here. You
just can't see it yet.

Nick leans slightly forward.

NICK

And once I pay several
thousand dollars for this
cleverly contrived piece of
oil-soaked canvas, I'll become
enlightened?

Man #1 and Man #2 look oddly back at him.

NICK

I know who painted this. I've
known him for years.

(to Man #2)

You really like that? You'd
hang it in your house?

MAN #2

If money were no object, I'd
buy both.

NICK

(to Pam)

Refresh my memory. What zoo
had the elephant who painted?

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

(MONDAY)

Nick and Stu are standing in Nick's cubicle. Nick is writing
dates on a big calendar.

STU

She's pretty, but why's she
still single?

NICK

I've been wondering myself.

STU

I think it's a bad sign. It
might mean she's a basket case
inside.

NICK

I don't think so. I haven't
seen any snakes. Yet.

STU

Too choosy?

NICK

Could be. She had boyfriends,
even lived with a few, but
never tied the knot.

STU

Maybe you oughta look into her
background.

Nick stops writing and frowns at Stu.

NICK

What do you think I'm going to
find? A rap sheet for check
kiting?

STU
Who knows? I'd be cautious,
that's all.

NICK
I don't think I'll have to
worry about it.

Nick resumes writing dates.

STU
You trust her that much?

NICK
No, I mean I don't think we're
going to work out long term.

Stu looks concerned.

STU
She dropping hints? Not
calling you back?

NICK
She kinda seems like she's
losing interest.

STU
Why?

NICK
Nothing I can put my finger
on. She just doesn't seem so
eager to get together, and
when we do the small talk
fades out kinda easy.

STU
You sure you're not just
imagining it?

NICK
Maybe. I've seen the signs
more than once.

Stu smiles, shakes his head.

STU
And you've been wrong more
than once. With a winner like
her at stake, I'd keep trying.

Nick stops writing, puts down his pen.

NICK
I'm not giving up yet, but I
feel like I'm ten points
behind and time's running out.

STU
What's going on with Donny and
the married woman?

NICK
She's divorced now, but I'm
not sure if Donny's still
seeing her.

STU
They broke up already?

NICK
I don't know. I haven't talked
with him in a while.

STU
Still? Give it a rest.

NICK
Yeah, you're probably right.

We hear a distant phone RING. Stu cocks his head listening

STU
Mine. See ya'.

Stu quickly walks away. Nick pauses a moment, then turns and
picks up his phone and dials a number.

INT. METAL SHOP - DAY

SHOP WORKER MITCH
Fabrication, this is Mitch.

NICK (VO)
Is Donny around?

SHOP WORKER MITCH
Lemme see.

Shop Worker Mitch puts the phone on hold and walks away.

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

Nick sits on hold, winces listening to Abba playing.

INT. METAL SHOP - DAY

Shop Worker Mitch yells at Donny, but the surrounding noises drown out his voice. He walks close to Danny and puts his mouth near Donny's ear. Donny nods and walks to the phone.

INT. NICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

We hear Nick being PAGED.

RECEPTIONIST (OS)
Nick, call on line 2. Nick,
line 2.

NICK
Damn.

We see him punch a button on the phone.

NICK
Hi, this is Nick.

INT. METAL SHOP - DAY

Donny picks up the phone just as the light stops blinking. He holds the phone up, listens, and puts it back down.

INT. - SALAD BAR - NIGHT (TUESDAY)

Donny and Sandra are at a table with half-finished salads and drinks in front of them.

SANDRA
I really like you, a lot, and
you've been a good friend thru
all of this... but I still
want to see other people.

DONNY
Other people, or other men?

SANDRA
You know what I mean. I just
got out of a bad situation and
don't want to get tied down so
soon.

DONNY

Tied down? I'm not askin' for anythin' long term.

SANDRA

Then you understand I need time to figure things out.

DONNY

You seein' someone else already?

Sandra picks at her salad but doesn't eat.

SANDRA

No. Well, sort of. I mean, we just went out once.

DONNY

And you want to go out again? You can do whatever you want. I've got no hold on you.

Sandra puts down her fork.

SANDRA

Thanks. I knew you'd understand.

DONNY

Yeah. Good ol' understandin' Donny.

SANDRA

You're not mad, are you?

DONNY

Me, mad? No way. We had some great fun an' maybe we'll have more again.

Sandra looks at her watch.

SANDRA

God, look at the time. I gotta run. Look, you're really sweet and this' been a lot of fun. I'll call you sometime, OK?

DONNY

Sure. See you 'round.

Sandra stands up and gives an awkward wave.

SANDRA

Bye, Donny.

Donny watches her go, then smacks his forehead.

DONNY

Shit!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nick and Pam are seated on a bench on a busy nightlife street. The pandemonium of cars and pedestrians and lights swirls in the background.

PAM

I never come here when I'm in town.

NICK

Why?

PAM

Every city's got a street like this and some places don't have much else.

NICK

And it's where a stranger in a strange land goes for nighttime entertainment.

PAM

You go with the group. It's a herd instinct, searching for fun without too many options.

NICK

I guess it's that, or the hotel bar, or watching TV.

PAM

The bars are full of the same people you see at the show. It's kinda like Groundhog Day.

NICK

Which gives people who met earlier a chance to get liquored up and chose which room for a tryst.

Pam shakes her head in dismay.

PAM

And I've seen plenty of that.
I don't care who does whom,
but when somebody's married
it's always so...

NICK

Tacky? Tasteless? Vile?

PAM

I'll take vile. What's worse,
it's the women cheating more
than men.

NICK

What happens on the road--

PAM

--Stays on the road.

NICK

Not everybody follows the same
code of ethics.

PAM

Sometimes I wonder if there's
code at all.

NICK

For some guys it's more of a
contest, like collecting
trophies. They date two or
three women and see how long
they can make it last.

Pam nods in agreement.

PAM

Why not? I know women who
double-dipped.

NICK

Yeah?

PAM

Some people are clueless. I've
got one friend who slept with
another friend's ex, kinda
soap opera style.

Nick looks interested.

PAM

Of course, the other friend found out and you should have seen the fur fly.

NICK

And you didn't approve.

PAM

No, of course not. It's one thing when you're still in school, but grown women shouldn't do that kind of thing.

NICK

Really?

PAM

It's like dating at the office. Don't get your meat the same place you get your bread.

NICK

Go on.

PAM

Some things you just don't do 'cause it's not right.

NICK

Like what else?

PAM

Dating married men, stealing boyfriends, you know, bitchcat stuff like that, but nothing's worse than sleeping with a friend's ex.

Nick sits back with a satisfied smile.

NICK

You think so?

PAM

You're OK with it?

NICK

Not a chance. I promise I
won't sleep with your ex.

Pam frowns, sits back, and crosses her arms.

PAM

Did I ever tell you about him?

NICK

I don't think we talked about
ex's other than I know you
weren't married.

PAM

I broke up with Jack about two
weeks before Lucy's party.
He's a great guy but it wasn't
going to work.

NICK

Because of you traveling?

PAM

No, he does shows, too. We
both work the same shows but
that's why it didn't work.

NICK

Which is..?

PAM

He's a competitor

NICK

Yep, that's a problem.

PAM

And he's kind-of a womanizer.
I mean, maybe he's just
friendly, but I was never
quite sure, you know?

NICK

I dated some flirts. I know
the feeling.

PAM

I've known Jack a long time
and I don't think he played
around when we were dating,
but I always kinda wondered.

NICK
And you dated him anyway.

PAM
Like I said, he's a great guy.
I don't date losers.

NICK
Thanks.

Pam pauses, as if to gather her thoughts.

PAM
I hadn't heard from him in a
while... and then he called
last night.

NICK
Let me guess. He wants another
try.

PAM
He found a new job.

NICK
Ah. No more ethical problem,
but you'll still be traveling.

PAM
So will he. He's still doing
shows, just not with a
competitor

NICK
(pause)
And you're thinking about it.

Pam looks at Nick earnestly.

PAM
I never talked with him while
I was going out with you. I
don't want you thinking I was
still seeing him, 'cause I
wasn't. I don't do that kind
of thing. I just never thought
he'd change jobs.

NICK
It's a big step to take.

PAM

It means a lot. He says it means he's serious.

NICK

And you already made your choice.

Pam looks away, then turns back.

PAM

Don't think it was easy. I didn't want to break up with him but if it wasn't going to work, there was no reason to keep going. I never thought I'd meet someone like you.

NICK

I guess I could say the same.

PAM

Meeting you at Lucy's seemed like a good sign.

Pam puts one hand on his arm for a moment.

PAM

I don't meet a lot of guys like you, at least not who hasn't been married a couple times, and I don't think you'd be happy with a part-time girlfriend.

NICK

I've been thinking about it, too. I tried doing the long distance thing years ago and it was pretty tough.

PAM

How long did it last?

NICK

About six months too long. We met down in Mexico on vacation and she's Canadian.

PAM

That's a tough commute.

Nick laughs, shakes his head ruefully.

NICK

She was worth tryin' for but I spent more on long distance calls than on the vacation itself. My buddies said I was nuts.

PAM

My friends'll think I'm nuts for going with Jack again.

NICK

I'll get a ration of shit for going out at all.

PAM

It's been a while?

NICK

Couple years.

PAM

That bad?

NICK

Just burned out. Swore off. Donny started calling me Monk.

PAM

And I'm the one made you break your vows?

NICK

All but the chastity part.

Pam looks him square in the eyes.

PAM

Not for a lack of interest.

NICK

More like a lack of opportunity.

PAM

And thinking about it isn't making this any easier.

NICK
It's something I'll be
thinking about for a while

PAM
Me too.
(pause)
I'm sorry. Really, really
sorry.

NICK
At least you're telling me in
person. It's not like you e-
mailed me.

PAM
I never wanted to hurt you.

NICK
I'll walk it off. At least I
know there's still a few
winners out there.

PAM
Friends?

Nick pauses, then sticks out one hand.

NICK
Friends.

PAM
Great. Let's go get a beer.

INT. OFFICE LUNCHROOM - DAY

(WEDNESDAY)

Nick sits at a table, staring at his food without eating.
Stu walks in and sits down and opens his lunch without
noticing Nick's lack of movement.

STU
Can you believe the excuses
they gave this time? I mean,
I've heard crap before but
today was the topper.

Nick looks at Stu without answering.

STU

Losing sales I can understand,
losing staff I can understand,
but how the hell do you just
lose money? Did they put it in
a box and forgot where they
hid the damn thing?

Nick remains silent.

STU

Those guys got huge bonuses
last year and all we got was a
frozen turkey. Now they can't
remember where they misplaced
a million fucking dollars
and...

Stu finally notices Nick's silence.

STU

What's wrong?

NICK

Nothing. Just thinking, I
guess.

STU

About that bullshit pep-talk?

NICK

No. Pam.

STU

Ah. Let me guess. You got some
last night?

NICK

I got dumped last night.

STU

What? No way.

Nick nods.

STU

Jeez, what a lousy... I guess
you can't trust anyone.

NICK

At least she told me. She was
brave enough to do that.

STU
On the phone?

NICK
In person. It wasn't easy, I
give her credit for that.

STU
What happened? What'd you do?

NICK
It wasn't me. Her ex-boyfriend
wants to patch things up.

STU
There's always a catch.

NICK
At least I don't have to put
up with any crap from the
guys.

STU
You never told your buddies?
Not even Donny?

NICK
Nope.

STU
So he never got to meet he?

NICK
Hasn't even heard of her.

STU
Too bad. He might give up
married women if he met some
good single ones.

NICK
You might give up bad-mouthing
them if you met the right one.

STU
I tried twice. Three's just
askin' for trouble.

NICK
I always heard three's the
charm.

STU
I'm not stickin' my neck out
for nothing, not even regular
sex.

NICK
Keep your powder dry, Stu.

INT. THE BUM STEER - NIGHT (FRIDAY)

Nick walks into the bar, sees Donny, stops, seems about to walk back out, but instead resumes walking and stops at Donny's table.

DONNY
Well, hell. Look who's here.

NICK
Even the best nuclear sub has
to surface once in a while.

DONNY
I guess so. You drinkin' or
just doin' a barfly census?

NICK
You buyin'?

Donny indicates the half-filled pitcher in front of him

DONNY
Find yourself a glass.

Nick waves and moments later Waitress Bonnie brings a glass.

WAITRESS
Hi, Nick. Haven't seen you
around much.

Nick takes the glass and pours beer.

NICK
I've been hanging out at the
White Swallow.

Donny almost spits up his beer laughing, but Waitress Bonnie is confused.

WAITRESS
Don't think I've heard of it.
New place?

NICK

I'd bet money you've tried it.
Thanks for the glass.

Waitress Bonnie walks away while Donny snickers.

DONNY

White Swallow! Next you'll be
down at the Man Hole.

Nick raises his glass and Donny clinks it with his,

NICK

You never know. Stranger
things could happen.

DONNY

I guess. How's work goin'?

NICK

Same shit, different day. How
about you?

DONNY

Cuttin' steel, weldin' steel,
paintin' steel. Same today as
yesterday.

NICK

Long as you're not cutting off
fingers, I guess it's OK.

(pause)

You hear about Chet's
paintings?

DONNY

I heard he sold somethin' but
I thought it was just rumors.

NICK

I hope you didn't make any
side bets because it's true.

DONNY

Knock down a wall and get out!

NICK

He got two paintings in the Bryant Gallery and sold both, then sold two more and got a commission to do something big for a lawyer.

DONNY

You been sniffin' whiteout?

NICK

Chet told me himself. He hauled most of his clothes and furniture down to the dumpster and's buying all new stuff.

Donny looks very doubtful.

DONNY

His shit was that good?

NICK

Somebody liked it. He's got another showing next week and now he's looking at lofts over by the freight yards.

(pause)

You still bird-doggin' his ex?

Donny grins broadly and laughs.

DONNY

I was wonderin' how long it'd take you. No, we're done.

NICK

Finally came to your senses?

DONNY

Nope.

(pause)

She dumped me.

NICK

Really?

Donny makes a "What can I do?" gesture with his hands.

DONNY

Yep. She's free of Chet an'
wants to have some fun. Guess
I can't blame her.

NICK

Guess I can't, either. You
think she might get back with
Chet now that he's flush?

DONNY

Naw. I think she's seein' some
guy she plays volleyball with,
but speakin' of dates, I heard
another rumor you were seein'
someone.

Nick looks away, sips his beer.

NICK

Just rumors.

DONNY

Too bad. I heard she was cute.

NICK

It would've been nice.

DONNY

If she was cute?

Nick turns back to face Donny.

NICK

If we were dating.

DONNY

Oh.

NICK

Where's Jeff and Rich?

DONNY

Ballet downtown. Black tie.

NICK

Serious?

DONNY

Somethin' just as crazy. Rich met a gal at that tai-chen thing an' Jeff's havin' dinner with a woman he met here.

Nick looks at Donny in disbelief.

NICK

Jeff? Met a woman? Here?

DONNY

Honest to God.

NICK

She tackle him, or what?

DONNY

She came walkin' in an' he wanted to play for her, an' when he won we made him try.

NICK

No shit?

DONNY

(laughing)

She ended up sittin' here an' buyin' rounds and thought Jeff was cute.

NICK

So Jeff and Rich are getting laid while we're sitting here at a sausage festival!

Nick refills his glass, then tops off Donny's, which empties the pitcher. Donny waves for a waitress.

NICK

I'll get this one.

Donny reaches for his wallet.

DONNY

No, no. I got it.

(pause)

Say, Jeff an' me are goin' back to the track this Friday. You wanna join us?

NICK
Sure. Sounds like fun.

FRONT DOOR

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #5 walks into the bar.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick and Donny immediately appraise Attractive Woman #5.

NICK
Nice legs. Great rack.

DONNY
Got a real purty mouth.

Nick puts his left fist onto his right palm.

NICK
You on?

Donny does this same thing with his hands.

DONNY
Ready? One, two, three...

FADE OUT

THE END